

English: Bible Commentary, Translation Notes for Acts, Luke

Formatted for Translators

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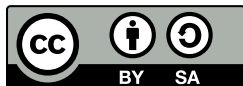
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Luke 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:46-55, 68-79.

Special concepts in this chapter

"He will be called John"

Most people in the ancient Near East would give a child the same name as someone in their family. People were surprised that Elizabeth and Zechariah named their son John, because there was no one else in their family with that name.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Luke's language is simple and straightforward. He does not use many figures of speech.

Links:

- [Luke 1:1 Notes](#)
- [Luke intro](#)

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Luke 1 Commentary

1:1-4

How did Luke begin his gospel?

[1:1, 1:2, 1:3, 1:4]

The first four verses of the Gospel of Luke introduce his gospel. Luke began his gospel in the same way that other people in ancient times began to write their own books. Like them, Luke said why he wrote his gospel, and how he wrote it.

See: Gospel

Who was Theophilus?

[1:3]

Luke wrote his gospel to someone named Theophilus. Luke called him "most excellent," so he showed that he respected him. Some scholars think that Theophilus was a government official. Some scholars have said that his name is perhaps a metaphor, because his name means "lover of God" or "friend of God." These scholars believe that his name showed that Luke wrote his gospel to anyone who wanted to love God or be a friend of God.

Luke did not call Theophilus a brother, so some scholars think that he was not a Christian. However, someone had taught Theophilus about Jesus. Perhaps Luke considered him to be in the group of Christians whom he called “us” in verses 1-2. Scholars do not know anything else about Theophilus.

See: Name

Folktales are stories that people tell to one another. They are passed down from parents to children, even though they know that these stories did not actually happen. How did Luke describe the events that actually happen? Luke spoke about things that actually happened. These things did not come from folktales. People could find out that the things that Luke wrote about were true because they did happen. People who saw these things happen told other people about them. It was from these people, the ones who saw these things, that Luke learned much about what Jesus did.

In ancient times, when Jews thought about why some nations became strong, and other nations became weak, they wanted to know what God did to make these things happen. The Gentiles thought in the same way. They were always thinking about what their gods made happen.

However, it is not the same today. Today, if someone says that God makes things happen in the world, many people think that that person is not telling the truth. However, the men who wrote the Old Testament wrote what the Holy Spirit told them to write. They showed that God did many things for the Israelites in ancient times.

When Luke wrote his gospel, he was thinking in the same way. He told about the wonderful things that God did. Luke wrote many things everywhere in his gospel, and in Acts, about what the Holy Spirit did.

See: Acts 1:1-4

How did Luke write?

[1:3, 1:4]

Luke wrote “order”(καθεξῆς/g2517) in verse three in order to tell how he wrote his gospel. Perhaps he wanted to say that he thought much about the things he wrote about.

Perhaps Luke wanted to say that he wrote first about the things that happened first. However, sometimes he wrote about later things first. For example, in 3:19-20, Luke wrote about why John the Baptist went into prison. He wrote this before he wrote that John baptized Jesus. However, John went into prison some time after he baptized Jesus.

See: Luke 3:19-20; Acts 18:24-28; 19:1-7

1:5-25

When was John the Baptist born?

[1:5]

Luke said that John was born when Herod was king of Judea. The Old Testament writers also said who was king when something happened. In this way, Luke wrote as the Old Testament writers wrote (see: Isaiah 1:1).

King Herod ruled Judea for the Romans between the years 40 B.C. and 4 or 5 B.C. Scholars think that he was close to dying when the first things that Luke wrote about happened.

The Jews knew that Herod was very cruel. He murdered many people. But he did rebuild the Jewish temple. Luke begins his story by telling about something that happened in this temple.

See: Isaiah 1:1

See: King Herod

What did Zechariah's and Elizabeth's names mean?

[1:5]

Zechariah's name meant, "The Lord remembers." His wife Elizabeth's name meant, "My God is an oath or a promise." This was because they had no children, and they were too old to have any. Why did God punish Zechariah? God punished Zechariah for not thinking that the angel Gabriel was telling him the truth (see: Luke 1:20). Zechariah should have remembered that God healed many women in the Old Testament who could not have children.

Instead, Zechariah was not able to speak until God made what he told Gabriel happen. Since Elizabeth was unable to have children, people thought that God had punished her and humiliated her. However, this did not happen because she had sinned.

See: Romans 3:21-31

See: Angel; Gospel; Sin

Why did Luke write Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous and blameless?

[1:6]

Luke wrote Zechariah and Elizabeth "lived in a way that honored God or lived the right way" (δίκαιος/g1342) and "innocent, blameless, or obeyed the rules" (ἄμεμπτος/g0273). Luke meant that Zechariah and Elizabeth honored God completely and did their best to obey him. Luke wanted his readers to think that God was pleased with Zechariah and Elizabeth because they did so.

Luke also wrote about people who lived in a way that honored God in verse seventeen. He said that John the Baptist helped many people to become wise like other people who honor God.

However, there were many other Jews who did not know God's law and who did not care about obeying it. These Jews were the people that the Pharisees called "sinners or people who sinned" (ἁμαρτωλός/g0268). The Pharisees said that Jesus was a "sinner" because they thought that he did not obey the law, even though he did (see: John 9:24).

However, when the Apostle Paul wrote about people who lived rightly and sinners, he meant something different. Paul wanted to show everyone that they have all sinned, and that they needed for Jesus Christ to die for them. He showed that God considers righteous anyone who believes in Jesus, even if that person still sins (see: Romans 3:21-31).

See: Righteous (Righteousness); Blameless; Pharisees; Sin

Why did Luke write about the Jewish temple?

[1:9]

About one thousand years before Jesus lived, King David ordered the priests to serve in different divisions or groups at the temple. After the Jews returned to Jerusalem from Babylon and rebuilt the temple, the priests served in these divisions again.

Zechariah belonged to the division of Abijah. The priests in each division served at the temple two weeks every year. There were about 18,000 priests, so not all priests got the chance to serve at the temple even one time their whole life. The leaders of the priests cast lots to choose which priests would burn incense at the morning and evening sacrifice that happened each day.

Luke began telling about what happened before Jesus was born. He began in this chapter by telling about what Zechariah the priest saw in the temple. Luke ended the next chapter by writing about what Jesus did in the

temple when he was twelve years old. It is in this way that words about the temple begin and end this part of Luke's gospel.

See: 1 Chronicles 24

See: Temple

What did John the Baptist succeed in doing by serving God?

[1:16, 1:17]

John the Baptist had to get the people ready to receive the Messiah. He did this by telling them to repent because they sinned.

Gabriel repeated some words the prophet Malachi wrote (see: Malachi 4:6). These words were about bringing the fathers' hearts back to their children. This was a prophecy about John the Baptist. Perhaps Luke was also thinking about what Malachi said right after that, and to bring back "the heart of the children to their fathers." When people "repent"(μετανοέω/g3340), fathers begin to love their children again, and children love their fathers.

Malachi also said that if this did not happen, God would curse the land of Israel. However, Gabriel did not say anything about this. So perhaps Gabriel was thinking that after the people "repented", God would do for Israel everything he had promised to do in his covenant with Israel.

See: Serve; Repent (Repentance); Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Curse; Covenant

How did Zechariah's son come with the spirit and power of Elijah?

[1:17]

Some scholars note that about eight hundred years earlier, some prophets said Elisha also had the spirit of Elijah because Elisha did powerful miracles like the ones that Elijah did (see: 2 Kings 2:15). This meant that Elisha did his work in the way that Elijah had done his. God caused Elisha to continue to serve him as Elijah had done. Much later, God caused John the Baptist to do the same kind of work as Elijah. This is what Malachi said would happen (see: Malachi 4:5-6).

Later in this chapter, when the angel told Mary that she would have a son (see: Luke 1:35), the angel said that the Holy Spirit and God's power would come upon her. Also, in Luke 4:14, Luke said that Jesus came out of the wilderness with the power of the Holy Spirit.

In verse fifteen, Luke said that the Holy Spirit would fill John even before he was born. Here in verse seventeen, when the angel told Zechariah that John the Baptist would come in the spirit and power of Elijah, perhaps the angel was talking about the Holy Spirit. However, most scholars think that the angel was saying that John would think and act in the same way that Elijah had done. This is how John would serve God.

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit

Why did Elizabeth hide herself for five months?

[1:24]

When Zechariah and Elizabeth returned to their house in Judea, Elizabeth decided to stay in her house for five months without coming out. Scholars give reasons for this.

1. She was afraid of having a miscarriage.
2. She was afraid people would not believe she was really pregnant, so she wanted to wait until everyone was able to see she was pregnant.
3. She wanted to pray.
4. She wanted to follow her husband's example of not spreading this good news.

5. She wanted to be sure that Mary would be the first person to know she was pregnant.

See Map: Judea

1:26-38

How the angel Gabriel greet Mary?

[1:28]

Most scholars believe the angel Gabriel greeted Mary in a way that the Jews usually greeted each other (see: Luke 1:28). They think the angel said that God favored Mary. This was why he chose her to bear the baby Jesus and to raise him. These scholars also say that in the Old Testament, some people greeted other people like this. When they greeted a person like this, they meant that God had chosen this person to do something very good for him.

Fewer scholars think the angel meant that Mary was able to show favor to other people and help them in this way. These scholars think this because of an old translation of scripture that said Mary is 'full of grace.' These scholars also believe that Mary never sinned in her whole life.

See: Exodus 33:16; Proverbs 12:2

See: Grace; Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

See Map: Galilee

Advice to Translators: Translate "the house of Jacob" as you did in your local version of the gospel of Luke.

How will Jesus make come true what God had promised King David that he would do?

[1:32]

The angel Gabriel described Jesus, then he said what Jesus would do (see: Luke 1:32-33). Jesus would become king and rule forever over Israel, the "house of Jacob." This is what God said he would make happen to King David. He made this happen by means of Jesus (see: 2 Samuel 7:14).

However, some scholars think that God has now made these things happen. They say that he made these things happen when Jesus was born. This is because Jesus began to rule over the hearts of those who believed in him.

Other scholars think that God will make these things happen when Jesus returns to earth. They say that this will happen when Jesus becomes king.

Still other scholars say that both of these things are true. They think that God made some of these things happen when Jesus was born, and that God will make the rest of them happen when Jesus comes back to earth.

Advice to Translators: Translate "the son of the Most High" here as you did in your local version of the gospel of Luke.

The angel Gabriel called Jesus "the Son of the Most High." This shows that Jesus, the Messiah who is a descendant of King David, is also God. It was God who gave King David the power to rule over Israel. But after the Babylonians took the Jews to their own country as prisoners, the Israelites never had a king again. However, the Israelites will once again prosper because Jesus, a descendant of King David, will rule over them.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites had many kings, one after another. They were descendants of King David. But now Jesus the Messiah, also a descendant of David, will rule forever.

Why did Mary have to be a virgin when she became pregnant?

[1:34]

It was necessary for Mary to be a virgin when she became pregnant with Jesus. This meant that God was Jesus' father, not any man. God was Jesus' father, so Jesus was born without wanting to sin in any way.

When God created Adam and Eve, they did not sin at first, either. God was Jesus' father, so when Mary gave birth to Jesus, Jesus did not sin. However, after Adam and Eve sinned for the first time, all people have been born wanting to sin. All men and women pass this desire on to their children. Every person who was born after Adam, God considered to be guilty of sin because they were born wanting to sin. When a person wants to sin, this is wrong and it is a sin. But God was Jesus' father, so Jesus never sinned, and He was not born wanting to sin. Therefore, God did not consider Jesus guilty of wanting to sin.

See: Isaiah 7:14; Psalm 51:5; 71:6; Romans 5:12

See: Virgin; Sinful Nature

Did God sleep with Mary?

[1:35]

The Holy Spirit came upon Mary to make her pregnant with Jesus. But when God gave Mary this baby, he did not sleep with her.

Jesus, the Son of God, has always been the son of God the Father. When Mary gave birth to Jesus, this was the same Son of God, but he became a human being when Mary became pregnant with him. But he did not stop being God. This is why Jesus is called the "God-Man," that is, the man who is also God, and God who is also man. It is because he is human, even though he is also God.

See: Incarnation; Son of God

Mary asked Gabriel a different question from what Zechariah asked him. How was it different?

[1:34, 1:38]

Luke wrote that both Mary and Zechariah asked the angel Gabriel a question. However, Luke showed that they thought differently. Zechariah wanted Gabriel to do something that would make him think he was saying the truth (see: Luke 1:18). This was because Zechariah did not believe Gabriel. But Luke made his readers know that Mary believed what Gabriel told her (see: Luke 1:38). Also, Mary's cousin Elizabeth knew that Mary had believed what Gabriel said to her (see: Luke 1:45). Mary even called herself a servant of God, ready to do anything that God commanded her to do (see: Luke 1:20).

1:39-45

How was Mary the mother of Elizabeth's "Lord" in Luke 1:43?

[1:43]

Elizabeth called Mary the mother of my "Lord" (κύριος/g2962). This word can mean "master" or "God." Some scholars think that Elizabeth knew that Mary's baby would be God because God was referred to as the "Lord." However, other scholars think that Elizabeth called the baby my "Lord" because she knew that the baby would become someone very great. So when she said "my Lord," she was showing respect for the baby.

In some places the New Testament called Mary the mother of Jesus (see: John 2:1). Today, some people call Mary the mother of God. However, Mary is not as great as Jesus.

See: Love

See Map: Judah

1:46-56

What was Mary's Song?

[1:46]

This section of poetry is called "Mary's Song." After Elizabeth greeted Mary, Mary praised God with this song. Mary knew the Old Testament, and during her journey of two or three days to visit Elizabeth, Mary probably thought about people in the Old Testament whom God had helped, and people to whom God had sent angels.

In her song, Mary repeated words from two Psalms. She was probably thinking about Hannah, whom God enabled to have a son, and also about how God had brought the Israelites out of Egypt. In the first part of her song, Mary sang about herself. In the second part, she sang about Israel. This song shows that Mary was thinking much about being a servant of God, giving him honor, and about God giving her more than she deserved.

See: Psalms 103:17; 107:9; 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Exodus 6:6

Why did Mary call herself "a low condition"?

[1:48]

Mary said that she was a humble servant of God. She knew that she was not great. She belonged to the village of Nazareth, a place that no one in the Old Testament even spoke about. But she said that many, many people would come to honor her because she obeyed God. Mary was thinking of Psalm 103:17. She was not thinking about all Jewish people who were not yet born, but of all the Christians everywhere in the world who would later honor her.

See Map: Nazareth

Advice to Translators: Everything in Greek in these verses that Mary said seemed to be about things that God had already done. However, many translations make it seem that God is now doing these things, or that he will do them in the future. Translators must decide if they want to use this entry or not.

Mary talked as if God had already had mercy on Israel. Why did she talk this way?

[1:50]

In verses 51-55 (see: Luke 1:51-55) Mary said that God had already done all these things for Israel. However, she meant that God was going to do them, not that he had already done them.

In the Old Testament, prophets often spoke about what would happen later as if it had already happened. They thought that those things were certain to happen, so they spoke of them as if they had happened. Mary said that God would one day defeat all of Israel's enemies and set the nation free from those who were ruling over it.

1:57-66

How did people in Israel choose what names to give to their children?

[1:59]

Israelite parents usually named their children when they were born. Usually these were names that others in their family had, or they gave certain names because of something that happened when they were born (see: Genesis 29:32-35). Sometimes they waited one week after the babies were born (see: 2 Samuel 12; Luke 2:21). God also changed Abram's name when he was circumcised (see: Genesis 17).

Zechariah and Elizabeth waited one week to name their child. They named him when he was circumcised. They surprised people by giving him a name that was different from the names of all the other people in their own family. In this way, they helped them to know that God was going to make this boy do great things.

The angel Gabriel had told Zechariah (see: Luke 1:20) that he must name the boy “John,” which means, “the Lord has mercy.” When Zechariah began to speak and praise God, this also made what the angel had said to him come true.

See: Circumcise (Circumcision)

1:67-79

What does Luke mean by being “filled with the Holy Spirit”?

[1:67]

The Gospel of Luke is the only gospel with the words “filled” (πλήνι/g4130) with the Holy Spirit.” Luke almost always wrote “fill” when he wrote about the Holy Spirit coming on people. He never shortened “Holy Spirit” to “Spirit” when using “fill”.

In this chapter, many people were “filled” with the Holy Spirit. Gabriel said that the Spirit is holy and would give John the power to serve God (see: Luke 1:15,17). For Elizabeth and Zechariah, when the Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth, she blessed Mary and Mary’s child right away. When the Spirit filled Zechariah, right away he praised God and said what God would do for Israel.

Luke used different words to tell how the Holy Spirit would come upon Mary. This was probably because she was going to bear the baby Jesus, something that no one else would ever do. When Luke said this, he called the Holy Spirit the power from the “Most High” God (see: Luke 1:35). When the Holy Spirit filled people, one thing most of them did was immediately say things that the Spirit enabled them to say.

See: Acts 13:52

Advice to Translators: Some versions use ideas different from “filled with the Holy Spirit.” Translators should choose what ideas in this entry to translate.

What was Zechariah’s prophecy?

[1:68]

This poetic section is called “Zechariah’s prophecy.” In this section, Zechariah answered the question that the people asked in verse 66 (see: Luke 1:66). Zechariah was a priest, so he knew the Old Testament. During the time that he could not speak, he was probably thinking about things that people in the Old Testament had wrote.

He repeated some words from a psalm (see: Psalm 106:10), and from what the prophets Malachi (see: Malachi 3:1) and Isaiah (see: Isaiah 9:2) had written. He was also thinking about things that other people in the Old Testament had said.

Zechariah spoke two kinds of things. In the first part, he spoke about the Messiah. He did this when he spoke about the family of King David.

In the second part, Zechariah began talking to his newborn son about how he would serve God. Zechariah spoke much about how God was helping the Israelites, how God was giving them more than they deserved and how God would rescue them from their enemies.

See: Priest (Priesthood)

How did Zechariah think that God will save people?

[1:71]

Some scholars say that Zechariah spoke about how God would rescue Israel from its enemies in the first part of his song. They say that then he spoke in the second part about how God would rescue the Israelites by forgiving their sins.

However, if a person thinks about everything together that Zechariah said, then it is easier to understand Zechariah's song. In verse 71, Zechariah repeated words from Psalm 106:10. Those words were about the time when God rescued the Israelites from the people of Egypt. When Zechariah talked about "the 'horn'(κέρας/g2768) of salvation" in verse 69, he was thinking about Psalm 132:17. There "horn of salvation" meant the power of King David, who defeated the enemies of Israel. In verses 72-74, Zechariah talked about the covenant that God had made with Abraham, the ancestor of the Israelites. In that covenant, God promised Abraham that he would defeat Israel's enemies and rescue the Israelites so Israel could worship him.

In the second part of his prophecy, Zechariah stopped speaking about what God did for Israel in the past. He began speaking about what the Messiah was going to do, and about what his own son John would do to get the people ready to believe in the Messiah.

Zechariah was no longer speaking about Israel's enemies. Now he was saying that God would forgive the Israelites and make them live in peace (see: 1:78-79). Some scholars also say that Zechariah was thinking that Jesus would heal people and rescue them from evil spirits.

See: Covenant; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

1:80

How did John the Baptist grow up "in spirit"?

[1:80]

Most scholars think when Luke wrote "in spirit," he meant John's mind and heart. However, some scholars think that Luke was talking about the Holy Spirit. Perhaps Luke meant both at the same time (see: Ephesians 3:16). Where did John the Baptist grow up? John the Baptist was in the wilderness until he began to preach to the Israelites, so some scholars think he may have been among some more radical religious people. Other scholars do not think he did this. This is because these radical, religious people rejected the temple and its priests. But John's family had priests who served in the temple. Luke did not say what part of the wilderness John lived in.

See: Zeal (Zealous, Zealot)

Luke 1:1	among us
General Information:	No one knows for sure who Theophilus was. If he was a Christian, the word "us" here would include him and so be inclusive, and if not, it would be exclusive.
Luke explains why he writes to Theophilus.	
of the things that have been accomplished among us	Luke 1:2
"about those things that have happened among us" or "about those events that have happened among us"	were eyewitnesses and servants of the word
	An "eyewitness" is a person who saw something happen, and a servant of the word is a person who serves God by telling people God's message. You may need to make it clear how they were servants of the

word. Alternate translation: "saw what had happened and served God by telling people his message"

servants of the word

The word "word" is a synecdoche for a message made up of many words. Alternate translation: "servants of the message" or "servants of God's message"

Luke 1:3

accurately investigated

"carefully researched." Luke was careful to find out exactly what happened. He probably talked to the different people who saw what happened to make sure that what he wrote down about these events was correct.

most excellent Theophilus

Luke said this to show honor and respect for Theophilus. This may mean that Theophilus was an important government official. This section should use the style that your culture uses to address people of high status. Some people may prefer to also put this greeting at the beginning and say, "To most excellent Theophilus" or "Dear most excellent Theophilus."

most excellent

"honorable" or "noble"

Theophilus

This name means "friend of God." It may describe this man's character or it may have been his actual name. Most translations have it as a name.

Luke 1:4

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 1:5

General Information:

Zechariah and Elizabeth are introduced. Verses 5-7 give background information about them.

Connecting Statement:

The angel prophesies the birth of John.

In the days of Herod, king of Judea

The phrase "In the days of" is used to indicate a new event. Alternate translation: "During the time that King Herod ruled over Judea"

there was a certain

"there was a particular" or "there was a." This is a way of introducing a new character in a story. Consider how your language does this.

division

It is understood that this refers to the priests. Alternate translation: "division of priests" or "group of priests"

of Abijah

"who descended from Abijah." Abijah was an ancestor of this group of priests and all of them were descended from Aaron, who was the first Israelite priest.

Luke 1:6

before God

"in God's sight" or "in God's opinion"

all the commandments and statutes of the Lord

"all that the Lord had commanded and required"

Luke 1:7

But

This contrast word shows that what follows here is the opposite of what is expected. People expected that if they did what was right, God would allow them to have children. Although this couple did what was right, they did not have any children.

they were both advanced in their days

This is a euphemism that says that they were very old. Alternate translation: "they had both lived many days" or "they had both lived many years" or "they were both very old"

Luke 1:8

Now it came about

This phrase is used to mark a shift in the story from the background information to the participants.

Zechariah was in God's presence, carrying out the priestly duties

It is implied that Zechariah was in God's temple and that these priestly duties were part of worshipping God.

in the order of his division

"when it was his group's turn" or "when the time came for his group to serve"

Luke 1:9

According to the customary way of choosing which priest would ... burn incense

This sentence gives us information about priestly duties.

the customary way

"the traditional method" or "the usual way"

chosen by lot

A lot was a marked stone that was thrown or rolled on the ground in order to decide something. The priests believed that God guided the lot to show them which priest he wanted them to choose.

to burn incense

The priests were to burn sweet-smelling incense as an offering to God each morning and evening on a special altar inside the temple.

Luke 1:10

The whole crowd of people

"A large number of people" or "Many people"

outside

The courtyard was the enclosed area surrounding the temple. Alternate translation: "outside the temple building" or "in the courtyard outside the temple"

at the hour

"at the set time." It is unclear if this was the morning or evening time for the incense offering.

Luke 1:11

Connecting Statement:

While Zechariah does his duty in the temple, an angel comes from God to give him a message.

Now

This word marks the beginning of the action in the story.

appeared to him

"suddenly came to him" or "was suddenly there with Zechariah." This expresses that the angel was present with Zechariah, and not simply a vision.

Luke 1:12

Zechariah ... was troubled ... fear fell on him

These two phrases mean the same thing, and emphasize how afraid Zechariah was.

When Zechariah saw him

"When Zechariah saw the angel." Zechariah was afraid because the appearance of the angel was frightening. He had not done anything wrong, so he was not afraid that the angel would punish him.

fear fell on him

Fear is described as if it was something that attacked or overpowered Zechariah.

Luke 1:13

Do not be afraid

"Stop being afraid of me" or "You do not need to be afraid of me"

your prayer has been heard

This can be stated in active form. It is implied that God will give Zechariah what he has asked for. Alternate translation: "God has heard your prayer and will give you what you have asked for"

bear you a son

"have a son for you" or "give birth to your son"

Luke 1:14

You will have joy and gladness

The words "joy" and "gladness" mean the same thing and are used to emphasize how great the joy will be. Alternate translation: "you will have great joy" or "you will be very glad"

at his birth

"because of his birth"

Luke 1:15

For he will be great

"This is because he will be great." Zechariah and the "many" will rejoice because John will be "great in the sight of the Lord." The rest of verse 15 tells how God wants John to live.

he will be great in the sight of the Lord

"he will be a very important person for the Lord" or "God will consider him to be very important"

he will be filled with the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit will empower him" or "the Holy Spirit will guide him" Make sure it does not sound similar to what an evil spirit might do to a person.

from his mother's womb

"even while he is in his mother's womb" or "even before he is born"

Luke 1:16

Many of the descendants of Israel will be turned to the Lord their God

Here "be turned" is a metaphor for a person repenting and worshiping the Lord. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will cause many of the people of Israel to repent and worship the Lord their God"

Luke 1:17

will go before the face of the Lord

Before the Lord comes, he will go and announce to the people that the Lord will come to them.

the face of the Lord

Here "the face of" someone can be an idiom that refers to the that person's presence. It is sometimes omitted in translation. Alternate translation: "the Lord"

in the spirit and power of Elijah

"with the same spirit and power that Elijah had." The word "spirit" either refers to God's Holy Spirit or to Elijah's attitude or way of thinking. Make sure that the word "spirit" does not mean ghost or evil spirit.

turn the hearts of the fathers to the children

"persuade fathers to care about their children again" or "cause fathers to restore their relationships with their children"

turn the hearts

The heart is spoken of as if it were something that could be turned to go in a different direction. This refers to changing someone's attitude toward something.

the disobedient

Here this refers to people who do not obey the Lord.

make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him

What the people will be prepared to do can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "make ready for the Lord a people who are prepared to believe his message"

Luke 1:18

How can I know this?

"How can I know for sure that what you said will happen?" Here, "know" means to learn by experience, suggesting Zechariah was asking for a sign as proof. Alternate translation: "What can you do to prove to me that this will happen?"

my wife is advanced in her days

This is a euphemism that says that she was very old.
See how you translated similar words in [Luke 1:7]

Luke 1:19

I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God

This is stated as a rebuke to Zechariah. The presence of Gabriel, coming directly from God, should be enough proof for Zechariah.

who stands

"who serves"

I was sent to speak to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God sent me to speak to you"

Luke 1:20

Behold

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

silent, unable to speak

These mean the same thing, and are repeated to emphasize the completeness of his silence. Alternate translation: "completely unable to speak" or "not able to speak at all"

not believe my words

"not believe what I said"

at the right time

"at the appointed time"

Luke 1:21

Now

This marks a shift in the story from what happened inside the temple to what happened outside. Alternate translation: "While that was happening" or "While the angel and Zechariah were talking"

Luke 1:22

They realized that he had seen a vision while he was in the temple. He kept on making signs to them and remained silent

These things probably happened at the same time, and Zechariah's signs helped the people understand that he had had a vision. It might be helpful to your audience to change the order to show that. Alternate translation: "He kept on making signs to them and remained silent. So they realized that he had seen a vision while he was in the temple"

a vision

The earlier description indicated that Gabriel actually came to Zechariah in the temple. The people, not knowing that, assumed Zechariah saw a vision.

Luke 1:23

It came about

This phrase moves the story ahead to when Zechariah's service was ended.

he went to his house

Zechariah did not live in Jerusalem, where the temple was located. He traveled to his home town.

Luke 1:24

After these days

The phrase "these days" refers to the time Zechariah was serving in the temple. It is possible to state more clearly what this refers to. Alternate translation: "After Zechariah's time of serving at the temple"

his wife

"Zechariah's wife"

kept herself hidden

"did not leave her house"

Luke 1:25

This is what the Lord has done for me

This phrase refers to the fact that the Lord allowed her to become pregnant.

This is what

This is a positive exclamation. She is very happy with what the Lord has done for her.

looked at me with favor

"to look at" here is an idiom that means "to treat" or "to deal with." Alternate translation: "regarded me kindly" or "had pity on me"

my shame

This refers to the shame she felt when she was not able to have children.

Luke 1:26

In the sixth month

"in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy." It may be necessary to state this clearly if it would be confused with the sixth month of the year.

the angel Gabriel was sent from God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God told the angel Gabriel to go"

Luke 1:27

a virgin engaged to ... Joseph

Mary's parents had agreed that Mary would marry Joseph. Though they had not had sexual relations, Joseph would have thought and spoken of her as his wife.

who was a descendant of David

"he belonged to the same tribe as King David"

the virgin's name was Mary

This introduces Mary as a new character in the story.

Luke 1:28

He came to her

"The angel came to Mary"

Greetings

This was a common greeting. It means: "Rejoice" or "Be glad."

you who are highly favored!

"you who have received great grace!" or "you who have received special kindness!"

The Lord is with you

"with you" here is an idiom that implies support and acceptance. Alternate translation: "The Lord is pleased with you"

Luke 1:29

she was very confused by his words, and she wondered what kind of greeting this could be

Mary understood the meaning of the individual words, but she did not understand why the angel said this amazing greeting to her.

Luke 1:30

Do not be afraid, Mary

The angel does not want Mary to be afraid of his appearance, because God sent him with a positive message.

you have found favor with God

The idiom "to find favor" means to be positively received by someone. The sentence can be altered to show God as the actor. Alternate translation: "God has decided to give you his grace" or "God is showing you his kindness"

Luke 1:31

you will conceive in your womb and bear a son ... Jesus

Mary will bear "a son" who will be called "the Son of the Most High." Jesus is therefore a human son born of a human mother, and he is also the Son of God. These terms should be translated very carefully.

Luke 1:32

the Son of the Most High

Mary will bear "a son" who will be called "the Son of the Most High." Jesus is therefore a human son born of a human mother, and he is also the Son of God. These terms should be translated very carefully.

will be called

Possible meanings are 1) "people will call him" or 2) "God will call him"

Son of the Most High

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

give him the throne of his ancestor David

The throne represents the king's authority to rule. Alternate translation: "give him authority to rule as king as his ancestor David did"

Luke 1:33

there will be no end to his kingdom

The negative phrase "no end" emphasizes that it continues forever. It could also be stated with a positive phrase. Alternate translation: "his kingdom will never end"

Luke 1:34

How will this happen

Though Mary did not understand how it could happen, she did not doubt that it would happen.

I have not known any man

Mary used this polite expression to say that she had not engaged in sexual activity. Alternate translation: "I am a virgin"

Luke 1:35

The Holy Spirit will overshadow you

The process of Mary's conception would begin with the Holy Spirit coming to her.

the power of the Most High

It was God's "power" that would supernaturally cause Mary to become pregnant even while she still remained a virgin. Make sure this does not imply any physical or sexual union—this was a miracle.

will overshadow you

"will cover you like a shadow"

So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the holy one who will be born they will call the Son of God" or "So the baby that will be born will be holy, and people will call him the Son of God"

the holy one

"the holy child" or "the holy baby"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

Luke 1:36

See, your relative

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

your relative Elizabeth

If you need to state a specific relationship, Elizabeth was probably Mary's aunt or great-aunt.

has also conceived a son in her old age

"Elizabeth has also become pregnant with a son even though she is already very old" or "Elizabeth, even though she is old, has also become pregnant and will bear a son." Make sure it does not sound as though both Mary and Elizabeth were old when they conceived.

the sixth month for her

"the sixth month of her pregnancy"

Luke 1:37

For nothing

"Because nothing" or "This shows that nothing"

nothing will be impossible for God

Elizabeth's pregnancy was proof that God was able to do anything—even enable Mary to become pregnant without her sleeping with a man. The double negatives in this statement can be stated with positive terms. Alternate translation: "everything will be possible for God" or "God can do anything"

Luke 1:38

See, I am the female servant

"Here I am, the female servant" or "I am glad to be the female servant." She is responding humbly and willingly.

I am the female servant of the Lord

Choose an expression that shows her humility and obedience to the Lord. She was not boasting about being the Lord's servant.

Let it be for me

"Let this happen to me." Mary was expressing her willingness for the things to happen that the angel had told her were about to happen.

Luke 1:39

Connecting Statement:

Mary goes to visit her relative Elizabeth, who is going to give birth to John.

arose

This idiom means she not only stood up, but also "got ready." Alternate translation: "started out" or "got ready"

the hill country

"the hilly area" or "the mountainous part of Israel"

Luke 1:40

She went

It is implied that Mary finished her journey before she went in to Zechariah's house. This could be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "When she arrived, she went"

Luke 1:41

Now it happened

The phrase is used to mark a new event in this part of the story.

in her womb

"in Elizabeth's womb"

jumped

moved suddenly

Luke 1:42

cried out with a loud shout and said

The phrases "cried out" and "loud shout" mean the same thing and are used to emphasize how excited Elizabeth was. You may want to combine them into one phrase. Alternate translation: "exclaimed loudly"

Blessed are you among women

The idiom "among women" means "more than any other woman"

the fruit of your womb

Mary's baby is spoken of as if it is the fruit that a plant produces. Alternate translation: "the baby in your womb" or "the baby you will bear"

Luke 1:43

Why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

Elizabeth is not asking for information. She was showing how surprised and happy she was that the mother of the Lord had come to her. Alternate translation: "How wonderful it is that the mother of my Lord has come to me!"

the mother of my Lord

It can be made clear that Elizabeth was calling Mary "the mother of my Lord" by adding the word "you." Alternate translation: "you, the mother of my Lord"

Luke 1:44

For see

This phrase alerts Mary to pay attention to Elizabeth's surprising statement that follows.

when the sound of your greeting came to my ears

Hearing a sound is spoken of as if the sound came to the ears. Alternate translation: "when I heard the sound of your greeting"

jumped for joy

"moved suddenly with joy" or "turned forcefully because he was so happy"

Luke 1:45

Blessed is she who believed ... that were told her from the Lord

Elizabeth is talking about Mary to Mary. Alternate translation: "Blessed are you who believed ... that were told you from the Lord"

Blessed is she who believed

The passive verb can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless her because she believed"

there would be a fulfillment of the things

"the things would actually happen" or "the things would come true"

the things that were told her from the Lord

The word "from" is used here instead of "by" because it was the angel Gabriel whom Mary actually heard speak

Luke 1:46

General Information:

Mary begins a song of praise to the Lord her Savior.

My soul praises

The word "soul" refers to the spiritual part of a person. Mary is saying that her worship comes from deep inside her. Alternate translation: "My inner being praises" or "I praise"

Luke 1:47

my spirit has rejoiced

Both "soul" and "spirit" refer to the spiritual part of a person. Mary is saying that her worship comes from deep inside her. Alternate translation: "my heart has rejoiced" or "I rejoice"

has rejoiced in

"has felt very joyful about" or "was very happy about"

God my Savior

"God, the One who saves me" or "God, who saves me"

Luke 1:48

For he

"This is because he"

looked at

"looked at with concern" or "cared about"

low condition

"poverty." Mary's family was not rich.

For see

This phrase calls attention to the statement that follows.

from now on

"now and in the future"

all generations

"the people in all generations"

Luke 1:49

the Mighty One has

"God, the Powerful One, has"

his name

Here "name" refers to the entire person of God. Alternate translation: "he"

Luke 1:50

His mercy

"God's mercy"

from generation to generation

"from one generation to the next generation" or "throughout every generation" or "to people in every time period"

Luke 1:51

displayed strength with his arm

Here "his arm" is a metonym that stands for God's power. Alternate translation: "shown that he is very powerful"

has scattered those ... hearts

"has caused those ... hearts to run away in different directions"

who were proud about the thoughts of their hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's inner beings. Alternate translation: "who were proud in their thoughts" or "who were proud"

Luke 1:52

He has thrown down princes from their thrones

A throne is a chair that a ruler sits on, and it is a symbol of his authority. If a prince is brought down from his throne, it means he no longer has the authority to reign. Alternate translation: "He has taken away the authority of princes" or "He has made rulers stop ruling"

raised up those of low condition

In this word picture, people who are important are higher than people who are less important. Alternate translation: "has made humble people important" or "has given honor to people whom others have not honored"

of low condition

"in poverty." See how you translated this in Luke 1:48.

Luke 1:53

He has filled the hungry ... the rich he has sent away empty

The contrast between these two opposite actions should be made clear in the translation if possible.

filled the hungry with good things

Possible meanings are 1) "given the hungry good food to eat" or 2) "given the needy good things."

Luke 1:54

General Information:

The information in verses 54 and 55 can be rearranged, as in the UDB, to make the meaning clearer.

He has given help to

"The Lord has helped"

Israel his servant

If readers confuse this with the man named Israel, it could be translated as "his servant, the nation of Israel" or "Israel, his servants."

so as to

"in order to"

to remember

God cannot forget. When God "remembers," it is an idiom that means God acts upon his earlier promise.

Luke 1:55

General Information:

The information in verses 54 and 55 can be rearranged, as in the UDB, to make the meaning clearer.

as he said to our fathers

"just as he promised our ancestors he would do." This phrase supplies background information about God's promise to Abraham. Alternate translation: "because he promised our ancestors he would be merciful"

his descendants

"Abraham's descendants"

Luke 1:56

returned to her house

"Mary returned to her (Mary's) house" or "Mary returned to her own house"

Luke 1:57

Now

This word marks the beginning of the next event in the story.

deliver her baby

"give birth to her baby"

Luke 1:58

Her neighbors and her relatives

"Elizabeth's neighbors and relatives"

shown his great mercy to her

"been very kind to her"

Luke 1:59

Now it happened

This phrase is used here to mark a change in the main story. Here Luke starts to tell a new part of the story.

on the eighth day

Here "eighth day" refers to the time after the birth of the baby, counted from the first day, which was the day he was born. Alternate translation: "on the eighth day of the baby's life"

they came to circumcise the child

This was often a ceremony where one person circumcised the baby and friends were there to celebrate with the family. Alternate translation: "they came for the baby's circumcision ceremony"

They would have called him

"They were going to name him" or "They wanted to give him the name"

after the name of his father

"his father's name"

Luke 1:60

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 1:61

by this name

"by that name" or "by the same name"

Luke 1:62

They

This refers to the people who were there for the circumcision ceremony.

made signs

"motioned." Either Zechariah was unable to hear, as well as unable to speak, or the people assumed that he could not hear.

to his father

"to the baby's father"

how he wanted him to be named

"what name Zechariah wanted to give the baby"

Luke 1:63

His father asked for a writing tablet

Since he could not speak, it may be helpful to state this differently. Alternate translation: "His father indicated that he wanted them to give him a writing tablet" or "His father showed that he wanted a writing tablets"

a writing tablet

"something on which to write"

astonished

greatly surprised or amazed

Luke 1:64

his mouth was opened ... his tongue was freed

These two phrases are word pictures that together emphasize that Zechariah was suddenly able to speak.

his mouth was opened and his tongue was freed

These phrases can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God opened his mouth and freed his tongue"

Luke 1:65

Fear came on all who lived around them

"All who lived around Zechariah and Elizabeth were afraid." It may be helpful to state clearly why they were afraid. Alternate translation: "All who lived around them were in awe of God because he had done this to Zechariah"

all who lived around them

The word "all" here is a generalization. Alternate translation: "those who lived around them" or "many who lived in that area"

All these matters were spread throughout all the hill country of Judea

The phrase "these matters were spread" is a metaphor for people talking about them. The passive verb here can also be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "All these matters were talked about by people throughout all the hill country of Judea" or "People throughout the hill country of Judea talked about all these matters"

Luke 1:66

All who heard them

"All who heard about these matters"

stored them in their hearts

People carefully remembering things so that they can think about them later is spoken of as if they were putting those things safely in their hearts. Alternate translation: "kept them in mind" or "thought carefully about these matters" or "thought a lot about these events"

hearts, saying

"hearts. They asked"

What then will this child become?

"What kind of great person will this baby grow up to be?" It is also possible that this question was meant to be a statement of their surprise at what they had heard about the baby. Alternate translation: "What a great man this child will be!"

the hand of the Lord was with him

The phrase "the hand of the Lord" refers to the Lord's power. Alternate translation: "the Lord's power was with him" or "the Lord was working in him powerfully"

Luke 1:67

Connecting Statement:

Zechariah tells what will happen with his son John.

His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit filled his father Zechariah, and Zachariah prophesied"

His father

John's father

prophesied, saying

Consider natural ways of introducing direct quotes in your language. Alternate translation: "prophesied and said" or "prophesied, and this is what he said"

Luke 1:68

the God of Israel

"Israel" here refers to the nation of Israel. The relationship between God and Israel could be stated more directly. Alternate translation: "the God who reigns over Israel" or "the God whom Israel worships"

his people

"God's people"

Luke 1:69

He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David

The horn of an animal is a symbol of its power to defend itself. To raise up here is to bring into existence or to enable to act. The Messiah is spoken of as if he were a horn with the power to save Israel. Alternate translation: "He has brought to us someone who is in the house of his servant David with the power to save us"

in the house of his servant David

David's "house" here represents his family, specifically, his descendants. Alternate translation: "in the family of his servant David" or "who is a descendant of his servant David"

Luke 1:70

as he spoke

"just as God said"

he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from long ago

God speaking by the prophets' mouths represents God causing his prophets to say what he wanted them to say. Alternate translation: "he caused his holy prophets who lived long ago to say"

Luke 1:71

salvation from our enemies

The abstract noun "salvation" can be expressed with the verbs "save" or "rescue." Alternate translation: "who will save us from our enemies"

our enemies ... all who hate us

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are repeated to emphasize how strongly their enemies are against them.

hand

The hand is a metonym for the power that the person uses the hand to exercise. Alternate translation: "power" or "control"

Luke 1:72

to show mercy to

"to be merciful to" or "to act according to his mercy toward"

remember

Here the word "remember" means to keep a commitment or fulfill something.

Luke 1:73

the oath that he swore

These words refer to "his holy covenant" (Luke 1:72).

Luke 1:74

to grant to us

"to make it possible for us"

that we, having been delivered out of the hand of our enemies, would serve him without fear

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that after he rescued us from the hand of our enemies we would serve him without fear"

out of the hand of our enemies

Here "hand" refers to the control or power a person. This could be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "from the control of our enemies"

without fear

This refers back to the fear of their enemies. Alternate translation: "without being afraid of our enemies"

Luke 1:75

in holiness and righteousness

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "holiness" and "righteousness." Possible meanings are 1) we would serve God in holy and righteous ways. Alternate translation: "doing what is holy and righteous" or 2) we would be holy and righteous. Alternate translation: "being holy and righteous"

before him

This is an idiom which means "in his presence"

Luke 1:76

Yes, and you

Zechariah uses this phrase to begin his direct address to his son. You may have a similar way to direct speech in your language.

you, child, will be called a prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as for you, child, people will know that you are a prophet"

of the Most High

These words are a euphemism for God. Alternate translation: "who serves the Most High" or "who speaks for God Most High"

will go before the face of the Lord

Before the Lord comes, he will go and announce to the people that the Lord will come to them. See how you translated this in Luke 1:17.

the face of the Lord

"the face of" someone can be an idiom that refers to the that person's presence. It is sometimes omitted in translation. Alternate translation: "the Lord" See how you translated this in [Luke 1:17]

to prepare his paths

This is a metaphor that means that John will prepare the people to listen to and believe the Lord's message.

Luke 1:77

to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins

The phrase "give knowledge" is a metaphor for teaching. The abstract nouns "salvation" and "forgiveness" can be expressed with the verbs "save" and "forgive." Alternate translation: "to teach his people salvation through the forgiveness of their sins" or "to teach his people how God saves people by forgiving their sins"

Luke 1:78

because of the tender mercy of our God

It might be helpful to state that God's mercy helps people. Alternate translation: "because God is compassionate and merciful to us"

the sunrise from on high

Light is often a metaphor for truth. Here, the Savior giving spiritual truth to people is spoken of as if he were a sunrise that shines light on the earth. Alternate translation: "the Savior, who is like a sunrise, will come from on high"

from on high

"from heaven"

Luke 1:79

to shine

Light is often a metaphor for truth. Here, the spiritual truth that the Savior will provide is spoken of as if it is a sunrise that lights up the earth

shine on

"give knowledge to" or "give spiritual light to"

those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death

Darkness is here a metaphor for the absence of spiritual truth. Here, people who lack spiritual truth are spoken of as if they are sitting in darkness. Also "shadow of death" represents the threat of death. Alternate translation: "those who do not know the truth and are in spiritual darkness and fear dying"

guide our feet into the path of peace

Here "guide" is a metaphor for teaching, and "path of peace" is a metaphor for living at peace with God. The phrase "our feet" is a synecdoche that represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "teach us how to live at peace with God"

Luke 1:80

General Information:

This tells briefly about John's growing years.

Now

This word is used here to mark a change in the main story. Luke quickly moves from the birth of John to the beginning of his ministry as an adult.

became strong in spirit

"became spiritually mature" or "strengthened his relationship with God"

was in the wilderness

"lived in the wilderness." Luke does not say at what age John began to live in the wilderness.

until

This does not necessarily mark a stopping point. John continued to live out in the desert even after he started preaching publicly.

the day of his public appearance

"when he began to preach in public"

the day

This is used here in the general sense of "the time" or "the occasion."

Luke 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 2:14, 29-32.

Links:

- [Luke 2:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 2

2:1-7

When did this census occur?

[2:1]

It is often important for a government to count its people. This is called a “census.” Near the time when Jesus was born, the Roman emperor began a census. This census required people to go to where they were born or where their family was from. During this census, the Roman emperor was Augustus and the governor of the province of Syria was Quirinius.

However, some scholars do not think that the Romans held a census at that time. They believe that Quirinius did not become governor of Syria until A.D. 6. This was at least ten years after Jesus was born. Despite this, other scholars believe that Quirinius became governor before A.D. 6. Scholars have given different explanations concerning Quirinius and the census.

1. Quirinius was governor of Syria at two different times. Or he had been an administrator in Syria when he ordered a census before A.D. 6, before he became governor (see: Acts 5:37).
2. The word “first” in verse two meant “before.” If it meant “before” here, then the census was held before Quirinius was governor of Syria.
3. An earlier governor of Syria began the census and Quirinius completed it.
4. The emperor in Rome had ordered the census and it took several years to complete.

Because of some things in the past, scholars think the Romans held many censuses. However, there is little that is known about these censuses.

Why did the Romans hold this census?

[2:1, 2:3]

The Romans held a census to collect taxes and enlist men to serve as soldiers. However, God used this census to cause Mary to go to the place where the Messiah would be born, in the way the Old Testament prophets had said centuries before. In this way, God used the Roman emperor, the most powerful ruler in the world at that time, to fulfill Micah’s prophecy (See: Micah 5:2; Acts 4:27-28).

See: Prophecy (Prophecy)

Why was Bethlehem called the “city of David”?

[2:4]

Here, “city of David” referred to Bethlehem. Bethlehem had been the hometown of King David. Luke called Bethlehem the “city of David” in order to say that both David and the Messiah were born in the same place. This was not always the “city of David.” In the Old Testament, the “city of David” was Jerusalem.

See: 2 Samuel 5:7,9; 2 Samuel 20:6

See Map: Judah; Bethlehem

Why did Mary put the infant Jesus into a feeding trough?

[2:7]

Mary put the infant Jesus into a “trough”(φάτνη/g5336) for feeding animals. Because of the census, many people travelled to Bethlehem at this time. Therefore, Luke explained there was no room for Mary and Joseph in the “inn”(κατάλυμα/g2646).

What was the “inn”?

[2:7]

Scholars give different ideas of what the “inn” was.

1. A room for guests in someone’s home.
2. A stopping place for travelers.
3. A stable for animals.

See: Luke 9:58; 7:44-46; 9:52-53

2:8-20

What season was Jesus born?

[2:8}

Most people believe that Jesus was in the winter. However, some scholars do not think that Jesus was born in the winter. This is because it would have been too cold for sheep to stay in pastures. However, other scholars believe that the winters in ancient Israel were warm enough for the sheep to be outdoors. Luke did not say what season Jesus was born.

Advice to Translators: For languages that do not speak of four seasons (spring, summer, autumn, and winter), the idea of winter can be expressed as “the cold season.”

How did Luke write the word “today”?

[2:11]

Luke wrote the word “today” (see: Luke 2:11) many times in his gospel (see: Luke 4:21; 5:26; 19:9; 23:43). Some scholars think that he wrote this word to show that something fulfilled a prophecy. However, other scholars think that “today” did not have any special meaning. They think that in this verse “today” means simply the day of Jesus’ birth.

Advice to Translators: The sentence below about fulfilling a prophecy can be restructured as, “Some scholars think that Luke writes ‘today’ when he is showing that a message from a prophet in the past came true in his gospel.”

What did the angel call the baby Jesus at his birth?

[2:11]

The angel called Jesus three different things when he was born.

1. The angel called Jesus “Savior”(σωτήρ/g4990). People who worshiped many gods sometimes called their gods “savior”, and the people of Rome sometimes called their leaders “savior”. However, here “Savior” refers to Zechariah’s prophecy that Jesus would save people from their sins (see: Luke 1:77).
2. The angel called Jesus the “Christ”(Χριστός/g5547). That is, Jesus is the “anointed one” whom God chose to be Israel’s Messiah.
3. The angel called Jesus “Lord”(κύριος/g2962). This word is usually translated “Lord,” but God the Father is called “Lord” in the Greek Old Testament. Scholars say when the angel called Jesus this same thing, he meant that Jesus is himself God.

When the angel called Jesus “Savior,” “Christ,” and “Lord,” perhaps he was explaining what the angel Gabriel said to Mary (see: Luke 1:32-35).

See: Angel; Incarnation; Messiah (Christ); Savior

What were “signs”?

[2:12]

The angel told the shepherds that the newborn baby would be wrapped in cloths and lying in a feeding trough. He said that this would be a “sign”(σημεῖον/g4952) for them. Signs are things that show people that God has power, or that he is telling the truth about something.

When the shepherds saw the baby in a feeding trough, they would know that this was the child of which the angel had spoken. They would also know that the angel had told them the truth. Luke often wrote about signs. He wrote about signs in the sky (see: Luke 21:25), and signs that King Herod wanted to see Jesus do (see: Luke 23:8). Even though Luke did not call it a sign, some scholars believe the judgment on Zechariah was a sign (see: Luke 1:20).

See: Sign

Advice to Translators: Some languages prefer to use a verb instead of a noun such as “sign.” For example, instead of translating, “This will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a feeding trough,” some languages will want to translate, “This is how you will know what I am talking about: You will find a baby....” In the same way, instead of writing, “Signs are things that show people that God has power...,” some languages will prefer to say, “God uses things to show people that he has power....”

What did the angels mean when spoke about peace on earth?

[2:14]

The angels either promised or wished that God would give peace to certain people on earth. They did not speak, as many believe, of God giving general peace to everyone on earth. Here, “peace” meant complete well-being. It means more than just not worrying, or just not fighting with other people.

See: Luke 7:50; 8:48

Did the angels say “among people with whom God is pleased” or “among people who please God”?

[2:14]

The oldest Greek copies disagreed about whether the angels said “among people whom God ‘favors’”(εὐδοκία/g2017) or “among people who please God”. The difference of meaning is whether God choose people because of his “favor”, or whether he gave peace to people who had “favor” for God, that is, who loved God.

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

2:21-40

Why did the parents of Jesus take him to the temple in Jerusalem?

[2:22]

Mary and Joseph were careful to obey the Law of Moses (see: Luke 2:22,23,24,27,39). Because Bethlehem was near the temple in Jerusalem, they were able to take Jesus to the temple. There, they asked God to bless Jesus.

See: Temple

See Map: Jerusalem; Bethlehem

How was Jesus’ family poor?

[2:24]

Some scholars believe that Mary and Joseph were poor because they brought two small birds to sacrifice for her. This was for them to obey the law of Moses. The normal sacrifice was a lamb, but it could be two small birds if the family was poor.

Some scholars believe that Mary and Joseph made this trip to the temple before the “learned men”(μάγος/g3097) visited Jesus. Mary and Joseph would have been able to buy a lamb after the “learned men” brought Jesus valuable gifts (see: Matthew 2:11).

See: Leviticus 12:8

Who was Simeon?

[2:25]

Luke wrote nothing about Simeon except that he honored God and obeyed him. He was waiting for the “helper”(παράκλησις/g3874) of Israel. That is, he was waiting for God to help Israel. Also the Holy Spirit was “on him”. That is, was with him. This was how Simeon was able to speak about what Jesus would do in the future.

What were the “helper” of Israel and the “deliverer” of Jerusalem?

[2:25]

The “helper”(παράκλησις/g3874) of Israel and the “deliverer”(λύτρωσις/g3085) of Jerusalem are both in this passage (see: Luke 2:25,38). They were both things that Simeon, Anna, and others were “waiting”(προσδέχομαι/g4327) for God to make happen. Some scholars believe that they were waiting for God to free Israel from the Romans, who ruled over it. Others believe that they were waiting for the kingdom of God, that is, for God to begin to rule in Israel.

Simeon, Anna, and others like them were probably waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue them from their suffering. Some scholars say that when Jews talked about the “helper” of Israel, they were talking about the Messiah, the person they were expecting to come.

See: Redeem (Redemption); Kingdom of God

Why was the Holy Spirit was upon Simeon?

[2:25]

The Holy Spirit was “upon”(ἐπί/g1909) Simeon. Because of this, Simeon honored God (see: Luke 2:25). Also, the Holy Spirit told Simeon that he would see the Messiah (see: Luke 2:26). The Holy Spirit guided Simeon’s life until he went to the temple at the right time to see the Messiah (see: Luke 2:27). Finally, the Holy Spirit made Simeon able to recognize the Messiah and to prophesy about him.

See: Holy Spirit;Filling of the Holy Spirit

What did Simeon believe about Jesus?

[2:26]

Simeon believed that Jesus is the Messiah God sent (see: Luke 2:26). He also believed that Jesus would “save”(σωτήριος/g4992) the people of Israel (see: Luke 2:30). Simeon also called Jesus the “light”(φῶς/g5457) for the Gentiles. This metaphor meant that Jesus would enable Gentiles to also know God. Simeon also believed that Jesus would bring “glory”(δόξα/g1391) to Israel (see: Luke 2:32). Some scholars say all the people in the world will honor Israel because of Jesus. Other scholars say Jesus is the Israelite whom all people in the world will honor in the future (see: Isaiah 49:5). God also honored Israel by planning to save people everywhere through Jesus, an Israelite man.

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Metaphor; Light and Darkness (Metaphor)

Why were Joseph and Mary amazed at what Simeon said about Jesus?

[2:33]

Jesus’ parents were amazed at what Simeon said about Jesus (see: 2:33). Most Jews did not believe that Gentiles could live together with God forever. Mary probably did not expect Simeon to praise God because of her child.

How did Simeon say to Mary that Jesus will be very great?

[2:34]

Simeon said that Jesus was “appointed”(κεῖμαι/g2749) to do a certain task. He meant that God had sent Jesus in order to cause many in Israel to “rise” and many others to “fall.” That is, God would bless many Israelites through Jesus, and would condemn many others, those who would reject Jesus. Some scholars also believe that “rise” represents living with God forever, and that “fall” represents suffering forever away from God.

Simeon also called Jesus a “sign,” that is, someone that God would show to the people. Despite this, many people would speak against him and not accept his message.

See: Luke 11:23

See: Appoint; Heaven; Hell; Sign

How will a sword pierce Mary’s “soul”?

[2:35]

Simeon told Mary that a sword will pierce her “soul”(ψυχῇ/g5590). By saying this, Simeon meant that Mary would become very sad. Many scholars believe that it was over the death of Jesus that Mary would become sad like this. Some scholars believe that she would become sad over the division in Israel between those who would accept her Son and those who would reject him. Other scholars believe that she would become sad over grief Jesus caused when he stayed in the temple (see: Luke 2:49), and when he gave his disciples priority over his own family (see:

Luke 8:21). It is also possible that Simeon spoke about the sword for more than one of these reasons. In any case, Mary would suffer greatly in the years ahead.

See: John 19:25; Luke 12:51-53

How did the birth of John the Baptist compare to Jesus' birth?

There were some ways in which the birth of John the Baptist was born in the same way Jesus was born.

1. The angel Gabriel announced beforehand that each would be born.
2. Both John's mother and Jesus' mother did not expect to become pregnant.
3. Men gave prophecies about each of the babies.
4. Both babies caused people to rejoice.

However, scholars have pointed out several differences.

1. John was born to old and barren parents, but Jesus was born to a virgin.
2. John was a prophet of God, but Jesus is the Son of God.
3. The Holy Spirit filled John while he was in his mother's womb, but Jesus' mother conceived him as the Holy Spirit came on her.
4. Neighbors and relatives rejoiced because of John's birth, but angels rejoiced because of Jesus' birth.
5. John grew and became strong in spirit (see: Luke 1:80), but Jesus also increased in wisdom.
6. John was the greatest human to ever live, but Jesus is more excellent than John.

These differences were how Jesus was greater than John.

How did the Holy Spirit begin to work in a different way after Jesus was born?

[2:38]

Most scholars believe that God stopped sending prophets to Israel about four hundred years before Jesus was born. These four hundred years are called the "inter-testamental years," that is, the years between when the last book of the Old Testament was written and when Jesus was born.

However, since Luke calls Anna a "prophetess" (προφῆτις/g4398), some scholars believe that the Holy Spirit continued to work in the same way in Israel. Still other scholars believe that God began to send prophets again after these four hundred years.

See: Holy Spirit; Prophecy (Prophecy)

2:41-52

Why did Jesus' parents go to Jerusalem every year?

[2:41]

The Law of Moses required Jewish men to go to three festivals in Jerusalem each year (see: Deuteronomy 16:16), but it was often impossible for the poor to go so often, because for many of them, Jerusalem was very far away. Probably many people went only to the Passover festival, as Mary and Joseph did. In doing so, they showed themselves to be people who honored God. At the Passover, they offered sacrifices and celebrated for a week. This festival was to remember how God had brought the Israelites out from Egypt and freed them from being slaves.

See: Leviticus 23:6

See: Passover

See Map: Jerusalem

When did Jesus' parents take him to the Passover?

[2:41]

Some scholars believe that this was the first time that Jesus' parents took him to Jerusalem for the Passover. Other scholars believe that they took him every year. Either is possible.

How did Jesus become a son of the Law of Moses?

[2:43]

The Jews thought that when boys became twelve years old, they were old enough to know the difference between right and wrong. It was at this age that a Jewish boy began to have to obey the Law of Moses. People then began to call him a "son of the Law".

See: Law of Moses

How did Jesus' parents leave him in Jerusalem?

[2:44]

Jesus and his parents traveled to Jerusalem in a large group of people. Mary and Joseph probably thought that everyone in the group made sure that all the children were with them.

Where did Mary and Joseph find Jesus?

[2:46]

Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple. Jesus was not inside the temple itself. He was in the courtyard of the temple.

See: Temple; Temple Courts

How did Jesus amaze teachers in the temple?

[2:47]

During Passover, many teachers came to the temple. They taught by asking questions and then answering their own questions. At the end of the festival, although most visitors had left Jerusalem, the boy Jesus stayed behind in the temple. Perhaps Jesus asked questions of the teachers because he truly wanted to know various things about the Law of Moses. Perhaps he also asked questions in the same way the teachers did, in order to answer them himself. In any case, he answered questions in a way that amazed the teachers.

See: Temple

Why did Mary ask Jesus a question?

[2:48]

Mary asked Jesus a question because she cared for her son. She was very worried after she and Joseph could not find Jesus for three days. She thought that Jesus had done wrong when he left their group and stayed behind in Jerusalem. However, Jesus did not do anything wrong.

Who was Jesus' Father?

[2:49]

See: Son of God; God the Father

What was “necessary” to happen?

[2:49]

Luke wrote the word “necessary”(δεῖ/g1163) to say God required Jesus to be in his Father’s house, or to be busy with his Father’s affairs. Jesus had no choice other than to honor and obey God. At the age of twelve, Jesus understood that he had to do what his Father wished him to do.

How did Jesus grow in wisdom?

[2:52]

Jesus grew up like other children grow up. Even though he was God, he was also a human being, so he needed to learn just like any other child. Luke seems to want to say that as Jesus grew, he understood better and better how he was going to serve God his Father.

See: Incarnation

Luke 2:1

the world

General Information:

Here the word "world" represents only the part of the world that Caesar August ruled. Alternate translation: "the Empire" or "the Roman world"

This gives background to show why Mary and Joseph have to move at the time of Jesus's birth.

Luke 2:2

Now

Quirinius

This word marks the beginning of a new part of the story.

Quirinius was appointed to be the governor of Syria.

it came about that

Luke 2:3

This phrase is used to show that this is the beginning of an account. If your language has a way of showing the start of an account, you may use that. Some versions do not include this phrase.

everyone went

"everyone started off" or "everyone was going"

his own city

Caesar Augustus

This refers to the cities where people's ancestors lived. People may have lived in a different city. Alternate translation: "the city in which his ancestors lived"

"King Augustus" or "Emperor Augustus." Augustus was the first emperor of the Roman Empire.

sent out a decree ordering

to be registered for the census

This command was probably carried by messengers throughout the empire. Alternate translation: "sent messengers with a decree ordering"

"to have his name written in the register" or "to be included in the official count"

Luke 2:4

that a census be taken of all the people living in the world

General Information:

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that they register all the people living in the world" or "that they count all the people in the world and write down their names"

The UDB rearranges verses 4 and 5 into a verse bridge in order to make it easier to shorten the sentences.

Joseph also

This introduces Joseph as a new participant in the story.

to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem

The phrase "the city of David" was a name for Bethlehem that tells why Bethlehem was important. Although it was a small town, King David was born there, and there was a prophecy that the Messiah would be born there. Alternate translation: "to Bethlehem, the city of King David" or "to Bethlehem, the town where King David was born"

because he was of the house and family line of David

"because Joseph was a descendant of David"

Luke 2:5

to register

This means to report to the officials there so they could include him in the count. Use a term for an official government count if possible.

along with Mary

Mary traveled with Joseph from Nazareth. It is likely that women were also taxed, so Mary would have needed to travel and be registered as well.

who was engaged to him

"his fiancée" or "who was promised to him." An engaged couple was considered legally married, but there would not have been physical intimacy between them.

Luke 2:6

General Information:

The UDB rearranges verses 6 and 7 into a verse bridge in order to keep together the details about the place they stayed.

Now it came about

This phrase marks the beginning of the next event in the story.

while they were there

"while Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem"

the time came for her to deliver her baby

"it was time to give birth to her baby"

Luke 2:7

wrapped him in long strips of cloth

In some cultures mothers comfort their babies by wrapping them tightly in cloth or a blanket. Alternate translation: "wrapped cloths firmly around him" or "wrapped him tightly in a blanket"

laid him in a manger

This was some kind of box or frame that people put hay or other food in for animals to eat. It was most likely clean and may have had something soft and dry like hay in it as a cushion for the baby. Animals were often kept near the home to keep them secure and to feed them easily. Mary and Joseph stayed in a room that was used for animals.

there was no room for them in the inn

"there was no space for them to stay in the guest room." This was probably because so many people went to Bethlehem to register. Luke adds this as background information.

Luke 2:8

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 2:9

An angel of the Lord

"An angel from the Lord" or "An angel who served the Lord"

appeared to them

"came to the shepherds"

the glory of the Lord

The source of the bright light was the glory of the Lord, which appeared at the same time as the angel.

Luke 2:10

Do not be afraid

"Stop being afraid"

that will bring great joy to all the people

"that will make all the people very happy"

all the people

Some understand this to refer to the Jewish people.
Others understand it to refer to all people.

Luke 2:11

the city of David

This refers to Bethlehem.

Luke 2:12

This is the sign that will be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
"God will give you this sign" or "You will see this sign
from God"

the sign

"the proof." This could either be a sign to prove that
what the angel was saying was true, or it could be a
sign that would help the shepherds recognize the baby.

wrapped in strips of cloth

This was the normal way that mothers protected and
cared for their babies in that culture. See how you
translated this in [Luke 2:7]

lying in a manger

This was some kind of box or frame that people put hay
or other food in for animals to eat. See how you
translated this in Luke 2:7.

Luke 2:13

a great multitude from heaven

These words could refer to a literal army of angels, or it
could be a metaphor for an organized group of angels.
Alternate translation: "a large group of angels from
heaven"

praising God

"giving praise to God"

Luke 2:14

Glory to God in the highest

Possible meanings are 1) "Give honor to God in the
highest place" or 2) "Give the highest honor to God."

may there be peace on earth among people with whom he is
pleased

"may those people on earth with whom God is pleased
have peace"

Luke 2:15

It came about

This phrase is used to mark a shift in the story to what
the shepherds did after the angels left.

from them

"from the shepherds"

to each other

"to one another"

Let us ... to us

Since the shepherds were speaking to one another,
languages that have inclusive forms for "we" and "us"
should use the inclusive form here.

Let us

"We should"

this thing that has happened

This refers to the birth of the baby, and not to the
appearance of the angels.

Luke 2:16

lying in a manger

A manger is a box or frame that people put hay or
other food in for animals to eat. See how you translated
this in Luke 2:7.

Luke 2:17

what had been said to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the angels had told the shepherds"

this child

"the baby"

Luke 2:18

what was spoken to them by the shepherds

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the shepherds told them"

Luke 2:19

treasuring them in her heart

A person who thinks is something is very valuable or precious is "treasuring" it. Mary considered the things she was told about her son to be very precious. Alternate translation: "carefully remembering them" or "joyfully remembering them"

Luke 2:20

shepherds returned

"shepherds went back to the sheep"

glorifying and praising God

These are very similar and emphasize how excited they were about what God had done. Alternate translation: "talking about and praising God's greatness"

Luke 2:21

General Information:

The laws God gave the Jewish believers told them when to circumcise a boy baby and what sacrifice the parents had to bring.

When it was the end of the eighth day

This phrase shows the passing of time before this new event.

the end of the eighth day

"the end of the eighth day of his life." The day he was born was counted as the first day.

he was named

Joseph and Mary gave him his name.

the name he had been given by the angel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the name the angel had called him"

Luke 2:22

When the required number ... had passed

This shows the passing of time before this new event.

the required number of days

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the number of days that God required"

for their purification

"for them to become ceremonially clean." You can also state God's role. Alternate translation: "for God to consider them clean again"

they brought him up to the temple

"Mary and Joseph brought the baby up to the temple"

to present him to the Lord

"to bring him to the Lord" or "to bring him into the Lord's presence." This was a ceremony acknowledging God's claim on the firstborn children who were male.

Luke 2:23

As it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As Moses wrote" or "They did this because Moses wrote"

Every male who opens the womb

This is an idiom meaning the first male born into a family. This referred to both animals and people. Alternate translation: "The first male that a mother gives birth to" or "Every firstborn male"

Luke 2:24

what was said in the law of the Lord

"that which the law of the Lord also says." This is a different place in the law. It refers to all males, whether firstborn or not.

Luke 2:25

Behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

was righteous and devout

These abstract terms can be expressed as actions. Alternate translation: "did what was right and feared God" or "obeyed God's laws and feared God"

consolation of Israel

The word "Israel" is a metonym for the people of Israel. To "console" someone is to give them comfort, or "consolation." The words "consolation of Israel" are a metonym for the Christ or Messiah who would comfort or bring consolation to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the one who would comfort the people of Israel"

the Holy Spirit was upon him

"the Holy Spirit was with him." God was with him in a special way and gave him wisdom and direction in his life.

Luke 2:26

It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit had shown him" or "The Holy Spirit had told him"

he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ

"he would see the Lord's Messiah before he died"

Luke 2:27

Led by the Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As the Holy Spirit directed him"

came

Some languages may say "went."

into the temple

"into the temple courtyard." Only priests could enter the temple building.

the parents

"Jesus's parents"

the custom of the law

"the custom of the law of God"

Luke 2:28

he took him into his arms

"Simeon took the infant Jesus into his arms" or "Simeon held Jesus in his arms"

Luke 2:29

Now let your servant depart in peace

"I am your servant; let me depart in peace." Simeon was referring to himself.

depart

This is a euphemism meaning "die"

according to your word

"Word" here is a metonym for "promise." Alternate translation: "as you have promised"

Luke 2:30

my eyes have seen

This expression means, "I have personally seen" or "I, myself, have seen"

your salvation

This expression refers to the person who would bring salvation—the infant Jesus—whom Simeon was holding. Alternate translation: "the savior whom you sent" or "the one whom you sent to save"

Luke 2:31

which you

Depending on how you translate the previous phrase, this may need to be changed to "whom you."

have prepared

"have planned" or "caused to happen"

Luke 2:32

A light for revelation to the Gentiles

This metaphor means that the child will help people to understand God's will. The Gentiles understanding God's will is spoken of as if they were people using physical light to see a solid object. You may need to make explicit what it is that the Gentiles will see. Alternate translation: "This child will enable the Gentiles to understand God's will as light allows people to see clearly"

for revelation

It may be necessary to state what is to be revealed. Alternate translation: "that will reveal God's truth"

glory to your people Israel

"he will be the reason that glory will come to your people Israel"

Luke 2:33

what was said about him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that Simeon said about him"

Luke 2:34

said to Mary his mother

"said to the child's mother, Mary." Make sure it does not sound like Mary is the mother of Simeon.

Behold

Simeon used this expression to tell Mary that what he is about to say is extremely important to her.

this child is appointed for the downfall and rising up of many people in Israel

The words "downfall" and "rising up" express turning away from God and drawing closer to God. Alternate translation: "this child will cause many people in Israel to fall away from God or to rise closer to God"

Luke 2:35

a sword will pierce your own soul

This metaphor describes the deep sadness that Mary would feel. Alternate translation: "your sadness will be painful as though a sword pierced your soul"

the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed

Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's inner beings. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he may reveal the thoughts of many people" or "he may reveal what many people secretly think"

Luke 2:36

A prophetess named Anna was there

This introduces a new participant into the story.

Phanuel

This is a man's name.

She was advanced in her days

This is a euphemism that says that she was very old. See how you translated similar words in [Luk 2:7]

seven years

"7 years"

after her virginity

"after she married him"

Luke 2:37

a widow for eighty-four years

Possible meanings are 1) she had been a widow for 84 years or 2) she was a widow and was now 84 years old.

never left the temple

This is probably an exaggeration meaning that she spent so much time in the temple that it seemed as though she never left it. Alternate translation: "was always at the temple" or "was often at the temple"

with fastings and prayers

"by abstaining from food on many occasions and by offering many prayers"

Luke 2:38

came near to them

"approached them" or "went to Mary and Joseph"

the redemption of Jerusalem

Here the word "redemption" is used to refer to the person who would do it. Alternate translation: "the one who would redeem Jerusalem" or "the person who would bring God's blessings and favor back to Jerusalem"

Luke 2:39

Connecting Statement:

Mary, Joseph, and Jesus leave the town of Bethlehem and return to the city of Nazareth for his childhood.

they were required to do according to the law of the Lord

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the law of the Lord required them to do"

their own town of Nazareth

This phrase means they lived in Nazareth. Make sure it does not sound like they owned the town. Alternate translation: "the town of Nazareth, where they lived"

Luke 2:40

full of wisdom

"becoming wiser" or "learning what was wise"

the grace of God was upon him

"God blessed him" or "God was with him in a special way"

Luke 2:41

His parents went ... Festival of the Passover

This is background information.

His parents

"Jesus's parents"

Luke 2:42

they again went up

Jerusalem was higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem.

at the customary time

"at the normal time" or "as they did every year"

the festival

The Festival of the Passover, which involved eating a ceremonial meal.

Luke 2:43

After they had stayed the full number of days for the feast

"When the entire time for celebrating the feast was over" or "After celebrating the feast for the required number of days"

Luke 2:44

They assumed

"They thought"

they traveled a day's journey

"they traveled one day" or "they went as far as people walk in one day"

Luke 2:45

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 2:46

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the temple

This refers to the courtyard around the temple. Only the priests were allowed in the temple. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard" or "at the temple"

in the middle of

This does not mean the exact center. Rather, it means "among" or "together with" or "surrounded by."

the teachers

"the religious teachers" or "those who taught people about God"

Luke 2:47

All who heard him were amazed

They could not understand how a twelve-year-old boy with no religious education could answer so well.

at his understanding

"at how much he understood" or "that he understood so much about God"

his answers

"at how well he answered them" or "that he answered their questions so well"

Luke 2:48

When they saw him

"When Mary and Joseph found Jesus"

why have you treated us this way?

This was an indirect rebuke because he had not gone with them on the way back home. This caused them to worry about him. Alternate translation: "you should not have done this to us!"

Look

This word is often used to show the beginning of a new or important event. It also can be used to show where the action begins. If your language has a phrase that is used in this way, consider whether it would be natural to use it here.

Luke 2:49

Why were you searching for me?

Jesus uses two questions to mildly rebuke his parents, and to begin to tell them that he had a purpose from his heavenly Father that they did not understand. Alternate translation: "You did not need to be concerned about me."

Did you not know ... business?

Jesus uses this second question to try to say that his parents should have known about the purpose for which his Father sent him. Alternate translation: "You should have known ... business."

about my Father's business

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus meant these words literally, to indicate that he was doing the work that his Father had given him, or 2) these words are an idiom that indicate where Jesus was, "in my Father's house." Since the next verse says that his parents did not understand what he was telling them, it would be best not to explain it more.

my Father's business

At age 12, Jesus, the Son of God, understood that God was his real Father

Luke 2:50

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 2:51

he went back home with them

"Jesus went back home with Mary and Joseph"

was obedient to them

"obeyed them" or "was always obeying them"

treasured all these things in her heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "carefully remembered all these things"

Luke 2:52

grow in wisdom and stature

"become wiser and stronger." These refer to mental and physical growth.

increased in favor with God and people

This refers to spiritual and social growth. These could be stated separately. Alternate translation: "God blessed him more and more, and people liked him more and more"

Luke 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 3:4-6, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

John's instructions to the soldiers and tax collectors in this chapter are not complicated. They are things that should have been obvious to them. He instructed them to live justly. (See: justice and [Luke 3:12-15](#))

Genealogy

A genealogy is a list which records a person's ancestors or descendants. Such lists were very important in determining who had the right to be king, because the king's authority was usually passed down or inherited from his father. It was also common for other important people to have a recorded genealogy.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Prophecy often involves the use of metaphors to express its meaning. Spiritual discernment is needed for proper interpretation of the prophecy. The prophecy of Isaiah is an extended metaphor describing the ministry of John the Baptist

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"(Herod) had John locked up in prison"

This event can cause confusion because the author says John was imprisoned and then says he was baptizing Jesus. The author probably uses this phrase in anticipation of Herod's imprisonment of John. This would mean that this statement is still in the future at the time of the narrative.

Links:

- [Luke 3:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 3

3:1-20

Who was Tiberius Caesar?

[3:1]

Tiberius Caesar ruled the entire Roman Empire from A.D. 14 to 37. The fifteenth year of his reign was A.D. 27.

See: Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar)

Who was Pontius Pilate?

[3:1]

Pontius Pilate was a “leader”(ἡγεμονεύω/g2230) in the Roman Empire. He ruled over Judea and the area near Judea from A.D. 26 to 36.

See Map: Judea

Who was Herod?

[3:1]

There are several men named Herod in the Bible. The man in this verse is Herod Antipas, one of the sons of King Herod the Great. He ruled a “fourth”(τετραρχέω/g5075) of the area that his father ruled. Herod Antipas ruled over Galilee from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39.

See: King Herod

Who was Philip?

[3:1]

Philip was another one of the sons of Herod the Great. He ruled a “fourth”(τετραρχέω/g5075) of the area that his father ruled. This included the regions of Iturea and Trachonitis, which were located east of Caesarea Philippi, and south of Damascus.

See Map: Israel

Who was Lysanias?

[3:1]

The only thing that is known about Lysanias is that Luke said he was ruler of Abilene at this time. Abilene was place north of Mt. Hermon. Perhaps he was another son of Herod the Great. He ruled a “fourth”(τετραρχέω/g5075) of the area that his father ruled.

See: King Herod

See Map: Israel

Why did Luke give the names of Roman and Jewish rulers at the time of John the Baptist?

[3:1]

Luke gave the names of Roman and Jewish rulers at the time of John because John was a prophet who served God. In the Old Testament, when someone wrote about a prophet, they often said what kings were ruling when the prophets served God (see: Isaiah 1:1; Zechariah 1:1). Although Luke did not call John a prophet in this scripture (see: Luke 3:2), Zechariah and Jesus called John a prophet (see: Luke 1:76; 7:26). This was because God told him what to say to people.

Also, Luke gave the names of the rulers because his readers knew them. They knew that these rulers had did many evil things, and that the prophets suffered because of them. When the people of Israel read about these

things, perhaps they thought about how kings in the past made the prophets suffer and die (see: Hebrews 11:32-40). John suffered and died because of evil rulers in the same way other prophets suffered and died.

See: Prophet

Advice to translators: Use the expression for “clean” or “ritually pure” that you use in your version of the gospels.

Why was John’s baptism different than other kinds of baptism?

[3:3]

See: Baptize (Baptism); Repent (Repentance); Messiah (Christ); Clean and Unclean

See Map: Jordan

How did Luke write about repenting?

[3:3]

“Repentance”(μετάνοια/g3341) is a turning, in the same way when someone turns from facing one way to facing another way. Some scholars think that it means to stop dishonoring God and to turn to follow a path that honors him. Other scholars think it means for a person to change what he thinks about God. John used the word “repentance” because he wanted the people to get ready for the messiah to come to them.

See: Isaiah 40:3-5

See: Repent (Repentance)

How did God forgive a Jew’s sins?

[3:3]

God will only forgive a person for sinning if that person believes in him. Before Jesus came to Earth, the Jews showed God that they believed in him by obeying the Law of Moses. When John the Baptist preached, some Jews showed that they trusted God by “repenting”(μετάνοια/g3341) and asking John to baptize them. However, it was not because of the way that they acted that God forgave them. It was because they trusted in him.

See: Baptize (Baptism); Repent (Repentance)

How did John serve God and Jesus?

[3:4]

John served God by helping the Jewish people to know that Jesus was the messiah and to believe in Jesus. Luke wrote about the way John served Jesus as if John was announcing that a king was coming (see: Luke 3:5). When a king visited, the people often repaired the road and made it easy to travel on. John explained to the people that the right way to receive Jesus was to repent and trust in God to save them.

See: Repent (Repentance); Messiah (Christ)

Why did Luke write all flesh will see God’s salvation?

[3:6]

Luke wrote all flesh will see God’s salvation. Luke was repeating Isaiah 40:5. The Greek translation of the Old Testament used the word “salvation” in Isaiah 40:5. Luke may have also thinking about Isaiah 45:8,17; 46:13 and other scriptures in Isaiah. Isaiah wrote about God’s salvation many times.

See: Luke 2:30; Isaiah 12:2-3; 17:10; 25:9; 52:7; 59:17

What was flesh?

[3:6]

Flesh was “people”(σάρξ/g4561). That is, flesh was a metaphor to say that all people will know about the salvation God brings.

Why did John call the Jews poisonous snakes?

[3:7]

John called the Jews children of poisonous snakes because they did evil things. The Jews thought they were Abraham’s children and friends with God. While Abraham was their ancestor, they did not do the things that Abraham did. Therefore, they were not friends with God. Isaiah said that God’s enemies among the Israelites were poisonous snakes (see: Isaiah 59:5).

See: Luke 19:40

See: Wrath; Fire

Advice to translators: “Imply” means to want to say something without saying it clearly.

Why did John speak of the wrath to come?

[3:7]

John implied that God will be angry with the people who do not “repent”(μετάνοια/g3341). He also implied that he was talking about the “Day of the Lord,” when God will judge the whole world.

See: Isaiah 13:9; Zephaniah 2:2

See: Repent (Repentance); Day of the Lord; Day of Judgment

How did John speak about fruit?

[3:8]

John spoke about people doing good things as if they were trees producing fruit. That is, when people “repented”(μετάνοια/g3341), they made fruit. John said that if there was no fruit, then they did not truly “repent”.

If Jews did not do good things, then John said they did not live in the same way Abraham lived. If Jews did good things, then John said they were “true” descendants of Abraham. That is, they lived in the way that Abraham lived. However, the Jews thought they were “true” descendants of Abraham even when they did evil things. John said they were wrong to think that. He said they needed to do good things.

John said when trees did not make fruit, they were useless. Therefore, men cut them down and burned them. In the Bible, when God punishes sinners it is often spoken about as if they were being burned (see: Matthew 13:49-50; Revelation 21:8). If the Jews did not “repent”, God would punish them. They only had a short period of time in which to repent.

Finally, when people “repented,” they changed how they treated other people. They were to share with those who lacked what they needed every day. They were also to treat all people the same way. John wanted people to think about the things they did.

See: Repent (Repentance); Fruit (Metaphor)

What did the Jews think about tax collectors?

[3:12]

The Jews hated tax collectors for many reasons.

1. Tax collectors collected taxes for the Roman government. The Jews hated the Roman government because they were Gentiles and they treated the Jews badly.
2. Tax collectors often took more money than they needed to take.
3. The Jews believed they were giving money to people who were evil and reject God.

Because of this, the Jews considered Jewish tax collectors to be traitors to their own people so that they could gain money for themselves.

See: Tax (Tax Collector, Toll)

Advice to translators: A sandal is a type of shoe that does not completely surround the foot. When someone wears a sandal, you can see his toes.

Why was John unworthy to untie Jesus' sandals?

[3:16]

Except for Jesus, John the Baptist honored God more than anyone else who ever lived (see: Luke 7:28). He was humble, and he knew that Jesus was far stronger than himself. He knew Jesus is God. Because of this, John did not feel that he was good enough to approach Jesus. For the Jews, God could not be approached because he is perfectly "holy" (ἅγιος/g0040). That is, God is perfect and completely different from men.

In ancient Israel, people's feet got dirty from the dusty ground they walked on. Only servants would touch someone's feet; they did so in order to wash them for them. People wore sandals on their feet, so their sandals also became dirty. John thought that Jesus was so much greater than himself, that he did not deserve even to help him remove his sandals.

See: Holy (Holiness, Set Apart)

Why did people baptize other people?

[3:16]

See: Baptize (Baptism)

How did Jesus baptize in the Holy Spirit and in fire?

[3:16]

Some scholars say Jesus baptized in the Holy Spirit and in fire when he punished people who did evil things (see: Luke 3:9,17). Other scholars say Jesus baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire by filling people with the Holy Spirit so they could serve God (see: Acts 1:5; 2:3-4).

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit

Advice to translators: This entry is mainly for people in cultures that do not know or use threshing floors.

What was a threshing floor?

[3:17]

A threshing floor was a bare place on the ground where people separated grain from its stalk. In some places, people made threshing floors inside large buildings. At the time of John the Baptist, most threshing floors were outside.

When people separated the grain from its stalk, they often beat the stalks or they had large animals pull heavy loads across the stalks. Then, the people threw the stalks into the air, where the wind blew away the useless parts. The grain, which was heavier, fell back to the ground. Then the people put the grain into bags.

When John said that the messiah would separate grain, he meant that the messiah would separate the people who believed in him from those who rejected him. The writers of the Bible often spoke of God punishing the wicked people as if he were making a fire burn forever (see: Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10,15).

See: Metaphor; Hell; Fire; Punish (Punishment)

What was the good news John announced?

[3:18]

When Luke said that John announced the “good news” or “gospel”(εὐαγγέλιζω/g2097) to the Jews, he meant that John told everyone to repent of their sins. They must also be “baptized”(βαπτίζω/g0907) to get ready for the messiah.

When Jesus began to teach the people, he told them more things about this good news. He told people that the “kingdom of God” was coming. He also spoke more and more clearly about what he would do. He would die on a cross but he would rise again. This was what he must do as the “Lamb of God.” However, it seems that he only said this to the twelve disciples. It does not seem that he ever told the people in general about these things.

See: Gospel; Repent (Repentance); Messiah (Christ); Kingdom of God; Lamb of God

3:21-22

Why was Jesus praying when he was baptized?

[3:21]

Jesus was praying when he was baptized because he wanted the Holy Spirit to help him serve God. Luke often wrote about someone praying at the same time when he wrote about the Holy Spirit. He wrote about how Jesus taught his disciples how to pray to God. Later, God the Father gave the Holy Spirit to them (see: Luke 11:13). God filled Christians with the Holy Spirit when they prayed (see: Acts 4:31).

See: Pray (Prayer); Filling of the Holy Spirit

Advice to translators: For “the Holy Spirit filled Christians,” consider using the expression in your version of Acts 2:4.

Why was the Holy Spirit in bodily form of a dove?

[3:22]

In the Bible, a dove represented many different things. Only Luke wrote the Holy Spirit was in the “bodily”(σωματικός/g4984) “form”(εἶδος/g1491) of a dove.” Luke wrote that because he noted well the service of the Holy Spirit at the start of his Gospel (see: Luke 1:15,35,41,67; 2:25-27).

See: Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Isaiah 42:1

Advice to translators: For “the bodily form of a dove,” use the expression in your Bible version.

Why did God call Jesus his Son?

[3:22]

God called Jesus his Son because God was announcing that Jesus was the messiah whom he had promised to send. In Psalms 2:7, God said the person he made king was his “Son”. God also loves Jesus and is pleased with him. God spoke from heaven when Jesus was baptized. The people heard him, but they did not see him.

See: Messiah (Christ); Son of God

Why was Jesus baptized?

[3:22]

John “baptized”(βαπτίζω/g0907) people as part of their “repenting”(μετανοέω/g3340) from their sins. He did this so that they would be able to welcome the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He also “baptized” Jesus (see: Mark 1:9), because Jesus asked him to do so, even though Jesus had never sinned. He never needed to “repent” of having sinned. Most scholars think that Jesus wanted to be “baptized” in order to prepare him to be a sacrifice to God. He would die in the same way a sacrifice was done to allow people to be at peace with God.

See: 2 Corinthians 5:21

See: Repent (Repentance); Messiah (Christ); Atonement (Atonement)

3:23-38

Why did Luke write how old Jesus was when he began to serve the people?

[3:23]

Luke wrote that Jesus was about thirty years old when he began to serve the people. The Jews thought that this was when a man should begin doing the work that he would do for the rest of his life. Joseph was thirty years old when he became a leader in Egypt (see: Genesis 41:46). David was thirty when he began to rule over Israel (see: 2 Samuel 5:4). The Levites began serving in the tent of meeting at the age of thirty (see: Numbers 4:3).

See: Tent of Meeting

Advice to translators: A genealogy is a list of someone’s ancestors or descendants.

How was Luke’s genealogy of Jesus different from Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus?

[3:23]

Luke’s genealogy of Jesus is different from Matthew’s genealogy in several ways.

1. Matthew wrote the genealogy first in his gospel. However, Luke wrote the genealogy after he wrote about how Jesus was “baptized”(βαπτίζω/g0907). However, he wrote about it before he wrote about how Satan tried to make Jesus sin.
2. Matthew started Jesus’ genealogy with Abraham. He wrote Jesus’ descendants until Joseph, who people thought was the father of Jesus. However, Luke started Jesus’ genealogy with Joseph. He wrote Jesus’ ancestors all the way back to Adam, the first man.
3. Matthew wrote about David’s son Solomon in his genealogy. However, Luke wrote about David’s son Nathan.
4. Matthew wrote about women in his genealogy. However, Luke did not write about any women.
5. Matthew wrote about three groups of fourteen people. This was forty-two people. Luke wrote about eleven groups of seven people. This was seventy-seven people.
6. The people between Jesus to David are different in Matthew and Luke.

See: Gospel;Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Genealogy; Son of David

Advice to translators: A genealogy is a list of someone’s ancestors or descendants.

Why was Luke's genealogy of Jesus different from Matthew's genealogy of Jesus?

[3:23]

Scholars give different reasons why Luke's genealogy of Jesus was different from Matthew's genealogy.

- 1. Matthew and Luke thought different kinds of people would read their gospels. Matthew wrote for Jewish Christians and Luke wrote for Gentile Christians.
- 2. Luke wrote Jesus' ancestors from his mother Mary but Matthew wrote Jesus' ancestors from Joseph.
- 3. Luke wrote about Nathan instead of Solomon because of prophecies that David would stop having descendants (see: Jeremiah 22:28-30; 36:30-31).
- 4. Luke wanted to imply that Jesus was also a prophet.

See: Gospel; Prophet

Advice to translators: A genealogy is a list of someone's ancestors or descendants.

Why did Luke write a genealogy of Jesus?

[3:23]

Luke's genealogy named the ancestors of Jesus back to Adam, the first man, and then back to God. Luke wanted people to know that Jesus was related to all mankind, not only to the Jews. Therefore, Luke also wanted his readers to know that Jesus came to bring the gospel to all mankind.

Some scholars think Luke wanted people to know Jesus was different than Adam (see: Romans 5:12-21). When Adam sinned, the whole world rebelled against God and began to die. However, Jesus came so that people could live forever with God.

See: Gospel

Luke 3:1

General Information:

Verses 1-3 give background information to tell what is happening when Jesus's cousin John begins his ministry.

Connecting Statement:

As the prophet Isaiah had foretold, John begins to preach good news to the people.

Philip ... Lysanias

These are the names of men.

Iturea and Trachonitis ... Abilene

These are names of territories.

Luke 3:2

during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas

"while Annas and Caiaphas were serving together as the high priest." Annas was the high priest, and the Jews continued to recognize him as such even after the Romans appointed his son-in-law, Caiaphas, to replace him as high priest.

the word of God came

The writer speaks of God's message as though it were a person who moved toward those who heard it. Alternate translation: "God spoke his message"

Luke 3:3

preaching a baptism of repentance

The terms "baptism" and "repentance" could be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "and he preached that people should be baptized to show that they were repenting"

for the forgiveness of sins

They would repent so that God would forgive their sins. The term "forgiveness" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "so that their sins would be forgiven" or "so that God would forgive their sins"

Luke 3:4

General Information:

The author, Luke, quotes a passage from Isaiah the prophet concerning John the Baptist.

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

These words introduce a quotation from the prophet Isaiah. They can be stated in active form, and the missing words can be supplied. Alternate translation: "This happened as Isaiah the prophet had written in the book that contains his words:" or "John fulfilled the message that the prophet Isaiah had written in his book:"

A voice of one crying out in the wilderness

This can be expressed as a sentence. Alternate translation: "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness is heard" or "They hear the sound of someone crying out in the wilderness"

Make ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight

The second command explains or adds more detail to the first.

Make ready the way of the Lord

"Get the road ready for the Lord." Doing this represents preparing to hear the Lord's message when he comes. Alternate translation: "Prepare yourselves for the Lord to come" or "Be ready for the Lord when he comes"

the way

"the path" or "the road"

Luke 3:5

Every valley will be filled ... every mountain and hill will be made low

When people prepare the road for an important person who is coming, they cut down the high places and fill in

the low places so that the road will be level. This is part of the metaphor started in the previous verse.

Every valley will be filled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They will fill in every low place in the road"

every mountain and hill will be made low

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will level every mountain and hill" or "they will remove every high place in the road"

Luke 3:6

see the salvation of God

This can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "learn how God saves people from sin"

Luke 3:7

to be baptized by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for John to baptize them"

You offspring of vipers

This is a metaphor. Here "offspring of" means "having the characteristic of." Vipers are poisonous snakes that are dangerous and represent evil. Alternate translation: "You evil poisonous snakes" or "You are evil, like poisonous snakes"

Who warned you ... coming?

He was not really expecting them to answer. John was rebuking the people because they were asking him to baptize them so that God would not punish them, but they did not want to stop sinning. Alternate translation: "You cannot flee from God's wrath like this!" or "You cannot escape from God's wrath just by being baptized!"

from the wrath that is coming

The word "wrath" is used here to refer to God's punishment because his wrath precedes it. Alternate translation: "from the punishment that God is sending" or "from God's wrath on which he is about to act"

Luke 3:8

produce fruits that are worthy of repentance

In this metaphor, a person's behavior is compared to fruit. Just as a plant is expected to produce fruit that is appropriate for that kind of plant, a person who says that he has repented is expected to live righteously. Alternate translation: "produce the kind of fruit that shows that you have repented" or "do the good things that show that you have turned away from your sin"

to say within yourselves

"saying to yourselves" or "thinking"

We have Abraham for our father

"Abraham is our ancestor" or "We are Abraham's descendants." If it is unclear why they would say this, you may also add the implied information: "so God will not punish us."

raise up children for Abraham

"create children for Abraham"

from these stones

John was probably referring to the actual stones along the Jordan River.

Luke 3:9

the ax is set against the root of the trees

The ax that is in position so it can cut the roots of a tree is a metaphor for the punishment that is about to begin. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is like the man who has placed his ax against the root of the trees"

every tree ... is chopped down and thrown into the fire

"fire" here is a metaphor for punishment. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he chops down every tree ... and throws it into the fire"

Luke 3:10

asking him, saying

"asking him and said" or "asking John"

Luke 3:11

Connecting Statement:

John begins to respond to questions that people in the crowd ask him.

answered and said to them

"answered them, saying" or "answered them" or "said"

do the same

This refers back to giving to someone what he needs. Alternate translation: "give food to someone who does not have any" or "share extra food just as you shared the extra tunic"

Luke 3:12

to be baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for John to baptize them"

Luke 3:13

Do not collect more money

"Do not ask for more money" or "Do not demand more money." Tax collectors had been collecting more money than they should have been collecting. John tells them to stop doing that.

than you have been ordered to collect

This is passive to show that the tax collector's authority comes from Rome. Alternate translation: "than what the Romans have authorized you to take"

Luke 3:14

What about us? What must we do?

"How about us soldiers, what must we do?" John is not included in the words "us" and "we." The soldiers have implied that John had told the crowd and the tax collector what they must do and want to know what they as soldiers are to do.

do not accuse anyone falsely

It seems that the soldiers were making false charges against people in order to get money. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "in the same way, do not

accuse anyone falsely in order to get money from them"
or "do not say that an innocent person has done
something illegal"

Be content with your wages

"Be satisfied with your pay"

Luke 3:15

as the people

"because the people." This refers to the same people
who came to John.

everyone was wondering in their hearts concerning John, whether
he might be the Christ.

"everyone was unsure what to think about John; they
asked themselves, 'Could he be the Christ?'" or "no one
was sure what to think about John because they were
wondering whether he might be the Christ."

Luke 3:16

John answered by saying to them all

John's answer about a greater person coming clearly
implies that John is not the Christ. It may be helpful to
state this clearly for your audience. Alternate
translation: "John clarified that he was not the Christ by
saying to them all"

I baptize you with water

"I baptize using water" or "I baptize by means of water"

not worthy even to untie the strap of his sandals

"not important enough even to loosen the straps of his
sandals." Untying the straps of sandals was a duty of a
slave. John was saying that the one who would come is
so great that John was not even worthy enough to be
his slave.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire

This metaphor compares literal baptism that brings a
person into contact with water to a spiritual baptism
that brings them into contact with the Holy Spirit and
with fire.

fire

Here the word "fire" may refer to 1) judgment or 2)
purification. It is preferred to leave it as "fire"

Luke 3:17

His winnowing fork is in his hand

"He is holding a winnowing fork because he is ready."
John speaks of the Christ coming to judge people as if
he were a farmer who is ready to separate wheat grain
from chaff. Alternate translation: "He is ready to judge
people like a farmer who is ready"

winnowing fork

This is a tool for tossing wheat into the air to separate
the wheat grain from the chaff. The heavier grain falls
back down and the unwanted chaff is blown away by
the wind. It is similar to a pitchfork.

to thoroughly clear off his threshing floor

The threshing floor was the place where wheat was
stacked in preparation for threshing. To "clear off" the
floor is to finish threshing the grain. Alternate
translation: "to finish threshing his grain"

to gather the wheat

The wheat is the acceptable harvest that is kept and
stored.

will burn up the chaff

The chaff is not useful for anything, so people burn it
up.

Luke 3:18

With many other exhortations

"With many other strong urgings"

Luke 3:19

General Information:

Verses 19 and 20 tell what is going to happen to John
but has not happened at this time.

Herod the tetrarch

Herod was a tetrarch, not a king. He had only limited
rule over the region of Galilee.

When Herod the tetrarch had been reproved

It is implied that John reproved Herod. This can also be translated with an active form. Alternate translation: "When Herod the tetrarch had been reproved by John" or "When John reproved Herod the tetrarch")

for marrying his brother's wife Herodias

"because Herod married Herodias, his own brother's wife." This was evil because Herod's brother was still alive. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "because he married his brother's wife, Herodias, while his brother was still alive"

Luke 3:20

he locked John up in prison

Because Herod was tetrarch, he probably locked John up by ordering his soldiers to lock John up. Alternate translation: "he had his soldiers lock John up in prison" or "he told his soldiers to put John in prison"

Luke 3:21

General Information:

The previous verse says that Herod put John in prison. It might be helpful to make it clear that the account starting in verse 21 happened before John was arrested. The UDB does this by starting verse 21 with "But before John was put in prison."

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins his ministry with his baptism.

Now it came about

This phrase marks the beginning of a new event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

when all the people were baptized

"while John baptized all the people." The phrase "all the people" refers to the people present with John.

Jesus also was baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "John baptized Jesus also"

the heavens opened

"the sky opened" or "the sky became open." This is more than a simple clearing of clouds, but it's not clear what it means. It possibly means that a hole appeared in the sky.

Luke 3:22

the Holy Spirit in bodily form came down on him like a dove

"in physical form the Holy Spirit came down like a dove onto Jesus"

a voice came from heaven

Here "a voice came from heaven" represents people on earth hearing God in heaven speaking. It can be made clear that God spoke to Jesus. Alternate translation: "a voice from heaven said" or "God spoke to Jesus from heaven, saying"

my beloved Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Luke 3:23

General Information:

Luke lists the ancestors of Jesus through the line of his supposed father, Joseph.

When

This word is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Jesus's age and ancestors.

thirty years of age

"30 years old"

He was the son (as it was assumed) of Joseph

"It was thought that he was the son of Joseph" or "People assumed that he was the son of Joseph"

Luke 3:24

the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph

This continues the list that begins with the words "He was the son ... of Joseph, the son of Heli" in verse 24.

Consider how people normally list ancestors in your language. You should use the same wording throughout the whole list. Possible formats are 1) "He was the son ... of Joseph, the son of Heli, who was the son of Matthat, who was the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph" or 2) "He was the son ... of Joseph. Joseph was the son of Heli. Heli was the son of Matthat. Matthat was the son of Levi. Levi was the son of Melchi. Melchi was the son of Jannai. Jannai was the son of Joseph" or 3) "His father ... was Joseph. Joseph's father was Heli. Heli's father was Matthat. Matthat's father was Levi. Levi's father was Melchi. Melchi's father was Jannai. Jannai's father was Joseph"

Luke 3:25

the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos ... Naggai

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:26

the son of Maath ... Joda

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:27

Joda was the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa ... Neri

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that begins in [Luke 3:23]

the son of Salathiel

The name Salathiel may be a different spelling of the name Shealtiel (as some versions have it), but identification is difficult.

Luke 3:28

the son of Melchi ... Er

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:29

the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer ... Levi

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:30

the son of Simeon, the son of Judah ... Eliakim

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:31

the son of Melea ... David

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:32

the son of Jesse ... the son of Nahshon

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:33

the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin ... Judah

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:34

the son of Jacob ... Nahor

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:35

the son of Serug ... Shelah

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:36

the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad ... Lamech

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:37

the son of Methuselah ... Cainan

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:38

Adam, the son of God

the son of Enos ... Adam

"Adam, created by God" or "Adam, who was from God"
or "Adam, the son, we could say, of God"

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that
began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 4:10-11, 18-19, which is from the Old Testament.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Jesus was tempted by the devil

While it is true that the devil sincerely believed that he could persuade Jesus to obey him, it is important not to imply that Jesus actually ever really wanted to obey him.

Links:

- [Luke 4:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 4

4:1-13

Why did Luke write that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit when he went into the wilderness?

[4:1]

Luke wrote that the Holy Spirit wanted Jesus to go into the wilderness. In the wilderness, the devil tried to make Jesus sin. Matthew and Mark also wrote about the Holy Spirit doing this (see: Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12). However, only Luke wrote that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit. Some scholars say Jesus had the Holy Spirit in him and was full of the Holy Spirit since he was baptized (see: Luke 3:21-22). Other scholars say Luke wanted people to know that Jesus was not “tempted or tested”(πειράζω/g3985) because he did something wrong.

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit; Wilderness; Tempt (Temptation); Test

Advice to translators: The devil tried to trap Jesus and get him to sin, this was a “temptation.” A “temptation” was a certain type of test or a trap. A “wilderness” was an area that was very hot and had no water.

See Map: Judea

How did Jesus in the wilderness compare with the Israelites?

[4:1, 4:2]

Jesus in the wilderness compared to the Israelites because God tested Israel in the wilderness after they left Egypt with Moses. They did not obey God. However, Jesus obeyed God when the devil tried to make him sin. Also, the forty days Jesus was in the wilderness compared to the forty years the Israelites were in the wilderness. The Israelites were in the wilderness one year for each day the spies were in the promised land. In the same way Jesus was in the wilderness one day for each year the Israelites were in the wilderness (see: Numbers 14:33-34).

See: Wilderness; Canaan (Promised Land)

Why did Jesus fast for forty days?

[4:2]

The Old Testament used the number forty is used many times. Moses and Elijah began to serve God in a special way after they fasted for forty days (see: Exodus 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8). After Jesus fasted, he began to serve God in a special way and tell Israel that he was the messiah.

See: Fasting; Messiah (Christ)

The devil tried to convince Adam to sin. He also tried to convince Jesus to sin. How did Satan do this?

[4:2]

The devil tried to convince Adam to sin. He also tried to convince Jesus to sin. Some scholars think that Satan did this in the same way. They think that he did it in a certain way for a certain reason. Perhaps, John talked about these reasons in 1 John 2:16.

See: Incarnation; Tempt (Temptation); Satan (The Devil)

Advice to translators: In some translations, Satan said “if” you are the son of God. However, Satan knew that Jesus was the Son of God. This question may need to be adapted to explain your local translation.

Did Satan know that Jesus is the Son of God?

[4:3]

Satan knew that Jesus is the Son of God. However, the devil wanted Jesus to stop being the Son of God. Perhaps he thought that God would reject Jesus if Jesus rejected God.

In the Old Testament, Israel was also called the “son” of God (see: Exodus 4:22-23; Hosea 11:1). Jesus is also the Son of God. However, he is not the son of God in the same way that Israel was the son of God. Israel disobeyed God and God punished them in the same way a parent punished their son. The devil wanted Jesus to disobey God. Perhaps, Satan wanted God to punish Jesus. Despite this, Jesus obeyed God in the same way a son should obey his father.

See: Luke 3:22

See: Son of God; Satan (The Devil); Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

Why did the devil tempt Jesus when Jesus was hungry?

[4:3]

The devil wanted Jesus to turn a stone into bread because Jesus was hungry. Jesus was very hungry after not eating for forty days. The devil knew Jesus was a human being in every way except Jesus did not sin. Perhaps Luke remembered that the Israelites were also hungry in the desert. When they were hungry, they disobeyed God (see: Exodus 16:8). However, Jesus obeyed God when he was hungry.

See: Incarnation; Tempt (Temptation); Satan (The Devil)

The devil told Jesus to make himself food in the desert. Why did Jesus not do this?

[4:4]

Scholars give several reasons why Jesus did not make himself food in the desert.

1. God did not want him to eat food. Jesus was fasting when he was in the desert.

2. Jesus needed to suffer in the same way that people suffered (see: Hebrews 2:18; 4:15). This helped Jesus to become a priest who knew what people felt when they were hungry.
3. Jesus trusted God. Jesus knew that God would give him food to eat. He knew that God would give him everything that he needed to live. He also trusted in the things that God said in Scripture. Therefore, he said to the devil the things that Scripture wrote.

However, some scholars say it was not always wrong for Jesus to make food. When Jesus answered the devil, he repeated a scripture that spoke about the manna that God made (see: Deuteronomy 8:3). Later, Jesus made food for people (see: Luke 5:4-10; 9:12-17).

See: Fasting; Priest (Priesthood)

How did the devil show Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world”?

[4:5]

Scholars believe the devil showed Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world” in a vision. Whether it was the world that Rome ruled or the whole world, no one was able to see all of it at one time from a mountain. It was a real seeing but it did not belong to this world. Some scholars say it was real the same way the heavens opened at Jesus’ baptism (see: Luke 3:21). Some scholars say that is why Luke did not say Jesus was on a mountain. Other scholars say when the devil led Jesus up it was on a mountain.

See: Deuteronomy 32:49; 34:1-3

See: Vision); World; Satan (The Devil)

How was the devil able to give Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world”?

[4:6]

The devil was able to give Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world” because God gave permission to the devil to rule the whole world (see: 1 John 5:19). However, this is only for a limited time (see: John 12:31; 16:11).

See: Satan (The Devil)

Why did the devil want to give Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world”?

[4:6, 4:7]

The devil wanted to give Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world” because that was not God’s plan for Jesus. God gives Jesus authority to rule the world (see: Psalm 2:8; Daniel 7:14; Matthew 28:18). However, God’s plan was for Jesus to suffer and die before he entered into glory (see: Luke 24:26). Paul also wrote about this (see: Philippians 2:5-11).

See: Kingdom of God; Atone (Atonement); Cross; Glory (Glorify)

Why did Jesus refuse to worship the devil to receive “all the kingdoms of the world”?

[4:8]

Jesus refused to worship the devil to receive “all the kingdoms of the world” because the Old Testament wrote only God must be worshipped. That is, someone cannot worship God and worship someone else at the same time. Jesus noted this well by adding the word “only”(μόνος/g3441) when he repeated the Old Testament scripture (see: Deuteronomy 6:13).

See: Worship

How did the devil use Psalm 91 in a wrong way?

[4:10, 4:11]

The devil used Psalm 91 in a wrong way by telling Jesus that God protected people from harm even when they tested God. The devil tried to convince Jesus that he was able to throw himself down from the “highest point of the temple.” However, the writer of Psalm 91 wrote about someone who trusted God, even when things were difficult. He also wrote about how God promised to care for people who trusted in him. However, the devil wanted to use this Psalm in a different way. He wanted Jesus to think God would help him, even if Jesus tested God or rejected the things that God said. However, God did not promise to protect those who rejected him in Psalm 91.

See: Psalm; Temple; Satan (The Devil)

Why was Jesus not willing to test God?

[4:12]

Jesus was not willing to test God because Jesus knew all scriptures and he knew how to follow them in the right way. Jesus repeated Deuteronomy 6:16 to the devil. That Scripture said people must not test God. Jesus did not argue with the devil about scripture.

Advice to translators: Translate the phrase “until another time” as your local translation does. Why did Luke write “until another time”? Luke wrote “until another time” so his readers would know the devil left Jesus in order to wait for another time to try to make Jesus disobey God. The devil also tempted Jesus when he died on the cross. At that time, people spoke to Jesus using words using the same words the devil said, “If you are the Son of God” (see: Matthew 27:40).

4:14-15

Why did the second major section of Luke’s gospel begin here?

[4:14]

Jesus’ temptation concluded the first major section of Luke’s gospel. Jesus was a baby born from a virgin when he came into the world. John the Baptist prepared people for Jesus’ coming. Luke recorded Jesus’ genealogy and temptation. Jesus then began seeking people. He announced his ministry at his hometown. He taught and did miracles. This division of major sections is taken from the key verse of Luke’s gospel (see: Luke 19:10).

What did Luke say about the start of Jesus’ earthly service?

[4:15]

After the devil tempted Jesus, Jesus went back to Galilee in the “power”(δύναμις/g1411) of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helped Jesus to do the great things that he did. He taught and did miracles because the Holy Spirit gave him the power to do these things. Also, Luke said that many people believed in Jesus when he started his earthly service. When Jesus began teaching, everyone in Galilee spoke well of him.

See Map: Galilee

4:16-30

Why did Jesus stand to read the scroll in the synagogue?

[4:16]

Jesus stood to read the scroll in the synagogue because when someone read scripture they needed to stand. This was a way to honor God. Luke wrote that Jesus often went to the synagogue. This time when Jesus went to the synagogue, he asked to read Scripture. Jesus read the words of the prophet Isaiah (see: Isaiah 61:1-2).

See: Synagogue; Prophet

How did the prophecy that Jesus read from Isaiah say Jesus is the Messiah?

[4:18, 4:19]

Isaiah prophesied that the Holy Spirit, the “Spirit”(πνεῦμα/g4151) of the “Lord”(κύριος/g2962), would be with the messiah (see: Luke 3:22). There were three ways that the people would know the messiah.

1. The messiah told “good news or gospel”(εὐαγγελίζω/g2097) to the “poor”(πτωχός/g4434). The good news was to the “poor” because the poor needed help. People needed help to be at peace with God.
2. The messiah told people in prison that they would be free. The devil caused some people to be sick. The messiah made many sick people healthy. He also freed people from the way that they used to live before they believed in Jesus.
3. The messiah announced the “time”(ἐν ταῖς/g1763) of the Lord’s “favor”(δεκτός/g1184) (see: Luke 4:19; Isaiah 61:2). Some scholars think that Isaiah was speaking about a special Sabbath time called the Year of Jubilee in the Law of Moses (see: Leviticus 25:8-55). Other scholars think that Isaiah was speaking about how God would give favor to Christians. He did this when Jesus died so that Christians could be at peace with God.

See: Prophet; Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Messiah (Christ); Gospel; Law of Moses; Sabbath

Why did Jesus not talk about God’s judgment when he read from Isaiah?

[4:19]

Scholars give several reasons why Jesus did not talk about God’s judgment when he read from Isaiah.

1. Jesus did not want people to think about Isaiah’s warnings of judgment.
2. The people thought Isaiah’s judgment was for the Gentiles. Jesus wanted them to know the Lord’s favor was for the Gentiles also.
3. This was not time for the judgment. It was the time for the Lord’s favor. The judgment will come when Jesus returns at the end of the world (see: Revelation 19:11-16).
4. The people become angry enough in verse twenty-eight without hearing Jesus read about Judgment from Isaiah.

See: Judge (Judgment)

Why did Jesus tell the people a proverb?

[4:23]

Jesus told the people a proverb about a doctor healing himself because the people wanted Jesus to do miracles in Nazareth. They knew Jesus did miracles in Capernaum and now they wanted him to do the same things in Nazareth (see: Luke 4:23). However, Jesus did not do what they wanted because the people did not believe in him (see: Matthew 13:57-58).

See: Proverb; Miracle

See Map: Nazareth; Capernaum; Galilee

Why did Jesus talk about the prophets, Elijah and Elisha?

[4:25, 4:26, 4:27]

Jesus talked about the prophets, Elijah and Elisha. These men died many years before. Jesus wanted the people of Nazareth to know that they rejected him in the same way that the Israelites rejected Elijah and Elisha. However, the people of Nazareth knew that God sent Elijah and Elisha. After the Israelites rejected them, Elijah and Elisha helped the Gentiles. The Israelites thought that the Gentiles were evil and did not honor God. Therefore, a prophet should not help them. After the people of Nazareth rejected him, Jesus began to help Gentiles.

See: 1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 5

See: Prophet; Gentile

See Map: Sidon; Syria

Why did all the people in the synagogue try to kill Jesus?

[4:29]

Jesus read the words of Isaiah to the people in Luke 4:18-19 (see: Isaiah 61:1-2). All the people in the synagogue tried to kill Jesus because the things he said made them angry. They thought that Isaiah was speaking about God saving Israel. Jesus said that it was about the Gentiles. This insulted the Jews because they thought the Gentiles were evil.

See: Synagogue; Gentile

4:31-44

Why were the people amazed at the teaching of Jesus?

[4:32]

Luke said that the people were “amazed”(ἐκπλήσσω/g1605) at the things Jesus taught. They were amazed because Jesus said the words God commanded him to speak (see: Matthew 7:29). Jesus spoke with “power”(ἐξουσία/g1849) that came from the Holy Spirit and God himself. Scholars think that Jesus explained the Old Testament to the people.

What was another way Jesus demonstrated his power in the synagogue?

[4:35]

While Jesus was teaching in the synagogue, a man began to shout loudly. The man was controlled by a demon. Jesus commanded the demon to be “quiet”(φίμωσέ/g5392) and he commanded the demon to “come out”(ἐξέρχουμαι/g1831) of the shouting man. Luke wanted people to know that Jesus could make demons obey him because he is God. Once again, the people were amazed with Jesus and the power that God had given him.

See: Synagogue; Demon

How did Jesus heal Simon’s mother-in-law?

[4:39]

Simon’s mother-in-law was sick with a “high fever”(πυρετός/g4446)(μέγας/g3173) fever. Jesus stood over Simon’s mother-in-law and “commanded”(ἐπιτιμάω/g2008) the fever to leave. Simon’s mother-in-law was immediately healed. Some scholars think that Luke wanted people to know that Jesus could immediately heal a sick person. Other scholars think a demon caused the fever. Jesus “commanded” the fever to leave in the same way that he “commanded” the demon to leave the man in the synagogue.

Why did people come to Jesus after sunset?

[4:40]

People came to Jesus after sunset because it was the sabbath. People did not travel very far or carry a heavy load on the Sabbath. Therefore, after the sabbath they brought ill and demon possessed people to Jesus. Jesus healed them of various diseases and cast out demons.

See: Sabbath; Demon

Why did Jesus lay his hands on people when healing them?

[4:40]

Jesus laid his hands on people when he healed them because he loved them or he favored them. However, putting his hands on people was not what healed them. Instead, it was the power of God.

Why did Jesus command the demons not to say he is the Son of God even though they were right that he is the Messiah?

[4:41]

Scholars give several reasons why Jesus commanded the demons not to say he is the Son of God even though they were right that he is the messiah.

- 1. Demons taught people wrong things about the messiah.
- 2. Jesus did not want the evil demons to tell people about him.
- 3. Jesus wanted his disciples to tell people about him.

See: Son of God; Messiah (Christ); Demon

Why did God sent Jesus?

[4:43]

God sent Jesus to tell people about God's reign. Some scholars think Jesus told people he was the messiah. They think Jesus offered to rule the Jews on the earth. Other scholars think that Jesus wanted people to believe in him and obey him as their king. They think God sent him to help people to be at peace with God.

See: Kingdom of God

Luke 4:1

Then Jesus

After John had baptized Jesus.

was led by the Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
"the Spirit led him"

Luke 4:2

Connecting Statement:

Jesus fasts for 40 days, and the devil meets him to try to persuade him to sin.

for forty days he was tempted

Most versions say that the temptation was throughout the forty days. The UDB states "While he was there, the devil kept tempting him" to make this clear.

forty days

"40 days"

he was tempted by the devil

This can be stated in active form, and you can make explicit what it was the devil tempted him to do.
Alternate translation: "the devil tried to persuade him to disobey God"

He ate nothing

The word "he" refers to Jesus.

Luke 4:3

If you are the Son of God

The devil challenges Jesus to prove that he is the Son of God.

this stone

The devil either holds a stone in his hand or points to a nearby stone.

Luke 4:4

Jesus answered him, "It is written ... alone."

Jesus's rejection of the devil's challenge is clearly implied in his answer. It may be helpful to state this clearly for your audience, as the UDB does. Alternate translation: "Jesus replied, 'No, I will not do that because it is written ... alone.'"

It is written

The quotation is from Moses's writings in the Old Testament. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses has written in the scriptures"

Man does not live on bread alone

The word "bread" refers to food in general. Food as compared to God, by itself, is not enough to sustain a person. Jesus quotes the scripture to say why he would not turn the stone into bread. Alternate translation: "People cannot live on just bread" or "It is not just food that makes a person live" or "God says there are more important things than food"

Luke 4:5

Then the devil led Jesus up ... world

"Then the devil led Jesus up to a very high place ... world." It is uncertain where the devil led Jesus and how he showed all the kingdoms of the world to him.

in an instant of time

"in an instant" or "instantly"

Luke 4:6

they have been given to me

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are that "them" refers to 1) the authority and splendor of the kingdoms or 2) the kingdoms. Alternate translation: "God has given them to me"

Luke 4:7

if you will bow down ... worship me

These two phrases are very similar. They can be combined. Alternate translation: "if you will bow down in worship to me"

it will be yours

"I will give you all these kingdoms, with their splendor"

Luke 4:8

It is written

Jesus refused to do what the devil asked. It may be helpful to state this clearly. Alternate translation: "No, I will not worship you, because it is written"

answered and said to him

"responded to him" or "replied to him"

It is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses has written in the scriptures"

You will worship the Lord your God

Jesus was quoting a command from the scriptures to say why he would not worship the devil.

You

This refers to the people in the Old Testament who received God's Law. You could use the singular form of 'you' because each person was to obey it, or you could use the plural form of 'you' because all of the people were to obey it.

him

The word "him" refers to the Lord God.

Luke 4:9

the very highest point

This was the corner of the temple roof. If someone fell from there, they would be seriously injured or die.

If you are the Son of God

The devil is challenging Jesus to prove that he is the Son of God.

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

throw yourself down

"jump down to the ground"

Luke 4:10

For it is written

The devil implies that his quote from the Psalms means Jesus will not be hurt if he is the Son of God. This can be stated clearly, as the UDB does. Alternate translation: "You will not be hurt, because it is written"

it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the writer has written"

He will give orders

"He" refers to God. The devil partially quoted from the Psalms in an effort to persuade Jesus to jump off the building.

Luke 4:11

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 4:12

It is said

Jesus tells the devil why he will not do what the devil told him to do. His refusal to do it can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "No, I will not do that, because it is said"

It is said

Jesus quotes from the writings of Moses in Deuteronomy. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses has said" or "Moses has said in the scriptures"

Do not put the Lord your God to the test

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus should not test God by jumping off the temple, or 2) the devil should not test Jesus to see if he is the Son of God. It is best to translate the verse as stated rather than to try to explain the meaning.

Luke 4:13

until another time

"until another occasion"

had finished tempting Jesus

This does not imply that the devil was successful in his temptation—Jesus resisted every attempt. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "had finished trying to persuade Jesus to sin"

Luke 4:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus returns to Galilee, teaches in the synagogue (4:15), and tells the people there that he is fulfilling scripture of Isaiah the prophet (4:17-21).

Then Jesus returned

This begins a new event in the story.

in the power of the Spirit

"and the Spirit was giving him power." God was with Jesus in a special way, enabling him to do things that humans usually could not.

news about him spread

"people spread the news about Jesus" or "people told other people about Jesus" or "knowledge about him was passed on from person to person." Those who heard Jesus told other people about him, and then those other people told even more people about him.

throughout the entire surrounding region

This refers to the areas or places around Galilee.

Luke 4:15

he was praised by all

"everyone said great things about him" or "all the people spoke about him in a good way"

Luke 4:16

where he had been raised

"where his parents had raised him" or "where he lived when he was a child" or "where he grew up"

as was his custom

"as he did each Sabbath." It was his usual practice to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath day.

Luke 4:17

The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone gave him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah"

scroll of the prophet Isaiah

This refers to the book of Isaiah written on a scroll. Isaiah had written the words many years before, and someone else had copied them onto a scroll.

the place where it was written

"the place in the scroll with these words." This sentence continues on into the next verse.

Luke 4:18

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me

"The Holy Spirit is with me in a special way." When someone says this, he is claiming to speak the words of God.

he anointed me

In the Old Testament, ceremonial oil was poured on a person when they were given power and authority to do a special task. Jesus uses this metaphor to refer to the Holy Spirit being on him to prepare him for this work. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit is upon me to empower me" or "the Holy Spirit gave me power and authority"

the poor

"the poor people"

proclaim freedom to the captives

"tell people who are being held captive that they can go free" or "set free the prisoners of war"

recovery of sight to the blind

"give sight to the blind" or "make the blind be able to see again"

set free those who are oppressed

"set free those who are treated harshly"

Luke 4:19

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor

"tell everyone that the Lord is ready to bless his people" or "announce that this is the year that the Lord will show his kindness"

Luke 4:20

rolled up the scroll

A scroll was closed by rolling it like a tube to protect the writing inside it.

attendant

This refers to a synagogue worker who brought out and put away with proper care and reverence the scrolls containing the scriptures.

sat down

It was customary for teachers to be seated while teaching.

were fixed on him

This idiom means "were focused on him" or "were looking intently at him"

Luke 4:21

this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing

Jesus was saying that he was fulfilling that prophecy by his actions and speech at that very time. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am fulfilling what this scripture says right now as you are listening to me"

in your hearing

This idiom means "while you are listening to me"

Luke 4:22

amazed at the gracious words which were coming out of his mouth

"surprised about the gracious things that he was saying." Here "gracious" may refer to 1) how well or how persuasively Jesus spoke, or 2) that Jesus spoke words about God's grace.

Is this not the son of Joseph?

People thought that Joseph was Jesus's father. Joseph was not a religious leader, so they were surprised that his son would preach what he did. Alternate translation: "This is just Joseph's son!" or "His father is only Joseph!"

Luke 4:23

Surely

"Certainly" or "There is no doubt that"

Doctor, heal yourself

If someone claims to be able to heal diseases that he himself has, there is no reason to believe he is really a doctor. People will speak this proverb to Jesus to say that they will only believe he is a prophet if they see him do what they have heard that he did in other places.

Whatever we heard ... do the same in your hometown

The people of Nazareth do not believe Jesus is a prophet because of his low status as Joseph's son. They will not believe unless they personally see him do miracles.

Luke 4:24

Truly I say to you

"It is certainly true." This is an emphatic statement about what follows.

no prophet is received in his own hometown

Jesus makes this general statement in order to rebuke the people. He means that they are refusing to believe the reports of his miracles in Capernaum. They think they already know all about him.

own hometown

"homeland" or "native city" or "country where he grew up"

Luke 4:25

General Information:

Jesus reminds the people who are listening to him in the synagogue about Elijah and Elisha

But in truth I tell you

"I tell you truthfully." Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the importance, truth, and accuracy of the statement that follows.

widows

Widows are women whose husbands have died and who have not married again.

during the time of Elijah

The people to whom Jesus was speaking would have known that Elijah was one of God's prophets. If your readers would not know that, you can make this implicit information explicit as in the UDB. Alternate translation: "when Elijah was prophesying in Israel"

when the sky was shut up

This is a metaphor. The sky is pictured as a ceiling that was closed, and so no rain would fall from it. Alternate translation: "when no rain fell down from the sky" or "when there was no rain at all"

a great famine

"a serious lack of food." A famine occurs when the crops do not produce enough food for the people for a long period of time.

Luke 4:26

to Zarephath in Sidon, to a widow living there

The people living in the town of Zarephath were Gentiles, not Jews. The people listening to Jesus would have understood that the people of Zarephath were Gentiles. Alternate translation: "to a Gentile widow living in Zarephath in Sidon"

Luke 4:27

none of them were cleansed except Naaman the Syrian

This double negative emphasizes that Naaman was the only one who was cleansed. This can also be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the only one of them who was cleansed was Naaman" or "the only one of them whom God cleansed was Naaman"

were cleansed

People who had leprosy were considered to be unclean. When they were healed from leprosy, they were clean. Alternate translation: "were healed"

Naaman the Syrian

A Syrian is a person from the country of Syria. The people of Syria were Gentiles, not Jews. Alternate translation: "the Gentile Naaman from Syria"

Luke 4:28

All the people in the synagogue were filled with rage when they heard these things

The people of Nazareth were deeply offended that Jesus had cited scriptures where God had helped Gentiles instead of Jews.

Luke 4:29

forced him out of the town

"forced him to leave the town" or "shoved him out of the city"

cliff of the hill

"edge of the cliff"

Luke 4:30

through the middle of them

"through the middle of the crowd" or "between the people who were trying to kill him."

he went to another place

"he went away" or "he went on his way" Jesus went where he had planned to go instead of where the people were trying to force him to go.

Luke 4:31

Connecting Statement:

Jesus then goes to Capernaum, teaches the people in the synagogue there, and commands a demon to leave a man (4:35).

Then he

"Then Jesus." This indicates a new event.

went down to Capernaum

The phrase "went down" is used here because Capernaum is lower in elevation than Nazareth.

Capernaum, a city in Galilee

"Capernaum, another city in Galilee"

Luke 4:32

astonished

greatly surprised, greatly amazed

he spoke with authority

"he spoke as one with authority" or "his words had great power"

Luke 4:33

Now ... there was a man

This phrase is used to mark the introduction of a new character into the story; in this case, a demon-possessed man.

who had the spirit of an unclean demon

"who was possessed by an unclean demon" or "who was controlled by an evil spirit"

he cried out with a loud voice

"he shouted loudly"

Luke 4:34

What do we have to do with you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "What do we have in common" or "What right do you have to bother us"

What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth?

This question could be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "What do you, Jesus of Nazareth, have to do with us!" or "We have nothing to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth!" or "You have no right to bother us, Jesus of Nazareth!"

Luke 4:35

Jesus rebuked the demon, saying

"Jesus scolded the demon, saying" or "Jesus sternly said to the demon"

Come out of him

He commanded the demon to stop controlling the man. Alternate translation: "Leave him alone" or "Do not live in this man any longer"

Luke 4:36

What kind of words are these?

The people were expressing how amazed they were that Jesus had the authority to command demons to leave a person. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "These are amazing words!" or "His words are amazing!"

He commands the unclean spirits with authority and power

"He has authority and power to command the unclean spirits"

Luke 4:37

So news about him began to spread ... the surrounding region

This is a comment about what happened after the story. The spread of the news was caused by the events within the story itself.

news about him began to spread

"reports about Jesus began to spread" or "people began to spread the news about Jesus"

Luke 4:38

Connecting Statement:

Jesus is still in Capernaum, but he is now at the house of Simon.

Then Jesus left

This introduces a new event.

Simon's mother-in-law

"the mother of Simon's wife"

was suffering with

This is an idiom that means "was very sick with"

a high fever

"very hot skin"

pleaded with him on her behalf

This means they asked Jesus to heal her from the fever. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "asked Jesus to heal her from the fever" or "asked Jesus to cure her fever"

Luke 4:39

So he stood

The word "So" makes it clear that he did this because the people pleaded with him on behalf of Simon's mother-in-law.

stood over her

"went to her and leaned over her"

rebuked the fever, and it left her

"spoke sternly to the fever, and it left her" or "commanded the fever to leave her, and it did." It may be helpful to state clearly what he told the fever to do. Alternate translation: "commanded that her skin should become cool, and it did" or "commanded the sickness to leave her, and it did"

rebuked the fever

"rebuked the hotness"

started serving them

Here this means she began to prepare food for Jesus and the other people in the house.

Luke 4:40

laid his hands on

"placed his hands on" or "touched"

Luke 4:41

Demons also came out

It is implied that Jesus made the demons leave the demon-possessed people. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Jesus also forced demons to come out"

crying out and saying

These mean about the same thing, and probably refer to cries of fear or anger. Some translations use only one term. Alternate translation: "screaming" or "shouting"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

rebuked the demons

"spoke sternly to the demons"

would not let them

"did not allow them to"

Luke 4:42

Connecting Statement:

Though the people want Jesus to stay in Capernaum, he goes to preach in other Judean synagogues.

When daybreak came

"At sunrise" or "At dawn"

a solitary place

"a deserted place" or "a place where there were no people"

Luke 4:43

to many other cities

"to the people in many other cities"

this is the reason I was sent here

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this is the reason God sent me here"

Luke 4:44

throughout Judea

Since Jesus had been in Galilee, the term "Judea" here probably refers to the entire region where the Jews lived at that time. Alternate translation: "where the Jews lived"

Luke 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"You will catch men"

Peter, James, and John were fishermen. When Jesus told them that they would catch men, he was using a metaphor to tell them he wanted them to help people believe the good news about him.

Sinners

When the people of Jesus's time spoke of "sinners," they were talking about people who did not obey the law of Moses and instead committed sins like stealing or sexual sins. When Jesus said that he came to call "sinners," he meant that only people who believe that they are sinners can be his followers. This is true even if they are not what most people think of as "sinners." (See: sin)

Fasting and Feasting

People would fast, or not eat food for a long time, when they were sad or were showing God that they were sorry for their sins. When they were happy, like during weddings, they would have feasts, or meals where they would eat much food. (See: fast)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Irony

Jesus uses irony to condemn the Pharisees. This passage includes "people in good health" and "righteous people." This does not mean that there are people who do not need Jesus. There are no "righteous people." Everybody needs Jesus. (See: and [Luke 5:31-32](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

In several parts of this chapter the author left out some implicit information that his original readers would have understood and thought about. Modern readers might not know some of those things, so they might have trouble understanding all that the author was communicating. The UDB often shows how that information can be presented so that modern readers will be able to understand those passages.

Past Events

Parts of this chapter are sequences of events that have already happened. In a given passage, Luke sometimes writes as if the events have already happened while other events are still in progress (even though they are complete at the time he writes). This can cause difficulty in translation by creating an illogical order of events. It may be necessary to make these consistent by writing as if all the events have already happened.

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

- [Luke 5:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 5

5:1-11

Why were the people coming to Jesus?

[5:1]

Luke said that many people went Jesus to hear the “word”(λόγος/g3056) of God. That is, they wanted to hear the things that God told Jesus to say. These were often instructions, warnings, or prophecies. Jesus did this from a boat. Luke said Jesus asked Peter to take him out into the water on Peter’s boat. Jesus sat down in the boat and began to speak the word of God to the people. Teachers often sat when giving instruction during the time of Jesus.

See: Prophecy (Prophecy)

Why did Simon not want to fish in the deep water?

[5:5]

Simon did not want to fish in deeper water because he knew that people fished in deep water at night, not in the day. Simon fished all night the previous night in the deep water. Simon knew this was not a good way to fish. Some scholars think he thought he knew more about fishing than Jesus knew. Other scholars think he tired and was discouraged from fishing all night and not catching anything. In any case, some scholars say Simon respected Jesus because he was a great teacher. He called him “master”(ἐπιστάτης/g1988). Simon finally did what Jesus asked of him. Other scholars say he did what Jesus asked because he knew Jesus could do things that only God could do.

See Map: Capernaum

Why did Simon bow down to Jesus?

[5:8]

When Simon Peter saw how many fish he caught, he bowed down to Jesus. This miracle showed Simon that Jesus was more than his master or leader. Jesus has power that only God has. Simon called Jesus “Lord”(κύριος/g2962). Simon knew himself to be a “sinful man” (ἁμαρτωλός/g0268). In the Old Testament, people often bowed down and did not look at God because they feared God and knew how great he is (see: Isaiah 6:5). Simon and all the people with him were “amazed”(θαμβος/g2285) at what Jesus did.

Advice to translators: When someone “bows down” to another person, they either bend at the waist or lie down on the ground. When they did this, they were not as tall as the other person and they did not look at them. This was a way to show respect to people who were greater.

See: Miracle

What did Jesus do because Simon was amazed?

[5:9]

Jesus told Simon to not “fear”(φοβέω/g5399). He told Simon that he will be catching people now, not fish. This was a metaphor. In the same way Peter gathered fish for his work by fishing, Jesus wanted Peter to gather people into the kingdom of God (see: Acts 2:38-42). After Jesus spoke, Simon, James, and John left “everything”(πᾶς/g3956) and followed him.

See: Metaphor; Kingdom of God

5:12-16

Why did Luke say that the man was “full of leprosy”?

[5:12]

Some scholars think Luke used the medical term “full of leprosy” because this meant a severe case of leprosy. Luke described a man who was “completely covered”(πλήρης/g4134) with a skin disease called “leprosy”(λέπρα/g3014). A person full of leprosy was unable to be healed.

See: Leprosy (Leper); Clean and Unclean

What did the leper do when he saw Jesus coming?

[5:12]

The man with leprosy came to Jesus and “dropped to the ground”(πίπτω/g4098). Some scholars think he heard about Jesus healing many people (see: Luke 4:37). The man called Jesus “Lord”(κύριος/g2962). He told Jesus that if Jesus wanted him to be healed, he would be healed. He knew that Jesus had the ability to heal him from leprosy. But he knew he had no power to make Jesus do this if Jesus did not want to heal him. However, Jesus said he wanted to heal the man. Jesus told the man to “be cleansed”(καθαρίζω/g2511). The leprosy healed immediately.

See: Leprosy (Leper); Miracle

Why did Jesus tell the leper not to tell anyone but go to the priest immediately?

[5:14]

Jesus told the man he healed to immediately go to the priest. Some scholars think that Jesus did not want to bring attention to himself. Other scholars think Jesus wanted the man to go to the priest and have the priest say that this man was clean. That is, he wanted the Priest to prove he was clean before the man began speaking with other people in the town. If a man with leprosy went into the town, he broke the Law of Moses. The priest had to say he was clean.

See: Priest (Priesthood); Clean and Unclean; Sin; Clean and Unclean

What other things did Jesus tell the man with leprosy to do?

[5:14]

Jesus also told the man to make an offering in the same way the Law of Moses commanded (see: Leviticus 4-7). Jesus said giving this offering showed the man’s healing and cleansing of leprosy. Some scholars think this showed only the priest and those at the temple his healing. Other scholars think this showed all people his healing. For both of these reasons, Jesus wanted the man to obey the Law of Moses.

See: Priest (Priesthood); Law of Moses

Why did Jesus go to the wilderness to pray?

[5:16]

Scholars say Jesus prayed alone in the wilderness (See: Luke 5:16) because he did not want other people to see him. He did not want other people to give him attention for praying. Jesus prayed alone many times. People gave Jesus a lot of attention when he healed people and got rid of their demons. God gave Jesus the strength not to want attention when he prayed. Jesus showed his disciples that he obeyed God in everything he did. God guided him when he prayed.

See: Pray (Prayer)

5:17-26

What was the “power of the Lord” in Jesus?

[5:17]

Many scholars think that the “power of the Lord” in Jesus was the Holy Spirit (see: Luke 4:18) This made Jesus able to heal people. Some scholars think Luke wanted people to know that God the Father was also with Jesus. That is, all of God’s power gave Jesus the ability to heal people.

How did the paralyzed man get to Jesus?

[5:18]

Luke said the paralyzed man was taken to Jesus on a “bed”(κλίνη/g2825). Most scholars think this was a poor man’s bed. That is, it was a mat or mattress filled with straw. The men carrying the mat went up onto the roof. They took the tiles off the roof of the house and lowered the bed to Jesus in the house (see: Mark 2:3-4).

Who believed in Jesus?

[5:19, 5:20]

Some scholars think it was the men who helped the paralyzed man who believed in Jesus. They did anything they needed to do in order to get their friend to Jesus. They had no doubt that Jesus was able to heal their friend. Other scholars think Jesus also spoke about the paralyzed man who believed in Jesus. The paralyzed man gave permission to his friends to lower him down to Jesus through the roof. He knew Jesus had the ability to heal him.

Why did the Pharisees and Scribes say that Jesus insulted God?

[5:21]

The Pharisees and Scribes said Jesus “insulted God”(βλασφημία/g0988) because Jesus told the paralyzed man that he forgave his sins. The Pharisees and Scribes understood that only God can forgive sin (see: Isaiah 43:25; Psalm 32:5; Psalm 51:4). They did not understand that Jesus is God, and he can forgive sins also.

See: Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon); Sin

How did Jesus know what the Scribes and Pharisees were thinking?

[5:22]

Scholars say Jesus showed the people that he is God because he knew what the Scribes and Pharisees were thinking.

How did Jesus show that he had the power to forgive sins?

[5:24]

To show that he was able to forgive sins, Jesus healed the paralyzed man. The Jews knew that only God forgives sins and only God heals people. Jesus also knew this. Jesus showed that he was God by healing this man and forgiving his sins.

See: Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon); Sin

5:27-32

Who was Levi?

[5:27]

Luke said that Levi was a tax collector. Many scholars think Levi was this man's name in the Aramaic language. The Book of Matthew said that this tax collector was also called Matthew. Jesus called Matthew one of the first of the twelve apostles. (see: Matthew 10:2-4).

See: Apostle; Tax (Tax Collector, Toll)

How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees when they asked why he ate with sinners?

[5:31]

Jesus said that "healthy" (ὕγιαίνω/g5198) people do not need a doctor. Jesus used the metaphor of someone needing a doctor to talk about people who thought they were at peace with God because they did the right things. They thought they did not need God's forgiveness for their sins. The Pharisees thought they were at peace with God because they did the right things. They closely followed the Jewish Law. Jesus said to his disciples and to the Pharisees that he had come for the "sick" (κακῶς/g2560). "Sick" was a metaphor talking about sinners.

See: Metaphor; Sin

Why did Jesus say he "called people to repentance"?

[5:32]

See: Repent (Repentance)

What did it mean to fast?

[5:33]

See: Fasting

Who were the wedding guests and the bridegroom?

[5:34]

Jesus used the metaphor of wedding guests to speak about all the people who followed him. He used the metaphor of a bridegroom to speak about himself. Many scholars think that much feasting and rejoicing happened at a wedding, not fasting. Jesus spoke clearly that the time for fasting comes when the bridegroom leaves the wedding. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the future when he was going to be crucified.

See: Metaphor; Wedding; Fasting; Crucify (Crucifixion)

Why did Jesus talk about old and new clothes?

[5:36]

Jesus used the metaphor of “old clothes” to speak about a person who was living by Jewish traditions made from their law. Jesus used the metaphor of “new clothes” to speak about those who believed in Jesus. That is, they are changed into something new because of Jesus. Someone cannot become new by just adding new ideas to their old idea. That is, they cannot simply “patch” themselves. Becoming a new person is to be changed into someone completely different. The Holy Spirit inside the Christian makes these changes.

See: Metaphor

Why did Jesus talk about old and new wineskins?

[5:37]

The old wineskin spoke about the person in their old way of living. That is, they lived in the same way all sinners live. The new wineskin spoke about a person who believed in Jesus. The old wineskin cannot hold the life of Jesus. God works to make a person new when Jesus comes to live in the new person through faith in Jesus.

Many scholars think this last part of the parable spoke directly to the Pharisees. These scholars think Jesus told them they did not want this new idea, that is, believing in Jesus. That is, they found comfort with the old works of the Law of Moses. Advice to Translators: A wineskin was a leather sac used to hold wine.

Luke 5:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus preaches from Simon Peter's boat at the lake of Gennesaret.

Now it happened

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

listening to the word of God

Possible meanings are 1) "listening to the message God wanted them to hear" or 2) "listening to Jesus's message about God"

the lake of Gennesaret

These words refer to the Sea of Galilee. Galilee was on the west side of the lake, and the land of Gennesaret was on the east side, so it was called by both names. Some English versions translate this as the proper name of the body of water, "the Lake of Gennesaret."

Luke 5:2

washing their nets

They were cleaning their fishing nets in order to use them again to catch fish.

Luke 5:3

one of the boats, which was Simon's, and

"the boat belonging to Simon and"

asked him to put it out in the water

"asked Simon to move the boat"

he sat down and taught the people

Sitting was the normal position for a teacher.

taught the people out of the boat

"taught the people while he sat in the boat." Jesus was in the boat a short distance from the shore and he was speaking to the people who were on the shore.

Luke 5:4

When he had finished speaking

"When Jesus had finished teaching the people"

Luke 5:5

at your word

"because you have told me to do this"

Luke 5:6

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 5:7

motioned

They were too far from shore to call, so they made gestures, probably by waving their arms.

they began to sink

"the boats began to sink." The reason could be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the boats began to sink because the catch of fish was so heavy" or "the boats began to sink because there were so many fish"

Luke 5:8

fell down at Jesus' knees

Possible meanings are 1) "knelt down before Jesus" or 2) "bowed down at Jesus' feet" or 3) "lay down on the ground at Jesus' feet." Peter did not fall accidentally. He did this as a sign of humility and respect for Jesus.

sinful man

The word here for "man" means "adult male" and not the more general "human being."

Luke 5:9

the catch of fish

"the large number of fish"

Luke 5:10

partners with Simon

"Simon's partners in his fishing business"

you will catch men

The image of catching fish is being used as a metaphor for gathering people to follow Christ. Alternate translation: "you will fish for people" or "you will gather people for me" or "you will bring people to be my disciples"

Luke 5:11

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 5:12

Connecting Statement:

Jesus heals a leper in a different city that is not named.

It came about

This phrase marks a new event in the story.

a man full of leprosy

"a man who was covered with leprosy." This introduces a new character in the story.

he fell on his face

Here "fell on his face" is an idiom that means to bow down. Alternate translation: "he knelt and touched the ground with his face" or "he bowed down to the ground"

if you are willing

"if you want to"

you can make me clean

It is understood that he was asking Jesus to heal him. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "please make me clean, because you are able"

make me clean

This refers to ceremonial cleanness, but it is understood that he is unclean because of the leprosy. He is really asking Jesus to heal him of his disease. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "heal me from leprosy so I will be clean"

Luke 5:13

Be clean

This refers to ceremonial cleanness, but it is understood that he is unclean because of the leprosy. He is really asking Jesus to heal him of his disease. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Be healed"

the leprosy left him

"he no longer had leprosy"

Luke 5:14

He instructed him to tell no one but told him, "Go on your way

Jesus's instruction can be stated as a direct quote.
Alternate translation: "He said, 'Do not tell anyone, but go on your way'"

to tell no one

The understood information can be stated clearly.
Alternate translation: "to not tell anyone that he had been healed"

sacrifice for your cleansing

The law required a person to make a specific sacrifice after they were healed. This allowed the person to be ceremonially clean, and able to again participate in religious rituals.

for a testimony

"as proof of your healing"

to them

Possible meanings are 1) "to the priests" or 2) "to all the people."

Luke 5:15

the report about him

"the news about Jesus." This could mean either "the report about Jesus's healing the man with leprosy" or "the report about Jesus's healing people."

the report about him spread even farther

"the report about him went out even farther." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people kept telling the news about him in other places"

Luke 5:16

the deserted places

"lonely places" or "places where there were no other people"

Luke 5:17

Connecting Statement:

One day when Jesus was teaching in a building, some men brought a paralyzed man for Jesus to heal.

It came about

This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story.

Luke 5:18

Now some men came

These are new people in the story. Your language may have a way of showing that these are new people.

mat

sleeping pad or bed or stretcher

was paralyzed

"could not move himself"

Luke 5:19

They could not find a way to bring him in because of the crowd, so

In some languages it might be more natural to reorder this. Alternate translation: "But because of the crowd of people, they could not find a way to bring the man inside. So"

because of the crowd

It is clear that the reason they could not enter was that the crowd was so large that there was no room for them.

they went up to the housetop

Houses had flat roofs, and some houses had a ladder or staircase outside to make it easy to go up there. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "they went up to the flat roof of the house"

right in front of Jesus

"directly in front of Jesus" or "immediately in front of Jesus"

Luke 5:20

Seeing their faith, Jesus said

It is understood that they believe Jesus can heal the paralyzed man. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "When Jesus perceived that they believed that he could heal the man, he said to him"

Man

This is a general word that people used when speaking to a man whose name they did not know. It was not rude, but it also did not show special respect. Some languages might use a word like "friend" or "sir."

your sins are forgiven you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you are forgiven" or "I forgive your sins"

Luke 5:21

question this

"discuss this" or "reason about this." What they questioned can be stated. Alternate translation: "discuss whether or not Jesus had authority to forgive sins"

Who is this who speaks blasphemies?

This question shows how shocked and angry they were at what Jesus said. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This man is blaspheming God!" or "He blasphemes God by saying that!"

Who can forgive sins but God alone?

The implied information is that if a person claims to forgive sins he says he is God. This can be written as a clear statement. Alternate translation: "No one can forgive sins but God alone!" or "God is the only one who can forgive sins!"

Luke 5:22

Why are you questioning this in your hearts?

This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not argue about this in your hearts." or "You should not doubt that I have the authority to forgive sins."

in your hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's minds or inner beings.

Luke 5:23

Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

Jesus uses this question to make the scribes think about what might prove whether or not he could really forgive sins. Alternate translation: "You may think that it is easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven' than it is to say 'Get up and walk.'"

easier to say

The unspoken implication is that one thing is easier to say because no one will know what has happened, but the other thing is harder to say because everyone will know what has happened. People could not see if the man's sins were forgiven, but they would all know he was healed if he got up and walked.

Luke 5:24

you may know

Jesus was speaking to the scribes and Pharisees. The word "you" is plural.

the Son of Man

Jesus was referring to himself.

I tell you

Jesus was saying this to the paralyzed man. The word "you" is singular.

Luke 5:25

Immediately he got up

"At once he got up" or "Right away he got up"

he got up

It may be helpful to clearly say that he was healed. Alternate translation: "the man was healed! He got up"

Luke 5:26

filled with fear

"very afraid" or "filled with awe"

extraordinary things

"amazing things" or "strange things"

Luke 5:27

Connecting Statement:

When Jesus leaves the house, he calls Levi, the Jewish tax collector, to follow him.

After these things happened

The phrase "these things" refers to what happened in the previous verses. This signals a new event.

saw a tax collector

"looked at a tax collector with attention" or "looked carefully at a tax collector"

Follow me

To "follow" someone is to become that person's disciple. Alternate translation: "Be my disciple" or "Come, follow me as your teacher"

Luke 5:28

followed him, leaving everything behind

"followed him and left his work as a tax collector"

Luke 5:29

in his house

"in Levi's house"

reclining at the table

It was customary to lie on a couch while eating at a feast and to prop oneself up with the left arm on some pillows. Alternate translation: "eating together" or "eating at the table"

Luke 5:30

to his disciples

"to Jesus's disciples"

Why do you eat ... sinners?

The Pharisees and scribes ask this question to express their disapproval that Jesus's disciples are eating with sinners. Alternate translation: "You should not eat ... sinners!"

sinners

people who did not obey the law of Moses but committed what others thought were very bad sins

you eat and drink with ... sinners

The Pharisees and scribes believed that religious people should separate themselves from people they consider to be sinners. The word "you" is plural.

Luke 5:31

Connecting Statement:

At the meal, Jesus speaks with the Pharisees and scribes.

People who are well ... sick

Jesus uses this proverb to begin to tell them that he calls sinners to repentance the way a physician calls sick people to be healed.

physician

"doctor"

only those who are sick

You may need to supply the words that have been omitted. Alternate translation: "only those who are sick need a physician"

Luke 5:32

I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance

Jesus uses irony to condemn the Pharisees because they think of themselves as righteous. Anyone who wants to follow Jesus has to think of himself as a sinner, not as

righteous. Jesus does not mean that he thinks there are righteous people who do not need to repent.

the righteous

This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "righteous people"

Luke 5:33

They said to him

"The religious leaders said to Jesus"

Luke 5:34

Can anyone make the wedding attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is still with them?

Jesus uses this question to cause the people to think about a situation that they already know. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one tells the wedding attendants of the bridegroom to fast while he is still with them."

wedding attendants

"guests" or "friends." These are friends who celebrate with a man who is getting married.

the wedding attendants of the bridegroom fast

Fasting is a sign of sadness. The religious leaders understood that the wedding attendants would not fast while the bridegroom was with them.

Luke 5:35

the days will come when

"soon" or "some day"

the bridegroom will be taken away from them

Jesus is comparing himself to the bridegroom, and the disciples to the wedding attendants. He does not explain the metaphor, so the translation should explain it only if necessary.

Luke 5:36

General Information:

Jesus tells a story to the scribes and pharisees who were at Levi's house.

No one tears ... uses it ... he ... he

"No one rips ... uses it ... he ... he" or "People never tear ... use it ... they ... they"

mend

repair

will not fit with

"will not match" or "will not be the same as"

Luke 5:37

new wine

"grape juice." This refers to wine that has not yet fermented.

wineskins

These were bags made out of animal skins. They could also be called "wine bags" or "bags made of skin."

the new wine will burst the skins

When the new wine would ferment and expand, it would break the old skins because they could no longer stretch out. Jesus's audience would have understood how wine expands when it ferments.

the wine will be spilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the wine will spill out of the bags"

Luke 5:38

fresh wineskins

"new wineskins" or "new wine bags." This refers to new wineskins, unused.

Luke 5:39

drinking old wine ... wants the new

This metaphor contrasts the old teaching of the religious leaders against the new teaching of Jesus. The point is that people who are used to the old teaching are not willing to listen to the new things that Jesus is teaching.

for he says, 'The old is better.'

It may be helpful to add the implicit information.

Alternate translation: "for he says, 'The old is better,'
and he is therefore not willing to try the new wine."

Luke 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Luke 6:20-49 contains many blessings and woes that appear to correspond to Matthew 5-7. This part of Matthew has traditionally been called the "Sermon on the Mount." In Luke, they are not as connected to a teaching on the kingdom of God as they are in Matthew's gospel. (See: [kingdomofgod](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

"Eating the grain"

When the disciples plucked and ate the grain in a field they were walking through on the Sabbath ([Luke 6:1](#)), the Pharisees said that they were breaking the law of Moses. The Pharisees said that the disciples were doing work by picking the grain and so disobeying God's command to rest and not work on the Sabbath.

The Pharisees did not think the disciples were stealing. That is because the law of Moses required farmers to allow travelers to pluck and eat small amounts of grain from plants in fields they traveled through or near. (See: [lawofmoses](#) and [works and sabbath](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Metaphors are pictures of visible objects that speakers use to explain invisible truths. Jesus used a metaphor of a generous grain merchant to teach his people to be generous

Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions are questions to which the speaker already knows the answer. The Pharisees scolded Jesus by asking him a rhetorical question when they thought he was breaking the Sabbath

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

Speakers usually do not say things that they think their hearers already understand. When Luke wrote that the disciples were rubbing the heads of grain between their hands, he expected his reader to know that they were separating the part they would eat from what they would throw away

The twelve disciples

The following are the lists of the twelve disciples:

In Matthew:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James son of Zebedee, John son of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

In Mark:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and John the son of Zebedee (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder), Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot.

In Luke:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon (who was called the Zealot), Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot.

Thaddaeus is probably the same person as Jude, the son of James.

Links:

- [Luke 6:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 6

6:1-5

Why did the Pharisees not want Jesus and his disciples to pick grain?

[6:1, 6:2]

The Pharisees did not want Jesus and his disciples to pick grain on the Sabbath. The Law of Moses said that people cannot harvest grain on the Sabbath. But, the religious teachers said that picking grain on the Sabbath and harvesting grain on the Sabbath were the same activity. They said that both broke the Law of Moses. But, the Law of Moses says that it is good for a person to pick grain if they are hungry. However, they cannot use a tool to cut the grain (see: Deuteronomy 23:25).

See: Pharisees; Sabbath; Law of Moses

How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees?

[6:3, 6:4]

Jesus told the Pharisees about when David went to the house of God and “received”(λαμβάνω/g2983) the bread from the priest. The priest made new bread every Sabbath day. The Law gave the old bread to the priest for food. The Law of Moses always said to do good things, even on the Sabbath. The priest did a good thing by giving David and his men the bread because they were hungry.

See: 1 Samuel 21:6

See: Priest (Priesthood)

Why did Jesus say that the “Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath”?

[6:5]

Jesus said that the “Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath” because he is God, and God made the laws in the Law of Moses about the Sabbath. That is, because he made the Sabbath, he can say what can and cannot be done on the Sabbath (see: Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8-11). Genesis said that “God”(אלהים/h0430) created heaven and earth (see: Genesis 1:1). The Hebrew word for God is in the plural form. Also, God said in the plural, “Let us make” (see: Genesis 1:26). This means that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit helped create heaven and

earth. That is, God the Son, Jesus, created heaven and earth and also created the laws about the Sabbath (see: John 1:1-5; Colossians 1:15-18).

See: Heaven; Son of Man; Sabbath; Trinity

6:6-11

Why did the Scribes and Pharisees become angry when Jesus healed a person?

[6:11]

The Scribes and Pharisees said giving medical help on the Sabbath was work. The Scribes and Pharisees said the things they taught must be obeyed in the same way people obeyed the Law of Moses. However, nothing in the Law of Moses said giving medical help on the Sabbath day was wrong. The Old Testament made it clear that it was always lawful to do good everyday of the week (see: Deuteronomy 22:1-4).

See: Luke 13:10-17

See: Scribe; Pharisees; Sabbath; Law of Moses; Miracle

6:12-16

Why did Jesus go to the mountain to pray?

[6:12]

Perhaps Jesus went to the mountain to talk with God about the apostles. That is, he was about to choose those to be his special disciples. Luke does not say how many disciples Jesus had when he called them to be apostles. Later in Luke's gospel, he spoke about his having seventy other disciples (see: Luke 10:1).

See: Apostle; Disciple; Pray (Prayer)

Why did Jesus choose twelve of the disciples to be apostles?

[6:13]

Some scholars think that in the same way there were twelve tribes of Israel, Jesus chose twelve disciples to be apostles. They think Jesus chose the twelve apostles to be the new spiritual leaders of Israel. They think Jesus wanted these apostles to lead Israel based on the promises of the New Covenant (see: Jeremiah 31:31-33). Other scholars think Jesus chose the twelve apostles to be the spiritual leaders of the church, and not the new leaders of Israel. The Apostle Paul spoke about apostles and prophets being the foundation of God's household. They held up the church with the truth of the gospel in the same way a house is held up by its foundation. That is, they lead the church, told others about the gospel, and protected the gospel from false teachers. The household of God consisted of both Christian Jews and Christian Gentiles (see: Ephesians 2:19-20; 3:1-7).

See: Prophet; Gospel; Tribes of Israel; Disciple; Apostle; New Covenant; Church

6:17-19

Why did the crowds wait for Jesus and his disciples?

[6:17, 6:18]

The crowds waited for Jesus because they wanted to hear him teach. Also, they wanted him to heal them from their sicknesses. These people never heard anyone teach in the way Jesus taught. No one ever healed others in the same way that Jesus healed. Many people went to Jesus so they could touch him and be healed. They wanted

to touch him because healing power was coming from him. Jesus healed people who were attacked by evil, unclean spirits. Many more of Jesus' disciples were in the crowds that came to Jesus.

See: Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

See Map: Jerusalem; Judea; Tyre; Sidon

6:20-23

To whom did Jesus teach?

[6:20]

Luke wrote that Jesus looked at his disciples when he taught. This was the twelve apostles who came down the mountain with him. Also, it was the larger crowd of Jesus' disciples waiting for him to come down from the mountain (see: Luke 6:17).

See: Disciple; Apostle

What four things did Jesus teach that God approved?

[6:20, 6:21, 6:22, 6:23]

1. Jesus taught that God approved of those who were "poor" (πτωχός/g4434). Some scholars think Jesus spoke of people who did not have food, clothing, or shelter. Other scholars think Jesus spoke of the spiritually poor (see: Matthew 5:3). That is, they knew their great need for God, or people treated them badly (see: Matthew 5:10).
2. Jesus taught that God approved of those who were hungry. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about people who did not have food. These scholars think when God promised to feed people who were hungry, he was thinking about a feast held in heaven (see: Luke 13:29). Other scholars think Jesus spoke using a metaphor. He wanted to say that those who were hungry and thirsty really wanted to do the things that God wanted them to do (see: Matthew 5:6). These scholars think the words, "you will be filled" spoke about God's promise to approve those who hungered for him in this way.
3. Jesus taught that God approved those who "weep" (κλαίω/g2799). God promised them that their weeping will change to laughter. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about people being sorry for their sin or for the sins of other people. This sorrow caused them to weep. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about the evil of the world. This also caused Christians to weep. These scholars think Jesus spoke about the day when God gathers his people into his kingdom. There will be no weeping in the kingdom of God. There, all weeping will be changed to laughter (see: Jeremiah 31:13; Revelation 7:17; 21:4).
4. Jesus taught that God approves the disciples when people hate them for following Jesus. That is, when others treat Christians badly for following Jesus, Jesus told them to "rejoice" (χαίρω/g5463). Their reward will be in heaven when they die (see: Romans 5:3-5; 1 Peter 4:13).

See: Matthew 5:3; Ephesians 2:1-5

See: Metaphor; Kingdom of God; Persecute (Persecution)

6:24-26

What four things did Jesus teach that God did not reward?

[6:24, 6:25, 6:26]

1. Jesus said “woe”(οὐαί/g3759) to rich people. That is, disaster comes for people who trust in the things they own or in what they know. Jesus said these people received their reward here on this earth. No reward is given to them in heaven (see: Luke 12:16-21).
2. Jesus said “woe” to the “full”(ἐμπλήμι/g1705) people. That is, they do not think they needed God because they meet their own needs. However, Jesus warned them and said they will hunger. That is, spiritual hunger destroys them after their death (see: Luke 16:19-30; Isaiah 65:13-14).
3. God warned those who “laugh”(γελάω/g1070) now. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about a certain type of laughing. That is, he warned those who do not take care of the needs of others. Jesus said these people will one day weep and mourn.
4. Jesus said “woe” to you if people only say good things about you. Many people said evil things about Jesus because they hated his message. Jesus told the crowd that their fathers spoke good things which were said by false prophets (see: Jeremiah 5:31).

See: Prophet; Reward

6:27-36

Why did Jesus talk to those “who hear”?

[6:27]

Some scholars think Jesus was speaking to his disciples when he said, “I say to you who hear”(ἀκούω/g0191) (see: 6:20-26). Jesus only spoke to the whole crowd around him after he spoke to the disciples. Other scholars think that when Jesus said, “I say to you who hear,” he was speaking to those who listened and obeyed his words. That is, they obeyed because they heard.

See: Disciple

What three things did Jesus tell his disciples to do?

[6:27, 6:28, 6:29]

1. Jesus told his disciples to “love”(ἀγαπάω/g0025) their enemies. That is, they needed to be respectful to those who hated them and do good to those who hated them. Jesus said the world hated him, it will also hate people who believe in Jesus (see: John 15:18). God rewards those who give this type of love to others (see: 6:32,35).
2. Jesus told his disciples to “do good”(καλῶς/g2573) to those who hate them. That is, they need to be kind to those who hate them. In the same way Jesus taught about love, Christians are not to want to be treated kindly simply because they treated others kindly (see: Luke 6:33, 35). Christians show kindness in two ways. First, they speak good about a person who speaks evil of them. Second, they pray for the people who treat them badly.
3. Jesus told his disciples to give to those who ask to borrow something from them. In the same way Christians are to love and do good without wanting anything for this, they are to give whatever is asked of them without wanting to get anything back from the one who asked (see: Luke 6:34-35).

See: Persecute (Persecution)

How did God the Father show mercy to people?

[6:36]

Some scholars think Jesus said God the Father shows mercy to people by not getting angry quickly. He also gives approval and unchanging love to them (see: Psalm 103:8). Luke later said that Jesus told a story of a man who showed the same type of mercy that the Father shows (see: Luke 10:30-37).

6:37-38

How did Jesus tell Christians to treat others?

[6:37]

Jesus told Christians not to “judge” (κρίνω/g2919). Only God can judge a person because he knows what a person really wants, even if they do not tell anyone or do not know themselves. Also, Jesus told believers not to “condemn” (καταδικάζω/g2613) others. Only God can condemn.

Jesus told Christians to forgive others. That is, Christians are to forgive others when they do something wrong to them. This is not the same forgiveness for disobeying God. Only God can forgive those sins. Also, Jesus told Christians to freely “give” (δίδωμι/g1325) to others. That is, to meet the needs of others.

What was a “good measure?”

[6:38]

Jesus said the metaphor “good measure” to tell Christians about how valuable it was to give a lot to others. In the days of Jesus, the shop owners measured and sold their grain by pouring it into a person’s lap. The people wore a robe with a fold between their legs. A seller measured the grain and filled the fold of the robe. The fold was then pressed together and shaken. This made space for more grain. The seller then poured more grain into the fold of the robe until it went over the top of the fold.

See: Metaphor

6:39-42

Why did Jesus tell this parable?

[6:39]

Jesus used this parable to say that his disciples needed to be “fully trained” (καταρτίζω/g2675). Once they become fully trained, they will teach others. A fully trained disciple is one who understands God’s word fully. That is, because he understands God’s word fully, he does what God wants him to do (see: Hebrews 5:12-14). A fully trained disciple is one who knows when they hear a false teacher. Jesus said these false teachers were blind. That is, they were blind to true things about God. He told his disciples to not follow the teachings of a blind, false teacher.

See: Parable; Disciple

6:43-45

What was the “treasure” of a person’s heart?

[6:45]

Jesus used the word “treasure” to say how valuable the works were from a person’s “heart”(καρδία/g2588). When the Bible wrote about a person’s “heart,” it meant a person’s inner self. A person who did not believe in Jesus was under the control of the devil (see: Ephesians 2:1-3). But a person who believed in Jesus was a new creation. The Holy Spirit controlled them (see: 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 1:13-14).

In the same way a tree grew only one type of fruit, a person spoke what was in their heart. This was not both good and evil.

See: Satan (The Devil); Sanctify (Sanctification)

6:46-49

Why did Jesus say that being his disciple was like building a house?

[6:48]

Jesus said that in the same way a house was built on a solid foundation, a Christian needed to trust Jesus so that they were able to withstand the devil. Jesus’s words were their solid foundation. Jesus said that he was the cornerstone of the house (see: Ephesians 2:19-21). That is, he is the cornerstone of the church. In the same way a house with a solid foundation will not be destroyed during a severe storm, so a Christian who follows Jesus’s words will not be destroyed when the devil attacks them.

Also, in the same way a house without a solid foundation is easily destroyed when a severe storm comes, someone who does not follow Jesus’ words will be destroyed by the works of the enemy, the devil.

Advice to translators: A foundation is the base or bottom part of a house. If a foundation a not made well, then the whole house cannot be made well. A cornerstone is the first stone put in place in a house or building. After this stone is put into place, it affects the rest of the house. If it is put into crooked, then the whole house will be crooked.

See: Disciple; Satan (The Devil)

Luke 6:1

Connecting Statement:

While Jesus and his disciples are walking through grainfields, some Pharisees begin to question the disciples about what they are doing on the Sabbath, which, in God’s law, has been set aside for God.

Now it happened

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

grainfields

These are large sections of land where people had scattered wheat seed to grow wheat.

heads of grain

These are the topmost parts of the grain plant, which is a kind of large grass. It holds the mature, edible seeds of the plant.

grain, rubbing them between their hands, and eating

They did this to separate the grain seeds. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "grain. They rubbed them in their hands to separate the grains from the husks and ate"

Luke 6:2

General Information:

The word "you" here is plural, and refers to the disciples.

Why are you doing something that is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day?

They asked this question to accuse the disciples of breaking the law. It can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Picking grain on the Sabbath is against God's law!"

doing something

The Pharisees considered even the small action of rubbing a handful of grain to be unlawful work. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "doing work"

Luke 6:3

Have you not even read ... him?

Jesus is rebuking the Pharisees for not learning from the scriptures. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should learn from what you have read ... him!" or "Certainly you have read ... him!"

Luke 6:4

the bread of the presence

This is the sacred bread that priests placed before God in the tabernacle. It represented God's presence. Alternate translation: "the bread of Yahweh's presence" or "the bread that the priest placed before God" or "the sacred bread"

Luke 6:5

The Son of Man is

Jesus was referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, am"

is Lord of the Sabbath

The title "Lord" here emphasizes his authority over the Sabbath. Alternate translation: "has the authority to determine what is right for people to do on the Sabbath!"

Luke 6:6

General Information:

It is now another Sabbath day and Jesus is in the synagogue.

Connecting Statement:

The scribes and Pharisees watch as Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath.

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new event in the story.

A man was there

This introduces a new character in the story.

hand was withered

The man's hand was damaged in such a way that he could not stretch it. It was probably almost bent into a fist, making it look small and wrinkled.

Luke 6:7

were watching him closely

"were watching Jesus carefully"

so that they might find

"because they wanted to find"

Luke 6:8

in the middle of everyone

"in front of everyone." Jesus wanted the man to stand where everyone there could see him.

Luke 6:9

to them

"to the Pharisees"

I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to destroy it?

Jesus asks this question to force the Pharisees to admit that he was right to heal on the Sabbath. The intent of the question is thus rhetorical: to get them to admit what they all know is true rather than to obtain information. However, Jesus says, "I ask you," so this question is not like other rhetorical questions that might need to be translated as statements. This should be translated as a question.

to do good or to do harm

"to help someone or to harm someone"

Luke 6:10

Stretch out your hand

"Hold out your hand" or "Extend your hand"

restored

healed

Luke 6:11

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 6:12

General Information:

Jesus chooses twelve apostles after he prays all night.

It happened in those days

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.

in those days

"around that time" or "not long after" or "one day around then"

he went out

"Jesus went out"

Luke 6:13

When it was day

"When it was morning" or "The next day"

he chose twelve of them

"he chose twelve of the disciples"

whom he also named apostles

"whom he also made apostles" or "and he appointed them to be apostles"

Luke 6:14

The names of the apostles were

Luke wrote a list of the names of the apostles. The ULB uses these words to introduce the list.

his brother Andrew

"Simon's brother, Andrew"

Luke 6:15

the Zealot

Possible meanings are 1) "the Zealot" is a title that indicates he was part of the group of people who wanted to free the Jewish people from Roman rule. Alternate translation: "the patriot" or "the nationalist" or 2) "the Zealot" is a description that indicates he was zealous for God to be honored. Alternate translation: "the passionate one"

Luke 6:16

became a traitor

It may be necessary to explain what "traitor" means in this context. Alternate translation: "betrayed his friend" or "turned his friend over to enemies"

Luke 6:17

Connecting Statement:

Though Jesus especially addresses his disciples, there are many people around who listen.

with them

"with the twelve he had chosen" or "with his twelve apostles"

Luke 6:18

to be healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Jesus to heal them"

People who were troubled with unclean spirits were also healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus also healed people who were troubled with unclean spirits"

troubled with unclean spirits

"bothered by unclean spirits" or "controlled by evil spirits"

Luke 6:19

power to heal was coming out from him

"he had power to heal people" or "he was using his power to heal people"

Luke 6:20

Blessed are you

Jesus speaks this phrase three times. Each time, it indicates that God gives favor to certain people or that their situation is positive or good.

Blessed are you who are poor

"You who are poor receive God's favor" or "You who are poor benefit"

for yours is the kingdom of God

Languages that do not have a word for kingdom might say, "for God is your king" or "because God is your ruler."

yours is the kingdom of God

"the kingdom of God belongs to you." This could mean 1) "you belong to God's kingdom" or 2) "you will have authority in God's kingdom."

Luke 6:21

you will laugh

"you will laugh with joy" or "you will be joyful"

Luke 6:22

Blessed are you

"You receive God's favor" or "You benefit" or "How good it is for you"

exclude you

"reject you"

because of the Son of Man

"because you associate with the Son of Man" or "because they reject the Son of Man"

Luke 6:23

in that day

"when they do those things" or "when that happens"

leap for joy

This idiom means "be extremely joyful"

a great reward

"a large payment" or "good gifts"

Luke 6:24

woe to you

"how terrible it is for you." Jesus speaks this phrase three times. It is the opposite of "blessed are you." Each time, it indicates that God's anger is directed at the people, or that something negative or bad awaits them.

woe to you who are rich

"how terrible it is for you who are rich" or "trouble will come to you who are rich"

your comfort

"what comforts you" or "what satisfies you" or "what makes you happy"

Luke 6:25

who are full now

"whose stomachs are full now" or "who eat much now"

who laugh now

"who are happy now"

Luke 6:26

Woe to you

"How terrible it is for you" or "How sad you should be"

when all men speak

Here "men" is used in the generic sense the includes all people. Alternate translation: "when all people speak" or "when everyone speaks"

that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets

"their ancestors also spoke well of the false prophets"

Luke 6:27

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to speak to his disciples and the crowd who is listening to him as well.

to you who are listening

Jesus now begins to speak to the entire crowd, rather than just to his disciples.

love ... do good

Each of these commands is to be followed continually, not just a single time.

love your enemies and

This does not mean those listening were to only love their enemies and not their friends. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "love your enemies, not only your friends, and"

Luke 6:28

Bless ... pray

Each of these commands is to be followed continually, not just a single time.

Bless those

God is the one who blesses. This can made explicit. Alternate translation: "Ask God to bless those"

those who curse you

"those who habitually curse you"

those who mistreat you

"those who habitually mistreat you"

Luke 6:29

To him who strikes you

"If anyone hits you"

on the one cheek

"on one side of your face"

offer him also the other

It may be helpful to state what the attacker will do to the person. Alternate translation: "turn your face so that he can strike the other cheek also"

do not withhold

"do not prevent him from taking"

Luke 6:30

Give to everyone who asks you

"If anyone asks you for something, give it to him"

do not ask him to give

"do not require him to give" or "do not demand that he give"

Luke 6:31

As you want people to do to you, you should do the same to them

In some languages it may be more natural to reverse the order. Alternate translation: "You should do to people the same as what you want them to do to you" or "Treat people they way you want them to treat you"

Luke 6:32

what reward is there for you?

"what reward will you receive?" or "what praise will you receive for doing that?" This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "you will not receive any reward for that." or "God will not reward you for that."

Luke 6:33

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 6:34

people from whom you hope to be repaid

Here the word "hope" means to confidently expect that what one desires will happen. The person who hopes in this way believes that what he desires will happen. The verb "to be repaid" can be expressed with an active form. Alternate translation: "people whom you expect will repay you" or "people whom you believe will repay you"

to receive back the same amount

The law of Moses commanded the Jews not to receive interest on money they loaned to other Jews.

Luke 6:35

expecting nothing in return

"not expecting the person to return what you have given him" or "not expecting the person to give you anything"

your reward will be great

"you will receive a great reward" or "you will receive good payment" or "you will get good gifts because of it"

you will be sons of the Most High

It is best to translate "sons" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to a human son or child.

sons of the Most High

Make sure that the word "sons" is plural so it is not confused with Jesus's title "The Son of the Most High."

unthankful and evil people

"people who do not thank him and who are evil"

Luke 6:36

your Father

This refers to God. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to a human father.

Luke 6:37

Do not judge

"Do not judge people" or "Do not harshly criticize people"

and you

"and as a result you"

you will not be judged

Jesus does not say who will not judge. Possible meanings are 1) "God will not judge you" or 2) "no one will judge you"

Do not condemn

"Do not condemn people"

you will not be condemned

Jesus does not say who will not condemn. Possible meanings are 1) "God will not condemn you" or 2) "no one will condemn you"

you will be forgiven

Jesus does not say who will forgive. Possible meanings are 1) "God will forgive you" or 2) "people will forgive you"

Luke 6:38

it will be given to you

Jesus does not say exactly who will give. Possible meanings are 1) "someone will give it to you" or 2) "God will give it to you"

A good amount—pressed down, shaken together and spilling over—will pour into your lap

Jesus speaks either of God or of people giving generously as if he were speaking of a generous grain merchant. Alternate translation: "God will pour into your lap a generous amount—pressed down, shaken together and spilling over" or "Like a generous grain merchant who presses down the grain and shakes it together and pours in so much grain that it spills over, they will give generously to you"

A good amount

"A generous amount" or "A large amount"

it will be measured back to you

Jesus does not say exactly who will measure. Possible meanings are 1) "they will measure things back to you" or 2) "God will measure things back to you"

Luke 6:39

Connecting Statement:

Jesus includes some examples to make his point.

Can a blind person guide another blind person?

Jesus used this question to get the people to think about something that they already know. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "We all know that a blind person cannot guide another blind person."

blind person

The person who is "blind" is a metaphor for a person who has not been taught as a disciple.

If he did

Some languages might prefer, "if one did."

they would both fall into a pit, would they not?

This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "both of them would fall into a hole."

Luke 6:40

A disciple is not greater than his teacher

"A disciple does not surpass his teacher." Possible meanings are 1) "A disciple does not have more knowledge than his teacher" or 2) "A disciple does not have more authority than his teacher."

everyone when he is fully trained

"every disciple who has been trained well" or "every disciple whose teacher has fully taught him"

Luke 6:41

Why do you look ... brother's eye, but you do not notice the log that is in your own eye?

Jesus uses this question to challenge the people to pay attention to their own sins before they pay attention to another person's sins. Alternate translation: "Do not look ... brother's eye while you ignore the log that is in your own eye."

the tiny piece of straw that is in your brother's eye

This is a metaphor that refers to the less important faults of a fellow believer.

tiny piece of straw

"speck" or "splinter" or "bit of dust." Use a word for the smallest thing that commonly falls into a person's eyes.

brother

Here "brother" refers to a fellow Jew or a fellow believer in Jesus.

do not notice the log that is in your own eye

"do not notice that you have a log in your own eye"

the log that is in your own eye

This is a metaphor for a person's most important faults. A log could not literally go into a person's eye. Jesus exaggerates to emphasize that a person should pay attention to his own more important faults before he deals with another person's less important faults.

log

"beam" or "plank"

Luke 6:42

How can you say ... eye?

Jesus asks this question to challenge the people to pay attention to their own sins before they pay attention to another person's sins. Alternate translation: "You should not say ... eye."

Luke 6:43

General Information:

People can tell if a tree is good or bad, and what type of tree it is, by the fruit it produces. Jesus uses this as an unexplained metaphor—we know what kind of person someone is when we see his actions.

For there is

"This is because there is." This indicates that what follows is the reason why we should not judge our brother.

good tree

"healthy tree"

rotten fruit

fruit that is decaying or bad or worthless

Luke 6:44

each tree is known

People recognize the kind of tree by the fruit it bears. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people know the type of a tree" or "people recognize a tree"

thornbush

a plant or shrub that has thorns

briar bush

a vine or shrub that has thorns

Luke 6:45

General Information:

Jesus compares the thoughts of a person to his good or evil treasure. When a good person has good thoughts, he engages in good actions. When an evil person thinks evil thoughts, he engages in evil actions.

The good man

The word "good" here means righteous or moral.

good man

The word "man" here refers to a person, male or female. Alternate translation: "good person"

the good treasure of his heart

Here the good thoughts of a person are spoken of as if they were treasures stored in the heart of that person, and "his heart" is a metonym for the person's inner being. Alternate translation: "the good things he keeps deep inside himself" or "the good things he values very intensely"

produces what is good

Producing what is good is a metaphor for doing what is good. Alternate translation: "does what is good"

the evil treasure of his heart

Here the evil thoughts of a person are spoken of as if they were evil things stored in the heart of that person, and "his heart" is a metonym the person's inner being. Alternate translation: "the evil things he keeps deep inside himself" or "the evil things he values very intensely"

out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks

Here "heart" represents the person's mind or inner being. The phrase "his mouth" represents the person as a whole. Alternate translation: "what he thinks in his heart affects what he says with his mouth" or "a person will speak aloud what truly values inside of himself"

Luke 6:46

Lord, Lord

Here the repetition of these words is used as an exclamation. People repeat a name or title in this way when trying to find someone or to get someone's attention.

Luke 6:47

General Information:

In verse 47-48 Jesus compares the person who obeys his teaching to a man who builds a house on rock where it will be safe from floods.

Every person who comes to me and hears my words and obeys them, I will tell you what he is like

It may be clearer to change the order of this sentence.
Alternate translation: "I will tell you what every person is like who comes to me and hears my words and obeys them"

Luke 6:48

dug down deep in the ground and built the house's foundation on solid rock

"dug down deep into the ground until he found a large, solid rock. Then he built his house on that rock so that it would be strong and stable." Some cultures may not be familiar with this process of building a house and may need to use another image for a stable foundation.

torrent of water

"fast-moving water" or "river"

flowed against

"crashed against"

shake it

Possible meanings are 1) "cause it to shake" or 2) "destroy it."

because it had been well built

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the man had built it well"

Luke 6:49

General Information:

Jesus compares the person who hears but does not obey his teaching to a man who builds a house that has no foundation and so will collapse when the flood comes.

But the person

"But" shows a strong contrast to the previous person who built with a foundation.

on top of the ground without a foundation

Some cultures may not know that a house with a foundation is stronger. Additional information may be helpful. Alternate translation: "but he did not dig down and build first a foundation"

torrent of water

"fast-moving water" or "river"

flowed against

"crashed against"

collapsed

fell down or came apart

the ruin of that house was complete

"that house was completely destroyed"

Luke 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted material in 7:27.

Several times in this chapter Luke changes his topic without marking the change. You should not try to make these rough changes smooth.

Special concepts in this chapter

Centurion

The centurion who asked Jesus to heal his slave ([Luke 7:2](#)) was doing many unusual things. A Roman soldier would almost never go to a Jew for anything, and most wealthy people did not love or care for their slaves. (See: centurion and faith)

John's Baptism

John baptized people to show that those he was baptizing knew they were sinners and were sorry for their sin. (See: repent and sin)

"Sinners"

Luke refers to a group of people as "sinners." The Jewish leaders considered these people to be hopelessly ignorant of the law of Moses, and so called them "sinners." In reality, the leaders were sinful. This situation can be taken as irony.

"Feet"

The feet of the people in the ancient Near East were very dirty because they wore sandals and the roads and trails were dusty and muddy. Only slaves washed other people's feet. The woman who washed Jesus's feet was showing him great honor.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

- [Luke 7:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 7

7:1-10

Where is Capernaum?

[7:1]

See Map: Capernaum

What was a centurion?

[7:2]

A centurion was a type of Roman soldier. They led 100 soldiers.

See: Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar)

Why did the centurion send two groups of people to Jesus?

[7:3, 7:6]

The centurion sent two groups of people to Jesus because he was a Gentile. Perhaps he thought the leaders of the Jews had more influence than he did to ask Jesus to heal his servant. So he sent the leaders of the Jews to Jesus. Scholars think the centurion was humble because he felt unworthy for Jesus to come to his house and instead he sent his friends to speak with Jesus.

See: Gentile

Why did Matthew write that the centurion himself spoke to Jesus?

Matthew also wrote about this story, but he did not say the centurion sent people to Jesus (see: Matthew 8:5-13). Many scholars think the centurion spoke through his friends. That is, their words were the same as his words.

Why did the message of the centurion amaze Jesus?

[7:9]

Scholars think the centurion's message amazed Jesus for three reasons.

1. Though the centurion led many people, he showed humility before Jesus. He believed in Jesus' ability and power to heal his servant. The centurion felt unworthy for Jesus to come to his home because of his respect for Jesus.
2. The centurion understood the ability to give commands. Luke wrote about how the soldiers were given permission to give commands to other people they lead. He understood that Jesus had the ability to heal his servant from a distance.
3. Jesus never saw people in Israel believe in him so strongly. This Gentile military leader showed that he believed in Jesus more than the people of Israel. That is, God's chosen people did not show this much faith.

See: Gentile; Faith (Believe in); People of God

7:11-17

Why did Jesus raise the young man from the dead?

[7:14]

Scholars think Jesus raised the young man from the dead for two reasons.

1. Jesus had compassion for the young man's mother. His mother was also a widow, and she did not have any other sons. In ancient times, a widow's sons helped their mother and without them, the mother would be very poor.
2. Jesus wanted people to know that he controlled death and uncleanness.

Why did Jesus not become unclean when he touched the dead body?

[7:14]

The Old Testament spoke about uncleanness coming over someone who touches a dead body (see: Number 19:11-6). However, when Jesus raised the widow's son back to life, he made the man clean. Because he raised the boy, Jesus never became unclean under the Law of Moses.

See: Clean and Unclean; Law of Moses; Sin

Why did all the people say Jesus was a "great prophet"?

[7:16]

The people said Jesus was a "great prophet" because he raised a young man from the dead. Only two other prophets raised people from the dead. Elijah raised a widow's son (see: 1 Kings 17:17-18), and Elisha raised the son of a Shunammite woman (see: 2 Kings 4:18-37).

See: Prophet

7:18-23

Why did John send two of his disciples to ask Jesus if he was the "Coming One"?

[7:19]

Scholars give two reasons why John sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he is the "Coming One." That is, if Jesus was the messiah whom God promised to come.

1. John wanted to strengthen the faith of his disciples.
2. John wanted to know himself that Jesus is the "Coming One." God gave John a message to preach that spoke of a coming judgment. John expected Jesus to bring judgment on sinners quickly (see: Luke 3:8,16-17). When John was put in prison, Jesus said others will also be put in prison before the judgment of God comes on the world (see: Luke 21:10-22).

See: Preach (Preacher); Messiah (Christ)

Why might people "fall away" because of Jesus?

[7:23]

Some scholars think Jesus' words spoke about people in general. They think people "fall away" because they expected the Messiah to be someone different than who he really is. Other scholars think Jesus spoke to John specifically. They think Jesus' words told John not to stop believing in Jesus because judgment did not happen at the time John thought it was going to happen.

See: Judge (Judgment)

7:24-28

Why did Jesus ask the crowds about going into the wilderness?

[7:24]

Jesus asked the crowds three questions about going into the wilderness to speak about the serious message of John. Jesus did not want the crowds to answer the questions, but he wanted to use the questions to teach the truth about John. The first question spoke about a reed shaken by the wind. The wind easily bent reeds back and forth, and this was a common sight. People did not travel to the wilderness to see reeds bending in the wind. Some scholars think Jesus was saying that John was not a man who was easily swayed. Rather he was a solid man who believed in the coming Messiah.

Jesus then asked the people if they went to the wilderness to see a man dressed in soft, fancy clothes. The people knew that a person in soft, fancy clothes did not live in the wilderness. The third question Jesus asked was whether the people went out to the wilderness to see a prophet. Jesus told the crowds that John was more than just a prophet.

See: Metaphor; Parable

Why did Jesus say John was more than a prophet?

[7:26]

Many scholars think Jesus said John was "more than a prophet" because John spoke about the coming of the Messiah. The Old Testament prophet, Malachi, spoke about a prophet coming to tell people about the Messiah before the messiah came. Malachi spoke about the prophet John. John not only told people about the coming of the messiah, he also saw the messiah. He witnessed God's words about Jesus happen (see: John 1:32-34). Jesus even spoke about John the prophet being the same as Elijah, the prophet promised to come (see: Matthew 17:11-13).

See: Malachi 4:5-6

See: Prophet; Messiah (Christ)

Why did Jesus say the least in the kingdom was actually greater than John?

[7:28]

Scholars think Jesus said the least in the kingdom was actually greater than John because John lived in the time before Jesus began his ministry. That is, John did not live to see Jesus die and become alive again because he was in prison. Also, the ones Jesus called "the least" of his followers saw many believers filled with the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist did not see any. However, John will be in the kingdom in heaven with all of God's prophets (see: Luke 13:28).

See: Kingdom of God; Minister (Ministry); Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Filling of the Holy Spirit

7:29-30

Why did Luke write that the people declared God to be right?

[7:29]

After the people heard Jesus speak, those John baptized said that God was right. Some scholars think because John spoke about repentance and the Messiah, it showed that John taught God's message. However, the Pharisees refused to believe that Jesus is the Messiah and they refused to repent. They believed following the Law of Moses was right and made them be at peace with God.

See: Pharisees; Baptize (Baptism); Repent (Repentance); Messiah (Christ); Law of Moses

7:31-35

Who were the people of that generation?

[7:31]

Many scholars think Jesus spoke about the Pharisees, the teachers of the Law of Moses and all those who followed them. These scholars think Jesus spoke about the things the people of Israel did in the past (see: Acts 7:51-53). Jesus said that in the same way children made up games with rules, so did the Pharisees and teachers of the law of Moses criticized anyone who did not play by their rules.

See: Pharisees; Law of Moses

What did Jesus say about the accusations of the Pharisees?

[7:34, 7:35]

Jesus spoke about the things the Pharisees accused them of. They did this by saying wisdom was shown to be true by her children. This meant those who trusted in God and obeyed his commands were wise people. The Pharisees rejected the things John said that God gave him to tell the people. The Pharisees also rejected Jesus the messiah. They rejected him because he was a friend of sinners. Because the Pharisees rejected both John and Jesus, they were not considered to be children of wisdom.

See: Wise (Wisdom, Fool); Messiah (Christ)

7:36-50

How did Jesus recline at the table?

[7:36]

Jesus reclined at the table by lying on his side and facing the table. His feet went away from the table. The woman was then able to touch his feet. This reclining at a table was common in the days of Jesus.

How did Luke describe the unnamed woman?

[7:37]

Luke wrote the unnamed woman was a sinner. Luke did not say how she sinned. Some scholars think she was a prostitute. Fewer scholars think she committed adultery or her husband dishonored God in his work.

See: Sin; Adultery

What was an alabaster jar?

[7:37]

An alabaster jar was a glass or soft-stone jar with a long neck that held perfume. Both the jar and the perfume were very expensive. A woman broke the long neck of the jar to pour out the perfume. Why was the woman crying? Some scholars think the woman's tears showed her humility and a deep sense of repentance. Other scholars think she felt sad because she sinned. Or she felt joy because Jesus forgave her sins. So, she showed she loved Jesus very much by pouring out her tears on his feet, wiping them with her hair, kissing them, and anointing them with perfume from her alabaster jar.

See: Anoint (Anointing); Repent (Repentance)

Why did Simon the Pharisee think Jesus was not a prophet?

[7:39]

Simon the Pharisee thought Jesus did not know the woman was a sinner. So, he must not be a prophet. The Pharisees always kept away from any contact with sinners. Simon thought that Jesus, if he were a prophet, would also keep away from sinners.

See: Prophet

How did Jesus "answer" Simon?

[7:40]

Simon did not ask his question for others to be able to hear him. He only thought the question. However, Jesus knew Simon's inner thoughts and was able to answer Simon's question. Then people knew Jesus was a prophet.

See: Prophet

How much was a denarius?

[7:41]

A denarius was a fair wage for a day of labor (see: Matthew 20:2). Scholars say the man with the large debt needed one and three-quarters years to earn what he owed. The man with the small debt needed two months to earn what he owed. This story was a metaphor. In the story to Simon, the moneylender who "forgave" (χαρίζομαι/g5483) the debts of denarii was Jesus who "forgives" (ἀφίημι/g0863) people who sinned.

See: Denarius; Metaphor

Why did Jesus speak about water for his feet to Simon?

[7:44]

Jesus spoke to Simon about what was good and polite to do for a guest. That is, to provide water for the washing of feet, a kiss of greeting to welcome a guest into their home, and oil to anoint the guest's head. Simon failed to provide any of these common greetings to Jesus. But, the sinful woman washed the feet of Jesus with her own tears, kissed the feet of Jesus, and anointed his feet with expensive perfume. The sinful woman went far beyond Simon but others thought Simon was a man who honored God.

See: Genesis 18:4; 43:24

See: Anoint (Anointing)

Why did Jesus forgive the woman?

[7:47, 7:48]

Jesus forgave the woman because she believed in him. Jesus said her faith saved her (see: 7:50). The woman showed great love toward Jesus because of her awareness of her great sin. She knew only Jesus saved her. Her acts of love came from her desire to repent.

See: Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon); Repent (Repentance); Faith (Believe in)

What did the other guests think about Jesus forgiving the woman who sinned?

[7:49]

The other guests thought Jesus was not able to forgive people who sinned. They knew that only God is able to forgive people who sin. The other guests at the table continued to reject Jesus the Messiah. That is, they did not think he was equal with God.

See: Messiah (Christ)

Luke 7:1	He is worthy
General Information:	"The centurion is worthy"
Jesus enters Capernaum, where he heals a centurion's servant.	Luke 7:5
	our nation
in the hearing of the people	"our people." This refers to the Jewish people.
The idiom "in the hearing" emphasizes that he wanted them to hear what he said. Alternate translation: "to the people who were listening to him" or "to the people who were present" or "for the people to hear"	Luke 7:6
	continued on his way
he entered Capernaum	"went along"
This begins a new event in the story.	not far from the house
Luke 7:2	"near the house"
who was highly regarded by him	do not trouble yourself
"whom the centurion valued" or "whom he respected"	The centurion was speaking politely to Jesus. Alternate translation: "do not trouble yourself by coming to my house" or "I do not wish to bother you"
Luke 7:3	
General Information:	come under my roof
This page has intentionally been left blank.	This phrase is an idiom that means "come into my house." If your language has an idiom that means "come into my house," think about whether it would be good to use here.
Luke 7:4	
asked him earnestly	
"pleaded with him" or "begged him"	

Luke 7:7

just say a word

The servant understood that Jesus could heal the servant just by speaking. Here "word" refers to a command. Alternate translation: "just give the order"

my servant will be healed

The word that is translated here as "servant" is normally translated as "boy." It may indicate that the servant was very young or show the centurion's affection for him.

Luke 7:8

I also am a man who is under authority

"I also have someone over me that I must obey"

under me

"under my authority"

to my servant

The word that is translated here as "servant" is the typical word for a servant.

Luke 7:9

he was amazed at him

"he was amazed at the centurion"

I say to you

Jesus said this to emphasize the surprising thing that he was about to tell them.

not even in Israel have I found such faith.

The implication is that Jesus expected Jewish people to have this kind of faith, but they did not. He did not expect Gentiles to have this kind of faith, yet this man did. You may need to add this implied information. Alternate translation: "I have not found any Israelite who trusts me as much as this Gentile does!"

Luke 7:10

those who had been sent

It is understood that these were the people the centurion sent. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "the people whom the Roman officer had sent to Jesus"

Luke 7:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus goes to the city of Nain, where he heals a man who had died.

Nain

This is the name of a city.

Luke 7:12

behold, a man who had died

The word "behold" alerts us to the introduction of the dead man into the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "there was a dead man who"

a man who had died was being carried out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people were carrying out of the city a man who had died"

carried out, the only son of his mother (who was a widow), and a rather large crowd

"carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow. A rather large crowd." This is background information about the dead man and his mother.

widow

a woman whose husband has died and who has not remarried

Luke 7:13

was deeply moved with compassion for her

"felt very sorry for her"

Luke 7:14

he went up

"he went forward" or "he approached the dead man"

the wooden frame on which they carried the body

This was a stretcher or bed used to move the body to the burial place. It did not have to be something in which the body was buried. Other translations may have the less common "bier" or "funeral couch."

I say to you, arise

Jesus says this to emphasize that the young man needs to obey him. "Listen to me! Arise"

Luke 7:15

The dead man

The man was not still dead; he was now alive. It may be necessary to state this clearly. Alternate translation: "The man who had been dead"

Luke 7:16

Connecting Statement:

This tells what happens as a result of Jesus healing the man who had died.

fear overcame all of them

"fear filled all of them." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they all became very afraid"

A great prophet has been raised among us

They were referring to Jesus, not to some unidentified prophet. "Raised" here is an idiom for "caused to become." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has caused one of us to become a great prophet"

looked upon

This idiom means "cared for"

Luke 7:17

This news about Jesus spread

"This news" refers to the things people were saying in verse 16. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People spread this report about Jesus" or "People told others this report about Jesus"

This news

"This report" or "This message"

Luke 7:18

John's disciples told him about all these things

This introduces a new event in the story.

told him

"told John"

all these things

"all the things Jesus was doing"

Luke 7:19

Connecting Statement:

John sends two of his disciples to question Jesus.

Luke 7:20

the men said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to say, 'Are you ... or should we look for another?'"

This sentence can be rewritten so that it only has one direct quote. Alternate translation: "the men said that John the Baptist had sent them to him to ask, 'Are you the one who is coming, or should we look for another?'" or "the men said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask if you are the one who is coming, or if we should look for another.'"

Luke 7:21

In that hour

"At that time"

from evil spirits

It may be helpful to restate the healing. Alternate translation: "he healed them from evil spirits" or "he set people free from evil spirits"

Luke 7:22

said to them

"said to John's messengers" or "said to the messengers that John sent"

report to John

"tell John"

people who have died are being raised back to life

"dead people are being caused to live again"

the poor

This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "poor people"

Luke 7:23

The person who does not stop believing in me because of my actions is blessed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless the person who does not stop believing in me because of my actions"

The person who does not ... is blessed

"People who do not ... are blessed" or "Anyone who does not ... is blessed" or "Whoever does not ... is blessed." This is not a specific person.

does not stop believing in me because of

"continues to believe in me despite"

believing in me

"trusting me completely"

Luke 7:24

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to speak to the crowd about John the Baptist. He asks rhetorical questions to lead them to think about what John the Baptist is really like.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

This expects a negative answer. These questions can be written as a question with an answer or as a statement. Alternate translation: "Did you go out to see a reed shaken by the wind? Of course not!" or "Surely you did not go out to see a reed being shaken by the wind!"

A reed shaken by the wind

Possible meanings of this metaphor are 1) a person who easily changes his mind, as reeds are easily moved by the wind, or 2) a person who talks a lot but does not say anything important, as reeds rattle when the wind blows.

Luke 7:25

But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes?

This expects a negative answer. These questions can be written as a question with an answer or as a statement. Alternate translation: "Did you go out to see a man dressed in soft clothes? Of course not!" or "You certainly did not go out to see a man dressed in soft clothes!"

dressed in soft clothes

This refers to expensive clothing. Normal clothing was rough. Alternate translation: "wearing expensive clothing"

kings' palaces

A palace is a large, expensive house that a king lives in.

Luke 7:26

But what did you go out to see? A prophet?

This expects a positive answer. These questions can be written as a question with an answer or as a statement. Alternate translation: "Did you go out to see a prophet? Of course you did!" or "But you actually went out to see a prophet!"

Yes, I say to you

Jesus says this to emphasize the importance of what he will say next.

more than a prophet

This phrase means that John was indeed a prophet, but that he was even greater than a typical prophet.
Alternate translation: "not just an ordinary prophet" or "much more important than a normal prophet"

Luke 7:27

This is he of whom it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "John is the one the prophets wrote about long ago"

See, I am sending

In this verse, Jesus is quoting the prophet Malachi and saying that John is the messenger of which Malachi spoke.

before your face

This idiom means "in front of you" or "to go ahead of you"

your

The word "your" is singular because God was speaking to the Messiah in the quotation.

Luke 7:28

I say to you

Jesus is speaking to the crowd, so "you" is plural. Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the surprising thing he is about to say next.

among those born of women

"among those to whom a woman has given birth." This is a metaphor that refers to all people. Alternate translation: "of all the people who have ever lived"

none is greater than John

"John is the greatest"

the one who is least in the kingdom of God

This refers to anyone who is part of the kingdom that God will establish.

is greater than he is

The spiritual state of people in the kingdom of God will be higher than that of the people before the kingdom was established. Alternate translation: "has higher spiritual status than John"

Luke 7:29

General Information:

Luke, the author of this book, comments on how people responds to John and Jesus.

When all the people heard this, including the tax collectors, they declared that God is righteous, because they had been baptized with the baptism of John

This verse could be reordered to be more clear.
Alternate translation: "When all the people who had been baptized by John, including the tax collectors, heard this, they declared that God is righteous"

they declared that God is righteous

"they said that God had shown himself to be righteous" or "they declared that God had acted righteously"

because they had been baptized with the baptism of John

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because they had let John baptize them" or "because John had baptized them"

Luke 7:30

rejected God's purpose for themselves

"rejected what God wanted them to do" or "chose to disobey what God told them"

they had not been baptized by John

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they did not let John baptize them" or "they rejected John's baptism"

Luke 7:31

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the people about John the Baptist.

To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like?

Jesus uses these questions to introduce a comparison. They can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is what I compare this generation to. This is what they are like."

I compare ... What are they like

These are two ways of saying that this is a comparison.

the people of this generation

The people living when Jesus spoke.

Luke 7:32

They are like

These words are the beginning of Jesus's comparison. Jesus is saying that the people are like children who are never satisfied with the way other children act.

marketplace

a large, open-air area where people come to sell their goods

and you did not dance

"but you did not dance to the music"

and you did not cry

"but you did not cry with us"

Luke 7:33

eating no bread

Possible meanings are 1) "frequently fasting" or 2) "not eating normal food."

you say, 'He has a demon.'

Jesus was quoting what people were saying about John. This can be stated without the direct quote. Alternate translation: "you say that he has a demon." or "you accuse him of having a demon."

Luke 7:34

The Son of Man came

Jesus expected the people to understand that he was referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, came"

you say, 'Look, he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

This can be translated as an indirect quote. If you translated "The Son of Man" as "I, the Son of man," you can state this as an indirect statement and use the first person. Alternate translation: "you accuse him of eating and drinking too much and of being a friend of tax collectors and sinners." or "you say that I am a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors sinners."

he is a gluttonous man

"he is a greedy eater" or "he continually eats too much food"

a drunkard

"a drunk" or "he continually drinks too much alcohol"

Luke 7:35

wisdom is justified by all her children

This appears to be a proverb that Jesus applied to this situation, probably to teach that wise people would understand that the people should not have rejected Jesus and John.

Luke 7:36

General Information:

It was a custom in that time for onlookers to attend dinners without eating.

Connecting Statement:

A Pharisee invites Jesus to eat at his house.

Now one of the Pharisees

This marks the beginning of a new part of the story and introduces the Pharisee into the story.

reclined at the table to eat

"sat down at the table for the meal." It was the custom at a relaxed meal such as this dinner for men to eat while lying down comfortably around the table.

Luke 7:37

Behold, there was a woman

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

who was a sinner

"who lived a sinful lifestyle" or "who had a reputation for living a sinful life." She may have been a prostitute.

an alabaster jar

"a jar made of soft stone." Alabaster is a soft, white rock. People stored precious things in alabaster jars.

of perfumed oil

"with perfume in it." The oil had something in it that made it smell nice. People rubbed it on themselves or sprinkled their clothing with it in order to smell nice.

Luke 7:38

anointed them with perfumed oil

"poured perfume on them"

Luke 7:39

he thought to himself, saying

"he said to himself"

If this man were a prophet, then he would know who and what type of woman is touching him, that she is a sinner

The Pharisee thought that Jesus was not a prophet because he allowed the sinful woman to touch him. Alternate translation: "Apparently Jesus is not a prophet, because a prophet would know that this woman who is touching him is a sinner"

that she is a sinner

Simon assumed that a prophet would never allow a sinner to touch him. This part of his assumption can be

stated clearly. Alternate translation: "that she is a sinner, and he would not allow her to touch him"

Luke 7:40

Simon

This was the name of the Pharisee who invited Jesus into his home. This was not Simon Peter.

Luke 7:41

General Information:

To emphasize what he is going to tell Simon the Pharisee, Jesus tells him a story.

A certain moneylender had two debtors

"Two men owed money to a certain moneylender"

five hundred denarii ... fifty

"500 days' wages ... 50." "Denarii" is the plural of "denarius." A "denarius" was a silver coin.

the other fifty

The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the other debtor owed fifty denarii" or "the other debtor owed 50 days' wages"

Luke 7:42

he forgave them both

"he forgave their debts" or "he canceled their debts"

Luke 7:43

I suppose

Simon was cautious about his answer. Alternate translation: "Probably"

You have judged correctly

"You are right"

Luke 7:44

Jesus turned to the woman

Jesus directed Simon's attention to the woman by turning to her.

You gave me no water for my feet

It was a basic responsibility of a host to provide water and a towel for guests to wash and dry their feet after walking on dusty roads.

You ... but she

Jesus twice uses these phrases to contrast Simon's lack of courtesy with the woman's extreme actions of gratitude.

she has wet my feet with her tears

The woman used her tears in place of the missing water.

wiped them with her hair

The woman used her hair in place of the missing towel.

Luke 7:45

You did not give me a kiss

A good host in that culture would greet his guest with a kiss on the cheek. Simon did not do this.

did not stop kissing my feet

"has continued to kiss my feet"

kissing my feet

The woman kissed the feet of Jesus rather than his cheek as a sign of extreme repentance and humility.

Luke 7:46

You did not ... but she

Jesus continues to contrast Simon's poor hospitality with the actions of the woman.

anoint my head with oil

"put oil on my head." This was the custom to welcome an honored guest. Alternate translation: "welcome me by anointing my head with oil"

anointed my feet

The woman greatly honored Jesus by doing this. She demonstrated humility by anointing his feet instead of his head.

Luke 7:47

I say to you

This emphasizes the importance of the statement that follows.

her sins, which were many, have been forgiven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has forgiven her many sins"

for she loved much

Her love was the evidence that her sins were forgiven. Some languages require that the object of "love" be stated. Alternate translation: "for she greatly loves the one who forgave her" or "for she loves God very much"

the one who is forgiven little

"anyone who is forgiven only a few things." In this sentence Jesus states a general principle. However, he expected Simon to understand that he showed very little love for Jesus.

Luke 7:48

Then he said to her

"Then he said to the woman"

Your sins are forgiven

"You are forgiven." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I forgive your sins"

Luke 7:49

reclining together

"reclining together around the table" or "eating together"

Who is this that even forgives sins?

The religious leaders knew that only God could forgive sins and did not believe that Jesus was God. This question was probably intended to be an accusation. Alternate translation: "Who does this man think he is? Only God can forgive sins!" or "Why is this man pretending to be God, who alone can forgive sins?"

Luke 7:50

Your faith has saved you

"Because of your faith, you are saved." The abstract noun "faith" could be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "Because you believe, you are saved"

Go in peace

This is a way of saying good-bye while giving a blessing at the same time. Alternate translation: "As you go, do not worry anymore" or "May God give you peace as you go"

Luke 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Several times in this chapter Luke changes his topic without marking the change. You should not try to make these rough changes smooth.

Special concepts in this chapter

Miracles

Jesus made a storm stop by speaking to it, he made a dead girl alive by speaking to her, and he made evil spirits leave a man by speaking to them. (See: miracle)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Parables

The parables were short stories that Jesus told so that people would easily understand the lesson he was trying to teach them. He also told the stories so that those who did not want to believe in him would not understand the truth ([Luke 8:4-15](#)).

Links:

- [Luke 8:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 8

8:1-3

Why did Luke write 8:1-3?

[8:1, 8:2, 8:3]

Luke wanted his readers to know two things when he wrote 8:1-3. The other gospel writers did not write about these two things.

1. Luke wanted his readers to know that Jesus “preached”(κηρύσσω/g2784) and “proclaimed” the (εὐαγγελίζω/g2097) the gospel. The gospel is about the “kingdom of God.” Luke used the word “preached.” He used this word to write about how God gave Jesus permission to speak about the kingdom of God. Luke also used the words, “proclaimed the gospel.” He wrote this because the things Jesus spoke about were good for the people to know.
2. Luke also wanted readers to know women served Jesus. Some scholars think these women served in the same way the disciples served Jesus. Other scholars think these women served Jesus in a different way.

See: Gospel; Preach (Preacher); Kingdom of God; Disciple

Who was Mary Magdalene?

[8:2]

Mary Magdalene was a woman from a small village called Magdala. Some scholars think the village was near the west side of the Sea of Galilee. Other scholars think they do not know where Magdala was located. The apostle John wrote that Mary Magdalene witnessed the resurrection of Jesus (see: John 20:11-18).

See: Apostle; Resurrect (Resurrection)

See Map: Sea of Galilee

Why did Luke write about Joanna?

[8:3]

Luke wrote about Johanna. Johanna was a person who worked for Herod. John wanted his readers to know that even the people working for Herod heard about the gospel. Some scholars think her husband, Chuza, also served Herod.

See: Gospel

8:4-15

What was a “parable”?

[8:4]

See: Parable

How did people sow seeds when Jesus lived on earth?

[8:5]

When Jesus was on the earth, people sowed seeds by having a seed bag over their shoulders. They threw seeds from the bag onto the ground. They did this in late fall or early winter. The seeds began to grow out of the ground in spring. Then they gathered what was grown in summer. Many times a dirt road or pathway went through the field where they sowed seeds.

Advice to Translators: Spring, Summer, Winter, and fall are words used to talk about the changing seasons in an area of the world. Many places in the world do not have these four seasons. They may have only two of these seasons or they may have what is called wet and dry seasons. Overall, these words are used to talk about different times of the year due to changes in the weather in that particular area.

See: Sow (Plant); Hebrew Calendar (Seasons in Israel); Metaphor

Why did Jesus tell the parable of the farmer who sowed his seed?

[8:5, 8:6, 8:7, 8:8]

Jesus told the parable of the farmer who sowed his seed. He wanted people to know four different ways people heard the word of God.

See: Sow (Plant); Gospel; Word of God

Why did Jesus say, “Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear”?

[8:8]

Scholars think Jesus said, “Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear,” because he wanted people to listen to what he said. That is, people needed to not only know what he taught, but also they needed to do the things he taught. He did not say this because he was angry. How was the seed the word of God in the parable? Scholars do not agree about how the seed was the word of God in the parable. Some scholars think it was about God ruling (see: 8:1). Other scholars think it was about people needing to obey what Jesus taught (see: 8:21).

See: Sow (Plant); Parable; Kingdom of God; Word of God

Why did Jesus speak about the seed beside the road?

[8:12]

Jesus spoke about the seed beside the road because he wanted his listeners to know how Satan tries to take away the word of God from people. That is, Satan took the word of God from people in the same way birds ate seeds from a road. Satan did not want people to know the word of God. He also did not want God to save people from the punishment of sinning.

See: 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

See: Metaphor; Sow (Plant); Satan (The Devil); Word of God

What did Jesus say about the seed that fell on the rock?

[8:13]

Jesus said some seed fell on the rock. He used this to talk about how some people rejoice when they hear the word of God. However, they stop believing in it when they begin to suffer because of it. Seeds that were thrown over rocks did only grow for a short time. This is because it did not have any water or deep roots.

See: Metaphor; Parable; Rejoice (Joy, Joyful); Word of God; Sow (Plant); Eternal Security

What happened to the seed that fell among the thorns?

[8:14]

Jesus said that thorns grew with the good plants. Thorns took the things from the soil that the good plants needed to grow. Therefore, nothing could grow around the thorns. These thorns “choked” the life from the good plants. In the same way, people were “choked”(συνπνίγω/g4846) by the “cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life.” Jesus said these people were never able to do the things that honored God (see: 3:8-9).

Advice to translators: A “thorn” was a plant with thorns. It was a type of weed. It was a plant that grew quickly and hampered other plants. It did not do anything good.

See: Sow (Plant); Metaphor

How did Jesus speak about the seed that fell on good soil?

[8:15]

Scholars think there were two ways Jesus spoke about the seed that fell on good soil. Some scholars think Jesus wanted Christians to know that more people believed in Jesus (see: Acts 6:7; Colossians 1:5-6). Other scholars think Jesus wanted Christians to know that there were many people who trusted in God and Jesus more than they did before. Perhaps Jesus meant both.

See: Sow (Plant); Metaphor

8:16-18

Why did Jesus tell the parable of the lamp?

[8:16]

Jesus told the parable of the lamp to talk about how God wanted the disciples to listen very carefully to what Jesus said. Matthew and Mark also wrote about the parable of the lamp.

See: Matthew 5:14-16; Mark 4:21-25

See: Parable; Disciple

How did Jesus speak about the “light”?

[8:16, 8:17]

Scholars think different things about how Jesus spoke about the “light.”

1. Some scholars think it was a metaphor for the things Jesus taught. Jesus taught that God wanted people to believe in the word of God (see: 8:11-15).
2. Some scholars think it was a metaphor for the people who followed Jesus. It taught the word of God to other people (see: 24:44-48).
3. Some scholars think it was a metaphor for what people thought about the things Jesus taught.

See: Metaphor; Light and Darkness (Metaphor); Word of God

What did God give or take away?

[8:18]

Scholars think God either told people more things about himself or he made the things that they already knew about him leave them. This was because of how people listened to Jesus (see: 8:11-15). Some scholars say a person who did not believe in the word of God was wrong to think he knew anything about God.

See: 11:33; 12:2

See: Word of God

8:19-21

Why did Luke tell this story about Jesus and his family?

[8:19]

Luke told this story about Jesus and his family so people would know how great was the message Jesus taught. He wanted people to hear, believe, and obey the word of God (see: 8:11,15,21). Matthew and Mark also wrote about this.

See: Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35

See: Word of God; Family of Jesus

Why did Jesus say his family were the people who heard and did the word of God?

[8:21]

Some scholars think Jesus spoke about his “mother and brothers” as a metaphor. He wanted to say that everyone who heard his word and did the things his word said to do were a member of his family. Many scholars think Jesus did not reject his mother and brothers, but he made other people able to become members of his family. On the other hand, some scholars think Jesus spoke against family when they wanted people to stop obeying God’s word (see: Luke 14:26; 18:29-30).

See: Metaphor; Children of God; Word of God

8:22-25

Why did Luke write about Jesus stopping the storm?

[8:24]

When Luke wrote about Jesus stopping the storm, he wanted Christians to know that Jesus controlled the winds and the seas. In ancient times, people did not think these things could be controlled. These miracles came near the time when Peter said Jesus is the Messiah (see: Luke 9:20). Matthew and Mark also wrote about this.

See: Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41

See: Miracle; Messiah (Christ)

See Map: Sea of Galilee

Why did the disciples call Jesus “Master”?

[8:24]

The disciples called Jesus “master”(ἐπιστάτης/g1988) because they honored Jesus. They called him “master” twice because they honored Jesus in the same way they honored God.

How did Jesus “rebuke” the wind and water?

[8:24]

Jesus “rebuked”(ἐπιτιμάω/g2008) the wind and water with his own power. He did not pray to God. That is, Jesus wanted his disciples to know he has the same power God has (see: Psalm 89:9). Scholars think that the wind and water immediately settled down after Jesus spoke.

Why did the disciples not have faith?

[8:25]

Scholars think there were two reasons the disciples did not have faith. That is, they did not fully trust Jesus.

1. The disciples did not have faith because they did not think Jesus was able to stop the storm.
2. They also did not have faith because they feared they were going to die.

See: Disciple

8:26-39

Where was the “region of the Gerasenes”?

[8:26]

See Map: Sea of Galilee; Gerasenes

Why did the demon possessed man fall down in front of Jesus?

[8:28]

Scholars think the demon possessed man fell down in front of Jesus because the demons feared Jesus. The demons gave power to the possessed man, but they had no power compared to Jesus. They did not want Jesus to punish them. However, here the demons were not worshipping Jesus.

See: Demon; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons); Worship

What was meant by the words, “Most High God”?

[8:28]

Some scholars think the words “Most High God” were used to talk about God being more powerful and greater than any other god. Other scholars think the demon possessed man called God the “Most High” because that was what Gentiles called the God of the Jews. They were in a place where the Gentiles lived.

Advice to translators: Although this talks about God being greater than other gods, this does not mean that the other gods are real. The other gods are not real and have never lived.

See: Demon; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons); Gentile

Why did the demon possessed man call Jesus “Son of the Most High God”?

[8:28]

Scholars think the demon possessed man called Jesus “Son of the Most High God” because Jesus rules over everything, including demons. He gave permission for Satan to rule the demons. The demons did not want Jesus to punish or harm them. Gabriel, the angel of God, also called Jesus the “Son of the Most High God” (see: 1:32).

See: Demon; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)); Angel

Why did Jesus ask the demon possessed man his name?

[8:30]

Scholars think there were several reasons why Jesus asked the demon possessed man his name.

1. Jesus wanted people to know that thousands of demons controlled the man. “Legion” was a name for a group of about 6,000 Roman soldiers.
2. Jesus wanted people to know that he has power over the demons. Jesus had power over demon possessed people without asking their names (see: 4:33-36).
3. Jesus wanted people to know that the man was a person even though the demons controlled him. It was a way Jesus wanted people to know that he had compassion for him.

See: Demon; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

What was the abyss?

[8:31]

See: Abyss (Bottomless Pit)

Why did the demons ask Jesus to send them into the pigs?

[8:32]

Scholars think there are several reasons why the demons wanted to go into the pigs.

1. The demons did not want Jesus to make them go into the abyss.
2. The demons knew that Jesus did not want the demons to go into other people.
3. The demons wanted to control animals if they were no longer able to control people.

See: Demon; Abyss (Bottomless Pit); Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

Why did Jesus allow the demons to go into the pigs?

[8:32]

Jesus allowed the demons to go into the pigs. Scholars think he did this for many reasons.

1. Jesus wanted people to know that God will judge demons. This will happen when the known world ends and is recreated. He will send them into the abyss.
2. The demons went into the abyss when the pigs went into the sea.
3. Jesus created everything. Therefore, he has the ability to do anything he wants with his creation.

Jesus cared more about the man than about the pigs.

1. It made people know that the man was really free from the demons.

See: Demon; World; Day of Judgment; Abyss (Bottomless Pit); Punish (Punishment); Spiritual Warfare

Why did the people ask Jesus to leave?

[8:37]

Scholars think there are several reasons why the people asked Jesus to leave.

1. They cared more about losing the pigs than about Jesus rescuing the man from the demons.
2. They were afraid because Jesus has the same power over demons that God has.
3. They were afraid of Jesus. They did not want him to interfere with Roman rule over the Jews.

See: Demon; Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar)

8:40-56

Who was Jairus?

[8:41]

Jairus was the leader of a synagogue. He read Old Testament Scriptures in the synagogue meetings. He also was a leader in the community. Some scholars think that his name was the same as, "God will awaken." He was different from other synagogue leaders. He bowed down at Jesus' feet and asked Jesus to heal. He did not argue with Jesus.

See: Synagogue

How did the woman suffer?

[8:43]

Scholars think the woman suffered in three ways.

1. She had a bleeding illness for twelve years.
2. Because of her bleeding, she was unclean according to the law of Moses (see: Leviticus 15:25-33). That is, she had to be separated from people. That is, because they would be unclean if they touched her or if she touched them. She could not worship in the temple. The people in the crowd did not have compassion for her or even look at her.
3. She was poor. The Gospel of Mark said she spent all her money on doctors but she only got more sick (see: Mark 5:26).

See: Clean and Unclean; Law of Moses; Worship; Temple; Gospel

Why did the woman want to touch the edge of Jesus' coat?

[8:44]

Some scholars think the woman wanted to touch the edge of Jesus' coat because she believed in magic. More scholars say she believed Jesus was able to heal her (see: 8:48). That is, she did not believe in magic. Jesus healed other people when they touched him (see: 6:19).

See: Sorcery; Miracle

Why did Jesus ask who touched him?

[8:45]

Jesus asked who touched him because he wanted all the people to know he healed the woman. Scholars think Jesus already knew who touched him before he asked. He wanted the woman to talk about what had happened to her. Some scholars think this was so others would know that Jesus had the power to heal the woman completely. Also, Jesus wanted others would know that the woman was now clean. That is, she was able to go back into the community and no longer needed to be separated from people.

See: Clean and Unclean; Miracle

Why did Jesus call the woman "daughter"?

[8:48]

Scholars think there are three reasons Jesus called the woman "daughter."

1. Jesus wanted people to know he had compassion for her.
2. Jesus wanted people to know she came back into the community. That is, she was no longer unclean.
3. Luke wanted his readers to know that this story happened at the same time Jesus made another person's daughter alive again.

See: Clean and Unclean

Why did Jesus tell Jairus to not fear?

[8:50]

Scholars think Jesus told Jairus not to fear because his daughter's death made him fear. Jairus was afraid it was too late for Jesus to heal her. However, Jesus wanted Jairus to trust him that his daughter would be healed.

Why did Jesus use the word “sleep”?

[8:52]

The word “sleep” was a metaphor used to talk about someone who was dead. Some scholars think Jesus told the crowd that the girl was not dead. She was only sleeping because he knew he was going to heal her and make her alive again.

See: John 11:11-14

See: Sleep (Metaphor)

Why did all the crying people start laughing?

[8:53]

Scholars think there are two reasons why they quickly changed from crying to laughing.

1. Someone paid these people to mourn for the girl. Therefore, they were not really sad about the girl's death.
2. They did not think Jesus had the power to make the girl alive again. Perhaps they did not know Jesus made a man alive again in Nain (see: 7:11-16).

See Map: Nain

Why did Jesus tell the parents not to tell anyone that he made their daughter alive again?

[8:56]

Scholars think there are several reasons why Jesus told the parents not to tell anyone that Jesus made their daughter alive again.

1. Jesus wanted people to know that following him caused suffering, not comfort and miracles.
2. Jesus judged the people who laughed.
3. Jesus did not want those who did not believe to know about what he was doing.
4. Jesus wanted them to care for their daughter.
5. Jesus also did not want all of his disciples to see the miracle (see: Luke 8:51).
6. Jesus wanted to help his disciples understand who was Jesus (see: Luke 9:20).
7. Jesus wanted to wait until after he became alive again for people to know he has power to make people alive again.

See: Matthew 9:26

See: Miracle; Disciple; Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Messianic Secret

Luke 8:1

It happened

General Information:

This phrase is used here to mark a new part of the story.

These verses give background information about Jesus's preaching while traveling.

Luke 8:2	it was trampled underfoot
who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases	This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people walked on it" or "people walked on them"
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Jesus had set free from evil spirits and healed of diseases"	birds of the sky
Mary	This idiom can be translated simply as "birds" or as "birds flew down and" to keep the sense of "sky."
One of the "certain women."	devoured it
Mary who was called Magdalene ... seven demons had been driven out	"ate it all" or "ate them all"
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Mary, whom people called Magdalene ... Jesus had driven out seven demons"	Luke 8:6
Luke 8:3	it withered away
Joanna ... Susanna	"each plant became dry and shriveled up" or "the plants became dry and shriveled up"
Two of the "certain women"	it had no moisture
Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's manager	"it was too dry" or "they were too dry." The cause can also be stated. Alternate translation: "the ground was too dry"
Joanna was Chuza's wife, and Chuza was Herod's manager. "Joanna, the wife of Herod's manager, Chuza"	Luke 8:7
provided for their needs	Connecting Statement:
"financially supported Jesus and his twelve disciples"	Jesus finishes telling the parable to the crowd.
Luke 8:4	choked it
General Information:	The thorn plants took all the nutrients, water, and sunlight, so the farmer's plants could not grow well.
Jesus tells the parable of the soils to the crowd. He explains its meaning to his disciples in 8:11:15.	Luke 8:8
coming to him	produced a crop
"coming to Jesus"	"grew a harvest" or "grew more seeds"
Luke 8:5	a hundred times greater
A farmer went out to sow his seed	This means a hundred times more than the seeds that were sown.
"A farmer went out to scatter some seed in a field" or "A farmer went out to scatter some seeds in a field"	Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear
some fell	Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "ears to hear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey.
"some of the seed fell" or "some of the seeds fell"	

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. Alternate translation: "Let the one who is willing to listen, listen" or "The one who is willing to understand, let him understand and obey" or "If you are willing to listen, listen" or "If you are willing to understand, then understand and obey"

Luke 8:9

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 8:10

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to speak to his disciples.

The knowledge of ... God has been given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has given to you the knowledge of ... God" or "God has made you able to understand ... God"

the secrets of the kingdom of God

These are truths that have been hidden, but that Jesus is now revealing them.

for others

"for other people." This refers to the people who rejected the teaching of Jesus and did not follow him.

seeing they may not see

"though they see, they will not perceive." This is a quote from the prophet Isaiah. Some languages may need to state the object of the verbs. Alternate translation: "though they see things, they will not understand them" or "though they see things happen, they will not understand what they mean"

hearing they may not understand

"though they hear, they will not understand." This is a quote from the prophet Isaiah. Some languages may need to state the object of the verbs. Alternate translation: "though they hear instruction, they will not understand the truth"

Luke 8:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to explain the meaning of the parable that he told in [Luke 8:5-8](#).

The seed is the word of God

"The seed is the message from God"

Luke 8:12

The ones along the road are those

"The seeds that fell along the path are those." Jesus tells what happens to the seeds as it relates to people. Alternate translation: "The seeds that fell along the road represent people" or "In the parable, the seeds that fell along the road represent people"

are those who

Jesus speaks of the seeds showing something about people as if the seeds were the people. Alternate translation: "show what happens to people who"

the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's minds or inner beings. Alternate translation: "the devil comes and takes away the message of God from their inner thoughts"

takes away

In the parable this was a metaphor of a bird snatching away the seeds. Try to use words in your language that keep that image.

hearts so they may not believe and be saved.

This is the devil's purpose. Alternate translation: "hearts because the devil thinks, 'They must not believe and they must not be saved.'" or "hearts so it will not be that they believe and God saves them."

Luke 8:13

General Information:

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Luke 8:14

The seeds that fell among the thorns are people

"The seeds that fell among the thorns represent people" or "In the parable the seeds that fell among the thorns represent people"

they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the cares and riches and pleasures of this life choke them"

cares

things that people worry about

pleasures of this life

"the things in this life that people enjoy"

they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and their fruit does not mature

This metaphor refers to the way weeds cut off light and nutrients from plants and keep them from growing. Alternate translation: "as weeds prevent good plants from growing, the cares, riches, and pleasures of this life keep these people from becoming mature"

their fruit does not mature

"they do not bear ripe fruit." Mature fruit is a metaphor for good works. Alternate translation: "so like a plant that does not produce mature fruit, they do not produce good works"

Luke 8:15

the seed that fell on the good soil, these are the ones

"the seed that fell on the good soil represents the people" or "in the parable the seed that fell on the good soil represents the people"

hearing the word

"hearing the message"

with an honest and good heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts or intentions. Alternate translation: "with an honest and good desire"

bear fruit with patient endurance

"produce fruit by enduring patiently" or "produce fruit by continued effort." Fruit is a metaphor for good works. Alternate translation: "like healthy plants that produce good fruit, they produce good works by persevering"

Luke 8:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues with another parable.

No one

This marks the beginning of another parable.

Luke 8:17

nothing is hidden that will not be made known

This double negative can be written as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "everything that is hidden will be made known"

nor is anything secret that will not be known and come into the light

This double negative can be written as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "and everything that is secret will be made known and will come into the light"

Luke 8:18

to the one who has, more will be given to him

It is clear from the context that Jesus is talking about understanding and believing. This can be stated clearly and changed to active form. Alternate translation: "whoever has understanding will be given more understanding" or "God will enable those who believe the truth to understand even more"

the one who does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken away from him

It is clear from the context that Jesus is talking about understanding and believing. This can be stated clearly and changed to active form. Alternate translation: "whoever does not have understanding will lose even what understanding he thinks he has" or "God will cause those who do not believe the truth not to

understand even the little that they think they have understood"

Luke 8:19

brothers

These were Jesus's younger brothers—the sons of Mary and Joseph who were born after Jesus. Since the Father of Jesus was God, and their father was Joseph, they were technically his half-brothers. This detail is not normally translated.

Luke 8:20

He was told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People told him" or "Someone told him"

wanting to see you

"and they want to see you"

Luke 8:21

My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it

This metaphor expresses that the people who were coming to listen to Jesus were as important to him as his own family was. Alternate translation: "Those who hear the word of God and obey it are like a mother and brothers to me"

the word of God

"the message God has spoken"

Luke 8:22

Connecting Statement:

Jesus and his disciples use a boat to cross Lake Genneseret. The disciples learn more about Jesus's power through the storm that arises.

the lake

This is the lake of Genneseret, which is also called the Sea of Galilee.

They set sail

This expression means they began to travel across the lake in their sailboat.

Luke 8:23

as they sailed

"as they went"

fell asleep

"began to sleep"

A terrible windstorm came down

"A storm of very strong winds began" or "Very strong winds suddenly began to blow"

their boat was filling with water

The strong winds caused high waves which pushed water over the sides of the boat. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the winds caused high waves that started to fill up their boat with water"

Luke 8:24

rebuked

spoke sharply to

the raging of the water

"the violent waves"

they ceased

"the wind and the waves stopped" or "they became still"

Luke 8:25

Where is your faith?

Jesus rebukes them mildly because they do not trust him to take care of them. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have faith!" or "You should trust me!"

Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?

This question expresses shock and confusion over how Jesus is able to control the storm. Alternate translation: "What kind of man is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him!"

Luke 8:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus and his disciples come ashore at Gerasa, where Jesus removes many demons from a man.

the region of the Gerasenes

Gerasenes were people from the city called Gerasa.

across the lake from Galilee

"on the other side of the lake from Galilee"

Luke 8:27

a certain man from the city

"a man from the city of Gerasa"

a certain man from the city who had demons

The man had demons; it was not the city that had demons. Alternate translation: "a certain man from the city, and this man had demons"

who had demons

"who was controlled by demons" or "whom demons controlled"

For a long time he had worn no clothes ... but among the tombs

This is background information about the man who had demons.

he had worn no clothes

"he had not worn clothes"

tombs

These are places where people put dead bodies, possibly caves or small buildings that the man could use for shelter.

Luke 8:28

When he saw Jesus

"When the man who had the demon saw Jesus"

he cried out

"he screamed" or "he shrieked"

fell down before him

"lay down on the ground before Jesus." He did not fall accidentally.

he said with a loud voice

"he said loudly" or "he shouted out"

What have you to do with me

This idiom means "Why are you bothering me?"

Son of the Most High God

This is an important title for Jesus.

Luke 8:29

many times it had seized him

"many times it had taken control of the man" or "many times it had gone into him." This tells about what the demon had done many times before Jesus met the man.

though he was bound ... and kept under guard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "though the people had bound him ... and guarded him"

he would be driven by the demon

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the demon would make him go"

Luke 8:30

Legion

Translate this with a word that refers to a large number of soldiers or people. Some other translations say "Army." Alternate translation: "Battalion" or "Brigade"

Luke 8:31

kept begging him

"kept begging Jesus"

Luke 8:32

Now a large herd of pigs was there feeding on the hillside

This is supplied as background information to introduce the pigs.

was there feeding on the hillside

"was nearby eating grass on a hill"

Luke 8:33

So the demons came out

The word "so" is used here to explain that the reason the demons came out the man was because Jesus had told them that they could go into the pigs.

rushed

ran very fast

the herd ... was drowned

"the herd ... drowned." No one caused the pigs to drown once they were in the water.

Luke 8:34

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 8:35

found the man from whom the demons had gone out

"saw the man whom the demons had left"

in his right mind

"sane" or "behaving normally"

sitting at the feet of Jesus

"sitting at the feet" here is an idiom that means "sitting humbly nearby" or "sitting in front of." Alternate translation: "sitting on the ground in front of Jesus"

they were afraid

It may be helpful to state explicitly that they were afraid of Jesus. Alternate translation: "they were afraid of Jesus"

Luke 8:36

those who had seen it

"those who had seen what had happened"

the man who had been possessed by demons had been healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus had healed the man whom demons had possessed" or "Jesus had healed the man whom demons had controlled"

Luke 8:37

the region of the Gerasenes

"that area of the Gerasenes" or "the area where the Gerasene people lived." See how you translated this in 8:26 Luke 8:26

they were overwhelmed with great fear

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they were very afraid"

and returned

This is not the last thing that Jesus did in that place, so this can also be stated as "in order to return" or "to go back."

returned

The destination can be stated. Alternate translation: "returned across the lake"

Luke 8:38

The man

The events in these verses happened before Jesus left in the boat. It may be helpful to state this clearly at the beginning. Alternate translation: "Before Jesus and his disciples left, the man" or "Before Jesus and his disciples set sail, the man"

Luke 8:39

your home

"your household" or "your family"

give a full account of what God has done for you

"tell them everything about what God has done for you"

Luke 8:40

Connecting Statement:

When Jesus and his disciples return to Galilee on the other side of the lake, he heals the 12-year-old daughter of the ruler of the synagogue as well as a woman who has been bleeding for 12 years (8:43-48).

the crowd welcomed him

"the crowd joyfully greeted him"

Luke 8:41

one of the leaders of the synagogue

"one of the leaders at the local synagogue" or "a leader of the people who met at the synagogue in that city"

fell down at Jesus' feet

Possible meanings are 1) "bowed down at Jesus' feet" or 2) "lay down on the ground at Jesus' feet." Jairus did not fall accidentally. He did this as a sign of humility and respect for Jesus.

Luke 8:42

was dying

"was about to die"

As Jesus was on his way

Some translators may need to first say that Jesus had agreed to go with Jairus. Alternate translation: "So Jesus agreed to go with him. As he was on his way"

the crowds of people pressed together around him

"the people were crowding tightly around Jesus"

Luke 8:43

a woman was there

This introduces a new character in the story.

had been bleeding

"had a flow of blood." She was probably bleeding from her womb even when it was not the normal time for it. Some cultures may have a polite way of referring to this condition.

and could not be healed by anyone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but no one could heal her"

Luke 8:44

touched the edge of his coat

"touched the fringe of his robe." Jewish men wore tassels on the edges of their robes as a part of their ceremonial dress as commanded in God's Law. This is likely what she touched.

Luke 8:45

the crowds of people are all around you and they are pressing in against you

By saying this, Peter was implying that anyone could have touched Jesus. This implicit information can be made explicit if necessary. Alternate translation: "there are many people crowding around you and pressing in against you, so any one of them might have touched you"

Luke 8:46

Someone did touch me

It may be helpful to distinguish this intentional "touch" from the accidental touches of the crowd. Alternate translation: "Someone deliberately touched me"

I know that power has gone out from me

Jesus did not lose power or become weak, but his power healed the woman. Alternate translation: "I know that healing power went out from me" or "I felt my power heal someone"

Luke 8:47

that she could not escape notice

"that she could not keep secret what she had done." It may be helpful to state what she did. Alternate

translation: "that she could not keep it a secret that she was the one who had touched Jesus"

the teacher

she came trembling

This refers to Jesus.

"she came trembling with fear"

Luke 8:50

fell down before him

she will be healed

Possible meanings are 1) "bowed down in front of Jesus" or 2) "lay down on the ground at Jesus's feet." She did not fall accidentally. This was a sign of humility and respect for Jesus.

"she will be well" or "she will live again"

Luke 8:51

In the presence of all the people

When he came to the house

"In the sight of all the people"

"When they came to the house." Jesus went there with Jairus. Some of Jesus's disciples also went with them.

Luke 8:48

he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter ... mother

Daughter

This double negative emphasizes that Peter and the others were the only ones whom Jesus allowed to enter. This could be stated positively. Alternate translation: "he allowed only Peter ... mother to enter with him"

This was a kind way of speaking to a woman. Your language may have another way of showing this kindness.

the father of the child

your faith has made you well

This refers to Jairus.

"because of your faith, you have become well." The abstract noun "faith" could be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "because you believe, you are healed"

Luke 8:52

Go in peace

all were mourning and wailing for her

This idiom is a way of saying, "Goodbye" and giving a blessing at the same time. Alternate translation: "As you go, do not worry anymore" or "May God give you peace as you go"

This was the normal way of showing grief in that culture. Alternate translation: "all the people there were showing how sad they were and crying loudly because the girl had died"

Luke 8:53

Luke 8:49

began to mock him, knowing that she

While he was still speaking

"laughed at him because they knew the girl"

"While Jesus was still speaking to the woman"

Luke 8:54

synagogue leader

he took her by the hand

This refers to Jairus (Luke 8:41).

"Jesus took hold of the girl's hand"

Do not trouble the teacher

Luke 8:55

This statement implies that Jesus will not be able to do anything to help now that the girl is dead.

Her spirit returned

"Her spirit returned to her body." The Jews understood that life was the result of the spirit coming into a

person. Alternate translation: "She started breathing again" or "She came back to life" or "She became alive again"

Luke 8:56

to tell no one

This could be stated differently. Alternate translation:
"not to tell anyone"

Luke 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"To preach the kingdom of God"

No one knows for sure what the words "kingdom of God" here refer to. Some say it refers to the reign of God on earth, and others say it refers to the gospel message that Jesus died to pay for his people's sins. It is best to translate this as "to preach about the kingdom of God" or "to teach them about how God was going to show himself as king."

Elijah

God had promised the Jews that the prophet Elijah would return before the Messiah came, so some people who saw Jesus do miracles thought Jesus was Elijah ([Luke 9:9](#), [Luke 9:19](#)). However, Elijah did come to earth to speak with Jesus ([Luke 9:30](#)). (See: prophet and christ and elijah)

"Kingdom of God"

The term "kingdom of God" is used in this chapter to refer to a kingdom that was still in the future when the words were spoken. (See: kingdomofgod)

Glory

Scripture often speaks of God's glory as a great, brilliant light. When people see this light, they are afraid. Luke says in this chapter that Jesus's clothing shone with this glorious light so that his followers could see that Jesus truly was God's Son. At the same time, God told them that Jesus was his Son. (See: glory and fear)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. An example in this chapter is: "Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it." ([Luke 9:24](#)).

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

"Receiving"

This word appears several times in this chapter and means different things. When Jesus says, "If someone receives a little child like this in my name, he also is receiving me, and if someone receives me, he is also receiving the one who sent me" ([Luke 9:48](#)), he is speaking of people serving the child. When Luke says, "the people there did not receive him" ([Luke 9:53](#)), he means that the people did not believe in or accept Jesus. (See: believe)

Links:

- [Luke 9:1 Notes](#)

Luke 9

9:1-6

Who were the twelve?

[9:1]

The twelve Luke wrote about were the twelve disciples.

See: Disciple

Why did Luke wrote, “power and authority”?

[9:1]

Luke wrote that Jesus gave the disciples “power,” he wanted people to know that Jesus gave them the ability to do something. Luke wrote that Jesus gave the disciples “authority.” That is, Jesus gave them permission to do something.

See: Disciple

What did it mean to have power and authority “over all the demons”?

[9:1]

Jesus gave the disciples power and authority “over all the demons.” He gave them permission and power to make the demons to leave people and to stop controlling people.

See: Demon; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons); Disciple

What did it mean to “preach the kingdom of God”?

[9:2]

See: Preach (Preacher); Kingdom of God

Why was shaking dust off feet a testimony against people who did not receive the twelve?

[9:5]

The disciples shook the dust off of their feet because people did not believe the things they said about Jesus. This was a symbol. In ancient Israel, people did this when they left places where Gentiles lived because the Gentiles were unclean. Because people did not believe in Jesus, they were unclean. This is why the disciples shook the dust off of their feet. Perhaps this was a warning that God will reject these people.

See: Acts 13:48-51

See: Disciple; Gentile; Clean and Unclean; Symbol

9:7-9

Who was Herod the tetrarch?

[9:7]

Herod the tetrarch was Herod Antipas. Sometimes people called him the tetrarch because he reigned over one fourth of the territory his father reigned over before him. Sometimes people called him a king (see: Mark 6:14).

See: King Herod

Why did some people say Elijah appeared rather than became alive again?

[9:8]

Some people said Elijah appeared rather than become alive again because Elijah did not die (see: 2 Kings 2:11). Instead, he went to heaven without dying. People expected Elijah to appear before the coming of the messiah (see: Malachi 4:5-6).

See: Heaven; Messiah (Christ)

9:10-17

Where was Behsaida?

[9:10]

See Map: Bethsaida

How many people were in the crowd?

[9:14]

Luke wrote there were five thousand men in the crowd. However, scholars say there were also women and children in the crowd. In ancient times, people often counted only men in a crowd (see: Matthew 14:21). Perhaps there were about twenty thousand people in the crowd.

How did Jesus “bless” the food?

[9:16]

Jesus blessed the food. Some scholars say Jesus “consecrated” the food. That is, Jesus asked God to bless the people who were going to eat the food. More scholars think Jesus “thanked God” for the food.

See: John 17:1

See: Bless (Blessing)

9:18-22

What did it mean that Jesus was “praying by himself”?

[9:18]

Luke wrote that Jesus was “praying by himself”. Jesus and the disciples were away from the crowd. Perhaps the disciples came and joined Jesus while he was praying.

See: Disciple

Why did Peter know that Jesus is the “Christ of God”?

[9:20]

Peter thought that Jesus was “the Christ of God”. In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus told Peter that God the Father revealed to him that Jesus is the Christ (see: Matthew 16:16-17).

See: Messiah (Christ); Gospel; God the Father;Reveal (Revelation)

Why did Jesus warn the disciples not to tell people he is the Christ of God?

[9:21]

See: Messianic Secret

Why did Jesus have to suffer?

[9:22]

Jesus had to suffer. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about certain prophecies about things that will happen to the messiah (see: Luke 24:45-46; Isaiah 53). Others scholars think Jesus was preparing the disciples for what was going to happen.

See: Luke 24:47; Ephesians 1:7; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

See: Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Messiah (Christ); Disciple

Why did Jesus call himself the “Son of Man?”

[9:22]

See: Son of Man

9:23-27

What did it mean that a Christian “must deny himself”?

[9:23]

Luke wrote that a Christian must deny himself. Scholars think Jesus meant that a Christian must do what God wants him to do. That is, a Christian must give up the right to do what they want to do and instead do what God wants them to do.

What did it mean for a Christian to “take up his cross daily”?

[9:23]

Some scholars think Jesus used a metaphor when he said that a Christian must “take up his cross daily.” This meant that anyone who wanted to be a disciple of Jesus had to be prepared to suffer for being a Christian. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about Christians doing things God wanted and not the things they wanted to do (see: Galatians 2:20).

See: Metaphor; Cross; Suffer

What did Jesus mean by saying, “whoever would save his life will lose it”?

[9:24]

The person who wanted to “save his life” was a person that was willing to do what God wanted him to do. When they do this, they will suffer. Scholars think Jesus was talking about a person’s soul when he spoke about their life.

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Soul; Metaphor

What did Jesus mean by saying, “whoever loses his life for my sake will save it”?

[9:24]

A person who “loses his life” is a person who gave up his right to live in the way he wants to live. He did this so he could follow Jesus. This person did this to honor God because they were at peace with God.

What was meant by the words, “gain the whole world”?

[9:25]

Someone who gained the whole world was someone who owned the world and everything in it. It was hyperbole to speak in this way. They were very rich and powerful.

See: Hyperbole

What did it mean to be “ashamed” of Jesus and his words?

[9:26]

Jesus talked about someone who was ashamed of him and the things he said. This person refused to be a disciple because he felt “ashamed” and afraid of being embarrassed in front of other people. That is, he was afraid that other people would insult or mock him for following Jesus.

See: Disciple

When does Jesus come in “his own glory and the glory of the Father, and the angels”?

[9:26]

See: Jesus' Return to Earth; Glory (Glorify); God the Father; Angel

What did Jesus mean by saying that some “will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God”?

[9:27]

When someone tasted death, this was a way of saying that they died. Jesus said that some people will not die before they see the kingdom of God. Scholars think different things about what it meant to “see the kingdom of God”.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was talking about the disciples who would see the form of Jesus change on the mountain (see: Luke 9:28-36).
2. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about people seeing him when God made him alive again (see: Mark 15:33-16:13).
3. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about people seeing the Holy Spirit do great things (see: Acts 2:1-4).

See: Kingdom of God; Disciple; Resurrect (Resurrection)

9:28-36

Where did Jesus take Peter, John, and James?

[9:28]

Luke did not write the name of the mountain where Jesus took Peter, John, and James. Scholars think it was Hermon, Tabor, or Meron. Peter wrote the mountain was holy (see: 2 Peter 1:18).

See: Holy (Holiness, Set Apart)

See Map: Mt. Hermon; Mt. Tabor; Mt. Meron

How was “the form of his face” changed?

[9:29]

Luke wrote that the form of Jesus’ face changed. Jesus’ face looked different in some way. Perhaps this was because Jesus’ face began to shine with a glory from heaven.

See: Glory (Glorify); Heaven

How did Moses and Elijah appear in “glorious splendor”?

[9:30, 9:31]

Moses and Elijah appeared in “glorious splendor.” Like Jesus, they shone brightly with glory from heaven. That is, they were surrounded with very bright light.

See: Glory (Glorify); Heaven

What was the “departure” about which Jesus, Moses, and Elijah spoke?

[9:31]

When Moses and Elijah spoke to Jesus about his “departure,” they were speaking about Jesus dying. This happened in Jerusalem.

Why did Peter want to “make three shelters”?

[9:33]

Peter wanted to make three shelters. Scholars think Peter was thinking about the shelters that were used to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles when people lived in shelters for seven days (see: Leviticus 23:33-42). They think Peter was wanted to stay on the mountain with Jesus, Moses, and Elijah.

Advice to translators: A shelter is a type of tent.

See: Festival of Shelters

What was the cloud that came and overshadowed them?

[9:34]

Luke wrote about a cloud. Some scholars think the cloud was like the pillar of cloud that led the people of Israel in the wilderness (see: Exodus 14:19-20). They think the cloud appeared and cast a shadow over Jesus, Moses, Elijah, and the disciples. Other scholars think the cloud came close to the ground and surrounded Jesus, Moses, Elijah, and the disciples.

See: Disciple

Who spoke out of the cloud?

[9:35]

When Luke wrote about someone speaking out of the cloud, it was God who was speaking.

What did it mean that Jesus was found alone?

[9:36]

Luke wrote that Jesus was found alone. He wanted people to know that the disciples no longer saw Moses and Elijah. They only saw Jesus.

See: Disciple

9:37-45

When speaking about a child, what did it mean that “a spirit takes control over him”?

[9:39]

Luke was writing about an evil spirit or demon taking possession of the child. That is, the demon controlled the boy's body and caused him to shake violently and to cry out.

See: Demon; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

Why did Jesus call the people an “unbelieving and depraved generation”?

[9:41]

Jesus called people an “unbelieving and depraved generation.” Some scholars think Jesus was telling the people that they were just like their ancestors, who also rejected God (see: Deuteronomy 32:5-6, 20). These people rejected Jesus.

See: Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

What did it mean that Jesus “rebuked the unclean spirit”?

[9:42]

Luke wrote that Jesus “rebuked” the unclean spirit. Jesus commanded the evil spirit to leave the boy. That is, he made the demon stop controlling the boy.

See: Demon; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

What did it mean that the Son of Man will be betrayed?

[9:44]

Luke wrote that the Son of Man was going to be betrayed. That is, someone Jesus trusted would help Jesus' enemies arrest Jesus.

See: Son of Man

How was Jesus' statement “hidden” from the disciples?

[9:45]

Scholars think that God caused Jesus' statement to be “hidden.” That is, people did not understand what Jesus wanted to say. This is because it was not the right time for the meaning of what Jesus said to be revealed. God planned for a time in the future for the disciples to understand what Jesus said.

See: Reveal (Revelation); Disciple

9:46-48

What did it mean that the disciples were arguing about who would be “greatest”?

[9:46]

The disciples were arguing about who would be the greatest. Some scholars think the disciples were arguing about which of them was the greatest disciple at that present time. More scholars think the disciples were arguing about which of them was to be the greatest disciple in God’s kingdom. They wanted to be more honored than other people.

See: Disciple; Kingdom of God; Pride; Humble (Humility)

What did Jesus mean when he said “whoever welcomes this child in my name”?

[9:48]

Jesus put a “little child” next to him to teach the disciples a lesson about being great. Someone needed to help or care for a child. Because of this, someone must welcome a child. Jesus wanted the disciples to know that in the kingdom of God, they too needed someone greater than themselves to help them.

See: Disciple; Kingdom of God; Pride; Humble (Humility)

What did it mean that “whoever is least among you all is the one who is great”?

[9:48]

Luke wrote, “whoever is least among you all is the one who is great.” Some scholars think Jesus meant that whoever was a humble person was the one who was truly great. Others scholars think Jesus wanted the disciples to know that God thought certain people were great who other people did not think they were great.

See: Disciple; Pride; Humble (Humility)

9:49-50

Why did John say, “he does not follow along with us”?

[9:49]

When John said these words to Jesus, he meant that the person who was forcing out demons was not one of the disciples.

See: Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons); Demon; Disciple

9:51-56

What did it mean for Jesus to be “taken up”?

[9:51]

Jesus would be “taken up.” That is, God was going to take Jesus back up to heaven.

See: Ascend (Ascension); Heaven

What was meant by the words, “he set his face to go to Jerusalem”?

[9:51]

Luke wrote, “he set his face to go to Jerusalem.” Jesus decided to go to Jerusalem. That is, he was determined to start his journey to Jerusalem.

Who were the Samaritans?

[9:52]

See: Samaria

See Map: Samaria

Why did the people of Samaria not welcome Jesus?

[9:53]

The people of Samaria did not welcome Jesus because he was going to Jerusalem. The people of Samaria worshipped on Mount Gerizim. They did not like people traveling through Samaria to get to Jerusalem.

See Map: Mount Gerizim

Why did rebuke the disciples?

[9:55]

Scholars think that Jesus rebuked the disciples for wanting to see Samaria destroyed. This meant that Jesus told the disciples they were thinking in a wrong way. That is, they did not treat people the way God wanted them to treat other people.

See: Samaria; Disciple

See Map: Samaria

9:57-62

Why did Luke write, “the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head”?

[9:58]

Luke wrote, “the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” Foxes and birds had places where they lived. However, Jesus was always traveling and did not live in one place.

See: Son of Man

What did Jesus mean by saying, “leave the dead to bury their own dead”?

[9:60]

Jesus said, “leave the dead to bury their own dead.” Some scholars think the first use of the word “dead” was speaking about those who were spiritually dead. That is, all those who did not know Jesus or had rejected him as the messiah. Because of this, they were separated from God. In ancient Israel, people often spoke about this as a type of death.

He said those who were spiritually dead can take care of burying those who were physically dead. His command saying, “follow me” meant he wanted that person to immediately go out and tell people about the kingdom of God.

See: Tomb; Messiah (Christ); Kingdom of God

Someone wanted to say goodbye to people at home before they followed Jesus. How did Jesus use a metaphor to answer them?

[9:62]

Someone wanted to say goodbye to people at home before they followed Jesus. Jesus answered them with a metaphor about plowing a field and then looking back. People used an animal to pull a plow. The farmer held a handle on the plow to make a straight trench in the ground. If the farmer looked back the trench was not straight. Just as the farmer should not look behind him, so a disciple should keep his eye on following Jesus.

See: Metaphor; Kingdom of God

Luke 9:1

Take nothing

Connecting Statement:

"Do not take anything with you" or "Do not bring anything with you"

Jesus reminds his disciples not to depend on money and their things, gives them power, and then sends them out to various places.

staff

power and authority

large stick that people use for balance when climbing or walking on uneven ground, as well as for defense against attackers

These two terms are used together to show that the twelve had both the ability and the right to heal people. Translate this phrase with a combination of words that include both of these ideas.

wallet

a bag a traveler uses for carrying what he needs on a journey

all demons

bread

Possible meanings are 1) "every demon" or 2) "every kind of demon."

This is here used as a general reference to "food."

diseases

Luke 9:4

sicknesses

Whatever house you enter

Luke 9:2

"Any house you enter"

sent them out

stay there

"sent them to various places" or "told them to go"

"remain there" or "temporarily live in that house as a guest"

Luke 9:3

until you leave

He said to them

"Jesus said to the twelve." It may be helpful to state that this happened before they went out. Alternate translation: "Before they left, Jesus said to them"

"until you leave that town" or "until you leave that place"

Luke 9:5

Wherever they do not receive you, when you leave

"Here is what you should do in any town where people do not receive you: When you leave"

shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them

To "shake off the dust from your feet" was an expression of strong rejection in that culture. It showed they did not want even the dust of that town to remain on them.

Luke 9:6

they departed

"they left the place where Jesus was"

healing everywhere

"healing wherever they went"

Luke 9:7

General Information:

Verses 7-9 interrupt the story to give information about Herod.

Now Herod

The word "Now" marks a pause in the main story. Here Luke tells background information about Herod.

Herod the tetrarch

This refers to Herod Antipas, who was the ruler of one-fourth of Israel.

perplexed

unable to understand, confused

it was said by some

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some people said"

Luke 9:8

still others that one of the prophets of long ago had risen

The word "said" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "still others said that one of the prophets of long ago had risen"

Luke 9:9

I beheaded John. Who is this

Herod assumes that it is impossible for John to rise from the dead. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "It cannot be John because I had his head cut off. So who is this man"

I beheaded John

Herod's soldiers would have carried out executions. Alternate translation: "I commanded my soldiers to cut off John's head"

Luke 9:10

Connecting Statement:

Though the disciples return to Jesus and they go to Bethsaida to spend time together, the crowds follow Jesus for healing and to listen to his teaching. He performs a miracle to provide bread and fish to the crowds as they return home.

apostles returned

"apostles came back to where Jesus was"

everything they had done

This refers to the teaching and healing that they did when they went to the other cities.

Bethsaida

This is the name of a city.

Luke 9:11

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 9:12

the day was about to come to an end

"the day was about to end" or "it was near the end of the day." The end of the day was at sunset. Alternate translation: "it was almost sunset"

an isolated place

This was a place far away from where people lived. Alternate translation: "a remote place" or "a place where no one lives"

Luke 9:13

five loaves of bread

A loaf of bread is a lump of dough that is shaped and baked.

two fish—unless we go and buy food for all these people

If "unless" is difficult to understand in your language, you could make a new sentence. "two fish. In order to feed all these people, we would have to go and buy food"

Luke 9:14

about five thousand men

"about 5,000 men." This number does not include the women and children who might have been present.

Have them sit down

"Tell them to sit down"

fifty each

"50 each"

Luke 9:15

So they did this

"This" refers to what Jesus told them to do Luke 9:14. They told the people to sit down in groups of about fifty people.

Luke 9:16

Taking the five loaves

"Jesus took the five loaves of bread"

up to heaven

This refers to looking up, toward the sky. The Jews believed that heaven was located above the sky.

he blessed them

This refers to the loaves of bread and the fish.

to set before

"to pass out to" or "to give to"

Luke 9:17

were satisfied

This idiom means they ate enough food so they were not hungry. Alternate translation: "they had as much as they wanted to eat"

Luke 9:18

Connecting Statement:

Jesus is praying, with only his disciples near him, and they begin to talk about who Jesus is. Jesus tells them that he will soon die and resurrect and urges them to follow him even if it becomes very hard to do that.

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new event.

praying by himself

"praying alone." The disciples were with Jesus, but he was praying personally and privately by himself.

Luke 9:19

John the Baptist

It may be helpful to restate part of the question here. Alternate translation: "The crowds say you are John the Baptist"

that one of the prophets from long ago has risen

It may be helpful to clarify how this answer relates to Jesus's question. Alternate translation: "that you are one of the prophets from long ago and have risen"

has risen

"has come back to life"

Luke 9:20

Then he said to them

"Then Jesus said to his disciples"

Luke 9:21

he warned and instructed them

The combination of "warned" and "instructed" is a hendiadys that means "strongly warned" or "strictly instructed." Alternate translation: "he strongly warned them" or he strictly instructed them"

them to tell this to no one.

"not to tell anyone." or "that they should not tell anyone." This could be stated as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "them, 'Do not tell anyone.'"

Luke 9:22

The Son of Man must suffer many things

"People will cause the Son of Man to suffer greatly"

The Son of Man ... and he will

Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man ... and I will"

be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the elders, chief priests, and scribes will reject him"

he will be killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will kill him"

on the third day

"three days after he dies" or "on the third day after his death"

be raised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will make him alive again" or "he will live again"

Luke 9:23

he said

"Jesus said"

to them all

This refers to the disciples who were with Jesus.

come after me

Coming after Jesus represents being one of his disciples. Alternate translation: "be my disciple" or "be one of my disciples"

must deny himself

"must not give in to his own desires" or "must forsake his own desires"

take up his cross daily and follow me

"carry his cross and follow me every day." The cross represents suffering and death. Taking up the cross represents being willing to suffer and die. To follow Jesus represents obeying him. Alternate translation: "must obey me every day even to the point of suffering and dying"

Luke 9:24

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 9:25

What profit is there for a person to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit himself?

The implied answer to this question is that it is not good. Alternate translation: "It will not benefit someone at all to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit himself."

to gain the whole world

"to get everything in the world"

lose or forfeit himself

"ruin himself or give up his life"

Luke 9:26

my words

"what I say" or "what I teach"

of him will the Son of Man be ashamed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him"

the Son of Man ... when he comes in his own glory

Jesus was speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man ... when I come in my own glory"

the Father

This is an important title for God.

Luke 9:27

But truly I say to you

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the importance of what he will say next.

there are some standing here who will not taste death

"some of you who are standing here will not taste death"

before they see

Jesus was speaking to the people he was talking about. Alternate translation: "before you see"

will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God

"Taste death" is an idiom that means "die." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will see the kingdom of God before they die" or "will see the kingdom of God before you die"

Luke 9:28

Connecting Statement:

Eight days after Jesus tells his disciples that some would not die before they saw the kingdom of God, Jesus goes up the mountain to pray with Peter, James, and John, who all fall asleep while Jesus is changed to a dazzling appearance.

these words

This refers to what Jesus said to his disciples in the preceding verses.

Luke 9:29

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 9:30

Behold

The word "Behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows. Alternate translation: "Suddenly"

Luke 9:31

who appeared in glory

This phrase gives information about how Moses and Elijah looked. Some languages would translate it as a separate clause. Alternate translation: "and they appeared in glorious splendor" or "and they were shining brightly"

his departure

"his leaving" or "how Jesus would leave this world." This was a polite way of talking about his death. Alternate translation: "his death"

Luke 9:32

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the main story. Here Luke tells about Peter, James, and John.

heavy with sleep

This idiom means "very sleepy."

they saw his glory

This refers to the brilliant light that surrounded them. Alternate translation: "they saw brilliant light coming from Jesus" or "they saw very bright light coming out of Jesus"

the two men who were standing with him

This refers to Moses and Elijah.

Luke 9:33

As they were going away

"As Moses and Elijah were going away"

shelters

simple, temporary places in which to sit or sleep

Luke 9:34

As he was saying this

"While Peter was saying these things"

they were afraid

These adult disciples were not afraid of clouds. This phrase indicates that some kind of unusual fear came over them with the cloud. Alternate translation: "they were terrified"

they entered into the cloud

This can be expressed in terms of what the cloud did. Alternate translation: "the cloud surrounded them"

Luke 9:35

A voice came out of the cloud

It is understood that the voice could only have belonged to God. Alternate translation: "God spoke to them from the cloud"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

the one who is chosen

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "the one I have chosen" or "I have chosen him"

Luke 9:36

They kept silent ... what they had seen

This is information that tells what happened after the story as a result of the events in the story itself.

kept silent ... told no one

The first phrase refers to their immediate response, and the second refers to what they did in the following days.

Luke 9:37

Connecting Statement:

The next day after Jesus's dazzling appearance, Jesus heals a demon-possessed boy that the disciples were unable to make better.

Luke 9:38

Behold, a man from the crowd

The word "behold" alerts us to the new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. English uses "There was a man in the crowd who"

Luke 9:39

You see, a spirit

The phrase "You see" introduces us to the evil spirit in the man's story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "There is an evil spirit that"

he foams at the mouth

"foam comes out of his mouth." When a person has a seizure, he can have trouble breathing or swallowing. This causes white foam to form around his mouth.

Luke 9:40

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 9:41

Jesus answered and said

"Jesus answered by saying"

You unbelieving and perverse generation

Jesus says this to the crowd that has gathered, and not to his disciples.

perverse generation

"corrupt generation"

how long must I be with you and put up with you?

Here "you" is plural. Jesus uses these questions to express his sadness that the people do not believe. They can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "I have been with you so long, yet you do not believe. I wonder how long I must put up with you."

Bring your son here

Here "your" is singular. Jesus is speaking directly to the father who addressed him.

Luke 9:42

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 9:43

they were all amazed at the greatness of God

Jesus performed the miracle, but the crowd recognized that God was the power behind the healing.

everything he was doing

"everything Jesus was doing"

Luke 9:44

Let these words go deeply into your ears

This is an idiom that means they should pay attention. Alternate translation: "Listen carefully and remember" or "Do not forget this"

The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men

This can be stated with an active clause. Here "hands" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "Someone will betray the Son of Man and put him under the control of men"

The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. The word "hands" is a synecdoche for the people whose hands they are or a metonym for the power that uses those hands. You may need to make explicit who these men are. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men" or "The Son of Man will be betrayed into the power of his enemies" or "I, the Son of Man will be betrayed to my enemies"

Luke 9:45

It was hidden from them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God hid the meaning from them"

Luke 9:46

General Information:

The disciples begin to argue about who will be the most powerful among them.

among them

"among the disciples"

Luke 9:47

knowing the reasoning in their hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for their minds. Alternate translation: "knowing the reasoning in their minds" or "knowing what they were thinking"

Luke 9:48

in my name

This refers to a person doing something as a representative of Jesus. Alternate translation: "because of me"

in my name welcomes me

This metaphor could also be stated as a simile.
Alternate translation: "in my name, it is like he is welcoming me"

the one who sent me

"God, who sent me"

the one who is great

"the one whom God considers to be most important"

Luke 9:49

John answered

"In reply, John said" or "John replied to Jesus." John was responding to what Jesus had said about being the greatest. He was not answering a question.

we saw

John speaks of himself but not Jesus, so "we" here is exclusive.

in your name

This means the person was speaking with the power and authority of Jesus.

Luke 9:50

Do not stop him

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Allow him to continue"

whoever is not against you is for you

Some modern languages have sayings that mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "if a person does not keep you from working, it is as if he were helping you" or "if someone is not working against you, he is working with you"

Luke 9:51

General Information:

It is now obvious that Jesus has decided to go to Jerusalem.

When the days drew near for him to be taken up

Here "be taken up" implies that Jesus will be taken up to heaven. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When the time was coming for him to go up heaven" or "When it was almost time for him to leave this world"

set his face

This idiom means he "firmly decided." Alternate translation: "made up his mind" or "decided"

Luke 9:52

to prepare everything for him

This means to make arrangements for his arrival there, possibly including a place to speak, a place to stay, and food.

Luke 9:53

did not welcome him

"did not want him to stay"

because he had set his face to go to Jerusalem

The Samaritans and the Jews hated each other. Therefore the Samaritans would not help Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem, the Jewish capital.

Luke 9:54

saw this

"saw that the Samaritans did not receive Jesus"

command fire to come down from heaven and destroy them

James and John suggested this method of judgment because they knew that this was how the prophets such as Elijah had judged people who rejected God.

Luke 9:55

he turned and rebuked them

"Jesus turned and rebuked James and John." Jesus did not condemn the Samaritans as the disciples expected.

Luke 9:56

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 9:57

someone

This was not one of the disciples.

Luke 9:58

Foxes have holes ... nowhere to lay his head

Jesus responds with a proverb to teach the man about being Jesus's disciple. Jesus implies that if the man were to follow him, that man too might not have a home. Alternate translation: "Foxes have holes ... nowhere to lay his head. So do not expect that you will have a home"

Foxes

These are land animals similar to small dogs. They sleep in a den or a burrow in the ground.

birds in the sky

"birds that fly in the air"

the Son of Man has ... his head

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, have ... my head"

nowhere to lay his head

"nowhere to rest my head" or "nowhere to sleep." Jesus exaggerates to emphasize that he has no permanent home and that people did not often invite him to stay with them.

Luke 9:59

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk with the people along the road.

Follow me

By saying this Jesus is asking the person to become his disciple and to go with him.

first let me go and bury my father

It is unclear whether the man's father has died and he will bury him immediately, or if the man wants to stay for a longer amount of time until his father dies so he can bury him then. The main point is the man wants to do something else first before he follows Jesus.

first let me go

"before I do that, let me go"

Luke 9:60

Leave the dead to bury their own dead

Jesus does not mean literally that dead people will bury other dead people. Possible meanings of "the dead" are 1) it is a metaphor for those who will soon die, or 2) it is a metaphor for those who do not follow Jesus and are spiritually dead. The main point is that a disciple must not let anything delay him from following Jesus.

the dead

This refers to dead people in general. Alternate translation: "the dead people"

Luke 9:61

I will follow you

"I will join you as a disciple" or "I am ready to follow you"

first let me say goodbye to those in my home

"before I do that, let me tell my people at my home that I am leaving"

Luke 9:62

No one ... fit for the kingdom of God

Jesus responds with a proverb to teach the man about being his disciple. Jesus means that a person is not suitable for the kingdom to God if he focuses on people in his past instead of following Jesus.

No one who puts his hand to the plow

Here "puts his hand to" something is an idiom that means the person starts to do something. Alternate translation: "No one who starts to plow his field"

looks back

Anyone who is looking back while plowing cannot guide the plow where it needs to go. That person must focus on looking forward in order to plow well.

fit for the kingdom of God

"useful for the kingdom of God" or "suitable for the kingdom of God"

Luke 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Harvest

Harvest is when people go out to get the food they have planted so they can bring it to their houses and eat it. Harvest can also refer to the food that is gathered. Jesus used this as a metaphor to teach his followers that they need to go and tell other people about Jesus so those people can be part of God's kingdom. (See: harvest and faith)

Neighbor

A neighbor is anyone who lives nearby. The Jews helped their Jewish neighbors who needed help, and they expected their Jewish neighbors to help them. Jesus wanted them to understand that people who were not Jews were also their neighbors, so he told them a parable

Links:

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Luke 10

10:1-12

Why did Jesus send out people in groups of two?

[10:1]

Jesus sent out people in groups of two. In ancient times, people often traveled with other people. Perhaps he did this because in the Law of Moses, two people were needed to be a witness of something. These two people were witnesses of Jesus (see: Deuteronomy 19:15).

See: Law of Moses

What did Jesus mean by saying, “the harvest is plentiful”?

[10:2]

Jesus said “the harvest is plentiful.” This is a metaphor. A farmer’s field was full of grain and was ready to be harvested. Jesus was saying there are many people ready to believe in him. The farmer needed people to harvest the grain. Jesus also needed his disciples to tell people about him. Jesus wanted people to pray to God, and ask him to have more people serve God.

See: Metaphor; Disciple

How were the disciples like lambs being sent out “in the midst of wolves”?

[10:3]

Jesus used a metaphor when speaking about his disciples. When he spoke about sheep, he was speaking about his disciples. Sheep need a shepherd to defend them and to watch over them. Wolves were wild animals that killed sheep. There were many people who rejected Jesus and tried to harm the disciples.

See: Metaphor; Disciple

Advice to Translators: A wolf is large type of dog that does not live with people.

Why did Jesus tell his disciples not to “carry a money bag, or a traveler’s bag, or sandals”?

[10:4]

Jesus told his disciples not to carry certain things. Scholars disagree about why told his disciples not to bring anything with them.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was telling the disciples not to carry extra money or clothing for their journey. He wanted them to trust that God would give them what they needed to serve these people.
2. Other scholars think Jesus wanted the disciples to leave immediately.

See: Disciple

Why did Jesus command the disciples not to greet anyone on the road?

[10:4]

In ancient times, greetings often took a long time. Perhaps Jesus want people to hurry.

See: Disciple

Why did Jesus instruct the disciples to say, “May peace be on this house”?

[10:5]

Jesus wanted his disciples to say, “may peace be on this house.” Some scholars think Jesus wanted his disciples to greet people the way the Jews greeted one another when they entered someone’s home. They wanted people to be at peace with God.

What was a person of peace?

[10:6]

A person of peace accepted the peace from Jesus. Scholars think they were ready to receive peace or God prepared them to receive peace. This person wanted to be at peace and welcomed people who followed Jesus into their house.

Why did Jesus say that peace will return to you?

[10:6]

Jesus said that peace will return to you. He wanted people to know that God’s peace would not rest on that home. It would be like the disciples never even spoke the blessing.

See: Bless (Blessing); Disciple

Why did Jesus say, “the laborer is worthy of his wages”?

[10:7]

In ancient times, people often said “the laborer is worthy of his wages.” Anyone who did work had the right to receive money for the things he did. In the same way, Jesus wanted his disciples to know it was right for them to receive food and a place to sleep because they were teaching people about Jesus.

See: Disciple

How had the kingdom of God come close?

[10:9]

Luke wrote that the kingdom of God came close. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about his disciples, whom he sent out, healing and telling people about the kingdom of God. In this way, the kingdom had come near to them. Other scholars think Jesus was saying that because he was among them, the kingdom of God was now in the world. However, scholars think it will only be completed in the future. Other scholars think Jesus was offering to rule and be king, but he did not because people rejected him.

See: Justify (Justification)

What did Jesus mean with the words, “we wipe off against you” when speaking about the dust on the disciple’s feet?

[10:11]

See: Luke 9:5

Why did Jesus say it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for the town that rejected the followers of Jesus?

[10:12]

Jesus said that it would be better for the people of Sodom than for those who rejected him. The people of Sodom sinned more than other people and God punished them (see: Genesis: 18:20; 19:24). God will punish people more if they reject Jesus.

See: Punish (Punishment)

See Map: Sodom

10:13-20

What was a woe?

[10:13]

See: Woe

Where were Chorazin and Bethsaida?

[10:13]

Chorazin and Bethsaida were cities in Israel. The people in these cities were Jews.

See Map: Chorazin and Bethsaida

Where were Tyre and Sidon?

[10:13]

Tyre and Sidon were cities outside of Israel. The people in these cities were Gentiles.

See: Gentile

See Map: Tyre and Sidon

What were the “mighty works” about which Jesus spoke?

[10:13]

The “mighty works” or “miracles” about which Jesus spoke were the healings, making people alive again, and forcing out demons.

See: Miracle ; Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

What did it mean to repent?

[10:13]

See: Repent (Repentance)

When will Jesus judge these cities?

[10:14]

Jesus will judge these cities after he returns at the end of the earth.

See: Jesus' Return to Earth; Judge (Judgment)

Where was Capernaum?

[10:15]

Capernaum was a city in Israel near the Sea of Galilee. Jesus stayed there often and did many miracles and taught people.

See: Miracle

See Map: Capernaum; Sea of Galilee

How was a city exalted to “heaven?”

[10:15]

A city “exalted to heaven” was a metaphor. This city was more honored than other cities. A city was exalted to “heaven” or the “sky” when God honored it. In ancient Israel, people thought that nothing was higher than the sky.

See: Metaphor; Heaven

What is Hades?

[10:15]

See: Hades (Sheol)

Jesus said, “whoever listens to you.” Who was he talking about?

[10:16]

When Jesus said “whoever listens to you,” he was talking about the disciples he sent. He gave them permission to say the things he wanted them to say. If the people listen to the disciples, it was as if they listened to Jesus. If people did not listen to the disciples, they rejected Jesus.

See: Disciple

Why did the demons submit to the disciples in the name of Jesus?

[10:17]

The demons submitted to the disciples in the name of Jesus. Scholars think the demons knew that Jesus gave the disciples permission to do things for him. Because of this, the demons obeyed the disciples.

See: Demon; Submit (Submission); Disciple

What did Jesus mean when he said he was “watching Satan fall from heaven”?

[10:18]

Jesus said that Satan fell from heaven. This is a metaphor.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was talking about when God cast Satan out of heaven (see: Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-19). That is, God made Satan live in hell, not heaven.
2. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about Jesus defeating Satan when he was tempted (see: Matthew 4: 1-11).
3. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about Jesus and God defeating Satan.

See: Satan (The Devil); Heaven; Metaphor; Tempt (Temptation)

What was meant when Jesus said, “I have given you authority”?

[10:19]

Scholars think Jesus gave his disciples the permission to do things for him. He gave them the power to do things they could not do without him (see: Mark 16:17-18). They think Jesus gave his disciples power over the enemy, Satan.

See: Disciple; Satan (The Devil)

What was meant by the words, “your names are engraved in heaven”?

[10:20]

Some scholars think Jesus wanted the disciples to rejoice that they were joined together in some way with other Christians. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about God’s book of life (see: Revelation 3:5).

See: Disciple; Rejoice (Joy, Joyful); Heaven

10:21-24

How did Jesus rejoice in the Holy Spirit?

[10:21]

Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit filled him and led him (see: 3:22;4:1). The Holy Spirit wanted Jesus to pray these things (see: 10:21-22). This brought joy to Jesus.

See: Rejoice (Joy, Joyful); Holy Spirit; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Who is the Lord of heaven and earth?

[10:21]

God the Father is the Lord of heaven and earth. That is, God the Father made heaven and earth. This is why he is Lord over heaven and earth.

See: Genesis 1:1-25; John 1:1-5

See: God the Father; Heaven; Create (Creation, Creature); Lord

What did God conceal and reveal?

[10:21]

Scholars say God concealed and revealed things about the kingdom of God. At this time, he wanted people to know certain things about the kingdom of God. At this time, he also wanted people not to know certain things about the kingdom of God.

See: Kingdom of God; Reveal (Revelation)

Who were the little children?

[10:21]

Jesus spoke about little children. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think he was speaking about people who did not know much about the Bible (see: Hebrews 5:13). Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about people who believed the right things about God even when the Jewish teachers did not believe the right things.

See: Metaphor

What did it mean that the Father entrusted Jesus with all things?

[10:22]

God the Father entrusted Jesus with all things. Scholars think that when the Father entrusted all things to Jesus, he gave Jesus all knowledge. That is, Jesus knew everything that God the Father was going to do. He also gave Jesus permission to give eternal life to other people (see: Matthew 28:18; John 17:2).

See: God the Father; Eternal Life

Why did no one know who the Son was except the Father and no one knew who the Father was except the Son?

[10:22]

No one knew who the Son was except the Father and no one knew who the Father was except the Son. This is because only the Father and the Son know each other fully. The Father and the Son know each other from eternity.

See: God the Father; Son of God

How did Jesus reveal God the Father to people?

[10:22]

Jesus revealed God the Father to people by telling them about God and what God wanted. He also revealed God the Father by doing God's will.

See: God the Father; Reveal (Revelation); Will of God

What did it mean that the disciples were "blessed"?

[10:23]

Jesus said that the disciples were blessed. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about a person who had received great favor from God. God favored them because they witnessed the things Jesus said and did.

See: Disciple; Bless (Blessing)

10:25-29

What was a teacher of the Jewish laws?

[10:25]

See: Law of Moses

Why did this man want to test Jesus?

[10:25]

This man tried to test Jesus. Scholars disagree about why this man did this.

1. He wanted to know the things Jesus taught about the Law of Moses.
2. He wanted to trick Jesus into saying something that would make people angry.
3. He thought he knew more about the Law of Moses than Jesus.

See: Test; Law of Moses

How did the teacher of the law answer Jesus?

[10:27]

The teacher of the Law of Moses said what was written in the Law of Moses when he answered Jesus' question (see: Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18).

See: Law of Moses

How did the teacher of the law wanted to justify himself?

[10:29]

The teacher of the Law of Moses wanted to justify himself. Some scholars think that when the teacher wanted to make people think he was right. That is, he wanted to make people think that he was wise. Other scholars say this man wanted to justify himself because he did evil things to other people.

See: Law of Moses; Justify (Justification); Wise (Wisdom, Fool)

10:30-37

Where was Jericho?

[10:30]

See Map: Jericho

How did someone “fall among robbers”?

[10:30]

When someone “fell among robbers,” the robbers violently attacked him. They took his clothes and beat him. Some scholars think the robbers surrounded him. Other scholars think he fought the robbers and they used clubs or sticks to beat him. Other scholars think the robbers also took his money. The robbers left him half dead. That is, he was about to die if no one helped him.

What was a Samaritan?

[10:33]

See: Samaria

See Map: Samaria

What did it mean that the Samaritan was “moved with compassion”?

[10:33]

The Samaritan was moved with “compassion.” He felt sorry for the injured man.

See: Samaria; Mercy

See Map: Samaria

Why did the Samaritan pour oil and wine on the injured man’s wounds?

[10:34]

In ancient times, people often used oil and wine for wounds. The oil and wine cleaned the wound and made it feel better.

Advice to translators: A wound is a place on someone’s skin that has been hurt.

What was a denarius?

[10:35]

A denarius was the amount of money someone typically made in one day.

See: Denarius

10:38-42

Why did Mary “sat at the Lord’s feet and heard his word”?

[10:39]

In ancient Israel, a student often sat on the floor to listen to their teacher while he sat on a box or chair to teach. She did this because she was humble and wanted to learn from Jesus.

See: Humble (Humility); Disciple

How did Mary choose what was best?

[10:42]

Mary choose what was best by doing the one thing that she needed to do. That is, she needed to learn from Jesus more than she needed to help prepare a meal. Perhaps Martha needed to spend less time preparing for a meal and spend more time listening to Jesus.

How will the best not be taken away from Mary?

[10:42]

Luke wrote that the best will not be taken away from Mary. Some scholars think that Mary would always remember sitting at Jesus' feet and hearing him teach. She would especially remember these things after Jesus was crucified, buried, and became alive again.

See: Crucify (Crucifixion); Resurrect (Resurrection)

Luke 10:1	God's kingdom, but there are not enough disciples to go teach and help the people.
General Information:	Luke 10:3
Jesus sends out 70 more people ahead of him.	Go on your way
Now	"Go to the cities" or "Go to the people"
This word is used here to mark a new event in the story.	I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves
seventy	Wolves attack and kill sheep. This metaphor therefore means that there are people who would attempt to harm the disciples that Jesus is sending out. The names of other animals could be substituted. Alternate translation: "when I send you out, people will want to harm you, as wolves attack sheep"
"70." Some versions say "seventy-two" or "72." You may want to include a footnote that says that.	
sent them out two by two	
"sent them out in groups of two" or "sent them out with two people in each group"	Luke 10:4
Luke 10:2	Do not carry a money bag, or a traveler's bag, or sandals
He said to them	"Do not take with you a bag, a traveler's bag, or sandals"
This was before the men actually went out. Alternate translation: "He had said to them" or "Before they went out he told them"	greet no one on the road
The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few	"do not greet anyone on the road." Jesus was emphasizing that they should go quickly to the towns and do this work. He was not telling them to be rude.
"There is a big crop, but not enough workers to bring it in." Jesus means there are many people ready to enter	

Luke 10:5

May peace be on this house

This was both a greeting and a blessing. Here "house" refers to those who live in the house. Alternate translation: "May the people in this household receive peace"

Luke 10:6

a son of peace

The phrase "son of peace" here is a metaphor for a person who wants peace with God and with people. Alternate translation: "a peaceful person"

your peace will rest upon him

Here "peace" is described as a living thing that can choose where to stay. Alternate translation: "he will have the peace you blessed him with"

if not

It may be helpful to restate the entire phrase. Alternate translation: "if there is no person of peace there" or "if the owner of the house is not a peaceful person"

it will return to you

Here "peace" is described as a living thing that can choose to leave. Alternate translation: "you will have that peace" or "he will not receive the peace you blessed him with"

Luke 10:7

Remain in that same house

Jesus was not saying that they should stay in the house all day, but that they should sleep at the same house every night they were there. Alternate translation: "Continue to sleep at that house"

for the laborer is worthy of his wages

This is a general principle that Jesus was applying to the men he was sending out. Since they would be teaching and healing the people, the people should provide them with a place to stay and with food.

Do not move around from house to house

Moving around from house to house means going to different houses. It can be made clear that he was talking about staying overnight at different houses. "Do not go sleep at a different house each night"

Luke 10:8

and they receive you

"if they welcome you"

eat what is set before you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "eat whatever food they give you"

Luke 10:9

the sick

This refers to sick people in general. Alternate translation: "the sick people"

The kingdom of God has come close to you

The abstract noun "kingdom" can be expressed with the verbs "reign" or "rule." Possible meanings are 1) the kingdom of God will begin soon. Alternate translation: "God will soon rule everywhere as king" or 2) the activities of kingdom of God are happening all around you. Alternate translation: "The proof that God is reigning is all around you"

Luke 10:10

and they do not receive you

"and the people of the city reject you"

Luke 10:11

Even the dust from your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you

This is a symbolic action to show that they reject the people of the city. Alternate translation: "Just as you rejected us, we thoroughly reject you. We even reject the dust from your town that clings to our feet"

we wipe off

Since Jesus was sending these people out in groups of two, it would be two people saying this. So languages that have a dual form of "we" would use it.

But know this: The kingdom of God is near

The phrase "But know this" emphasizes the importance of what is said next. Alternate translation: "But be aware that the kingdom of God is near" or "But be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near"

The kingdom of God is near

The abstract noun "kingdom" can be expressed with the verbs "reign" or "rule." See how you translated a similar sentence in [Luke 10:8]

Luke 10:12

I say to you

Jesus was saying this to the 70 people he was sending out. He said this to show that he was about to say something very important.

that day

The disciples would have understood that this refers to the time of final judgment of sinners. Alternate translation: "judgment day"

it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town

"God will not judge Sodom as severely as he will judge that town." Alternate translation: "God will judge the people of that town more severely than he will judge the people of Sodom"

Luke 10:13

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!

Jesus speaks as if the people of the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida are there listening to him, but they are not.

If the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon

Jesus is describing a situation that could have happened in the past but did not. Alternate translation: "If someone had performed the miracles for the people of Tyre and Sidon that I performed for you"

they would have repented long ago, sitting

"the wicked people who lived there would have shown that they were sorry for their sins by sitting"

sitting in sackcloth and ashes

"wearing sackcloth and sitting in ashes"

Luke 10:14

But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you

It may be helpful to clearly state the reason for their judgment. Alternate translation: "But because you did not repent and believe in me even though you saw me do miracles, God will judge you more severely than he will judge the people of Tyre and Sidon"

at the judgment

"on that final day when God judges everyone"

Luke 10:15

You, Capernaum

Jesus now speaks to the people in the city of Capernaum as if they are listening to him, but they are not.

do you think you will be exalted to heaven?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke the people of Capernaum for their pride. The expression "exalted to heaven" means "greatly exalted" or "honored." Alternate translation: "you will certainly not go up to heaven!" or "God will not honor you!"

you will be brought down to Hades

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will go down to Hades" or "God will send you to Hades"

Luke 10:16

The one who listens to you listens to me

The comparison can be clearly stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "When someone listens to you, it is as if they were listening to me"

the one who rejects you rejects me

The comparison can be clearly stated as a simile.
Alternate translation: "when someone rejects you, it is as if they were rejecting me"

the one who rejects me rejects the one who sent me

The comparison can be clearly stated as a simile.
Alternate translation: "when someone rejects me, it is as if they were rejecting the one who sent me"

the one who sent me

This refers to God the Father, who appointed Jesus for this special task. Alternate translation: "God, who sent me"

Luke 10:17

The seventy returned

Some languages will need to say that the seventy actually went out first, as the UDB does. This is implicit information that can be made explicit.

seventy

You may want to add a footnote: "Some versions have '72' instead of '70.'"

in your name

Here "name" refers to Jesus's power and authority.

Luke 10:18

I was watching Satan fall from heaven as lightning

Jesus used a simile to compare how God was defeating Satan when his 70 disciples were preaching in the towns to the way lightning strikes.

fall from heaven as lightning

Possible meanings are 1) fall as quickly as lightning strikes, or 2) fall down from heaven as lightning strikes downward. Since both meaning are possible, it may be best to keep the image.

Luke 10:19

authority to tread on serpents and scorpions

"authority to trample on snakes and crush scorpions."
Possible meanings are 1) snakes and scorpions are a metaphor for evil spirits. Alternate translation: "the right to defeat evil spirits" or 2) this refers to actual snakes and scorpions.

tread on serpents and scorpions

This implies that they would do this and not be injured.
Alternate translation: "walk on snakes and scorpions, which will not hurt you,"

scorpions

Scorpions are small animals with two claws and a poisonous stinger on their tail.

over all the power of the enemy

"I have given you authority to crush the power of the enemy" or "I have given you authority to defeat the enemy." The enemy is Satan.

Luke 10:20

do not rejoice only in this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice even more that your names are engraved in heaven

"do not rejoice only because the spirits submit to you" can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "rejoice that your names are written in heaven even more than you rejoice that the spirits submit to you"

your names are engraved in heaven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has written your names in heaven" or "your names are on the list of people who are citizens of heaven"

Luke 10:21

that same hour

"that same time"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Lord of heaven and earth

The phrase "heaven" and earth" represents everything that exists. Alternate translation: "Master over everyone and everything in heaven and earth"

these things

This refers to Jesus's previous teaching about the authority of the disciples. It may be best to simply say "these things" and let the reader determine the meaning.

the wise and understanding

The words "wise" and "understanding" are nominal adjectives that refer to people with these qualities. Because God had concealed truth from them, these people were not actually wise and understanding, even though they thought they were. Alternate translation: "from people who think they are wise and have understanding"

those who are untaught, like little children

This refers to those who may not have much education but who are willing to accept Jesus's teachings in the same way that little children willingly listen to those they trust. Alternate translation: "people who may have little education, but who listen to God as little children do"

for so it was well pleasing in your sight

"for it pleased you to do this"

Luke 10:22

All things have been entrusted to me from my Father

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My Father has handed everything over to me"

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.

no one knows who the Son is except the Father

This double negative emphasizes that the Father is the only one who knows. Alternate translation: "The only one who knows who the Son is, is the Father"

knows ... knows

The word that is translated as "knows" means to know from personal experience. God the Father knows Jesus in this way.

the Son

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person.

no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those ... him

This double negative emphasizes that the Son is the only one who knows. Alternate translation: "The only one who knows who the Father is, is the Son"

those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him

"whoever the Son desires to show the Father to"

Luke 10:23

Then he turned around to the disciples and said privately

The word "privately" indicates that he was alone with his disciples. Alternate translation: "Later, when he was alone with his disciples, he turned to them and said"

Blessed are those who see the things that you see

This probably refers to the good works and miracles that Jesus was doing. Alternate translation: "How good it is for those who see the things that you see me doing"

Luke 10:24

and they did not see them

This implies that Jesus was not yet doing those things. Alternate translation: "but they could not see them because I was not doing them yet"

the things that you hear

This probably refers to the teaching of Jesus. Alternate translation: "the things that you have heard me say"

and they did not hear them

This implies that Jesus was not yet teaching. Alternate translation: "but they could not hear them because I had not yet started to teach"

Luke 10:25

Connecting Statement:

Jesus replies with a story to a Jewish teacher who wants to test Jesus.

Behold, an expert in the law

This alerts us to a new event and a new person in the story.

stood up

This is an idiom that probably here means "began to act." Your language may have a different way of showing that the expert in the law had been present, listening to Jesus, and was now beginning to act. He was not necessarily sitting before he "stood up" and began to speak.

test him

"challenge Jesus"

Luke 10:26

What is written in the law? How do you read it?

Jesus is not seeking information. He uses these questions to test the Jewish teacher's knowledge. Alternate translation: "Tell me what Moses wrote in the law and what you think it means."

What is written in the law?

This can be asked in active form. Alternate translation: "What did Moses write in the law?"

How do you read it?

"What have you read in it?" or "What do you understand it to say?"

Luke 10:27

You will love ... neighbor as yourself

The man is quoting what Moses wrote in the law.

with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind

Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These four phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly."

your neighbor as yourself

This simile can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "love your neighbor as much as you love yourself"

Luke 10:28

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 10:29

But he, desiring to justify himself, said

"But the expert in the law wanted to find a way to justify himself, so he said" or "But wanting to appear righteous, the expert in the law said"

Who is my neighbor?

The man wanted to know whom he was required to love. Alternate translation: "Whom should I consider to be my neighbor and love as I love myself?" or "Which people are my neighbors that I should love?"

Luke 10:30

Jesus answered him and said

Jesus answers the man by telling a parable. Alternate translation: "In response, Jesus told him this story"

A certain man

This introduces a new character in the parable.

He fell among robbers, who

"He was surrounded by robbers, who" or "Some robbers attacked him. They"

stripped him of his belongings

"took everything he had" or "stole all his things"

half dead

This idiom means "almost dead."

Luke 10:31

By chance

This was not something that any person had planned.

a certain priest

This expression introduces a new person in the story, but does not identify him by name.

and when he saw him

"and when the priest saw the injured man." A priest is a very religious person, so the audience would assume that he would help the injured man. Since he did not, this phrase could be stated as "but when he saw him" to call attention to this unexpected result.

he passed by on the other side

It is implied that he did not help the man. Alternate translation: "he did not help the injured man but instead walked past him on the other side of the road"

Luke 10:32

a Levite ... the other side

The Levite served in the temple. He would be expected to help his fellow Jewish man. Since he did not, it may are helpful to state that. Alternate translation: "a Levite ... the other side and did not help him"

Luke 10:33

But a certain Samaritan

This introduces a new person in the story without giving his name. We know only that he was from Samaria.

a certain Samaritan

The Jews despised the Samaritans and would have assumed that he would not help the injured Jewish man.

When he saw him

"When the Samaritan saw the injured man"

he was moved with compassion

"he felt sorry for him"

Luke 10:34

bound up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them

He would have put the oil and wine on the wounds first. Alternate translation: "he put wine and oil on the wounds and wrapped them with cloth"

pouring oil and wine on them

Wine was used to clean the wound, and oil was probably used to prevent infection. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "pouring oil and wine on them to help heal them"

his own animal

"his own pack animal." This was an animal that he used to carry heavy loads. It was probably a donkey.

Luke 10:35

two denarii

"two day's wages." "Denarii" is the plural of "denarius."

the host

"the innkeeper" or "the person who took care of the inn"

whatever extra you spend, when I return, I will repay you

This could be reordered. Alternate translation: "when I return, I will repay you whatever extra amount you spend"

Luke 10:36

Which of these three do you think ... robbers?

This could be written as two questions. Alternate translation: "What do you think? Which of these three men ... robbers?"

was a neighbor

"showed himself to be a true neighbor"

to him who fell among the robbers

"to the man whom the robbers attacked"

Luke 10:37

He said, "The one who showed mercy to him."

"The expert in the law said, 'The one who showed mercy to him.'"

Go and do the same

Here "do the same" refers to showing mercy to others. Alternate translation: "In the same way, go and show mercy to anyone else who needs help" or "In the same way, go and help everyone you can"

Luke 10:38

General Information:

Jesus comes to Martha's house, where her sister Mary listens to Jesus with great attention.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new event.

as they were traveling along

"as Jesus and his disciples were traveling along"

a certain village

This introduces the village as a new location, but does not name it.

a certain woman named Martha

This introduces Martha as a new character. Your language may have a way of introducing new people.

Luke 10:39

sat at the Lord's feet

This was the normal and respectful position for a learner at that time. Alternate translation: "sat on the floor near Jesus"

heard his word

This refers to everything that Jesus taught while at Martha's house. Alternate translation: "listened to the Lord teach"

Luke 10:40

overly busy

"very busy" or "too busy"

do you not care ... alone?

Martha is complaining that the Lord is allowing Mary to sit listening to him when there is so much work to do. She respects the Lord, so she uses a rhetorical question to make her complaint more polite. Alternate translation: "it seems like you do not care ... alone."

Luke 10:41

Martha, Martha

Jesus repeats Martha's name for emphasis. Alternate translation: "Dear Martha" or "You, Martha"

Luke 10:42

only one thing is necessary

Jesus is contrasting what Mary is doing with what Martha is doing. It may be helpful to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "the only thing that is really necessary is to listen to my teaching" or "listening to my teaching is more necessary than preparing a meal"

which will not be taken away from her

Possible meanings are 1) "and I will not take this opportunity away from her" or 2) "and she will not lose what she has gained as she was listening to me"

Luke 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines in 11:2-4 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are a special prayer.

Special concepts in this chapter

The Lord's Prayer

When Jesus's followers asked him to teach them how to pray, he taught them this prayer. He did not expect them to use the same words every time they prayed, but he did want them to know what God wanted them to pray about.

Jonah

Jonah was an Old Testament prophet who was sent to the Gentile city of Nineveh to tell them to repent. When he told them to repent, they repented. (See: prophet and sin and repent)

Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)

Washing

The Pharisees would wash themselves and the things they ate with. They would even wash things that were not dirty. The law of Moses did not tell them to wash these things, but they would wash them anyway. This was because they thought that if they obeyed both the rules that God had made and some rules that God had not made, God would think that they were better people. (See: lawofmoses and clean)

Links:

- [Luke 11:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 11

11:1-13

How did Jesus want his disciples to pray this prayer?

[11:2]

Some scholars think Jesus wanted his disciples to pray this prayer by saying the same words he said. Other scholars think Jesus wanted them to pray in the same way he prayed, but not say the same words he said. Other scholars think both ways of praying honored God.

See: Matthew 6:9-13

See: Disciple; Pray (Prayer)

What did Jesus mean when he told the disciples to pray “may your name be sanctified”?

[11:2]

Jesus told the disciples that the name of God the Father was to “sanctified”(ἁγιάζω/g0037). He wanted the disciples to know that the name of God the Father was holy and different than every other name. They were to honor the name of God.

See: Sanctify (Sanctification); Holy (Holiness, Set Apart)

What was meant by the words, “may your kingdom come”?

[11:2]

When Jesus prayed “may your kingdom come,” he wanted the kingdom of God to begin.

See: Kingdom of God

What was “daily bread”?

[11:3]

To the people of Jesus’ day, people needed to eat bread to live. Some scholars think Jesus was not speaking about bread, but he was speaking about all food. Other scholars think bread was a metaphor. He was speaking about everything the disciple needed to live. Still other scholars think Jesus was teaching the disciples that bread represented spiritual food (see: John 6:32-35).

See: Metaphor; Disciple

Why did Jesus want the disciples to pray “forgive us our sins”?

[11:4]

Jesus prayed, “forgive us our sins.” He told the disciples to pray this way. God had already forgiven the sins of the disciples. He wanted them to pray that they would forgive other people when these people sinned against them. God did not forgive the disciples’ sins because of the things they do. God forgave them because of his mercy.

See: Mercy; Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon)

How did Jesus use the word “temptation”?

[11:4]

Jesus spoke about temptation. Some scholars say Jesus was thinking about sin. Other scholars say Jesus was thinking about testing. That is, the persecution or suffering the disciples experienced.

See: Tempt (Temptation); Test; Sin; Persecute (Persecution) ; Persecute (Persecution)

What was meant by the words, “shameless persistence”?

[11:8]

Scholars think Jesus used “shameless persistence”(ἀναίδεια/g0335) in two different ways.

1. Some scholars think Jesus used “shameless persistence” to speak about the friend on the outside who boldly kept knocking on the door of the house until his friend gave him what he wanted.
2. Other scholars think Jesus used “shameless persistence” to speak about the friend on the inside of the house who gave his friend what he wanted because he was worried about what people thought about him.

Why did Jesus tell the disciples to ask, seek, and knock?

[11:8, 11:9, 11:10]

Jesus told the disciples to ask, seek, and knock. Scholars think these words were metaphors. Jesus was speaking about asking God in prayer, seeking God’s wisdom in prayer, and constantly praying.

See: Metaphor; Pray (Prayer)

What did Luke write in verse 11?

[11:11]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words, “if your son asks for a loaf of bread, will you give him a stone?” Other ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. When Matthew wrote about these same things, he said these words (see: Matthew 7:9). Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words.

What did Jesus mean by saying, “you who are evil”?

[11:13]

Jesus said, “you who are evil.” Scholars think Jesus was comparing people’s fathers with God the Father. Everyone’s father has sinned. However, God the Father has never sinned. He is holy and righteous.

See: God the Father; Sin; Holy (Holiness, Set Apart); Righteous (Righteousness)

Who is the Holy Spirit?

[11:13]

See: Holy Spirit

11:14-26

How was Jesus “driving out a demon”?

[11:14]

Jesus drove out the demon by the power of God. That is, Jesus commanded the spirit to leave which stopped the demon from controlling the man. Jesus had total control over demons (see: 4:33-36).

See: Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons); Demon

What was a demon that was mute?

[11:14]

A mute demon cannot talk. This caused the man to not be able to speak.

See: Demon

Who was Beelzebul?

[11:15]

Beelzebul was the name of a pagan god. Pagans called their gods Ba'al (see: 2 Kings 1:2). The New Testament used the name Beelzebul as a name for Satan.

See: Pagan; False gods; Satan (The Devil)

What did it mean that others tested Jesus?

[11:16]

Others tested Jesus. Some scholars do not know why other people tested Jesus, but they wanted a sign from heaven. Some scholars think they wanted Jesus to prove he is the messiah by doing a sign. Some scholars think these were people trying to make other people think the wrong things about Jesus. That is, they wanted people to think that Jesus was not the Messiah.

See: Test; Sign; Heaven; Messiah (Christ)

What did it mean that a kingdom "is made desolate"?

[11:17]

A kingdom that "is made desolate" is a kingdom that was destroyed.

What was Satan's kingdom?

[11:18]

Satan's kingdom was made of demons. Satan ruled over the demons. Jesus defeated Satan in the wilderness when Satan was not able to make Jesus sin. Jesus also defeated Satan at the cross. The final defeat of Satan will be at the end of the world.

See: Satan (The Devil); Demon; Sin; Cross; Jesus' Return to Earth

What was the "finger of God"?

[11:20]

The finger of God was a metaphor for God's power. Some scholars think it was easy for Jesus to drive out demons. Other scholars think the metaphor spoke about God not moving his finger very much to drive out demons. God did it easily. Jesus said he drove out demons by the Spirit of God (see: Matthew 12:28).

See: Metaphor; Demon; Holy Spirit

How did the kingdom of God come to these people?

[11:20]

The kingdom of God came to these people when Jesus came and cast out demons. That was one way God began to reign. God will fully reign at the end of the earth.

See: Kingdom of God; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons); Demon; Jesus' Return to Earth

What was a “strongman”?

[11:21]

Here, a strongman is a soldier or a warrior. That is, he is a man who is able to fight well. Perhaps this strongman was also Satan.

What did it mean to “plunder the man’s possessions”?

[11:22]

When someone plundered a man’s possessions, the man’s possessions were divided and then given to other people. What did Jesus mean when he said, “the one who is not with me is against me”? Jesus said, “the one who is not with me is against me.” Jesus wanted to say that anyone who was not his friend was his enemy. Here, Jesus spoke about a fight between good and evil (see: Luke 11:14-22). Anyone who was not Jesus’ friend was a friend of Satan.

See: Satan (The Devil)

Why did Jesus say, “the one who does not gather with me scatters”?

[11:23]

Jesus said, “the one who does not gather with me scatters.” He wanted to say that anyone who did not serve with him was fighting against him in some way. People made a decision to either serve with Jesus or fight against him. He spoke about this using a metaphor. Some scholars think this metaphor was about a shepherd who gathered his sheep. Satan tried to scatter the sheep. Other scholars think this metaphor was about a farmer who gathered his crop at harvest time. Christians helped Jesus gather the harvest.

See: Metaphor; Shepherd; Harvest; Satan (The Devil)

What was an unclean spirit?

[11:24]

See: Demon; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

What were waterless places?

[11:24]

Waterless places were the dry deserts and wilderness. People did not live in these places. Demons and unclean spirits wandered through the wilderness, but they did not find a place to stay. The demons then try to go back to the person from whom they were driven.

See: Demon; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

What was meant by the words, “house swept out and put in order”?

[11:25]

Jesus spoke about a “house swept out and put in order.” This was a metaphor. He compared the heart of a man to a clean and tidy house. A clean house was ready for someone to live in it. Jesus spoke about a person who was not living in the right way and was ready to have many spirits live in him (see: Matthew 12:44).

11:27-32

Why did the woman say, “blessed is the womb that bore you”?

[11:27]

When the woman spoke the words, “blessed is the womb that bore you,” she was speaking about Jesus’ mother. The woman said that his mother is blessed.

See: Bless (Blessing)

How did someone “hear the word of God and keep it”?

[11:28]

Jesus spoke about someone hearing the word of God and keeping it. Scholars think that Jesus wanted people to know that there was a greater blessing for people who believed in him and obeyed him, than his mother received.

See: Word of God; Bless (Blessing)

How did Jesus speak about an “evil generation”?

[11:29]

When Jesus spoke about an “evil generation” he was speaking about the people living when he was on the earth. They were “evil” because they refused to believe that God sent Jesus. They only wanted Jesus to do miracles.

See: Luke 11:16

See: Generation; Miracle

What was the “sign of Jonah”?

[11:29]

Jesus said that “no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.” Scholars think Jesus was speaking about a future sign. Matthew also wrote about the sign of Jonah and that Jonah was in the stomach of a big fish for three days and nights (see: Matthew 12:40). Scholars think Jesus was speaking about Jesus being crucified and being dead for three days. Just as Jonah was released from the stomach of fish, so Jesus became alive again.

See: Jonah 1:17-2:10

See: Sign; Resurrect (Resurrection)

Who was the queen of the south?

[11:31]

The queen of the south was the queen of Sheba who visited King Solomon of Israel (see: 1 Kings 10:1-13). Some scholars think she was from southern Arabia. Other scholars think she was from modern Yemen.

See Map: Arabia; Yemen

How will the queen of the south condemn that generation at God’s judgment?

[11:31]

Luke wrote about the queen of the south condemning a certain generation. Scholars think that when the queen of the south rises at the judgment, people will know she did things that pleased God. The Jewish people who lived at the time of Jesus, and rejected him, did not do what pleased God. They will be condemned when God judges them.

See: Condemn (Condemnation); Generation; Judge (Judgment); Day of Judgment

How will the Queen of the South come from the ends of the earth?

[11:31]

Luke wrote that the queen of the south “came from the ends of the earth.” He wanted to say that she came from very far away.

How will the men of Nineveh condemn that generation at God’s judgment?

[11:32]

Luke wrote that the men of Nineveh will condemn people. The men of Nineveh will not be acting as judges. However, they will rise and people will know that when Jonah spoke God’s word to them, they “repented” (see: Jonah 3:4-10). Their repentance pleased God. The Jewish people who lived at the time when Jesus was on the earth did not repent when Jesus spoke God’s word. This did not please God.

See: Condemn (Condemnation); Generation; Judge (Judgment); Day of Judgment; Repent (Repentance); Word of God

See Map: Nineveh

How did Jesus say something greater than Solomon and Jonah was there?

[11:32]

Jesus said something greater than Solomon and Jonah was there when he said that Solomon’s great wisdom did not compare to Jesus’ greater wisdom. Also, Jonah’s great preaching did not compare to Jesus’ greater preaching. Solomon and Jonah did not always do what God wanted (see: 1 Kings 11:1-9; Jonah 4:5-10). Jesus always did what God wanted him to do.

See: Wise (Wisdom, Fool); Preach (Preacher)

11:33-36

How was the eye the lamp of the body?

[11:34]

The eye is the lamp of the body. This is a metaphor. The eye sees light. Scholars think Jesus used a metaphor in speaking about the eye. He wanted people to believe the things he taught and to live in a way that honors God.

See: Metaphor; Light and Darkness (Metaphor)

11:37-54

What was a Pharisee?

[11:37]

See: Pharisees

Why did Jesus recline when he ate?

[11:37]

In ancient Israel, people often laid on cushions around a low table for a meal. The people leaned on one elbow while they ate.

Why was the Pharisee surprised that Jesus did not wash his hands?

[11:38]

The Pharisee was surprised Jesus did not wash his hands. They taught people that they needed to wash their hands in a certain way to be clean. They expected Jesus to follow the rules the Jewish teachers made. Jesus obeyed the Law of Moses, not the rules made by the Jewish teachers.

See: Pharisees; Clean and Unclean; Law of Moses

Why did Jesus say the Pharisees cleaned “the outside of cups and bowls”?

[11:39]

When Jesus spoke about the “outside of cups and bowls” he used a metaphor. People clean the “outside of cups and bowls”. That is, people did certain things so that other people thought they lived in a way that honored God. However, the inside of the cup was still dirty. That is, these people did not live in a way that honored God.

See: Pharisees; Metaphor; Clean and Unclean

What was a woe?

[11:42]

See: Woe

What was a tithe?

[11:42]

See: Tithe

What was a synagogue?

[11:43]

See: Synagogue

What did it mean when Jesus said the Pharisees were “like unmarked graves”?

[11:44]

An unmarked grave looked just like ordinary ground, because there was nothing to mark it as a grave. People could walk over these graves without knowing there were dead bodies underneath them. This was a metaphor. People did not see what happened inside an unmarked grave when they walked on it and people did not see the evil inside of the Pharisees.

Advice to translators: A grave is a hole in the ground where people put a dead person’s body. They cover it with dirt. It is often marked with a stone. This stone has the name of the person who died on it.

See: Metaphor; Pharisees; Tomb

What was a “teacher of the law”?

[11:45, 11:46]

A “teacher of the law” was an expert in the Law of Moses. They were often Pharisees.

See: Law of Moses; Pharisees

Why did Jesus criticize the teachers of the law for building tombs for the dead prophets?

[11:47]

Jesus criticized the teachers of the Law of Moses. The Pharisees wanted to honor the prophets who died long before they were born. Scholars think Jesus wanted the Pharisees to honor the prophets by obeying what they taught, not by building them tombs. Because the ancestors of these teachers killed the prophets, scholars think Jesus was saying the teachers were only honoring the prophets for dying, but not living in a way that honors God.

See: Prophet; Law of Moses; Pharisees; Tomb

Why was that generation responsible for so much?

[11:50]

Scholars give several reasons why that generation was responsible for so much.

1. That generation approved of their ancestors killing God’s prophets.
2. That generation was about to kill God’s apostles.
3. The Old Testament prophesied about the time of that generation. When that generation rejected prophets and apostles, they also rejected all the prophets from earlier times.
4. That generation rejected and killed Jesus.

See: Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Prophet; Generation

Why did Jesus talk about the deaths of Abel and Zechariah?

[11:51]

Jesus talked about the deaths of Abel and Zechariah because Abel was the first person killed in the Old Testament (see: Genesis 4:8) and Zechariah was the last person killed for obeying God in the Old Testament (see: 2 Chronicles 24:20-21).

What was the “key of knowledge”?

[11:52]

Jesus spoke about the “key of knowledge.” Scholars think Jesus was using a metaphor. A key was used to lock a door. The Jewish leaders stopped people from knowing God. They stopped people from knowing that Jesus is the messiah.

See: Metaphor; Messiah (Christ)

What was a scribe?

[11:53]

See: Scribe

Luke 11:1

General Information:

The is the beginning of the next part of the story. Jesus teaches his disciples to pray.

It happened

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

Luke 11:2

Jesus said to them

"Jesus said to his disciples"

Father

Jesus is commanding the disciples to honor the name of God the Father by addressing him as "Father" when praying to him. This is an important title for God.

may your name be honored as holy

"cause everyone to honor your name." "Name" often refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "may all people honor you"

May your kingdom come

The action of God ruling over everyone is spoken of as if it were God himself. Alternate translation: "May you come and rule over everyone"

Luke 11:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples how to pray.

Give us

This is an imperative, but it should be translated as a request, rather than as a command. It may be helpful to add something such as "please" to it to make this clear. Alternate translation: "Please give us"

our daily bread

Bread was an inexpensive food that people ate every day. It is used here to refer to food in general. Alternate translation: "the food we need each day"

Luke 11:4

Forgive us ... Do not lead us

These are imperatives, but they should be translated as requests, rather than as commands. It may be helpful to add something such as "please" to them to make this clear. Alternate translation: "Please forgive us ... Please do not lead us"

Forgive us our sins

"Forgive us for sinning against you" or "Forgive our sins"

as we forgive

"since we also forgive"

who is in debt to us

"who has sinned against us" or "who has done wrong things to us"

Do not lead us into temptation

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Lead us away from temptation"

Luke 11:5

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples about prayer.

lend to me three loaves of bread

"let me borrow three loaves of bread" or "give me three loaves of bread and I will pay you later." The host does not have any food ready to give to his guest.

three loaves of bread

Bread is a food that people in Israel commonly ate. If people in your community do not know what bread is, you may translate it with a more general expression for food. Alternate translation: "some food"

Luke 11:6

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes asking a question that begins in verse 5.

since a friend ... to set before him'?

Jesus finishes asking the question that begins with the words "Which of you will have a friend" in verse 5. The whole question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Suppose you have a friend and will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend to me three loaves of bread, since a friend ... to set before him.'"

just came in from the road

It is implied that the visitor has come far from his home. Alternate translation: "was traveling and just came to my house"

anything to set before him

"any food ready to give him"

Luke 11:7

I am not able to get up

"It is not convenient for me to get up"

give bread to you

Bread is a food that people in Israel commonly ate. If people in your community do not know what bread is, you may translate it with a more general expression for food. Alternate translation: "give you some food"

Luke 11:8

I say to you

Jesus was speaking to the disciples. The word "you" is plural.

give bread to you ... give you as many loaves of bread

Bread is a food that people in Israel commonly ate. If people in your community do not know what bread is, you may translate it with a more general expression for food. Alternate translation: "give you some food ... give you as much food"

give bread to you because you are ... your ... you ... you need

Jesus addresses the disciples as if they were the ones asking for bread. Alternate translation: "give bread to him because he is ... his ... him ... he needs"

because of your shameless persistence

The phrase can be reworded to eliminate the abstract noun "persistence." Alternate translation: "because you persist shamelessly" or "because you boldly continue to ask him"

Luke 11:9

ask ... seek, and you will find ... knock

Jesus gives these commands to encourage his disciples to pray continually. Some languages may also require more information with these verbs. Use the form of "you" that would be most appropriate in this context. Alternate translation: "keep asking for what you need ... keep seeking what you need from God, and you will find it ... keep knocking on the door"

it will be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will give it to you" or "you will receive it"

knock

To knock at a door is to hit it a few times to let a person inside the house know you are standing outside. It can also be translated using the way people in your culture show that they have arrived, such as "call out" or "cough" or "clap." Here, it means a person should keep praying to God until he answers.

it will be opened to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will open the door for you" or "God will welcome you inside"

Luke 11:10

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 11:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching his disciples about prayer.

Which father among you ... will ... a fish?

Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. It could also be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "None of you fathers ... would ... a fish."

Luke 11:12

Or ... egg, will you give a scorpion to him?

Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. It could also be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "And you would never give him a scorpion ... egg."

scorpion

A scorpion is similar to a spider, but it has a tail with a poisonous sting. If scorpions are not known where you are, you could translate this as "poisonous spider" or "spider that stings"

Luke 11:13

if you who are evil know

"since you who are evil know" or "even though you are sinful, you know"

how much more will ... give ... him?

Jesus again uses a question to teach his disciples. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you can be sure that ... will give ... him."

Luke 11:14

Now

The author uses this word to mark the beginning of a new event.

Jesus was driving out a demon

It may be helpful to add extra information. Alternate translation: "Jesus was driving a demon out of a person" or "Jesus was making a demon leave a person"

demon that was mute

The demon has power to prevent people from speaking. Alternate translation: "demon that caused the man to be unable to speak"

Now

This word is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. When the demon comes out of the man, some of the people criticize Jesus, and that leads to Jesus teaching about evil spirits.

When the demon had gone out

It may be helpful to add extra information. Alternate translation: "When the demon had gone out of the man" or "When the demon left the man"

the man who had been mute spoke

"the man who had been unable to speak now spoke"

Luke 11:15

General Information:

Jesus is accused of using Satan's power to drive a demon out of a mute man.

By Beelzebul, the ruler of demons, he is driving out demons

"He is driving out demons by the power of Beelzebul, the ruler of demons"

Beelzebul

another name for Satan

Luke 11:16

Others tested him

"Other people tested Jesus." They wanted him to prove that his authority was from God.

and sought from him a sign from heaven

"and asked him to give a sign from heaven" or "by demanding that he give a sign from heaven." This was how they wanted him to prove that his authority was from God.

Luke 11:17

General Information:

Jesus begins to respond to the crowd.

Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate

"kingdom" here refers to the people in it. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If people of a kingdom fight among themselves, they will destroy their kingdom"

a house divided against itself falls

Here "house" refers to a family. Alternate translation: "if family members fight each other, they will ruin their family"

falls

"crashes down and is destroyed." This image of the house collapsing refers to the destruction of a family when the members fight each other.

Luke 11:18

If Satan is divided against himself

"Satan" here is referring to the demons who follow Satan as well as to Satan himself. Alternate translation: "If Satan and members of his kingdom are fighting among themselves"

If Satan ... how will his kingdom stand?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If Satan ... his kingdom will not last." or "If Satan ... his kingdom will fall apart."

For you say I cast out demons by Beelzebul

"For you say that it is by the power of Beelzebul that I make demons leave people." The next part of his argument can be stated explicitly: Alternate translation: "For you say that it is by the power of Beelzebul that I make demons leave people. That would mean that Satan is divided against himself"

Luke 11:19

If I ... by whom do your followers drive them out?

"If I ... by whose power do your followers force demons to leave people?" Jesus uses a question to teach the people. The meaning of Jesus's question can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "If I ... then we must agree that your followers also drive out demons by Beelzebul's power. But you do not believe that it is true."

they will be your judges

"your followers who cast out demons by God's power will judge you for saying that I cast out demons by Beelzebul's power"

Luke 11:20

by the finger of God

The "finger of God" refers to God's power.

then the kingdom of God has come to you

"this shows that God's kingdom has come to you"

Luke 11:21

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins a parable about a strong man who is defeated by a stronger man.

When a strong man ... are safe

The "strong man" here is a metaphor for Satan.

his own palace

Possible meanings of the word "palace" are 1) the entire premises of the "strong man" or 2) it refers to the courtyard of a palace and is a synecdoche for the palace. If you have a word for the house and other areas close to it that the strong man can constantly guard, you may want to use it here.

his possessions are safe

"no one can steal his things"

Luke 11:22

a stronger man

The stronger man in the parable is a metaphor for Jesus, who is stronger than Satan.

takes away the armor

"removes the weapons and protection"

plunders the man's possessions

"steals his possessions" or "takes away anything that he wants"

Luke 11:23

The one who is not with me is against me, and the one who does not gather with me scatters

This refers to any person or any group of people.
"Anyone who is not with me is against me, and anyone who does not gather with me scatters" or "Those who are not with me are against me, and those who do not gather with me scatter"

one who is not with me

"one who does not support me" or "one who does not work with me"

is against me

"works against me"

the one who does not gather with me scatters

Jesus is referring to gathering disciples who follow him. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "anyone who does not cause people to come and follow me causes them to go away from me"

Luke 11:24

waterless places

This refers to "desolate places" where the evil spirits wander.

Finding none

"If the spirit does not find any rest there"

my house from which I came

This refers to the person in which he used to live. Alternate translation: "the person in whom I used to live"

Luke 11:25

finds the house had been swept clean and put in order

This metaphor speaks about the person as if he were a house that is swept clean, with things put in their places. It is implied that the house is still empty. This can be stated in active form with that information made explicit. Alternate translation: "finds that the person is like a house that someone has swept clean and organized by putting everything where it belongs,

but has left empty" or "finds that the person is like a house that is clean and organized, but empty"

Luke 11:26

worse than the first

The word "first" refers to the condition of the man while he had the unclean spirit before it left him. Alternate translation: "worse than his condition was before the spirit left"

Luke 11:27

General Information:

This is a break in Jesus's teachings. A woman speaks a blessing and Jesus responds.

It happened that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

raised her voice above the crowd

This idiom means "spoke loudly above the noise of the crowd"

Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you

The parts of a woman's body are used to refer to the whole woman. Alternate translation: "How good it is for the woman who bore you and nursed you at her breasts" or "How happy the woman who bore you and nursed you at her breasts must be"

Luke 11:28

Rather, blessed are they

"It is even better for those"

hear the word of God

"hear the message God has spoken"

and keep it

"and obey it"

Luke 11:29	this generation
Connecting Statement:	"the people living today"
Jesus continues teaching the crowd.	Luke 11:31
As the crowds were increasing	Queen of the South
"As more people were joining the crowd" or "As the crowd was growing larger"	This refers to the Queen of Sheba. Sheba was a kingdom south of Israel.
This generation is an evil generation. It seeks ... to it	will rise up
Here "generation" refers to the people in it. Alternate translation: "The people living at this time are evil people. They seek ... to them" or "You people living at this time are evil people. You seek ... to you"	"will appear"
It seeks a sign	she came from the ends of the earth
The information about what kind of sign it seeks can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "It wants me to perform a miracle as proof that I have come from God"	This idiom means that she came from very far away. Alternate translation: "she came a very great distance" or "she came from a place very far away"
no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah	someone greater than Solomon is here
This double negative emphasizes that the sign of Jonah is the only sign that will be given. Alternate translation: "The only sign that will be given to it is the sign of Jonah"	Jesus is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, who am greater than Solomon, am here"
no sign will be given to it	Luke 11:32
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not give it a sign"	The men of Nineveh
the sign of Jonah	It may be helpful to state explicitly that this refers to the ancient city of Nineveh. Alternate translation: "The men who lived in the ancient city of Nineveh"
"what happened to Jonah" or "the miracle that God did for Jonah"	The men
Luke 11:30	This includes both men and woman. Alternate translation: "The people"
For just as Jonah became a sign ... so too ... this generation	this generation of people
This means that Jesus will serve as a sign from God for the Jews of that day in exactly the same way as Jonah served as a sign from God to the people of Nineveh.	"the people of this time"
Son of Man will	for they repented
Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will"	"for the people of Nineveh repented"
	someone greater than Jonah is here
	Jesus is speaking about himself. It may be helpful to explicitly state that they have not listened to him. Alternate translation: "even though I am greater than Jonah, you still have not repented"

Luke 11:33

General Information:

Jesus begins a parable in which he speaks of his teaching as light that he wants his disciples to obey and share with others.

puts it in a hidden place or under a basket

"hides it or puts in under a basket"

but on a lampstand

The understood subject and verb in this clause may be supplied. Alternate translation: "but a person places it on a lampstand" or "but a person puts it on a table"

Luke 11:34

General Information:

Jesus continues his parable, in which he speaks of his teaching as light that he wants his disciples to obey and share with others. He speaks of people who do not know or accept his teaching as being in darkness.

Your eye is the lamp of the body

In this part of the metaphor, the things they saw Jesus do provided understanding just as an eye provides light for the body. Alternate translation: "Your eye is like the lamp of the body"

Your eye

The eye is a metonym for vision.

the body

The body is a synecdoche for a person's life.

When your eye is good

Here "eye" here is a metonym for vision. Alternate translation: "When your vision is good" or "when you see well"

the whole body is filled with light

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the light will fill your whole body" or "you will be able to see everything clearly"

when your eye is bad

Here "eye" is a metonym for vision. Alternate translation: "When your vision is bad" or "when you see poorly"

your body is full of darkness

"you will not be able to see anything"

Luke 11:35

General Information:

Jesus continues his parable, in which he speaks of his teaching as light that he wants his disciples to obey and share with others. He speaks of people who do not know or accept his teaching as being in darkness.

watch out that the light in you is not darkness

"look carefully to make sure that what you think is light is not actually darkness"

Luke 11:36

General Information:

Jesus ends his parable.

If then your whole body is full of light, not having any member in darkness

Jesus speaks of his teaching as light that he wants his disciples to obey and share with others. He speaks of people who do not know or accept his teaching as being in darkness.

not having any member in darkness

"with none of its parts in darkness"

then your whole body will be like when a lamp shines its brightness on you

Jesus states the same truth he has just presented as a metaphor, but this time he uses a simile. He speaks of people who are full of truth as if they are a lamp that shines brightly.

Luke 11:37

General Information:

Jesus finishes teaching the crowd, and a Pharisee invites Jesus to eat at his house.

When he had finished speaking

The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event.

at his house

This refers to the Pharisee's house.

reclined

It was the custom at a relaxed meal such as this dinner for men to eat while lying down comfortably around the table. You might want to translate using the word your language uses for the way people's bodies are when they eat. Alternate translation: "sat down at the table"

Luke 11:38

wash

The Pharisees had a rule that people must wash their hands in order to be ceremonially clean before God. Alternate translation: "wash his hands" or "wash his hands in order to be ritually clean"

Luke 11:39

General Information:

Jesus begins to speak to the Pharisee using a metaphor. He compares the way they clean cups and bowls to how they clean themselves.

the outside of cups and bowls

Washing of the outside of containers was a part of the ritual practices of the Pharisees.

but the inside of you is filled with robbery and evil

This part of the metaphor contrasts the careful way they clean the outside of the dishes with the way they ignore their own internal condition.

Luke 11:40

You senseless men

This expression can refer to men or women, even though all of the Pharisees to whom Jesus was speaking to here were men.

Did not the one who made the outside also make the inside?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke the Pharisees for not understanding that what is in their hearts matters to God. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The one who made the outside also made the inside!"

Luke 11:41

Give what is inside as alms

This refers to what they should be doing with their cups and bowls. Alternate translation: "Give what is inside your cups and bowls as alms" or "Be generous to the poor"

all things will be clean for you

"you will be completely clean" or "you will be clean both inside and outside"

Luke 11:42

you tithe mint and rue and every other garden herb

"you give God one tenth of your mint and rue and other herbs from your garden." Jesus was giving an example of how extreme the Pharisees were in giving a tenth of their income.

mint and rue

These are herbs. People put just a little bit of these leaves into their food to give it flavor. If people do not know what mint and rue are, you can use the name of herbs they know or a general expression such as "herbs."

every other garden herb

Possible meanings are 1) "every other vegetable" 2) "every other garden herb" or 3) "every other garden plant."

the love of God

"to love God" or "love for God." God is the one who is loved.

without failing to do the other things also

"without failing" emphasizes that this should always be done. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate

translation: "and to always do the other good things as well"

Luke 11:43

the front seats

"the best seats"

respectful greetings

"you like people to greet you with special honor"

Luke 11:44

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes speaking to the Pharisees.

you are like unmarked graves that people walk over without knowing it

The Pharisees are like unmarked graves because they look ceremonially clean, but they cause people around them to become unclean.

unmarked graves

These graves were holes dug in the ground where a dead body was buried. They did not have the white stones that people normally place over graves so that others would see them.

without knowing it

When the Jews walked over a grave, they would become ceremonially unclean. These unmarked graves caused them to accidentally do that. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "without realizing it and become ceremonially unclean"

Luke 11:45

General Information:

Jesus begins to respond to a Jewish teacher.

One of the experts in the law

This introduces a new character into the story.

what you say insults us too

Jesus's comments about the Pharisees also seemed to apply to the teachers of the Jewish laws.

Luke 11:46

Woe to you, teachers of the law!

Jesus makes it clear that he intended to condemn the actions of the teachers of the law along with the Pharisees.

you put people under burdens that are hard to carry

"you put burdens on people that are too heavy and they cannot carry them." Jesus speaks about someone giving people many rules as if the person were giving them heavy things to carry. Alternate translation: "you burden people by giving them too many rules to follow"

touch the burdens with one of your own fingers

Possible meanings are 1) "do anything at all to help people carry those burdens" or 2) "make any effort to carry those burdens yourselves."

Luke 11:47

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 11:48

So you are witnesses and you consent

Jesus is rebuking the Pharisees and teachers of the law. They know about the murder of the prophets, but do not condemn their ancestors for killing them. Alternate translation: "So, rather than denouncing them, you confirm and agree"

Luke 11:49

For this reason

This refers back to the previous statement that the teachers of the law burdened people with rules.

God's wisdom said

"wisdom" is treated as if it was able to speak for God. Alternate translation: "God in his wisdom said" or "God wisely said"

I will send to them prophets and apostles

"I will send prophets and apostles to my people." God had declared beforehand that he would send prophets

and apostles to the ancestors of the Jewish audience to whom Jesus was speaking.

they will persecute and kill some of them

"my people will persecute and kill some of the prophets and apostles." God had declared beforehand that the ancestors of the Jewish audience to whom Jesus was speaking would persecute and kill the prophets and apostles.

Luke 11:50

this generation will be charged for all the blood of the prophets shed since the foundation of the world

God will hold the people to whom Jesus is speaking responsible for the murder of the prophets by their ancestors. Alternate translation: "God will hold this generation responsible for the deaths of all the prophets whom people have killed since the foundation of the world"

for all the blood of the prophets shed

The "blood ... shed" refers to the blood that was spilled when the prophets were killed. Alternate translation: "for all the murders of the prophets"

since the foundation of the world

The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "since the creation of the world" or "since God created the world"

Luke 11:51

Zechariah

This was probably the priest in the Old Testament who rebuked the people of Israel for idolatry. This was not the Father of John the Baptist.

who was killed

This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the people killed"

Luke 11:52

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes responding to the Jewish teacher.

you have taken away the key of knowledge; you do not enter in yourselves, and you hinder those who are entering

Jesus speaks about life in God's kingdom as if it were in a house that the teachers will neither enter nor allow others to enter. This means the teachers do not truly know God, and they prevent others from knowing him as well by teaching about scripture things that are not true. Alternate translation: "you have made it impossible for people to know how to live in God's kingdom; you do not want to live in it yourselves, and you keep others from knowing"

the key of knowledge

Possible meanings are 1) "the key that opens the door to knowledge," in which case "knowledge" is what is behind the door, or 2) "the key, which is the knowledge of how to open the door," in which case Jesus is not telling what is behind the door.

you do not enter in yourselves

"you yourselves do not go in to get knowledge"

Luke 11:53

General Information:

This is the end of the part of the story where Jesus eats at the Pharisee's house.

After Jesus left there

"After Jesus left the Pharisee's house"

argued with him about many things

The scribes and Pharisees did not argue in order to defend their views, but to try to trap Jesus so they could accuse him of breaking the law of God.

Luke 11:54

lying in wait to catch him in something he might say

The scribes and Pharisees hoped Jesus would say something wrong so that they could accuse him of breaking God's law. They did not want to learn from him.

lying in wait to catch him

The writer speaks of the Pharisees as if they were thieves hiding by the side of a road waiting for

someone to come by whom they could overpower and rob. In this case, they were waiting for Jesus to say

something for which they could accuse him. Alternate translation: "waiting and hoping to accuse him"

Luke 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Blasphemy against the Spirit"

No one knows for sure what actions people perform or what words they say when they commit this sin. However, they probably insult the Holy Spirit and his work. Part of the Holy Spirit's work is to make people understand that they are sinners and that they need to have God forgive them. Therefore, anyone who does not try to stop sinning is probably committing blasphemy against the Spirit. (See: blasphemy and holyspirit)

Servants

God expects his people to remember that everything in the world belongs to God. God gives his people things so they can serve him. He wants them to please him by doing what he wants them to do with everything he has given them. One day Jesus will ask his servants what they have done with everything he gave them to use. He will give a reward to those who have done what he wanted them to do, and he will punish those who have not.

Division

Jesus knew that those who did not choose to follow him would hate those who did choose to follow him. He also knew that most people love their families more than they love anyone else. So he wanted his followers to understand that following and pleasing him had to be more important to them than having their family love them ([Luke 12:51-56](#)).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

- [Luke 12:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 12

12:1-12

What was the yeast of the Pharisees?

[12:1]

When Jesus spoke about the yeast of the Pharisees, this was a metaphor. A little yeast spread through the whole lump of dough. It affected all of the dough. In the same way, the things the Pharisees did affected many people.

See: Yeast (Leaven); Pharisees; Metaphor

How will God reveal concealed things?

[12:2]

Jesus was speaking about God concealing things. Jesus was speaking about God knowing why people did things. Even though people wanted to conceal why they did things, but God will reveal the truth. Scholars think God will reveal the truth about why people do things when he returns to judge the earth.

See: Jesus' Return to Earth; Reveal (Revelation); Judge (Judgment); Judge (Judgment)

Why did Jesus say “do not be afraid of those who kill the body”?

[12:4]

Jesus told people not to be afraid of those who can kill their body. Jesus did not want Christians to be afraid of people who were only able to kill the body because those people cannot kill a Christian's soul (see: Matthew 10:28). People can kill Christians, but they cannot stop them from living with God in heaven forever.

See: Soul; Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Heaven

Who has permission to throw people into hell?

[12:5]

Only God can throw people into hell. He does not give permission to anyone else to do this.

See: Hell; Day of Judgment

Why did Jesus speak about sparrows and two small coins?

[12:6]

Sparrows were a common bird poor people ate in ancient Israel. Someone could buy five sparrows for two small coins. This was the amount of money someone earned for working for about one hour. People did not value the sparrow. Yet God does not forget even one sparrow. Jesus wanted his disciples to know that God will never forget them. Indeed, they were worth far more than birds.

See: Disciple

What did it mean to confess Jesus before men?

[12:8]

Jesus spoke about people confessing him before men. Jesus wanted to say that a person declared to the other people that he was a disciple of Jesus.

See: Confess (Confession); Disciple

Who is the Son of Man?

[12:8]

See: Son of Man

What will Jesus confess about people before the angels?

[12:8]

Jesus will confess certain things about people before the angels. Scholars think that Jesus will stand before the angels of God and tell them that a person is at peace with God.

See: Confess (Confession); Angel

How did people deny Jesus?

[12:9]

People denied Jesus by rejecting him in front of other people. They did not believe he is the messiah and Son of God.

See: Messiah (Christ); Son of God

What did it mean to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit?

[12:10]

To “blaspheme”(βλασφημέω/g0987) the Holy Spirit meant to dishonor, insult, or even reject the work of the Holy Spirit. Matthew wrote about people who blasphemed the Holy Spirit (see: Matthew 12:22-32).

Jesus said that every sin could be forgiven except one. That was blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Scholars disagree about how someone blasphemes the Holy Spirit.

1. Jesus spoke about rejecting him. If someone does not believe in Jesus, then they will not be forgiven of their sins.
2. Jesus spoke about someone seeing Jesus do miracles and saying that Satan gave him the power to do this. Therefore, people today cannot blaspheme the Holy Spirit.
3. Jesus spoke about people who said that the Holy Spirit did not do the things that he did.

See: Sin; Blaspheme (Blasphemy); Holy Spirit; Miracle

What did Jesus mean when he said the Holy Spirit will teach you what you should say?

[12:12]

Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will teach the disciples what they should say. Jesus wanted his disciples to know that when they spoke to certain leaders, the Holy Spirit will cause them to know what they should say. That is, the Holy Spirit will tell them what is the right thing to say.

See: Holy Spirit; Disciple

12:13-21

What was an inheritance?

[12:13]

See: Inherit (Inheritance, Heir)

What was a judge or mediator?

[12:14]

See: Judge (Judgment); Mediator

What did Jesus mean when he said, “life does not consist of the abundance of his possessions”?

[12:15]

Jesus said, “life does not consist of the abundance of his possessions.” Jesus wanted people to know that owning many things did not make a person’s life more valuable or more important. He wanted them to do things that honored God.

What was meant by the words, “your soul is required of you”?

[12:20]

The words, “your soul is required of you” meant that the man’s life would be taken from him. That is, he was to die on that night.

See: Soul

Who was a person that was “not rich toward God”?

[12:21]

A person who was “not rich toward God” was a person did not trust God. He did not do the things that God wanted him to do. He did not use the things he had to serve God.

12:22-34

Why did Jesus tell the disciples not to worry about their lives?

[12:22]

Jesus told his disciples not to “worry”(μεριμνάω/g3309). He wanted them not to think too much about whether they will have enough food to eat or clothes to wear. Jesus spoke about food, clothing, and birds of the sky because he wanted the disciples to know that God will take care of them and give them what they need.

See: Disciple

What was a cubit?

[12:25]

See: Cubit

How did someone seek the kingdom of God?

[12:31]

When someone seeked the kingdom of God, they wanted to live in a way that honors God. They did things to serve God. They do not seek the things of the world. That is, they do not do the evil things that people in the world do.

See: Kingdom of God; World; Disciple

Why did Jesus call his disciples a “little flock”?

[12:32]

Jesus called his disciples a “little flock.” This was a metaphor. In the Old Testament, Israel was a flock. Jesus cared for his flock in the same way a shepherd cared for his sheep. They were little because they were few in number.

They were helpless in the same way sheep were helpless. Jesus told them to not fear persecution or not having food and clothes.

Advice to translators: A flock is a group of sheep.

See: Metaphor; Shepherd; People of God; Persecute (Persecution)

Why did Jesus tell his disciples to sell their possessions?

[12:33]

Scholars give several ways of how Jesus wanted his disciples to sell everything they owned. Jesus wanted them to know that trusting in what they owned prevented them from trusting in God. Jesus did not want them to spend a lot of time thinking about what they owned. Jesus wanted them to be ready to sell everything they owned. Jesus did not want Christians to use the things they owned to help other people.

See: Disciple

What was “treasure in the heavens”?

[12:33]

Jesus spoke about “treasures in heaven.” Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about blessings from God. Jesus was not talking about money. Fewer scholars think that Jesus was speaking about wanting people to think about the kingdom of God. This is because being in the kingdom of God is the greatest reward.

See: Heaven; Bless (Blessing); Kingdom of God; Reward

Why did Jesus say, “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”?

[12:34]

Jesus said, “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Treasure was a metaphor for what people valued. When people valued God their hearts, they did not want the things of the world.

See: Heart (Metaphor); Metaphor; World

12:35-40

How did someone keep their “loins girded”?

[12:35]

Jesus spoke about someone keeping their “loins girded”. That is, they tucked in their long clothing. When someone did this, they were ready to work very hard. Some scholars think Christians must be ready for action. That is, they must be ready to serve God.

Why did Jesus tell those who served him to keep their lamps lit?

[12:35]

In ancient Israel, servants kept lamps burning at night when they knew their master would be returning. In the same way, Jesus wanted those who served him to be ready for him to return. He was speaking about his second coming.

See: Jesus' Return to Earth; Serve

What was a wedding feast?

[12:36]

See: Wedding

What did it mean to be blessed?

[12:37]

See: Bless (Blessing)

What were the second and third watches?

[12:38]

The second and third watches were time periods of the night in which guards had duty. Typically, the watch periods were from 6:00 in the evening until 6:00 in the morning. The Jews and Romans divided the watches. The Romans divided the watches into four periods of three hours each. The Jews divided the watches into three periods of four hours each.

Why did Jesus talk about a thief?

[12:39]

When Jesus spoke about the owner of a home knowing a thief was coming, he was saying it was wise to keep alert and watch. By doing this, the owner would prevent the thief from breaking into his home. In the same way, Jesus wanted Christians to be alert and watching for him to return. He wanted them to do this even though they did not know the time of his return.

See: Wise (Wisdom, Fool); Jesus' Return to Earth

Who is the son of man?

[12:40]

Jesus is the Son of Man.

See: Son of Man

12:41-48

How did Jesus answer Peter?

[12:42]

Jesus did not answer Peter's question directly. However, Jesus answered him using a parable.

See: Parable

How will the Lord come to the unfaithful servant and "cut him in pieces"?

[12:46]

Jesus spoke about a master coming to the unfaithful servant and cutting him into pieces. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think he wanted people to know that the unfaithful servant would be severely punished. Other scholars think he wanted Christians to separate themselves from their community. That is, he would have to live outside of the town.

See: Punish (Punishment)

12:49-59

Why did Jesus speak about “cast fire upon the earth”?

[12:49]

Jesus spoke about casting fire on the earth. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about God judging people on the earth. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about God removing evil from the world.

See: Metaphor; Judge (Judgment); Purify (Pure)

What baptism was Jesus talking about?

[12:50]

The baptism Jesus was talking about was a baptism of suffering and death. That is, he was speaking about his death as a type of baptism.

See: Baptize (Baptism)

What did Jesus mean by saying he came to bring “division”?

Jesus said that he came to divide people. Jesus divided people. Some people believed in him. Other people rejected him. People have to choose whether they believe in Jesus or reject Jesus. They must choose to follow Jesus, or to follow Satan.

See: Satan (The Devil)

Why did Jesus say that people did “not know how to interpret the present time”?

[12:56]

Jesus said that people did “not know how to interpret the present time.” Jesus was saying that people did not know how to interpret what Jesus was doing. That is, they did not understand that God sent Jesus, and did not understand what God was going to do through Jesus. The “present time” meant the time in which Jesus was living on earth.

What was a magistrate?

[12:58]

A magistrate was a ruler, or a person who had permission to make legal decisions when two people disagreed with one another.

Luke 12:1	In the meantime
General Information:	This is probably while the scribes and Pharisees were looking for a way to trap him. The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event.
Jesus begins to teach his disciples in front of thousands of people.	

when many thousands of the people ... they trampled on each other

This is background information that tells the setting of the story.

many thousands of the people

"a very great crowd"

they trampled on each other

This is probably an exaggeration to emphasize that so many people were crowded close together that they would step on each other. Alternate translation: "they were stepping on each other" or "they were stepping on one another's feet"

he began to say to his disciples first of all

"Jesus first started speaking to his disciples, and said to them"

Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy

Just as yeast spreads through a whole lump of bread dough, their hypocrisy was spreading through the whole community. Alternate translation: "Guard yourself against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, which is like yeast" or "Be careful that you do not become hypocrites like the Pharisees. Their evil behavior influences everyone just as yeast affects a lump of dough"

Luke 12:2

But there is

The word "But" connects this verse to the previous verse about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed

"everything that is hidden will be shown." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will find out about everything that people do secretly"

nothing hidden that will not be known

This means the same thing as the first part of the sentence in order to emphasize its truth. It can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will learn about everything that others try to hide"

Luke 12:3

whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light

Here "darkness" is a metonym for "night" which is a metonym for "private. And "light" is a metonym for "day" which is a metonym for "public. The phrase "will be heard" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whatever you have said privately at night, people will hear it in the daylight"

spoken in the ear

whispered

in the inner rooms

"in a closed room." This refers to private speech. Alternate translation: "in privacy" or "secretly"

will be proclaimed

"will be shouted loudly." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will proclaim"

upon the housetops

Houses in Israel had flat roofs, so people could go up and stand on top of them. If readers would be distracted trying to imagine how people would get up on the house tops, this could also be translated with a more general expression, such as "from a high place so that everyone will be able to hear."

Luke 12:4

I say to you, my friends

Jesus readdresses his disciples to mark a shift in his speech to a new topic, in this case, to speak about not being afraid.

they have no more that they can do

"they cannot cause any more harm"

Luke 12:5

Fear the one who, after ... has authority

The phrase "the one" refers to God. This could be reworded. Alternate translation: "Fear God who, after ... has authority" or "Fear God, because after ... he has authority"

after he has killed

"after he kills you"

has authority to throw you into hell

This is a general statement about God's authority to judge people. It does not mean this will happen to the disciples. Alternate translation: "has authority to throw people into hell"

Luke 12:6

Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins?

Jesus uses a question to teach the disciples. Alternate translation: "You know that five sparrows are sold for only two small coins."

sparrows

very small, seed-eating birds

not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God

This could be stated in active form and in positive form. Alternate translation: "God never forgets any of them" or "God indeed remembers every sparrow"

Luke 12:7

even the hairs of your head are all numbered

This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God knows even how many hairs are on your head"

Do not fear

The reason for the fear is not stated. Possible meanings are 1) "Do not be afraid of what will happen to you" or 2) "So do not be afraid of people who could hurt you."

You are more valuable than many sparrows

"You are worth more to God than many sparrows"

Luke 12:8

I say to you

Jesus readdresses his audience to mark a shift in his speech to a new topic, in this case, to speak about confession.

everyone who confesses me before men

What is confessed can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "whoever tells others that he is my disciple" or "anyone who acknowledges before others that he is loyal to me"

the Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man"

Luke 12:9

he who denies me before men will be denied

"I will deny before the angels of God that I know anyone who denies me" or "I, the Son of Man will deny before the angels of God that I know anyone who denies me"

denies me

"claims that he does not know me" or "claims that he is not my disciple"

before men

where people can hear

will be denied

"will be treated as though I do not know him" or "will be treated as if he is not my disciple"

Luke 12:10

Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man

"Everyone who says something bad about the Son of Man"

it will be forgiven him

"he will be forgiven." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive him for that"

blasphemes against the Holy Spirit

"speaks evil against the Holy Spirit"

but to him ... it will not be forgiven

This can be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "but he ... God will not forgive him" or "but he ... God will consider him guilty forever"

Luke 12:11

When they bring you

It is not stated who brings them into judgment.

before the synagogues

"into the synagogues to question you before the religious leaders"

rulers ... authorities

It may be necessary to combine these into one statement. Alternate translation: "other people who have power in the country"

Luke 12:12

in that hour

"at that time" or "then"

Luke 12:13

General Information:

This is a break in Jesus's teachings. A man asks Jesus to do something and Jesus responds to him.

divide the inheritance with me

In that culture, inheritances came from the father, usually after the father had died. You may need to make explicit that the speaker's father had probably died. Alternate translation: "share my father's property with me now that our father is dead"

Luke 12:14

Man

Possible meanings are 1) this is simply a way to address a stranger or 2) Jesus is rebuking the man. Your language might have a way of addressing people in either of these ways. Some people do not translate this word at all.

who appointed me a judge or a mediator over you?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke the man. Alternate translation: "no one appointed me a judge or mediator over you." or "I am not your judge or mediator."

you

This word refers to the man and his brother and so is plural.

Luke 12:15

He said to them

The word "them" here probably refers to the whole crowd of people. Alternate translation: "And Jesus said to the crowd"

keep yourselves from all greedy desires

"guard yourself from every form of greed." Alternate translation: "do not allow yourself to love having things" or "do not let the urge to have more things control you"

a person's life

This is a general statement of fact. It does not refer to any specific person. Some languages have a way of expressing that.

the abundance of his possessions

"how many things he owns" or "how much wealth he has"

Luke 12:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues his teaching by telling a parable.

Then Jesus told them

Jesus was probably still speaking to the entire crowd.

yielded abundantly

"grew a very good harvest"

Luke 12:17

What will I do, because I do not have a place to store my crops?

This question reflects what the man was thinking to himself. Alternate translation: "I do not know what to do, because I do not have any place big enough to store all my crops!"

Luke 12:18

barns

buildings where farmers store the crops they have harvested

all of my grain and other goods

"all of my grain and the other good things that I own"

Luke 12:19

I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ... years. Rest ... merry."

"I will say to myself, 'I have ... years. Rest ... merry.'" or "I will tell myself that I have ... years, so I can rest ... merry."

many goods

"many good things" or "many possessions"

Luke 12:20

Connecting Statement:

Jesus quotes how God responds to the rich man, as he finishes telling his parable.

tonight your soul is required of you

The "soul" refers to the life of a person. Alternate translation: "you will die tonight" or "I will take your life from you tonight"

the things you have prepared, whose will they be?

"who will own what you have stored up?" or "who will have what you prepared?" God uses a question to make the man realize that he would no longer possess those things. Alternate translation: "the things that you have prepared will belong to someone else!"

Luke 12:21

stores up treasure

"saves up valuable things"

is not rich toward God

has not used his time and possessions for the things that are important to God

Luke 12:22

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues teaching his disciples in front of the crowd.

Therefore

"For that reason" or "Because of what this story teaches"

I say to you

"I want to tell you something important" or "you need to listen carefully to this"

about your body, what you will wear

"about your body and what you will wear" or "about having enough clothes to put on your body"

Luke 12:23

life is more than food

This is a general statement of value. Alternate translation: "life is more important than the food you eat"

the body is more than clothes

"your body is more important than the clothes you wear"

Luke 12:24

ravens

This refers either to 1) crows, a kind of bird that eats mostly grain, or 2) ravens, a kind of bird that eats the flesh of dead animals. Jesus's audience would have considered the ravens worthless since the Jewish people could not eat these types of birds.

storeroom ... barn

These are places where food is stored.

How much more valuable you are than the birds!

This is an exclamation, not a question. Jesus emphasizes the fact that people are much more valuable to God than birds.

Luke 12:25

Which of you by being anxious can add a cubit to his lifespan?

Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "None of you can make your life any longer by being anxious!"

add a cubit to his lifespan

This is a metaphor because a cubit is a measure of length rather than of time. The image is of a person's life stretched out as if it were a board, a rope, or some other physical object.

cubit

the length from a man's elbow to the end of his fingers

Luke 12:26

If then you are not able to do such a very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

Jesus uses another question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "Since you cannot do even this small thing, you should not worry about the other things."

Luke 12:27

Think about the lilies—how they grow

"Think about how the lilies grow."

lilies

Lilies are beautiful flowers that grow wild in the fields. If your language does not have a word for lily, you can use the name of another flower like that or translate it as "flowers"

neither do they spin

The process of making thread or yarn for cloth is called "spinning." It may be helpful to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "neither do they make thread in order to make cloth" or "and they do not make yarn"

Solomon in all his glory was

"Solomon, who had great wealth, was" or "Solomon, who wore beautiful clothes, was"

Luke 12:28

If God so clothes the grass in the field, which

"If God clothes the grass in the field like that, and it" or "If God gives the grass in the field such beautiful clothing, and it." God making the grass beautiful is spoken of as if God were putting beautiful clothes on the grass. Alternate translation: "If God makes the grass in the field beautiful like this, and it"

is thrown into the oven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone throws it into a fire"

how much more will he clothe you

This is an exclamation, not a question. Jesus emphasizes that he will certainly take care of people even better than he does the grass. This could be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "he will certainly clothe you even better"

Luke 12:29

Do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink

"Do not focus on what you will eat and drink" or "Do not greatly desire more to eat and drink"

Luke 12:30

all the nations of the world

Here "nations" refers to "unbelievers." Alternate translation: "all people of other nations" or "all the unbelievers in the world"

your Father

This is an important title for God.

Luke 12:31

seek his kingdom

"focus on God's kingdom" or "greatly desire God's kingdom"

these things will be added to you

"these things also will be given to you." "These things" refers to food and clothing. This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will also give you these things"

Luke 12:32

little flock

Jesus is calling his disciples a flock. A flock is a group of sheep or goats that a shepherd cares for. As a shepherd cares for his sheep, God cares for Jesus's disciples. Alternate translation: "small group" or "dear group"

your Father

This is an important title for God.

Luke 12:33

give alms

It may be helpful to state what they receive. Alternate translation: "give alms from the money you earn from the sales"

Make for yourselves purses ... treasure in the heavens

The purses and treasure in the heavens are the same thing. They both represent God's blessing in heaven.

Make for yourselves

This is the result of giving to the poor. Alternate translation: "In this way you will make for yourselves"

purses which will not wear out

"money bags that will not get holes in them"

does not run out

"does not diminish" or "does not become less"

no thief comes near

"thieves do not come near"

no moth destroys

"moths do not destroy"

moth

A "moth" is a small insect that eats holes in fabric. You may need to use a different insect, such as an ant or termite.

Luke 12:34

where your treasure is, there your heart will be also

"your heart will be focused on where you store your treasure"

your heart

Here "heart" refers to a person's thoughts.

Luke 12:35

General Information:

Jesus begins to tell a parable.

Keep your loins girded

These words are a metaphor for being ready to do hard work. People in Jesus's culture wore long flowing robes. They would tuck these robes into their belts to keep them out of the way while they worked. Alternate translation: "Always be ready to serve" or "Be dressed and ready to serve"

and your lamps lit

This is a metaphor or metonym for staying awake at night and another metaphor for always being ready to work, even when it would otherwise be time to rest. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "keep your lamps burning"

Luke 12:36

be like people waiting expectantly for their master

Jesus commands the disciples to be ready for him to return the same way servants should be ready for their master to return.

waiting expectantly

If your language has a word for one person waiting and looking for someone he expects will come soon, you may want to use it here.

returns from the marriage feast

"returns home from a marriage feast"

open the door for him

This refers to the door of the master's house. It was the responsibility of his servants to open it for him.

Luke 12:37

Blessed are

"How good it is for"

whom the master will find watching when he comes

"whose master finds them waiting for him when he returns" or "who are ready when the master returns"

he will gird himself to serve and have them sit down

Because the servants have been faithful and ready to serve their master, the master will now reward them by serving them.

he will gird himself to serve

"he will tuck in his robe to serve." If people are not familiar with robes, this can also be translated in a more general way. Alternate translation: "he will dress himself to serve"

Luke 12:38

in the second watch of the night

The second watch was between 9:00 p.m. and midnight. Alternate translation: "late at night" or "just before midnight"

or if even in the third watch

The third watch was from midnight to 3:00 a.m. Alternate translation: "or if he comes very late at night"

Luke 12:39

had known the hour

"had known when"

he would not have let his house be broken into

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he would not have let the thief break into his house"

Luke 12:40

because the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect

The similarity between a thief (Luke 12:39) and the Son of Man is that people do not know when either one will come, so they need to be ready. Jesus is not saying that he himself is a thief.

the Son of Man is coming

Jesus is talking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, am coming"

Luke 12:41

General Information:

Here there is a stop in the story as Peter asks Jesus a question about the previous parable.

Luke 12:42

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to tell another parable.

Who then is ... right time?

Jesus uses a question to answer Peter's question indirectly. He expected those who wanted to be faithful managers to understand that the parable was about them. Alternate translation: "I said it for everyone who is ... right time."

the faithful and wise manager

Jesus tells another parable about how servants should be faithful while they wait for their master to return.

whom his lord will set over his other servants

"whom his lord puts in charge of his other servants"

Luke 12:43

Blessed is that servant

"How good it is for that servant"

whom his lord finds doing that when he comes

"if his lord finds him doing that work when he comes back"

Luke 12:44

Truly I say to you

This expression means they should pay special attention to what he is about to say.

will set him over all his property

"will put him in charge of all his property"

Luke 12:45

that servant

This refers to the servant whose lord has put him in charge of the other servants.

says in his heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "thinks to himself"

My lord delays his return

"My master will not return soon"

male servants and female servants

The words that are translated here as "male servants and female servants" are normally translated as "boys" and "girls." They may indicate that the servants were young or that they were dear to their master. If your language can shorten this phrase to "male and female servants," you may want to do so here.

Luke 12:46

in a day when he does not expect and in an hour that he does not know

The words "day" and "hour" form a merism of time that refers to any time, and the words "expect" and "know" have similar meanings, so the two phrases here are

parallel to emphasize that the coming of the lord will be a total surprise to the servant. However, the phrases should not be combined unless your language has no different words for "know" and "expect" or "day" and "hour." Alternate translation: "at a time when the servant is not expecting him"

cut him in pieces and appoint a place for him with the unfaithful

Possible meanings are 1) this is an exaggeration for the master dealing out harsh punishment toward the slave, or 2) this describes the manner in which the servant will be executed and buried as punishment.

Luke 12:47

That servant, having known his lord's will and not having prepared or done according to his will, will be beaten with many blows

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "But as for the servant who knows his lord's will does not prepare or do according to it, the master will beat him with many blows"

his lord's will ... according to his will

"what his master wanted him to do ... it"

Luke 12:48

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling the parable.

But the one ... few blows

Both the servant who knows the master's will and the servant who does not know it are punished, but the words that begin with "That servant" (verse 47) show the servant who intentionally disobeyed his master was punished more severely than the other servant.

But everyone who has been given much, from them much will be required

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They will require more of anyone who has received much" or "The master will require more of everyone he has given much to"

from the one ... much, even more will be asked

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the master will ask even more of the one ... much" or "the master will require even more of the one ... much"

the one who has been entrusted with much

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one to whom the master has given much property to take care of" or "the one to whom the master has given much responsibility"

Luke 12:49

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples.

I came to cast fire upon the earth

"I came to throw fire on the earth" or "I came to set the earth on fire." Possible meanings are 1) Jesus has come to judge people or 2) Jesus has come to purify believers or 3) Jesus has come to cause division among people.

how I wish that it were already kindled

This exclamation emphasizes how much he wants this to happen. Alternate translation: "I wish very much that it was already lit" or "how I wish that it had already begun"

Luke 12:50

I have a baptism to be baptized with

Here "baptism" refers to what Jesus must suffer. Just as water covers a person during baptism, suffering will overwhelm Jesus. Alternate translation: "I must go through a baptism of terrible suffering" or "I must be overwhelmed by suffering as a person being baptized is covered by water"

But

The word "but" is used to show that he cannot cast the fire on the earth until after he goes through his baptism.

how I am distressed until it is completed

This exclamation emphasizes how distressed he was. Alternate translation: "I am terribly distressed and will be so until I complete this baptism of suffering"

Luke 12:51

Do you think that I came to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division

Jesus asks a question to let them know that he is going to correct their wrong understanding. You may need to supply the words "I came" that are omitted in the second sentence. Alternate translation: "You think that I came to bring peace on the earth, but I tell you I did not. Instead, I came to bring division"

division

"hostility" or "discord"

Luke 12:52

there will be five in one house

It may be helpful to state that this refers to people. Alternate translation: "there will be five people in one house"

against ... against

"will oppose ... will oppose"

Luke 12:53

against

"will oppose"

Luke 12:54

General Information:

Jesus begins to speak to the crowd.

When you see a cloud rising ... happens

This condition normally meant rain was coming in Israel.

A shower is coming

"Rain is coming" or "It is going to rain"

Luke 12:55

When a south wind is blowing

This condition normally meant hot weather was coming in Israel.

Luke 12:56

the earth and the heavens

"the earth and the sky"

how is it that you do not know how to interpret the present time?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke the crowd. Jesus uses this question to convict them. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you should know how to interpret the present time."

Luke 12:57

Why do you not judge what is right for yourselves?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke the crowd. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You yourselves should discern what is right."

for yourselves

"on your own initiative"

Luke 12:58

For when you go ... prison

Jesus presents a situation here that continues through verse 59. This may be a parable to teach Jesus's hearers that they need to repent of their sins before God

condemns them on the day of judgment. Alternate translation: "If when you go ... prison"

when you go

Though Jesus is talking to a crowd, the situation he is presenting is something that a person would go through alone. So in some languages the word "you" would be singular.

be reconciled with him

"be reconciled with your adversary"

the judge

This refers to the magistrate, but the term here is more specific and threatening.

does not deliver you

"does not take you"

Luke 12:59

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the situations that begins in verse 58.

the very last bit of money

"the entire amount of money that your adversary demands"

Luke 13 General Notes

Possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Unknown events

The people and Jesus speak about two events that they knew about but about which no one today knows anything except what Luke has written ([Luke 13:1-5](#)). Your translation should tell only what Luke tells.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. A paradox occurs in this chapter: "those who are least important will be first, and those who are most important will be last" ([Luke 13:30](#)).

Links:

- [Luke 13:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 13

13:1-5

How was the blood of Galileans mixed with their own sacrifices?

[13:1]

Luke wrote about the blood of Galileans mixed with their sacrifices. Scholars think that at the Passover, Pilate ordered some of the Jews in Galilee to be killed while they were offering sacrifices. Their blood was mixed with the blood of the animal sacrifices for the Passover in some way.

See: Blood; Sacrifice; Offer (Offering)

See Map: Galilee

Where was the tower of Siloam?

[13:4]

Luke wrote about the tower of Siloam. Scholars think the tower in Siloam was a tower on the walls around Jerusalem near the pool of Siloam. Luke did not say why the tower fell.

See Map: Jerusalem; Pool of Siloam

Why did it mean to “repent”?

[13:5]

See: Repent (Repentance)

13:6-9

What was a parable?

[13:6]

See: Parable

What was a fig tree?

[13:6]

A fig tree was a tree that was very common in Israel. The tree produced a small fruit called a fig.

What was a vineyard?

[13:6]

A vineyard was a farm where grapes and olives were grown. In this man's vineyard, there was also a fig tree planted.

See: Vine (Vineyard)

13:10-17

What was a synagogue?

[13:10]

See: Synagogue

What was the Sabbath?

[13:10]

See: Sabbath

What was a "spirit of weakness"?

[13:11]

A "spirit of weakness" was an evil spirit or demon. The evil spirit caused the woman to have a "weakness." Some scholars say the "spirit of weakness" always kept the woman sick. Other scholars say it disabled the woman in some way.

See: Demon

Why was the synagogue ruler mad that Jesus "healed on the Sabbath"?

[13:14]

See: Luke 6:6-11

See: Sabbath; Synagogue

Why did Jesus cry out “hypocrites”?

[13:15]

Jesus said that the rulers of the synagogue were “hypocrites.” He said this because of the things they taught about the Law of Moses and the Sabbath. The ruler and other religious leaders said they could help their own animals on the Sabbath, but they could not help other people on the Sabbath.

See: Synagogue; Hypocrisy (Hypocrite); Law of Moses; Sabbath

How did Satan bind “bound” the woman?

[13:16]

When Jesus spoke about the woman being bound for eighteen years, he was using a metaphor. Animals were tied, or bound with a rope. They could not move. The bound woman could not move because she was sick.

See: Metaphor

13:18-21

How is the kingdom of God like a mustard seed?

[13:19]

Jesus told a parable about a mustard seed. He wanted people to know that the kingdom of God will be very large. In Israel, the mustard tree had the smallest seed. However, this seed grew into a big tree. In the same way, the kingdom of God started among a small group of people but it will grow large in some way. It will include all people of the world.

See: Parable; Kingdom of God

Why did Jesus tell the parable of yeast?

[13:21]

Jesus told a parable about yeast. He wanted people to know that the kingdom of God will spread into the whole world. When a woman mixed a small amount of yeast with a big amount of flour the flour raised. Three measures of flour fed 150 people. In the same way, the kingdom of God started among a small group of people but it will become very large. It will include all people of the world.

See: Parable; Kingdom of God; Yeast (Leaven)

13:22-30

What did it mean to be “saved”?

[13:23]

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

What was the narrow door?

[13:24]

Jesus spoke about a narrow door. This was a metaphor. Scholars think Jesus spoke about the “narrow door” because it was difficult to enter a house through a narrow door. In the same way, it was difficult to enter the kingdom of God. Someone could only enter the kingdom of God if they repented.

See: Metaphor; Kingdom of God; Repent (Repentance)

Why will many not be able to enter the kingdom of God?

[13:24]

Many people will not be able to enter the kingdom of God. The owner of the house gets up and locks the door. This was a metaphor. Scholars think there will be a time when Jesus will not allow people to enter the kingdom of God. Perhaps this will happen at the second coming of Jesus.

See: Metaphor; Kingdom of God; Jesus' Return to Earth

What did Jesus mean by saying “there will be crying and the grinding of teeth”?

[13:28]

Jesus said that there will be “crying and the grinding of teeth”. Some scholars think he was saying that people will be greatly disappointed, angry, and filled with worry because they thought they should be in heaven with God. Other scholars think there will be “crying and the grinding of teeth” because people will know they are guilty, and they will be very sad.

See: Heaven; Hell; Day of Judgment; Judge (Judgment); Punish (Punishment) .

Who were the least important and the most important?

[13:30]

Jesus spoke about the least and most important people. Scholars think the least important were the Gentiles and the most important were the Jews.

See: Gentile

13:31-35

What was a Pharisee?

[13:31]

See: Pharisees

Why did Jesus call Herod a fox?

[13:32]

Jesus called Herod a fox. Scholars think Jesus was using a metaphor when he called Herod a “fox”. A fox was an animal that was very tricky, sneaky, and often destroyed things. He wanted to say that Herod like this because he was trying to get rid of Jesus. He was being sneaky by having others try to kill Jesus for him.

See: Metaphor; King Herod

What was casting out demons?

[13:32]

See: Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

What was Jesus’ goal?

[13:33]

Jesus spoke about a goal. This was something he wanted to do. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about going to die in Jerusalem. This was when he finished the things God sent him to do.

Why did Jesus say, “it is not acceptable for a prophet to be destroyed outside of Jerusalem”?

[13:33]

Jesus said “it is not acceptable for a prophet to be destroyed outside of Jerusalem.” He wanted people to know that more prophets were killed in Jerusalem than in any other place. Jesus is the greatest of all the prophets and God planned for him to be killed in the city where most of the prophets were killed.

See: Prophet

Who were the “children” about whom Jesus spoke?

[13:34]

Jesus spoke about the “children.” He was speaking about people who lived in Jerusalem. Scholars think Jesus was talking about the whole nation of Israel.

Why did Jesus say, “your house is abandoned”?

[13:35]

Jesus said, “your house is abandoned”. Jesus spoke about something that was going to happen. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about Jerusalem. Other scholars think Jesus was saying the temple will be abandoned. The Romans destroyed both Jerusalem and the temple about 40 years after Jesus died.

See: Temple

When will people say “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”?

[13:35]

People will say “Blessed is he who come in the name of the Lord”. Jesus was speaking about returning to the earth. Perhaps the “name of the Lord” referred to the coming of the Messiah.

See: Bless (Blessing); Messiah (Christ); Jesus' Return to Earth

Luke 13:1	At that time
Connecting Statement:	This phrase connects this event to the end of chapter 12, when Jesus was teaching a crowd of people.
Jesus is still speaking in front of the crowd. Some people in the crowd ask him a question and he begins to respond. This continues the story that begins in Luke 12:1.	whose blood Pilate mixed with their own sacrifices Here "blood" refers to the death of the Galileans. They were probably killed while they were offering their sacrifices. This could be stated explicitly as in the UDB.

whose blood Pilate mixed with their own sacrifices

Pilate probably ordered his soldiers to kill people rather than doing it himself. Alternate translation: "whom Pilate's soldiers killed as they were sacrificing animals"

Luke 13:2

Do you think that these Galileans were more sinful ... way?

"Were these Galileans more sinful ... way?" or "Does this prove that these Galileans were more sinful ... way?" Jesus uses this question to challenge the understanding of the people. He answers the question in verse 3.

Luke 13:3

No, I tell you. But if you do not repent ... same way

Jesus answers the question he asked in 13:2. Jesus explains that the Galileans who were killed were not more sinful than other Galileans.

No, I tell you

Here "I tell you" emphasizes "no." Alternate translation: "They certainly were not more sinful" or "You are wrong to think that their suffering proves that they were more sinful"

all of you will perish in the same way

"all of you also will die." The phrase "in the same way" means they will experience the same result, not that they will die by the same method.

perish

die

Luke 13:4

Or those

This is Jesus's second example of people who suffered. Alternate translation: "Or consider those" or "Think about those"

eighteen people

"18 people"

Siloam

This is the name of an area in Jerusalem.

do you think they were worse sinners ... Jerusalem?

Jesus uses this question to challenge the understanding of the people. He answers the question in 13:4. Alternate translation: "does this prove that they were more sinful ... Jerusalem?"

they were worse sinners

The crowd assumed that they died in this terrible way because they were especially sinful. This could be explicitly stated. Alternate translation: "they died because they were worse sinners"

other men

"other people." The word here is the general term for a person.

Luke 13:5

No, I say

Jesus answers the question he asked in 13:4. Alternate translation: "They certainly did not die because they were more sinful"

perish

die

Luke 13:6

General Information:

Jesus begins to tell the crowd a parable to explain his last statement, "But if you do not repent, all of you will also perish."

Someone had a fig tree planted in his vineyard

The owner of a vineyard had another person plant a fig tree in the vineyard.

vineyard

Possible meanings are 1) this was a garden where grapes were grown, or 2) this was a garden where fruit trees were grown. Alternate translation: "garden" or "orchard"

Luke 13:7

Why let it waste the ground?

The man uses a question to emphasize that the tree is useless and the gardener should cut it down. Alternate translation: "Do not let it waste the ground."

Luke 13:8

leave it alone

"do not do anything to the tree" or "do not cut it down"

put manure on it

"put manure in the soil." Manure is animal dung. People put it in the ground to make the soil good for plants and trees. Alternate translation: "put fertilizer on it"

Luke 13:9

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling his parable. This is the end of the story that began in Luke 12:1.

If it bears fruit next year, good

It may be helpful to state what will happen. Alternate translation: "If it has figs on it next year, good; we can allow it to keep growing"

cut it down

The servant was making a suggestion; he was not giving a command to the owner. Alternate translation: "tell me to cut it down" or "I will cut it down"

Luke 13:10

General Information:

Verses 10-11 give background information about the setting of this part of the story and about a crippled woman who is introduced into the story.

Now

The author uses this word to mark the beginning of a new event.

during the Sabbath

"on a Sabbath day." Some languages would say "a Sabbath" because we do not know which particular Sabbath day it was.

Luke 13:11

Behold, a woman was there

The word "behold" here alerts us to a new person in the story.

eighteen years

"18 years"

a spirit of weakness

"an evil spirit that made her weak"

Luke 13:12

Woman, you are freed from your weakness

"Woman, you are healed from your disease." This can be expressed with an active verb: Alternate translation: "Woman, I have set you free from your weakness"

Woman, you are freed from your weakness

By saying this, Jesus healed her. This can be expressed with a sentence that shows that he was causing it to happen, or by a command. Alternate translation: "Woman, I now free you from your weakness" or "Woman, be freed from your weakness"

Luke 13:13

He placed his hands on her

"He touched her"

she was made straight again

This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she was able to stand up straight again"

Luke 13:14

was indignant

"was very angry"

answered and said

"said" or "responded"

be healed then

This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let someone heal you during those six days"

on the Sabbath day

"on a Sabbath day." Some languages would say "a Sabbath" because we do not know which particular Sabbath day it was.

Luke 13:15

The Lord answered him

"The Lord responded to the synagogue ruler"

Hypocrites

Jesus speaks directly to the synagogue ruler, but the plural form includes the other religious rulers also. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "You and your fellow religious leaders are hypocrites"

Does not each of you untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it to drink on the Sabbath?

Jesus uses a question to get them to think about something they already knew. Alternate translation: "Every one of you unties his ox or his donkey from the stall and leads it to drink on the Sabbath."

ox ... donkey

These are animals that people care for by giving them water.

on the Sabbath

"on a Sabbath." Some languages would say "a Sabbath" because we do not know which particular Sabbath day it was.

Luke 13:16

daughter of Abraham

This is an idiom that means, "descendant of Abraham"

whom Satan bound

Jesus compares people tying animals to the way Satan restricted the woman with this disease. Alternate translation: "whom Satan kept crippled by her illness" or "whom Satan bound with this disease"

eighteen long years

"18 long years." The word "long" here emphasizes that eighteen years was a very long time for the woman to suffer. Other languages may have other ways of emphasizing this.

should her bonds not be untied ... day?

Jesus uses a question to tell the synagogue rulers that they are wrong. Jesus speaks about the women's disease as if it were ropes that bound her. This can be translated as an active statement. Alternate translation: "it is right to release her from the bonds of this illness ... day."

Luke 13:17

As he said these things

"When Jesus said these things"

the glorious things he did

"the glorious things Jesus was doing"

Luke 13:18

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to tell a parable to the people in the synagogue.

What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to?

Jesus uses two questions to introduce what he is about to teach. Alternate translation: "I will tell you what the kingdom of God is like and what I can compare it to."

what can I compare it to?

This is basically the same as the previous question. Some languages can use both questions, and some would use only one.

Luke 13:19

It is like a mustard seed

Jesus compares the kingdom to a mustard seed.
Alternate translation: "The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed"

a mustard seed

A mustard seed is a very small seed that grows into a large plant. If this seed is not known, the phrase can be translated with the name of another seed like it or simply as "a small seed."

threw into his garden

"planted in his garden." People planted some kinds of seeds by throwing them so that they scattered in the garden.

a big tree

The word "big" is an exaggeration that contrasts the tree with the tiny seed. Alternate translation: "a very large shrub"

birds of heaven

"birds of the sky." Alternate translation: "birds that fly in the sky" or "birds"

Luke 13:20

To what can I compare the kingdom of God?

Jesus uses another question to introduce what he is about to teach. Alternate translation: "I will tell you another thing to which I can compare to the kingdom of God."

Luke 13:21

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes speaking to the people in the synagogue. This is the end of this part of the story.

It is like yeast

Jesus compares the kingdom of God to yeast in bread dough. Alternate translation: "The kingdom of God is like yeast"

like yeast

Only a little bit of yeast is needed to make a lot of dough rise. This can be made clear, as it is in the UDB.

three measures of flour

This is a large amount of flour, since each measure was about 13 liters. You may need to use a term that your culture uses to measure flour. Alternate translation: "a large amount of flour"

Luke 13:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 13:23

are only a few people to be saved?

This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will God save only a few people?"

Luke 13:24

General Information:

Jesus responds to a question by using a metaphor about entering God's kingdom.

Struggle to enter through the narrow door

"Work hard to go through the narrow doorway." Jesus is speaking about the entrance to God's kingdom as if it were a small doorway to a house. Since Jesus is talking to a group, the "you" implied in this command is plural.

the narrow door

The fact that the door is narrow implies that it is difficult to go through it. Translate it in a way to keep this restrictive meaning.

many will try to enter, but will not be able to enter

It is implied that they will not be able to enter because of the difficulty of entering. The next verse explains the difficulty.

Luke 13:25

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk about entering into God's kingdom.

Once the owner

"After the owner"

the owner of the house

This refers to the owner of the house with the narrow door in the previous verses. This is a metaphor for God as the ruler of the kingdom.

you will stand outside

Jesus was talking to a crowd. The form of "you" is plural. He is addressing them as if they will not enter through the narrow door into the kingdom.

pound the door

"hit on the door." This is an attempt to gain the owner's attention.

Luke 13:26

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 13:27

Get away from me

"Go away from me"

Luke 13:28

crying and the grinding of teeth

These actions are symbolic acts, indicating great regret and sadness. Alternate translation: "crying and grinding of teeth because of your great regret"

when you see

Jesus continues to speak to the crowd as if they will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

but you are thrown out

"but you yourselves will have been thrown outside."
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but God will have forced you outside"

Luke 13:29

from the east, west, north, and south

This means "from every direction."

be seated at a table in the kingdom of God

It was common to speak of the joy in God's kingdom as a feast. Alternate translation: "they will feast in the kingdom of God"

Luke 13:30

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk about entering into God's kingdom. This is the end of this conversation.

will be first ... will be last

Being first represents being important or honored.
Alternate translation: "will be the most important ... will be the least important" or "God will honor ... God will shame"

Luke 13:31

Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in this part of the story. Jesus is still on his way towards Jerusalem when some Pharisees speak to him about Herod.

In that same hour

"Right at that time" or "Soon after Jesus finished speaking"

Go and leave here because Herod wants to kill you

Translate this as a warning to Jesus. They were advising him to go somewhere else and be safe.

Herod wants to kill you

Herod would order people to kill Jesus. Alternate translation: "Herod wants to send his men to kill you"

Luke 13:32

that fox

Jesus was calling Herod a fox. A fox is a small wild dog. Possible meanings are 1) Herod was not much of a threat at all 2) Herod was deceptive.

Luke 13:33

In any case

"Nevertheless" or "However" or "Whatever happens"

it is not acceptable for a prophet to be destroyed outside of Jerusalem

The Jewish leaders claimed to serve God and that Jerusalem was their holy city, but it was in Jerusalem that their ancestors had killed many of God's prophets, and Jesus knew that they would kill him there also. This can be stated in positive terms. Alternate translation: "it is only in Jerusalem that it is acceptable for prophets to be destroyed" or "even though you think you are serving God and Jerusalem is your holy city, you disobey God by killing his prophets, and in doing so you defile Jerusalem"

to be destroyed

"to be killed"

Luke 13:34

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes responding to the Pharisees. This is the end of this part of the story.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem

Jesus speaks as if the people of Jerusalem are there listening to him. Jesus says this twice to show how sad he is for them.

who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you

If it would be strange to address the city, you can make it clear that Jesus was really addressing the people in the city: "you people who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you"

those sent to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those God has sent to you"

How often I desired

"I so often desired." This is an exclamation and not a question.

to gather your children

The people of Jerusalem are described as her "children." Alternate translation: "to gather your people" or "to gather the people of Jerusalem"

the way a hen gathers her brood under her wings

This describes how a hen protects her young from harm by covering them with her wings.

Luke 13:35

your house is abandoned

This is a prophecy about something that would happen soon. It means that God has stopped protecting the people of Jerusalem, so enemies can attack them and drive them away. Possible meanings are 1) God will abandon them. Alternate translation: "God will abandon you" or 2) their city will be empty. Alternate translation: "your house will be abandoned"

you will not see me until you say

"you will not see me until the time comes when you will say" or "the next time you see me, you will say"

the name of the Lord

Here "name" refers to the Lord's power and authority.

Luke 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Verse 3 says, "Jesus asked the experts in the Jewish law and the Pharisees, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?'" Many times, the Pharisees got angry with Jesus for healing on the Sabbath. In this passage, Jesus dumbfounds the Pharisees. It was normally the Pharisees who tried to trap Jesus.

Changes of subject

Many times in this chapter Luke changes from one subject to another without marking the changes.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Parable

Jesus told the parable in [Luke 14:15-24](#) to teach that the kingdom of God will be something that everyone can enjoy. But people will refuse to be part of it. (See: and kingdomofgod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. A paradox occurs in this chapter: "for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" ([Luke 14:11](#)).

Links:

- [Luke 14:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 14

14:1-6

What was the Sabbath?

[14:1]

See: Sabbath

What was edema?

[14:2]

Edema was swelling of the arms and legs. It affected the heart and kidneys.

Who were the "experts in the Jewish laws"?

[14:3]

The experts of the Jewish laws were people who taught about the Law of Moses. They were also called “scribes.”

See: Scribe; Law of Moses

Was it lawful for Jesus to heal on the Sabbath?

[14:3]

See: Luke 6:6-11

See: Sabbath

14:7-11

What was a parable?

[14:7]

See: Parable

What were “seats of honor”?

[14:8]

The “seats of honor” were the places at a feast where the most important people sat.

See: Wedding; Pride; Humble (Humility)

14:12-24

What is the “resurrection of the just”?

[14:14]

The “resurrection of the just” is a time in the future when God will cause all righteous people, who have died, to live again.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Righteous (Righteousness)

Why are people blessed who “eat bread in the kingdom of God”?

[14:15]

People who eat bread in the kingdom of God are blessed. Some scholars think people will be blessed because they will be eating with all those who belong to the kingdom of God. More scholars think that eating in the kingdom of God will happen in heaven.

See: Bless (Blessing); Kingdom of God; Heaven

Why did Jesus say, “none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner”?

[14:24]

Jesus said “none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner”. He said this because the men who were invited refused when Jesus first invited them.

14:25-35

Why must Christians hate their families?

[14:26]

Jesus said that Christians must hate their families. This was a hyperbole. He wanted Christians to love him more than they loved their families (see: Matthew 10:37).

See: Hyperbole

What did it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?

[14:26]

See: Disciple

What did it mean for a person to “carry his own cross”?

[14:27]

Jesus told people to carry a cross. This was a metaphor. Someone carried their own cross when they suffered or died for following Jesus. The cross was a metaphor for suffering and death.

See: Cross; Metaphor

What did it mean to “count the cost”?

[14:28]

When someone counted the cost of something, they would calculate how much money the materials to build a tower would cost. He would also calculate the cost of paying people to construct the tower. He would then know if he had enough to build the tower.

Why did Jesus say that if a person “does not give up all his possessions (he) cannot be my disciple”?

[14:33]

Jesus said that if a person did not give up everything, then this person cannot be Jesus’ disciple. Jesus was telling people the cost of following him. Some scholars think Jesus was clearly saying that a disciple must give up everything they own to follow Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus was saying that a disciple must not keep anything that would stop him from following Jesus.

See: Disciple

Why did Jesus say, “he who has ears to hear, let him hear”?

[14:35]

Jesus said “he who has an ear, let him hear” because he really wanted people to listen to the things that he just said. Jesus knew that when he spoke, the Holy Spirit spoke too.

See: Holy Spirit

Luke 14:1

General Information:

It is the Sabbath, and Jesus is at a Pharisee's house. Verse 1 gives background information for the event that follows.

It happened one Sabbath

This indicates a new event.

to eat bread

"to eat" or "for a meal." Bread was an important part of a meal and is used in this sentence to refer to a meal.

watching him closely

They wanted to see if they could accuse him of doing anything wrong.

Luke 14:2

Behold, there in front of him was a man

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. English uses "There in front of him was a man"

was suffering from edema

Edema is swelling caused by water building up in parts of the body. Some languages may have a name for this condition. Alternate translation: "was suffering because parts of his body were swollen with water"

Luke 14:3

Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not

"Does the law permit us to heal on the Sabbath, or does it forbid it"

Luke 14:4

But they kept silent

The religious leaders refused to answer Jesus's question.

So Jesus took hold of him

"So Jesus took hold of the man who suffered from edema"

Luke 14:5

Which of you who has a son or an ox ... will not immediately pull him out?

Jesus uses a question because he wanted them to admit that they would help their son or ox, even on the Sabbath. Therefore, it was right for him to heal people even on the Sabbath. Alternate translation: "If one of you has a son or an ox ... you would surely pull him out immediately."

Luke 14:6

They were not able to give an answer

They knew the answer and that Jesus was right, but they did not want to admit that he was correct. Alternate translation: "They had nothing to say"

Luke 14:7

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to speak to the guests at the house of the Pharisee who had invited him to a meal.

those who were invited

It may be helpful to identify these people, and to state this in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom the leader of the Pharisees had invited to the meal"

the seats of honor

"the seats for honored people" or "the seats for important people"

Luke 14:8

When you are invited by someone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When someone invites you"

When you ... than you

These occurrences of "you" are singular. Jesus is speaking to the group as if to each individual person.

because someone may have been invited who is more honored than you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the host may have invited a person who is more important than you are"

Luke 14:9

say to you ... your place ... you will proceed

These occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular. Jesus is speaking to the group as if to each individual person.

both of you

This occurrence of "you" refers to the two people who want the same seat of honor.

in shame

"you will feel ashamed and"

the lowest place

"the least important place" or "the place for the least important person"

Luke 14:10

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the people at the Pharisee's house.

when you are invited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when someone invites you"

the lowest place

"the seat meant for the least important person"

go up higher

"move to a seat for a more important person"

Then you will be honored

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then the one who invited you will honor you"

Luke 14:11

who exalts himself

"who tries to look important" or "who takes an important position"

will be humbled

"will be shown to be unimportant" or "will be given an unimportant position." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will humble"

humbles himself

"who chooses to look unimportant" or "who takes an unimportant position"

will be exalted

"will be shown to be important" or "will be given an important position." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will exalt"

Luke 14:12

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking at the Pharisee's house, but addresses his host directly.

the man who had invited him

"the Pharisee who had invited him to his house for a meal"

When you give

"you" is singular because Jesus is speaking directly to the Pharisee that invited him.

do not invite

This probably does not mean they can never invite these people. More likely it means they should invite others as well. Alternate translation: "do not only invite" or "do not always invite"

as they may

"because they might"

invite you in return

"invite you to their dinner or banquet"

you will be repaid

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in this way they will repay you"

Luke 14:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the Pharisee who had invited him to his home.

invite the poor

It may be helpful to add "also" since this statement is probably not exclusive. Alternate translation: "also invite the poor"

Luke 14:14

you will be blessed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless you"

they cannot repay you

"they cannot invite you to a banquet in return"

you will be repaid

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will repay you"

in the resurrection of the just

This refers to the final judgment. Alternate translation: "when God brings the righteous people back to life"

Luke 14:15

General Information:

One of the men at the table speaks to Jesus and Jesus responds to him by telling a parable.

one of them who sat at the table

This introduces a new person.

Blessed is he

The man was not talking about a specific person. Alternate translation: "Blessed is anyone" or "How good it is for everyone"

he who will eat bread

The word "bread" is used to refer to the whole meal. Alternate translation: "he who will eat at the meal"

Luke 14:16

But Jesus said to him

Jesus begins telling a parable.

A certain man prepared a large dinner and invited many

The reader should be able to infer that the man probably had his servants prepare the meal and invite the guests.

A certain man

This phrase is a way of referring to the man without giving any specific information about his identity.

invited many

"invited many people" or "invited many guests"

Luke 14:17

At the dinner hour

"At the time for the dinner" or "When the dinner was about to begin"

those who were invited

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

Luke 14:18

General Information:

All of the people who were invited gave the servant excuses about why they could not come to the banquet.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling his parable.

to make excuses

"to say why they could not come to the dinner"

The first said to him

The reader should be able to infer that these people spoke directly to the servant whom the master had sent out

Please excuse me

"Please forgive me" or "Please accept my apology"

Luke 14:19

Another said

The reader should be able to infer that these people spoke directly to the servant whom the master had sent out

five pairs of oxen

Oxen were used in pairs to pull farming tools. Alternate translation: "10 oxen to work in my fields"

I am going to try them out

He wanted to use the oxen and see how well they worked together pulling farm tools.

Luke 14:20

another man said

The reader should be able to infer that these people spoke directly to the servant whom the master had sent out

married a wife

Use an expression that is natural in your language. Some languages may say "gotten married" or "taken a wife."

Luke 14:21

became angry

"became angry with the people he had invited"

bring in here

"invite in here to eat the dinner"

Luke 14:22

The servant said

It may be necessary to state clearly the implied information that the servant did what the master commanded him. Alternate translation: "After the servant went out and did that, he came back and said"

what you commanded has been done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have done what you commanded"

Luke 14:23

the highways and hedges

This refers to roads and paths outside of the city. Alternate translation: "the main roads and paths outside of the city"

compel them to come in

"demand that they come in"

compel them

The word "them" refers to anyone the servants find. "compel anyone you find to come in"

that my house may be filled

"so that people may fill my house"

Luke 14:24

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes his parable.

For I say to you

The word "you" is plural, so it is unclear to whom it is addressed.

those men

The word here for "men" means "male adults" and not just people in general.

who were invited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom I invited"

will taste my dinner

"will enjoy the dinner I have prepared"

Luke 14:25

General Information:

Jesus begins to teach the crowds that were traveling with him.

Luke 14:26

If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father ... he cannot be my disciple

Here, "hate" is an exaggeration for the lesser love people are to show to people other than Jesus. Alternate translation: "If anyone comes to me and does not love me more than he loves his father ... he cannot be my disciple" or "Only if a person loves me more than he loves his own father ... can he be my disciple"

Luke 14:27

Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple

This could be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Only he who carries his own cross and comes after me can be my disciple" or "If anyone wants to be my disciple, he must carry his own cross and follow me"

carry his own cross

Jesus does not mean every Christian must be crucified. The Romans often made people carry their own crosses before they crucified them as a sign of their submission to Rome. This metaphor means they must submit to God and be willing to suffer in any way to be Jesus's disciples.

Luke 14:28

General Information:

Jesus continues to explain to the crowd that it is important to count the cost of being a disciple.

For which of you who desires to build a tower does not first sit down and count the cost to calculate if he has what he needs to complete it?

Jesus uses this question to prove that people count the cost of a project before they begin it. Alternate

translation: "If a person wanted to build a tower, he would certainly first sit down and determine if he had enough money to complete it."

tower

This may have been a watchtower. "a tall building" or "a high lookout platform"

Luke 14:29

Otherwise

It may be helpful to give more information. Alternate translation: "If he does not first count the cost"

when he has laid a foundation

"when he has built a base" or "when he has completed the first part of the building"

is not able to finish

It is understood that he was not able to finish because he did not have enough money. This could be stated. Alternate translation: "does not have enough money to be able to finish"

Luke 14:30

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 14:31

General Information:

Jesus continues to explain to the crowd that it is important to count the cost of being a disciple.

Or

Jesus used this word to introduce another situation where people count the cost before making a decision.

what king ... will not sit down first and take advice ... men?

Jesus uses another question to teach the crowd about counting the cost. Alternate translation: "you know that a king ... would sit down first and take counsel ... men."

take advice

Possible meanings are 1) "think carefully" or 2) "listen to his advisors."

ten thousand ... twenty thousand

"10,000 ... 20,000"

Luke 14:32

If not

It may be helpful to restate the information given in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "If he realizes that he will not be able to defeat the other king"

conditions of peace

"terms to end the war" or "what the other king wants him to do in order to end the war"

Luke 14:33

any one of you who does not give up all his possessions cannot be my disciple

This can be stated with positive verbs. Alternate translation: "only those of you who give up all your possessions can be my disciples"

give up all his possessions

"leave behind all that he has"

Luke 14:34

Salt is good

"Salt is useful." Jesus is teaching a lesson about those who want to be his disciple.

how can it be made salty again?

Jesus uses a question to teach the crowd. Alternate translation: "it cannot be made salty again." or "no one can make it salty again."

Luke 14:35

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching the crowd.

manure pile

People use manure to fertilize gardens and fields. Salt without taste is so useless it is not even worth mixing with manure. Alternate translation: "compost heap" or "fertilizer"

It is thrown away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone just throws it away"

He who has ears to hear, let him hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "ears to hear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 8:8]

He who ... let him

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 8:8]

Luke 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The parable of the prodigal son

[Luke 15:11-32]

Special concepts in this chapter

Sinners

When the people of Jesus's time spoke of "sinners," they were talking about people who did not obey the law of Moses and instead committed sins like stealing or sexual sins. But Jesus told three parables

Links:

- [Luke 15:1 Notes](#)

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Luke 15

15:1-10

Who were tax collectors and sinners?

[15:1]

Tax collectors were Jews who worked for the Roman government. People in Israel hated the tax collectors. The tax collector paid the Romans so they could collect taxes from other people. If they collected more taxes than they paid the Roman government, then they were allowed to keep it. Because of this, many tax collectors became rich. The Jews thought a Jewish tax collector betrayed the Jewish people because they took money from the Jews and gave it to the Romans. They thought tax collectors were evil because they took money from people who honored God and gave it to people who rejected God.

The sinners Luke wrote about were Jewish people who did not obey the Law of Moses.

See: Luke 5:29-32

See: Law of Moses; Tax (Tax Collector, Toll), Sin

Who were the scribes?

[15:2]

See: Scribe

What was a parable?

[15:3]

See: Parable

How will there be “joy in heaven”?

[15:7]

Jesus said that there will be “joy in heaven.” Jesus spoke about the joy of God and the joy of the angels. They have joy because a sinner repented.

See: Angel; Sin; Rejoice (Joy, Joyful); Repent (Repentance)

15:11-32

What did the younger son mean when he said “the portion of the wealth that falls to me”?

[15:12]

The younger son said “the portion of the wealth that falls to me”. He was speaking about the money of his inheritance.

See: Inherit (Inheritance, Heir)

How did the younger son live?

[15:13]

The younger son lived recklessly. That is, he wasted his money on doing things that did not honor God.

Why did the younger son say that he “sinned against heaven”?

[15:18]

The younger son said he “sinned against heaven.” This was a metaphor the ancient Jews used to talk about God without saying the word God. That is, the younger son sinned against God.

See: Metaphor; Sin; Heaven

Why was the young man’s father “moved with compassion”?

[15:20]

Jesus said the father was “moved with compassion.” Scholars think the father wanted to be compassionate to his son. That is, he had wanted to show mercy to his young, to forgive him, and to love him.

See: Mercy

What was the “fattened calf”?

[15:23]

The fattened calf was not with the other calves in the field. People gave it extra food and then had it prepared for a special celebration.

How did people believe the younger son was “dead”?

[15:24]

The father spoke about his son being dead. However, he was not dead. He believed his son was dead in some way. That is, he meant that his son was like someone who was dead, but now had come back to life. The father never expected to see his son again.

Why did the father say to the older son, “you are always with me”?

[15:31]

The father told the older son, “you are always with me.” This was because the older son lived with the father all the time. Therefore, there was no need to have a special feast to celebrate his return.

Luke 15:1	to them
General Information:	Here "them" refers to the religious leaders.
We do not know where this takes place; it simply occurs one day when Jesus is teaching.	Luke 15:4
Now	Which one of you ... will not leave ... until he finds it?
This marks the beginning of a new event.	Jesus uses a question to remind the people that if any of them lost one of their sheep, they would certainly go looking for it. Alternate translation: "Each of you ... would certainly leave ... until he finds it."
all the tax collectors	Which one of you, if he has a hundred sheep ... loses ... he finds it
This is an exaggeration to stress that there were very many of them. Alternate translation: "many tax collectors"	Since the parable starts with "Which one of you," some languages would continue the parable in the second person. Alternate translation: "Which one of you, if you have a hundred sheep ... lose ... you find it"
Luke 15:2	hundred ... ninety-nine
This man welcomes sinners	"100 ... 99"
"This man lets sinners into his presence" or "This man associates with sinners"	Luke 15:5
This man	Then when he has found it, he lays ... rejoices
They were talking about Jesus.	Since the parable starts in the previous verse with "Which one of you," some languages would continue the parable in the second person. Alternate translation: "Then when you have found it you will lay ... rejoice"
even eats with them	lays it across his shoulders
The word "even" shows that they thought it was bad enough that Jesus allowed sinners to come to him, but it was worse that he would eat with them.	This is the way a shepherd carries a sheep. This could be stated. Alternate translation: "lays it across his shoulders to carry it home"
Luke 15:3	
General Information:	
Jesus begins to tell several parables. These parables are situations about things that anyone could experience. They are not about particular people. The first parable is about what a person would do if one of his sheep was lost.	

Luke 15:6

When he comes to the house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors

Since the parable starts in the verse 4 with "Which one of you," some languages would continue the parable in the second person. Alternate translation: "When you come home you will call together your friends and your neighbors"

When he comes to the house

"When the owner of the sheep comes home" or "When you come home." Refer to the owner of the sheep as you did in the previous verse.

Luke 15:7

even so

"in the same way" or "as the shepherd and his friends and neighbors would rejoice"

there will be joy in heaven

"everyone in heaven will rejoice"

ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent

Jesus uses sarcasm to say that the Pharisees were wrong to think that they did not need to repent. Your language may have a different way to express this idea. Alternate translation: "ninety-nine persons like you, who think they are righteous and do not need to repent"

ninety-nine

"99"

Luke 15:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins telling another parable. It is about a woman with 10 silver coins.

Or what woman ... would not light a lamp ... and seek diligently until she has found it?

Jesus uses a question to remind the people that if they lost a silver coin, they would certainly look for it diligently. Alternate translation: "Any woman ... would

certainly light a lamp ... and seek diligently until she has found it."

Luke 15:9

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 15:10

Even so

"In the same way" or "Just as people would rejoice with the woman"

over one sinner who repents

"when one sinner repents"

Luke 15:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins telling another parable. It is about a young man who asks his father for his part of the inheritance.

A certain man

This introduces a new character in the parable. Some languages might say "There was a man who"

Luke 15:12

give me

The son wanted his father to give it to him immediately. Languages that have a command form that means that they want it done immediately should use that form.

the portion of the wealth that falls to me

"the part of your wealth that you plan for me to receive when you die"

between them

"between his two sons"

Luke 15:13

gathered together all he owned

"packed his things" or "put his things in his bag"

living recklessly

"living without thinking about the consequences of his actions" or "living wildly"

Luke 15:14

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Jesus explains how the younger son went from having plenty to being in need.

a severe famine spread through that country

"a drought occurred there and the entire country did not have enough food"

to be in need

"to lack what he needed" or "to not have enough"

Luke 15:15

He went

The word "he" refers to the younger son.

hired himself out to

"took a job with" or "began to work for"

one of the citizens of that country

"a man of that country"

to feed pigs

"to give food to the man's pigs"

Luke 15:16

was longing to eat

"wished very much that he could eat." It is understood that this is because he was very hungry. This could be stated. Alternate translation: "he was so hungry that he would have happily eaten"

carob pods

These are the husks of beans that grow on the carob tree. Alternate translation: "carob bean pods" or "bean husks"

Luke 15:17

came to himself

This idiom means he realized what the truth was, that he had made a terrible mistake. Alternate translation: "clearly understood his situation"

How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread

This is part of an exclamation, and not a question. Alternate translation: "All my father's hired servants have more than enough bread to eat"

bread

This is a synecdoche for any kind and all kinds of food. Alternate translation: "food"

perishing from hunger

This is probably not an exaggeration. Jesus may have meant that the young man in his parable was actually starving then.

perishing

"dying" or "being destroyed"

Luke 15:18

I will get up

This is an idiom that means he will begin to act. It does not mean that he was sitting or lying down when he said these words.

I have sinned against heaven

Jewish people sometimes avoided saying the word "God" and used the word "heaven" instead. Alternate translation: "I have sinned against God"

Luke 15:19

I am no longer worthy to be called your son

"I was once worthy to be called your son, but not now." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You called me son in the past, but now I am not worthy for you to call me son"

make me as one of your hired servants

"hire me as an employee" or "hire me and I will become one of your servants." This is a request, not a command. It may be helpful to add "please" as the UDB does.

Luke 15:20

So the young son got up and left and came toward his father

"So he left that country and started going back to his father." The word "so" marks an event that happened because of something else that happened first. In this case, the young man was in need and had decided to go home.

got up

This is an idiom that means he began to act. It does not mean that he had been sitting or lying down. See how you translated similar words in [Luke 15:18]

While he was still far away

"While he was still far away from his home" or "While he was still far away from his father's house"

was moved with compassion

"had pity on him" or "loved him deeply from his heart"

embraced him and kissed him

The father did this to show his son that he loved him and was glad that the son was coming home. If people think that it is strange or wrong for a man to embrace or hug and kiss his son, you can substitute a way that men in your culture show affection to their sons. Alternate translation: "welcomed him affectionately"

Luke 15:21

sinned against heaven

Jewish people sometimes avoided saying the word "God" and used the word "heaven" instead. See how you translated this in [Luke 15:18]

I am no longer worthy to be called your son

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Luke 15:18]

Luke 15:22

best robe

"the best robe in the house." Alternate translation: "the best coat" or "the best garment"

put a ring on his hand

A ring was a sign of authority that men wore on one of their fingers.

sandals

Wealthy people of that time wore sandals. However, in many cultures the modern equivalent would be "shoes."

Luke 15:23

fattened calf

A calf is a young cow. People would give one of their calves special food so that it would grow well, and then when they wanted to have a special feast, they would eat that calf. Alternate translation: "the best calf" or "the young animal we have been making fat"

kill it

The implied information that they were to cook the meat can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "kill it and cook it"

Luke 15:24

my son was dead, and now he is alive

This metaphor speaks of the son being gone as if he were dead. Alternate translation: "it is as if my son were dead and became alive again" or "I felt like my son had died, but he is now alive"

He was lost, and now he is found

This metaphor speaks of the son being gone as if he had been lost. Alternate translation: "It is as if I had lost my son and now I have found him" or "My son went to where I could not bring him back, but now he has returned home"

Luke 15:25

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Jesus starts to tell about the older son in a new part of the story.

out in the field

It is implied that he was out in the field because he was working there.

Luke 15:26

one of the servants

The word that is translated here as "servant" is normally translated as "boy." It may indicate that the servant was very young.

what these things might be

"what was happening"

Luke 15:27

the fattened calf

A calf is a young cow. People would give one of their calves special food so that it would grow well, and then when they wanted to have a special feast, they would eat that calf. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 15:23]

he has received him in good health

"your father has received your brother, and your brother is healthy" or "your brother is well and has returned to your father"

Luke 15:28

General Information:

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Luke 15:29

these many years

"for many years"

I slaved for you

"I worked extremely hard for you" or "I worked as hard as a slave for you"

never neglected a command of yours

"never disobeyed any of your commands" or "always obeyed everything you told me to do"

a young goat

A young goat was smaller and less expensive than a fattened calf. Alternate translation: "even a young goat"

Luke 15:30

your son

"that son of yours." The older son refers to his brother this way in order to show how angry he is.

devoured your living

Food is a metaphor for money. After one eats food, the food is no longer there and there is nothing to eat. The money that the brother had received was no longer there and there was no more to spend. Alternate translation: "wasted all your wealth" or "thrown away all your money"

with prostitutes

Possible meanings are 1) he assumed this is how his brother spent the money or 2) he speaks of prostitutes to exaggerate the sinfulness of his brother's actions in the "country far away"

fattened calf

A calf is a young cow. People would give one of their calves special food so that it would grow well, and then when they wanted to have a special feast, they would eat that calf. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 15:23]

Luke 15:31

The father said to him

The word "him" refers to the older son.

Child

"My dear child" or "My dear son." The father was addressing his son tenderly.

Luke 15:32

this brother of yours

The father was reminding the older son that the one who just came home was his brother.

this brother of yours was dead, and is now alive

This metaphor speaks of the brother being gone as if he were dead. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 15:24]

he was lost, and has now been found

This metaphor speaks of the son being gone as if he had been lost. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 15:24]

Luke 16 General Notes

Links:

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Luke 16

16:1-13

What was a manager?

[16:1]

A manager took care of a master's house, land, and business. A master gave the manager a ring. This was a symbol that he had permission to do things for the master. Sometimes managers were servants but sometimes they were free people.

See: Serve

What was meant by the words, "to dig"?

[16:3]

Jesus spoke about digging. Some scholars think he was speaking about digging ditches or digging in the fields using a shovel. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about doing any type of hard work.

How did the manager change what the debtors owed his master?

[16:6, 16:7]

The manager changed what the debtor owed his master. Scholars do not know how the the manager did this.

1. Some scholars think he wrote that the people owed less money than they owed.
2. Some scholars think he did not make them pay more money than they owed. They think the owner charged them more interest than he should have.
3. Some scholars think he would have made money from these people. However, he chose not to make money from them. The master did not lose any money.

Advice to translators: A debtor is someone who owed someone else money. When someone borrows money, they often have to pay more money back. This is called interest.

What was an "unrighteous manager"?

[16:8]

See: Righteous (Righteousness); Steward

How did the master “commend” the unrighteous manager?

[16:8]

Scholars think that when the master “commended” the manager, he complimented the manager for acting shrewdly.

Advice to Translators: The master did not compliment the manager for acting dishonestly. You will need to distinguish acting “shrewdly” from acting dishonestly.

What did it mean to act “shrewdly”?

[16:8]

When someone acted “shrewdly”, they acted with wisdom and skill in the face of a coming problem or crisis. Some scholars think it meant to act in a way that was prudent and they planned for things.

See: Wise (Wisdom, Fool)

What was “unrighteous wealth”?

[16:9]

Money that was considered “unrighteous wealth” was money gained from doing evil.

See: Sin

Why did Jesus tell the disciples to make friends “by means of unrighteous wealth”?

[16:9]

Jesus told his disciples to use the money they gained on earth in a way that helped people who were in need. Jesus wanted his disciples to help people because those people might become friends of the disciples. Those friends might then believe in Jesus.

See: Disciple

Who were the “friends” who will welcome the disciples into eternal dwellings?

[16:9]

Scholars have different ideas of who the “friends” are who will welcome the disciples into eternal dwellings.

1. These friends were poor people whom the disciples helped. These poor people became Christians and died before the disciples. Then these poor people welcomed the disciples into heaven when the disciples died.
2. These friends were angels. This was a metaphor for God. They spoke about God without saying the name of God. However, the angels will also welcome the disciples into heaven.
3. These friends were God and Jesus. Only God and Jesus will receive people into heaven.

See: Eternal Life; Disciple; Heaven; Angel; Metaphor

How did Jesus want the disciples to be “faithful”?

[16:10]

Jesus wanted the disciples to be “faithful”(πιστός/g4103) by being honest with money (see: 16:11). Then God will give them true wealth. This is a metaphor for the treasures and blessings in heaven. This is really valuable and will last forever.

See: Faithful; Bless (Blessing); Heaven; Metaphor

What did Jesus mean when he told the disciples, “you cannot serve God and wealth”?

[16:13]

Jesus said the disciples were not able to serve God and wealth. This was a metaphor. They could not serve a master other than God. If the disciples served someone or something other than God, they did not serve God. Jesus wanted his disciples to serve God only. Jesus said this more than one time (see: Matthew 6:24).

See: Metaphor; Disciple

16:14-18

What did it mean that the Pharisees were lovers of money?

[16:14]

Luke wrote that the Pharisees loved money. Scholars think that someone who was described as a lover of money was a person who wanted to get more and more money. This person really wanted to have a lot of money.

See: 1 Timothy 6:10; 2 Timothy 3:2

See: Pharisees

How did the Pharisees justify themselves to other people?

[16:15]

The Pharisees justified themselves to other people by doing certain things so people could see them doing these things. They gave people money because people saw them give money. They did these things to try to make people think they were righteous. However, that did not justify them to God.

See: Pharisees; Justify (Justification); Righteous (Righteousness)

What was meant by the words, “God knows your hearts”?

[16:15]

God knows someone’s heart. That is, he knows what a person is thinking and what a person wants. God knew these Pharisees loved money rather than God.

See: Heart (Metaphor); Pharisees; Love

What did Jesus mean when he said, “that which is exalted among men is detestable in the sight of God”?

[16:15]

Jesus said, “that which is exalted among men is detestable in the sight of God”. Jesus was speaking about the things people thought were valuable or to be admired. These were not the things God wanted them to do.

See: World; Sin

What were the Law and the prophets?

[16:16]

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

What was the gospel of the kingdom of God?

[16:16]

See: Gospel; Kingdom of God; Preach (Preacher)

How do people try to force their way into the kingdom of God?

[16:16]

Jesus said that people tried to force their way into the kingdom of God. Scholars disagree about what Jesus said.

1. Some scholars think people who believed in Jesus wanted to enter the kingdom of God.
2. Some scholars think both Christians and non-Christians wanted to enter the kingdom of God.
3. Some scholars think non-Christians tried to force their way into the kingdom of God but they were not able to get into it.
4. Some scholars think people tried to fight a war to bring the kingdom of God to earth.
5. Some scholars think Jesus warned people to enter the kingdom of God because not all people will enter into it.
6. Some scholars think the Pharisees tried to stop people from entering into the kingdom of God. Demons also tried to stop people from entering into it. Disciples opposed them.

See: Kingdom of God; Pharisees; Demon; Disciple

What was Jesus talking about when he talked about the Law becoming invalid?

[16:17]

Jesus talked about the Law of Moses becoming invalid. Some scholars think he was talking about certain parts of the Law of Moses. However, some parts of the Law of Moses still need to be followed. Other scholars think the Law of Moses ended when Jesus became alive again.

See: Law of Moses; Resurrect (Resurrection)

What is adultery?

[16:18]

See: Adultery

16:19-31

Why was the man described as being “clothed in purple and fine linen”?

[16:19]

When Jesus spoke about the rich man being “clothed in purple and fine linen,” he wanted people to know that this man was as rich as a king. For only kings and very rich people could buy this type of clothing.

What did it mean that Lazarus was laid at the rich man's gate?

[16:20]

Lazarus was laid at the rich man's gate. Some scholars think Lazarus was laid on his mat at the opening to the rich man's home in hopes that the rich man would give food or money to Lazarus. Other scholars think Lazarus was thrown down or dropped off at the gate to the rich man's house. They think he was dumped there so he could beg for money from the rich man.

Advice to Translators: A beggar was someone who asked people for money because they were poor or because they could not do anything.

What did Jesus mean when he said Lazarus was "longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table"?

[16:21]

Lazarus was "longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table." Scholars think Lazarus was so hungry that he waited every day for the servants of the rich man to toss the food scraps out to the dogs and beggars.

Advice to translators: Food scraps were food that was not eaten and thrown away or put in the garbage.

Why did the dogs lick Lazarus' sores?

[16:21]

The dogs licked Lazarus' sores. Scholars think this was because Lazarus was too sick to stop them. Some scholars also think it helped ease Lazarus' pain from his sores.

What did it mean that Lazarus was "carried away by the angels to Abraham's side"?

[16:22]

"Abraham's side" is another name for "heaven."

See: Heaven

Where is Hades?

[16:23]

See: Hades (Sheol)

What was a "great chasm"?

[16:26]

Scholars think Jesus used the words "great chasm" to talk about a distance that cannot be crossed.

Why did the rich man call Abraham "Father Abraham"?

[16:27]

The rich man called Abraham "Father Abraham" because Abraham was the ancestor of all Jewish people.

See: Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

What did Abraham mean when he said, "They have Moses and the prophets"?

[16:29]

Many scholars think that "Moses and the prophets" spoke and wrote enough to teach the rich man's brothers about God.

Luke 16:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins telling another parable. It is about a master and the manager of his debtors. This is still the same part of the story and the same day that began in [Luke 15:3]

Jesus also said to the disciples

The last section was directed at Pharisees and scribes, though Jesus's disciples may have been part of the crowd listening.

There was a certain rich man

This introduces a new character in the parable.

it was reported to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people reported to the rich man"

wasting his possessions

"foolishly managing the rich man's wealth"

Luke 16:2

What is this that I hear about you?

The rich man uses a question to scold the manager. Alternate translation: "I have heard what you are doing."

Give an account of your management

"Set your records in order to pass on to someone else" or "Prepare the records you have written about my money"

Luke 16:3

What should I do ... job?

The manager asks this question of himself, as a means of reviewing his options. Alternate translation: "I need to think about what I should do ... job."

my master

This refers to the wealthy man. The manager was not a slave. Alternate translation: "my employer"

I do not have strength to dig

"I am not strong enough to dig the ground" or "I am not able to dig"

Luke 16:4

when I am removed from my management job

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when I lose my management job" or "when my master takes away my management job"

people will welcome me into their houses

This implies that those people will provide a job, or other things that he needs to live.

Luke 16:5

his master's debtors

"the people who were in debt to his master" or "the people who owed things to his master." In this story the debtors owed olive oil and wheat.

Luke 16:6

He said ... He said to him

"The debtor said ... The manager said to the debtor"

A hundred baths of olive oil ... fifty

A bath is about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "I owe 2,200 liters of olive oil ... 1,100 liters"

hundred ... fifty

"100 ... 50"

Take your bill

A "bill" is a piece of paper that tells how much someone owes.

Luke 16:7

the manager said to another ... He said ... He said to him

"the manager said to another debtor ... The debtor said ... The manager said to the debtor"

A hundred cors of wheat

A cor is about 220 liters. You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "I owe 22,000 liters of wheat" or "I owe one hundred large baskets of wheat"

write eighty

"write eighty cors of wheat." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "write 17,600 liters of wheat" or "write eighty large baskets of wheat"

eighty

"80"

Luke 16:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling the parable about the master and the manager of his debtors. In verse 9, Jesus continues to teach his disciples.

The master then commended

The text does not say how the master learned of the manager's action.

commended

"praised" or "spoke well of" or "approved of"

he had acted shrewdly

"he had acted cleverly" or "he had done a sensible thing"

the sons of this world

This refers to those who, like the unrighteous manager, do not know or care about God. Alternate translation: "the people of this world" or "worldly people"

the sons of light

Here "light" is a metaphor for everything godly. Alternate translation: "the people of God" or "godly people"

Luke 16:9

I say to you

"I" refers to Jesus. The phrase "I say to you" marks the end of the story and now Jesus tells the people how to apply the story to their lives.

make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth

The focus here is on using the money to help other people. Alternate translation: "make people your friends by helping them with worldly wealth"

by means of unrighteous wealth

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus uses hyperbole when he calls money "unrighteous" because it has no eternal value. Alternate translation: "by using money, which has no eternal value" or "by using worldly money" or 2) Jesus uses metonymy when he calls money "unrighteous" because people sometimes earn it or use it in unrighteous ways. Alternate translation: "by using even money that you earned dishonestly"

they may welcome

Possible meanings are 1) "the friends you helped with your money may welcome" or 2) "God and his angels may welcome"

eternal dwellings

This refers to heaven, where God lives.

Luke 16:10

He who is faithful ... is also faithful ... he who is unrighteous ... is also unrighteous

"People who are faithful ... are also faithful ... people who are unrighteous ... are also unrighteous." This would include women.

faithful in very little

"faithful even with small things." Make sure this does not sound like they are not very faithful.

unrighteous in very little

"unrighteous even in small things." Make sure this does not sound like they are not often unrighteous.

Luke 16:11

unrighteous wealth

See how you translated this in [Luke 16:9]

who will trust you with true wealth?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "no one will trust you with true wealth." or "no one will give you true wealth to manage."

true wealth

This refers to wealth that is more genuine, real, or lasting than money.

Luke 16:12

who will give you money of your own?

Jesus uses this question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "no one will give you wealth for yourself."

Luke 16:13

No servant can

"A servant cannot"

serve two masters

It is implied that he cannot "serve two different masters at the same time"

for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other

These two clauses are essentially the same. The only significant difference is that the first master is hated in the first case, but the second master is hated in the second case.

he will hate

"the servant will hate"

be devoted to one

"love one very strongly"

despise the other

"hold the other in contempt" or "hate the other"

despise

This means essentially the same as "hate" in the previous clause.

You cannot serve

Jesus was talking to a group of people, so languages that have a plural form of "you" would use that.

Luke 16:14

General Information:

This is a break in Jesus teachings, as verse 14 tells us background information about how the Pharisees ridiculed Jesus. In verse 15, Jesus continues teaching and responds to the Pharisees.

Now

This word marks a shift to the background information.

who were lovers of money

"who loved having money" or "who where very greedy for money"

they ridiculed him

"the Pharisees ridiculed Jesus"

Luke 16:15

He said to them

"And Jesus said to the Pharisees"

You justify yourselves in the sight of men

"You make yourselves look good to other people"

God knows your hearts

Here "hearts" refers to the desires of people. Alternate translation: "God understands your true desires" or "God knows your motives"

That which is exalted among men is detestable in the sight of God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Those things that men think are very important are things that God hates"

Luke 16:16

The law and the prophets

This refers to all of God's word that had been written up to that time.

were in effect

"had authority" or "were what people needed to obey"

John came

This refers to John the Baptist. Alternate translation: "John the Baptist came"

the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am teaching people about the good news of the kingdom of God"

everyone tries to force their way into it

This refers to the people who were listening to and accepting the teaching of Jesus. Alternate translation: "many people are doing everything they can to enter it"

Luke 16:17

it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the law to become invalid

This contrast could be stated in the reverse order.

Alternate translation: "even the smallest stroke of the letter of the law will last longer than heaven and earth will exist"

than for one stroke of a letter

A "stroke" is the smallest part of a letter. It refers to something in the law that may seem to be insignificant. Alternate translation: "than for even the smallest detail of the law"

become invalid

"disappear" or "cease to exist"

Luke 16:18

Everyone who divorces his wife

"Anyone who divorces his wife" or "Any man who divorces his wife"

commits adultery

"is guilty of adultery"

he who marries one

"any man who marries a woman"

Luke 16:19

General Information:

These verses give background information about the story Jesus begins to tell about the rich man and Lazarus.

Connecting Statement:

As Jesus continues teaching the people he begins to tell a story. It is about a rich man and Lazarus.

Now

This marks a shift in Jesus's speech as he begins to tell a story that will help people understand what he was teaching them.

a certain rich man

This phrase introduces a person in Jesus's story. It is not clear if this is a real person or if it is simply a person in a story that Jesus tells in order to make a point.

who was clothed in purple and fine linen

"who wore clothing made with fine linen and purple dye" or "who wore very expensive clothes." Purple dye and fine linen cloth were very expensive.

was enjoying every day his great wealth

"enjoyed eating expensive food every day" or "continued to spend much money, buying whatever he desired"

Luke 16:20

A certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People had laid a certain beggar named Lazarus at his gate"

A certain beggar named Lazarus

This phrase introduces another person in Jesus's story. It is not clear if this is a real person or simply a person in a story that Jesus tells in order to make a point.

at his gate

"at the gate to the rich man's house" or "at the entrance to the rich man's property"

covered with sores

"with sores all over his body"

Luke 16:21

longing to eat what fell

"wishing he could eat the scraps of food that fell"

Even the dogs came

The word "Even" here shows that what follows is worse than what has already been told about Lazarus. Alternate translation: "In addition to that, the dogs came" or "Worse yet, the dogs came"

dogs

The Jews considered dogs to be unclean animals. Lazarus was too sick and weak to stop the dogs from licking his wounds.

Luke 16:22

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

was carried away by the angels

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the angels carried him away"

to Abraham's side

This implies that Abraham and Lazarus were reclining next to each other at a feast, which was a customary style of feasting. The joy in heaven is often represented in the scriptures by the idea of a feast.

was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people buried him"

Luke 16:23

at his side

This implies that Abraham and Lazarus were reclining next to each other at a feast, which was the customary style of feasting. The joy in heaven is often represented in the scriptures by the idea of a feast.

in Hades, being in torment

"he went to Hades, where, suffering in terrible pain"

he lifted up his eyes

This idiom means "he looked up"

Luke 16:24

he cried out and said

"the rich man called out to say" or "he shouted out to Abraham"

Father Abraham

Abraham was the ancestor of all the Jews, including the rich man.

have mercy on me

"please have pity on me" or "please be merciful to me"

and send Lazarus

"by sending Lazarus" or "and tell Lazarus to come to me"

he may dip the tip of his finger

This indicates the smallness of the amount requested. Alternate translation: "he may wet the tip of his finger"

I am in anguish in this flame

"I am in terrible pain in this flame" or "I am suffering terribly in this fire"

Luke 16:25

Child

The rich man was one of Abraham's descendants.

good things

"fine things" or "pleasant things"

in like manner evil things

"in like manner received evil things" or "in like manner received things that caused him to suffer"

in like manner

This refers the fact that they both received something while they lived on earth. It is not saying that what they received was the same. Alternate translation: "while he was living received"

he is comforted here

"he is comfortable here" or "he is happy here"

in agony

"suffering"

Luke 16:26

Besides all this

"In addition to this reason"

a great chasm has been put in place

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has placed a huge ravine between you and us"

a great chasm

"a steep, deep and wide valley" or "a big separation" or "a huge ravine"

those who want to cross over ... cannot

"those people who want to cross over the chasm ... cannot" or "if anyone wants to cross over ... he cannot"

Luke 16:27

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 16:28

in order that he may warn them

"so that Lazarus may warn them"

this place of torment

"this place where we suffer torment" or "this place where we suffer terrible pain"

Luke 16:29

They have Moses and the prophets

It is implied that Abraham refused to send Lazarus to the rich man's brothers. This could be stated. Alternate translation: "No, I will not do that, because your brothers have what Moses and the prophets wrote long ago"

Moses and the prophets

This refers to their writings. Alternate translation: "what Moses and the prophets wrote"

let them listen to them

"your brothers should pay attention to Moses and the prophets"

Luke 16:30

if someone would go to them from the dead

The rich man would like this to happen. Alternate translation: "if a person who has died would go to them" or "if someone who has died would go and warn them"

from the dead

The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. Alternate translation: "from among all those who have died"

Luke 16:31

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling the story about the rich man and Lazarus.

If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets

Here "Moses and the prophets" represent the things that they wrote. Alternate translation: "If they do not pay attention to what Moses and the prophets wrote"

neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "neither will a person who comes back from the dead be able to convince them" or "they will not believe even if a person comes back from the dead"

rises from the dead

The words "the dead" speak of all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from among them is to become alive again.

Luke 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Old Testament Examples

Jesus used the lives of Noah and of Lot to teach his followers. Noah was ready for the flood when it came, and they needed to be ready for him to return, because he would not warn them when he came. Lot's wife loved the evil city she had been living in so much that God also punished her when he destroyed it, and they needed to love Jesus more than anything else,

Those who read your translation may need help so they can understand what Jesus was teaching here.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Jesus asked his disciples three questions ([Luke 17:7-9](#)) to teach them that even those who serve him well are righteous only because of his grace. (See: [and grace and righteous](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. A paradox occurs in this chapter: "Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will save it" ([Luke 17:33](#)).

Links:

- [Luke 17:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 17

17:1-10

What is "woe"?

[17:1]

See: Woe

What was a "millstone"?

[17:2]

A millstone was a large, heavy round stone used to grind grain. The grain was ground between two stones. The top stone was the millstone. The millstone was often turned by a large animal.

Who were the little ones?

[17:2]

In the Bible, the little ones were often the children (see: Matthew 18:1-22). Here, some scholars think Jesus was speaking about Christians who had recently believed in Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about those people who were poor and needed people to help them.

Who was a “brother”?

[17:3]

When Jesus spoke about a brother, he was speaking about Christians.

See: Family of God

What did it mean to “rebuke” a brother?

[17:3]

When someone “rebuked” a brother, he corrected his brother and told him that what he had done was wrong.

How did someone repent?

[17:3]

See: Repent (Repentance)

What was meant by the words, “if he sins against you seven times in the day”?

[17:4]

Jesus wanted the disciples to forgive another person as often as they sinned and repented. Some scholars think that when Jesus said to forgive seven times, he was speaking about always forgiving someone. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about seven different kinds of sins and a brother was to forgive all types of sins.

See: Repent (Repentance); Sin; Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon)

Why did the apostles say, “Increase our faith”?

[17:5]

The apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith. Scholars think that when the apostles said “increase our faith”, they were asking Jesus to help them. They wanted Jesus to help them have more confidence in God. They wanted Jesus to help them trust and believe in God even more.

See: Apostle; Faith (Believe in)

What did it mean to have “faith like a mustard seed”?

[17:6]

Jesus spoke to his disciples about having “faith like a mustard seed”. This was a metaphor. A mustard seed is a very, very small seed. However, this very small seed grows into a large tree (see: Luke 13:18-19). Jesus was telling his disciples that even if a person’s faith is small, it can do great things.

See: Disciple; Metaphor; Faith (Believe in)

What was a mulberry tree?

[17:6]

A mulberry tree was a tree where Jesus and the disciples lived. It was a large tree and had many roots.

See: Disciple

What did it mean for a servant to “put a belt around his clothes”?

[17:8]

A servant “put a belt around his clothes”. Some scholars think the servant removed his clothes for working in the field and put on the clothes for serving meals. Other scholars think he put something over his clothes before serving other people food.

See: Serve

Why did Jesus want the apostles to say they were “unworthy servants”?

[17:10]

Jesus wanted the disciples to say that they were “unworthy servants.” They did not think they were greater than other people. They wanted to serve other people. They did not want other people to honor them.

See: Serve; Disciple; Humble (Humility)

17:11-19

Where were Jerusalem, Samaria, and Galilee?

[17:11]

See Map: Jerusalem; Samaria; Galilee

Why did the lepers say to Jesus, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us”?

[17:13]

When the lepers asked Jesus to have mercy on them, they were asking Jesus to have compassion on them. Some scholars think they wanted Jesus to heal them. Other scholars do not think they were asking Jesus to heal them.

See: Leprosy (Leper); Mercy; Miracle

Why did Jesus tell the lepers to go to the priests?

[17:14]

At this time, only the priests in the temple could say that someone no longer had leprosy. The priest would then declare the person to be clean (see: Leviticus 14:1-32).

See: Leprosy (Leper); Priest (Priesthood); Temple; Clean and Unclean

How did Jesus cleanse the lepers?

[17:14, 17:15]

Scholars think Jesus healed the lepers by speaking.

See: Leprosy (Leper); Miracle

Who were the Samaritans?

[17:16]

See: Samaria

Why did Jesus tell the Samaritan man his faith made him “well”?

[17:19]

Jesus said, “Your faith has made you well.” Scholars think the leper was healed because he believed that Jesus would heal him. He would not have leprosy anymore.

17:20-37

Why did the Pharisees ask when the kingdom of God will come?

[17:20]

The Pharisees asked when the kingdom of God will come.

1. Some scholars think the Pharisees tried to make Jesus tell them a specific date when the kingdom of God would come. If he did this, and the kingdom of God did not come, then they could tell people that Jesus is not the messiah.
2. Some scholars think the Pharisees wanted to know how to predict when God’s kingdom will come.

See: Kingdom of God; Pharisees; Messiah (Christ)

How was the kingdom of God “within” you?

[17:21]

Jesus said that the kingdom of God was “within” or “among” (ἐντός/g1787) you.

1. The kingdom of God was “among” the people already because Jesus was among them.
2. The kingdom of God will come suddenly in the future. It will be “among” them. There will be no signs to warn them of its coming.
3. The kingdom of God was “within” the hearts of people who believed in Jesus. That is, when people obeyed God, then God ruled them in a certain way.

See: Kingdom of God; Sign; Heart (Metaphor)

What was “one of the days of the Son of Man”?

[17:22]

Jesus spoke about “one of the days of the Son of Man”.

1. Some scholars think this was the days when the Messiah will be ruling over all things.
2. Some scholars think this was the day on which Jesus, the Messiah will return to the earth, at his second coming.

3. Some scholars think the disciples wanted to see the kingdom of the Messiah.

See: Messiah (Christ); Jesus' Return to Earth; Disciple; Kingdom of God; Day of the Lord

Why did Jesus talk about lightning flashing from one part of the sky to another part?

[17:24]

On the day of the Son of Man, there will be lightning in the sky. That is, everyone will see Jesus return in the same way they see the brightness of lightning. Jesus will return suddenly in the same way lightning is sudden.

See: Son of Man; Day of the Lord; Jesus' Return to Earth

Why did Jesus speak about being “rejected by this generation”?

[17:25]

Jesus spoke about being rejected by this generation. Jesus was telling his disciples he must first be rejected by the people who were living at this time. That is, he would be rejected by the Jewish people.

See: Generation; Disciple

What were the days of Noah?

[17:26]

The “days of Noah” were to the days in which Noah lived, before the Flood. Perhaps Jesus was speaking specifically about the days just before the flood (see: Genesis 6:5-13).

What were the “days of Lot”?

[17:28]

The “days of Lot” were the days when Lot lived, before God destroyed the city of Sodom (see: Genesis 19:1-25).

See: Map: Sodom

What was meant by the words, “Lot went out from Sodom”?

[17:29]

Jesus said, “Lot went out from Sodom.” That is, Lot left the city of Sodom. Just as God waited for Noah to enter the ark before he destroyed the world with a flood, so God waited until Lot left Sodom before he destroyed the city with fire from heaven.

See: Fire; Heaven

See: Map: Sodom

What did Jesus mean when he said, “After the same manner it will be in the day that the Son of man is revealed”?

[17:30]

Jesus said, “after the same manner.” He wanted to say that people will be living normal lives, just as they were before people were punished in Noah’s day, and before people were punished in Lot’s day. The day that the Son of Man is “revealed” speaks about when Jesus returns to earth.

Advice to translators: Noah’s day is the time when Noah lived. Lot’s day is the time when Lot lived.

See: Jesus' Return to Earth; Reveal (Revelation); Day of the Lord.; Son of Man; Punish (Punishment) Reveal (Revelation)

Why did Jesus say, “Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will save it”?

[17:33]

See: Luke 9:24

Why did Jesus say, “one will be taken, and the other will be left”?

[17:34]

Jesus said that, “one will be taken, and the other will be left.” Some scholars think that the people that will be taken are Christians who are taken to a place of safety with Jesus. The people who are left will be punished. Other scholars think the people who will be taken are the people God punishes, and the ones who are left are people who will not be punished.

See: Punish (Punishment); RaptureKingdom of God

Why do scholars think Luke did not write the words in verse 36?

[17:36]

Scholars think Luke did not write the words in verse 36 because most ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not contain the words in verse 36. However, Jesus did say these words in the Book of Matthew (see: Matthew 24:40).

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

What did Jesus mean by saying, “where there is a body, there will (be) vultures”?

[17:37]

Jesus said, “where there is a body, there will (be) vultures.” A vulture is a bird that eats dead animals.They fly over the dead animals before they eat them. Some scholars think Jesus was telling the disciples that punishment comes to wherever evil people are. Other scholars think Jesus was telling his disciples that people would know when Jesus returns to the earth, just as it is obvious there is a dead body because of the vultures flying overhead.

See: Disciple; Punish (Punishment); Jesus' Return to Earth; Metaphor

Luke 17:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues teaching, but he directs his attention back to his disciples. This is still the same part of the story and the same day that began in Luke 15:3.

It is certain there will be stumbling blocks

"Things that tempt people to sin will certainly happen"

to that person through whom they come

"to anyone who causes the temptations to come" or "to any person who causes people to be tempted"

Luke 17:2

It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble

You may need to make explicit that Jesus is comparing the punishment for causing people to sin to being thrown into the sea. Alternate translation: "It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than that he should

suffer the more severe punishment for causing one of these little ones to stumble" or "He would suffer less if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than if he should cause one of these little ones to stumble"

if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea

This was a terrible punishment. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if they were to put a millstone around his neck and throw him into the sea" or "if someone were to put a heavy stone around his neck and push him into the sea"

for him ... his neck ... he were ... he should

The words "him," "his," and "he" refer to "that person" through whom things that cause people to sin come.

a millstone

This is a very large, heavy circular stone used for grinding wheat grain into flour. Alternate translation: "a heavy stone"

these little ones

This here refers to people whose faith is still weak. Alternate translation: "these people whose faith is small"

to stumble

This was a way of referring to unintentional sin. Alternate translation: "to sin"

Luke 17:3

If your brother sins

This is a conditional statement that talks about an event that will probably happen in the future.

your brother

"brother" is here used in the sense of someone with the same belief. Alternate translation: "a fellow believer"

rebuke him

"tell him strongly that what he did was wrong" or "correct him"

Luke 17:4

seven times in the day, and seven times

The number seven in the Bible is a symbol for completeness. Alternate translation: "many times in a day, and each time"

Luke 17:5

General Information:

There is a brief break in Jesus's teachings as the disciples speak to him. Then Jesus continues teaching.

Increase our faith

"Please give us more faith" or "Please add more faith to our faith"

Luke 17:6

If you had faith like a mustard seed, you

A mustard seed is a very small seed. Jesus implies that they do not have even a small amount of faith. Alternate translation: "If you had faith that was even as small as a mustard seed, you" or "Your faith is not as big as a mustard seed—but if it were, you"

mulberry tree

If this type of tree is not familiar, it may be helpful to substitute another type of tree. Alternate translation: "fig tree" or "tree"

Be uprooted, and be planted in the sea

These can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Uproot yourself and plant yourself in the sea" or "Take your roots out of the ground, and put your roots down into the ocean"

it would obey you

"the tree would obey you." This result is conditional. It would happen only if they had faith.

Luke 17:7

But which of you, who ... sheep, will say ... sit down to eat?"

Jesus asks his disciples a question to help them think about the role of a servant. This could be translated as a

statement. Alternate translation: "But none of you who ... sheep would say ... sit down to eat."

a servant plowing or keeping sheep

"a servant that plows your field or takes care of your sheep"

Luke 17:8

Will he not say to him ... eat and drink?

Jesus uses a second question explain how the disciples would actually treat a servant. This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "He would certainly say to him ... eat and drink"

put a belt around your clothes and serve me

"tie your clothes at your waist and serve me" or "dress up properly and take care of me." People would tie their clothes closely around their waist so that their clothes would not get in their way while they worked.

Then afterward

"Then after you serve me"

Luke 17:9

He does not thank the servant ... commanded, does he?

Jesus uses this question to show how people treat servants. This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "He would not thank the servant ... commanded."

the things that were commanded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things you commanded him to do"

does he?

"right?" or "is this not true?"

Luke 17:10

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching. This is the end of this part of the story.

you also

Jesus was speaking to his disciples, so languages that have a plural form of "you" would use it.

that you are commanded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God has commanded you"

We are unworthy servants

This is an exaggeration to express that they did not do anything worthy of praise. Alternate translation: "We are ordinary slaves" or "We servants do not deserve your praise"

Luke 17:11

General Information:

This begins the story of Jesus healing 10 men of leprosy.

It came about that

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

as he traveled to Jerusalem

"as Jesus and the disciples were traveling to Jerusalem"

Luke 17:12

General Information:

This is the beginning of the background information and the setting of the story of Jesus healing the ten lepers.

a certain village

This phrase does not identify the village.

there he was met by ten men who were lepers

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "ten men who were lepers met him" or "ten men who had leprosy met him"

They stood far away from him

This was a respectful gesture, because lepers were not allowed to approach other people.

Luke 17:13

General Information:

This is the end of the background information and the setting of the story of Jesus healing the ten lepers.

they lifted up their voices

The idiom "to lift up one's voice" means to speak loudly. Alternate translation: "they called with loud voices" or "they called aloud"

have mercy on us

They were specifically asking to be healed. Alternate translation: "please show us mercy by healing us"

Luke 17:14

show yourselves to the priests

Lepers were required to have the priests verify that their leprosy was healed. Alternate translation: "show yourselves to the priests so they can examine you"

they were cleansed

When people were healed, they were no longer ceremonially unclean. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "they were healed of their leprosy and so became clean" or "they were cured of their leprosy"

Luke 17:15

saw that he was healed

"realized that he was healed" or "realized that Jesus had healed him"

he turned back

"he went back to Jesus"

with a loud voice glorifying God

"and glorified God loudly"

Luke 17:16

He fell on his face at Jesus' feet

"he knelt down and put his face close to Jesus' feet." He did this to honor Jesus.

Now he was a Samaritan

The word "now" is used to mark a break in the main story. Here Luke tells background information about the man who returned to Jesus.

Luke 17:17

Then Jesus said

Jesus responded to what the man did, but he was speaking to the group of people around him. Alternate translation: "So Jesus said to the crowd"

Were not the ten cleansed?

This is the first of three rhetorical questions. Jesus used them to show the people around him how surprised and disappointed he was that only one of the ten men came back to glorify God. Alternate translation: "Ten men were healed." or "God healed ten men."

Where are the nine?

"Why did not the other nine come back?" This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "The other nine men should have come back, too."

Luke 17:18

Were there no others who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?

This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "There were no others who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner!" or "God healed ten men, yet only this foreigner came back to give glory to God!"

this foreigner

Samaritans had non-Jewish ancestors and they did not worship God in the same way that the Jews did.

Luke 17:19

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about Jesus healing the 10 lepers.

Your faith has made you well

"Because of your faith you have become well." The idea of "faith" can be expressed with the verb "believe."

Alternate translation: "Because you believe, you are well again"

Luke 17:20

General Information:

We do not know where this event takes place; it simply happens one day when Jesus is talking with the Pharisees.

Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come,

This is the beginning of a new event. Some translations start it with "One day" or "Once." It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, 'When will the kingdom of God come?'"

The kingdom of God does not come with careful observing

People thought that they would be able to see signs of the kingdom coming. The idea of signs can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "The kingdom of God does not come with signs that people can observe"

Luke 17:21

the kingdom of God is within you

The idea of the noun "kingdom" can be expressed with the verb "rules." Alternate translation: "God rules within you"

the kingdom of God is within you

Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders who were hostile to him. Possible meanings are 1) the word "you" refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "the kingdom of God is within people" or 2) the word translated "within" means "among." Alternate translation: "the kingdom of God is among you"

Luke 17:22

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach his disciples.

The days are coming when

The idea of days days coming represents something being soon. Alternate translation: "A time is coming when" or "Soon"

you will desire to see

"you will want very much to see" or "you will wish to experience"

one of the days of the Son of Man

This refers to the kingdom of God. Alternate translation: "one of the days when the Son of Man will rule as king"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

but you will not see it

"you will not experience it"

Luke 17:23

Look, there! Look, here!

This refers to seeking the Messiah. Alternate translation: "Look, the Messiah is over there! He is over here!"

do not go out or run after them

The purpose of going out can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "do not go with them to look"

Luke 17:24

as the lightning shines brightly ... so will the Son of Man be

When lightning flashes, people can see it clearly. This is a metaphor for the way the Son of Man will appear: when he does, everyone will see him clearly. Alternate translation: "as the people can see lightning clearly when it flashes ... so they will clearly see the Son of Man"

so will the Son of Man be in his day

This refers to the future kingdom of God. Alternate translation: "it will be like that on the day when the Son of Man comes to reign"

so will the Son of Man be

Jesus speaks of himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "so will I, the Son of Man, be"

Luke 17:25

But first he must suffer

"But first the Son of Man must suffer." Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

be rejected by this generation

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people of this generation must reject him"

Luke 17:26

As it happened ... even so will it also happen

"As people were doing things ... even so people will be doing the same things"

in the days of Noah

The "days of Noah" refers to the time during Noah's life just before God punished the people of the world. Alternate translation: "when Noah was living"

in the days of the Son of Man

The "days of the Son of Man" refers to the period just before the Son of Man will come. Alternate translation: "when the Son of Man is about to come"

Luke 17:27

They ate, they drank, they married, and they were given in marriage

People were doing ordinary things. They did not know or care that God was about to judge them.

they were given in marriage

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "parents were allowing their daughters to marry men"

the ark

"the ship" or "the barge"

destroyed them all

This does not include Noah and his family who were in the ark. Alternate translation: "destroyed all those who were not in the boat"

Luke 17:28

they were eating and drinking

"the people of Sodom were eating and drinking"

Luke 17:29

it rained fire and sulfur from heaven

"fire and burning sulfur fell from the sky like rain"

destroyed them all

This does not include Lot and his family. Alternate translation: "destroyed all those who stayed in the city"

Luke 17:30

After the same manner it will be

"It will be like that." Alternate translation: "In the same way people will not be ready"

in the day that the Son of Man is revealed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the Son of Man appears" or "when the Son of man comes"

the Son of Man is revealed

Jesus is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, am revealed"

Luke 17:31

let him who is on the housetop not go down

"whoever is on the housetop must not go down" or "if anyone is on his housetop, he must not go down." This is a statement of what people should not do, not a command to the hearers.

on the housetop

Their housetops were flat and people could walk or sit on them.

his goods

"his possessions" or "his things"

return

They are not to go back to the house to get anything.
They are to flee quickly.

Luke 17:32

Remember Lot's wife

"Remember what happened to Lot's wife" This is a warning. She looked back toward Sodom and God punished her along with the people of Sodom.
Alternate translation: "Do not do what Lot's wife did"

Luke 17:33

Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it

"People who try save their lives will lose them" or
"Whoever tries to save his old way of life will lose his life"

but whoever loses his life will save it

"but people who lose their lives will save them" or "but whoever abandons his old way of life will save his life"

Luke 17:34

I tell you

As Jesus continues to address his disciples, he emphasizes the importance of what he is telling them.

in that night

This refers to what will happen if he, the Son of Man, comes during the night.

there will be two people in one bed

The emphasis is not on these two people, but on the fact that some people will be taken away and the others will be left.

bed

"couch" or "cot"

One will be taken, and the other will be left

"One person will be taken and the other person will be left behind." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will take one person and leave the other" or "Angels will take one and leave behind the other"

Luke 17:35

There will be two women grinding grain together

The emphasis is not on these two women or their activity, but on the fact that some people will be taken away and the others will be left.

grinding grain together

"grinding grain together"

Luke 17:36

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 17:37

General Information:

The disciples ask Jesus a question about his teaching and he answers them.

Where, Lord?

"Lord, where will this happen?"

Where there is a body, there will the vultures also be gathered together

Apparently this is a proverb that means "It will be obvious" or "You will know it when it happens."
Alternate translation: "As vultures gathering shows that there is a dead body, so these things show that the Son of Man is coming"

vultures

Vultures are large birds that fly together and eat the flesh of dead animals that they find. You could describe these birds this way or use the word for local birds that do this.

Luke 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Jesus told two parables ([Luke 18:1-8](#) and [Luke 18:9-14](#)) and then taught that his followers were to be humble ([Luke 18:15-17](#)), to use everything they owned to help the poor ([Luke 18:18-30](#)), and to expect him to die soon ([Luke 18:31-34](#)). Then they all began to walk to Jerusalem, and Jesus healed a blind man ([Luke 18:35-43](#)).

Special concepts in this chapter

Judges

People expected judges always to do what God said was right and to make sure that other people did what was right. But some judges did not care about doing right or making sure others did right. Jesus called this kind of judge unjust. (See: justice)

Pharisees and tax collectors

The Pharisees thought that they themselves were the best examples of righteous good people, and they thought that tax collectors were the most unrighteous sinners. (See: righteous and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

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Luke 18

18:1-8

What was a parable?

[18:1]

See: Parable

Why did Jesus talk about the judge and the widow?

[18:2, 18:3]

Jesus talked about the judge and the widow so that his disciples will pray again and again for God to bring justice to the earth when Jesus returns. Jesus also wanted the disciples to always know God hears their prayers. Some scholars think God will quickly bring justice for Christians. The unjust judge was slow to bring justice but God will not be slow. Other scholars think God will be slow to bring justice for Christians. God is patient and he does

not judge a Christian's sins right away, or he limits the ability of people to persecute Christians. Other scholars think God is slow to bring justice but when Jesus returns he will bring justice quickly.

See: Justice (Just, Unjust); Disciple; Jesus' Return to Earth; People of God; Persecute (Persecution)

How does someone fear God?

[18:4]

See: Fear of God

Who were God's chosen ones?

[18:7]

God's chosen ones were the disciples or people who followed Jesus.

When will the Son of Man come?

[18:8]

See: Son of Man; Jesus' Return to Earth

Why did Jesus ask, "will he indeed find faith on the earth"?

[18:8]

Jesus asked about finding faith on earth. Some scholars think Jesus was asking if people will believe that he is the Messiah. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about people believing that God will bring justice quickly. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about people believing that he will return to the earth.

See: Messiah (Christ); Jesus' Return to Earth; Faith (Believe in)

18:9-14

Why did Jesus talk about the Pharisee and the tax collector?

[18:10]

Jesus talked about the Pharisee and the tax collector because he warned people not to think they were doing something that honored God when they hated other people. The Pharisee listed sins he did not do, but other people did these sins. The Pharisee also fasted more times than the Law of Moses said they needed to fast. They also tithed on everything. He stood in the temple so that other people saw him when he prayed. However, he was not at peace with God. God did not think he did the right things.

On the other hand, the tax collector stood away from people and did not think he was able to look at God. He hit his chest because he was ashamed of his sins. Jesus said he was justified. That is, God forgave his sins.

See: Pharisees; Tax (Tax Collector, Toll); Fasting; Law of Moses; Tithe

18:15-17

Why did people bring infants to Jesus?

[18:15]

People brought infants to Jesus for him to bless them. The ancient Jews brought infants to their leaders on the Day of Atonement for their leaders to bless the infants.

See: Matthew 19:13

See: Bless (Blessing); Atone (Atonement)

Why did the disciples rebuke these people?

[18:15]

The disciples rebuke these people. Some scholars think the disciples rebuked these people because they thought Jesus was too tired to bless the infants. Other scholars think the disciples thought Jesus did not have time to bless infants.

See: Disciple; Bless (Blessing)

How did someone receive the kingdom of God?

[18:16]

Someone received the kingdom of God by believing in Jesus in the same way a child believes in Jesus. Children accepted Jesus and trusted him when he blessed them. People did not honor children. Children are humble. That is, they do not think they are greater than they are. Children also trust and depended on their parents.

See: Kingdom of God; Bless (Blessing); Humble (Humility)

18:18-30

Who was the “certain ruler”?

[18:18]

Luke did not write who the “certain ruler” was, but the ruler was young (see: Matthew 19:22). Some scholars think he was a Jewish leader who may have been the leader of a synagogue. Other scholars think he was too young to do that.

See: Synagogue

Why did Jesus say no one is good except God?

[18:19]

Jesus said that no one is good except God.

1. Some scholars think Jesus wanted the young ruler to know that only God is good. That is, he was telling the young ruler that his goodness was the goodness of God working in him.
2. Some scholars think the rich young ruler thought Jesus was only a man. He did not think Jesus was good in the same way that God is good. This was because the young ruler did not do what Jesus said.
3. Other scholars think only God is perfectly holy and righteous. If the rich young ruler wanted to please God he needed to obey God's Son whom God sent.

See: Holy (Holiness, Set Apart); Righteous (Righteousness); Son of God

Why did Jesus repeat some of the Ten Commandments?

[18:20]

Jesus repeated some of the ten commandments to the young ruler. Some scholars think the young ruler was asking how he could have eternal life through his own power. That is, through doing good things. However, no one except for Jesus has ever been able to keep all of the commandments perfectly, and therefore have eternal life by keeping them.

See: Ten Commandments; Eternal Life; Command (Commandment)

Why did Jesus tell the rich young ruler to sell everything and give the money to the poor?

[18:22]

Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell everything and give the money to the poor because the rich young ruler loved his money and the things he owned. He was not willing to give up everything to follow Jesus. Perhaps Jesus also wanted the young ruler to understand the greater value of being rewarded in heaven.

See: Reward; Heaven

Why do some scholars think Luke did not write “seeing that he had become sad” in verse 24?

[18:24]

Some scholars think Luke did not write “seeing that he had become sad” in verse 24 because some of the oldest Greek copies did not contain them.

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

What was the eye of the needle?

[18:25]

The eye of the needle was a small circle on one end of a needle used for sewing cloth. It was very small. The camel was a very large animal. Scholars think Jesus was saying that in the same way it was impossible for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, so it was impossible for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God on his own. That is, he could not be at peace with God without Jesus.

See: Kingdom of God

What did Jesus mean by saying, “things which are impossible with people are possible with God”?

[18:27]

Jesus said, “things which are impossible with people are possible with God.” Scholars think that Jesus was saying that God can do what people cannot do. That is, God makes it possible for a person to be saved, whereas a person cannot possibly save himself.

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

How will Jesus reward people?

[18:30]

See: Reward

18:31-34

Who were the twelve?

[18:31]

When Jesus gathered the twelve, he brought the twelve apostles to him. There was a large crowd of people. Jesus wanted to talk to the twelve alone.

See: Apostle; Disciple

Why did Jesus say they are going up to Jerusalem?

[18:31]

Jesus said they are going up to Jerusalem because Jerusalem was on a mountain. They were going to Jerusalem.

See Map: Jerusalem

What were the things written by the prophets about the Son of Man?

[18:31]

Things were written in the prophets about the Son of Man. They said that the Son of Man will suffer (see: Isaiah 53).

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Son of Man

What was meant by the words, “this word was hidden from them”?

[18:34]

Some scholars think that Jesus did not allow the twelve to understand. Other scholars think that because the disciples expected the Messiah to come in a certain way, they could not understand the words of which Jesus spoke.

Where was Jericho?

[18:35]

See Map: Jericho

Why did the blind man ask Jesus to have mercy on him?

[18:38]

The blind man asked Jesus for mercy. The man was asking Jesus to show him compassion and help him. He specifically wanted Jesus to be kind to him and heal him (see: Luke 18:41).

See: Mercy; Miracle

Why did people rebuke this man for crying out to Jesus?

[18:39]

People rebuked this man for crying out to Jesus. Some scholars think they believed Jesus was too important to stop for a blind man. Other scholars think these people thought Jesus was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem. Other scholars think these people knew the Jewish leaders would be angry with people calling Jesus the “Son of David”.

See: Son of David

How did Jesus heal the blind man?

[18:42]

Jesus immediately healed the blind man because the blind man believed in him. When Jesus told him his faith healed him, Jesus healed the blind man. Perhaps Jesus also wanted to say that this man's faith made him have peace with God.

See: 7:48-50

See: Faith (Believe in)

Luke 18:1	of her as a person who had no one to protect her from those who wanted to harm her.
Connecting Statement:	she came often to him
Jesus begins to tell a parable as he continues to teach his disciples. This is the same part of the story that began in [Luke 17:20]	The word "him" refers to the judge. Help me get justice against
Then he	"Give me a just ruling against"
"Then Jesus"	my opponent
Luke 18:2	"my enemy" or "the person who is trying to harm me." This is an opponent in a lawsuit. It is not clear whether the widow is suing the opponent or the opponent is suing the widow.
saying	
A new sentence could begin here (if the comma at the end of the previous verse is changed to a period): "He said"	Luke 18:4
a certain city	man This refers here to "people" in general.
Here "certain city" is a way to let the listener know that the narrative that follows takes place in a city, but the name of the city itself is not important.	Luke 18:5
did not respect people	causes me trouble
"did not care about other people"	"bothers me"
Luke 18:3	wear me out
Now there was a widow	"exhaust me"
Jesus uses this phrase to introduce a new character to the story.	by her constant coming
widow	"by continually coming to me"
A widow is a woman whose husband has died and who has not remarried. Jesus's hearers would have thought	

Luke 18:6

General Information:

Jesus has finished telling his parable and is now commenting about it to his disciples.

Listen to what the unjust judge says

"Think about what the unjust judge just said." Translate this in a way that people will understand that Jesus has already told what the judge said.

Luke 18:7

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of an explanation of the parable in Luke 18:1-5.

Now

This word indicates that Jesus has ended the parable and has started explaining its meaning.

will not God also bring ... night?

Jesus uses a question to teach the disciples. This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "God will also certainly bring ... night!"

his chosen ones

"the people he has chosen"

Will he delay long over them?

Jesus uses a question to teach the disciples. This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "He will certainly not delay long over them!"

Luke 18:8

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the explanation of the parable in Luke 18:1-5 that began in Luke 18:7.

when the Son of Man comes, will he indeed find faith on the earth?

Jesus asks this question so that his hearers will stop thinking that God is slow to help those who call to him for justice and will understand that the real problem is that they do not truly have faith in God. Alternate translation: "when the Son of Man comes, you need to

be sure that he will find that you truly have faith in him." or "when the Son of Man comes, he will find few on earth who believe."

the Son of Man comes, will he indeed find

Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man come, will I indeed find"

Luke 18:9

General Information:

Jesus begins to tell another parable to some other people who were persuaded that they themselves were righteous.

Then he

"Then Jesus"

to some

"to some people"

who trusted in themselves that they were righteous

"who had convinced themselves that they were righteous" or "who thought they were righteous"

despised

strongly disliked or hated

Luke 18:10

into the temple

"into the temple courtyard"

Luke 18:11

The Pharisee stood and prayed these things about himself

The meaning of the Greek text of this phrase is not clear. Possible meanings are 1) "The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself in this way" or 2) "The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed."

robbers

Robbers are people who steal from other people by forcing the other people to give things to them, or by threatening to harm them if they refuse to give what the robbers ask for.

or even like this tax collector

The Pharisees believed that tax collectors were as sinful as robbers, unrighteous people, and adulterers. This could be made explicit. Alternate translation: "and I am certainly not like this sinful tax collector, who cheats people"

Luke 18:12

all that I get

"everything I earn"

Luke 18:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling his parable.

standing at a distance

"stood away from the Pharisee." This was a sign of humility. He did not feel worthy to be near the Pharisee.

lift up his eyes to heaven

To "lift up his eyes" means to look at something. Alternate translation: "look toward heaven" or "look upward"

hit his breast

This is a physical expression of great sorrow, and shows this man's repentance and humility. Alternate translation: "hit his breast to show his sorrow"

God, have mercy on me, a sinner

"God, please be merciful to me. I am a sinner" or "God, please have mercy on me even though I have committed many sins"

Luke 18:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus comments on what the parable teaches.

this man went back down to his house justified

He was justified because God forgave his sin. Alternate translation: "God forgave the tax collector"

rather than the other

"rather than the other man" or "and not the other man." Alternate translation: "but God did not forgive the Pharisee"

because everyone who exalts himself

With this phrase, Jesus switches from the story to state the general principle that the story illustrates.

will be humbled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will humble"

will be exalted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will greatly honor"

Luke 18:15

Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in the part of the story which began in Luke 17:20. Jesus welcomes the children and talks about them.

touch them, but

This could also be translated as separate sentences: "touch them. But"

they rebuked them

"the disciples tried to stop the parents from bringing their children to Jesus"

Luke 18:16

Jesus called them to him

"Jesus told the people to bring their infants to him"

Permit the little children to come to me, and do not forbid them

These two sentences have similar meaning and they are combined for emphasis. Some languages emphasize in a different way. Alternate translation: "You must certainly allow the children to come to me"

belongs to such ones

This could be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "belongs to people who are like these little children"

Luke 18:17

Truly I say to you

"Surely I say to you." Jesus used this expression to emphasize the importance of what he was about to say.

whoever will not receive the kingdom of God like a child will definitely not enter it

God requires people to accept his rule over them with trust and humility. Alternate translation: "whoever wants to enter God's kingdom must receive it with trust and humility like a child"

Luke 18:18

Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in the part of the story which began in Luke 17:20. Jesus begins to talk with a ruler about entering the kingdom of heaven.

A certain ruler

This introduces a new character in the story. It only identifies him by his position.

what must I do

"what do I need to do" or "what is required of me"

inherit eternal life

"receive life that does not end." The term "inherit" usually refers to the property that a man left to his children when he dies. Therefore, this metaphor may mean he understood himself to be a child of God and desired for God to give him eternal life.

Luke 18:19

Why do you call me good? No one is good, except God alone

Jesus asks the question because he knows that the ruler will not like Jesus's answer to the ruler's question in verse 18. Jesus does not expect the ruler to answer Jesus's question. Jesus wants the ruler to understand that Jesus's answer to the ruler's question comes from God, who alone is good. Alternate translation: "You

know that no one is good, except God alone, so to call me good is to compare me with God"

No one is good, except God alone

This double negative emphasizes that God is the only one who is good. Alternate translation: "The only one who is good is God"

Luke 18:20

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 18:21

All these things

"All of these commandments"

Luke 18:22

When Jesus heard that

"When Jesus heard the man say that"

he said to him

"he answered him"

One thing you still lack

"You still need to do one more thing" or "There is one thing that you have not yet done"

sell all that you have

"sell all your possessions" or "sell everything that you own"

distribute it to the poor

"give away the money to the poor people"

come, follow me

"come with me as my disciple"

Luke 18:23

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 18:24

How difficult it is ... kingdom of God!

This is an exclamation, and not a question. Alternate translation: "It is so very hard ... kingdom of God!"

Luke 18:25

a camel to go through a needle's eye

It is impossible for a camel to fit through the eye of a needle. Jesus was probably using hyperbole to mean it is extremely difficult for a rich man to enter God's kingdom.

needle's eye

The needle's eye is the hole in a sewing needle through which the thread is passed.

Luke 18:26

Those hearing it said

"The people who listening to Jesus said"

Then who can be saved?

It is possible that they were asking for an answer. But it is more likely that they used the question to emphasize their surprise at what Jesus said. Alternate translation: "Then no one can be saved from sin!" or in active form: "Then God will not save anyone!"

Luke 18:27

are impossible with people are possible with God

"people cannot do are possible for God to do" or "people cannot do, God can do"

Luke 18:28

Well, we

This phrase refers only to the disciples, and contrasts them with the rich ruler.

we have left

"we have given up" or "we have left behind"

everything that is our own

"all our wealth" or "all our possessions"

Luke 18:29

Truly, I say to you

Jesus uses this expression to stress the importance of what he is about to say.

there is no one who

This expression is intended to include not only the disciples, but also everyone else who has made the same sacrifices.

Luke 18:30

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the conversation about entering the kingdom of heaven.

who will not receive

This could be stated in positive form. First the words "there is not one who" in the previous verse

in this time

"in this present world"

in the age to come, eternal life

"he will also receive eternal life in the age to come"

Luke 18:31

Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in this part of the story that began in Luke 17:20. Jesus is talking to his disciples alone.

gathered the twelve to himself

Jesus took the twelve disciples to a place away from other people where they could be alone.

See, we are going up to Jerusalem

This indicates a significant change in the ministry of Jesus as he goes to Jerusalem for the final time.

that have been written by the prophets

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the prophets have written"

the prophets

This refers to the Old Testament prophets.

Son of Man

Jesus speaks of himself as "the Son of Man." Alternate translation: "me, the Son of Man,"

will be accomplished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will happen" or "will occur"

Luke 18:32

For he will be given over to the Gentiles

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For the Jewish leaders will give him over to the Gentiles"

he

Jesus speaks of himself. Alternate translation: "I"

will be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will mock him, treat him shamefully, and spit on him"

Luke 18:33

him ... him ... he

Jesus speaks of himself. Alternate translation: "me ... me ... I"

on the third day

This refers to the third day after his death. However, the disciples did not yet understand this, so it is best not to add this explanation when translating this verse.

Luke 18:34

General Information:

This verse is not part of the main story, but rather a comment about this part of the story.

They understood none of these things

"They did not understand any of these things"

these things

This refers to Jesus's description of how he would suffer and die in Jerusalem, and that he would rise from the dead.

this word was hidden from them

This can be stated in active form, but it is not clear whether it is God or Jesus who hid the word from them. Alternate translation: "Jesus hid his message from them" or "God prevented them from understanding the meaning of what Jesus was telling them"

the things that were said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that Jesus said"

Luke 18:35

General Information:

Jesus heals a blind man as he approaches Jericho. These verses give background information and information about the setting of the story.

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.

a certain blind man was sitting

"there was a blind man sitting." Here "certain" means only that the man is an important new participant in the story. Luke does not mention his name.

Luke 18:36

and hearing

and hearing

It may be helpful to start a new sentence here after changing the comma at the end of the previous verse (verse 35) to a period. Alternate translation: "When he heard"

Luke 18:37

They told him

"People in the crowd told the blind man"

Jesus of Nazareth

Jesus came from the town of Nazareth, which was located in Galilee.

was passing by

"was walking past him"

Luke 18:38

So

This word marks an event that happened because of something else that happened first. In this case, the crowd had told the blind man that Jesus was walking by.

cried out

"called out" or "shouted"

Son of David

Jesus was a descendant of David, Israel's most important king.

have mercy on me

"show me pity" or "show me compassion"

Luke 18:39

The ones who were walking ahead

"The people who were walking at the front of the crowd"

to be quiet

"to be silent" or "not to shout"

cried out all the more

This could mean that he cried out louder or that he cried out more persistently.

Luke 18:40

that the man be brought to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people to bring the blind man to him"

Luke 18:41

to receive my sight

"to be able to see"

Luke 18:42

Receive your sight

This is a command, but Jesus is not commanding the man to do anything. Jesus is healing the man by commanding him to be healed. Alternate translation: "You will now receive your sight"

Your faith has healed you

These words are a metonym. It was because of the man's faith that Jesus healed the man. Alternate translation: "I have healed you because you have believed in me"

Luke 18:43

glorifying God

"giving glory to God" or "praising God"

Luke 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

After Jesus helped a man named Zacchaeus repent of his sins

Special concepts in this chapter

"Sinner"

The Pharisees referred to a group of people as "sinners." The Jewish leaders thought these people were sinful, but in reality the leaders were also sinful. This can be taken as irony.

Servants

God expects his people to remember that everything in the world belongs to God. God gives his people things so they can serve him. He wants them to please him by doing what he wants them to do with everything he has given them. One day Jesus will ask his servants what they have done with everything he gave them to use. He will give a reward to those who have done what he wanted them to do, and he will punish those who have not.

The donkey and the colt

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an animal. In this way he was like a king who came into a city after he had won an important battle. Also, the kings of Israel in the Old Testament rode on donkeys. Other kings rode on horses. So Jesus was showing that he was the king of Israel and that he was not like other kings.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about this event. Matthew and Mark wrote that the disciples brought Jesus a donkey. John wrote that Jesus found a donkey. Luke wrote that they brought him a colt. Only Matthew wrote that there were both a donkey and a colt. No one knows for sure whether Jesus rode the donkey or the colt. It is best to translate each of these accounts as it appears in the ULB without trying to make them all say exactly the same thing. (See: [Matthew 21:1-7](#) and [Mark 11:1-7](#) and [Luke 19:29-36](#) and [John 12:14-15](#))

Spreading garments and branches

When a king would enter one of the cities he ruled, people would cut branches from trees and would take off the clothes that they wore to stay warm in cold weather and spread them all on the road so the king would ride over them. They did this to honor the king and show that they loved him.

The merchants in the temple

Jesus forced the people who were selling animals in the temple to leave. He did this to show everyone that he had authority over the temple and that only those who were righteous, who did what God said was good, could be in it. (See: righteous)

Links:

- [Luke 19:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 19

19:1-10

Where was Jericho?

[19:1]

See: Map of Jericho

What did it mean that Zacchaeus was the “chief tax collector”?

[19:2]

Zacchaeus was the “chief tax collector.” Scholars think he was the leader of several other tax collectors who worked for him.

See: Tax (Tax Collector, Toll)

Why did Jesus say to Zacchaeus, “today I must stay at your house”?

[19:5]

Scholars think Jesus told Zacchaeus, “today I must stay at your house” because it was God’s will that Jesus stayed with Zacchaeus. They think God planned for salvation to come to Zacchaeus and his house on that day (see: Luke 19:9).

See: Will of God; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

Why did the people complain that Jesus went to visit a man who was a sinner?

[19:7]

Scholars think the people complained about Jesus going to the house of Zacchaeus because they thought Zacchaeus was a greater sinner than other sinners. Tax collectors often collected more money than the required taxes for themselves. Zacchaeus was a tax collector. Zacchaeus was also a Jew. Therefore, the Jewish people thought he was a traitor.

See: Sin; Tax (Tax Collector, Toll)

Who was a “son of Abraham”?

[19:9]

The words “son of Abraham” were used to talk about a descendant of Abraham. Abraham was the ancestor of all Jewish people.

See: Luke 3:7-9; 16:24

See: Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

What did Jesus mean when he said, “Today salvation has come to this house”?

[19:9]

Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about a certain person within the house who was saved on that day. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about Zacchaeus and his family being saved on that day.

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

19:11-27

What was a parable?

[19:11]

See: Parable

What was a “nobleman”?

[19:12]

A “nobleman” was a man who had been born to a family people honored. Scholars think a nobleman would rule other people. Perhaps this particular nobleman was on his way to Rome to be made a king of Israel.

What was a “mina”?

[19:13]

A mina was a unit of money in the Greek money system. It had the value of 100 “drachmas”. One drachma was what someone was paid for one day’s work during this time. Therefore, it would have taken about four months to earn a mina.

See: Denarius

19:28-44

Why did Luke write he went up to Jerusalem?

[19:28]

Luke wrote he went up to Jerusalem because Jerusalem was on a mountain.

See Map: Jerusalem

Where were Bethpage, and the hill that is called Olivet?

[19:29]

See Map: Bethpage; Mount of Olives (Olivet)

Why did Jesus send two of his disciples to go into the village and bring back a colt?

[19:30]

When Jesus asked for a colt upon which he would ride into Jerusalem, it fulfilled a prophecy (see: Zechariah 9:9). Scholars think the “colt” was a young donkey because of the words written by other gospel writers (see: Matthew 21:2-5; John 12:14-15). People thought the donkey was a symbol of humility and peace (see: 1 Kings 1:33-37).

See: Fulfill (Fulfillment); Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Gospel; Symbol

Why did the disciples cry out, “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord”?

[19:38]

Jesus spoke about those who would cry out “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” (see: Luke 13:35). Scholars think these people said that Jesus is the messiah.

See: Psalm 118:26-29

See: Disciple; Bless (Blessing); Messiah (Christ)

What is peace in heaven?

[19:38]

Some scholars think the peace in heaven spoken about in verse 38 is the peace between God and people. Other scholars think this was the salvation of God’s people. The peace of Jerusalem in verse 42 is the same kind of peace.

See: Heaven; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); People of God

What did Jesus mean by saying, “the stones would cry out”?

[19:40]

Jesus said that the stones would cry out. Some scholars think Jesus was saying that it was no more possible for the disciples to be silent, than it would be possible for stones to cry out. Other scholars think that if the disciples were to keep silent, then the stones would be made to proclaim God’s mighty acts. That is, God would make the stones cry out to tell people about the things he does.

See: Disciple

How was there not “one stone upon another”?

[19:44]

There was not one stone upon another when a Roman army attacked Jerusalem and forced down almost all its walls in about forty years after Jesus died. Some scholars think that when Jesus spoke the words, “One stone upon another”, he was using hyperbole to say the Romans attacked every part of the city and almost nothing was left. The Roman army also destroyed the temple.

See: Hyperbole; Temple

19:45-48

Why did Jesus say the sellers made the temple a den of robbers?

[19:46]

Jesus said the sellers made the temple a den of robbers because they cheated people by selling animals and exchanging money. When they did this they made much money from people coming to the temple to worship God. Some scholars think Jesus was saying the same things the prophet Jeremiah wrote about when he spoke those words (see: Jeremiah 7:11). They did that because they were greedy. Isaiah prophesied God will make the temple a place for prayer and worship for all people in the future (see: Isaiah 56:7). However, at that time the Jews themselves did not use it for prayer.

See: Temple; Prophet; Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Pray (Prayer)

What did Luke mean when he said the leaders of the people wanted to kill Jesus?

[19:47] Scholars think the leaders were looking for a way to kill Jesus that would not upset the people. Many people would be angry if the Jewish leaders killed Jesus.

Why did the Jewish leaders want to kill Jesus?

[19:47] The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. Some scholars think they did this because they thought Jesus was trying to rule the temple. Other scholars think they did not like what Jesus taught about the Law of Moses. Other scholars think they were afraid that Jesus was starting a revolution. That is, he was going to fight against the Roman Empire. They did not think he could defeat the Romans.

See: Temple; Law of Moses

Luke 19:1	a sycamore tree
General Information:	"a sycamore fig tree." It produces small round fruit about 2.5 centimeters across. Alternate translation: "a fig tree" or "a tree"
Verses 1-2 begin to give background information for the events that follow.	
Luke 19:2	Luke 19:5
Behold, there was a man there	the place
The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "There was a man who was"	"the tree" or "where Zacchaeus was"
He was a chief tax collector and was rich	Luke 19:6
This is background information about Zacchaeus.	So he hurried
Luke 19:3	"So Zacchaeus hurried"
General Information:	Luke 19:7
This verse completes the background information begun in [Luke 19:1-2]	they all complained
He was trying	The Jews hated the tax collectors and did not think any good person should associate with them.
"Zacchaeus was trying"	He has gone in to visit a man who is a sinner
because he was small in height	"Jesus has gone into the house of a sinner to visit him"
"because he was short"	a sinner
Luke 19:4	"an obvious sinner" or "a real sinner"
So he ran	Luke 19:8
The author has finished giving the background to the event and now begins to describe the event itself.	the Lord
	This refers to Jesus.

restore four times the amount

"return to them four times as much as I took from them"

Luke 19:9

salvation has come to this house

It was understood that salvation comes from God.
Alternate translation: "God has saved this household"

this house

The word "house" here refers to the people living in the house or the family.

he too

"this man too" or "Zacchaeus also"

son of Abraham

Possible meanings are 1) "descendant of Abraham" and 2) "person who has faith as Abraham did."

Luke 19:10

the Son of Man came

Jesus is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, came"

the people who are lost

"the people who have wandered away from God" or "those who by sinning have wandered away from God"

Luke 19:11

General Information:

Jesus begins to tell a parable to the crowd. This verse gives background information about why Jesus tells the parable.

that the kingdom of God was about to appear immediately

The Jews believed that the Messiah would establish the kingdom as soon as he came to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "that Jesus would immediately begin to rule over God's kingdom"

Luke 19:12

A certain nobleman

"A certain man who was a member of the ruling class" or "A certain man from an important family"

to receive for himself a kingdom

This is the image of a lesser king going to a greater king. The greater king would give the lesser king the right and authority to rule over his own country.

Luke 19:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

He called

"The nobleman called." It may be helpful to state that the man did this before he left to receive his kingdom. Alternate translation: "Before he left, he called"

gave them ten minas

"gave each of them one mina"

ten minas

A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work, so ten minas would have been about three years' wages. Alternate translation: "ten valuable coins" or "a large amount of money"

Conduct business

"Trade with this money" or "Use this money in order to earn more"

Luke 19:14

his citizens

"the people of his country"

a delegation

"a group of people to represent them" or "several messengers"

Luke 19:15

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

having received the kingdom

"after he had become king"

to be called to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to come to him"

what profit they had made

"how much money they had earned"

Luke 19:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

The first

"The first servant"

came before him

"came before the nobleman"

your mina has made ten minas more

It is implied that the servant was the one who caused the profit. Alternate translation: "I used your mina to make a profit of ten more minas"

mina

A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work. See how you translated this in [Luke 19:13]

Luke 19:17

Well done

"You have done well." Your language may have a phrase that an employer would use to show approval, such as "Good job."

very little

This refers to the one mina, which the nobleman apparently did not consider to be a lot of money.

Luke 19:18

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

The second

"The second servant"

Your mina, lord, has made five minas

It is implied that the servant was the one who caused the profit. Alternate translation: "Lord, I used your mina to make a profit of five more minas"

mina

A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work. See how you translated this in [Luke 19:13]

Luke 19:19

You take charge over five cities

"You will have authority over five cities"

Luke 19:20

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

Another came

"Another servant came"

mina

A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work. See how you translated this in [Luke 19:13]

kept safely in a cloth

"wrapped in a cloth and stored away"

Luke 19:21

a demanding person

"a stern man" or "a man who expects a lot from his servants"

You take up what you did not put in

This was probably a proverb. A person who takes out of storage or out of a bank things that he did not put in is a metaphor for someone who benefits from other people's hard work. Alternate translation: "You take out what you did not put in" or "You are like a person who takes out what other people put in"

you reap what you did not sow

This was probably a proverb. A person who harvests food that someone else has planted is a metaphor for someone who benefits from other people's hard work. Alternate translation: "you are like a person who reaps the fruit of what other people sowed"

Luke 19:22

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

By your own words

His "words" refer to all that he had said. Alternate translation: "Based on what you have said"

You knew that I am a demanding person

The nobleman was repeating what the servant had said about him. He was not saying that it was true. Alternate translation: "You say that I am a demanding person"

Luke 19:23

why did you not put my money ... interest?

The nobleman uses a question to rebuke the wicked servant. Alternate translation: "you should have put my money ... interest."

put my money in the bank

"lent my money to a bank." Cultures that do not have banks might translate it as "let someone borrow my money."

bank

A bank is a business that safely holds money for people. A bank lends that money to others for a profit. Therefore it pays an extra amount, or interest, to the people who keep their money in the bank.

I would have collected it with interest

"I could have collected that amount plus the interest it would have earned" or "I would have gained a profit from it"

interest

Interest is money that a bank pays people who put their money in the bank.

Luke 19:24

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

The nobleman

The nobleman had become king. See how you translated this in Luke 19:12.

them that stood by

"the people who were standing near them"

mina

A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work. See how you translated this in [Luke 19:13]

Luke 19:25

he has ten minas.

"he already has ten minas!"

Luke 19:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

I say to you

It can be stated clearly that the nobleman is speaking. Alternate translation: "And the nobleman replied, 'I say to you' or "But the nobleman said 'I tell you this'"

everyone who has will be given more

It is implied that what he has is the money he earned by using his mina faithfully. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone who uses well what he has been given, I will give him more" or "to everyone who uses well what I have given him I will give more"

from him that has not

It is implied that the reason he does not have money is because he did not use his mina faithfully. Alternate translation: "from the person who does not use well what I have given him"

will be taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will take away from him"

Luke 19:27

these enemies of mine

Since the enemies were not right there, some languages would say "those enemies of mine."

Luke 19:28

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about the nobleman and his servants. This verse tells us what Jesus does after this part of the story.

When he had said these things

"When Jesus had said these things"

going up to Jerusalem

Jerusalem was higher than Jericho, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem.

Luke 19:29

General Information:

Jesus approaches Jerusalem.

It came about that

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

when he came near

The word "he" refers to Jesus. His disciples were also traveling with him.

Bethphage

Bethphage is a village on the Mount of Olives, which is across the Kidron Valley from Jerusalem.

the mountain that is called Olives

"the hill that is called the Mount of Olives" or "the hill that is called 'Olive Tree Mountain'"

Luke 19:30

a colt

"a young donkey" or "a young riding animal"

that has never been ridden

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that no one has ever ridden"

Luke 19:31

If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say

The inner quote can also be translated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "If any one asks you why you are untying it, say"

Luke 19:32

Those who were sent

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
"The two disciples that Jesus sent"

Luke 19:33

the owners

"the owners of the colt"

Luke 19:34

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 19:35

threw their cloaks upon the colt

"put their robes on the young donkey." Cloaks are outer robes.

set Jesus on it

"helped Jesus get up on and ride on the colt"

Luke 19:36

they spread their cloaks

"people spread their cloaks." This is a sign of giving honor to someone.

Luke 19:37

As he was now approaching

"As Jesus was going near." Jesus's disciples were traveling with him.

where the Mount of Olives descends

"where the road goes down from the Mount of Olives"

mighty works which they had seen

"great things they had seen Jesus do"

Luke 19:38

Blessed is the king

They were saying this about Jesus.

in the name of the Lord

Here "name" refers to power and authority. Also, "Lord" refers to God.

Peace in heaven

"May there be peace in heaven" or "We want to see peace in heaven"

glory in the highest

"may there be glory in the highest" or "we want to see glory in the highest." The words "the highest" refer to heaven, which is a metonym for God, who lives in heaven. Alternate translation: "Let everyone give glory to God in the highest heaven"

Luke 19:39

in the multitude

"in the large crowd"

rebuke your disciples

"tell your disciples to stop doing these things"

Luke 19:40

I tell you

Jesus said this to emphasize what he would say next.

if these were silent

Jesus is describing something that could have happened but did not. Some translators may need to make it clear what Jesus was implying when he said this. Alternate translation: "I will not rebuke them, for if these people were to be silent"

the stones would cry out

"the stones would call out praises"

Luke 19:41

the city

This refers to Jerusalem.

he wept over it

To weep over something means to weep because of something. The word "it" refers to the city of Jerusalem, but it represents the people who lived in that city. Alternate translation: "he cried about the people of Jerusalem"

Luke 19:42

If only you had known ... bring you peace

Jesus expresses his sadness that the people of Jerusalem had missed the opportunity to be at peace with God.

you

The word "you" is singular because Jesus is speaking to the city. But if this would be unnatural in your language, you could use a plural form of "you" to refer to the people of the city.

they are hidden from your eyes

"your eyes" refer to the ability to see. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can no longer see them"

Luke 19:43

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking.

For

What follows is the reason for Jesus's sadness.

the days will come upon you when your enemies

This indicates that they will experience difficult times. Some languages do not talk about time "coming." Alternate translation: "in the future these things will happen to you: Your enemies" or "soon you will endure troublesome times. Your enemies"

you ... your

The word "you" is singular because Jesus is speaking to the city as he would to a woman. But if this would be unnatural in your language, you could use a plural form of "you" to refer to the people of the city.

barricade

This refers to a wall to keep the people from getting out of the city.

Luke 19:44

They will strike you down to the ground, and your children with you

Jesus is speaking to the people of the city as if he were speaking to the city itself as he would speak to a woman. He speaks of the people who live in the city as if they are the woman's children, and thus the city's children. To strike down a city is to destroy its walls and buildings, and to strike down its children is to kill those who live in it. Alternate translation: "They will completely destroy you and kill all who live in you" or "They will completely destroy your city and kill all of you"

They will not leave one stone upon another

"They will not leave any of the stones in place." Jesus uses hyperbole here to emphasize the extent of the devastation that enemies will cause in Jerusalem. The enemies will completely destroy the city, which is built of stones. Alternate translation: "They will destroy Jerusalem"

you did not recognize

"you were not aware of" or "you were not grateful during"

the time of your visitation

The abstract noun "visitation" can be translated as a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "the time when God visited you" or "the time during which God was with you."

visitation

This is a "visit" by an overseer to make sure that things are going well with those over whom he is in charge, not a casual social visit.

Luke 19:45

Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in this part of the story. Jesus enters the temple in Jerusalem.

Jesus entered the temple

You may need to make explicit that he first entered Jerusalem, where the temple was located. Alternate translation: "Jesus entered Jerusalem and then went to the temple courtyard"

entered the temple

Only priests were allowed to enter the temple building. Alternate translation: "went into the temple courtyard"

cast out

"throw out" or "force out"

Luke 19:46

It is written

This is a quotation from Isaiah. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The scriptures say" or "A prophet wrote these words in the scriptures"

My house

The word "My" refers to God and "house" refers to the temple.

house of prayer

"a place where people pray to me"

a den of robbers

Jesus speaks of the temple as if it were a place where thieves come together. Alternate translation: "a place where thieves hide"

Luke 19:47

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of this part of the story. Verses 47-48 tell about ongoing action that continues after the main part of the story ends.

in the temple

"in the temple courtyard" or "at the temple"

destroy him

This hyperbole refers to killing Jesus. Alternate translation: "kill him"

Luke 19:48

were listening to him intently

"were paying close attention to what Jesus was saying"

Luke 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 20:17, 42-43, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Using questions to trap people

When Jesus asked the Pharisees who gave John the authority to baptize ([Luke 20:4](#)), they could not answer because any answer they gave would give someone a reason to say that they were wrong ([Luke 20:5-6](#)). They thought that they would be able to say that Jesus was wrong when they asked him if people should pay taxes to Caesar ([Luke 20:22](#)), but Jesus gave them an answer that they had not thought of.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. In this chapter, Jesus quotes a psalm that records David calling his son "Lord," that is, "master." However, to the Jews, ancestors were greater than their descendants. In this passage, Jesus is trying to lead his hearers to the true understanding that the Messiah will himself be divine, and that he himself is the Messiah. ([Luke 20:41-44](#)).

Links:

- [Luke 20:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 20

20:1-8

Why did the Jewish leaders ask Jesus who gave him permission to do the things he did?

[20:2]

The Jewish leaders asked Jesus who gave him permission to do the things he did. Some scholars think the Jewish leaders were asking Jesus whether a person or God gave him permission to do these things. Other scholars think the Jewish leaders were asking Jesus to name the Jewish teacher who taught him. In ancient Israel, a teacher learned from another teacher.

See: Rabbi

What were "these things"?

[20:8]

The Jewish teachers asked “these things”.

1. Some scholars think they asked about the things Jesus taught.
2. Some scholars think that they asked about when Jesus made people to leave the temple because they were selling things.
3. Some scholars think they asked about Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a colt.
4. Some scholars think they asked about Jesus healing people in the temple (see: Matthew 21:14)

See: Temple

Why did Jesus not answer the Jewish leaders?

[20:8]

Jesus did not answer the Jewish leaders. Some scholars think that Jesus did not answer the question from the Jewish leaders because they would not answer his question to them. The Jewish leaders knew the answer to Jesus' question.

20:9-19

What was a parable?

[20:9]

See: Parable

Why did Jesus speak about the vine growers?

[20:10]

Jesus spoke about the vine growers. Scholars think Jesus told this parable to say that the Jewish leaders were just like the vine growers in the parable. When God sent prophets and apostles to the people of Israel, the prophets were killed, and they would soon be killing the apostles (see: Luke 11:47-51; Matthew 23:37-39).

See: Parable; Prophet; Apostle

What was the “stone” about which Jesus spoke?

[20:17]

When Jesus spoke about the “stone” rejected by the builders, he was saying what was written in Psalm 118:22-23. This was a metaphor. Jesus was speaking about himself. That is, the Jewish leaders rejected Jesus.

See: Metaphor

What was the “cornerstone” about which Jesus spoke?

[20:17]

A “cornerstone” was spoken about in two ways in the days of Jesus. It was used to describe the large stone set in the ground that established the corner from which the foundation of a building was measured. It was also used to describe the stone at the top part of an arch. This stone held the arch together. Jesus used the word “cornerstone” as a metaphor. Jesus was speaking about himself. That is, Jesus himself is the foundation upon which the church, that is the body of Christ, is built. He holds all things together.

See: Metaphor; Church; Body of Christ

How will people be broken or crushed by the stone about which Jesus spoke?

[20:18]

When Jesus spoke about people falling on the stone, he was speaking about the people who rejected Jesus. When they rejected him, they are forever broken. This was a metaphor. They cannot be at peace with God. When Jesus spoke about the stone crushing people, he meant that God will judge people who reject Jesus. They will be crushed, that is, they will live forever in hell.

See: Isaiah 8:14-15

See: Hell; Day of Judgment; Punish (Punishment)

20:20-26

How did the Jewish leaders try to trick Jesus?

[20:20]

When the Jewish leaders asked a question about paying taxes, they tried to trick Jesus. They wanted Jesus to say something that made people angry. If Jesus said that people needed to pay taxes, the Jewish people would be angry and stop following him. If Jesus said that people should not pay taxes, then the Romans would be angry with him.

See: Tax (Tax Collector, Toll)

What were the things that belonged to Caesar?

[20:25]

Jesus spoke about things that belonged to Caesar. Some scholars think that because the name and face on the coin showed that it belonged to Caesar, then Caesar had the right to collect taxes from the people. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking very specifically about giving to Caesar what was due to him. That is, taxes and honor.

See: Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar); Tax (Tax Collector, Toll)

What are the things that belong to God?

[20:25]

Jesus spoke about things that belong to God. Scholars think that when Jesus spoke about the things that belong to God he was speaking about how people must worship, love, and obey God.

20:27-40

Who were the Sadducees?

[20:27]

See: Sadducees

What is the “resurrection”?

[20:27]

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

What did Jesus mean by saying that people who are resurrected will not “die anymore”?

[20:36]

The people who follow Jesus and are resurrected will never die again. That is, they will live together in God in heaven.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection); Heaven

Why did Jesus say, “they are equal to angels”?

[20:36]

Jesus said that those who are resurrected are “equal to angels”. He wanted people to know that they will never die. Angels do not die.

Advice to Translators: People who are resurrected do not become angels, rather they are like the angels in that they do not die. The translation must be clear to make that distinction.

See: Angel

Why did Jesus use the words “sons of God” to describe those who are resurrected?

[20:36]

People who believe in Jesus are “sons of God.” They are not sons of God in the same way Jesus is the Son of God.

See: Family of God; Son of God

Why did Jesus talk about Moses and the bush?

[20:37]

Jesus talked about Moses and the burning bush. Scholars think that because God revealed himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, these men are still alive in heaven. Jesus used the story of Moses and the bush so that people would know that there is a resurrection of the dead.

See: Exodus 3:6

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

20:41-44

Why did the ancient Jews believe the messiah is the Son of David?

[20:41]

The ancient Jews believed the messiah is the Son of David because it was written about in the Old Testament (see: Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5). Jesus also believed this.

See: Matthew 22:41-42; Mark 12:35

See: Messiah (Christ); Son of David; Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

What was meant by the words, “The Lord said to my Lord”?

[20:42]

The Hebrew used two words for “Lord” in Psalm 110:1. The first use of the word is also the name Yahweh, which is the name of the God of Israel. The second use of the word “Lord” is translated as Lord and master.

See: Yahweh (I am); Lord

How was Jesus both David’s Lord and his son?

[20:41, 20:42]

Jesus was David’s “Lord” because Jesus is God. However, Jesus was also David’s son because Jesus was a descendant of David.

See: Lord; Jesus is God; Son of David; Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

20:45-47

Who were the scribes?

[20:46]

See: Scribe

How did the scribes “devour widows’ houses”?

[20:47]

The scribes devour widows’ houses. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about widows who were wealthy and the scribes were taking a very large donations from those widows. Other scholars think the scribes took the things the widows owned. Other scholars think the scribes, in helping widows, took more from the widows than what they should have taken for helping them.

See: Scribe

Why will the scribes “receive greater condemnation”?

[20:47]

The scribes will receive greater condemnation. Scholars think that God will punish the scribes more severely than other people who will be judged and punished.

See: Scribe; Condemn (Condemnation); Judge (Judgment); Punish (Punishment)

Luke 20:1	It came about
Connecting Statement:	This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.
The chief priests, scribes, and elders question Jesus in the temple.	in the temple
	"in the temple courtyard" or "at the temple"

Luke 20:2

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 20:3

General Information:

Jesus responds to the chief priests, scribes, and elders.

He answered and said to them

"Jesus replied"

I will also ask you a question, and you tell me

The words "I will ... ask you a question" are a statement.
The words "you tell me" are a command.

Luke 20:4

Was it from heaven or from men

Jesus knows that John's authority comes from heaven, so he is not asking for information. He asks the question so the Jewish leaders will have to tell what they think to all who are listening. This question is rhetorical, but you will probably have to translate it as a question. Alternate translation: "Do you think John's authority to baptize people came from heaven or from men" or "Was it God who told John to baptize people, or did people tell him to do it"

from heaven

"from God." Jewish people avoided referring to God by his name "Yahweh." Often they used the word "heaven" to refer to him.

Luke 20:5

They reasoned

"They discussed" or "They considered their answer"

with themselves

"among themselves" or "with each other"

If we say, 'From heaven,' he

Some languages might prefer an indirect quote.
Alternate translation: "If we say that John's authority is from heaven, he"

From heaven

"From God." Jewish people avoided referring to God by his name "Yahweh." Often they used the word "heaven" to refer to him. See how these words are translated in [Luke 20:4]

he will say

"Jesus will say"

Luke 20:6

if we say, 'From men,'

Some languages might prefer an indirect quote.
Alternate translation: "if we say that John's authority is from men,"

stone us

"kill us by throwing stones on us." God's Law commanded that his people stone those of his people who mocked him or his prophets.

Luke 20:7

So they answered

"So the chief priests, scribes and elders answered." The word "so" marks an event that happened because of something else that happened first. In this case, they had reasoned with themselves ([Luke 20:5-6](#)), and they did not have an answer they wanted to say.

they answered that they did not know where it came from.

This could be stated as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "they said, 'We do not know where it came from.'"

where it came from

"where John's baptism came from." Alternate translation: "where John's authority to baptize came from" or "who authorized John to baptize people"

Luke 20:8

Neither will I tell you

"And I will not tell you." Jesus knew they were not willing to tell him the answer, so he responded in the same manner. Alternate translation: "Just as you will not tell me, I will not tell you"

Luke 20:9

General Information:

Jesus begins to tell a parable to the people in the temple courtyard.

rented it out to vine growers

"allowed some vine growers to use it in exchange for payment" or "allowed some vine growers to use it and pay him later." Payment might be in the form of money or a portion of the harvest.

vine growers

These are people who tend grape vines and grow grapes. Alternate translation: "grape farmers"

Luke 20:10

the appointed time

"the time they had agreed to pay him." This would have been at the harvest time.

of the fruit of the vineyard

"some of the grapes" or "some of what they produced in the vineyard." It could also refer to the things they made from grapes or the money they earned by selling the grapes.

sent him away empty-handed

An empty hand is a metaphor for "nothing." Alternate translation: "sent him away without paying him" or "sent him away without the grapes"

Luke 20:11

beat him

"beat that servant"

treated him shamefully

"humiliated him"

sent him away empty-handed

Having an empty hand is a metaphor for having nothing. Alternate translation: "sent him away without paying him" or "sent him away without any grapes"

Luke 20:12

yet a third

"even a third servant" or "yet another servant." The word "yet" hints at the fact that the landowner should not have had to send the second servant, but he went beyond that and sent a third servant.

wounded him

"injured that servant"

threw him out

"threw him out of the vineyard"

Luke 20:13

What will I do?

This question emphasizes that the vineyard owner thought carefully about what he was going to do. Alternate translation: "Here is what I will do:"

Luke 20:14

when the vine growers saw him

"when the farmers saw the owner's son"

Let us kill him

They were not asking permission. The said this to encourage each other to kill the heir.

Luke 20:15

They threw him out of the vineyard

"The vine growers forced the son out of the vineyard"

What then will the lord of the vineyard do to them?

Jesus uses a question to get his listeners to pay attention to what the owner of the vineyard will do.

Alternate translation: "So now, listen to what the lord of the vineyard will do to them."

Luke 20:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling his parable to the crowd.

May it never be

"May it never happen"

Luke 20:17

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues teaching the crowd.

But Jesus looked at them

"But Jesus stared at them" or "But he looked straight at them." He did this to hold them accountable to understand what he was saying.

What is the meaning of that which is written: "The stone ... cornerstone"?

Jesus uses a question to teach the crowd. Alternate translation: "You should be able to understand that which is written: 'The stone ... cornerstone.'"

that which is written

"this scripture"

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone

This is the first of three metaphors in a prophecy from the book of Psalms. This one refers to the Messiah as if he were a stone that builders chose not to use, but that God made the most important stone.

The stone that the builders rejected

"The stone that the builders said was not good enough to use for building." In those days people used stones to build the walls of houses and other buildings.

the builders

This refers to the religious rulers who are rejecting Jesus as Messiah.

the cornerstone

"the chief stone of the building" or "the most important stone of the building"

Luke 20:18

Everyone who falls ... broken to pieces

This second metaphor speaks of people who reject the Messiah as if they fall over a stone and are injured.

will be broken to pieces

This is a result of falling onto the stone. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will break up into pieces"

the one on whom it falls

"the one that stone falls on." This third metaphor speaks about the Messiah judging those who reject him as if he were a large stone that would crush them.

Luke 20:19

sought to lay hands on him

In this verse, to "lay hands on" someone is to arrest that person. Alternate translation: "looked for a way to arrest Jesus"

in that very hour

"immediately"

they were afraid of the people

This is the reason that they did not arrest Jesus right away. The people respected Jesus, and the religious leaders were afraid of what the people might do if they arrested him. Alternate translation: "they did not arrest him because they were afraid of the people"

Luke 20:20

they sent out spies

"the scribes and chief priests sent spies to watch Jesus"

that they might find fault with his speech

"because they wanted to accuse Jesus of saying something bad"

to the rule and to the authority of the governor

"Rule" and "authority" are two ways of saying that they wanted the governor to judge Jesus. It can be translated with one or both expressions. Alternate translation: "so that the governor would punish Jesus"

Luke 20:21

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of the next event in the story. Some time has passed since Jesus was questioned in the temple by the chief priests. The spies are now questioning Jesus.

They asked him

"The spies asked Jesus"

Teacher, we know ... way of God

The spies were trying to deceive Jesus. They did not believe these things about Jesus.

we know

"we" refers only to the spies.

are not partial to anyone

Possible meanings are 1) "you tell the truth even if important people do not like it" or 2) "you do not favor one person over another"

but you teach the truth about the way of God

This is part of what the spies were saying that they knew about Jesus.

Luke 20:22

Is it lawful ... or not?

They hoped that Jesus would say either "yes" or "no." If he said "yes," then the Jewish people would be angry with him for telling them to pay taxes to a foreign government. If he said "no," then the religious leaders could tell the Romans that Jesus was teaching the people to break the Roman laws.

Is it lawful

They were asking about God's law, not about Caesar's law. Alternate translation: "Does our law permit us"

Caesar

Because Caesar was the ruler of the Roman government, they could refer to the Roman government by Caesar's name.

Luke 20:23

But Jesus understood their craftiness

"But Jesus understood how tricky they were" or "But Jesus saw that they were trying to trap him." The word "their" refers to the spies.

Luke 20:24

a denarius

This is a Roman silver coin worth a day's wages.

Whose image and name is on it?

Jesus uses a question to respond to those who were trying to trick him. Alternate translation: "Tell me, whose image and name do you see on it?"

image and name

"picture and name"

Luke 20:25

He said to them

"Then Jesus said to them"

Caesar

Here "Caesar" refers to the Roman government.

and to God

The word "give" is understood from the previous phrase. It can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "and give to God"

Luke 20:26

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of this event about the spies and the part of the story which began in Luke 20:1.

They were not able to find fault with what he had said

"The spies could not find anything wrong with what he said"

but marveling at his answer, they were silent

"but they were amazed at his answer and did not say anything"

Luke 20:27

General Information:

We do not know where this takes place, though it possibly takes place in the temple courtyard. Jesus is talking with some Sadducees.

the ones who say that there is no resurrection

This phrase identifies the Sadducees as being the group of Jews that say that no one would rise from the dead. It does not imply that some Sadducees believed that there is a resurrection and some did not.

Luke 20:28

if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and being childless

"if a man's brother dies when he has a wife but does not have children"

the man should take the brother's wife

"the man should marry his dead brother's widow"

raise up children for his brother

The Jews considered the first son born to a woman who married her dead husband's brother as if he were the son of the woman's first husband. This son inherited the property of his mother's first husband and carried on his name.

Luke 20:29

General Information:

The Sadducees tell Jesus a short story in verses 29-32. This is a story they made up as an example. In verse 33, they ask Jesus a question about the story they told.

There were seven brothers

This may have happened, but it is probably a story that they made up to test Jesus.

the first

"brother number one" or "the oldest"

died childless

"died without having any children" or "died, but did not have any children"

Luke 20:30

the second as well

The Sadducees kept the story short by not repeating many of the details. Alternate translation: "the second married her and the same thing happened" or "the second brother married her and died without having any children"

the second

"brother number two" or "the oldest brother who was still alive"

Luke 20:31

The third took her

"The third married her"

The third

"Brother number three" or "The oldest brother who was still alive"

and in the same way the seven also left no children and died

The speakers kept the story short by omitting details. Alternate translation: "in the same way the rest of the seven brothers married her and died without having any children"

the seven

"all seven of the brothers" or "each of the seven brothers"

Luke 20:32

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 20:33

Connecting Statement:

The Sadducees finish asking Jesus their question.

In the resurrection

"When people are raised from the dead" or "When dead people become alive again." Some languages have a way of showing that the Sadducees did not believe that there would be a resurrection, such as "In the supposed resurrection" or "When dead people are supposedly raised from the dead."

Luke 20:34

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to answer the Sadducees.

The sons of this age

"The people of this world" or "The people of this time." This is in contrast with those in heaven or the people who live after the resurrection.

marry and are given in marriage

In that culture they spoke of men marrying women and women being given in marriage to their husband. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "get married"

Luke 20:35

those who are regarded as worthy in that age

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people in that age whom God will consider to be worthy"

to receive the resurrection from the dead

"to be raised from the dead" or "to rise from death"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To receive resurrection from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

will neither marry nor be given in marriage

In that culture they spoke of men marrying women and women being given in marriage to their husband. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will not marry" or "will not get married." This is after the resurrection.

Luke 20:36

Neither can they die anymore

This is after the resurrection. Alternate translation: "They will not be able to die anymore"

are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection

"are children of God because he has brought them back from the dead"

Luke 20:37

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes answering the Sadducees.

But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed

The word "even" is here because the Sadducees might not have been surprised that some scriptures say that the dead are raised, but they did not expect Moses to have written something like that. Alternate translation: "But even Moses showed that dead people rise from the dead"

the dead are raised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God causes the dead to live again"

in the place concerning the bush, where he calls the Lord

The implied information can be supplied. Alternate translation: "in the scripture about the burning bush, where he wrote about the Lord being"

the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob

"the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." They all worshiped the same God.

Luke 20:38

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Jesus explains how this story proves that people rise from the dead.

he is not the God of the dead, but of the living

These two phrases have similar meaning. They are used together for emphasis. Some languages have different ways of showing emphasis. Alternate translation: "the Lord is the God of living people only"

but of the living

"but the God of living people." Since these people died physically, they must still be alive spiritually. Alternate translation: "but the God of people whose spirits are alive, even though their bodies may have died"

because all live to him

"because in God's sight they all are still alive" or "because their spirits are alive in God's presence"

Luke 20:39

Some of the scribes answered

"Some of the scribes said to Jesus." There were scribes present when the Sadducees were questioning Jesus.

Luke 20:40

For they

It is unclear if this refers to the scribes, or the Sadducees, or both. It is best to keep the statement general.

they did not dare ask him any more questions

"they were afraid to ask him any more questions" or "they did not risk asking him any more questions." They understood that they did not know as much as Jesus did, but they did not want to say that. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "they did not ask him any more tricky questions because they feared that his wise answers would make them appear foolish again"

Luke 20:41

General Information:

Jesus asks the scribes a question.

How do they say ... son?

"Why do they say ... son?" Jesus uses a question to make the scribes think about who the Messiah is. Alternate translation: "Let's think about them saying ... son." or "I will talk about them saying ... son."

they say

The prophets, the religious rulers, and the Jewish people in general knew that the Messiah was the son of David. Alternate translation: "everyone says" or "people say"

David's son

"King David's descendant." The word "son" is used here to refer to a descendant. In this case it refers to the one who would reign over God's kingdom.

Luke 20:42

The Lord said to my Lord

This is a quotation from the book of Psalms which says "Yahweh said to my Lord." But the Jews stopped saying "Yahweh" and often said "Lord" instead. Alternate translation: "The Lord God said to my Lord" or "God said to my Lord"

my Lord

David was referring to the Christ as "my Lord."

Sit at my right hand

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God.

Alternate translation: "Sit in the place of honor beside me"

Luke 20:43

until I make your enemies your footstool

The Messiah's enemies are spoken of as if they were furniture on which he would rest his feet. This was an image of submission. Alternate translation: "until I make your enemies like a footstool for you" or "until I conquer your enemies for you"

Luke 20:44

David therefore calls the Christ 'Lord,'

In the culture of that time, a father was more respected than a son. David's use of the title 'Lord' for the Christ implies that he was greater than David.

so how is he David's son?

"so how can the Christ be David's son?" This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "and this shows that the Christ is not merely David's descendant"

Luke 20:45

Connecting Statement:

Jesus now directs his attention to his disciples and speaks mainly to them.

Luke 20:46

Beware of

"Be on guard against"

who desire to walk in long robes

Long robes would show that they were important. Alternate translation: "who like to walk around wearing their important robes"

Luke 20:47

They also devour widows' houses

"They also eat up widows' houses." The scribes are spoken of as if they were hungry animals that eat up the widows' houses. The word "houses" is a synecdoche for both where the widow lives and all the possessions she puts in her home. Alternate translation: "They also take away from widows all their possessions"

for a show they make long prayers

"they pretend to be righteous and make long prayers" or "they make long prayers so that people will see them"

Men like this will receive greater condemnation

"They will receive a more severe judgment." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will certainly punish them very severely"

Luke 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Jesus told his disciples much about what would happen before he returned.

Special concepts in this chapter

"For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,'"

Jesus taught that before he returned many people would falsely claim to be him returning. It will also be a time when many people will hate Jesus's followers and even want to kill them.

"Until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"

The Jews spoke of the time between when the Babylonians forced their ancestors to go to Babylon and the time when the Messiah would come as "the times of the Gentiles," the time when the Gentiles would rule over the Jews.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

- [Luke 21:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 21

21:1-4

What were mites?

[21:2]

Mites were a type of coin. They were tiny, copper coins that had very little value (see: Mark 12:42). In ancient times, a person would earn about 100 mites in a day.

See: Denarius

Why did Jesus say the widow gave more than other people?

[21:3]

Jesus said the widow gave more than other people. She did not give as much money as other people. However, Jesus said this because she gave everything she had. However, the rich only gave a small part of what they had.

21:5-38

Why did Jesus say, “not one stone will be left on another”?

[21:6]

Jesus said “not one stone will be left on another.” This was a metaphor. Jesus was speaking about the Romans destroying the temple and many of the walls in Jerusalem. This happened about forty years after Jesus died.

See: Metaphor; Temple

What were the things which were about to happen?

[21:7]

Certain things were about to happen. Scholars think the disciples were asking when the temple would be destroyed.

See: Matthew 24:3

See: Disciple; Temple

Why did Jesus say, “the end will not happen immediately”?

[21:9]

Jesus said, “the end will not happen immediately”. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about the Romans destroying the temple in Jerusalem, but he was also thinking about when he returns.

See: Temple; Jesus' Return to Earth

What are the “terrifying events” and the “great signs from heaven”?

[21:11]

Jesus spoke about “terrifying events” and “great signs from heaven.” Scholars think Jesus was speaking about things that happen in the sky. People have never seen these things before and it caused them to fear greatly. Perhaps they will affect the whole universe. They think Jesus was speaking about comets and meteors, such as have never been seen before.

See: Sign; Heaven

Why did Jesus say, “they will lay their hands on you”?

[21:12]

Jesus told the disciples “they will lay their hands on you.” He wanted them to know that some of them will be arrested, imprisoned, and tortured.

See: Disciple; Laying on of Hands ; Persecute (Persecution).

How will Jesus give “words and wisdom” to the disciples?

[21:15]

When Jesus told the disciples he would give them “words and wisdom,” he wanted them to know that the Holy Spirit would help the disciples know how to live in a way that honors God.

See: Disciple; Holy Spirit; Reveal (Revelation)

What did it mean to be “given over”?

[21:16]

Someone who is “given over” or “delivered up” is betrayed. People help the leaders to arrest them so they can be punished.

See: Punish (Punishment); Persecute (Persecution)

Why did Jesus say, “not a hair of your head will perish”?

[21:18]

Jesus said, “not a hair of your head will perish.” Some scholars think Jesus wanted the disciples to know that people could not harm the disciples without God giving them permission to do this. However, more scholars think Jesus was speaking about God protecting the disciples. They will live forever with God in heaven forever. God will not punish them, even if people punish them on earth.

See: Disciple; Punish (Punishment); Heaven; Eternal Life

Why did Jesus say, “In your endurance you will gain your lives”?

[21:19]

Jesus said, “In your endurance you will gain your lives” or “souls”. Scholars think Jesus wanted people to keep trusting in God when they were persecuted.

See: Persecute (Persecution); Soul

Why did Jesus say woe to those who are pregnant or nursing in those days?

[21:23]

Jesus said, “woe”(οὐαί/g3759) to those who are pregnant or nursing in those days. The things Jesus spoke were going to happen suddenly. This will make it more difficult for a pregnant or nursing mother.

See: Woe; Last Days

What was “the times of the Gentiles”?

[21:24]

The words “time of the Gentiles” refer to a certain period of time when the Gentiles will do something.” Some scholars think it is a certain period of time when God will allow the Gentiles to destroy Jerusalem. Other scholars believe it is a certain period of time when Gentiles will be saved (see: Romans 11:25).

See: Gentile; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

What were the signs in the sun, moon, and the stars?

[21:25]

Jesus spoke about the signs in the sun, moon, and the stars. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about changes in the sun, moon, and stars (see: Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24). These things looked different than they have always looked.

See: Isaiah 34:4; Joel 2:30-31

See: Sign; Last Days

What was a parable?

[21:29]

See: Parable

What was a fig tree?

[21:29]

See: Luke 13:6

What was meant by the words, “the kingdom of God is near”?

[21:31]

Jesus said that the kingdom of God is near. Some scholars think Jesus was saying that the “kingdom of God” would begin soon. Other scholars think Jesus was saying the “kingdom of God” had already begun because God began ruling Christians in some way that he did not before.

See: Kingdom of God

What was “this generation”?

[21:32]

Jesus spoke about this “generation.”

1. Some scholars think a future generation will see Jesus return.
2. Some scholars think the generation was the generation who saw Jesus and the temple in Jerusalem destroyed about forty years after Jesus died.
3. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about the Jewish people. There will still be Jews when Jesus returns.
4. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about evil people. There will always be evil people until Jesus returns (see: Luke 11:29-32, 50-51).

See: Generation; Jesus' Return to Earth; Temple

Why did Jesus command people to be alert and pray at all times?

[21:36]

Jesus wanted people to be alert and pray at all times. Scholars think that Jesus wanted Christians to be ready for him to return at any moment. That is, they must not become tired of waiting and then start to sin again.

See: Pray (Prayer); Sin

Who is the “Son of Man”?

[21:36]

See: Son of Man

Luke 21:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins teaching his disciples, but it is uncertain whether this occurs on the same day that the Sadducees question Jesus

gifts

You may need to make explicit what the gifts are.
Alternate translation: "gifts of money"

treasury

The "treasury" means the boxes in the temple courtyard where people put money as a gift to God.

Luke 21:2

a certain poor widow

This is a way of introducing a new character to the story.

two mites

"two small coins" or "two tiny copper coins." These were the least valuable of the coins people used then.
Alternate translation: "two pennies" or "two small coins of little value"

Luke 21:3

Truly I say to you

This means that what Jesus was about to say was very important.

I say to you

Jesus was talking to his disciples. The word "you" is plural.

this poor widow put in more than all of them

God considers her gift, a small amount of money, more significant than the large amounts of money the men gave. Alternate translation: "the small gift of this widow is more valuable than the larger gifts of the rich men"

Luke 21:4

gave gifts out of their abundance

"have a lot of money but only gave a small portion of it" out of her poverty

"who has very little money"

Luke 21:5

Connecting Statement:

Jesus switches from talking about the widow to teaching about the temple.

offerings

things people had given to God

Luke 21:6

these things that you see

This refers to the beautiful temple and its decorations.

the days will come when

"there will be a time when" or "someday"

when not one stone will be left on another which will not be torn down

Jesus uses hyperbole here to emphasize the extent of the devastation that enemies will cause to the temple. The enemies will completely destroy the temple, which is built of stones. Alternate translation: "when all these things will be destroyed" or "when enemies will destroy all of these things"

not one stone will be left on another which will not be torn down

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "every stone will be removed from its place and torn down"

left on another which will not be torn down

A new sentence can be started here, and it can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "left on another. They will all be torn down" or "left on another. Enemies will tear down every stone"

Luke 21:7

they asked him

"the disciples asked Jesus" or "Jesus's disciples asked him"

these things

This refers to what Jesus has just said about enemies destroying the temple.

Luke 21:8

that you are not deceived

Jesus was talking to his disciples. The word "you" is plural. Alternate translation: "that you do not believe lies" or "that no one deceives you"

in my name

People coming in his name claim to represent him. Alternate translation: "claiming to be me" or "claiming to have my authority"

I am he

"I am the Christ" or "I am the Messiah"

Do not go after them

"Do not believe them" or "Do not become their disciples"

Luke 21:9

wars and riots

Here "wars" probably refers to fighting between countries, and "riots" probably refers to people fighting against their own leaders or against others in their country. Alternate translation: "wars and rebellions" or "wars and revolutions"

do not be terrified

"do not let these things terrify you" or "do not be afraid"

the end

Possible meanings are: (1) The end of the era in which the disciples to whom Jesus spoke were in at the time. Alternate translation: "the end of the age" or (2) The

end of the heavens and earth as we know them.

Alternate translation: "the end of the world"

will not happen immediately

Implied word can be supplied here. Alternate translation: "will not happen immediately after the wars and riots" or "will not happen immediately after those things happen"

Luke 21:10

Then he said to them

"Then Jesus said to his disciples." Since this is a continuation of Jesus speaking from the previous verse, some languages may prefer not to say "Then he said to them."

Nation will rise against nation

Here "nation" is a metonym for the people of the nation, and "rise against" is a metonym for attack. The word "nation" represents nations in general, not one particular nation. Alternate translation: "The people of one nation will attack the people of other nations" or "The people of some nations will attack the people of other nations"

Nation

This refers to ethnic groups of people rather than to countries.

kingdom against kingdom

The words "will rise" are understood from the previous phrase and mean attack. Alternate translation: "kingdom will rise against kingdom" or "the people of some kingdoms will attack the people of other kingdoms"

Luke 21:11

in various places famines and plagues

The words "there will be" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "there will be famines and plagues in many places" or "there will be times of hunger and diseases in different places"

terrifying events

"events that terrify people" or "events that cause people to be very afraid"

Luke 21:12

these things

This refers to the terrible things that Jesus has said will happen.

they will lay their hands on you

"they will grab you." This expression refers to people exercising authority over the disciples. Alternate translation: "they will arrest you"

they will

"people will" or "enemies will"

you

Jesus was talking to his disciples. The word "you" is plural.

delivering you over to the synagogues

The word "synagogues" is a metonym for the people in the synagogues, specifically the leaders. Alternate translation: "giving you over to the leaders of the synagogues" or "taking you to the synagogues so that the people there can do to you whatever they want to do"

and prisons

"and delivering you over to the prisons" or "and putting you in prisons"

because of my name

The word "name" is here used to refer to Jesus himself. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because you follow me"

Luke 21:13

for your testimony

"for you to tell them your testimony about me"

Luke 21:14

Therefore

"Because of this," referring to everything Jesus has said, beginning in [Luke 21:10]

resolve in your hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's minds. Alternate translation: "make up your mind" or "decide firmly"

not to prepare your defense ahead of time

"not to figure out ahead of time what you will say in order to defend yourself against their accusations"

Luke 21:15

wisdom that all your adversaries will not be able to resist or contradict

"wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict"

I will give you words and wisdom

"I will tell you what wise things to say"

words and wisdom

These can be combined into one phrase. Alternate translation: "words of wisdom" or "wise words"

contradict

show to be false

Luke 21:16

you will be given over also by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "even your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends will give you over to the authorities"

they will put some of you to death

"they will kill some of you." Possible meanings are 1) "the authorities will kill some of you" or 2) "those who deliver you up will kill some of you." The first meaning is more likely.

Luke 21:17

You will be hated by everyone

This can be translated in active form. The word "everyone" emphasizes how many people will hate the disciples, either through 1) exaggeration Alternate translation: "It will seem like you are hated by

everyone" or "It will seem like everyone hates you" or 2) a generalization. Alternate translation: "You will be hated by most people" or "Most people will hate you"

because of my name

"my name" here refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because you follow me"

Luke 21:18

But not a hair from your head will perish

Jesus speaks of one of the smallest parts of a person. He is emphasizing that the whole person will not perish. Jesus had already said that some of them would be put to death, so some understand this to mean that they would not be harmed spiritually. Alternate translation: "But these things cannot really harm you" or "Even every hair on your head will be safe"

Luke 21:19

In your endurance

"By holding firm." This can be stated in the opposite way. Alternate translation: "If you do not quit"

you will gain your lives

"you will save yourselves"

Luke 21:20

Jerusalem surrounded by armies

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "armies surrounding Jerusalem"

that its desolation is near

The word "desolation," which describes a place that is empty, is a metonym for Jerusalem after it has been destroyed and the Jews can no longer live there. Alternate translation: "that it will soon be destroyed" or "that they will soon destroy it"

Luke 21:21

flee

run away from danger

in the country

This refers to the rural areas outside Jerusalem, and not to the nation. Alternate translation: "outside the city"

enter the city

"enter Jerusalem"

Luke 21:22

these are days of vengeance

"these are days of punishment" or "this will be the time when God will punish this city"

all the things that are written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the things that the prophets wrote in the scriptures long ago"

will be fulfilled

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

Luke 21:23

to those who are nursing

"to mothers who are nursing their babies"

there will be great distress upon the land

Possible meanings are 1) the people of the land will be distressed or 2) there will be physical disasters in the land.

wrath to this people

"there will be wrath to the people at that time." God will bring this wrath. Alternate translation: "this people will experience God's anger" or "God will be very angry and will punish this people"

Luke 21:24

They will fall by the edge of the sword

"They will be killed by the edge of the sword." Here "fall by the edge of the sword" represents being killed by enemy soldiers. Alternate translation: "Enemy soldiers will kill them"

they will be led captive into all the nations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their enemies will capture them and take them to other countries"

into all the nations

The word "all" is an exaggeration to emphasize that they will be led into many countries. Alternate translation: "into many other countries"

Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles

Possible meanings are 1) the Gentiles will conquer Jerusalem and occupy it or 2) the Gentiles will destroy the city of Jerusalem or 3) the Gentiles will destroy the people of Jerusalem.

trampled by the Gentiles

This metaphor speaks of Jerusalem as if the people of other nations was walking on it and crushing it down with their feet. This refers to domination. Alternate translation: "conquered by the Gentiles" or "destroyed by the other nations"

the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the period of the Gentiles has come to an end"

Luke 21:25

The nations will be in distress

Here "the nations" refers to the people in them. Alternate translation: "The people of the nations will be distressed"

distress, anxious because of the roar of the sea and waves

"distress because they will be anxious about the roar of the sea and its waves" or "distress, and the loud noise of the sea and its rough movements will frighten them." This seems to refer to unusual storms or disasters involving the seas.

Luke 21:26

the things which are coming upon the world

"the things that will happen in the world" or "the things that will happen to the world"

the powers of the heavens will be shaken

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "God will shake the sun, moon, and stars so they will not move in their normal ways" or 2) "God will trouble the powerful spirits in the heavens." The first is recommended.

Luke 21:27

Son of Man coming

Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "me, the Son Man, coming"

coming in a cloud

"coming down in a cloud"

with power and great glory

Here "power" probably refers to his authority to judge the world. Here "glory" may refer to a bright light. God sometimes shows his greatness with a very bright light. Alternate translation: "powerfully and gloriously" or "and he will be powerful and very glorious"

Luke 21:28

stand up

Sometimes when people are afraid, they crouch down in order to avoid being seen or hurt. When they are no longer afraid, they get up. Alternate translation: "stand up with confidence"

lift up your heads

Lifting the head is a metonym for looking up. When they lift their heads up, they will be able to see their rescuer coming to them. Alternate translation: "look up"

because your redemption is coming near

God, who redeems, is spoken of as if he were the redemption that he causes. The word "redemption" is an abstract noun that can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because God will soon redeem you"

redemption

God rescuing his people from those who want to harm them is spoken of as if he were buying back people who

had become slaves because they could not pay their debts. Alternate translation: "rescue" or "salvation"

Luke 21:29

Connecting Statement:

As Jesus continues teaching his disciples, he tells them a parable.

Luke 21:30

When they sprout buds

"When new leaves start to grow"

summer is already near

"summer is about to start." Summer in Israel follows the sprouting of fig tree leaves and is the time when the figs ripen. Alternate translation: "harvest time is ready to start"

Luke 21:31

So also, when you see these things happening

The appearance of the signs that Jesus just described signal the arrival of the kingdom of God just as appearance of the leaves of the fig tree signal the arrival of summer.

the kingdom of God is near

"God will soon establish his kingdom." Alternate translation: "God will soon rule as king"

Luke 21:32

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues teaching his disciples.

Truly I say to you

This expression emphasizes the importance of what Jesus is about to say.

this generation

Possible meanings are 1) the generation that will see the first of the signs Jesus speaks of or 2) the generation Jesus is speaking to. The first is more likely.

will not pass away until

This could be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will still be alive when"

Luke 21:33

Heaven and earth will pass away

"Heaven and earth will cease to exist." The word "heaven" here refers to the sky and the universe beyond it.

my words will never pass away

"my words will never cease to exist" or "my words will never fail." Jesus uses "words" here to refer to everything he says.

will never pass away

This could be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will remain forever"

Luke 21:34

so that your hearts are not burdened

The "heart" here refers to the mind and thoughts of the person. Alternate translation: "so that you are not occupied"

are not burdened

Jesus here speaks of the following sins as if they were a physical weight that a person had to carry.

excessive drinking ... drunkenness

"drinking too much wine and becoming drunk." Excessive drinking is the action, and intoxication is the effect of that action.

the worries of life

"the things you worry about as you live every day"

that day does not close on you suddenly

The rest of this sentence, "like a trap," is in verse 35. Just as a trap closes on an animal when the animal does not expect it, that day will happen when people do not expect it. Alternate translation: "that day does not happen when you are not expecting it, as when a trap

closes suddenly on an animal" or "that day does not surprise you like a trap"

that day

This refers to the day when the Messiah returns.
Alternate translation: "the day when the Son of Man comes"

Luke 21:35

like a trap

The first part of this statement, "that day does not close on you suddenly," is in verse 34. Just as a trap closes on an animal when the animal does not expect it, that day will happen when people do not expect it. Alternate translation: "that day does not happen when you are not expecting it, as when a trap closes suddenly on an animal" or "that day does not surprise you like a trap"

it will come upon everyone

"it will affect everyone" or "the events of that day will affect everyone"

on the face of the whole earth

The surface of the earth is spoken of as if it were the outward part of the face of a person. Alternate translation: "on the surface of the whole earth" or "on the entire earth"

Luke 21:36

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching his disciples.

be alert

"be ready for my coming"

strong enough to escape all these things

Possible meanings are 1) "strong enough to endure these things" or 2) "able to avoid these things."

these things that will take place

"these things that will happen." Jesus has just told them about terrible things that will happen, such as persecution, war, and captivity.

to stand before the Son of Man

"to stand with confidence before the Son of Man." This probably refers to when the Son of Man judges everyone. A person who is not ready will be afraid of the Son of Man and will not stand with confidence.

Luke 21:37

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story that begins in [Luke 20:1]

during the days he was teaching

"during the daytime he would teach" or "he would teach each day." The following verses tell about things that Jesus and the people did each day during the week before he died.

in the temple

Only priests were allowed in the temple. Alternate translation: "at the temple" or "in the temple courtyard"

at night he went out

"at night he would go out of the city" or "he went out each night"

Luke 21:38

All of the people

The word "all" is probably an exaggeration to emphasize that the crowd was very large. Alternate translation: "A very large number of people in the city" or "Almost everyone in the city"

came early in the morning

"would come early each morning"

to hear him in the temple

"to hear him teach in the temple courtyard"

Luke 22 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The eating of the body and blood

[Luke 22:19-20](#) describes Jesus's last meal with his followers. At that time, Jesus told them that what they were eating and drinking were his body and his blood. Nearly all Christian churches celebrate "the Lord's Supper," the "Eucharist," or "Holy Communion" to remember this meal.

The new covenant

Some people think that Jesus established the new covenant during the supper. Others think he established it after he went up to heaven. Others think it will not be established until Jesus comes again. Your translation should say no more about this than the ULB does. (See: covenant)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

- [Luke 22:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 22

22:1-6

What was the “festival of Unleavened Bread”?

[22:1]

See: Festival of Unleavened Bread; Passover

Why did the chief priests and the scribes discuss “how” to put Jesus to death?

[22:2]

The chief priests and scribes wanted to kill Jesus. Scholars think the chief priests and the scribes were talking about how to kill Jesus. They wanted to kill him in a way that was not against the law. They wanted to find something Jesus did that would make the Roman government kill him.

See: High Priest; Scribe

Why were the Jewish leaders afraid of the people?

[22:2]

The Jewish leaders were afraid of the people. Some scholars think the Jewish leaders were afraid of the people because the people might be angry if they arrested Jesus for the wrong reasons. Perhaps the people would riot and cause great trouble. A riot would make the Romans angry (see: Acts 19:40).

Advice to translators: A riot is when a large group of people get angry and they destroy things.

How did Satan enter into Judas Iscariot?

[22:3]

Satan entered into Judas. That is, Satan began to control Judas' thoughts and Judas began to obey Satan. Satan wanted Judas to betray Jesus (see: John 6:70-71; 13:2,27).

See: Satan (The Devil)

22:7-13

Why did the Jews have the Passover lamb?

[22:7]

The Jews had the Passover lamb because it reminded them of when they left Egypt. At this time, they killed a lamb and painted its blood onto the two side doorposts and the tops of the door frames of the houses (see: Exodus 12:5-7). God saw the blood on the door and he passed over the house with the blood on the door and did not kill the firstborn in the house (see: Exodus 12:12-13).

See: Passover; Lamb of God; Blood; Firstborn (Birthright)

Why did Jesus tell the disciples to look for a man bearing a pitcher of water?

[22:10]

In ancient Israel, only the women carried pitchers of water. Scholars think that when Jesus wanted his disciples to look for a man carrying a pitcher of water because there would only be one man carrying a pitcher of water. Then they would know who they must follow.

22:14-23

How will the Passover be fulfilled in the kingdom of God?

[22:16]

The Passover will be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. At that time, people will not sin and things will not die. Scholars think there will be a great feast and Christians will celebrate and be with Jesus forever. This is sometimes called the wedding feast of the Lamb.

See: Passover; Kingdom of God; Fulfill (Fulfillment); Sin; Lamb of God

What did Jesus mean when he said, "This is my body, which is given for you"?

[22:19]

Jesus said, "This is my body, which is given for you." He was speaking about dying so that people could be at peace with God.

See: Lord's Supper

Why did Jesus say, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood”?

[22:20]

See: Lord's Supper; New Covenant; Blood

How was the betrayal of Jesus “determined”?

[22:22]

God “determined”(ὁρίζω/g3724) that Judas would betray Jesus (see: Acts 2:23). That is, God knew that this would happen. However, Jesus said the person who betrayed him will answer to God. That is, even though God knew Jesus would be betrayed, God would punish Judas.

See: Foreknow (Foreknowledge); Predestine (Predestination); Punish (Punishment); Elect (Election); Will of God

22:24-30

Why did Jesus say, “let the one who is the greatest among you become like the youngest”?

[22:26]

In ancient times, the younger people typically served those who were older. They thought the older people were greater in some way and people should honor them. Jesus did not want his disciples to live as if they were greater than other people, rather he wanted them to serve other people.

When will Jesus give the disciples a kingdom?

[22:29]

Jesus will give his disciples a kingdom. That is, they will rule something. Some scholars say Jesus will give the disciples a kingdom after he returns to the earth. Fewer scholars think say Jesus gave them a kingdom when he said this. Jesus was a servant during his time on earth, so the disciples must also lead other people by serving them.

See: Disciple; Jesus' Return to Earth

How will the disciples judge the twelve tribes of Israel?

[22:30]

The disciples will judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Some scholars say the disciples will judge the twelve tribes of Israel for accepting or rejecting the gospel. Other scholars say the disciples will rule the twelve tribes of Israel some day. Perhaps this will happen after Jesus returns to the earth.

See: Tribes of Israel; Gospel; Jesus' Return to Earth

22:31-34

Why did Jesus say “Simon, Simon”?

[22:31]

Jesus said “Simon, Simon” because he wanted Simon to listen closely to what Jesus was going to tell him. Perhaps Jesus addressed Peter as “Simon” to remind him that he needed help because he was about to be tested.

See: Test

Why did Jesus say, “that he might sift you as wheat”?

[22:31]

Jesus told Simon that Satan wanted to “sift” him as wheat is sifted. This was a metaphor. Sifting was the violent, shaking action taken to separate grain. It was separated into something people wanted and something people did not want. Jesus was telling Simon that Satan wanted him not to trust in Jesus.

See: Satan (The Devil); Metaphor; Faith (Believe in)

Why did Jesus say “the rooster will not crow this day” before Simon denied him three times?

[22:34]

In ancient Israel, the Jewish day started at sundown, that is, in the evening. The rooster generally crows just before sunrise. Jesus wanted Simon to know that he would deny him three times sometime during the night before the sunrise.

22:35-38

Why did Jesus tell the disciples to buy swords?

[22:36]

Jesus told his disciples to buy swords.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was warning his disciples that they may need to defend themselves. Traveling on the roads was often dangerous.
2. Some scholars think Jesus used a metaphor when he spoke about swords. That is, he was warning the disciples that they were going to be persecuted or people were going to try to hurt them.

See: Disciple; Metaphor; Persecute (Persecution)

22:39-46

Where was the Mount of Olives?

[22:39]

See Map: Mount of Olives

What did it mean to “enter into temptation”?

[22:40]

When someone entered into temptation, they sinned when they were tempted. Jesus had already told the disciples that Satan will tempt them.

See: Tempt (Temptation); Satan (The Devil)

Why did Jesus say to God the Father, “If you are willing, remove this cup from me”?

[22:42]

Jesus asked God the Father to remove the cup from him if God the Father was willing to do this. The cup was a symbol. Jesus was speaking about the suffering he was about to endure. That is, Jesus was about to be tortured

and then killed. Jesus was praying that God would rescue him from the suffering. However, he would do this if it was what God the Father wanted him to do.

See: God the Father; Will of God; Symbol

How did the angel from heaven strengthen Jesus?

[22:43]

The angel from heaven strengthened Jesus. Scholars think the angel helped Jesus to endure the pain he was having.

See: Angel; Heaven

Why did Luke say that Jesus' "sweat became like great drops of blood"?

[22:44]

Luke said that Jesus' "sweat became like great drops of blood". Some scholars think Luke was saying that Jesus was sweating so much that sweat fell to the ground just as blood does when someone is bleeding. Other scholars think Luke was saying that Jesus' sweat blood.

Why did Jesus say the disciples were "sleeping because of their sorrow"?

[22:45]

Jesus said the disciples were sleeping because they were sad. Some scholars think the disciples were exhausted because of the great "sorrow" (λύπη/g3077) they experienced being with Jesus that day. Other scholars say it was because they saw their Jesus in much pain.

22:47-53

Why did Jesus ask Judas if he was "betraying the Son of Man with a kiss"?

[22:48]

In ancient Israel, friends often greeted one another with a kiss of some kind. Some scholars think Jesus was sad that Judas was betraying him when he kissed Jesus. That is, Judas told people who Jesus was when he kissed Jesus. Judas was, in fact, handing Jesus over to his enemies, that is, to those who would crucify him.

See: Son of Man

What was the "authority of darkness"?

[22:53]

In the Bible, the "authority of darkness" was a symbol of Satan and every evil thing that served him. Jesus wanted people to know that the people who came out at night to arrest him were following Satan.

See: Light and Darkness (Metaphor); Satan (The Devil)

22:54-62

Why did the crowd take Jesus to the high priest?

[22:54]

The crowd took Jesus to the high priest. They wanted Jesus to answer the Jewish leaders who accused him of doing and saying evil things. The high priest could decide if Jesus was guilty of anything against the Law of Moses.

See: High Priest; Law of Moses

Why did Jesus appear before Pilate and Herod?

Jesus appeared before Pilate because Rome controlled Israel (see: Matthew 27: 11-26; John 18:28-40). The Jewish leaders were not able to kill Jesus without getting permission from the Roman government. However, Pilate did not find Jesus guilty of any crime worthy of death. Pilate sent Jesus to Herod because Jesus was from Galilee. Herod ruled over Galilee. The Romans gave him permission to do this.

See: King Herod; Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar)

See Map: Galilee

22:63-65

Why did the guards mock and beat Jesus?

[22:63]

The guards mocked and beat Jesus. They insulted him while they were striking him with their fists. The Romans often hit people they arrested. Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would suffer in many ways (see: Isaiah 53).

See: Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Messiah (Christ)

22:66-71

Who were the elders?

[22:66]

See: Elder

Why did the Jewish leaders ask Jesus if he was the “Christ”?

[22:67]

The Jewish leaders asked Jesus if he was the “Christ” because they did not believe he was the Messiah. They believed that if Jesus said that he was the Messiah, they could charge him with blasphemy. Then they would kill Jesus.

See: Messiah (Christ); Blaspheme (Blasphemy)

What was the “right hand of the power of God”?

[22:69]

In ancient times, when someone was seated at the “right hand” of the king, he was in the highest place of honor. Jesus wanted the Jewish leaders to know that he would soon be given the highest honor possible.

Why did Jesus answer the religious leaders’ question by saying, “You say that I am”?

[22:70]

Jesus said, “You say that I am”. Scholars think Jesus was saying, “I am the Son of God just as your question is asking”.

See: Son of God; Yahweh (I am)

Luke 22:1

General Information:

Judas agrees to betray Jesus. These verses give background information about this event.

Now

This word is used here to introduce a new event.

Festival of Unleavened Bread

The festival was called by this name because during the festival the Jews did not eat bread that was made with yeast. Alternate translation: "festival when they would eat unleavened bread"

was approaching

"was almost ready to begin"

Luke 22:2

seeking how

"looking for an opportunity" or "thinking of ways in which"

they could put Jesus to death

The priests and scribes did not have the authority to kill Jesus themselves, but they hoped to get others to kill him. Alternate translation: "they could get someone to put Jesus to death" or "they could get someone to kill Jesus"

afraid of the people

Possible meanings are 1) "scared of what the people might do" or 2) "scared that the people would make Jesus king."

Luke 22:3

General Information:

This is the beginning of the action in this part of the story.

Satan entered into Judas, the one called Iscariot

What happened might have been similar to demon possession, but other demon-possessed people are obviously unable to control any of their own actions. Here Judas Iscariot seems to do everything he desires, but Satan was somehow at work in a special way. Whatever the intended meaning, Satan "entering" Judas Iscariot is a metaphor for Satan taking control of Judas Iscariot. Alternate translation: "Satan took control of Judas, the one called Iscariot"

Luke 22:4

chief priests

"the leaders of the priests"

captains

officers of the temple guards

how he would betray Jesus to them

"how he would help them arrest Jesus"

Luke 22:5

They were glad

"The chief priests and captains were glad"

to give him money

"to give Judas money"

Luke 22:6

He consented

"He agreed"

looked for an opportunity to give him over to them away from the crowd

This is an ongoing action that continues after this part of the story ends.

away from the crowd

"privately" or "when there was no crowd around him"

Luke 22:7

General Information:

Jesus sends Peter and John to prepare for the Passover meal. This verse gives background information about the event.

the day of unleavened bread

"the day of bread without yeast." This was the day the Jews would take all bread made with yeast out of their homes. Then they would celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days.

the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed

Each family or group of people would kill a lamb and eat it together, so many lambs were killed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people had to kill a lamb for their Passover meal"

Luke 22:8

prepare

This is a general word meaning "make ready." Jesus was not necessarily telling Peter and John to do all the cooking.

so that we may eat it

Jesus was including Peter and John when he said "we." Peter and John would be part of the group of the disciples that would eat the meal.

Luke 22:9

you want us to make preparations

The word "us" does not include Jesus. Jesus would not be part of the group that would prepare the meal.

make preparations

"make preparations for the meal" or "prepare the meal"

Luke 22:10

He answered them

"Jesus answered Peter and John"

Look

Jesus used this word to tell them to pay close attention and to do exactly what he tells them.

a man bearing a pitcher of water will meet you

"you will see a man carrying a pitcher of water"

bearing a pitcher of water

"carrying a jar with water in it." He probably would be carrying the jar on his shoulder.

Follow him into the house

"Follow him, and go into the house"

Luke 22:11

The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room, where I ... my disciples?"

The quote beginning with "Where is the guest room" is a direct quote of what Jesus, the teacher, wants to say to the master of his house. It can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Our teacher asks where the guest room is in which he ... his disciples." or "Our teacher says to show us the guest room where he ... us and the rest of his disciples."

The Teacher

This refers to Jesus.

eat the Passover

"eat the Passover meal"

Luke 22:12

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues giving instructions to Peter and John.

He will show you

"The owner of the house will show you"

upper room

"room upstairs." If your community does not have houses with rooms above other rooms, you may need to consider how to describe buildings in the city.

Luke 22:13

So they went

"So Peter and John went"

Luke 22:14

Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in the part of the story about the Passover. Jesus and his disciples are sitting to eat the Passover meal.

When the hour came

"When it was time to eat the meal"

he sat down

"Jesus sat down"

Luke 22:15

I have greatly desired

"I have wanted very much"

before I suffer

Jesus is referring ahead to his death. The word for "suffer" here means to go through an unusually difficult or painful experience.

Luke 22:16

For I say to you

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the importance of what he will say next.

until it is fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) until the purpose of the Passover Festival is accomplished. Alternate translation: "until God fulfills it" or "until God completes the purpose of the Passover Festival" or 2) "until we celebrate the final Passover Festival"

Luke 22:17

took a cup

"picked up a cup of wine"

when he had given thanks

"when he had given thanks to God"

he said

"he said to his apostles"

share it among yourselves

They were to share the contents of the cup, and not the cup itself. Alternate translation: "share the wine in the cup among yourselves" or "each of you drink some of the wine from the cup"

Luke 22:18

For I say to you

This phrase is used to emphasize the importance of what Jesus will say next.

fruit of the vine

This refers to the juice that is squeezed from the grapes that grow on grapevines. Wine is made from fermented grape juice.

until the kingdom of God comes

"until God establishes his kingdom" or "until God rules in his kingdom"

Luke 22:19

bread

This bread did not have yeast in it, so it was flat.

he broke it

"he ripped it" or "he tore it." He may have divided it into many pieces or he may have divided it into two pieces and given them to the apostles to divide among themselves. If possible, use an expression that would apply to either situation.

This is my body

Possible meanings are 1) "This bread is my body" and 2) "This bread represents my body."

my body, which is given for you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my body, which I will give for you" or "my body, which I will sacrifice for you"

Do this

"Eat this bread"

in remembrance of me

"in order to remember me"

Luke 22:20

This cup

The word "cup" refers to the wine in the cup. Alternate translation: "The wine in this cup" or "This cup of wine"

the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you

Here "blood, which is poured out" represents death. Jesus's death will establish the new covenant that God will make with his people. Alternate translation: "the new covenant that God will put into effect because I have shed my blood for you"

Luke 22:21

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to his apostles.

The hand of the one who betrays me

The hand here is a synecdoche that refers to the whole person. Jesus speaks of Judas betraying him as if it has already happened. Alternate translation: "The person who is about to betray me" or "The man who is ready to betray me"

Luke 22:22

For the Son of Man indeed goes

"For, indeed, the Son of Man will go" or "For the Son of Man will die"

the Son of Man indeed goes

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, indeed go"

as it has been determined

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as God has determined" or "as God has planned"

But woe to that man through whom he is betrayed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But woe to the man who betrays the Son of Man" or "But how terrible it will be for that man who betrays the Son of Man"

Luke 22:23

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 22:24

Then there arose also a quarrel among them

"Then the apostles began to argue among themselves"

was considered to be greatest

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "was the most important" or "the people thought was most important"

Luke 22:25

He said to them

"Jesus said to the apostles"

are lords over them

"rule forcefully over the Gentiles"

are called

Their people probably did not think that those rulers did good to them. Alternate translation: "like to be called" or "call themselves"

Luke 22:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues teaching his apostles.

it must not be like this with you

"you should not act like that"

the youngest

Older people were respected in that culture. The leaders were usually older people and were called "elders." The youngest person would be the least likely to lead, and the least important. Alternate translation: "the least important"

and the one who leads like the one who serves

Words from the phrase before this apply to this phrase. Alternate translation: "and let the one who leads become like the one who serves"

the one who serves

"a servant"

Luke 22:27

For

This connects Jesus's commands in verse 26 with this whole verse. It means that the most important person should serve because Jesus is a servant.

For who is greater ... serves?

"For who is more important ... serves?" Jesus uses this question to begin to explain to the apostles who is truly great. Alternate translation: "I want you to think about who is greater ... serves."

the one who sits at the table

"the one who is dining"

Is it not the one who sits at the table?

Jesus uses another question to teach the disciples. Alternate translation: "Of course the one who sits at the table is more important than the servant!"

Yet I am among you as one who serves

"But I am with you to be a servant" or "But I am with you to show you how a servant acts." The word "yet" is here because there is a contrast between what people would expect Jesus to be like and what he really was like.

Luke 22:28

have continued with me in my trials

"have stayed with me as I have struggled" or "have stayed with me while Satan has tempted me"

Luke 22:29

I set you over a kingdom, even as my Father has set me over a kingdom

Some languages may need to change the order. Alternate translation: "Just as my father has given a kingdom to me, I give a kingdom to you"

I set you over a kingdom

"I make you rulers in God's kingdom" or "I give you authority to rule in the kingdom" or "I will make you kings"

even as my Father has set me over a kingdom

"just as my Father has given me authority to rule as king in his kingdom"

Luke 22:30

you will sit on thrones

Kings sit on thrones. Sitting on a throne is a symbol of ruling. Alternate translation: "you will work as kings" or "you will do the work of kings"

Luke 22:31

General Information:

Jesus speaks directly to Simon.

Simon, Simon

Jesus said his name twice to show that what he was about to say to him was very important.

to have you, that he might sift you

The word "you" refers to all of the apostles. Languages that have different forms of "you" should use the plural form.

sift you as wheat

This means that Satan wanted to test the disciples to find something wrong. Alternate translation: "test you like someone passes grain through a sieve"

Luke 22:32

But I have prayed for you

The word "you" here refers specifically to Simon. Languages that have different forms of "you" should use the singular form.

that your faith may not fail

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "that you will continue to have faith" or "that you will continue to trust me"

After you have turned back again

Here "turned back again" is a metaphor for starting to believe in someone again. Alternate translation: "After you start believing in me again" or "After you start serving me again"

strengthen your brothers

"encourage your brothers to be strong in their faith" or "help your brothers believe in me"

your brothers

This refers to the other disciples. Alternate translation: "your fellow believers" or "the other disciples"

Luke 22:33

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 22:34

the rooster will not crow this day before you deny three times that you know me

The order of the parts of the verse can be reversed. Alternate translation: "you will deny three times that you know me before the rooster crows this day"

the rooster will not crow this day before you deny

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "the rooster will crow this day only after you deny" or "before the rooster crows today, you will deny"

the rooster will not crow

Here, the crowing of the rooster refers to a certain time of day. Roosters often crow just before the sun appears in the morning. Therefore, this refers to dawn.

rooster

a bird that calls out loudly around the time the sun comes up

this day

The Jewish day begins at sunset. Jesus was speaking after the sun had set. The rooster would crow just before morning. The morning was part of "this day." Alternate translation: "tonight" or "in the morning"

Luke 22:35

Connecting Statement:

Jesus turns his attention back to speaking to all of his disciples.

Jesus said to them, "When ... did you lack anything?" They answered, "Nothing."

Jesus uses a question to help the apostles remember how well the people provided for them as they traveled. Though this is a rhetorical question and Jesus is not asking for information, you should translate it as a question unless only a statement would cause the disciples to reply that they had lacked nothing.

When I sent you out

Jesus is talking to his apostles, so the word "you" is plural.

purse

A purse is a bag for holding money. Here it is used to refer to "money."

a bag of provisions

"travelers' bag" or "bag of food"

Nothing

It may be helpful to some audiences to include more about the conversation. Alternate translation: "We did not lack anything" or "We had everything we needed"

Luke 22:36

and likewise a bag of provisions

"and let him also take a bag of provisions" or "and also a bag of provisions"

The one who does not have a sword should sell his cloak

Jesus was not referring to a specific person who did not have a sword. Alternate translation: "If anyone does not have a sword, he should sell his cloak"

cloak

"coat" or "outer garment"

Luke 22:37

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes speaking with his disciples.

what is written about me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what a prophet wrote about me in the scriptures"

must be fulfilled

The apostles would have understood that God would cause everything written in the scriptures to happen. Alternate translation: "God will fulfill" or "God will cause to happen"

He was counted with the lawless ones

Here Jesus is quoting the scriptures. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People counted him as a member of the group of lawless men"

the lawless ones

"those who break the law" or "the criminals"

For what is predicted about me is being fulfilled

Possible meanings are 1) "For what the prophet predicted about me is about to happen" or 2) "For my life is coming to an end"

Luke 22:38

they said

This refers to at least two of Jesus's apostles.

It is enough

Possible meanings are 1) they have enough swords. "We now have enough swords." or 2) Jesus wants them to stop talking about having swords. "No more of this talk about swords."

Luke 22:39

General Information:

Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives to pray.

Luke 22:40

that you do not enter into temptation

"that you are not tempted" or "that nothing tempts you and causes you to sin"

Luke 22:41

about a stone's throw

"about the distance that someone can throw a stone." Alternate translation: "a short distance" or with an estimated measurement like "about thirty meters"

Luke 22:42

Father, if you are willing

Jesus will bear the guilt of every person's sin on the cross. He prays to his Father, asking if there is another way.

Father

This is an important title for God.

remove this cup from me

Jesus refers to what he will soon experience as if it were a cup of bitter liquid that he would have to drink. Alternate translation: "allow me to not drink from this cup" or "allow me to not experience what is about to happen"

Nevertheless not my will, but yours be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "However, do what is according to your will rather than what is according to my will"

Luke 22:43

appeared to him

"appeared to Jesus"

strengthening him

"encouraging him"

Luke 22:44

Being in agony, he prayed

"He was suffering greatly, and so he prayed"

he prayed more earnestly

"he prayed more intensely"

his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground

"his sweat was falling to the ground like large drops of blood"

Luke 22:45

When he rose up from his prayer, he

"When Jesus got up after praying, he" or "After praying, Jesus got up and he"

found them sleeping because of their sorrow

"saw that they were sleeping because they were tired from their sadness"

Luke 22:46

Why are you sleeping?

Possible meanings are 1) "I am surprised that you are sleeping now." or 2) "You should not be sleeping now!"

that you may not enter into temptation

"so that you may not be tempted" or "so that nothing tempts you and causes you to sin"

Luke 22:47

behold, a crowd appeared

The word "behold" alerts us to a new group in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "there was a crowd that appeared"

leading them

Judas was showing the people where Jesus was. He was not telling the crowd what to do. Alternate translation: "leading them to Jesus"

to kiss him

"to greet him with a kiss" or "to greet him by kissing him." When men greeted other men who were family or friends, they would kiss them on one cheek or both cheeks. If your readers would find it embarrassing to say that a man would kiss another man, you could translate it in a more general way: "to give him a friendly greeting."

Luke 22:48

are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke Judas for betraying him with a kiss. Normally a kiss is a sign of love. Alternate translation: "it is a kiss you are using to betray the Son of Man!"

the Son of Man with

Jesus is using this term to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "me, the Son of Man, with"

Luke 22:49

those who were around Jesus

This refers to Jesus's disciples.

what was happening

This refers to the priests and soldiers coming to arrest Jesus.

strike with the sword

The question is about the type of fight they should engage in

Luke 22:50

one of them

"one of the disciples"

struck the servant of the high priest

"struck the servant of the high priest with a sword"

Luke 22:51

That is enough

"Do not do any more of that"

touched his ear

"touched the servant where his ear had been cut off"

Luke 22:52

Do you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?

"Do you come out with swords and clubs because you think I am a robber?" Jesus uses this question to scold the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "You know that I am not a robber, yet you come out to me bringing swords and clubs."

Luke 22:53

I was daily with you

"I was among you every day"

in the temple

Only priests entered the temple. Alternate translation: "in the temple courts" or "at the temple"

lay your hands on me

In this verse, to lay hands on someone is to arrest that person. Alternate translation: "arrest me"

this is your hour

"this is the time for you to do whatever you want"

the authority of darkness

It may be helpful to repeat the reference to time. "Darkness" is a metonym for Satan. Alternate translation: "the time of the authority of darkness" or "the time when God is allowing Satan to do whatever he wants"

Luke 22:54

led him away

"led Jesus away from the garden where they had arrested him"

into the high priest's house

"into the courtyard of the high priest's house"

Luke 22:55

they had kindled a fire

"some people had made a fire." The fire was to keep the people warm during the cool night. Alternate translation: "some people started a fire to keep warm"

the middle of the courtyard

This was the courtyard at the high priest's house. It had walls around it, but no roof.

in the midst of them

"together with them"

Luke 22:56

he sat in the light of the fire

He sat near the fire and its line shone on him.

and looked straight at him and said

"and she looked straight at Peter and said to the other people in the courtyard"

This man also was with him

The woman was telling the people about Peter being with Jesus. She probably did not know Peter's name.

Luke 22:57

But Peter denied it

"But Peter said that it was not true"

Woman, I do not know him

Peter did not know the woman's name. He was not insulting her by calling her "woman." If people would think he was insulting her, you could use a culturally acceptable way for a man to address a woman he does not know, or you could leave out the word.

Luke 22:58

You are also one of them

"You are also one of those who were with Jesus"

Man, I am not

Peter did not know the man's name. He was not insulting him by calling him "Man." If people would think he was insulting him, you could use a culturally acceptable way for a man to address a man he does not know, or you could leave out the word.

Luke 22:59

insisted and said

"said insistently" or "said loudly"

Truly this man

Here "this man" refers to Peter. The speaker probably did not know Peter's name.

he is a Galilean

The man could probably tell Peter was from Galilee from the way he talked.

Luke 22:60

Man

Peter did not know the man's name. He was not insulting him by calling him "Man." If people would think he was insulting him, you could use a culturally acceptable way for a man to address a man he does not know, or you could leave out the word. See how you translated this in Luke 22:58.

I do not know what you are saying

"I do not know what you are talking about." This expression means that Peter completely disagrees with the man. Alternate translation: "what you said is not true at all" or "what you said is completely false"

while he was speaking

"while Peter was speaking"

a rooster crowed

Roosters often crow just before the sun appears in the morning. See how you translated a similar phrase in Luke 22:34.

Luke 22:61

Turning, the Lord looked at Peter

"The Lord turned and looked at Peter"

the word of the Lord

"what Jesus had said" when Jesus had said that Peter would betray Jesus

a rooster crows

Roosters often crow just before the sun appears in the morning. See how you translated a similar phrase in Luke 22:34.

today

The Jewish day started at sundown and continued to the next evening. Jesus had spoken the previous evening about what would happen shortly before dawn or at dawn. Alternate translation: "tonight"

deny me three times

"deny three times that you know me"

Luke 22:62

Peter went outside

"Peter went out of the courtyard"

Luke 22:63

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 22:64

They put a cover over him

"They covered his eyes so that he could not see"

Prophecy! Who is the one who hit you?

The guards did not believe that Jesus was a prophet. Rather, they believed that a real prophet would know who hit him even if he could not see. They called Jesus a prophet, but they were teasing him and showing him why they did not think that he was a prophet. Alternate translation: "Prove that you are a prophet. Tell us who hit you!" or "Hey prophet, who hit you?"

Prophecy!

"Speak words from God!" The implied information is that God would have to tell Jesus who struck him since Jesus was blindfolded and could not see.

Luke 22:65

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 22:66

General Information:

It is now the next day and Jesus is brought before the council.

As soon as it was day

"At dawn the next morning"

They led him into the Council

Possible meanings are 1) "The elders had Jesus brought into the Council" or 2) "The guards led Jesus into the council of the elders." Some languages may avoid saying who led him by using the pronoun "they" or by using a passive verb: "Jesus was led into the council"

Luke 22:67

and said

A new sentence can be started here if a period is put at the end of the previous verse. Alternate translation: "The elders said to Jesus"

If you are the Christ, tell us

"Tell us if you are the Christ"

If I tell you, you will not believe

This was a way for Jesus to respond without giving them a reason to say that he was guilty of blasphemy. Alternate translation: "If I tell you, you will not believe me"

Luke 22:68

if I ask you, you will not answer

This was a way for Jesus to rebuke them without giving them a reason to convict him. These words, along with "If I tell you, you will not believe" (verse 67), show that Jesus did not believe that the council really wanted to know the truth.

Luke 22:69

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the council.

from now on

"from this day" or "starting from today"

the Son of Man will

Jesus uses this phrase to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will"

seated at the right hand of the power of God

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "seated in the place of honor beside the power of God"

the power of God

"the all-powerful God." Here "power" refers to his supreme authority.

Luke 22:70

Then you are the Son of God?

The council asked this question because they wanted Jesus to explicitly confirm their understanding that he was saying he was the Son of God. Alternate translation: "So when you said that, did you mean that you are the Son of God?"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

You say that I am

"Yes, it is just like you say"

Luke 22:71

Why do we still need a witness?

They use a question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "We have no further need for witnesses!"

heard from his own mouth

The phrase "his own mouth" refers to his speech. Alternate translation: "heard him say himself that he was the Son of God"

Luke 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the last line of this chapter apart because it is more connected with chapter 24 than with chapter 23.

Special concepts in this chapter

Accuse

The chief priests and scribes accused Jesus of doing evil because they wanted Pilate to kill Jesus. But they were accusing him falsely, because Jesus had never done what they accused him of doing.

"The curtain of the temple was split in two"

The curtain in the temple was an important symbol that showed that people needed to have someone speak to God for them. They could not speak to God directly because all people are sinful and God hates sin. God split the curtain to show that Jesus's people can now speak to God directly because Jesus has paid for their sins.

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried ([Luke 23:53](#)) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"I find no fault in this man"

Pilate was saying that he did not know of any reason why he should punish Jesus: Jesus had not broken any laws. Pilate was not saying that Jesus was perfect.

Links:

- [Luke 23:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Luke 23

23:1-7

Who was Pilate?

[23:1]

Pilate was the Roman ruler of Judah. While he was in Jerusalem for the holiday, his home was at Caesarea.

See Map: Jerusalem; Caesarea

Why did the religious leaders take Jesus to Pilate?

[23:1]

The Jewish leaders took Jesus to Pilate. This was because they needed the Roman ruler's permission to kill someone.

What did the leaders mean when they accused Jesus of perverting the nation?

[23:2]

The leaders accused Jesus of perverting the nation. Some scholars think they believed Jesus caused people to fight against their Roman rulers. Other scholars think these leaders believed Jesus caused the Jewish people to riot and fight against the Jewish leaders.

Who was Herod Antipas?

[23:7]

See: King Herod

Why was Jesus taken to Herod?

[23:7]

Jesus was taken to Herod. Some scholars think Pilate sent Jesus to Herod so Herod would have something to report to Pilate about Jesus. Other scholars think Herod asked to meet Jesus so Pilate sent Jesus to Herod. Other scholars think Pilate sent Jesus to Herod so that Herod could determine whether the things said about Jesus were true.

See: King Herod

23:8-12

Why did Jesus not answer Herod's questions?

[23:9]

Jesus did not answer Herod's questions. Some scholars think this was because he knew that he was going to die. He knew that he needed to die so that people could be at peace with God. Other scholars think Jesus did not answer Herod's questions because he knew Herod wanted to do something evil.

Advice to Translators: Jesus did not answer Herod's questions. This does not mean that Jesus was guilty.

See: King Herod; Atonement

Why did the soldiers dress Jesus in elegant clothes?

[23:11]

The soldiers dressed Jesus in the type of robe that only kings wore. They did this to mock Jesus. They did not think he was a king. They wanted other people to think this also.

See: Irony

23:13-24

Did Luke write the words in verse 17?

[23:17]

Some ancient copies of Luke have the words in verse 17. More and older ancient copies of Luke do not have these words. Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words. However, Matthew and Mark wrote these words (see: Matthew 27:15; Mark 15:6).

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

Who was Barabbas?

[23:18]

Barabbas was a criminal who was in prison. Luke said that Barabbas had been involved with a rebellion. Scholars think he was also a violent person who fought against the Roman empire. They think the Jewish people asked for Barabbas to be freed because Barabbas was a hero to some of them. He was a hero because he tried to free Israel from Roman rule.

See: Rebel (Rebellion)

23:26-31

Where was Cyrene?

[23:26]

See Map: Cyrene

How did soldiers make Simon carry Jesus' cross?

[23:26]

The soldiers grabbed Simon from the crowd and forced him to carry Jesus' cross. Some scholars think the soldiers had Simon carry one piece of the cross while Jesus carried the other piece. Other scholars think Simon was made to carry one piece and the other piece was at the place where Jesus was going to be crucified. Other scholars think Simon carried one end of the cross while Jesus carried the other end.

See: Cross; Crucify (Crucifixion)

Who were the "daughters of Jerusalem"?

[23:28]

The "daughters of Jerusalem" were the women living in Jerusalem.

Why did Jesus tell the women not to weep for him?

[23:28]

Jesus told the women not to weep for him because God wanted Jesus to suffer and die. This was God's will. However, they needed to weep because the people of Jerusalem would soon experience great suffering. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. This happened about forty years after Jesus died.

See: Will of God; Temple

Why will people “say to the mountains, ‘fall on us’ and the hills, ‘cover us’”?

[23:30]

Luke wrote about people speaking to the mountains and hills. This was a metaphor. Scholars think that they were going to greatly suffer and because of this they would want to die quickly.

See: Metaphor

Why did Jesus talk about a green tree and a dry tree?

[23:31]

Jesus talked about a green tree and a dry tree because he warned the Jewish people they will suffer. The green tree was a metaphor for Jesus. When Jesus talked about the green tree, he wanted people to know that he was going to greatly suffer, but he did not do anything wrong. When Jesus talked about the the dry tree, he was speaking about people who did the wrong things. These people will suffer more than Jesus.

See: Metaphor

23:32-38

Why was the place they took Jesus to called “The Skull”?

[23:33]

Scholars think the place they took Jesus was called “the skull” because it was a hill that looked like a skull. Other scholars think the place was called the skull because the Romans had executed many people there. It was not because there were human skulls lying on the ground.

What was crucifixion?

[23:33]

See: Crucify (Crucifixion)

What did it mean to “cast lots”?

[23:34]

See: Cast Lots

Why did the soldiers offer Jesus vinegar to drink?

[23:36]

Scholars think different things about why the soldiers offered Jesus vinegar to drink.

1. Some scholars think this was to fulfill a prophecy in the Old Testament (see: Psalm 69:21). The soldiers did something evil.
2. Some scholars think that offering Jesus vinegar to drink was an act of compassion because the drink was thought to satisfy thirst better than water.
3. Some scholars think the soldiers offered Jesus vinegar to drink in order to mock him. That is, only the common people drank vinegar, or sour wine. A king would never be offered vinegar or sour wine to drink.

See: Fulfill (Fulfillment); Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

Why did they put a sign over Jesus?

[23:38]

Scholars think the soldiers put a sign over Jesus so people would know why he was crucified. Some scholars say Pilate wanted to mock Jesus with the sign. Other scholars think Pilate wanted to mock the Jewish leaders because they put their own king to death.

See: John 19:19-22

See: Crucify (Crucifixion)

23:39-43

Why did the criminal ask Jesus to remember him?

[23:42]

The criminal asked Jesus to remember him because the criminal wanted to enter the kingdom of God. That is, he wanted Jesus to remember him when he returned to rule as the Messiah.

See: Kingdom of God; Messiah (Christ)

What was “paradise”?

[23:43]

“Paradise” is another name for “heaven.”

See: Heaven

23:44-49

What was the sixth hour?

[23:44]

The sixth hour was midday. The ancient Jews divided a day into twelve parts. The hours varied in length according to the time of the year so that midday was always the sixth hour. It was about noon.

What did it mean that the sun's light failed?

[23:44]

Luke wrote about the sun's light fading. Some scholars think God used a strong wind that caused large amounts of dust to blow up and block the light of the sun. Other scholars think God used a miracle to blocked the light of the sun.

See: Miracle

What was the curtain of the temple?

[23:45]

Scholars think the curtain of the temple was an inner curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. It was very thick. Nothing could tear this curtain except God.

See: Temple; Holy Place; Most Holy Place (Holy of Holies)

Why was the curtain of the temple split in two?

[23:45]

Scholars think different things about why the curtain of the temple split in two.

1. Some scholars think this happened so people would know that God who tore the curtain.
2. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. When Jesus died, people could now go to God without needing a priest.
3. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. God stopped living in the temple in some way.
4. Some scholars think this was a warning of the coming destruction of the temple.

See: Temple; Metaphor

What did it mean that Jesus committed his spirit to God the Father?

[23:46]

When Jesus said that he committed his spirit to God the Father, it meant that he completely trusted God.

See: Psalm 31:5

See: Spirit (Spiritual); God the Father

Why did the people beat their breasts when they left?

[23:48]

Scholars think different things about why the people beat their breasts when they left.

1. They were greatly saddened because of the way Jesus died.
2. They felt guilt because Jesus died and they beat their breasts as a sign of repentance because of their part in his death.
3. They knew something terrible happened because darkness came.

See: Sign; Repent (Repentance)

23:50-56

Who was Joseph?

[23:50]

This Joseph was a Jewish leader. Joseph was a popular name in ancient Israel.

Where was Arimathea?

[23:51]

See Map: Arimathea

What did it mean that Joseph was looking for the kingdom of God?

[23:51]

Joseph was looking for the kingdom of God. He was expecting the coming of the kingdom of God. Some scholars think Joseph may have believed that Jesus was the Messiah.

See: Kingdom of God; Messiah (Christ)

What was the Day of Preparation?

[23:54]

The Day of Preparation was the time to prepare for the Sabbath. It began on Thursday evening and lasted until Friday evening. People cleaned houses, bought supplies, and cooked food so that they did no work on the Sabbath.

See: Sabbath

Why did the women prepare spices and ointments?

[23:56]

The women prepared spices and ointments to put on the body of Jesus. The spices and ointments helped to hide the smell of a decaying body. It was also a sign of honor to anoint a body with spices and ointments, and was thought to preserve the body.

See: Sign; Anoint (Anointing)

Luke 23:1

General Information:

Jesus is brought before Pilate.

The whole company of them

"All of the Jewish leaders" or "All the members of the Council"

rose up

This is an idiom that means that they began to act decisively.

before Pilate

To appear before someone means to enter into their authority. Alternate translation: "to be judged by Pilate"

Luke 23:2

We found

"We" refers only the Council members, and not to Pilate of any other people nearby.

misleading our nation

"causing our people to do things that are not right" or "causing trouble by telling lies to our people"

forbidding to give tribute

"telling them not to pay taxes"

to Caesar

Caesar represents the Emperor of Rome. Alternate translation: "to the Emperor"

Luke 23:3

Pilate asked him

"Pilate asked Jesus"

You say so

Possible meanings are 1) by saying this, Jesus implied that he is the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "Yes, as you said, I am" or "Yes. It is as you said" or 2) by saying this, Jesus was saying that Pilate, not Jesus, was the one calling him the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "You yourself have said so"

Luke 23:4

multitudes

large groups of people

I find no guilt in this man

"I do not find this man guilty of anything"

Luke 23:5

stirs up

"causes trouble among"

all Judea, beginning from Galilee even to this place

This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "all Judea. He began causing trouble in Galilee and now is causing trouble here"

Luke 23:6

heard this

"heard that Jesus began to teach in Galilee"

he asked whether the man was a Galilean

Pilate wanted to know from which area Jesus came because he wanted to have a lower-ranking government official judge Jesus. If Jesus were from Galilee, Pilate could have Herod judge Jesus because Herod had authority over Galilee.

the man

This refers to Jesus.

Luke 23:7

he learned

"Pilate found out"

he was under Herod's authority

The passage does not state the implied fact that Herod was the ruler of Galilee. Alternate translation: "Jesus was under the authority of Herod because Herod ruled over Galilee"

he sent

"Pilate sent"

who himself

This refers to Herod.

in those days

"at that time"

Luke 23:8

he was very glad

"Herod was very glad"

he had wanted to see him

"Herod had wanted to see Jesus"

He had heard about him

"Herod had heard about Jesus"

he hoped to see some sign done by him

Here the word "hope" means to expect that something one desires might happen. Alternate translation: "Herod expected that he might see some sign done by him"

to see some sign done by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to see him do some kind of sign" or "that he might see Jesus do some sign"

sign

a miracle that would show that Jesus was more than a mere man

Luke 23:9

Herod questioned Jesus in many words

"Herod asked Jesus a lot of questions"

answered him nothing

"did not reply" or "did not give Herod an answer"

Luke 23:10

the scribes stood

"the scribes were standing there"

vigorously accusing him

They were showing great anger and using strong words and accusing him of many things.

Luke 23:11

Herod with his soldiers

"Herod and his soldiers"

dressed him in splendid clothes

"put beautiful clothes on him." The translation should not imply that this was done to honor or care for Jesus. They did it to mock Jesus and to make fun of him.

Luke 23:12

Herod and Pilate had become friends with each other that very day

The implied information is that they became friends because Herod appreciated Pilate allowing him to judge Jesus. Alternate translation: "Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day because Pilate had sent Jesus to Herod for judgment"

before this they had been enemies with each other

This information is enclosed in parentheses to show that it is background information. Use a format that your audience would understand.

Luke 23:13

called together the chief priests and the rulers and the crowd of people

"called the chief priests and the rulers and the crowd of people to come meet together"

the crowd of people

It is not likely that Pilate asked a crowd to come. The crowd was probably still there waiting to see what would happen to Jesus. Alternate translation: "the crowd that was still there"

Luke 23:14

this man

This refers to Jesus.

like a man who

"saying that he"

misleading the people

"urging the people to act badly" or "trying to get the people to rebel against the government"

I, having questioned him before you,

"I have questioned Jesus in your presence and." It is implied that they were witnesses to the proceedings. Alternate translation: "I have questioned Jesus with you here as witnesses, and I"

find no guilt in this man

"do not think that he is guilty"

Luke 23:15

Connecting Statement:

Pilate continues speaking to the Jewish leaders and to the crowd.

No, nor does Herod

We can understand what Herod did not do from what Pilate said about himself in verse 14. Alternate translation: "Nor does Herod find guilt in this man" or "Even Herod thinks he is innocent"

nor does Herod, for

"nor does Herod, because" or "nor does Herod. We know this because"

he sent him back to us

"Herod sent Jesus to return to us." The word "us" refers to Pilate, his soldiers, and the priests and scribes, but not those who were listening to Pilate.

nothing worthy of death has been done by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he has not done anything to deserve a death sentence"

Luke 23:16

I will therefore punish him

Because Pilate had found no fault in Jesus he should have released him without punishment. It is not necessary to try to make this statement fit logically into the translation. Pilate punished Jesus, whom he knew to be innocent, only because he was afraid of the crowd.

Luke 23:17

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 23:18

General Information:

Verse 19 tells us background information about who Barabbas is.

they cried out all together

"all the people in the crowd shouted"

Away with this man, and release

"Take this man away! Release." They are asking him to have his soldiers kill Jesus. Alternate translation: "Take this man away and execute him! Release"

release to us

"us" refers to the crowd only, and not to Pilate and his soldiers.

Luke 23:19

Barabbas was a man ... for murder

This is background information that Luke gives about who Barabbas was.

who had been put into prison

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Romans had put in prison"

a certain rebellion in the city

"trying to persuade the people of the city to rebel against the Roman government"

Luke 23:20

addressed them again

"spoke to them again" or "spoke again to the people in the crowd and to the religious rulers"

desiring to release Jesus

"because he wanted to set Jesus free"

Luke 23:21

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 23:22

He said to them a third time

"Pilate said to the crowd again, for the third time"

what evil has this man done?

Pilate uses this question to cause the crowd to understand that Jesus is innocent. Alternate translation: "this man has not done anything wrong!"

I have found no guilt deserving death in him

"I have not learned of anything he has done for which I should put him to death"

after punishing him, I will release him

As in Luke 23:16, Pilate should have released Jesus without punishment because he was innocent.

However, he offered to punish Jesus to appease the crowd.

I will release him

"I will set him free"

Luke 23:23

they were insistent

"the crowd insisted"

with loud voices

"with shouting"

for him to be crucified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Pilate to have his soldiers crucify Jesus"

Their voices convinced Pilate

"The crowd kept shouting until they convinced Pilate"

Luke 23:24

to grant their demand

"to do what the crowd requested"

Luke 23:25

He released the one they asked for

Pilate released Barrabas from prison. Alternate translation: "Pilate freed Barabbas, whom the crowd had asked be released"

who had been put in prison ... murder

This is background information about where Barrabas was at that time. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Romans had put in prison ... murder"

he delivered up Jesus to their will

"Pilate commanded the soldiers to bring Jesus to them to do whatever the crowd wanted to do"

Luke 23:26

As they led him away

"While the soldiers led Jesus away from where Pilate was"

seized

The Roman soldiers had the authority to compel people to carry their loads. Do not translate this in a way that indicates that Simon was arrested or had done anything wrong.

one Simon of Cyrene

"a man named Simon, from the city of Cyrene"

coming from the country

"who was coming into Jerusalem from the countryside"

laid the cross on him

"put the cross on his shoulders"

following Jesus

"and he followed behind Jesus"

Luke 23:27

A great crowd

"A large crowd"

great crowd of the people, and of women

The woman were part of the large crowd, and not a separate crowd.

mourned for him

"mourned for Jesus"

were following him

This does not mean that they were Jesus's disciples. It simply means they were walking along behind him.

Luke 23:28

turning to them

This indicates that Jesus turned to face the women and address them directly.

Daughters of Jerusalem

The "daughter" of a city means the women of the city. This was not rude. It was a normal form of address to a group of women from one location. Alternate translation: "You women who are from Jerusalem"

do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children

The person is a metonym for what happens to the person. Alternate translation: "do not weep about the bad things that will happen to me. Instead, weep because worse things will happen to you and to your children" or "you are weeping because bad things are happening to me, but you will weep even more when worse things happen to you and your children"

Luke 23:29

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes speaking to the crowd.

For see

This introduces the reason why the women of Jerusalem should weep for themselves.

the days are coming

"there will soon be a time"

in which they will say

"when people will say"

the barren

"women who have not given birth to children"

the wombs that did not bear ... the breasts that did not nurse

These clauses are used to more fully describe "the barren." Those women neither gave birth nor nursed children. It may be helpful to combine these together with "the barren." Alternate translation: "the women who have never given birth to children or nursed babies"

they

This can refer to either the Romans or the Jewish leaders, or to people in general.

Luke 23:30

Then

at that time

to the hills

Words are left out to keep the phrase short. Alternate translation: "they will say to the hills"

Luke 23:31

For if they do these things while the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?

Jesus uses a question to help the crowd understand that people are doing bad things now in good times, so certainly they will do worse things in the bad times in the future. Alternate translation: "You can see that they are doing these bad things while the tree is green, so you can be sure that they will do worse things when the tree is dry."

the tree is green

The green tree is a metaphor for something that is good. If your language has a similar metaphor, you should use it here.

it is dry

The dry wood is a metaphor for something that will be useful only to burn.

Luke 23:32

Other men, two criminals, were led away with him to be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The soldiers led away with Jesus two criminals to execute them also"

Other men, two criminals

"Two other men who were criminals" or "Two criminals." Luke avoids saying "other criminals" because Jesus was innocent, even though he was treated as a criminal. Luke calls the other two men criminals, but not Jesus.

Luke 23:33

When they came

The word "they" includes the soldiers, the criminals, and Jesus.

they crucified him

"the Roman soldiers crucified Jesus"

one on his right and one on his left

"they crucified one criminal on Jesus's right side and the other criminal on Jesus's left side"

Luke 23:34

Father, forgive them

The word "them" refers to those who were crucifying Jesus. Jesus speaks to his Father with compassion toward the men crucifying him.

Father

This is an important title for God.

for they do not know what they are doing

"because they do not understand what they are doing." The Roman soldiers did not understand that they were crucifying the Son of God. Alternate translation: "for they do not really know whom they are crucifying"

they cast lots

The soldiers participated in a type of gambling. Alternate translation: "they gambled"

cast lots, dividing up his garments

"cast lots to decide who among the soldiers would take home each piece of Jesus's clothing"

Luke 23:35

The people stood

"The people were standing there"

him

This refers to Jesus.

He saved others. Let him save himself

Luke records the ironic words of the rulers. The only way Jesus could save others was by dying instead of saving himself.

Let him save himself

"Jesus should be able to save himself." They said this to mock Jesus. They did not believe he could save himself. Alternate translation: "We would like to see him prove who he is by saving himself from the cross"

the chosen one

"the one that God has chosen"

Luke 23:36

him

Jesus

approaching him

"coming close to Jesus"

offering him vinegar

"offering Jesus vinegar to drink." Vinegar is a cheap drink that common people drink. The soldiers were mocking Jesus by giving a cheap drink to someone who claims to be a king.

Luke 23:37

If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself

The soldiers were mocking Jesus. Alternate translation: "We do not believe you are the King of the Jews, but if you are, prove us wrong by saving yourself"

Luke 23:38

a sign over him

"a placard at the top of Jesus's cross that stated"

This is the King of the Jews

The people who put this sign above Jesus were mocking him. They did not really think he was a king.

Luke 23:39

insulted him

"reviled Jesus"

Are you not the Christ? Save yourself

The criminal uses a question to mock Jesus. Alternate translation: "You claim to be the Christ. Save yourself" or "If you really were the Christ, you would save yourself"

Save yourself and us

The criminal did not really think that Jesus could rescue them from the cross.

Luke 23:40

the other rebuked him

"the other criminal rebuked him"

Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?

The criminal uses a question to scold the other criminal. Alternate translation: "You should fear God, because you are under the same sentence of condemnation."

you are under the same sentence of condemnation

"the government has condemned you to be punished in the same way"

Luke 23:41

We indeed ... for we ... we deserve

These usages of "we" refer only to the two criminals, and not to Jesus or the other people.

We indeed are here justly

"Truly we deserve this punishment"

this man

This refers to Jesus.

Luke 23:42

Then he said

"The criminal also said"

remember me

"think about me and treat me well"

come into your kingdom

To "come into" a kingdom means to begin to rule. Alternate translation: "begin to rule as king"

Luke 23:43

Truly I say to you, today

"Truly" adds emphasis to what Jesus is saying. Alternate translation: "I want you to know that today"

paradise

This is the place that righteous people go to when they die. Jesus was assuring the man that he would be with God and God would accept him. Alternate translation: "the place where the righteous people live" or "the place where people live well"

Luke 23:44

about the sixth hour

"about noon." This reflects the custom at the time of counting hours beginning with daybreak at 6 a.m.

darkness came over the whole land

"the entire land became dark"

until the ninth hour

"until 3 p.m." This reflects the custom at the time of counting hours beginning with daybreak at 6 a.m.

Luke 23:45

as the sun turned dark

This does not refer to sundown. Rather, the light of the sun turned dark during the middle of the day. Use a term to describe the sun becoming dark rather than the sun going down.

the curtain of the temple

"the curtain inside the temple." This was the curtain that separated the most holy place from the rest of the temple.

the curtain of the temple was split in two

"the curtain of the temple was torn into two pieces." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God tore the temple curtain into two pieces"

Luke 23:46

Crying with a loud voice

"Shouting loudly." It may be helpful to show how this is related to the events of the previous verses. Alternate translation: "When that happened, Jesus shouted loudly"

Father

This is an important title for God.

into your hands I commit my spirit

"The phrase 'into your hands' refers to God's care. Alternate translation: 'I entrust my spirit to your care' or 'I give my spirit to you, knowing you will care for it'"

Having said this

"After Jesus said this"

he died

"Jesus died"

Luke 23:47

the centurion

This was the title for the Roman officer who was in charge of the other Roman soldiers. He supervised the crucifixion.

what was done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the things that had happened"

this was a righteous man

"this man did nothing wrong" or "this man did not do anything wrong"

Luke 23:48

multitudes

large groups of people

who came together

"who gathered together"

witness this sight

"see this event" or "observe what was happening"

the things that were done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what had happened"

returned beating

"returned to their homes beating"

beating their breasts

This was a symbol of sorrow and regret. Alternate translation: "hitting their own chests to show that they were sorrowful"

Luke 23:49

followed him

"traveled with Jesus"

at a distance

"some distance away from Jesus"

these things

"what happened"

Luke 23:50

General Information:

The author begins to give background information about the man who buried Jesus's body.

Behold, there was a man

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "There was a man who was"

the Council

"the Jewish Council"

Luke 23:51

General Information:

The author finishes giving background information about the man who buried Jesus's body. It may be helpful to reorder some of the information in this verse and the previous verse with a verse bridge, as the UDB does.

with their plan and action

What the decision was can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "with either the Council's decision to kill Jesus or with their action in killing him"

a city of the Jews

"a city in which most people were Jews"

Luke 23:52

This man, approaching Pilate, asked for the body of Jesus

"This man went to Pilate and requested the body of Jesus, to bury it."

Luke 23:53

He took it down

"Joseph took Jesus's body from the cross." He probably had help, so this may be a synecdoche. Alternate translation: "Joseph and some helpers took it down"

wrapped it in fine linen

"wrapped the body in a fine linen cloth." This was the normal burial custom at that time.

that was cut in stone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which someone had cut in a rock cliff"

where no one had ever been laid

This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "No one had ever before put a body in that tomb"

Luke 23:54

the Day of the Preparation

"the day when people got ready for the Jewish day of rest called the Sabbath"

the Sabbath was about to begin

For the Jews, the day began at sunset. Alternate translation: "it was soon going to be sunset, the start of the Sabbath"

Luke 23:55

who had come with Jesus out of Galilee

"who had traveled with Jesus from the region of Galilee"

followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "walked along behind Joseph and the men who were with him; the women saw the tomb and how the men laid Jesus's body inside the tomb"

Luke 23:56

They returned

"The women went to the houses where the women were staying"

prepared spices and ointments

Because they had had no time to honor Jesus by putting fragrant spices and ointments on his body on the day he died, they were going to do it on the morning of the first day of the week. Alternate translation: "prepared spices and ointments to put on Jesus's body"

they rested

"the women did no work"

according to the commandment

"according to the Jewish law" or "as the Jewish law required." According to the law, they were not allowed to prepare his body on the Sabbath.

Luke 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried ([Luke 24:1](#)) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

The faith of the women

Most of Luke's original readers would have thought of women as less important than men, but Luke carefully shows that some women loved Jesus very much and had more faith than the twelve disciples had.

Resurrection

Luke wants his readers to understand that Jesus came alive again in a physical body ([Luke 24:38-43](#)).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

"On the third day"

Jesus told his followers that he would become alive again "on the third day" ([Luke 18:33](#)). He died on a Friday afternoon (before sunset) and became alive again on a Sunday, so he became alive again "on the third day" because the Jews said that the day began and ended at sunset, and they counted any part of the day as a day. Friday was the first day, Saturday was the second day, and Sunday was the third day.

Two men in bright shining robes

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about angels in white clothing with the women at Jesus's tomb. Two of the authors called them men, but that is only because the angels were in human form. Two of the authors wrote about two angels, but the other two authors wrote about only one of them. It is best to translate each of these passages as it appears in the ULB without trying to make the passages all say exactly the same thing. (See: [Matthew 28:1-2](#) and [Mark 16:5](#) and [Luke 24:4](#) and [John 20:12](#))

Links:

- [Luke 24:1 Notes](#)

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Luke 24

24:1-12

When was the first day of the week?

[24:1]

The first day of the week was after the sabbath. The sabbath was Saturday for Jews and some Christians. The first day of the week was Sunday. The women went to the tomb likely brought the spices at sunrise on the first day of the week.

Why was there a stone?

[24:2]

The stone covered the entry point of the tomb. The stone kept grave robbers out of the tomb and it also kept animals from entering the tomb. The stone was too large for women to move.

Who were the two men?

[24:4]

Scholars think that the two men who suddenly stood by the women were angels.

See: Angel

Why did the angels asking the women, “Why do you seek the living among the dead”?

[24:5]

When the angels asked the women a question, they knew that Jesus was alive. Therefore, the women were not going to find Jesus in the tomb.

Who were the “sinful men” into whose hands Jesus was delivered?

[24:7]

Scholars think the “sinful men” spoke about Judas and the crowd of men he brought to arrest Jesus. Jesus himself said he was to be delivered into the hands of Gentiles (see: Luke 18:32). Gentiles were considered to be sinful people.

See: Gentile; Sin

How many days was Jesus dead and in the tomb?

[24:7]

Jesus was dead and in the tomb three days. The first day was Friday, the second day was Saturday, and the third day was Sunday. The Jewish day began and ended when the sun went down.

What was “idle talk”?

[24:11]

Scholars think that “idle talk” was talk that was impossible to believe. That is, people who heard it did not understand it.

Why did Peter run to the tomb?

[24:12]

Some scholars think Peter ran to the tomb to see if the women were telling the truth about Jesus.

See: John 20:1-10

24:13-35

Where was Emmaus?

[24:13]

See Map: Emmaus

What was a “stadia”?

[24:13]

A stadia was about 190 meters.

What did it mean that two followers of Jesus were prevented from recognizing Jesus?

[24:16]

Scholars give several reasons why the two followers of Jesus were prevented from recognizing him.

1. They were not expecting to see Jesus alive again.
2. God did something so that the two men did not know it was Jesus.
3. The Holy Spirit waited until the right time for them to know that it was Jesus. This was when they sat close to Jesus to eat a meal.

Who was Cleopas?

[24:18]

Scholars do not know who Cleopas was. Some scholars say Cleopas as an uncle of Jesus. He was Joseph's brother.

What was a Nazarene?

[24:19]

A Nazarene was a person who came from or lived in a town called Nazareth.

See Map: Nazareth

What were the scriptures to which Jesus referred?

[24:27]

The scriptures to which Jesus referred were the places in the Old Testament that told about the messiah before the messiah came.

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Messiah (Christ)

What did it mean that Jesus “acted as though he were going further”?

[24:28]

Jesus “acted as though he were going further”. That is, it seemed that he was going to travel beyond the village. Scholars think Jesus would have continued on past the village if the two people had not asked him to stay with them.

How were the eyes of the two followers of Jesus opened?

[24:31]

Luke wrote that the eyes of the two people were opened. This was a metaphor. These people were able to recognize Jesus. Scholars think this happened when Jesus broke the bread and handed it to them.

See: Metaphor

What was meant by the words, “our heart burning within us”?

[24:32]

The words “our heart burning within us” was a metaphor. It meant that their hearts and minds were filled with joy, a sense of awe, hope, and excitement. It described how they felt when Jesus explained the Old Testament to them.

See: Metaphor; Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

24:36-49

Why did Jesus give the greeting “peace be to you”?

[24:36]

In ancient times, people often greeted one another by saying, “peace be to you.” This was a way people asked for blessings for someone else.

See: Bless (Blessing)

Why did Jesus say to the disciples, “See my hands and my feet”?

[24:39]

Jesus said to the disciples, “See my hands and my feet”. Scholars think Jesus wanted them to look at his hands and feet because they showed the scars of his crucifixion (see: John 20:25-27).

See: Disciple; Crucify (Crucifixion)

Why did Jesus say, “a spirit does not have flesh and bones”?

[24:39]

Some scholars think that when Jesus said a “spirit”(πνεῦμα/g4151) does not have flesh and bones, he was telling the disciples he was not a ghost. That is, a ghost does not have a real physical body.

See: Spirit (Spiritual); Disciple

What did Luke mean when he wrote, “They still could not believe it because of joy”?

[24:41]

Luke wrote, “They still could not believe.” Scholars think the disciples thought it was too good to be true, that Jesus was really alive again. This was because they were overcome with amazement.

What was meant by the words, “he opened their minds”?

[24:45]

When Jesus “opened their minds,” he caused his disciples to be able to understand all that was written in the Old Testament about the Messiah.

See: Disciple; Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Messiah (Christ).

What was “repentance”?

[24:47]

See: Repent (Repentance)

What did it mean to preach “in his name”?

[24:47]

Some scholars think that to preach in the name of Jesus happened when Jesus gave someone permission to preach. Other scholars think that someone preached in Jesus’ name when they preached about the gospel.

See: Preach (Preacher); Gospel

What were “these things” of which the disciples were witnesses?

[24:48]

When Jesus spoke about “these things” he was referring to his suffering, death, and resurrection, all of which the disciples were witnesses.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

Why did Jesus say, “I am sending you what my Father promised”?

[24:49]

Jesus said, “I am sending you what my Father promised.” This is the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Advice to Translators: It may be more clear to state that Jesus said “I am going to send you what my Father promised”.

See: God the Father; Holy Spirit; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Filling of the Holy Spirit

What did it mean to be “clothed with power from on high”?

[24:49]

To be “clothed with power from on high” was a metaphor. God gave power to the disciples. Scholars think God did this soon after Jesus returned to heaven (see: Acts 1:8; 2:1-4).

See: Metaphor; Disciple; Heaven

24:50-53

What did it mean that Jesus “blessed” his disciples?

[24:50]

See: Bless (Blessing)

Why was Jesus carried up into heaven?

[24:51]

Jesus had completed his work and returned to heaven. Jesus said this was necessary so that the Holy Spirit could come to people in a new way (see: John 16:7-11).

See: Heaven; Holy Spirit; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Filling of the Holy Spirit

How did the followers of Jesus “worship” Jesus?

[24:52]

Some scholars think people worshipped Jesus by bow down before him, or to lay face-down on the ground before him.

See: Worship

Why did the followers of Jesus have “great joy” after Jesus went to heaven?

[24:52]

Scholars give several reasons the followers of Jesus had “great joy”(χαρά/g5479) after Jesus went to heaven.

- 1. Jesus is Lord in heaven and he reigns over everything.
- 2. They were no longer afraid of dying because they would also go to heaven.
- 3. They had no more doubts. They knew Jesus was the Messiah.
- 4. They believed they will complete the things Jesus wanted them to do.

See: Rejoice (Joy, Joyful); Heaven; Messiah (Christ)

What did it mean that the disciples were “continually in the temple”?

[24:53]

Scholars think Luke meant that the disciples were in the temple very often, likely every day. When in the temple, they were continually worshipping God and giving him thanks.

Luke 24:1	Very early on the first day of the week
General Information:	"Before dawn on Sunday"
The women (Luke 23:55) return to the tomb with spices to put on Jesus's body.	they came to the tomb "the women arrived at the tomb." These were the women spoken of in Luke 23:55.

the tomb

This tomb was cut in the rock of a cliff.

bringing the spices

These were the same spices they prepared in Luke 23:56.

Luke 24:2

They found the stone

"They saw that the stone was"

the stone rolled away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that someone had rolled the stone"

the stone

This was a large, cut, round stone big enough to completely block the doorway to the tomb. It required several men to roll it.

Luke 24:3

did not find the body of the Lord Jesus

You can state explicitly that they did not find it because it was not there. Alternate translation: "the body of the Lord Jesus was not there"

Luke 24:4

General Information:

Two angels appear and begin speaking to the women.

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Luke 24:5

were terrified

"became very afraid"

bowed down their faces to the earth

"bowed low to the ground." This action expresses their humility and submission to the men.

Why do you seek the living among the dead?

The men use a question to mildly criticize the women for looking in a tomb for a living person. Alternate translation: "You are looking for a living person among dead people!" or "You should not be looking for someone who is alive in a place where they bury dead people!"

Why do you seek

Here "you" is plural, referring to the women who came.

Luke 24:6

but has been raised

"but he has been made alive again." "Raised" here is an idiom for "caused to live again." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because God has made him alive again"

Remember how

"Remember what"

to you

The word "you" is plural. It refers to the women and possibly the other disciples in addition.

Luke 24:7

Connecting Statement:

The angels finish speaking to the women.

that the Son of Man

This is the beginning of an indirect quote. It can also be translated with a direct quote, as in the UDB.

the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men and be crucified

The phrase "must be" means this is something that would certainly happen because God had already decided that it would happen. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "it was necessary

that they hand the Son of Man over to sinful men who would crucify him"

into the hands

Here "hands" refers to power or control.

third day

The Jews counted any portion of a day as a day. Therefore, the day Jesus was raised was the "third day" because it followed the day of his burial and the Sabbath day.

Luke 24:8

remembered his words

Here "words" refers to the statement that Jesus made. Alternate translation: "remembered what Jesus said"

Luke 24:9

Connecting Statement:

The women go to tell the apostles about what they found at the tomb.

the eleven and all the rest

"the eleven apostles and all the rest of the disciples who were with them"

the eleven

This is Luke's first reference to the "eleven" because there had always been twelve before. But Judas left the twelve and betrayed Jesus.

Luke 24:10

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke gives the names of some of the women who came from the tomb and told the apostles what had happened there.

Luke 24:11

But this message seemed like idle talk to the apostles

"But the apostles thought that what the women said was foolish talk"

Luke 24:12

Yet Peter

This phrase contrasts Peter to the other apostles. He did not dismiss what the women said, but ran to the tomb to see for himself.

rose up

This is an idiom that means "began to act." Whether Peter was sitting or standing when he decided to act is not important. Alternate translation: "started out"

stooping

Peter had to bend over in order to see inside the tomb because tombs cut in solid rock were very low. Alternate translation: "bending himself at the waist"

the linen cloths by themselves

"only the linen cloths." This refers to the cloths that had been wrapped around Jesus's body when he was buried in [Luke 23:53]

departed to his home

"went away to his home"

Luke 24:13

General Information:

Two of the disciples are on their way to Emmaus.

Behold

The author uses this word to mark the beginning of a new event.

two of them

"two of the disciples"

that very day

"that same day." This refers to the day when the women found the tomb to be empty.

Emmaus

This is the name of a town.

sixty stadia

"eleven kilometers." A "stadium" was 185 meters.

Luke 24:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 24:15

It happened that

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. It starts with Jesus approaching them. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Jesus himself

The word "himself" emphasizes the fact that the very Jesus they were talking about actually appeared to them. So far the women had seen the angels, but no one had seen Jesus.

Luke 24:16

their eyes were prevented from recognizing him

"their eyes were kept from recognizing Jesus." The men's ability to recognize Jesus is spoken of as their eyes' ability to recognize him. This can be stated in active form. It is most likely that it was God who prevented them from recognizing Jesus. Alternate translation: "something happened to them so they could not recognize him" or "God prevented them from recognizing him"

Luke 24:17

Jesus said to them

"Jesus said to the two men"

Luke 24:18

Cleopas

This is the name of a man.

Are you the only person ... days?

Cleopas uses this question to show his surprise that this man appears not to know about the things that have

happened in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "You must be the only person ... days."

Are you

Here "you" is singular.

Luke 24:19

What things

"What things have happened" or "What things have taken place"

a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people

This means that God caused Jesus to be mighty and that the people saw that he was mighty. Alternate translation: "a prophet to whom God gave power to do and teach great things that were amazing to all the people"

Luke 24:20

delivered him up

"gave him over"

to be condemned to death and crucified him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in order for the governor to put Jesus to death by crucifying him"

Luke 24:21

Connecting Statement:

The two men continue responding to Jesus.

But we hoped that he was the one

Here the word "hope" means "expect" or "think" that something might be true. By saying "we hoped" the two men show that they no longer think that Jesus is the one who will redeem Israel. Alternate translation: "But we thought that he might be the one"

who was going to redeem Israel

The Romans ruled over the Jews. Alternate translation: "who would free the Israelites from our Roman enemies"

Yes, and what is more,

This introduces another reason why they believed Jesus would not free Israel. Alternate translation: "Now that does not seem possible because"

the third day

The Jews counted any portion of a day as a day. Therefore, the day Jesus was raised was the "third day" because it followed the day of his burial and the Sabbath day. See how you translated this in [Luke 24:7]

since all these things happened

"since all the many actions that led up to the death of Jesus have taken place"

Luke 24:22

But also

This introduces another reason why it the men did not understand what was happening concerning Jesus.

of our company

"in our group"

having been at the tomb

The women were the ones who were at the tomb.

Luke 24:23

a vision of angels

"angels in a vision"

Luke 24:24

Connecting Statement:

The two men finish responding to Jesus.

they did not see him

"they did not see Jesus"

Luke 24:25

Jesus said to them

Jesus is speaking to the two disciples.

slow of heart to believe

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind. Alternate translation: "your minds are slow to believe" or "you are slow to believe"

Luke 24:26

Was it not necessary ... glory?

Jesus uses a question to remind the disciples about what the prophets said. Alternate translation: "It was necessary ... glory."

to enter into his glory

This refers to Jesus beginning to rule and to receive honor and glory.

Luke 24:27

beginning from Moses

Moses wrote the first books of the Bible. Alternate translation: "beginning with the writings of Moses"

Jesus interpreted to them

"Jesus explained to them"

Luke 24:28

Jesus acted as though he were going further

The two men understood from his actions that he was going on to another destination. Perhaps he kept walking on the road when they turned off to enter the gate into the village. There is no indication that Jesus deceived them with words.

Luke 24:29

they compelled him

You may need to make explicit what they compelled him to do. This is probably an exaggeration to show that they needed to speak with him for a long time before they could change his mind. The word "compel" means to use physical force, but it seems that they persuaded him using only words. Alternate translation: "they were able to persuade him to stay"

it is toward evening and the day is almost over

The Jewish day ended at sundown.

Jesus went in

"Jesus entered the house"

stay with them

"stay with the two disciples"

Luke 24:30

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

the bread

This refers to bread made without yeast. It does not refer to food in general.

blessed it

"gave thanks for it" or "thanked God for it"

Luke 24:31

Then their eyes were opened

Their "eyes" represent their understanding. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then they understood" or "Then they realized"

they knew him

"they recognized him." These disciples had known him before his death.

he vanished out of their sight

This means that suddenly he was no longer there. It does not mean that he became invisible.

Luke 24:32

Was not our heart burning ... scriptures?

They use a question to emphasize how amazed they were about their encounter with Jesus. The intense feelings they had while talking to Jesus are spoken of as if they were a fire burning inside them. Alternate translation: "Our hearts were burning ... scriptures."

within us

The two men were speaking to each other. The word "us" is dual inclusive for languages that make these distinctions.

while he opened to us the scriptures

Jesus did not open a book or scroll. "opened" refers to their understanding. Alternate translation: "while he explained the scriptures to us" or "while he enabled us to understand the scriptures"

Luke 24:33

Connecting Statement:

The two men go to Jerusalem to the eleven disciples to tell them about Jesus.

They rose up

"They" refers to the two men.

rose up

"got up" or "stood up"

the eleven

This refers to Jesus's apostles. Judas was no longer included with them.

Luke 24:34

saying

"and those people told the two men"

Luke 24:35

So they told

"So the two men told them"

the things that happened on the way

This refers to Jesus appearing to them while they were on their way to the village of Emmaus.

how Jesus was recognized by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "how they recognized Jesus"

in the breaking of the bread

"when Jesus broke the bread" or "when Jesus tore the bread"

Luke 24:36

General Information:

Jesus appears to the disciples. When the two men previously arrived at the house where the Eleven were, Jesus was not with them.

Jesus himself

The word "himself" focuses on Jesus and the surprise of Jesus actually appearing to them. Most of them had not seen him after his resurrection.

in the midst of them

"among them"

Peace be to you

"May you have peace" or "May God give you peace!"
The word "you" is plural.

Luke 24:37

But they were terrified

"But" indicates a strong contrast. Jesus told them to be at peace, but they were very afraid instead.

terrified and filled with fear

"startled and afraid." These two phrases mean about the same thing, and are used together to emphasize their fear.

a spirit

Here it refers to the spirit of a dead person.

Luke 24:38

Why are you troubled?

Jesus uses a question to comfort them. Alternate translation: "Do not be frightened."

Why do questions arise in your heart?

Jesus uses a question to mildly rebuke them. Jesus was telling them not to doubt that he was alive. The word "heart" is a metonym for a persons' mind. Alternate translation: "Do not doubt in your minds!" or "Stop doubting!"

Luke 24:39

Touch me and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see me having

Jesus asks them to confirm by touch that he is not a ghost. It may be helpful to combine and reorder these two sentences. Alternate translation: "Touch me and feel that I have flesh and bones that a ghost would not have"

flesh and bones

This is a way of referring to the physical body.

Luke 24:40

his hands and his feet

It is understood that his hands and feet contained the nail marks from his crucifixion that would prove it was really Jesus. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the wounds in his hands and his feet"

Luke 24:41

They still could not believe it because of joy

"They were so full of joy that they still could not believe it was really true"

Luke 24:42

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Luke 24:43

ate it before them

Jesus does this to prove that he has a physical body. Spirits would not be able to eat food.

before them

"in front of them" or "while they were watching"

Luke 24:44

when I was with you

"when I was with you before"

all that was written ... Psalms must be fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God would fulfill all that was written ... Psalms" or "God would cause all that was written ... Psalms to happen"

all that was written in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms

The words "law of Moses," "the Prophets," and "the Psalms" are proper names for parts of the Hebrew Bible. This can be stated in active form and using common nouns. Alternate translation: "all that Moses wrote in the law, all that the prophets wrote, and all that the writers of the Psalms wrote about me"

Luke 24:45

Then he opened their minds, that they might understand the scriptures

To "open the mind" is an idiom that means to enable someone to understand. Alternate translation: "Then he enabled them to understand the scriptures"

Luke 24:46

Thus it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is what people long ago wrote"

rise again from the dead

In this verse the words "rise again" mean "come alive again." The words "the dead" speak of all dead people together in the underworld.

the third day

The Jews counted any portion of a day as a day. Therefore, the day Jesus was raised was the "third day" because it followed the day of his burial and the Sabbath day. See how you translated this in [Luke 24:7]

Luke 24:47

Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Followers of the Christ should preach to people in all the nations that they need to repent and that they need God to forgive their sins through Jesus"

in his name

His "name" here refers to his authority. Alternate translation: "by the Christ's authority"

all the nations

"all the ethnic communities" or "all the people groups"

beginning from Jerusalem

"starting in Jerusalem"

Luke 24:48

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the disciples.

You are witnesses

"You are to tell others that what you saw about me is true." The disciples had observed Jesus's life, death, and resurrection and could describe to other people what he did.

Luke 24:49

I am sending you what my Father promised

"I will give you what my Father promised to give you." God had promised to give the Holy Spirit. The UDB makes this explicit.

Father

This is an important title for God.

you are clothed with power

God's power will cover them in the same way that clothes cover a person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you receive power"

from on high	the carrying, it would be better to use "went" instead, as the UDB does.
"from above" or "from God"	Luke 24:52
Luke 24:50	General Information:
Jesus led them out	These verses tell us about the ongoing actions of the disciples as the story ends.
"Jesus led the disciples outside the city"	they worshiped him
He lifted up his hands	"the disciples worshiped Jesus"
This was the action that priests performed when they blessed the people.	and returned
Luke 24:51	"and then returned"
It happened	Luke 24:53
"It came about." This introduces a new event in the story.	continually in the temple
while he was blessing them	This is an exaggeration to express that they went into the temple courtyard every day.
"while Jesus was asking God to do good to them"	in the temple
was carried	Only priests were allowed into the temple building. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard"
Since Luke does not specify who carried Jesus up, we do not know if it was God himself or one or more angels. If your language would have to specify who did	blessing God
	"praising God"

Chapter 1

Acts 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records an event, commonly known as the "Ascension," when Jesus returned to heaven after he became alive again. He will not come back until he returns at his "second coming." (See: heaven and resurrection)

The UDB has set the words "Dear Theophilus" apart from the other words. This is because English speakers often start letters this way. You might want to start this book the way people start letters in your culture.

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the two quotes from Psalms in 1:20.

Special concepts in this chapter

Baptize

The word "baptize" has two meanings in this chapter. It refers to the water baptism of John and to the baptism of the Holy Spirit ([Acts 1:5](#)). (See: baptize)

"He spoke about the kingdom of God"

Some scholars believe that when Jesus "spoke about the kingdom of God," he explained to the disciples why the kingdom of God did not come before he died. Others believe that the kingdom of God did begin while Jesus was alive and that here Jesus was explaining that it was beginning in a new form.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The twelve disciples

The following are the lists of the twelve disciples:

In Matthew:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James son of Zebedee, John son of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

In Mark:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and John the son of Zebedee (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder), Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot.

In Luke:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon (who was called the Zealot), Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot.

Thaddaeus is probably the same person as Jude, the son of James.

Akeldama

This is a phrase in Hebrew or Aramaic. Luke used Greek letters so his readers would know how it sounded, and then he told what it means. You should probably spell it the way it sounds in your language and then explain the meaning.

Links:

- [Acts 1:1 Notes](#)
- [Acts intro](#)

| >>

Acts 1 Commentary

1:1-11

What does the kingdom of God mean in this passage?

[1:3]

In this passage, the “kingdom of God” means two different things.

God rules over everything. However, some scholars think that Christians agree for him to rule over themselves now in this life. This is why they obey him and trust in him. When Luke says that God rules over his kingdom, he means that these Christians agree to trust in him and obey him. But this is not the same as God ruling over the whole world, because most people still reject Jesus.

God rules over everything, but other scholars believe that he will also rule over the earth when Jesus comes back to earth and stays here. These scholars think that this is what Jesus was talking about in 1:3.

Most Jews thought that the Messiah would free Israel from the Gentiles ruling them. Some scholars believe that this meant that the nation of Israel would be free once again. They believe that Jesus will do this for Israel in the future and it will last forever.

Other scholars think that Jesus was talking about a new kind of kingdom. In this kingdom, Christians agree for God to rule over themselves, and they will obey him. While Jesus has always ruled over everything, he now rules over Christians in a special way. They also believe that Christians are the new “people of God” and therefore can also be called Israel.

See: Kingdom of God; People of God; Messiah (Christ); Jesus' Return to Earth; Gospel; Glory (Glorify)

Why did the disciples wait for the Holy Spirit?

[1:4, 1:5]

What the disciples waited for was for the Holy Spirit to do something new and different. They waited for him to give them his power in a new way. This new way would begin a new time when God would do new things for mankind.

See: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Disciple

How is a person baptized with the Holy Spirit?

[1:5]

To baptize something means to dip it into water or to cover it with water. The Jews dipped things in water to make them pure, that is, so they could use them as the Law of Moses instructed them. They also bathed themselves in order to make themselves pure or clean, that is, so that God would continue to accept them as his people.

In the same way, some scholars think that God baptizes people with the Holy Spirit when they begin to believe in Jesus. When God does that, he joins that person to himself. That person then becomes part of the Church, which is also called the “body of Christ.”

However, other scholars think that when God baptizes a person with the Spirit, he makes that person able to do miracles, such as speaking in unknown languages. However, only some Christians experience this.

See: Baptize (Baptism); Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

How does one receive the Holy Spirit?

[1:8]

See: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Why did Jesus talk about how the church would grow?

[1:8]

In 1:8 Jesus told his disciples how the Church will grow, that is, how more people would believe in him. Jesus said, "In Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." In the book of Acts, Luke tells how the Christians announced the gospel to people in these places, first in Jerusalem, next in Judea and Samaria, and finally much farther away, in Greece and in Rome.

See: Gospel; Israel; Samaria

What is the purpose of the church?

[1:8]

Christians are to tell people about God. They are also to share the gospel with everyone, no matter where they come from. They are to continue doing this until the whole world hears the gospel. This is the work that the church must do.

The church is able to do this by the power of the Holy Spirit, who is always with the church. The nation of Israel did not always have the Holy Spirit with it. But in the church, the Holy Spirit lives in all Christians. Because of this, Christians have become the primary means by which God draws people to himself.

See: Church; Gospel; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Israel

See Map: Jerusalem and Judea

1:12-26

Who were the apostles?

[1:13]

Eleven apostles were mentioned in 1:13. They are not always called by the same name in Scripture. However, they were the same eleven men.

Jewish people often had Greek names in addition to their Hebrew names. For example, Simon Peter had a Hebrew name (Simon) and a Greek name (Peter). He is sometimes called by one name, sometimes by the other, and sometimes by both.

Judas, son of James, is also called Thaddeus. Simon the zealot is also called Simon the Canaanite. Thomas is also called Didymus ("twin" in Greek). James is identified as a son of Zebedee (see: Matthew 4:21)

See: Mark 6:7-13, Matthew 10, and Luke 9:1-6

See: Apostle

Who were the "zealous people"?

[1:13]

The “zealous people” were a group of Jews who wanted to stop the Romans from ruling their own nation. The zealous people were often willing to fight with violent force in order to stop the Romans. They may have even murdered leaders in the government.

In 1:13 Luke shows that Simon was a member of this group. Scripture probably referred to Simon as a zealous person in order to tell him apart from Simon Peter. Scholars think that Simon did not continue to act as a zealous person after he started following Jesus.

See: Matthew 10:4

See: Zeal (Zealous, Zealot)

Who were Jesus’ “brothers”?

[1:14]

“Brothers” usually referred to brothers born from the same mother. However, it also refers to Christians together. They are brothers because they believe in Jesus. Most scholars believe 1:14 referred to Jesus’ brothers who were born from Mary, his mother. But perhaps “brothers” in 1:14 referred to Christians.

See: Family of God; Family of Jesus

Why were Jesus’ brothers praying?

[1:14]

If brothers referred to other Christians, then they were obeying Jesus’ command to pray.

Brothers might have also referred to Jesus’ brothers who were also born from Mary. However, these brothers did not believe in Jesus before he died on the cross. It would have been surprising for them to obey the commands of Jesus if they did not believe in him. Therefore, they probably came to believe in Jesus after he died and rose again.

See: Matthew 12:46-50, Galatians 1:18-19, 1 Corinthians 15:7, and Mark 6:3

See: Family of God; Family of Jesus

How did Judas Iscariot die?

[1:18]

Matthew said that Judas hanged himself (see: Matthew 27:5). In the book of Acts, Luke perhaps told what happened to Judas’ body after he died. If no one found his body, it would have decomposed and, after some time, have fallen down to the ground. The rotten corpse could easily have burst open.

Was the role of apostle possible only in the very early Church?

[1:20, 1:21, 1:22]

Some scholars think that only the first Christians could be “apostles.” They think this, because in 1:21-22 Luke says who could be an apostle. To be an apostle, a man had to be someone who had followed Jesus while Jesus lived on earth. He also had to have seen Jesus after he rose from the dead. This is why only people who lived in the time of Jesus could be apostles.

However, some scholars think that God still makes certain people able to be apostles. These people are of course different from the twelve apostles in the time of the first Christians.

Still other scholars think that the apostles sinned in selecting Matthias as the twelfth apostles. They do not think that God wanted Matthias to replace Judas Iscariot; they think that God wanted Paul instead.

These scholars say that the disciples sinned when they cast lots in order to find out what God wanted. It is true that Israelites cast lots in order to know what God wanted (see: Leviticus 16:8-10 and Numbers 26:55-56. Also, the book of Proverbs appears to permit the casting of lots (see: Proverbs 16:33.

However, most scholars do not think that Christians should cast lots. Few Christians cast lots today. Some scholars say that people who cast lots do sorcery. Others scholars say that Christians do not need to cast lots, because the Holy Spirit now lives in them and guides them.

See: Acts 6:2

See: Apostle; Cast Lots; Gifts of the Holy Spirit;Will of God

Why were there twelve apostles?

[1:26]

In Matthew 19:28, Jesus prophesied that the twelve apostles would judge the twelve tribes of Israel. This is probably the reason that the apostles appointed another disciple to replace Judas Iscariot.

In addition to this, some scholars believe that the Church has replaced Israel as the people of God. They think that the twelve apostles represent this new Israel. However, other scholars believe that the church and Israel remain distinct groups.

See: Luke 22:30

See: Apostle; Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Church; Israel

Acts 1:1

The former account I wrote

The "former account" is the Gospel of Luke.

Theophilus

Luke wrote this book to a man named Theophilus. Some translations follow their own culture's way of addressing a letter and write "Dear Theophilus" at the beginning of the sentence. Theophilus means "friend of God"

Acts 1:2

until the day that he was taken up

This refers to Jesus's ascension into heaven. Alternate translation: "until the day on which God took him up to heaven" or "until the day that he ascended into heaven"

he had given commands through the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit had led Jesus to instruct his apostles on certain things.

Acts 1:3

After his suffering

This refers to Jesus's suffering and death on the cross.

he presented himself alive to them

Jesus appeared to his apostles and to many other disciples.

Acts 1:4

General Information:

Here the word "he" refers to Jesus. Except where otherwise noted, the word "you" in the book of Acts is plural.

Connecting Statement:

This event happened during the 40 days that Jesus appeared to his followers after he had risen from the dead.

When he was meeting together with them

"When Jesus was meeting together with his apostles"

the promise of the Father, about which he said

This is a reference to the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit, whom the Father promised to send, about whom Jesus said"

Acts 1:5

John indeed baptized with water ... baptized with the Holy Spirit

Jesus contrasts how John baptized people in water with how God would baptize believers in the Holy Spirit.

John indeed baptized with water

"John indeed baptized people with water"

you will be baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will baptize you"

Acts 1:6

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the apostles.

is this the time you will restore the kingdom to Israel

"will you now make Israel a great kingdom again"

Acts 1:7

the times or the seasons

Possible meanings are 1) the words "times" and "seasons" refer to different kinds of time. Alternate translation: "the general period of time or the specific date" or 2) the two words are basically synonymous. Alternate translation: "the exact time"

Acts 1:8

you will receive power ... and you will be my witnesses

The apostles will receive power that will enable them to be witnesses for Jesus. Alternate translation: "God will empower you ... to be my witnesses"

to the ends of the earth

Possible meanings are 1) "all over the world" or 2) "to the places on earth that are farthest away"

Acts 1:9

as they were looking up

"as they watched." The apostles "were looking" at Jesus because Jesus rose into the sky. Alternate translation: "as they were looking up at the sky"

he was raised up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he rose up into the sky" or "God raised him up into the sky"

a cloud hid him from their eyes

"a cloud blocked their view so that they could no longer see him"

Acts 1:10

looking intensely to heaven

"staring at the sky" or "gazing at the sky"

Acts 1:11

of Galilee

"from Galilee"

will return in the same manner

Jesus ascended into the sky, through the clouds, and the clouds hid him [Acts 1:9](#). He will return from the sky, through (or on) the clouds, and people will be able to see him.

Acts 1:12

Then they returned

"The apostles returned"

a Sabbath day's journey

This refers to the distance which, according to Rabbinical tradition, a person was allowed to walk on a Sabbath day. Alternate translation: "about one kilometer away"

Acts 1:13

When they arrived

"When they reached their destination." Verse 12 says they were returning to Jerusalem.

the upper chamber

"the room on the upper level of the house"

Acts 1:14

They all were devoted ... to prayer

They all spent much time ... praying

with one purpose

The phrase "with one purpose" translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

Acts 1:15

Connecting Statement:

This event happened during the time that Peter and the other believers were staying together in the upper room.

In those days

These words mark the beginning of a new part of the story. They refer to the period of time after Jesus ascended. On many days after Jesus ascended, the disciples met in the upper chamber. Alternate translation: "During that time"

120 names

"one hundred and twenty names"

names

The word "names" is a metonym for the people whose names they were. Alternate translation: "people"

in the midst of the brothers

Here the word "brothers" refers to fellow believers and includes both men and women.

Acts 1:16

it was necessary that the scripture should be fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that we read about in scripture had to take place"

by the mouth of David

The word "mouth" refers to the words that David wrote. Alternate translation: "through the words of David"

Acts 1:17

General Information:

Although Peter is addressing the entire group of people, here the word "us" refers only to the apostles.

Connecting Statement:

In verse 17 Peter continues his speech to the believers that he began in Acts 1:16.

Acts 1:18

General Information:

The author begins to tell the reader background information about how Judas died and what people called the field where he died. This is not part of Peter's speech.

Now this man

The words "this man" refers to Judas Iscariot.

the earnings he received for his wickedness

"the money that he earned from the evil thing that he did." The words "his wickedness" refer to Judas Iscariot's betraying Jesus to the people who killed him.

there he fell headfirst, and his body burst open, and all his intestines poured out

This suggests that Judas fell from a high place, rather than just falling down. The fall was severe enough to cause his body to burst open. Other passages of scripture mention that he hanged himself.

Acts 1:19

General Information:

The author finishes telling the reader background information about how Judas died and what people called the field where he died. This is not part of Peter's speech.

Field of Blood

When the people living in Jerusalem heard of the way in which Judas died, they renamed the field.

Acts 1:20

General Information:

Based on the situation with Judas that Peter just recounted, he recalls two Psalms of David that relate to the incident. The quote ends at the end of this verse.

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues his speech to the believers that he began in Acts 1:16.

For it is written in the Book of Psalms

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For David wrote in the Book of Psalms"

Let his field be made desolate, and do not let even one person live there

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words.

Let his field be made desolate

Possible meanings are 1) that the word "field" refers to the field where Judas died or 2) that the word "field" refers to Judas's dwelling place and is a metaphor for his family line.

be made desolate

"become empty"

Acts 1:21

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to the apostles and does not include the audience to whom Peter is speaking.

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes his speech to the believers that he began in Acts 1:16.

It is necessary, therefore

Based on the scriptures that he quoted and on what Judas had done, Peter tells the group what they must do.

the Lord Jesus went in and out among us

Going in and out among a group of people is a metaphor for openly being part of that group. Alternate translation: "the Lord Jesus lived among us"

Acts 1:22

beginning from the baptism of John ... become a witness with us of his resurrection

The qualification for the new apostle that began with the words "It is necessary ... that one of the men who accompanied us" in verse 21 ends here. The subject of the verb "become" is thus "one of the men." Here is a reduced form of the sentence: "It is necessary ... that one of the men who accompanied us ... beginning from the baptism of John ... must become a witness with us."

beginning from the baptism of John

The noun "baptism" can be translated as a verb. Possible meanings: 1) "beginning from when John baptized Jesus" or 2) "beginning from when John baptized people"

to the day that he was taken up from us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until the day when Jesus left us and rose up to heaven" or "until the day that God took him up from us"

become a witness with us of his resurrection

"must begin to testify with us about his resurrection"

Acts 1:23

They put forward two men

Here the word "They" refers to all of the believers who were present. Alternate translation: "They proposed two men who fulfilled the requirements that Peter listed"

Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus

This can be translated with an active form. Alternate translation: "Joseph, whom people also called Barsabbas and Justus"

Acts 1:24

They prayed and said

Here the word "They" refers to all of the believers, but it was probably one of the apostles who spoke these words. Alternate translation: "The believers prayed together and one of the apostles said"

You, Lord, know the hearts of all people

Here the word "hearts" refers to the thoughts and motives. Alternate translation: "You, Lord, know the thoughts and motives of everyone"

Acts 1:25

to take the place in this ministry and apostleship

Here the word "apostleship" defines what kind of "ministry" this is. Alternate translation: "to take Judas's

place in this apostolic ministry" or "to take Judas's place in serving as an apostle"

from which Judas turned away

Here the expression "turned away" means that Judas stopped performing this ministry. Alternate translation: "which Judas stopped fulfilling"

to go to his own place

This phrase refers to Judas's death and likely to his judgment after death. Alternate translation: "to go where he belongs"

Acts 1:26

They cast lots for them

The apostles cast lots to decide between Joseph and Matthias.

the lot fell to Matthias

The lot indicated that Matthias was the one to replace Judas.

he was numbered with the eleven apostles

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the believers considered him to be an apostle with the other eleven"

Acts 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 2:17-21, 25-28, and 34-35.

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted material in 2:31.

The events described in this chapter are commonly called "Pentecost." Many people believe that the church began to exist when the Holy Spirit came to live inside believers at Pentecost.

Special concepts in this chapter

Tongues

The word "tongues" has two meanings in this chapter. Luke describes what came down from heaven (Acts 2:3) ([../act/02/03.md](#)) as tongues that looked like fire. This is different from "a tongue of flame," which is a fire that looks like a tongue. Luke also uses the word "tongues" to describe the languages that the people spoke after the Holy Spirit filled them (Acts 2:4).

Last days

No one knows for sure when the "last days" ([Acts 2:17](#)) began. Your translation should not say more than the ULB does about this. (See: lastday)

Baptize

The word "baptize" in this chapter refers to Christian baptism (Acts 2:38-41). Though the event described in [Acts 2:1-11](#) is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised in [Acts 1:5](#), the word "baptize" here does not refer to that event. (See: baptize)

The prophecy of Joel

Many of the things that Joel said would happen did happen on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18), but some things Joel spoke of have not happened yet (Acts 2:19-20). (See: prophet)

Wonders and signs

These words refer to things that only God could do, things that showed that Jesus was who the disciples said he was.

Links:

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Acts 2

2:1-4

What was the day of Pentecost?

[2:1]

Pentecost was a Jewish festival. This festival came 50 days after the Passover week ended. It was one of the three most important festivals in the Jewish faith. For these three festivals, the Law of Moses made all Jewish men come to Jerusalem to “appear before the Lord” (see: Deuteronomy 16:16). These men brought offerings of the grain from the summer wheat harvest. These offerings gave thanks to God for helping the harvest. Pentecost was also called “The Feast of Weeks.” It was celebrated seven weeks after the Passover week ended (see: Leviticus 23:15).

The Feast of Pentecost brought the most visitors of Jews and Gentiles who believed in God to Jerusalem. It was the best time of year to travel. Some scholars think this is why God chose the Pentecost festival to baptize the followers of Jesus with the Holy Spirit. That is, the most people possible were there to see it.

See: Passover; Pentecost; Law of Moses; Baptize (Baptism)

Who was there when the Holy Spirit came?

[2:1]

Scholars disagree on how many people were there when the Holy Spirit came. They do not know if it was only the twelve apostles or if Jesus’ relatives and the 120 disciples were also there (see: 1:14-15). The house or upper room was big enough for the twelve apostles (see: 1:13). If 120 disciples were there, then the “house” where they met was thought to be a large house with many rooms. Or some scholars think they met in part of the outer courts of the temple.

See: Holy Spirit; Apostle; Disciple; Temple Courts

How did Luke describe the coming of the Holy Spirit?

[2:2]

The Holy Spirit came with the sound of a strong “rushing” (φέρω/g5342) “wind”(πνοή/g4466). Luke said all the people in the house heard this sound. The word wind, or “breath”(πνοή/g4466), is used other places in the Bible to talk about the Holy Spirit (see: 17:25; Ezekiel 37:9-10). In those places, it is the Spirit who gives life. The Holy Spirit is also a part of giving Christians a new life after they believe in Jesus (see: Titus 3:5).

Luke also talked about the Holy Spirit coming in little flames in the shape of tongues. These tongues laid on top of all those in the house. Some scholars think Luke was talking about the Holy Spirit’s coming in the same way John the Baptist spoke of it (see: Luke 3:16-17).

See: Born Again (New Life, Regeneration); Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

What did it mean that the disciples spoke in other tongues?

[2:4]

When the disciples spoke in other “tongues”(γλῶσσα/g1100) on the day of Pentecost, it meant they spoke in commonly known languages. But, the disciples did not know these languages. That is, they did not learn these languages by studying them or learning them. The Holy Spirit caused the disciples to speak in other languages. In this way, the Jews from many language groups heard the disciples speaking in their own languages.

See: Speak in Tongues

2:5-13

What places did Luke speak about?

[2:5, 2:9, 2:10, 2:11]

See Map: Ancient Middle East

Why did many in the crowd think the disciples were drunk?

[2:13]

Many in the crowd thought the disciples were drunk because they did not know what the disciples said. Because they spoke in languages that the people did not know, they thought they just spoke from drunkenness. Others became confused and amazed when they heard the disciples speaking in their own language. This confusion and amazement allowed Peter to tell them about what really happened.

2:14-21

What was the third hour of the day?

[2:15]

The Jews counted time each day beginning with the sunrise. The third hour of the day was about nine o'clock in the morning. Three hours after the sun rose where they lived. When are the "the last days"?

Some scholars think the "last days" began when Jesus first came to earth. That is, they began at his birth. These scholars think the last days continue until Jesus comes back to earth. Other scholars think the last days began after Jesus came back from the dead and the Holy Spirit came to the disciples. These scholars also think the last days will end when Jesus comes back to earth.

See: Last Days

Who are "all flesh"?

[2:17]

Some scholars think Luke said "all flesh" to say all kinds of Jewish people. In the past, God only spoke to certain people, that is, prophets, kings, or priests with messages from the Holy Spirit. Other scholars think the words "all flesh" meant the Gentile nations of the world along with the Jews.

See: Prophet; Priest (Priesthood) ; Gentile

When did the people think Joel's prophecy was going to happen?

[2:17]

Peter knew the signs of flames of fire and the speaking of foreign languages to be the "signs on the earth below." Some scholars think the prophecy of the "wonders in the heavens" happened on the day when Jesus died (see: Luke 23:44-45). Other scholars think the signs of blood, fire, smoke, the sun changing to darkness, and the moon changing to blood all speak about when Jesus is going to come back to earth.

See: Sign; Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Jesus' Return to Earth

What is the "great and glorious day of the Lord"?

[2:20]

The 'great and glorious day of the Lord' is the day of judgment. It is the time when Jesus comes back to earth and judges the whole human race (see: Matthew 24:30-31 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4) Scholars think the word glorious also meant fearful or dreadful.

See: Day of the Lord; Glory (Glorify); Day of Judgment

2:22-36

What does it mean that God "accredited" Jesus to the men of Israel?

[2:22]

When Peter said God "accredited" Jesus to the men of Israel, he said that through the many miracles he did, God helped people to know that Jesus was the promised messiah.

See: Miracle; Messiah (Christ)

What was meant by "God's predetermined plan and foreknowledge"?

[2:23]

God's predetermined(ὁρίζω/g3724) plan spoke about God's specific and unchangeable will. That is, God knew what would happen before it happen because he wanted it to happen or allowed it to happen. God planned Jesus' death on the cross before he created the world (see: 2 Timothy 1:9; Revelation 13:8). God's foreknowledge(πρόγνωσις/g4268) spoke about God setting the time for Jesus to be crucified by "lawless"(ἄνομος/g0459) men. Some scholars think "lawless men" spoke about the Romans who beat Jesus and nailed him to the cross. Other scholars think both the Jewish leaders and the Romans were guilty of having Jesus killed.

See: Predestine (Predestination); Foreknow (Foreknowledge); Will of God

Why was death not able to keep Jesus?

[2:24]

In the same way that God planned Jesus dying on the cross, he also planned to make Jesus live again. God controls living and dying. Dying could not stop Jesus because he is God.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

What is "Hades"?

[2:27]

Here, Hades means the general place where the dead people go. Peter said David was a prophet because he spoke about Jesus dying and that his body would not decay or rot.

See: Hades (Sheol); Prophet

What did the people see and hear that showed the Holy Spirit came to them?

[2:33]

The people saw and heard the disciples speaking in languages that the disciples did not know how to speak (see: 2:6-8). This showed the fulfillment of the promise Jesus made. Also, it showed that the Holy Spirit came to the disciples. The Holy Spirit came with power in the same way Jesus said the Holy Spirit was going to come.

See: Disciple; Holy Spirit

What do the words, “The Lord said to my Lord” mean?

[2:34]

Scholars think the words, “The Lord said to my Lord” spoke about God saying that Jesus is also the Lord. That is, Jesus is God. Only God could be a master of God.

See: Psalm 110:1

See: Lord; Jesus is God; Trinity

How is Jesus at the right hand of the Father?

[2:34]

Some scholars think the words meant “having been exalted by the right hand of God” instead of “to the right hand of God.” That is, Jesus was given back the honor he had in heaven before he came to earth. By coming to earth, he humbled himself and was not honored as much while he was on the earth. When someone sat at the right hand of a king, he was honored greatly. They were given power and permission to rule.

When someone sat down, it meant that they were finished working. The writer of Hebrews talks about the difference between Jesus finishing the things he wanted to do and the Jewish priests who continuously stand because they never finish the things they need to do (see: Hebrews 10:11-12). Jesus was given the highest place of honor and permission to rule in heaven.

See Psalm 110

See: Right Hand; Disciple; Heaven

How do Jesus’ enemies become a stool for his feet?

[2:35]

This is a prophecy from Psalm 110:1. God placed the enemies of Jesus under Jesus, who was given permission to rule them. That is, Jesus holds complete rule over his enemies.

See: Prophecy (Prophesy)

2:36-41

Who was “the whole house of Israel”?

[2:36]

The whole house of Israel was all the Jewish people who rejected Jesus (see: Mark 14:61-65).

What did Peter mean when he called Jesus both Lord and Christ?

[2:36]

Peter called Jesus lord and christ. He meant that Jesus completed the prophecy David wrote in Psalm 110:1. Jesus is “lord”(κύριος/g29362) because God placed him at his right hand after he rose from the dead (see: Psalm 16:8). Jesus is ruler over everything.

Jesus is the “christ.” That is, he is the messiah, the one to complete God’s plan for saving people from their sins. Paul also spoke of Jesus as the Christ. Jesus showed that he was the Christ because he did not stay dead (see: Romans 1:4).

See: Lord; Messiah (Christ); Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

What does it mean to be pierced to the heart?

[2:37]

Scholars think to be “pierced to the heart” spoke of when a person would know something quickly and very strongly. They think the people knew quick and strong sorrow and felt guilty. They understood they killed their messiah. Their words of “what shall we do” were desperate words.

See: Messiah (Christ)

What was meant by the word “repent”?

[2:38]

See: Repent (Repentance)

Why did Peter command the Jews to be baptized in the name of Jesus?

[2:38]

Scholars think several things happened when baptism “in the name of Jesus” happened:

1. By calling on the name of Jesus, the Jews acknowledged that Jesus is Israel’s messiah and savior. They knew that Jesus did not stay dead and is sitting at God’s right hand.
2. By calling on the name of Jesus, the Jews accepted that forgiveness for sins was only possible by believing in Jesus.
3. By calling on the name of Jesus, the Jews publicly said that only Jesus can cleanse them from their sin and impurity.

See: Baptize (Baptism); Name; Messiah (Christ); Savior; Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon); Clean and Unclean

What was the “gift of the Holy Spirit”?

[2:38]

The gift of the Holy Spirit was the comforter that Jesus promised (see: John 14:16). The Holy Spirit comes to live inside those who believe in Jesus (see: Romans 8:9-11; Ephesians 1:13-14). Scholars agree that the gift of the Holy Spirit is different from the gifts of the Holy Spirit. All Christians are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. But the gifts the Holy Spirit gives each Christian are different. He chooses to give different people different gifts to help the church (see: 1 Corinthians 12:11).

See: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Why does Peter say this promise is “for you, your children and to all those who are far off”?

[2:39]

This promise of the Holy Spirit is for all Christians of all ages everywhere. The promise of the Holy Spirit was not only for the first Christians but also for all who will become Christians. Luke also wrote that the promise of the Holy Spirit was for the Jews and the Gentiles (see Acts 10:45; 11:16,17). Peter did not fully know that the Holy Spirit was also for the Gentiles when he spoke. But the Holy Spirit spoke this through him.

See: Gentile

What did it mean when Peter said, “to as many as the Lord our God will call”?

[2:39]

Peter again quoted from the prophet Joel when he said, “to as many as the Lord our God will call.” The prophecy spoke of both those who call on the name of the Lord, and of those whom the Lord will call.

See: Romans 1:6; 9:1-33, John 3:16

See: Call (Calling)

Why did Peter say “save yourselves from this wicked generation”?

[2:40]

Scholars think Peter told the Jews to “save themselves”(σώζω/g4982) because he told the Jews to allow themselves to be saved by Jesus. The book of Acts speaks about God being the one who saves (see: 2:21, 39; 4:11-12). These scholars think that God’s call offers salvation. The people who are called must respond to the gospel with faith and by repenting (see: 2:38; 16:14-15, 30-34).

A “wicked generation” spoke about people who continually reject God and the things he says. Moses wrote about a wicked generation in the Old Testament (see: Deuteronomy 32:5), and Paul wrote about a wicked generation in the New Testament (see: Philippians 2:15).

See: Generation; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Gospel; Repent (Repentance)

2:42-47

What was the “apostles’ teaching”?

[2:42]

The apostles taught about the things Jesus said and did. The apostles saw the power of Jesus in the miracles he did while they were with him. The teaching also talked about God’s plans and promises. God planned to save people from their sins even before he created the world. That is, he planned for Jesus to die on the cross, be buried, and be brought back to life even before he created the world. The apostles strongly taught that Jesus is the messiah whom God promised to come. They taught that it was through Jesus alone that someone could be at peace with God (see: 2:36-39; 3:17-23).

See: Apostle; Miracle; Messiah (Christ); Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

What was meant by “the fellowship”?

[2:42]

The word “fellowship” meant to share or be a part of something. Here, it meant sharing in each other’s lives. That is, in the same way they shared life in Jesus, they also shared life together. To share life with each other meant to know others, care for others, and allow them to care for you and to help one another in times of suffering (see: Romans 12:10-13; 1 Peter 4:8-10).

See: Fellowship

What was meant by “the breaking of bread”?

[2:42]

Some scholars think the “breaking of bread” took place at any ordinary meal time where people gathered together to eat. They think Jesus gave this command when he celebrated his last Passover meal with the disciples

(see: Luke 22:14-19). That is, they took the loaves of bread they ate, broke them into small pieces, and shared them with one another. Other scholars think the “breaking of bread” was for Christians to regularly be a part of, so that they specifically remembered Jesus’ death on the cross, the forgiveness of sins, and the new covenant made by God with Christians (see: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

See: Passover; Disciple; New Covenant

What were the prayers about which Luke wrote?

[2a:42]

Scholars think the prayers were Jewish prayers and possibly the Jewish times of prayer as well (see: 3:1). Certainly, the Christians prayed together. They also went to the prayer times in the temple together (see: 2:46).

See: Pray (Prayer)

Why did those gathered experience “awe”?

[2:43]

Because the apostles did signs and wonders similar to the miracles done by Jesus, the people felt great “awe”(φóβος/g5401) about God. This means the people felt great respect and reverence for God.

See: Awe (Awesome); Sign; Miracle

What did it mean to have all things in common?

[2:44]

Some scholars think “to have all things in common” meant the Christians wanted to share the things they owned. Though they kept the things they owned, they willingly sold them to help people with needs near them (see: 4:32). When someone needed something, the Christians sold some of their things, land, or other things they owned. Then they brought the money to the leaders or apostles to give to all with needs (See: Acts 4:32-37).

See: Apostle

Why did the early Christians worship at the Temple?

[2:46]

The Christians went to the temple daily for prayers because the first Christians were Jewish. This was before they were not allowed to go to the temple because they believed in Jesus. They went there to pray Jewish prayers and to praise God who sent the messiah into the world (see: John 17:18).

See: Temple; Pray (Prayer; Messiah (Christ))

What did Luke mean when he wrote “the Lord added to their number”?

[2:47]

Scholars think Luke wrote “the Lord added to their number” because it was God’s church. He is the one who adds people to his church (see: 11:21).

See: Lord; Church

Acts 2:1

General Information:

This is a new event; it is now the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after Passover. Here the word "they" refers to the apostles and the other 120 believers that Luke mentions in Acts 1:15.

Acts 2:2

Suddenly

This word explains that no one expected to hear the sound or to have it fill the house.

a sound like the rush of a violent wind came from heaven

Possible meanings are 1) "heaven" refers to the place where God lives. Alternate translation: "a sound came from heaven" or 2) "heaven" refers to the sky. Alternate translation: "a sound came from the sky"

the whole house

This may have been a house or a larger building.

Acts 2:3

There appeared to them tongues like fire

These might have been something that looked like tongues or like fire, not actual tongues or fire. Possible meanings are 1) tongues that looked like they were made of fire or 2) small flames of fire that looked like tongues. When fire burns in a small space, such as on a lamp, the flame can be shaped like a tongue.

that were distributed, and they sat upon each one of them

This means that the "tongues like fire" spread out so that there was one on each person.

Acts 2:4

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit filled all of those who were there and they"

speak in other tongues

They were speaking in languages that they did not already know.

as the Spirit gave them the ability

The Holy Spirit gave them the ability to speak; they were dependent on the Spirit to speak in different languages.

Acts 2:5

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to the believers; the word "his" refers to each person in the multitude. Verse 5 gives background information about the large number of Jews who were living in Jerusalem, many of whom were present during this event.

godly men

Here "godly men" refers to people who were devout in their worship of God and tried to obey all of the Jewish laws.

every nation under heaven

"every nation in the world." The word "every" is an exaggeration that emphasizes that the people came from many different nations. Alternate translation: "many different nations"

Acts 2:6

When this sound was heard

This refers to the sound that was similar to a strong wind. Alternate translation: "When they heard this sound"

the multitude

"the large crowd of people"

Acts 2:7

They were amazed and marveled

These two words share similar meanings. Together they emphasize the intensity of amazement. Alternate translation: "They were greatly amazed"

Really, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

The people ask this question to express their amazement. The question could be changed to an exclamation. Alternate translation: "All of these Galileans could not possibly know our languages!"

Acts 2:8

Why is it that we are hearing them, each in our own language in which we were born?

Possible meanings are 1) this is a rhetorical question that expresses how amazed they were or 2) this is a real question for which the people wanted an answer.

in our own language in which we were born

"in our own languages that we have learned from birth"

Acts 2:9

Parthians ... Medes ... Elamites

These are names of people groups.

Mesopotamia ... Judea ... Cappadocia ... Pontus ... Asia

These are names of large areas of land.

Acts 2:10

Phrygia ... Pamphylia ... Egypt ... Libya ... Cyrene

These are names of large areas of land.

Acts 2:11

Cretans ... Arabians

These are names of people groups.

proselytes

converts to the Jewish religion

Acts 2:12

amazed and perplexed

These two words share similar meanings. Together they emphasize that the people could not understand what was happening. Alternate translation: "surprised and confused"

Acts 2:13

They are full of new wine

Some people accuse the believers of having drunk too much wine. Alternate translation: "They are drunk"

new wine

This refers to wine that is in the process of fermentation.

Acts 2:14

Connecting Statement:

Peter begins his speech to the Jews who were there on the Day of Pentecost.

stood with the eleven

All the apostles stood up in support of Peter's statement.

raised his voice

This is an idiom for "spoke loudly."

declared to them

Made a formal, important speech to them. See how you translated "make declarations" in Acts 2:4.

let this be known to you

This means that Peter is about to explain the meaning of what the people had witnessed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "know this" or "let me explain this to you"

pay attention to my words

Peter was referring to what he was saying. Alternate translation: "listen carefully to what I am saying"

Acts 2:15

it is only the third hour of the day

"It is only nine o'clock in the morning." Peter expected his audience to know that people do not get drunk that early in the day.

Acts 2:16

General Information:

Here Peter tells them a passage about which the prophet Joel wrote in the Old Testament that relates to what is happening with the languages in which the believers spoke. This is written in the form of poetry as well as being a quotation.

this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this is what God told the prophet Joel to write" or "this is that which the prophet Joel spoke"

Acts 2:17

It will be

"This is what will happen" or "This is what I will do"

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh

Here the words "pour out" mean to give generously and abundantly. Alternate translation: "I will give my Spirit abundantly to all flesh"

all flesh

This is a hyperbolic metonym that refers to all people by speaking of them as all living creatures, who have flesh. Alternate translation: "all people"

Acts 2:18

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues to quote the prophet Joel.

my servants and my female servants

"both my male and my female servants." These words emphasize that God will pour out his Spirit on all of his servants, both men and women.

I will pour out my Spirit

Here the words "pour out" mean to give generously and abundantly. See how you translated this in [Acts 2:17]

Acts 2:19

vapor of smoke

"thick smoke" or "clouds of smoke"

Acts 2:20

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes quoting the prophet Joel.

The sun will be turned to darkness

This means that the sun will appear to be dark instead of light. Alternate translation: "The sun will become dark"

the moon to blood

This means that the moon will appear to be red like blood. Alternate translation: "the moon will be turned to blood" or "the moon will appear to be red"

the great and remarkable day

The words "great" and "remarkable" share similar meanings and emphasize the intensity of greatness. Alternate translation: "the very great day"

remarkable

great and beautiful

Acts 2:21

everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Lord will save everyone who calls on him"

Acts 2:22

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues his speech to the Jews that he began in Acts 1:16.

hear these words

"listen to what I am about to say"

accredited to you by God with the mighty deeds and wonders and signs

This means that God proved that he had appointed Jesus for his mission, and proved who he was by his many miracles.

Acts 2:23

by God's predetermined plan and foreknowledge

The nouns "plan" and "foreknowledge" can be translated as verbs. This means that God planned out and knew beforehand what would happen to Jesus.

Alternate translation: "because God planned out and knew beforehand everything that would happen"

This man was handed over

Possible meanings: 1) "you handed Jesus over into the hands of his enemies" or 2) "Judas betrayed Jesus to you."

you, by the hand of lawless men, put him to death by nailing him to a cross

Although "lawless men" actually crucified Jesus, Peter accuses the crowd of having killed him because they demanded his death.

by the hand of lawless men

Here "hand" refers to the actions of the lawless men. Alternate translation: "through the actions of lawless men" or "by what lawless men did"

lawless men

Possible meanings are 1) the unbelieving Jews who accused Jesus of crimes or 2) the Roman soldiers who performed the execution of Jesus.

Acts 2:24

But God raised him up

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "But God caused him to live again"

freeing him from the agonies of death

He speaks of the agonies of dying as if God were freeing Christ from ropes that were binding Jesus. Alternate translation: "ending the pains of death"

for him to be held by it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for death to hold him"

for him to be held by it

Peter speaks of Christ remaining dead as if death were a person who held him captive. Alternate translation: "for him to remain dead"

Acts 2:25

General Information:

Here Peter quotes a passage that David wrote in a Psalm which relates to Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection. Since Peter says that David said these words about Jesus, the words "I" and "my" refer to Jesus and the words "Lord" and "he" refer to God.

For David says about him, 'I saw

The context makes it plain that this is an elliptical way of saying that David was speaking as if David were the Messiah. Alternate translation: "For David spoke these words as if he were the Christ: 'I saw"

before my face

"in front of me." Alternate translation: "in my presence" or "with me"

beside my right hand

To be at someone's "right hand" often means to be in a position to help and sustain. Alternate translation: "right beside me" or "with me to help me"

I should not be moved

Here the word "moved" means to be troubled. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will not be able to cause me trouble" or "nothing will trouble me"

Acts 2:26

my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced

People consider the "heart" the center of emotions and the "tongue" voices those emotions. Alternate translation: "I was glad and rejoiced"

my flesh will live in hope

Possible meanings of the phrase "my flesh" are 1) it indicates that the writer is a mortal who will die. Alternate translation: "even though I am only mortal, I will live in hope" or 2) it is a synecdoche for the writer's entire person. Alternate translation: "I will live in hope"

will live in hope

Here the word "hope" refers to a person's confidence that what he desires will happen. Since the speaker

hoped that God would rescue him, "in hope" could be translated as "in confidence in God." The phrase "live in hope" can also be translated with the phrases "confidently expect," "confidently wait," or "trust." Alternate translation: "will live with confidence in God" or "will confidently wait for God to rescue me"

Acts 2:27

General Information:

Since Peter says that David said these words about Jesus, the words "my," "Holy One," and "me" refer to Jesus and the words "you" and "your" refer to God.

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes quoting David.

neither will you allow your Holy One to see decay

The Messiah, Jesus, refers to himself with the words "your Holy One." Alternate translation: "neither will you allow me, your Holy One, to see decay"

to see decay

Here the word "see" means to experience something. The word "decay" refers to the decomposition of his body after death. Alternate translation: "to decay"

Acts 2:28

the ways of life

"the ways that lead to life"

full of gladness with your face

Here the word "face" refers to the presence of God. Alternate translation: "very glad when I see you" or "very glad when I am in your presence"

gladness

joy, happiness

Acts 2:29

General Information:

The words "he" and "his" refer to David.

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues the speech to the Jews that surround him and the other believers in Jerusalem, which he began in Acts 1:16.

Brothers, it

"My fellow Jews, it"

it is proper for me to speak

Or "it is possible." He is able to speak because it is proper for him to do so.

he both died and was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he died and people buried him"

Acts 2:30

he would set one of the fruit of his loins on his throne

"God would set one of David's fruit upon David's throne." Alternate translation: "God would appoint one of David's fruit to be king in David's place"

one of the fruit of his loins

This is a metaphor for a child or other descendant. Alternate translation: "one of his children" or "one of his descendants"

Acts 2:31

he was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see decay

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Neither did God abandon him to Hades nor did his flesh see decay" or "God did not abandon him to Hades, and his flesh did not see decay"

did his flesh see decay

Here the word "see" means to experience something. The word "decay" refers to the decomposition of his body after death. See how you translated this in [Acts 2:27]

Acts 2:32

This Jesus—God raised him up

Peter talks again about Jesus. Alternate Translation: "It is this Jesus whom God raised up" or "God raised up this Jesus"

God raised him up

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "God caused him to live again"

Acts 2:33

having been exalted to the right hand of God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because God has exalted Jesus up to his right hand"

having been exalted to the right hand of God

"Right hand of God" here is an idiom that means that Christ will rule as God, with God's authority. Alternate translation: "Christ is in the position of God"

he has poured out what

Here the words "poured out" mean that Jesus, who is God, made these events to happen. It is implicit that he did this by giving the Holy Spirit to the believers. Alternate translation: "he has caused to happen these things that"

has poured out

"has given generously and abundantly." See how you translated a similar phrase in Acts 2:17. Alternate translation: "given abundantly"

Acts 2:34

General Information:

Peter again quotes one of David's Psalms. David is not speaking of himself in this Psalm. "The Lord" and "my" refer to God; "my Lord" and "your" refer to Jesus the Messiah.

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes his speech to the Jews that he began in Acts 1:16.

Sit at my right hand

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "Sit in the place of honor beside me"

Acts 2:35

until I make your enemies the footstool for your feet

This means that God will completely defeat the Messiah's enemies and make them subject to him. Alternate translation: "until I make you victorious over all of your enemies"

Acts 2:36

all the house of Israel

This refers to the entire nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "every Israelite"

Acts 2:37

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the people in the crowd to whom Peter spoke.

Connecting Statement:

The Jews respond to Peter's speech and Peter answers them.

when they heard this

"when the people heard what Peter had said"

they were pierced in their hearts, and said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said"

pierced in their hearts

This means that the people felt guilty and became very sad. Alternate translation: "deeply troubled"

Acts 2:38

be baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "allow us to baptize you"

in the name of Jesus Christ

"In the name of" here is a metonym for "by the authority of" Alternate translation: "by the authority of Jesus Christ"

Acts 2:39

all who are far off

This means either 1) "all people who live far away" or 2) "all people who are far from God."

Acts 2:40

he testified and exhorted them

"he seriously told them." Here the word "testified" and "begged" share similar meanings and emphasize that Peter urged them strongly to respond to what he was saying. Alternate translation: "he strongly urged them"

exhorted

or "pleaded with"

Be saved from this perverse generation

The implication is that God will punish "this perverse generation." Alternate translation: "Be saved from the punishment that these wicked people will suffer"

Be saved

Possible meanings are 1) Peter was urging people to let God save them. Alternate translation: "Let God save you," or 2) Peter was simply urging them in a general way to avoid being punished. Alternate translation: "Save yourselves" or "Flee" or "Escape"

Acts 2:41

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story that happened on the Day of Pentecost.

they received his word

Here the word "received" means that they accepted what Peter said to be true. Alternate translation: "they believed what Peter said"

were baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people baptized them"

there were added in that day about three thousand souls

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "about three thousand souls joined the believers on that day"

about three thousand souls

Here the word "souls" refers to people. Alternate translation: "about 3,000 people"

Acts 2:42

Connecting Statement:

This section explains how the believers continued to live after the Day of Pentecost.

the breaking of bread

Bread was part of their meals. These words could refer to 1) any meals they might eat together. Alternate translation: "eating meals together" or 2) meals they would eat together in order to remember Christ's death and resurrection. Alternate translation: "eating the Lord's Supper together"

Acts 2:43

Fear came upon every soul

Here the word "Fear" refers to deep respect and awe for God. The word "soul" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "Each person felt a deep respect and awe for God"

many wonders and signs were done through the apostles

Possible meanings are 1) "the apostles performed many wonders and signs" or 2) "God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles"

wonders and signs

"miraculous deeds and supernatural events." See how you translated this in Acts 2:22.

Acts 2:44

All who believed were together

Possible meanings are 1) "All of them believed the same thing" or 2) "All who believed were together in the same place."

had all things in common

"shared their belongings with one another"

Acts 2:45

property and possessions

"land and things they owned"

distributed them to all

Here the word "them" refers to the profit that they made from selling their property and possessions. Alternate translation: "distributed the proceeds to all"

according to the needs anyone had

They distributed the proceeds that they earned from selling their property and possessions to any believer who had a need.

Acts 2:46

they devoted themselves with one purpose in the temple

You may need to supply the words that have been omitted in this ellipse. What they devoted themselves to doing is stated in verse 42. Alternate translation: "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching with one purpose in the temple"

with one purpose

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

They also broke bread in homes

Bread was part of their meals. Alternate translation: "They also ate meals together in their homes"

Acts 2:47

praising God and having favor with all the people

"praising God. All the people approved of them"

those who were being saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom the Lord saved"

Acts 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The covenant God made with Abraham

This chapter explains that Jesus came to the Jews because God was fulfilling part of the covenant he had made with Abraham. Peter thought that the Jews were the ones who were truly guilty of killing Jesus, but he wanted them to understand that Jesus, by living and dying, had fulfilled God's promise to Abraham and that if they repented, God would forgive them.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"You delivered up"

The Romans were the ones who killed Jesus, but they killed him because the Jews captured him, brought him to the Romans, and told the Romans to kill him. For this reason Peter thought that they were the ones who were truly guilty of killing Jesus. But he tells them that they are also the first ones to whom God has sent Jesus's followers to invite them to repent ([Acts 3:26](#)). (See: repent)

Links:

- [Acts 3:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 3

3:1-10

What was the "hour of prayer"?

[3:1]

The Jewish people went to the temple three times a day to pray. The "ninth hour" was in the middle of the afternoon. Jews also prayed in the middle of the morning at the middle of the day (see: Psalm 55:16-19). Peter and John were Christians. But they were also Jews. So they continued to pray at the temple three times a day after they became Christians.

Why did Luke write that the man was "lame from birth"?

[3:2]

Some scholars think Luke wrote that the man was "lame from birth" because it showed how powerful Jesus was because he healed this man. Scholars think "lame" (χωλός/g5560) meant a man with legs, ankles and feet not formed correctly. That made this man not strong enough to walk or stand (see: 3:7). What was the "Beautiful Gate"?

The "Beautiful Gate" was one of many gates that went into the Jewish temple. Scholars think the greatest number of people entered into the temple through this gate. Perhaps they carried the lame man to this gate so that they could ask people for gifts of money.

See: Temple

Why did Peter “fasten his eyes” on the lame man?

[3:4]

The phrase “fastening his eyes”(ἀτενίζω/g0816) meant that Peter looked specifically and closely at the lame beggar. Also, Peter commanded the man saying, “Look at us.” Scholars think the lame man looked at Peter and this man had expected a great gift.

Advice to Translators: A beggar was someone who asked people for money because they were poor or because they could not do anything.

Why did Peter tell the man to stand and walk, “in the name of Jesus”?

[3:6]

The lame man did not stand up and walk before Peter spoke the name of Jesus. The phrase “in the name of Jesus” meant that Jesus gave him permission to heal this man and the power to do so. People knew Jesus’ power because of what Peter did (see: 3:16). Some scholars say the power that caused the lame man to stand up and “walk”(περιπατέω/g4043) and he was strong enough to walk for the rest of his life (see: 3:16).

See: Name

3:11-16

Where was Solomon’s porch?

[3:11]

Solomon’s porch was on the east side of the temple courts. Scholars think the court of the Gentiles was near this area. Jesus taught on this porch to many people (see: John 10:23).

See: Temple; Gentile

See Map: Show map of Jewish temple with its various gates, and porches

Why did Peter speak about the “God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob”?

[3:13]

Peter spoke about God in a way that the Jewish people would understand. Scholars think Peter wanted the Jews to think about God promised to do certain things. God not only healed a lame man, but he made it so that people would know that Jesus is the promised messiah. The things Peter said also helped people to know he and the apostles served the God of Israel. They did not worship another god.

See: Messiah (Christ); Apostle

Why did Peter say that Jesus was God’s servant?

[3:13]

Scholars think Peter said the same thing the prophet Isaiah said to show that Jesus is the messiah. Jesus is the servant who brings the justice of God, he brings people back to God, and he is the servant who suffers for the people of God (see: Isaiah 42:1; 49:5-6; 52:13-15). The Jewish people knew what Isaiah said and expected a suffering servant to come.

See: Prophet; Messiah (Christ); Justice (Just, Unjust); Serve (Servant, Slave)

Who is the “Holy and Righteous One”?

[3:14]

Jesus is the holy and righteous one.

See: Holy (Holiness, Set Apart); Righteous (Righteousness)

How is Jesus the “Founder of Life”?

[3:15]

Peter spoke about Jesus as the “founder of life”(ἀρχηγός/g0747). This meant that Jesus created the universe and created everything on earth. It also meant that Jesus was the leader of the whole world. Jesus also made it so that Christians would live together with God in heaven forever.

See: Create (Creation, Creature)

3:17-21

What was meant by the words, “you acted in ignorance”?

[3:17]

Peter knew the people and the religious leaders did not fully understand the plan of God for Jesus. God made this plan before the beginning of the world (see: Ephesians 1:4). The prophets spoke how the messiah must suffer and die (see: Isaiah 53:1-12; Zechariah 12:10). Some scholars think Jesus spoke about how those who crucified him did not really know what they were doing (see: Luke 23:34).

See: Messiah (Christ); Prophet

Why did Peter command the people to “repent and turn back”?

[3:19]

Peter told the Jewish people and leaders they must “repent.” This meant they must believe that Jesus is the messiah. It also meant they must think differently about what the Scriptures teach about the messiah (see: 2 Corinthians 3:12-16). The people refused to believe that Jesus was God’s servant. They did not think that Jesus was the “holy one.” They refused to believe that Jesus was the one who created everything and was the messiah. Peter’s told the people that they needed to repent and believe in Jesus. In this way, their sins were to be “blotted out,” that is, the penalty for their sins was removed because Jesus served the penalty for their sins. They were made clean.

See: Repent (Repentance); Messiah (Christ); Serve (Servant, Slave); Holy (Holiness, Set Apart); Sin; Clean and Unclean

What were “periods of refreshing”?

[3:19]

Some scholars think “refreshing” meant to experience a relief from trouble or to have a time of peace before Jesus returns. They think that Scripture teaches that there will be a time of peace and forgiveness when God would not judge people. Other scholars think the “periods of refreshing” spoke about the time when Peter lived. They think that Luke was speaking about God given them peace from different things. Still other scholars think the periods of refreshing came when the people repented and trusted in God. That is, the Holy Spirit brings refreshing in the life of a person who repents (see: Acts 2:38; John 14:15-21).

See: Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon); Repent (Repentance); Holy Spirit

What does “the final restoration of all things” mean?

[3:21]

Some scholars think when Luke spoke about “restoration,” he wanted to say that God will bring Israel back to their land (see: 1:6). That is, he will bring back the kingdom of Israel. These scholars also think this is a time when God will fulfill his promises made through the prophet Malachi (see: Malachi 4:2-6). This is when the messiah returns to the world to judge the world for its sin. Other scholars think Peter spoke about the world being restored. That is, the world will be returned to be perfect in the same way it was perfect before Adam and Eve sinned (see: Genesis 3). These scholars think Peter spoke about something still to have that the prophets spoke about (see: Isaiah 65:17; 66:22).

However, God began the restoring people making it possible for them to be at peace with him because Jesus died. In Scripture, there is a metaphor about people who reject God are far away from him. People who were far away from God because of sin, were brought near to God because of the sacrifice for sin made by Jesus on the cross. That is, But, most scholars think there will still be a future time in which all of creation will be brought back to God.

See: Fulfill (Fulfillment); Prophet; Metaphor

3:22-26

Who was the prophet that was like Moses?

[3:22]

The Old Testament spoke of a prophet coming in the future (see: Deuteronomy 18:15-18). The Jews thought of Moses as the first and greatest of all prophets. They thought Moses said that the prophet coming in the future was the messiah. Peter said clearly that the people needed to “listen” to the prophet, that is, to obey the prophet God sent, the messiah. This meant they needed to listen and obey the words of the messiah. That is, they needed to do what Jesus told them to do. Peter said that the people who did not listen to the prophet from God were going to be punished. God raised this prophet up to a high position in the same way he raised up Moses to a high position (see: Deuteronomy 18:19). Scholars think the punishment which Peter spoke was the removing of the people from being in the family of God.

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Prophet; Messiah (Christ)

Why did Peter mention the prophet Samuel?

[3:24]

God told him to anoint King David (see: 1 Samuel 16:11-13). God gave David promises from the prophet Nathan that spoke of someone to come. This person was to reign forever. This person to come was the messiah (see: 2 Samuel 7:8-17).

See: Anoint (Anointing); Prophet; Messiah (Christ)

What was meant by the words, “these days”?

[3:24]

Scholars think the words “these days” spoke about the times when Peter and the other apostles lived. They think it was the beginning of the days of the promised New Covenant (see: Jeremiah 31:31-34). Scholars think the phrase “these days” also meant the beginning of the last days spoken of by the prophet Joel (see: 2:17-21).

See: Apostle; New Covenant; Last Days

What was the covenant that God made with Abraham?

[3:25]

God made a covenant with Abraham. He promised to bless all the nations of the world through Abraham (see: Genesis 22:15-18). One promise was that one of Abraham's descendants would bring about a certain blessing. That is, the messiah was going to be a descendant of Abraham (see: Galatians 16-18).

See: Covenant with Abraham; Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Bless (Blessing); Messiah (Christ)

Why did Peter say that God sent his servant, Jesus, to the Jewish people first?

[3:26]

The Old Testament spoke about God's covenant with the nation of Israel as the people. He made Israel his people. The Jewish people thought about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as their fathers. They thought about Moses as their greatest prophet. Keeping his covenant with Abraham and Israel, God sent the promised messiah to the Jews (see: Genesis 22:18; Jeremiah 31:31-34). God's plan from the beginning of the world was to give his favor to all the nations of the world. Jesus was how God gave his favor to the world. Paul also spoke about God's plan to save people from all of the nations. God gave the gospel first to the Jews and then to the rest of the world (see: Romans 1:16).

See: Serve (Servant, Slave);Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Prophet; Covenant with Abraham; Messiah (Christ); Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Gospel

Acts 3:1	the temple gate called Beautiful
Connecting Statement:	This was one of the gates in the high, strong wall that surrounded the temple. People sometimes gathered near the gate.
One day Peter and John go to the temple.	
into the temple	lame
They did not go into the temple building where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "to the temple courtyard" or "into the temple area"	unable to walk
Acts 3:2	Acts 3:3
a man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried	General Information:
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people were carrying a man who was lame from from his mother's womb"	This page has intentionally been left blank.
from his mother's womb	Acts 3:4
"ever since he was born"	Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said
	Both Peter and John looked at the man, but only Peter spoke.
	fastening his eyes upon him
	Possible meanings are 1) "looking directly at him" or 2) "looking intently at him"

Acts 3:5

The lame man looked at them

Here the word "looked" means to pay attention to something. Alternate translation: "The lame man paid close attention to them"

Acts 3:6

Silver and gold I do not have

"I do not own any silver or gold"

Silver and gold

These words refer to money.

what I do have

It is understood that Peter has the ability to heal the man.

In the name of Jesus Christ

Here the word "name" refers to power and authority. Alternate translation: "With the authority of Jesus Christ"

Acts 3:7

Peter raised him up

"Peter caused him to stand"

Acts 3:8

he entered ... into the temple

He did not go inside the temple building where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "he entered ... the temple area" or "he entered ... into the temple courtyard"

Acts 3:9

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 3:10

noticed that it was the man

"realized that it was the man" or "recognized him as the man"

the Beautiful Gate

This was the name of one of the entrances to the temple area. See how you translated a similar phrase in Acts 3:2.

they were filled with wonder and amazement

Here the words "wonder" and "amazement" share similar meanings and emphasize the intensity of the people's amazement. Alternate translation: "they were extremely amazed"

Acts 3:11

General Information:

The phrase "in the porch that is called Solomon's" makes it clear that they were not inside the temple where only the priests were allowed to enter. Here the words "us" and "we" refer to Peter and John but not to the crowd to whom Peter is talking.

Connecting Statement:

After healing the man who could not walk, Peter talks to the people.

the porch that is called Solomon's

"Solomon's Porch." This was a covered walkway that consisted of rows of pillars that supported a roof, and which people named after king Solomon. It was in the temple courtyard.

greatly marveling

"extremely surprised"

Acts 3:12

When Peter saw this

Here the word "this" refers to the amazement of the people.

You Israelite men

"Fellow Israelites." Peter was addressing the crowd.

why do you marvel?

Peter asks this question to emphasize that they should not be surprised by what had happened. Alternate translation: "you should not be surprised."

Why do you fix your eyes on us, as if we made him walk by our own power or godliness?

Peter asks this question to emphasize that the people should not think that he and John had healed the man by their own abilities. This could be written as two statements. Alternate translation: "Do not fix your eyes on us. We did not make him walk by our own power or godliness."

fix your eyes on us

This means that they looked intently at them without stopping. Alternate translation: "stare at us" or "look at us"

Acts 3:13

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues his speech to the Jews that he began in Acts 3:12.

rejected before the face of Pilate

Here the phrase "before the face of" means "in the presence of." Alternate translation: "rejected in Pilate's presence"

when he had decided to release him

"when Pilate had decided to release Jesus"

Acts 3:14

for a murderer to be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Pilate to release a murderer to you"

Acts 3:15

General Information:

Here the word "we" includes just Peter and John.

the Founder of life

This refers to Jesus. Possible meanings are 1) "the one who gives people eternal life" or 2) "the ruler of life" or 3) "the one who leads people to life"

Acts 3:16

On the basis of faith in his name

Possible meanings are 1) this is the reason the man was made strong. Alternate translation: "Because of faith in his name" or 2) this is how the man was made strong. Alternate translation: "By faith in his name"

On the basis of faith in his name

The word "his" refers to the Founder of life, Jesus. The abstract noun "faith" can be translated with the verb "believe." Possible meanings are 1) the lame man had faith in Jesus. Alternate translation: "Because he believed in Jesus name" or 2) Peter and John, and perhaps the lame man, had faith in Jesus. Alternate translation: "Because we believed in Jesus's name"

his name

The phrase "his name" is a metonym either for Jesus or for Jesus's power.

made this man ... strong

"made this man ... well"

The faith that is through Jesus

Possible meanings are 1) this is the faith that Jesus enables people to have. Alternate translation: "The faith that comes from Jesus" or 2) this is faith in Jesus.

Acts 3:17

Now

Here Peter shifts the audience's attention from the lame man and continues to talk to them directly.

you acted in ignorance

Possible meanings are 1) that the people did not know that Jesus was the Messiah or 2) that the people did not understand the significance of what they were doing.

Acts 3:18

God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets

When the prophets spoke, it was as though God himself was speaking because he told them what to say.

Alternate translation: "God foretold by telling all of the prophets what to speak"

God foretold

"God spoke about ahead of time" or "God told about before they happened"

the mouth of all the prophets

Here the word "mouth" refers to the words that the prophets spoke and wrote down. Alternate translation: "the words of all the prophets"

Acts 3:19

and turn

"and turn to the Lord." Here "turn" is a metaphor for starting to obey the Lord. Alternate translation: "and start obeying the Lord"

so that your sins may be blotted out

Here "blotted out" is a metaphor for forgiving. Sins are spoken of as if they are written in a book and God erases them from the book when he forgives them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that God will forgive you for sinning against him"

Acts 3:20

times of refreshing

Possible meanings are 1) "times when God will strengthen your spirits" or 2) "times when God will revive you"

from the presence of the Lord

Here the words "presence of the Lord" is a metonym for the Lord himself. Alternate translation: "from the Lord"

that he may send the Christ

"that he may again send the Christ." This refers to Christ's coming again.

who has been appointed for you

This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom he has appointed for you"

Acts 3:21

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues the speech that he began in Acts 3:12 to the Jews who stood in the temple area.

He is the One heaven must receive

"He is the One heaven must welcome." Peter speaks of heaven as if it were a person who welcomes Jesus into his home.

heaven must receive until

This means that it is necessary for Jesus to remain in heaven because that is what God has planned.

until the time of the restoration of all things

Possible meanings are 1) "until the time when God will restore all things" or 2) "until the time when God will fulfill everything that he foretold."

about which God spoke from ancient times by the mouth of his holy prophets

When the prophets spoke long ago, it was as if God himself was speaking because he told them what to say. Alternate translation: "about which things God spoke long ago by telling his holy prophets to speak about them"

the mouth of his holy prophets

Here the word "mouth" refers to the words that the prophets spoke and wrote down. Alternate translation: "the words of his holy prophets"

Acts 3:22

General Information:

Peter begins to quote something Moses told the Israelites before the Messiah came.

will raise up a prophet like me from among your brothers

"will cause one of your brothers to become a true prophet, and everyone will know about him"

your brothers

"your nation"

Acts 3:23

that prophet will be completely destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that prophet, God will completely destroy"

Acts 3:24

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes his speech to the Jews that he began in Acts 3:12.

Yes, and all the prophets

"In fact, all the prophets." Here the word "Yes" adds emphasis to what follows.

from Samuel and those who came after him

"beginning with Samuel and continuing with the prophets who lived after he did"

these days

"these times" or "the things that are happening now"

Acts 3:25

You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant

Here the word "sons" refers to heirs who will receive what the prophets and the covenant promised.

Alternate translation: "You are the heirs of the prophets and heirs of the covenant"

In your seed

"Because of your offspring"

all the families of the earth will be blessed

Here the word "families" refers to people groups or nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will bless all the people groups in the world"

Acts 3:26

After God raised up his servant

"After God caused Jesus to become his servant and made him famous"

his servant

This refers to the Messiah, Jesus.

turning every one of you from your wickedness

Here "turning ... from" is a metaphor for causing someone stop doing something. Alternate translation: "causing every one of you to stop doing wicked things" or "causing every one of you to repent from your wickedness"

Acts 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 4:25-26.

Special concepts in this chapter

Unity

The first Christians wanted very much to be united. They wanted to believe the same things and share everything they owned and help those who needed help.

"Signs and wonders"

This phrase refers to things that only God can do. The Christians wanted God to do what only he can do so that people would believe that what they said about Jesus was true.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Cornerstone

The cornerstone was the first piece of stone that people put down when they were building a building. This is a metaphor for the most important part of something, the part on which everything depends. To say that Jesus is the cornerstone of the church is to say that nothing in the church is more important than Jesus and that everything about the church depends on Jesus. (See: and faith)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Name

"There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" ([Acts 4:12](#)). With these words Peter was saying that no other person who has ever been on the earth or will ever be on earth can save people.

Links:

- [Acts 4:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 4

4:1-7

Who were the captains of the temple and the priests?

[4:1]

The captain of the temple controlled soldiers. These soldiers protected the temple area. This made the temple a peaceful area to worship. The priests offered sacrifices and worshiped in the temple (see Exodus 28).

See: Temple; Priest (Priesthood)

Who were the Sadducees?

[4:1]

See: Sadducees

Why did the Sadducees questioned Peter and John?

[4:2]

Some scholars think the priests and Sadducees questioned Peter and John because they taught that after people died, they would be resurrected. That is, their bodies will be made alive again. The Sadducees did not believe anyone would be made alive again (see: 4:2; 5:17). Peter and John taught that some people will be made alive again to live in heaven, and other people will be made alive again to live in hell. They taught that by believing in Jesus, people will be made alive again to live in heaven. That is, they will live together with God in heaven forever. Those who do not believe in Jesus will live separated from God forever and be punished for their sins. Other scholars think the priest and Sadducees questioned Peter and John because Peter and John taught in the temple area without permission from the Sadducees.

See: Sadducees

Why did the Sanhedrin arrest the apostles, Peter and John?

[4:3]

The Sanhedrin arrested the apostles because it was evening. The Sanhedrin, a group of Jewish leaders, could not gather together until the morning. They did not want the apostles to leave without questioning them. They wanted to know how the lame man was healed.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Apostle

How did people respond to the apostles' preaching after the healing miracle?

[4:4]

People responded to the apostles' preaching that day in two different ways. First, the religious leaders opposed the apostles. Second, Luke wrote that about 5,000 men who came to believe the apostles' teaching about Jesus. Some scholars think this number is the total number of men and women who believed in Jesus at that time. Other scholars think the number is simply the men who believe in Jesus that day. Fewer scholars think Luke wrote the total number of Christians from the entire area, including Galilee.

See: Apostle; Preach (Preacher)

See Map: Galilee

Who came together to discuss the actions of Peter and John?

[4:5, 4:6]

Verse 5 talks about three types of people: the rulers, the elders, and the teachers of religious laws. Scholars think these three groups combined to make the Sanhedrin. At that time, Rome allowed the Sanhedrin to make many decisions for the nation. The elders were the ordinary people. They were leaders of the community and the leaders of powerful families. They were mostly Sadducees. The teachers of the law were scribes. They were also

the lawyers. They were mostly Pharisees. The rulers were mostly priests, including the chief priests and the high priest.

The ruling High Priest, Caiaphas, was the Chief (or High) Priest. He was the High Priest when Jesus was killed (see Matthew 26:3; John 18:28). The former High Priest, Annas, was the father-in-law of Caiaphas. Therefore, though the verse says Annas was the High Priest, he was the former High Priest. Many still called Annas High Priest to honor him. So, it was Caiaphas who was the High Priest at the time.

See: Elder; Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar); Sadducees; Pharisees; Scribe; Chief Priest; High Priest

Why did the leaders ask the apostles who gave them permission to heal the crippled man?

[4:7]

The Jews at that time believed that the power to heal a lame man came either from God or from Satan. So the Sanhedrin wanted to know if God or Satan gave him permission to heal this man (see: Luke 11:15; Matthew 9:34).

See: Satan (The Devil); Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)

4:8-12

Why did Luke write, “Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit”?

[4:8]

Scholars think God gave Peter special power to speak what God needed him to say to the Jewish leaders. This fulfilled the promise Jesus made to his followers (see: Luke 12:11; 21:14-15).

See: Holy Spirit

What did Peter say to the people listening?

[4:8, 4:9, 4:10]

Some scholars think the things Peter said confronted the Jewish leaders for arresting them. People normally gave thanks when a sick person was healed. Instead, they arrested Peter and John. Other scholars think Peter wanted to know why the Sanhedrin arrested him and John. Peter said clearly that Jesus has the power and permission to heal the man.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)

What was a cornerstone?

[4:11]

Builders used a cornerstone to make buildings. This was the first stone used when building. They used this stone to know the direction the building needed to go and where the building needed to be placed. They did not bury this stone, but they always made it so that people could see it. The prophet Isaiah spoke of this cornerstone. He said that God placed this cornerstone in Jerusalem. It was firm, tested, precious, and it prevented people from needing to be afraid (see: Isaiah 28:16). Finally, Jesus used this metaphor when speaking about himself (see: Mark 12:1-12).

Peter quoted the well-known passage about the messiah from Psalm 118:22: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.” However, Peter added the words, “by you.” He used the words “by you” to say that the religious leaders rejected God’s cornerstone, Jesus the messiah.

See: Prophet; Metaphor; Messiah (Christ)

How is Jesus the only way to be saved?

[4:12]

Peter said there “is no other name... by which we must be saved.” He was talking about Jesus. He wanted to say that people could only be at peace with God by believing in Jesus.

See: John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Name

4:13-22

How were Peter and John “ordinary, uneducated men”?

[4:13]

Luke wrote that Peter and John were ordinary, uneducated men. That is, they did not have any formal training in the Old Testament from certain teachers. The Jewish teachers did not teach them about the Old Testament in the synagogues.

See: Synagogue; Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

Why did the Sanhedrin not know what to do with the apostles?

[4:16]

The Sanhedrin did not know what to do to stop the apostles from talking about Jesus. Everyone knew about the miracle they did in Jesus’ name.

Advice to Translators: To do something in Jesus’ name means that they did something to honor Jesus and that Jesus gave permission to them to do these things.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Apostle

Why did the Sanhedrin tell the apostles not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus?

[4:18]

The Sanhedrin didn’t want the apostles to speak or teach in the name of Jesus because they did not think Jesus was the messiah. They did not think Jesus was the reason the crippled man was healed (see: 4:10). They thought Jesus was dead. Therefore, they did not think that Jesus was the messiah.

Advice to Translators: To do something in Jesus’ name means that they did something to honor Jesus and that Jesus gave permission to them to do these things.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Apostle; Name: Messiah (Christ)

What did it mean for Peter to obey God rather than man?

[4:19]

Obedying God meant not doing what people said to do if what they said to do was something God said not to do. Jesus said to tell the whole world about him and to feed his sheep (see: Matthew 28: 18-20; John 21:15-20; Acts 1:8) The apostles had to obey Jesus (See: Acts 5:29).

See: Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 15:22

See: Apostle; Shepherd

Why did Luke say the crippled man was over 40 years old?

[4:22]

Luke said the crippled man was over 40 years old to say that a great healing occurred. Everyone knew this man. He lived in that area all of his life.

4:23-31

How did the other Christians pray and praise God together?

[4:24]

Some scholars think one person led the group by praying aloud. The others repeated what he said or agreed with him by saying "Amen." Other scholars think the Christians prayed one at a time. That is, one prayed and then another prayed until all the people prayed.

See: Pray (Prayer

Why did the disciples of Jesus call God Lord?

[4:24]

The disciples of Jesus called God "Lord" (δεσπότης/g1203). This is how the Jewish people began their prayers.

See: Isaiah 37:16-20

See: Disciple; Lord; Pray (Prayer

Why did Peter say, "You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David?"

[4:25]

Peter said, "You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David." God spoke through King David. God fulfilled the prophecy he gave to David (see: Psalm 2:1-3). Some scholars think this makes known that God spoke to the prophets and apostles. He inspired them to write the words of the Bible.

See: 2 Timothy 3:16; Ephesians 3:5; 2 Peter 1:20; 1 Thessalonians 1:5

See: Holy Spirit; Serve (Servant, Slave); Fulfill (Fulfillment); Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Prophet; Apostle; Inspired

What does Psalm 2 say about Jesus?

[4:25, 4:26]

The Jewish religious teachers taught that Psalm 2 was about the messiah. The words "his anointed," "my king," and "my son" were ways of talking about the messiah. The apostles knew the "holy servant Jesus" was the "Son of God" in Psalm 2. The "raging gentiles" were the Roman soldiers who killed Jesus. The "peoples" were the Jewish leaders. The "kings of the earth" was Herod Antipas (ruler of Galilee; see Luke 23:7-12). And the "rulers" was Pontius Pilate (v. 27).

See: Messiah (Christ); Anoint (Anointing); Son of God; King Herod; King Herod

Why did Luke say, "your hand and your plan"?

[4:28]

The Christians knew Jesus suffered because God wanted him to and because he made a plan for him. The words “your hand” means God used the gentiles, rulers, and king to kill Jesus (see Exodus 3:20, 13:3; 15:6).

See: Acts 2:23; 3:18; Ephesians 1:4,5; Exodus 3:20, 13:3, 15:6)

See: King Herod

How did they “speak the word with all boldness”?

[4:29]

Jesus’ disciples prayed for God “boldness”(παρρησία/g3954). They wanted boldness to “speak the word.” That is, they wanted boldness to speak of the gospel to other people clearly and without fear. They wanted God’s word to be proven true. That is, they wanted more great things through the name of Jesus. This would make people know that Jesus was the messiah.

Advice to Translators: To do something in Jesus’ name means that they did something to honor Jesus and that Jesus gave permission to them to do these things.

See: Disciple; Gospel; Messiah (Christ)

What was meant by the words, “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit”?

[4:31]

God filled the Christians with the Holy Spirit. This made them speak boldly about Jesus. This same power gave Peter the boldness to speak about Jesus to the Jewish leaders.

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit

4:32-37

How were the Christians “of one heart and soul”?

[4:32]

The Christians were “of one heart and soul.” First, the Christians did not say they owned anything. They knew God owned everything. That is, their property was not truly theirs. Knowing this made them want to share. Second, the apostles spoke powerfully about Jesus being made alive again (v.33). Third, Luke said, “there was no person among them who lacked anything.” That is, all the Christians had everything they needed to live. The Christians gave generously after selling their fields, properties, and houses.

See: Heart (Metaphor); Soul; Apostle

How did they place the money “at the apostles’ feet?”

[4:35]

The Christians brought the money to the apostles. The apostles decided who received the money. It was given to other Christians when they needed it to live.

See: Apostle

Barnabas was a Levite. Why did he own a field?

[4:37]

God did not give the Levites any land in the Old Testament (see: Numbers 18:20; Deuteronomy 10:9). Some scholars think the Old Testament laws of inheritance were not being followed during the time of the New Testament. Other scholars think Barnabas's wife owned the land that he sold.

See: Tribes of Israel; Inherit (Inheritance, Heir)

Acts 4:1

Connecting Statement:

The religious leaders arrest Peter and John after Peter's having healed the man who was born lame.

came upon them

"approached them" or "came to them"

Acts 4:2

They were deeply troubled

"They were very angry." The Sadducees, in particular, would have been angry about what Peter and John were saying because they did not believe in resurrection.

proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead

Peter and John were saying that God would raise people from the dead in the same way as he had raised Jesus from among the dead. Translate this in a way that allows "the resurrection" to refer to both Jesus's resurrection and the general resurrection of other people.

from the dead

From among all those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

Acts 4:3

They laid hands on them

"The priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees arrested Peter and John"

since it was now evening

It was common practice not to question people at night.

Acts 4:4

the number of the men who believed

This refers only to men and does not include how many women or children believed.

was about five thousand

"grew to about five thousand"

Acts 4:5

General Information:

Here the word "their" refers to the Jewish people as a whole.

Connecting Statement:

The rulers question Peter and John, who answer without fear.

It came about ... that

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

their rulers, elders, and scribes

This is a reference to the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling court, which consisted of these three groups of people.

Acts 4:6

John, and Alexander

These two men were members of the high priest's family. This is not the same John as the apostle.

Acts 4:7

By what power

"Who gave you power"

in what name

Here the word "name" refers to authority. Alternate translation: "by whose authority"

Acts 4:8

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Acts 2:4]

Acts 4:9

we are on trial today

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you are questioning us today"

by what means this man was healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "by what means we have made this man well"

Acts 4:10

let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May all of you and all of the people of Israel know this"

to you all and to all the people of Israel

"to you who are questioning us and to all the other people of Israel"

in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth

Here the word "name" refers to power and authority. Alternate translation: "by the power of Jesus Christ of Nazareth"

whom God raised from the dead

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "whom God caused to live again"

Acts 4:11

Connecting Statement:

Peter completes his speech to the Jewish religious rulers that he began in Acts 4:8.

Jesus Christ is the stone ... which has been made the cornerstone

Peter is quoting from the Psalms. This is a metaphor that means the religious leaders, like builders, rejected Jesus, but God will make him the most important in his kingdom, as a cornerstone in a building is important.

you builders rejected

"you builders thought was worth nothing"

Acts 4:12

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Peter as well as those to whom he is speaking.

There is no salvation in any other person

The noun "salvation" can be translated as a verb. This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "He is the only person who is able to save"

no other name under heaven given among men

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no other name under heaven that God has given among men"

no other name ... given among men by which

The phrase "name ... given among men" refers to the person of Jesus. Alternate translation: "no other person under heaven, who is given among men, by whom"

under heaven

This is a way of referring to everywhere in the world. Alternate translation: "in the world"

by which we must be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which can save us" or "who can save us"

Acts 4:13

General Information:

Here the second instance of "they" refers to Peter and John. All other occurrences of the word "they" in this section refer to the Jewish leaders.

the boldness of Peter and John

Here the abstract noun "boldness" refers to the way in which Peter and John responded to the Jewish leaders, and can be translated with an adverb or an adjective. Alternate translation: "how boldly Peter and John had spoken" or "how bold Peter and John were"

boldness

bravery, courage, lack of fear. A person with boldness is not afraid.

realized that they were ordinary, uneducated men

The Jewish leaders "realized" this because of the way Peter and John spoke.

and realized

"and understood"

ordinary, uneducated men

The words "ordinary" and "uneducated" share similar meanings. They emphasize that Peter and John had received no formal training in Jewish law.

Acts 4:14

the man who was healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the man whom Peter and John had healed"

nothing to say against this

"nothing to say against Peter and John's healing of the man." Here the word "this" refers to what Peter and John had done.

Acts 4:15

the apostles

This refers to Peter and John.

Acts 4:16

What should we do with these men?

The Jewish leaders ask this question out of frustration because they could not think of what to do with Peter and John. Alternate translation: "There is nothing that we can do with these men!"

For a remarkable sign has been done through them, and this is evident to everyone who lives in Jerusalem

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For God has done a remarkable sign through them, and everyone who lives in Jerusalem has seen it" or "For everyone who lives in Jerusalem knows that they have done a remarkable sign"

sign

The miracle of healing was a sign that Peter and John were obeying God, who did the healing.

everyone who lives in Jerusalem

This is a generalization. It may also be an exaggeration to show that the leaders think that this is a very big problem. Alternate translation: "many of the people who live in Jerusalem" or "people who live throughout Jerusalem"

Acts 4:17

in order that it spreads no further

Here the word "it" refers to any miracles or teaching Peter and John might continue to do. Alternate translation: "in order that news of this miracle spreads no further" or "in order that no more people hear about this miracle"

not to speak anymore to anyone in this name

Here the word "name" refers to the person of Jesus. Alternate translation: "not to speak anymore to anyone about this person, Jesus"

Acts 4:18

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 4:19

Whether it is proper in the sight of God

Here the phrase "in the sight of God" refers to God's opinion. Alternate translation: "Whether God thinks it is right"

Acts 4:20

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Peter and John but not to those whom they are addressing.

Acts 4:21

After further warning

The Jewish leaders again threatened to punish Peter and John.

They were unable to find any excuse to punish them

Although the Jewish leaders threatened Peter and John, they could not find a reason to punish them without causing the people to riot.

for what had been done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for what Peter and John had done"

Acts 4:22

General Information:

This verse gives background information about the age of the lame man who was healed.

The man who had experienced this sign of healing

"The man whom Peter and John had miraculously healed"

this sign

The miracle of healing was a sign that Peter and John were obeying God, who did the healing.

Acts 4:23

came to their own people

The phrase "their own people" refers to the rest of the believers. Alternate translation: "went to the other believers"

Acts 4:24

General Information:

Speaking together, the people quote a Psalm of David from the Old Testament. Here the word "they" refers to the rest of the believers, but not to Peter and John.

they raised their voices with one purpose to God

To raise the voice is an idiom for speaking. "they began speaking with one purpose to God"

with one purpose

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

Acts 4:25

You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David

This means that the Holy Spirit caused David to speak or write down what God said.

through the mouth of your servant, our father David

Here the word "mouth" refers to the words that David spoke or wrote down. Alternate translation: "by the words of your servant, our father David"

our father David

Here the word "father" refers to an ancestor.

Why did the Gentile nations rage, and the peoples imagine useless things?

This is a rhetorical question that emphasizes the futility of opposing God. Alternate translation: "The Gentile nations should not have raged, and the peoples should not have imagined useless things."

the peoples imagine useless things

These "useless things" consist of plans to oppose God. Alternate translation: "the peoples imagine useless things against God"

peoples

people groups

Acts 4:26

Connecting Statement:

The believers complete their quotation from King David in the Psalms that they began in Acts 4:25.

The kings of the earth set themselves together, and the rulers gathered together against the Lord

These two lines mean basically the same thing. The two lines emphasize the combined effort of the earth's rulers to oppose God.

set themselves together ... gathered together

These two phrases mean that they joined their armies together to fight a battle. Alternate translation: "set their armies together ... gathered their troops together"

against the Lord, and against his Christ

Here the word "Lord" refers to God. In the Psalms, the word "Christ" refers to the Messiah or God's anointed one.

Acts 4:27

Connecting Statement:

The believers continue praying.

in this city

"this city" refers to Jerusalem.

your holy servant Jesus

"Jesus, who serves you faithfully"

Acts 4:28

to do all that your hand and your plan had decided

Here the word "hand" is used to mean God's power. Additionally, the phrase "your hand and your desire decided" shows God's power and plan. Alternate translation: "to do all that you in your power had decided and planned they would do"

Acts 4:29

look upon their warnings

Here the words "look upon" are a request for God to take notice of the way in which the Jewish leaders threatened the believers. Alternate translation: "notice how they threaten to punish us"

speak your word with all boldness

The word "word" here is a metonym for God's message. The abstract noun "boldness" can be translated as an adverb. Alternate translation: "speak your message boldly" or "be bold when we speak your message"

Acts 4:30

Connecting Statement:

The believers complete the prayer that they began in Acts 4:24.

Stretch out your hand to heal and to give

Here the word "hand" refers to God's power. This is a request for God to show how powerful he is. Alternate translation: "Show your power by healing people and by giving"

through the name of your holy servant Jesus

Here the word "name" refers to power and authority. Alternate translation: "through the power of your holy servant Jesus"

your holy servant Jesus

"Jesus, who serves you faithfully." See how you translated this in Acts 4:27.

Acts 4:31

the place ... was shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the place ... shook"

they were all filled with the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in Acts 2:4. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit had filled them all" or "God had filled them all with the Holy Spirit"

Acts 4:32

were of one heart and soul

Here the word "heart" refers to the thoughts and the word "soul" refers to the emotions. Together they refer to the total person. Alternate translation: "thought the same way and wanted the same things"

they had everything in common

"they shared their belongings with one another." See how you translated this in Acts 2:44.

Acts 4:33

great grace was upon them all

Possible meanings are: 1) that God was greatly blessing the believers or 2) that the people in Jerusalem held the believers in very high esteem.

Acts 4:34

all who owned title to lands or houses

The word "all" here is a generalization. Alternate translation: "Many people who owned title to lands or houses" or "People who owned title to lands or houses"

owned title to lands or houses

"owned land or houses"

the money from the things that were sold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the money that they received from the things that they sold"

Acts 4:35

laid it at the apostles' feet

This means that they presented the money to the apostles. Alternate translation: "presented it to the apostles" or "gave it to the apostles"

it was distributed to each one according to their need

The noun "need" can be translated with a verb. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they distributed the money to each believer who needed it"

Acts 4:36

General Information:

Luke introduces Barnabas into the story.

Son of Encouragement

The apostles used this name to show that Joseph was a person who encouraged others. "Son of" is an idiom used to describe a person's behavior or character. Alternate translation: "Encourager" or "one who encourages"

Acts 4:37

laid it at the apostles' feet

This means that they presented to money to the apostles. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:35]

Acts 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit"

No one knows for sure if Ananias and Sapphira were truly Christians when they decided to lie about the land that they sold (Acts 5:1-10), because Luke does not say. However, Peter knew that they lied to the believers, and he knew that they had listened to and obeyed Satan.

When they lied to the believers, they also lied to the Holy Spirit. This is because the Holy Spirit lives inside believers.

Links:

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Acts 5

5:1-11

What did it mean to keep back part of the price of the land?

[5:2]

Luke wrote that Annanias and Sapphira kept back part of the price of the land. They sold a piece of land and gave the money to the apostles. However, they did not give all of the money to the apostles. It was not wrong for them to do this. However, they made the apostles think they gave all of the money to them. They wanted to be honored for doing this. This was wrong.

What did Peter mean about Satan filling Ananias' heart?

[5:3]

Peter said that Satan filled Annaias' heart. Peter said that Satan wanted Ananias to lie to the apostles. Satan put the idea for doing the wrong thing into the heart of Ananias. He made Annanias think about doing the wrong thing.

See: Satan (The Devil); Heart (Metaphor); Apostle

How did Ananias lie to the Holy Spirit?

[5:3]

Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit. Some scholars think that when Ananias lied to the apostles, this was the same as lying to the Holy Spirit. This was because the Holy Spirit had created Christians. Other scholars think Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit because he lied to the apostles who have the Holy Spirit in them.

See: Hebrews 4:12-13

See: Holy Spirit; Apostle; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

How did Peter know that Ananias lied?

[5:3]

Luke wrote that Peter knew Annanias lied to the apostles. Luke does not write how Peter knew this. Some scholars thought there was someone told Peter. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit told Peter in some way.

See: Apostle; Holy Spirit

Why did Peter write, “You have not lied to men but to God?”

[5:4]

Scholars think when Peter said, “you have not lied to men but to God,” he wanted people to know that Annanias lied to the apostles and to God. This was because Ananias gave an offering to God when he gave money to the apostles.

See: Apostle; Offer (Offering); Sacrifice

How did someone test the Spirit of the Lord?

[5:4]

How did someone test the Spirit of the Lord. Annanias and Sapphira tested the Holy Spirit when they lied to the apostles. When they did this it also tested the Holy Spirit. This is because they did not think the Holy Spirit knew what they were doing.

See: Holy Spirit; Test; Apostle

When speaking to Sapphira, why did Peter say, “they will carry you out”?

[5:9]

When speaking to Sapphira, Paul said, “they will carry you out.” Some scholars think that because Peter watched Ananias die for lying to the Holy Spirit, he also thought Sapphira was also going to die. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit helped Peter to know that Sapphira was going to die for deceiving the Holy Spirit. Peter was not judging them. God judged Ananias and Sapphira.

See: Holy Spirit; Judge (Judgment)

How did great fear come upon the whole church?

[5:11]

Great fear came upon the whole church. He was speaking about a certain group of Christians. Scholars think the Christians suddenly became afraid because God quickly judged Anania and Sapphira.

See: Church

5:12-16

What were “signs and wonders”?

[5:12]

See: Sign

Why were the people afraid of joining the apostles in the Temple area?

[5:12]

People were afraid of joining the apostles in the Temple area. Scholars think the people were afraid of what happened to Ananias and Sapphira or that they feared the Jewish leaders. The Jewish leaders rejected Jesus and they arrested the apostles.

See: Apostle; Temple

Why did people hope that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them?

[5:15]

People hoped that Peter's shadow would fall on them. This is a metaphor. Scholars think that because many signs and wonders were being done through the apostles, the people hoped that Peter would heal them. They think the people believed that if the crowds were too large, that even if Peter's shadow crossed over a sick person, they would be healed. Luke wanted people to know that the people who were brought before the apostles were all healed.

See: Metaphor; Sign; Apostle

5:17-21

Why did the high priest and Sadducees arrest the apostles?

[5:18]

The high priest and Sadducees arrested the apostles. Some scholars think the high priest and the Sadducees were filled with "jealousy" (ζήλος/g2205) because many people believed the things the apostles taught about Jesus (see 13:45). The Jewish leaders believed the apostles taught the wrong things so they arrested the apostles. Other scholars think that the Jewish leaders really wanted to protect the Temple, the Law of Moses, and what they believed about God. The Sadducees zealously protected the things they taught would honor God.

What is an angel?

[5:19]

See: Angel

What were "all the words of this life"?

[5:20]

The angel of the Lord told the apostles to speak "all the words of this life." He wanted them to preach the gospel and help people to know how to be at peace with God by believing in Jesus.

See: Angel; Apostle; Preach (Preacher); Gospel

Who were "all the elders" and "the council"?

[5:21]

Scholars think the assembly, which was the council and all the elders was made up of the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and even Gamaliel, an honorable teacher of the Law of Moses (see: Acts 5:34).

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Sadducees; Pharisees; Law of Moses

5:22-26

Why did the Captain of the Temple guard and the guards fear that the people might stone them when they arrested the apostles?

[5:24]

The people thought the apostles were great because of the things they did. They did many miracles and healed many people (see: Acts 5:12-16). The guards thought the people would begin to throw stones at them if they were to hurt the apostles in any way. For this reason the guards feared the people.

See: Apostle; Miracle

5:27-32

What was meant by the words, “to bring this man’s blood upon us”?

[5:28]

The words, “to bring this man’s blood upon us” meant to make someone responsible for a death. They were willing to be the reason people died. Perhaps the Jewish leaders were willing to have people blame them for Jesus dying.

Why did God exalt Jesus to his right hand?

[5:31]

In ancient times, a person on the right hand side of the king was greatly honored. The king gave this permission to do things for the king. Some scholars think Luke wrote this so that people would know that God gave Jesus permission to do all things and power to do anything. Other scholars think Luke wrote this so people would know that Jesus should be honored.

See: Psalm 110:1-8

See: Exalt; Right Hand

How was the Holy Spirit a witness to these things?

[5:32]

The Holy Spirit was a witness to things. Some scholars think the Holy Spirit was causing people to understand the things the apostles taught. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to perform miracles to prove to people that they were saying true things about Jesus.

See: Holy Spirit; Witness (Martyr); Apostle; Miracle

5:33-42

What kind of beating did the apostles receive from the Sanhedrin?

[5:40]

The apostles were beaten because of the Sanhedrin. Scholars think the apostles were beaten with whips. A whip is made from leather strips. Other scholars think the apostles were beaten with rods. In ancient Israel, they would not hit someone 40 times because of something taught in the Law of Moses (see: Deuteronomy 25:3). Instead, they hit someone 39 times.

See: Apostle; Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Law of Moses

Why did the apostles rejoice to be counted worthy to suffer dishonor for Jesus?

[5:41]

The apostles left the Sanhedrin rejoicing because they believed they were suffering to honor Jesus.

See: Apostle; Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)

Acts 5:1

to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the price

Connecting Statement:

This implies that Ananias had told the apostles that he was giving the entire amount that he had received from selling his land.

Continuing the story of how the new Christians shared their belongings with other believers, Luke tells about two believers, Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts 5:4

Now

While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own ... authority?

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story to tell a new part of the story.

Peter uses this question to rebuke Ananias. Alternate translation: "While it remained unsold, it was your own ... authority."

Acts 5:2

While it remained unsold

his wife also knew it

"Before you sold it"

"his wife also knew that he kept back part of the sale money"

after it was sold, was it not under your authority?

laid it at the apostles' feet

Peter uses this question to rebuke Ananias. Alternate translation: "after it was sold, you had control over the money that you received."

This means that they presented to money to the apostles. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:35]

after it was sold

Acts 5:3

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after you sold it"

General Information:

If your language does not use rhetorical questions, you may reword these as statements.

Why did you put it in your heart to do this?

why has Satan filled your heart to lie ... land?

Peter used this question to rebuke Ananias. Here the word "heart" refers to the will and emotions. Alternate translation: "You should not have thought of doing this thing." or "It is Satan who has put this activity in your heart."

Peter uses this question to rebuke Ananias. Alternate translation: "you should not have let Satan fill your heart to lie ... land."

Acts 5:5

Satan filled your heart

fell down and breathed his last

Here the word "heart" is a metonym for the will and emotions. The phrase "Satan filled your heart" is a metaphor. Possible meanings of the metaphor are 1) "Satan completely controlled you" or 2) "Satan convinced you"

Here "breathed his last" means "breathed his final breath" and is a polite way of saying that he died. Ananias fell down because he died; he did not die

because he fell down. Alternate translation: "died and fell to the ground"

Acts 5:6

The young men arose

This means that they began to act. This does not necessarily mean that they had been sitting or that Peter and Ananias had been at the front of the room or a meeting hall. If your language has a phrase that speaks of people responding to something by beginning to act, you may use it.

Acts 5:7

his wife came in

"Ananias' wife came in" or "Sapphira came in"

what had happened

"that her husband had died"

Acts 5:8

for so much

"for this much money." This refers to the amount of money that Ananias had given to the apostles.

Acts 5:9

General Information:

Here the word "you" is plural and refers to both Ananias and Sapphira.

How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord?

Peter asks this question to rebuke Sapphira. Alternate translation: "You should not have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord!"

you have agreed together

"the two of you have agreed together"

to test the Spirit of the Lord

Here the word "test" means to challenge or to prove. They were trying to see if they could get away with lying to God without receiving punishment.

Look, the feet of the men

The word "Look" is an idiom for "Pay attention!" Peter is probably telling Sapphira to pay attention to the sound of the men's footsteps, which indicate that they are about to enter the building, not to look at their feet. Here the phrase "the feet" can be either a synecdoche for the men whose feet they are or a metonym for the sound that they make. Alternate translation: "Pay attention! The men" or "Listen! The footsteps of the men"

they will carry

"the men will carry"

Acts 5:10

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about Ananias and Sapphira.

fell down at his feet

This means that when she died, she fell on the floor in front of Peter. This expression should not be confused with falling down at a person's feet as a sign of humility.

breathed her last

Here "breathed his last" means "breathed her final breath" and is a polite way of saying "she died." See how you translated a similar phrase in [Acts 5:5]

Acts 5:11

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 5:12

General Information:

It is not clear whether here the word "They" refers to the believers or only to the apostles.

Connecting Statement:

Luke continues to tell what happens in the early days of the church.

Many signs and wonders were taking place among the people through the hands of the apostles

"Many signs and wonders took place among the people through the hands of the apostles." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people"

signs and wonders

"supernatural events and miraculous deeds." See how you translated these terms in Acts 2:22

through the hands of the apostles

Here the word "hands" refers to the apostles. Alternate translation: "through the apostles"

all together

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose. The people were more than just in the same place at the same time.

Solomon's Porch

This was a covered walkway that consisted of rows of pillars that supported a roof, and which people named after king Solomon. See how you translated "the porch that is called Solomon's" in Acts 3:11.

Acts 5:13

General Information:

The words "them" and "they" refer to the apostles.

none of the rest

Possible meanings are 1) the apostles were in Solomon's Porch, but the rest of the believers were afraid to join them there, or 2) all the believers were in Solomon's Porch, and the word "none" is a hyperbole that means that most of the people who were not believers were afraid to join them.

they were held in high esteem by the people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people held the believers in high esteem"

Acts 5:14

more believers were being added to the Lord

This could be stated in active form. See how you translated "were added" in [Acts 2:41]

Acts 5:15

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the people who lived in Jerusalem.

his shadow might fall on some of them

It is implied that God would heal them if Peter's shadow touched them.

Acts 5:16

those afflicted with unclean spirits

"those whom unclean spirits had afflicted"

they were all healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God healed them all" or "the apostles healed them all"

Acts 5:17

Connecting Statement:

The religious leaders began to persecute the believers.

But

This begins a contrasting story. You may translate this in the way that your language introduces a contrasting narrative.

the high priest rose up

Here the phrase "rose up" means that the high priest decided to take action, not that he stood up from a seated position. Alternate translation: "the high priest took action"

they were filled with jealousy

The abstract noun "jealousy" can be translated as an adjective. This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they became very jealous"

Acts 5:18

laid hands on

This means they had the believers arrested. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:3]

Acts 5:19

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to the apostles.

Acts 5:20

in the temple

This phrase here refers to the temple courtyard, not to the temple building, where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard"

all the words of this life

The word "words" here is a metonym for the message that the apostles had already proclaimed. Possible meanings are 1) "all this message of eternal life" or 2) "the whole message of this new way of living"

Acts 5:21

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the apostles.

into the temple

They went into the temple courtyard, not into the temple building, where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "into the temple courtyard"

about daybreak

"as it began to be light." Although the angel led them out of the jail during the night, the sun was rising by the time the apostles reached the temple courtyard.

sent to the prison to have the apostles brought

This implies someone went to the jail. Alternate translation: "sent someone to the jail to bring the apostles"

Acts 5:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 5:23

we found no one inside

Possible meanings are 1) they found no one inside the apostles' cell Alternate translation: "we did not find them inside" or 2) the apostles had been the only prisoners and now there were no prisoners at all in the jail.

Acts 5:24

General Information:

Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the captain of the temple and the chief priests.

they were much perplexed

"they were very puzzled" or "they were very confused"

concerning them

"concerning the words they had just heard" or "concerning these things"

as to what would come of it

"and what would happen as a result" or "what would happen next"

Acts 5:25

General Information:

Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the captain of the temple and the chief priests.

standing in the temple

They did not go into the part of the temple building where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "standing in the temple courtyard"

Acts 5:26

Connecting Statement:

The captain and the officers bring the apostles before the Jewish religious council.

brought them back

"brought the apostles back"

they feared the people, that they might be stoned

This can be expressed with an active form. Alternate translation: "they feared that the people might stone them"

Acts 5:27

they had brought them, they set them ... interrogated them

"the captain and officers had brought the apostles, the captain and the officers set the apostles ... interrogated the apostles"

interrogated

questioned to find out what was true

Acts 5:28

We ... us

The speakers were referring to themselves, but not to the apostles, so these words are exclusive.

you ... your

These words refer to the apostles and so are plural.

in this name

Here the word "name" refers to the person of Jesus. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:17]

you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching

Teaching many people in a city is spoken of as if they were filling the city with a teaching. Alternate translation: "you have taught many people in Jerusalem about him" or "you have taught about him throughout the Jerusalem"

desire to bring this man's blood upon us

Here the word "blood" is a metonym for death, and to bring someone's blood on people is a metaphor for saying that they are guilty of that person's death. Alternate translation: "desire to make us responsible for this man's death"

Acts 5:29

General Information:

Here the word "We" refers to the apostles, and not to the audience.

Peter and the apostles answered

Peter spoke on behalf of all of the apostles when he said the following words.

Acts 5:30

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus

Here "raised up" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "The God of our fathers caused Jesus to live again"

by hanging him on a tree

Here Peter uses the word "tree" to refer to the cross, which was made of wood. Alternate translation: "by hanging him on a cross"

Acts 5:31

God exalted him to his right hand

To be at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "God exalted him to the place of honor beside him"

give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins

The words "repentance" and "forgiveness" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "give the people of Israel an opportunity to repent and have God forgive their sins"

Israel

The word "Israel" refers to the Jewish people.

Acts 5:32

those who obey him

"those who submit to God's authority"

Acts 5:33

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 5:34

Connecting Statement:

Gamaliel addresses the council members.

Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was honored by all the people

Luke introduces Gamaliel and provides background information about him.

who was honored by all the people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom all the people honored"

to take the men outside

The words "the men" refers to the apostles.

Acts 5:35

pay close attention to

"think carefully about" or "be cautious about." Gamaliel was warning them not to do something that they would later regret.

Acts 5:36

Theudas rose up

Possible meanings are 1) "Theudas rebelled" or 2) "Theudas appeared."

claiming to be somebody

"claiming to be somebody important"

He was killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People killed him"

all who had been obeying him were scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the people scattered who had been obeying him" or "all who had been obeying him went in different directions"

came to nothing

This means that they did not do what they had planned to do.

Acts 5:37

After this man

"After Theudas"

in the days of the census

"during the time of the census"

drew away some people after him

This means that he persuaded some people to rebel with him against the Roman government. Alternate translation: "caused many people to follow him" or "caused many people to join him in rebellion"

Acts 5:38

keep away from these men and let them alone

Gamaliel is telling the Jewish leaders not to punish the apostles any more and not to put them back in jail.

if this plan or work is of men

"if men have devised this plan or are doing this work"

it will be overthrown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone will overthrow it"

Acts 5:39

Connecting Statement:

Gamaliel finishes addressing the council members.

if it is of God

Here the word "it" refers to "this plan or work."
Alternate translation: "if God has devised this plan or commanded these men to do this work"

So they were persuaded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So Gamaliel persuaded them"

Acts 5:40

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the council members and all instances of "them" refer to the apostles.

they called the apostles in and beat them

The council members would have ordered the temple guards to do these things.

to speak in the name of Jesus

Here "name" refers to the authority of Jesus. See how you translated a similar phrase in Acts 4:18. Alternate translation: "to speak anymore in the authority of Jesus"

Acts 5:41

General Information:

All instances of "they" refer to the apostles.

they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name

The apostles rejoiced because God had honored them by letting the Jewish leaders dishonor them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God had counted them worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name"

for the Name

Here "the Name" refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "for Jesus"

Acts 5:42

General Information:

The word "they" refers to the apostles.

Thereafter every day

"After that day, every day." This phrase marks what the apostles did every day through the following days.

in the temple and from house to house

They did not go into the temple building where only the priests went. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard and in different people's houses"

Acts 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The distribution to the widows

The believers in Jerusalem gave help—probably money but possibly food—every day to women whose husbands had died. All of these widows had been raised as Jews, but some of them had lived in Judea and spoke Hebrew. Others had lived in Gentile areas and spoke Greek. Those who gave out the money or food gave it to the Hebrew-speaking widows but not to the Greek-speaking widows. To please God, the church leaders appointed Greek-speaking men to make sure the Greek-speaking widows received their share of help. One of these Greek-speaking men was Stephen.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"His face was like the face of an angel"

No one knows for sure what it was about Stephen's face that was like the face of an angel, because Luke does not tell us. It is best for the translation to say only what the ULB says about this.

Links:

- [Acts 6:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 6

6:1-7

What was a disciple?

[6:1]

See: Disciple

Who were the "Grecian" Jews and the Hebrews?

[6:1]

Scholars think the "Grecian Jews" were to Greek-speaking Jewish Christians. They think these were Jews were raised in other countries and only spoke Greek. The Hebrews referred to Jewish Christians who spoke Hebrew or Aramaic.

What did it mean that the "widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food"?

[6:1]

The widows that were among the Grecian Jews were being "overlooked" (παράθεωρέω/g3865) when the daily food was distributed. That is, they were not given food regularly. Instead, the Hebrew widows were given food instead.

What did Luke mean by saying, “give up the word of God in order to serve tables”?

[6:2]

Luke wrote about giving up the Word of God. He did not want the apostles to stop telling people about Jesus in order to do something else. The apostles did not think that it was right for them to stop teaching so they could make sure people were given food. Some scholars think this was because Jesus specifically commanded the apostles to preach and teach the message of the gospel. The apostles were not too great to serve people by giving them food.

See: Word of God; Apostle; Preach (Preacher); Gospel

Who were men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom?

[6:3]

A man of “good reputation” was a man who other people spoke well about. People trusted this type of man to do the right things. It was the Holy Spirit who gave these men the wisdom they needed to serve other people.

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit

Why did Luke write, we will always continue in prayer and in the ministry of the word?

[6:4]

Scholars think the apostles wanted to “devote”(προσκαρτερέω/G4674) themselves completely to prayer and teaching people about Jesus. They wanted to pray for people. They also wanted to preach and teach about Jesus and the things he taught.

See: Apostle; Pray (Prayer

Why did the apostles place their hands upon the men chosen to the community?

[6:6]

When someone laid their hands on someone, they gave this permission to do something. The apostles then prayed for them while they laid their hands on these men.

See 13:1-3; 1 Tim. 4:14

See: Laying on of Hands ; Apostle

How did the priests became obedient to the faith?

[6:7]

When the priests became “obedient”(ὕπακούω/G5219) to the faith, they accepted that Jesus was the messiah God promised to Israel.

See: Priest (Priesthood); Messiah (Christ); Faith (Believe in)

6:8-14

How was Stephen full of grace and power?

[6:8]

How was Stephen full of grace and power. Because of God's favor toward Stephen, God gave Stephen power in the Holy Spirit. Some scholars think the power God gave him was the power to do amazing miracles. Other scholars think that God gave Stephen great wisdom and courage to speak the truth about Jesus in a bold way.

See: Grace; Holy Spirit; Miracle

What was the "Synagogue of the Freedmen"?

[6:9]

The synagogue of freedom was a place where certain people went to worship God. These people were once slaves or prisoners of war who now lived in Jerusalem as free people.

See: Synagogue

How were the freedmen not able to stand against Stephen?

[6:10]

Stephen was wise and full of the Spirit. Because of this, some scholars think that when Luke said the freedmen "were not able to stand against" Stephen, he wanted to say that they could not prove that what Stephen was saying was wrong.

See: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

How did someone blaspheme Moses and God?

[6:11]

The people from the synagogue charged Stephen with blaspheming against Moses and against God. When he wrote about Moses, he was writing about the Law of Moses. These people accused Stephen of saying things that were untrue about the Law of Moses and God.

See: Blaspheme (Blasphemy); Synagogue; Law of Moses

What were the "holy place" and the "law" about which Luke wrote?

[6:13]

The "holy place" was the temple and the "law" referred to the rules for the running of the temple.

See: Temple; Holy (Holiness, Set Apart)

Were the witnesses right about what Stephen said about Jesus?

[6:13]

The witnesses misunderstood what Jesus taught about the temple and the Law of Moses. Jesus did say he would destroy the temple and in three days he would rebuild it again (see: John 2:19, 20). However, Jesus was using a metaphor. He was speaking about dying and being resurrected.

They said the same thing Stephen said. Stephen taught about what Jesus said, but people did not understand what Jesus meant about dying and resurrecting on the third day (see: Matthew 12:40). Jesus body was a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus also prophesied about the destruction of the Jewish Temple (see Luke 21:6). This happened about 40 years after Jesus died. So Stephen knew the current temple was temporary and the Law of Moses had been replaced after Jesus' resurrection.

See: Witness (Martyr); Temple; Metaphor; Law of Moses; Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Prophecy (Prophecy) ;Atonement (Atonement)

What did Luke mean when he said Stephen’s face was “like the face of an angel”?

[6:15]

Luke wrote that Stephen’s face was like the face of an angel. Some scholars think Stephen’s face was shining in the same way that Moses’ face shone after God had talked with Moses (see: Exodus 34:29-35). Other scholars think Stephen’s face was shining because the Holy Spirit was completely controlling Stephen.

See: Angel; Holy Spirit

Acts 6:1

widows

General Information:

A widow is a woman who has not remarried since her husband died.

This is the beginning of a new part of the story. Luke gives important background information to understand the story.

their widows were being overlooked

Now in these days

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Hebrew believers were overlooking the Grecian widows"

Consider how new parts of a story are introduced in your language.

being overlooked

was multiplying

"being ignored" or "being forgotten." There were so many who needed help that some were missed.

"was greatly increasing"

daily distribution of help

Grecian Jews ... Hebrews

These were both groups of Jews who had become believers. The writer assumes that the reader understands that these people were all believers because at this point all believers had grown up as Jews.

The disciples were able to help the widows because believers were giving money to the apostles Acts 4:34-35. Possible meanings are 1) the disciples used the money to buy food, which they would give to the widows, or 2) the disciples gave the money directly to the widows.

Grecian Jews

Acts 6:2

These were believers who had grown up as Jews or become converts living somewhere in the Roman Empire outside of Israel and speaking Greek. Their language and culture were somewhat different from those who had grown up in Israel.

General Information:

the Hebrews

Here the word "us" refers to the 12 apostles and not to their hearers, so it is exclusive.

These were believers who had grown up as Jews or become converts in Israel speaking Hebrew or Aramaic.

The twelve

This refers to the eleven apostles plus Matthias, who was selected in Acts 1:26.

the multitude of the disciples

"all of the disciples" or "all the believers"

give up the word of God

This is an exaggeration in order to emphasize the importance of their task of teaching the word of God. Alternate translation: "stop preaching and teaching the word of God"

serve tables

This is a phrase meaning to serve food to the people.

Acts 6:3

General Information:

Here the word "you" refers to the believers and so is plural.

men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom

Possible meanings are 1) the men have three qualities—a good reputation, being full of the Spirit, and being full of wisdom or 2) the men have a reputation for two qualities—being full of the Spirit, and being full of wisdom .

men of good reputation

"men that people know are good" or "men whom people trust"

over this business

"to be responsible to do this task"

Acts 6:4

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to the 12 apostles and not to their hearers, so it is exclusive.

the ministry of the word

"the ministry of teaching and preaching the message"

Acts 6:5

Their speech pleased the whole multitude

"All the disciples liked their suggestion"

Stephen ... Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus

These are Greek names, so it seems that all of the men elected were from the Grecian Jewish group of believers.

proselyte

a Gentile who converted to the Jewish religion

Acts 6:6

placed their hands upon them

This represented giving a blessing and imparting responsibility and authority for the work to the seven.

Acts 6:7

General Information:

This verse gives an update on the church's growth.

the word of God continued to spread

The writer speaks of the growing number of people who believed the word as if the word of God itself were covering a larger area. Alternate translation: "the number of people who believed the word of God increased" or "the number of people who believed the message from God increased"

became obedient to the faith

"followed the teaching of the new belief"

the faith

Possible meanings are 1) the gospel message of trust in Jesus or 2) the teaching of the church or 3) the Christian teaching.

Acts 6:8

General Information:

The writer begins to give background information about Stephen and other people that is important to understanding the story.

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story.

Now Stephen

This introduces Stephen as the main character in this part of the story.

Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing

The words "grace" and "power" here refer to power from God. This could be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "God was giving Stephen power to do"

Acts 6:9

General Information:

The writer continues giving background information about Stephen and other people that is important to understanding the story.

there arose some people ... Asia. These people were debating with Stephen

The word "arose" is an idiom that represents beginning to act. These people did not begin to rise into the air, nor did they necessarily get up from a sitting position. Alternate translation: "some people ... Asia, began to debate against Stephen"

the synagogue of the Freedmen, of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia

Possible meanings are 1) the Cyrenians, the Alexandrians and those from Cilicia and Asia were all members of the synagogue of the Freedmen; 2) the Cyrenians and the Alexandrians were members of the synagogue of the Freedmen, but those from Cilicia and Asia were not; or 3) there were three separate groups of people: those from the synagogue, those from Cyrene and Alexandria, and those from Cilicia and Asia.

synagogue of the Freedmen

"Freedmen" were probably ex-slaves from these different locations. It is unclear if the other people listed were part of the synagogue or just participated in the debate with Stephen.

the Cyrenians and Alexandrians

"people from Cyrene and Alexandria." Cyrene and Alexandria were cities in Northern Africa. They were south of the Mediterranean Sea.

some from Cilicia and Asia

Cilicia was a city and Asia was a Roman province, both north of the Mediterranean Sea.

debating with Stephen

"arguing with Stephen"

Acts 6:10

Connecting Statement:

The writer finishes giving background information about Stephen and other people that is important to understanding the story.

not able to stand against

This phrase means they could not prove false what he said. Alternate translation: "could not argue against"

Spirit

this refers to the Holy Spirit

Acts 6:11

General Information:

Here the word "We" refers only to the men they persuaded to lie. The word "they" refers back to the people from the synagogue of the freemen

some men to say

They were given money to give false testimony. Alternate translation: "some men to lie and say"

blasphemous words against

"bad things about"

Acts 6:12

General Information:

The word "they" most likely refers back to the people from the synagogue of the Freedmen (Acts 6:9). They were responsible for the false witnesses and for inciting the council, the elders, the scribes, and the other people.

stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes

"caused the people, the elders, and the scribes to be very angry at Stephen"

seized him

"grabbed him and held him so he could not get away"

Acts 6:13

General Information:

The word "they" most likely refers back to the people from the synagogue of the Freedmen (Acts 6:9).

does not stop speaking

"continually speaks"

Acts 6:14

General Information:

The words "we" and "us" refer only to the speakers, not to the hearers, and so is exclusive.

handed down to us

The phrase "handed down" means "passed on."
Alternate translation: "taught our ancestors"

Acts 6:15

fixed their eyes on him

This is an idiom that means they looked intently at him. Here "eyes" is a metonym for sight. Alternate translation: "looked intently at him" or "stared at him"

was like the face of an angel

This phrase compares his face to that of an angel but does not say specifically what they have in common.

Acts 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 7:42-43 and 49-50.

It appears that 8:1 is part of the narrative of this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Stephen said"

Stephen told the history of Israel very briefly. He paid special attention to the times that the Israelites had rejected the people God had chosen to lead them. At the end of the story, he said that the Jewish leaders he was talking to had rejected Jesus just as the evil Israelites had always rejected the leaders God had appointed for them.

"Full of the Holy Spirit"

The Holy Spirit completely controlled Stephen so that he said only and all of what God wanted him to say.

Foreshadowing

When an author speaks of something that is not important at that time but will be important later in the story, this is called foreshadowing. Luke mentions Saul, also known as Paul, here, even though he is not an important person in this part of the story. This is because Paul is an important person in the rest of the Book of Acts.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Implied information

Stephen was talking to Jews who knew the law of Moses well, so he did not explain things that his hearers already knew. But you may need to explain some of these things so that your readers will be able to understand what Stephen was saying. For example, you may need to make explicit that when Joseph's brothers "sold him into Egypt"

Metonymy

Stephen spoke of Joseph ruling "over Egypt" and over all of Pharaoh's household. By this he meant that Joseph ruled over the people of Egypt and of the people and possessions in Pharaoh's household.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Background knowledge

The Jewish leaders to whom Stephen spoke already knew much about the events he was telling them about. They knew what Moses had written in the Book of Genesis. If the Book of Genesis has not been translated into your language, it may be difficult for your readers to understand what Stephen said.

Links:

- [Acts 7:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 7

7:1-8

Why did Stephen call the council members his “brothers” and his “fathers”?

[7:2]

Stephen called these members of the council his “brothers” because they were all Jews. He called them “fathers” because they were older so he wanted to honor them when he spoke.

What did Stephen mean by calling their God “the God of glory?”

[7:2]

Scholars think the words “God of glory” referred to God’s glory. Though Stephen did not write how God showed himself to Abraham, scholars think it was in a way that Abraham knew that it was God.

See: Glory (Glorify)

Where were Mesopotamia and Haran?

[7:4]

See Map: Mesopotamia; Haran

Why did Stephen say God gave none of the land as an inheritance to Abraham?

[7:5]

Stephen said that God did not give any of the land as an inheritance to Abraham. Abraham did not possess the land that was promised to him. Instead, his descendants inherited the land promised to Abraham.

See: Canaan (Promised Land); Covenant with Abraham; Inherit (Inheritance, Heir); Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

Where was the land where the descendants of Abraham went and became slaves?

[7:6]

The descendants of Abraham first went to the land of Egypt when Abraham’s great-grandson, Joseph, was sold into slavery there (see: Genesis 39:1-4; 46:3-4). They were slaves in Egypt for 400 years.

See: Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Serve (Servant, Slave)

See Map: Egypt

Where was the place where God said Abraham’s descendants will worship him?

[7:7]

God said that Abraham's descendants will worship him in Canaan.

See: Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Worship

See Map: Canaan

What was the covenant of circumcision that God made with Abraham?

[7:8]

See: Circumcise (Circumcision); Covenant with Abraham

What was a Patriarch?

[7:8]

The Patriarchs are the 12 sons of Jacob. The twelve tribes of Israel are named for each of the sons of Jacob.

See: Tribes of Israel; Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

7:9-19

Why were Joseph's brothers jealous of Joseph?

[7:9]

Scholars think Joseph's brothers were "jealous"(ζηλόω/g2206) of him because their father, Jacob, showed more favor to Joseph than he did to the other brothers (see: Genesis 37:3-4).

What did Stephen mean by saying "our fathers"?

[7:11]

When Stephen spoke the words, "our fathers" he was referring to the twelve sons of Jacob.

See: Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

Why did Joseph have to reveal himself to his brothers?

[7:13]

Scholars think that because Joseph lived in Egypt for thirteen years after his brothers sold him, Joseph acted and spoke in the same way the Egyptians did. Because of this, his brothers did not know him immediately. Joseph also spoke to his brothers through a translator to cause them to think he was an Egyptian (see: Genesis 42:23).

See Map: Egypt

Where was Shechem?

[7:16]

See Map: Shechem

Who was buried in Shechem?

[7:16]

Scholars think that Stephen was speaking about the twelve sons of Jacob when he spoke of those buried in Shechem.

What was “the time of the promise”?

[7:17]

Stephen spoke about the time of promise. Some scholars think Stephen was speaking about two different parts of the same promise. That is, God promised Abraham that he would give the land of Canaan to his descendants. The second part of the promise was that Abraham’s descendants would first be enslaved in Egypt for 400 years (see: Genesis 15:13).

See: Covenant with Abraham; Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Serve (Servant, Slave)

See Map: Canaan

What is important about the new king not knowing Joseph?

[7:18]

While Joseph was in Egypt, he became one of their most recognized leaders under Pharaoh. That is, everyone in Egypt knew Joseph. However, sixty years after Joseph died, a new king began to rule in Egypt. The new king hated and was very afraid of the people of Israel.

See Map: Egypt; Israel

7:20-36

How was something “beautiful before God”?

[7:20]

Scholars disagree about how something was beautiful before God. Some scholars think it meant that God was very pleased with Moses. Other scholars think this was something the Israelites said when they wanted to say that someone was a very beautiful child.

How was Moses placed outside?

[7:21]

Moses’ parents hid Moses for three months without Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, knowing. Some scholars think that after three months, Moses’ parents could no longer keep him hidden, so they placed him in a basket that was then placed in the river. They think this was done so that the king’s daughter would find him (see: Exodus 2:3-10)

How had the daughter of Pharaoh adopted Moses and raised him as her own son”?

[7:21]

Pharaoh was the king of Egypt. Pharaoh’s daughter adopted Moses. Stephen meant that Pharaoh’s daughter took Moses and cared for him, raising him up in her family as if Moses was her own son. She made him part of her own family.

How did Moses avenge an Israelite by “striking the Egyptian”?

[7:24]

When Stephen said that Moses avenged an Israelite by “striking the Egyptian,” he wanted people to know that Moses killed the Egyptian. The Old Testament does not say how Moses killed the Egyptian (see: Exodus 2:12).

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

Why did the people ask, “Who made you a ruler and a judge over us”?

[7:27]

The people asked Moses, “who made you a ruler and a judge over us.” These people wanted to say that Moses was not a ruler over them and could not judge them.

See: Judge (Judgment)

Where was the land of Midian?

[7:29]

See Map: Midian

Where is the wilderness of Mt. Sinai?

[7:30]

See Map: Mt. Sinai

See: Sinai

Who was the “angel” who appeared to Moses?

[7:30]

The “angel” who appeared in a flame of fire to Moses was the angel of God. That is, God showed himself to Moses in the form of a flame (see: Exodus 3:2).

See: Angel

Why did God say that he was the God of Moses’ fathers--Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?

[7:32]

God revealed himself to Moses as the God of his fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Scholars think God wanted Moses to know that God kept his promises. That is, Moses experienced part of the covenant promise God made with Abraham.

See: Covenant; Covenant with Abraham; Reveal (Revelation)

Why did God command Moses to remove his sandals?

[7:33]

God commanded Moses to remove his sandals because God declared the place where he was standing was holy. When he did this, it was a sign of great respect and honor for God.

See: Holy (Holiness, Set Apart); Sign

How did God “come down” to rescue His people from their sufferings in Egypt?

[7:34]

God came down in the form of an angel to speak to Moses and to send Moses to rescue the Israelites. God was going with Moses to be with him to tell him what to say and do.

See: Angel

Where did God send Moses to deliver God’s people?

[7:35]

God sent Moses back to Egypt to deliver his people from the suffering and slavery.

See: Serve (Servant, Slave); People of God

See Map: Egypt

Why did Stephen speak about the people of Israel rejecting Moses?

[7:35]

Stephen spoke about the people of Israel rejecting Moses. Scholars think Stephen spoke about Israel rejecting Moses to show that Israel rejected many of the prophets God sent to them. Ultimately, the people of Israel rejected Jesus, the one Moses declared would come after him (see: 1 Corinthians 7:37, 51-52).

See: Prophet

How did Moses lead Israel out of Egypt?

[7:36]

Moses did many miracles so the king of Egypt would let the Israelites leave Egypt. However, he did not let them leave. Then God used Moses to punish Egypt and help the Israelites leave Egypt.

See: Exodus 7-14

See: Miracle; Exodus

Where was the Red Sea and the wilderness of Mt. Sinai?

[7:36]

See Map: Red Sea; Mt. Sinai

7:37-43

What did Stephen mean by saying, “God will raise up a prophet”?

[7:37]

The words, “God will raise up a prophet” meant that God was going to appoint and send a prophet to the people of Israel. Scholars think Moses was speaking about the Messiah. Just as Moses was the mediator between the people of Israel and God, so the Messiah is the greatest mediator who mediates between all the peoples of the world and God.

See: Prophet; Appoint; Messiah (Christ); Mediator

What were the “living words” Moses received to give to the Israelites?

[7:38]

Scholars think the “living words” about which Stephen spoke were the messages from God that told people how to live in a way that honored God. They think these “living words” were also seen in the laws given to Moses (see: Deuteronomy 30:15-20).

See: Law of Moses

What did Stephen mean when he said, “in their hearts they turned back to Egypt?”

[7:39]

Some scholars think that when Stephen spoke about the fathers who “in their hearts they turned back to Egypt,” he was speaking about the Israelites who wanted to return to Egypt where they had plenty to eat and drink. Fewer scholars think the fathers wanted to return to Egypt to reject God and worship the idols of Egypt.

See: Exodus 16:3; Numbers 11:4-6

See: Heart (Metaphor); Idolatry (Idol)

Where was Moses when the Israelites asked Aaron to make other gods to lead them?

[7:40]

Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the laws from God when the Israelites asked Aaron to make other gods. The Israelites were impatient, and wanted instead the kind of gods they worshipped in Egypt.

See: Exodus 32:1-6

See: Law of Moses; False gods; Idolatry (Idol)

See Map: Mount Sinai

Why did Aaron and the people make a calf as their idol?

[7:41]

Scholars think Aaron and the people made a calf as an idol because it was like the bull worship of the Egyptians.

See: Idolatry (Idol)

How did God give them up?

[7:42]

The words “God gave them up” meant that God let the Israelites go and follow their own desires. That is, God let the Israelites do the sins they wanted to do. Some scholars think that the Israelites sinned more and more, so God let them suffer the consequences of sinning.

See: Sin

What was the “book of the prophets”?

[7:42]

The “book of the prophets” referred to the last twelve books of the Old Testament. These books were also known as the books of the minor prophets. Stephen quoted from one of the minor prophets (see: Amos 5:25-27).

See: Prophet; Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

What was the “tabernacle of Molech” and the “star of the god Rephan?”

[7:43]

Scholars think the Israelites misused the tabernacle to worship false gods, Molech and the star of Rephan. Scholars think Molech represented the planet Venus, while the star of the god Rephan was the planet Saturn.

See: False gods; Tabernacle

What and where was Babylon?

[7:43] Babylon was in modern day Iraq and it represented a far away place from home and captivity as slaves. Stephen quoted the passage from Amos where God threatened to send the Israelites there as slaves because they worshipped idols.

See: Babylon; Serve (Servant, Slave); Idolatry (Idol)

See Map: Babylon

7:44-53

What was the tabernacle of the testimony?

[7:44]

See: Tabernacle; Testify (Testimony)

How did Israel gain possession of the promised land?

[7:45]

God gave the Israelites the land by driving out the people who were there. He did this by giving the Israelites good leaders like Joshua and by doing miracles (see: Joshua 6).

See: Canaan (Promised Land); Miracle

What did it mean that David “found favor in the sight of God”?

[7:46]

David “found favor in the sight of God.” That is he lived in a way that honored God.

What was a dwelling place for the God of Jacob?

[7:46]

David wanted to build a beautiful temple for God and for the Ark of the Covenant that represented God’s presence with the people. Jacob was the father of the 12 tribes of Israel.

See: Temple; Ark of the Covenant; Presence of God; Tribes of Israel

Who was Solomon?

[7:47]

Solomon was David’s son from his wife Bathsheba. He ruled Israel.

See: 1 Kings 6

What was the house that Solomon built?

[7:47]

Solomon built a house, which is the temple. This was a place where Israel could go to worship God. It was a house because it was where God's presence was on the earth at that time.

See: Temple; Tribes of Israel; Presence of God

Did the Most High live in houses made with hands?

[7:48]

Stephen said the same thing that Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 66:1-2). He wanted to show that God is far greater than any house that can be made with human hands.

How did Stephen say the people of Israel acted?

[7:51] Stephen spoke about four different ways in which the people of Israel acted:

1. Stephen said the people were "stiff-necked." This was a way of saying the people were very stubborn in doing wrong. Scholars think the people did not want to obey God.
2. Stephen said the Israelites were "uncircumcised in heart and ears." This meant that though the Israelites has the outward signs of belonging to God, they did not obey God, or even listen to him. That is, they acted like the people who did not believe in God.
3. Stephen said to the Israelites "you always resist the Holy Spirit." This meant the Israelites had a history of rejecting or fighting against the Holy Spirit (see Isaiah 63:10).
4. Stephen said to the Israelites "you act just as your fathers acted." This meant the Israelites were doing the same thing as their ancestors who resisted the Holy Spirit by rejecting the messages of the prophets.

See: 1 Kings 19:14; Nehemiah 9:26; Luke 6:22-23; 11:49; 13:34

See: Circumcise (Circumcision); Heart (Metaphor); Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Prophet

Did the people of Israel persecute every prophet?

[7:52]

Stephen asked a rhetorical question. That is, he did not expect any answer from the Israelites. The Israelites persecuted most of the prophets. They repeatedly rejected Moses, even though they said that Moses was their greatest teacher.

See: Matthew 23:29-36

See: Persecute (Persecution); Prophet

[7:52]### Who was the righteous one?

The righteous one was the Messiah. People knew that Stephen was talking about Jesus.

See: Isaiah 53:11; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15

See: Messiah (Christ); Righteous (Righteousness)

What was Stephen accusing these members of the Jewish council of doing?

[7:52, 7:53]

Stephen accused the members of the Jewish council of being traitors (προδότες /g4273) and killing Jesus because they helped the Romans to kill Jesus (see John 19:11).

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)

What was the law the “angels had established”?

[7:53]

Scholars think that God used angels to give the Law of Moses to the Israelites. That is, God created the Law of Moses and then sent his angels to deliver the Law of Moses (see: Deuteronomy 33:2; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2).

See: Angel; Law of Moses

7:54-60

Who were the council members?

[7:54]

The Council members were the religious leaders of the people, that is, the Sanhedrin.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)

What was meant by the words, “cut to the heart”?

[7:54]

When Luke wrote that the council members were “cut to the heart,” it was a metaphor. It meant that the council members were extremely angry.

See: Heart (Metaphor); Metaphor; Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)

What did Luke mean when he said the council “ground their teeth at Stephen”?

[7:54]

When Luke wrote the words “ground their teeth at Stephen” he meant the council members were so angry they closed their mouths tightly. Perhaps they did this to not do some bad because they were angry.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin))

How was Stephen “full of the Holy Spirit”?

[7:55]

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit

Why was Jesus “standing at the right hand of God”?

[7:56]

Scholars think that Jesus being at the “right hand of God” was to show that Jesus had all the power of God and God gave him permission to rule everything. Some scholars think Jesus was “standing” to welcome Stephen into

heaven. Stephen also called Jesus the “Son of Man.” Those who heard Stephen understood that Stephen was claiming that Jesus was God.

See: Heaven; Son of Man; Jesus is God

See: Mark 14:62; Daniel 7:13-14

How were the heavens opened?

[7:56]

The words that the heavens were opened was a way to say that God revealed things about heaven. God did this to honor Jesus. At the baptism of Jesus, the heavens were also opened and the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus.

See Matthew 3:16; Ezekiel 1:1

See: Heaven; Reveal (Revelation)); Baptize (Baptism); Holy Spirit

Why did the council members stone Stephen?

[7:58]

Scholars think the Jewish council stoned Stephen to death because they believed he blasphemed God. They think he did this when he said that Jesus is God. However, this is not blasphemy because Jesus is God.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Blaspheme (Blasphemy); Jesus is God

Why did the witnesses lay their clothing at Saul’s feet?

[7:58]

Scholars think the witnesses laid their clothing at Saul’s feet simply so that he would guard the clothes while they cast stones at Stephen. Some scholars do not know if Saul was leading this stoning. Other scholars think he was just watching Stephen being stoned.

Who was Saul?

[7:58]

Saul was the same one who had the name Paul (see: Acts 13:9) He became an apostle.

See: Apostle

What did Stephen mean when he cried out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit”?

[7:59]

Scholars think that when Stephen cried out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” he was asking Jesus to welcome him into heaven, that he might be with Jesus. This prayer is very similar to that which Jesus himself prayed (see: Luke 23:6).

See: Spirit (Spiritual); Heaven

What did Stephen mean when he asked God to “not hold this sin against them”?

[7:59]

Scholars think Stephen prayed that Jesus would forgive the people who were stoning him. This prayer is very similar to the prayer Jesus prayed (see: Luke 23:34).

See: Sin

How did Stephen fall asleep?

[7:59]

When Luke wrote that Stephen “fell asleep,” he wanted to write that Stephen died.

Acts 7:1

enough to set a foot on

Connecting Statement:

Possible meanings for this phrase are 1) enough ground to stand on or 2) enough ground to take a step.

The part of the story about Stephen, which began in Acts 6:8, continues. Stephen begins his response to the high priest and the council by talking about things that happened in Israel's history. Most of this history comes from Moses's writings.

Alternate translation: "a very tiny piece of ground"

as a possession to him and to his descendants after him

"for Abraham to own and to give to his descendants"

Acts 7:2

Acts 7:6

General Information:

God was speaking to him like this

The word "our" includes both Steven, the Jewish council to whom he spoke, and the entire audience.

It may be helpful to state that this occurred later than the statement in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "Later God told Abraham"

Brothers and fathers, listen to me

four hundred years

Stephen was being very respectful to the council in greeting them as extended family.

"400 years"

Acts 7:3

Acts 7:7

General Information:

I will judge the nation

The word "your" refers to Abraham and so is singular.

"nation" refers to the people in it. Alternate translation: "I will judge the people of the nation"

Acts 7:4

the nation that they serve

General Information:

"the nation that they will serve"

In verse 4 the words "he," "his," and "him" refer to Abraham. In verse 5 the words "He" and "he" refer to God, but the word "him" refers to Abraham. Here the word "you" refers to the Jewish council and audience.

Acts 7:8

gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision

Acts 7:5

The Jews would have understood that this covenant required Abraham to circumcise the males of his family. Alternate translation: "made a covenant with Abraham to circumcise the males of his family"

He gave none of it

so Abraham became the father of Isaac

"He did not give any of it"

The story transitions to Abraham's descendants.

Jacob the father

"Jacob became the father." Stephen shortened this.

Acts 7:9

the patriarchs

"the founders of our tribes" or "our ancestors." A patriarch is a man who rules a family.

sold him into Egypt

The Jews knew their ancestors sold Joseph to be a slave in Egypt. Alternate translation: "sold him as a slave in Egypt"

was with him

This is an idiom for helping someone. Alternate translation: "helped him"

Acts 7:10

over Egypt

This refers to the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "over all the people of Egypt"

all his household

This refers to all his possessions. Alternate translation: "everything he owned"

Acts 7:11

Now a famine and great tribulation came

"a famine came." The ground stopped producing food and this caused a terrible suffering.

our fathers

This refers Jacob and his sons, who were the ancestors of the Jewish people.

Acts 7:12

grain

Grain was the most common food at that time.

our fathers

Here this phrase refers to Joseph's older brothers, who were Jacob's sons.

Acts 7:13

On their second trip

"On their next trip"

made himself known

Joseph revealed to his brothers his identity as their brother.

Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh learned that they were Joseph's family"

Acts 7:14

sent his brothers back

"sent his brothers back to Canaan" or "sent his brothers back home"

Acts 7:15

he died

Make sure it does not sound as though he died as soon as he arrived in Egypt. Alternate translation: "eventually Jacob died"

he and our fathers

"Jacob and his sons, who became our ancestors"

Acts 7:16

They were carried over ... and laid

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jacob's descendants carried Jacob's body and his son's bodies over ... and buried them"

for a price in silver

"with money"

Acts 7:17

As the time of the promise ... the people grew and multiplied

In some languages it may be helpful to say that the people increased in number before saying that the time of the promise arrived.

time of the promise approached

It was close to the time that God would fulfill his promise to Abraham.

Acts 7:18

there arose another king

"another king began to rule"

over Egypt

"Egypt" refers to the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "over the people of Egypt"

who did not know about Joseph

"Joseph" refers to the reputation of Joseph. Alternate translation: "who did not know that Joseph had helped Egypt"

Acts 7:19

General Information:

The word "our" includes Stephen and his audience.

Acts 7:20

At that time Moses was born

This introduces Moses into the story.

very beautiful before God

This phrase is an idiom that means Moses was very beautiful.

was nourished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his parents nourished him" or "his parents cared for him"

Acts 7:21

When he was placed outside

Moses was "placed outside" because of Pharaoh's command. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When his parents placed him outside" or "When they abandoned him"

Pharaoh's daughter ... raised him as her own son

She did for him every good thing a mother would do for her own son. Use your language's normal word for what a mother does to make sure her son becomes a healthy adult.

adopted him

If your language has a word for an informal procedure, not a formal legal procedure, in which one family takes a child in and raises him, you may want to use that here. Pharaoh's daughter did do for Moses what any mother would do for her child, but this involved no formal legal procedure.

as her own son

"as if he were her own son"

Acts 7:22

Moses was educated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Egyptians educated Moses"

all the wisdom of the Egyptians

This is an exaggeration to emphasize that he was trained in the best schools in Egypt.

mighty in his words and works

"effective in his speech and actions" or "influential in what he said and did"

Acts 7:23

it came into his heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for "mind." The phrase "it came into his heart" is an idiom that means to decide something. Alternate translation: "it came into his mind" or "he decided"

visit his brothers, the descendants of Israel

This refers to his people, and not just to his family.
Alternate translation: "see how his own people, the children of Israel, were doing"

Acts 7:24

Seeing an Israelite being mistreated ... the Egyptian

This can be stated in active form by rearranging the order. Alternate translation: "Seeing an Egyptian mistreating an Israelite, Moses defended and avenged the Israelite by striking the Egyptian who was oppressing him"

striking the Egyptian

Moses hit the Egyptian so hard that he died.

Acts 7:25

he thought

"he imagined"

by his hand, was giving them salvation

Here "hand" refers to the actions of Moses. Alternate translation: "was giving them salvation through what he, Moses, was doing"

was giving them salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated using the verb "save." Alternate translation: "was saving them" or "was rescuing them"

Acts 7:26

when they were fighting

Some translations make it clear that two men were fighting. Alternate translation: "when two men of Israel were fighting"

make peace between them

"make them stop fighting"

Men, you are brothers

Moses was addressing the Israelites who were fighting.

why are you wronging one another?

Moses asked this question to encourage them to stop fighting. Alternate translation: "you should not do wrong to each other!"

Acts 7:27

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to the Israelites but does not include Moses.

Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us?

The man used this question to rebuke Moses. Alternate translation: "No one appointed you ruler or judge over us." or "You have no authority over us!"

Acts 7:28

Would you like to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?

The man used this question to warn Moses that he and probably others knew Moses had killed the Egyptian.

Acts 7:29

General Information:

Stephen's audience already knew that Moses had married a Midianite woman when he fled Egypt.

after hearing this

The implied information is that Moses understood that the Israelites knew that he had killed an Egyptian the day before (Acts 7:28).

Acts 7:30

When forty years were past

"After 40 years passed." This was the amount of time Moses had been in Midian. Alternate translation: "Forty years after Moses fled from Egypt"

an angel appeared

Stephen's audience knew that God spoke through the angel.

Acts 7:31

he marveled at the sight

Moses was surprised that the bush was not burning up in the fire. This was previously known by Stephen's audience. Alternate translation: "because the bush was not burning up"

as he approached to look at it

This may mean Moses initially drew close to the bush to investigate.

Acts 7:32

I am the God of your fathers

"I am the God whom your ancestors worshiped"

Moses trembled and did not dare to look

This may mean Moses drew back in fear when he heard the voice.

Moses trembled

Moses shook from fear. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Moses trembled with fear"

Acts 7:33

Take off the sandals

God told Moses this so he would honor God.

for the place where you are standing is holy ground

The implied information is that where God is present, the immediate area around God is considered holy or is made holy by God.

Acts 7:34

certainly seen

"seen for sure." The word "certainly" adds emphasis to "seen."

the oppression of my people

The abstract noun "oppression" can be translated using the verb "oppress." Alternate translation: "the way the Egyptians are oppressing my people"

my people

The word "my" emphasizes that these people belonged to God. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"

I have come down to rescue them

"will personally cause their release"

now come

"get ready." God uses an order here.

Acts 7:35

General Information:

Verses 35-38 contain a series of connected phrases referring to Moses. Each phrase begins with statements such as "This Moses" or "This same Moses" or "This is the man" or "It is the same Moses." If possible, use similar statements to emphasize Moses. After the Israelites left Egypt, they spent 40 years wandering around the wilderness before God led them into the land he had promised them.

This Moses whom they rejected

This refers back to the events recorded in Acts 7:27-28.

deliverer

"rescuer"

by the hand of the angel ... bush

The hand is a metonym for the action performed by the person. In this case, the angel had commanded Moses to return to Egypt. Stephen speaks as if the angel had a physical hand. You may need to make explicit what action the angel did. Alternate translation: "by the action of the angel" or "by having the angel ... bush command him to return to Egypt"

Acts 7:36

during forty years

Stephen's audience knew about the forty years the Israelites spent in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "during the 40 years that the Israelite people lived in the wilderness"

Acts 7:37

raise up a prophet

"cause a man to be a prophet"

from among your brothers

"from among your own people"

Acts 7:38

This is the man who was in the assembly

"This is the man Moses who was among the Israelites"

This is the man

The phrase "This is the man" throughout this passage refers to Moses.

who received living words to give to us

God was the one who gave those words. Alternate translation: "to whom God spoke living words to give to us"

living words

Possible meanings are 1) "a message that endures" or 2) "words that give life."

Acts 7:39

pushed him away from themselves

This metaphor emphasizes their rejection of Moses. Alternate translation: "they rejected him as their leader"

in their hearts they turned back

Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's thoughts. To do something in the heart means to desire do to something. Alternate translation: "they desired to turn back"

Acts 7:40

General Information:

The quotation in this verse is from the writings of Moses.

At that time

"When they decided to return to Egypt"

Acts 7:41

they made a calf

Stephen's audience knew the calf they made was a statue. Alternate translation: "they made a statue that looked like a calf"

a calf ... the idol ... the work of their hands

These phrases all refer to the same statue of the calf.

Acts 7:42

General Information:

Stephen's quotation here is from the prophet Amos.

God turned

"God turned away." This action expresses that God was not pleased with the people and no longer helped them. Alternate translation: "God stopped correcting them"

gave them up

"abandoned them"

the stars in the sky

Possible meanings for the original phrase are 1) the stars only or 2) the sun, moon, and stars.

the book of the prophets

This was apparently a collection of the writings of several of the Old Testament prophets into one scroll. It would also have included the writings of Amos.

Did you bring me offerings and sacrifices ... Israel?

God asked this question to show Israel they did not worship him with their sacrifices. Alternate translation: "You did not honor me when brought offerings and sacrifices ... Israel."

house of Israel

This refers to the whole nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "all you Israelites"

Acts 7:43

General Information:

The quotation from the prophet Amos continues here.

Connecting Statement:

Stephen continues his response to the high priest and the council which he began in Acts 7:2.

You accepted

It is implied that they took these idols with them as they traveled in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "you carried with you from place to place"

tabernacle of Molech

the tent that housed the false god Molech

the star of the god Rephan

the star that is identified with the false god Rephan

the images that you made

They made statues or images of the gods Molech and Rephan in order to worship them.

I will carry you away beyond Babylon

"I will remove you to places even farther than Babylon." This would be God's act of judgment.

Acts 7:44

the tabernacle of the testimony

The tent that housed the ark (a box) with the 10 commandments carved in stone inside it

Acts 7:45

our fathers, under Joshua, received the tabernacle and brought it with them

The phrase "under Joshua" means that their ancestors did these things in obedience to Joshua's direction. Alternate translation: "our fathers, in accordance with Joshua's instructions, received the tabernacle and brought it with them"

God took the land from the nations and drove them out before the face of our fathers

This sentence tells why the ancestors were able to take possession of the land. Alternate translation: "God forced the nations to leave the land before the face of our fathers"

God ... drove them out before the face of our fathers

Here "the face of our fathers" refers to the presence of their ancestors. Possible meanings are 1) "As our ancestors watched, God ... drove them out" or 2) "When our ancestors came, God ... drove them out"

the nations

This refers to the people who lived in the land before Israel. Alternate translation: "the people who previously lived here"

drove them out

"forced them to leave the land"

Acts 7:46

he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob

Here "house" is probably a metonym for the ark of the covenant. David wanted to build a place for the ark, which represented God's presence, so people could go there to worship God. Alternate translation: "he might build a place where people could worship the God of Jacob"

the house of Jacob

Many versions read, "the God of Jacob."

Acts 7:47

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 7:48

made with hands

The hand is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "made by people"

Acts 7:49

General Information:

In verses 49 and 50, Stephen quotes from the prophet Isaiah. In the quotation, God is speaking about himself.

Heaven is my throne ... the earth is the footstool for my feet

The prophet is comparing the greatness of God's presence to how impossible it is for man to build a place for God to rest on earth since the whole earth is nothing but a place for God to rest his feet.

What kind of house can you build for me?

God asks this question to show how useless man's efforts are to take care of God. Alternate translation: "You can not build a house adequate enough for me!"

what is the place for my rest?

God asks this question to show man that he cannot provide God any rest. Alternate translation: "There is no place of rest good enough for me!"

Acts 7:50

General Information:

In verses 49 and 50, Stephen quotes from the prophet Isaiah. In the quotation, God is speaking about himself.

Did my hand not make all these things?

God asks this question to show that man did not create anything. Alternate translation: "My hand made all these things!"

Acts 7:51

Connecting Statement:

With a sharp rebuke, Stephen finishes his response to the high priest and the council, which he began in Acts 7:2.

You stiff-necked people

Stephen shifts from identifying with the Jewish leaders to rebuking them.

uncircumcised in heart and ears

The Jews regarded uncircumcised people as disobedient to God. Stephen uses "hearts and ears" to represent to the Jewish leaders who acted the way Gentiles act when they do not obey or listen to God. Alternate translation: "you refuse to obey and hear"

Acts 7:52

Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?

Stephen asked this question to show them that they learned nothing from the errors of their forefathers. Alternate translation: "Your forefathers persecuted every prophet!"

Righteous One

This refers to the Christ, the Messiah.

you have now become the betrayers and murderers of him also

"you have also betrayed and murdered him"

murderers of him

"murderers of the Righteous One" or "murderers of the Christ"

Acts 7:53

the law that angels had ordained

"the laws that God caused angels to give to our ancestors"

Acts 7:54

Connecting Statement:

The council reacts to Stephen's words.

Now when the council members heard these things

This is the turning point; the sermon ends and the council members react.

they were furious in their hearts

This means that they were extremely angry.

ground their teeth at Stephen

This action expressed their strong anger at Stephen or hatred of Stephen. Alternate translation: "they became so angry that they ground their teeth together" or "moved their teeth back and forth as they looked at Stephen"

Acts 7:55

looked up intently into heaven

"stared up into heaven." It appears that only Stephen saw this vision and not anyone else in the crowd.

saw the glory of God

People normally experienced the glory of God as a bright light. Alternate translation: "saw a bright light from God"

and he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God

To stand at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "and he saw Jesus standing in the place of honor and authority beside God"

Acts 7:56

Son of Man

Stephen refers to Jesus by the title "Son of Man."

Acts 7:57

covered their ears

"put their hands on their ears." They did this to show that they did not want to hear any more of what Stephen said.

with one purpose

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

Acts 7:58

They forced him out of the city

"They seized Stephen and forcefully took him out of the city"

outer clothing

These are cloaks or robes they would wear outside to stay warm, similar in function to a jacket or coat.

at the feet

"in front of." They were placed there so Saul could watch them.

a young man

Saul was probably around 30 years old at the time.

Acts 7:59

receive my spirit

"take my spirit." It may be helpful to add "please" to show that this was a request. Alternate translation: "please receive my spirit"

Acts 7:60

Connecting Statement:

This ends the story of Stephen.

He knelt down

This is an act of submission to God.

do not hold this sin against them

This can be stated in a positive way. Alternate translation: "forgive them for this sin"

fell asleep

Here to fall asleep is a euphemism for dying. Alternate translation: "died"

Acts 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 8:32-33.

The first sentence of verse 1 ends the description of the events in chapter 7. Luke begins a new part of his history with the words "So there began."

Special concepts in this chapter

Receiving the Holy Spirit

In this chapter for the first time Luke speaks of people receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15-19). The Holy Spirit had already enabled the believers to speak in tongues, to heal the sick, and to live as a community, and he had filled Stephen. But when the Jews started putting believers in prison, those believers who could leave Jerusalem did leave, and as they went, they told people about Jesus. When the people who heard about Jesus received the Holy Spirit, the church leaders knew that those people had truly become believers.

Proclaimed

This chapter more than any other in the Book of Acts speaks of the believers proclaiming the word, proclaiming the good news, and proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ. The word "proclaim" translates a Greek word that means to tell good news about something.

Links:

- [Acts 8:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Acts 8

8:1-3

How was Saul "in agreement" with Stephen's death?

[8:1]

Saul thought that Stephen should die. When the angry people threw stones at Stephen, Saul guarded their clothes they took off themselves (see: Acts 7:58). Scholars think Saul later changed his name to Paul after he became a Christian.

See Acts 22:20

What was a "great persecution"?

[8:1]

A “strong and violent persecution” began when the angry people killed Stephen. The people from a certain synagogue organized attacks in Jerusalem. They put many Christians in prison. Saul went from house to house and put Christians in prison (see: Acts 8:3). The Christians who were not in prison quickly left Jerusalem and went to Samaria and other places in Judea to escape persecution. Only the apostles stayed in Jerusalem at that time.

Some scholars think those who left Jerusalem were the Greek-speaking Jewish Christians and not the Hebrew and Aramaic speaking Jewish Christians. The Hebrew and Aramaic speaking Jewish Christians were more loyal to Jerusalem. Other scholars think the persecution was stronger against the Greek-speaking Jewish Christians. Thus, the apostles, who were Hebrew and Aramaic speaking Jewish Christians, were able to stay in Jerusalem.

See: 1 Thessalonians 2:14

See: Persecute (Persecution); Synagogue; Apostle

See Map: Jerusalem; Samaria; Judea

Who were the “devout men” who buried Stephen?

[8:2]

The “devout men” were men who feared God and lived in a way that honored God. These men took Stephen’s body to bury it in the way the Law of Moses required. Scholars think these men believed in Jesus.

See: Fear of God; Law of Moses

8:4-8

What was “preaching the word”?

[8:4]

See: Galatians 2:19-20

See: Preach (Preacher); Word of God; Gospel

What was “proclaimed to them the Christ”?

[8:5]

Philip told those in Samaria the important story about the messiah. He told them that Jesus was the messiah of the Jewish and Samaritan people, and that he lived a perfect life. Jesus did many miracles and taught them about God. Jesus suffered, died, and became alive again on the third day.

See: Messiah (Christ); Miracle; Atonement (Atonement); Resurrect (Resurrection)

See Map: Samaria

Who was Philip?

[8:5]

Philip was one of the seven brothers the Christians chose to help widows (see: Acts 6:5).

How did people give “close attention”?

[8:6]

The crowds listened together with complete attention. All of the people watched and listened to what Philip said because he did miracles and he spoke strongly.

See: Miracle

What was a sign?

[8:6]

A sign was a miracle that God did and people were able to see it (see: Acts 8:7).

See: Miracle; Sign

What is an unclean spirit?

[8:7]

An unclean spirit is an evil spirit. It is also called a demon. Unclean spirits and demons obey Satan.

See: Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons); Demon; Satan (The Devil)

What was a paralyzed person? A lame person?

[8:7]

A paralyzed person was someone who was partially or completely unable to move.

A lame person was someone who was injured or had an illness and were not able to walk well or they were not able to walk at all.

8:9-13

Why did the people think God gave power to the man who did sorcery?

[8:9]

The people believed God gave power to the man who did sorcery because he did amazing things for a long time and he claimed to be someone great (see: Acts 8:9,11).

See: Sorcery

What was the gospel of the kingdom of God?

[8:12]

See: Gospel; Kingdom of God

What did the people do after they believed the good news about Jesus and the kingdom of God?

[8:12]

The people, both men and women, were baptized immediately after they believed the good news about Jesus and the kingdom of God.

See: Baptize (Baptism); Gospel; Kingdom of God

Why did Simon, who had great power of God, believe and be baptized?

[8:13]

Simon believed and was baptized because he was surprised when he saw the signs and mighty works Philip did with God's power. That is, the Samaritans thought Simon had great power of God, but Simon himself was amazed when he saw God's power through Philip. Simon knew about power from God and he knew something more powerful than his power worked through Philip. His trust in miracles and power was not enough for him to believe for very long. He soon became more interested in power than in believing (see: Acts 8:18-19). Jesus knew Simon was thinking in the wrong way (see: John 2:23-24).

See: Baptize (Baptism); Sign

8:14-25

What did the apostles in Jerusalem think about the Samaritans believing in Jesus, the Messiah?

[8:14]

The apostles in Jerusalem were glad the Samaritans believed in Jesus and they were not surprised. They did, however, feel it was their duty to inspect the new work to make sure it was true and good (see: Acts 11:22). Before, John went to Samaria because before that he wanted Jesus to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans for rejecting Jesus since Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem (see: Luke 9:52-55). Now, John went to see for himself if the Samaritans believed in Jesus. Then, John told other Samaritan villages about Jesus and the gospel (see: Acts 8:25).

See: Apostle; Samaria; Fire; Heaven; Gospel

See Map: Jerusalem

How did Samaria receive the "word" of God?

[8:14]

Samaria received the "word"(λόγος/g3056) of God when they believed Jesus is the messiah, the Son of God, and the power of salvation (see: Romans 1:2-5). It was a way to say they believed the things Philip said about Jesus, who is the "Word" of God (see: John 1:1).

See: Word of God; Messiah (Christ); Son of God; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

Why did the apostles send Peter and John to Samaria?

[8:14]

Scholars give several reasons why the apostles sent Peter and John to Samaria.

1. The Jewish Christians in Jerusalem needed evidence that God accepted the Samaritans. The Jews in general did not accept the Samaritans because the Samaritans were a mixed race of Jews who married Gentiles (see: 2 Kings 17:26). So the apostles sent Peter and John to see the new work of God in Samaria.
2. It was necessary for the apostles from Jerusalem to welcome the Samaritan Christians. Then the Christians in Jerusalem would be able to fully include Samaritan Christians into the Christian community. The Christian community was only Jewish people until that time.
3. It was not necessary for the apostles from the Jerusalem church to welcome the Samaritan Christians. Luke did not write it was necessary. Later, Paul wrote that other Christians who were not apostles baptized people (see: 1 Corinthians 1:14-17).

4. God wanted to use the apostles when the first Gentiles received the Holy Spirit.

See: Apostle; Samaria; Gentile; Baptize (Baptism); Holy Spirit

See Map: Samaria

Why did Luke write “to come down” to Samaria?

[8:15]

Samaria was lower in elevation from Jerusalem. Jerusalem is high in elevation. So they came down to Samaria from Jerusalem.

See: Samaria

What happened when the apostles Peter and John prayed and laid hands on the Samaritans for them to receive the Holy Spirit?

[8:15, 8:16, 8:17]

Luke did not write what happened when the apostles Peter and John prayed and laid hands on the Samaritans for them to receive the Holy Spirit. Some scholars think they spoke in tongues because that happened at other times when the Holy Spirit filled people in Acts (see: Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:6). Other scholars think there were other gifts of the Spirit or signs because Luke did not write the Samaritans spoke in tongues.

See: Baptize (Baptism); Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit; Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Pray (Prayer; Laying on of Hands ;Samaria; Speaking in Tongues; Sign

Why did Simon want to give the apostles money to give the Holy Spirit to people?

[8:18]

Simon wanted to do the same things an apostle did. Then he will have the power to give people the Holy Spirit when he laid his hands on people. He liked having power and this was another way for him to have power over people and bring glory to himself.

See: Apostle; Holy Spirit; Laying on of Hands ; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Glory (Glorify)

Why did Peter rebuke Simon for wanting to buy the power of God from the apostles?

[8:20, 8:21]

Peter rebuked Simon for wanting to buy the free gift of God with money. The Holy Spirit was not for sale. People did not need money to have the gifts of God (see: Acts 8:20). Instead, a person repented and believed in Jesus. God's gift of the Holy Spirit to live in everyone was a free gift for all who believed in him.

See: Acts 3:6

See: Holy Spirit; Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Repent (Repentance); Redeem (Redemption)

What did Peter wish will perish?

[8:20]

Peter wanted Simon to not have money. Peter did not wish for Simon to die.

What was the “part or allotted portion” for which Simon did not have the right heart?

[8:21]

Peter and John knew Simon did not have the right heart. That is, he did not think the right things and they did not think Simon should be a leader.

See: Heart (Metaphor)

When was a person’s heart not right with God?

[8:21]

A person’s heart was not right with God when a person did not live in a way that honors God or does not want to live in a way that honors God.

See: Heart (Metaphor)

Why did Peter say God “might perhaps forgive”?

[8:22]

Peter did not question if God was able to forgive Simon. He said these words because he did not know if God will forgive Simon. His sin of offering money for the gift of God was a serious sin. God will not allow man to control God (see: 2 Samuel 6:1-7).

See: Joshua 7:1

How did a person repent?

[8:22]

See: Repent (Repentance)

How was Simon “in the poison of bitterness and in the bonds of unrighteousness”?

[8:23]

Some scholars think Simon was still controlled by his old self. That is he sinfully wanted power and glory. Simon was a Christian. He believed the message from Philip and he was baptized, but he still wanted to do evil (see: Romans 7:8,19). Other scholars think Simon was not a Christian. He was not part of the kingdom of God (see: John 8:31,44-47). Simon really wanted to have power over others by having the permission to give the Holy Spirit to others. If he repented and asked God’s forgiveness, then God would forgive and heal him. Then, God would give him the Holy Spirit to help him to stop sinning and wanting to sin

See: Deuteronomy 29:17-18

See: Faith (Believe in); Baptize (Baptism); Old and New Self; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit; Repent (Repentance); Sin

How did Simon respond to Peter?

[8:24]

Simon did not respond according to what Peter said. Peter told Simon to pray and repent. Instead Simon asked Peter to pray for him.

See: Pray (Prayer; Repent (Repentance)

8:26-31

What is an angel?

[8:26]

See: Angel

Where was Gaza?

[8:26]

See Map: Gaza

Where was Ethiopia?

[8:27]

Ethiopia, or Cush, was where the ancient kingdom of Nubia was located. It was in the southern part of Egypt in what today includes part of Sudan.

See Map: Ethiopia; Sudan; Cush.

What was a eunuch?

[8:27]

A eunuch was a man whose testicles were cut off. This was usually done for a certain purpose. Sometimes this was done so the man could guard the women in a royal palace. This eunuch was the treasurer for the queen of the Ethiopians. He had great power. In Israel, a eunuch was not allowed in the military and could not worship God with other people. God did not want the people of Israel to make their boys eunuchs (see: Genesis 1:27-28).

See: Worship

Why did the eunuch go to Jerusalem to worship?

[8:27]

The eunuch went to Jerusalem to worship God because he feared the God of Israel. However, because this man was an eunuch and a gentile, he was not allowed to go into the temple area. He was reading the book of Isaiah. Some scholars say he wanted to see the memorial for eunuchs inside the temple (see Isaiah 56:3-5). Other scholars say the prophecy of Isaiah became complete when this eunuch believed in Jesus and was baptized (see: Isaiah 56:3-7). There was also another Ethiopian eunuch who went to Jerusalem (see Jeremiah 38:7-13).

See: Leviticus 23

See: Worship; Fear of God; Gentile; Temple; Prophecy (Prophesy) ; Baptize (Baptism)

What was a chariot?

[8:28]

A chariot was a two-wheel vehicle pulled by horses or a horse. It was often used for war or racing. Certain leaders travelled in chariots to go from one place to another place. Since this eunuch was the treasurer of the queen of the Ethiopians, this was a larger chariot.

See: Chariot

How was the man reading?

[8:28]

The man was reading aloud from the book of Isaiah and Philip heard him reading. In ancient times, people did not often read silently.

See: Isaiah 53:7-8

Why did the man not understand the things Isaiah wrote about?

[8:30, 8:31]

The man did not understand the things Isaiah wrote about because he did not have anyone to explain this prophecy. He asked Philip to sit beside him and tell him about what Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 53).

Whom did the prophet Isaiah write about in Isaiah 53?

[8:32, 8:33, 8:34, 8:35]

The prophet Isaiah wrote about Jesus in Isaiah 53. It was a prophecy about a servant of God who was persecuted. Isaiah wrote about Jesus. The servant of God suffered and was rejected for other people. That is, God forgave others because Jesus died. However, the suffering servant prophesied about Jesus' resurrection when Isaiah spoke about Jesus seeing the light of life again (see: Isaiah 53:11).

See: Atonement (Atonement); Prophecy (Prophecy); Persecute (Persecution); Resurrect (Resurrection)

What things did the eunuch read from Isaiah 53 about the death of Jesus?

[8:32, 8:33, 8:34, 8:35]

The eunuch read several things read from Isaiah 53 about the death of Jesus.

1. Jesus was led like sheep to the slaughter. This is a metaphor. Jesus died in the same way sheep died. Sheep follow and go where they are led, even if they will die. Jesus died to obey God and was willing to die to obey God.
2. Jesus was silent like a lamb before his shearer. This is a metaphor. Jesus did not argue with God to try to keep living. He did not try to stop people from killing him. He did not open his mouth (see: Matthew 26:62, 63).
3. In his humiliation, justice was taken away from Jesus. That is, Jesus was humble and did not speak and try to defend himself. People said he was guilty and punished him even though he was innocent.
4. No can give a full account of all of Jesus' descendants. That is, Jesus has more children than anyone can count. Jesus did not have any children and never had sex. However, all Christians are part of Jesus' family and are children of God.

See: Prophet; Prophecy (Prophecy); Crucify (Crucifixion); Metaphor; Lamb of God; Punish (Punishment); Family of God; Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

Why did the eunuch ask to be baptized?

[8:36]

The eunuch asked to be baptized because Philip explained the prophet Isaiah's words about Jesus. That is, if someone believed in Jesus, then they should be baptized. The eunuch believed in Jesus so he asked to be baptized. There was much more about "the gospel about Jesus" Philip told the eunuch that Luke did not write. This was

why Luke wrote, “Beginning with this Scripture.” Philip began with the Scripture from Isaiah that the eunuch was reading, but Philip explained more than just those few verses.

See: Baptize (Baptism); Prophet

Did Luke write verse 37?

[8:37]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have verse 37. More and older copies of the Greek New Testament do not have verse 37. Scholars do not think Luke wrote the words in verse 37.

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible)

How did the Spirit of the Lord take Phillp away?

[8:39]

The Spirit of the Lord took Philip away miraculously. That is, Philip vanished quickly and then he appeared somewhere else. The Spirit of the Lord is also called the Holy Spirit.

See: 1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16; Ezekiel 3:14; 8:3

See: Holy Spirit; Lord

Why did the eunuch go on his way with rejoicing?

[8:39]

The eunuch experienced the same joy the Samaritans did when they believed in Jesus (see: Acts 8:8). The eunuch continued on the road home “rejoicing” (χαίρω/G5463) or “being glad.” It did not matter to him that God took away Philip.

See: Rejoice (Joy, Joyful);Samaria

Where were Azotus and Caesarea?

[8:40]

Azotus was the Greek name of the city of Ashdod in the Old Testament.

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

See Map: Azotus

Acts 8:1

General Information:

It may be helpful to your audience to move these parts of the story about Stephen together by using a verse bridge as the UDB does.

Connecting Statement:

The story shifts from Stephen to Saul in these verses.

So there began ... except the apostles

This part of verse 1 is background information about the persecution that began after Stephen's death. This explains why Saul was persecuting the believers in verse 3.

that day

This refers to the day that Stephen died (Acts 7:59-60).

the believers were all scattered

The word "all" is a generalization to express that a large number of the believers left Jerusalem because of the persecution.

except the apostles

This statement implies that the apostles remained in Jerusalem even though they also experienced this great persecution.

Acts 8:2

Devout men

"God-fearing men" or "Men who feared God"

made great lamentation over him

"greatly mourned his death"

Acts 8:3

house after house

"houses one by one"

drag off both men and women

"took away both men and women by force." Saul forcefully took Jewish believers out of their homes and put them into prison.

men and women

This refers to men and women who believed in Jesus.

Acts 8:4

who had been scattered

The cause for the scattering, the persecution, was stated previously. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who had fled the great persecution"

the word

This is a metonym for "the message." You may need to make explicit that the message was about Jesus. Alternate translation: "the message about Jesus"

Acts 8:5

Connecting Statement:

This begins the story of Philip, whom the people had chosen as a deacon.

went down to the city of Samaria

The phrase "went down" is used here because Samaria is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.

the city of Samaria

Possible meanings are 1) Luke expected the readers to know which city he was writing about. Alternate translation: "the main city in Samaria" or 2) Luke did not expect his readers to know which city he was writing about. Alternate translation: "a city in Samaria"

proclaimed to them the Christ

The title "Christ" refers to Jesus, the Messiah. Alternate translation: "told them about Jesus Christ" or "told them about Jesus the Messiah"

Acts 8:6

Crowds of people

"Many people in the city of Samaria." The location was specified in Acts 8:5.

were giving close attention

The reason people paid attention was because of all the healing Philip did.

with one mind

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

Acts 8:7

who were possessed

"who had them" or "who were controlled by them"

Acts 8:8

So there was much joy in that city

The phrase "that city" refers to the people who were rejoicing. Alternate translation: "So the people of the city were rejoicing"

Acts 8:9

General Information:

Simon is introduced to the story of Philip. This verse gives the beginning of the background information about Simon and who he was among the Samaritans.

But there was a certain man ... named Simon

This is a way of introducing a new person into the story. Your language may use different wording to introduce a new person into the story.

the city

"the city in Samaria" (Acts 8:5)

Acts 8:10

General Information:

Simon is introduced to the story of Philip. This verse continues to give the beginning of the background information about Simon and who he was among the Samaritans.

All the Samaritans

The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "Many of the Samaritans" or "The Samaritans in the city"

from the least to the greatest

These two phrases refer to everyone from one extreme to the other. Alternate translation: "no matter how important they were"

This man is that power of God which is called Great

People were saying that Simon was the divine power known as "The Great Power."

that power of God which is called Great

Possible meanings are 1) the powerful representative of God or 2) God or 3) the most powerful man or 4) an angel. Since the term is unclear, it may be best to simply translate it as "the Great power of God."

Acts 8:11

General Information:

Simon is introduced to the story of Philip. This verse ends the background information about Simon and who he was among the Samaritans.

Acts 8:12

Connecting Statement:

Verses 12 and 13 give more information about Simon and some of the Samaritans coming to believe in Jesus.

they were baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Philip baptized them" or "Philip baptized the new believers"

Acts 8:13

Connecting Statement:

Verses 12 and 13 give more information about Simon and some of the Samaritans coming to believe in Jesus.

Simon himself believed

The word "himself" is here used to emphasize that Simon believed. Alternate translation: "Simon was also one of those who believed"

he was baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Philip baptized Simon"

Acts 8:14

Connecting Statement:

Luke continues the news of what was happening in Samaria.

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard

This marks the beginning of a new part of the story of the Samaritans.

Samaria

This refers to the many people who had become believers throughout the district of Samaria.

had received

"had believed" or "had accepted"

Acts 8:15

When they had come down

"when Peter and John had come down"

come down

This phrase is used here because Samaria is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.

they prayed for them

"Peter and John prayed for the Samaritan believers"

that they might receive the Holy Spirit

"that the Samaritan believers might receive the Holy Spirit"

Acts 8:16

they had only been baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Philip had only baptized the Samaritan believers"

they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus

Here "name" represents authority, and being baptized into his name represents being baptized in order to be under his authority. Alternate translation: "they had only been baptized to become disciples of the Lord Jesus"

Acts 8:17

Peter and John placed their hands on them

The word "them" refers to the Samaritan people who believed Stephen's message of the gospel.

placed their hands on them

This symbolic action shows that Peter and John wanted God to give the Holy Spirit to the believers.

Acts 8:18

the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the apostles gave the Holy Spirit by laying their hands on people"

Acts 8:19

that whoever I place my hands on might receive the Holy Spirit

"that I can give the Holy Spirit to anyone on whom I place my hands"

Acts 8:20

General Information:

Here the words him, your, you, and yours all refer to Simon.

May your silver perish along with you

"May you and your money be destroyed"

the gift of God

Here this refers to the ability of a person to give the Holy Spirit by laying his hands on someone.

Acts 8:21

You have no part or allotted portion in this matter

The words "part" and "allotted portion" mean the same thing and are used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "You may not participate in this work"

your heart is not right

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts or motives. Alternate translation: "you are not right in your heart" or "the motives of your mind are not right"

Acts 8:22

this wickedness

"these evil thoughts"

he might perhaps forgive

"he may be willing to forgive"

for the intention of your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts.
Alternate translation: "for what you intended to do" or
"for what you were thinking of doing"

Acts 8:23

in the poison of bitterness

Here "in the poison of bitterness" is a metaphor for
being very envious. It speaks of envy as if it tastes bitter
and poisons the person who is envious. Alternate
translation: "very envious"

in the bonds of unrighteousness

The phrase "bonds of unrighteousness" is spoken as if
unrighteousness could make Simon a prisoner. It is
metaphor that means Simon is not able to stop himself
from sinning. Alternate translation: "because you
continue sinning you are like a prisoner" or "sin has
made you its prisoner"

Acts 8:24

General Information:

Here the word "you" refers to Peter and John.

so that nothing you have said may happen to me

This refers to Peter's rebuke about Simon's silver
perishing along with him.

nothing you have said may happen to me

This can be stated another way. Alternate translation:
"the things you have said may not happen to me"

Acts 8:25

Connecting Statement:

This concludes the part of the story about Simon and
the Samaritans.

testified

Peter and John told what they personally knew about
Jesus to the Samaritans.

spoken the word of the Lord

Here "word" is a metonym for "message." Peter and
John explained the message about Jesus to the
Samaritans.

to many villages of the Samaritans

Here "villages" refers to the people in them. Alternate
translation: "to the people in many Samaritan villages"

Acts 8:26

Connecting Statement:

This begins the part of the story about Philip and the
man from Ethiopia.

Now

This marks a transition in the story.

Arise and go

These verbs work together to emphasize that he should
get ready to start a long journey that will take some
time. Alternate translation: "Get ready to travel"

goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza

The phrase "goes down" is used here because Jerusalem
is higher in elevation than Gaza.

This road is in a desert

Most scholars believe Luke added this comment to
describe the area through which Philip would travel.

Acts 8:27

General Information:

This verse gives background information about the man from Ethiopia.

Behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

eunuch

The emphasis of "eunuch" here is about the Ethiopian's being a high government official, not so much his physical state of being castrated.

Candace

This was a title for the queens of Ethiopia. It is similar to the way the word Pharaoh was used for the kings of Egypt.

He had come to Jerusalem to worship

This implies that he was a Gentile who believed in God and had come to worship at the Jewish temple.
Alternate translation: "He had come to worship God at the temple in Jerusalem"

Acts 8:28

chariot

Possibly "wagon" or "carriage" is more fitting in this context. Chariots are normally mentioned as a vehicle for war, not as a vehicle for long-distance travel. Also, people stood to ride in chariots.

reading the prophet Isaiah

This is the Old Testament book Isaiah. Alternate translation: "reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah"

Acts 8:29

stay close to this chariot

Philip understood that this meant he was to stay close to the person riding in the chariot. Alternate translation: "accompany the man in this chariot"

Acts 8:30

reading Isaiah the prophet

This is the Old Testament book Isaiah. Alternate translation: "reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah"

Do you understand what you are reading?

The Ethiopian was intelligent and could read, but he lacked spiritual discernment. Alternate translation: "Do you understand the meaning of what you are reading?"

Acts 8:31

How can I, unless someone guides me?

This question was asked to state emphatically that he could not understand without help. Alternate translation: "I cannot understand unless someone guides me."

He invited Philip to ... sit with him

It is implied here that Philip agreed to travel down the road with him to explain the scriptures.

He invited

Possible meanings are that 1) he offered a sincere invitation or 2) he made a sincere request.

Acts 8:32

General Information:

This a passage from the book of Isaiah. Here the word "he" refers to the Messiah.

like a lamb before his shearer is silent

A shearer is a person who cuts the wool off the sheep so that it may be used.

Acts 8:33

General Information:

This verse continues quoting a passage from the book of Isaiah. Here the words "his" and "him" refer to the Messiah.

In his humiliation justice was taken away from him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He was humiliated and they did not judge him fairly" or "He allowed himself to be humbled before his accusers and he suffered injustice"

Who can give a full account of his descendants?

This question was used to emphasize that he will not have descendants. Alternate translation: "No one will be able to speak about his descendants, for there will not be any."

his life was taken from the earth

This referred to his death. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "men killed him" or "men took his life from the earth"

Acts 8:34

I beg you

"Please tell me"

Acts 8:35

this scripture

This refers to Isaiah's writings in the Old Testament. Alternate translation: "the writings of Isaiah"

Acts 8:36

they went on the road

"they continued to travel along the road"

What prevents me from being baptized?

The eunuch uses this question as a way of asking Philip for permission to be baptized. Alternate translation: "Please allow me to be baptized."

Acts 8:37

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 8:38

commanded the chariot to stop

"told the driver of the chariot to stop"

Acts 8:39

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about Philip and the man from Ethiopia. The story of Philip ends at Caesarea.

the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away

The words "took Philip away" imply that the Spirit took forceful, physical action, perhaps a miracle that moved Philip in an instant. The angel probably did not just suggest or even command that Philip leave the eunuch and go elsewhere.

the eunuch saw him no more

"the eunuch did not see Philip again"

Acts 8:40

Philip appeared at Azotus

There was no indication of Philip's traveling between where he baptized the Ethiopian and Azotus. He just suddenly disappeared along the road to Gaza and reappeared at the town of Azotus.

that region

This refers to the area around the town of Azotus.

to all the cities

"to all the cities in that region"

Acts 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"The Way"

No one knows for sure who first started calling believers "followers of the Way." This is probably what the believers called themselves, because the Bible often speaks of a person living his life as if that person were walking on a path or "way." If this is true, the believers were "following the way of the Lord" by living in a way that pleased God.

"Letters for the synagogues in Damascus"

The "letters" Paul asked for were probably legal papers that permitted him to put Christians in prison. The synagogue leaders in Damascus would have obeyed the letter because it was written by the high priest. If the Romans had seen the letter, they also would have allowed Saul to persecute the Christians, because they permitted the Jews to do as they desired to people who broke their religious laws.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

What Saul saw when he met Jesus

It is clear that Saul saw a light and that it was because of this light that he "fell upon the ground." Some people think that Saul knew that it was the Lord speaking to him without seeing a human form, because the Bible often speaks of God as being light and living in light. Other people think that later in his life he was able to say, "I have seen the Lord Jesus" because it was a human form that he saw here.

Links:

- [Acts 9:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 9

9:1-9

What was a high priest?

[9:1]

See: High Priest

How was the high priest in Jerusalem able to approve Saul's request to bring people back to Jerusalem?

[9:2]

At that time the high priest in Jerusalem had permission to bring back a prisoner to Jerusalem from other areas under Roman control. Saul looked for Christians who left Jerusalem when the people persecuted Christians (see: Acts 8:1).

See: Persecute (Persecution)

See Map: Jerusalem

What was a synagogue?

[9:2]

See: Synagogue

Where was Damascus?

[9:2]

See Map: Damascus

What was “the way”?

[9:2]

“The way” was a name for Christians (see: Acts 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

See: John 14:6

What did Saul want to do when he found Christians in Damascus?

[9:2]

Saul wanted to bring Christians back to Jerusalem in ropes or chains to punish them (see Acts 22:5). The high priest and the Jewish council in Jerusalem gave permission to Paul to bring Christians back to Jerusalem. He also planned to kill Christians and destroy the church (see: Acts 8:3; 9:1; 22:4-5).

See: Persecute (Persecution); Punish (Punishment); Church

Why did Saul fall to the ground?

[9:4]

Saul fell to the ground because he was blinded by the very bright light from heaven. It was mid-day so the light shone even more than the sun. He was not able to see any more. Luke used the same word for a lightning flash. Thus, Saul saw a light bigger than a lightning flash around him that blinded him. However, it did not make the men with him blind.

See: Light and Darkness (Metaphor); Heaven

Why did Saul call the person speaking “Lord”?

[9:5]

Some scholars think Saul did not know who spoke, so he used the word “sir” or “master” out of respect or fear. Other scholars think he said “Lord”(κύριος/g2962) to talk to God because the voice he heard seemed to be God. However, Saul did not know at first who it was because he had to ask who spoke to him (see: Acts 9:17,27; 1 Corinthians 15:8). The voice replied to Saul’s question and told Saul it was Jesus who spoke.

See: Lord

Why were the men with Saul speechless?

[9:7]

The flash of light from above and then heard Saul speak but could not see to whom he was speaking. This made the men afraid so that they were not able to speak. They heard the voice but the words of the voice came only to Saul. They saw the bright light shining all around but it did not blind them and they did not see anyone.

See Acts 22:9

See: Light and Darkness (Metaphor)

Why did Saul not eat or drink for three days?

[9:9]

Saul was not able to see for three days. Some scholars think he was still in shock so he did not want to eat. Other scholars think he was praying and fasting to repent (see: Acts 9:11). He felt terrible about killing and persecuting Christians because Jesus told him when he persecuted Christians, Saul actually persecuted Jesus.

See: Fasting; Repent (Repentance); Pray (prayer); Persecute (Persecution)

9:10-19

How did Ananias become a disciple?

[9:10]

Luke did not write how Ananias became a disciple of Jesus. Some scholars think he came from Jerusalem after people began persecuting Christians. Other scholars think he lived in Damascus and heard the gospel.

See: Discipline (To Disciple); Persecute (Persecution); Gospel

See Map: Jerusalem; Damascus

What was a vision?

[9:10]

See: Vision

Why did the Lord tell Ananias the name of the street?

[9:11]

Jesus told Ananias the name of the street so he was able to find the right house where Saul was staying. Straight Street was the long street that ran east to west through Damascus.

See Map: Damascus

Who was Judas?

[9:11]

Judas was a Jew and the host of Saul when Saul came to Damascus. He was not the same person as Judas Iscariot.

See Map: Damascus

Where was Tarsus?

[9:11]

Paul was from Tarsus, but he moved from Tarsus to Jerusalem to study Judaism (see: Acts 22:3). He came to Damascus directly from Jerusalem.

See Map: Tarsus

Why did the Lord want Ananias to lay hands on Saul?

[9:12]

Some scholars think Jesus wanted Ananias to lay hands on Saul so Saul will see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit. That is, the laying on of hands made Saul receive the Holy Spirit in the same way Peter and John prayed and laid hands on the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit (see: Acts 8:14-17). Other scholars think Jesus called Saul to serve him and then Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit after his baptism (see: Acts 9:18). In ancient Israel, the Israelites laid on hands so people were able to know God wanted someone to do something (See Numbers 8:10; 27:18).

See: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit; Laying on of Hands ; Pray (prayer); Samaria; Baptize (Baptism)

Who were the Lord's holy people?

[9:13]

The Lord's holy people or holy ones were Christians. The New Testament wrote Christians were holy people because God forgave them (see Ephesian 1:1,4,7).

See: Holy Ones; Holy (Holiness, Set Apart); People of God

What was a chief priest?

[9:14]

See: Chief Priest

Why did people call upon the Lord's name?"

[9:14]

People called upon the Lord's name to ask Jesus to save them. That is, anyone who believed in Jesus became a Christian (See Acts 4:12; 26:16-18). Saul was coming to get any Christians and bring them to Jerusalem in chains.

See: Lord

How was Saul a chosen instrument for God?

[9:15]

God chose Saul to be an apostle to bring the gospel to people. Saul was going to tell kings and rulers of the Gentiles and the Jews about Jesus. He told them he has seen and heard Jesus after Jesus died (see: Acts 22:15).

See: Apostle; Gospel; Gentile; Resurrect (Resurrection)

How did Saul "suffer for the cause of my name"?

[9:16]

Saul will suffer to serve Jesus. He was persecuted because he told many people about Jesus. Saul was often put in prison for telling people about Jesus.

See: Acts 16:16-40; 17:-9; 21:30-36; 22:21-29; 27:27-28:6; 2 Corinthians 6:4-5; 11:23-27

How was someone filled with the Holy Spirit?

[9:17]

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit

Why was Ananias able to call Saul “brother”?

[9:17]

Ananias was able to call Saul “brother”(ἀδελφός/g0080) because Jesus told Ananias that Saul was a different man. The word “brother”(ἀδελφός/g0080) was a gentle term to tell Saul he was no longer an enemy of Christians. Saul was now part of the family of God.

See: Family of God

Why was Saul baptized?

[9:18]

Saul was baptized to obey Jesus (see: Matthew 28:18-20). Saul was also able to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit (see: Matthew 3:16; Acts 19:5-6).

See: Baptize (Baptism); Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Why did Saul stay with the disciples in Damascus for several days?

[9:19]

Some scholars think Saul stayed with the disciples in Damascus to learn from them about Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus revealed to Saul everything he needed to know about Jesus (see: Galatians 1:11-12).

The Christians in Damascus wanted to give Saul a safe place to stay. The Jews wanted to harm him (see: Acts 9:23).

See: Discipline (To Disciple); Reveal (Revelation)

See Map: Damascus

9:20-25

How did Saul right away proclaim “Jesus in the synagogues”?

[9:20]

Some scholars think the high priest and Jewish council in Jerusalem gave permission to Saul to teach people about Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus gave Saul permission to do this. Saul told the Jews Jesus is the Son of God and he proved Jesus is the messiah. He told the Jews about what he saw and heard on the road to Damascus (see: Acts 9:20). He wanted them to know Jesus was resurrected and Jesus spoke to him.

See: Synagogue; Son of God; Messiah (Christ); Heresy; Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Resurrect (Resurrection)

See Map: Damascus

Why did Luke write, “But Saul became more and more powerful?”

[9:22]

Luke wrote, “But Saul became more and more powerful,” because Saul became more effective in proving that Jesus is the Son of God and the promised messiah. It did not mean Saul was getting stronger physically.

See: Son of God; Messiah (Christ)

Why did Saul distress the Jews in Damascus?

[9:22]

Saul distressed the Jews in Damascus because they thought Saul went there to bring Christians back to Jerusalem. Instead, he became a Christian and persuaded other Jews to also believe in Jesus.

See Map: Damascus

Why did the Jews in Damascus want to kill Saul?

[9:23]

The Jews in Damascus wanted to kill Saul because they thought he tried to make Jews worship other gods (see: Deuteronomy 13:6-11). The Jews were wrong to think that. They did not believe Jesus is the Son of God and the messiah.

See: Son of God; Messiah (Christ); Worship; False gods

Who were Saul’s disciples?

[9:25]

Scholars think Saul’s disciples were people in Damascus who Saul helped to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and the messiah.

See: Disciple; Son of God; Messiah (Christ)

9:26-30

Why were the disciples in Jerusalem afraid of Saul?

[9:26]

The disciples in Jerusalem remembered how Saul helped people to stone Stephen and other Christians. They had not heard that Saul became a Christian.

Who were the Grecian Jews?

[9:29]

The Grecian Jews were the ones who made trouble for Stephen and who stoned him when Saul looked upon this.

Where was Caesarea?

[9:30]

See Map: Caesarea

9:31-35

Where were Judea, Galilee, and Samaria?

[9:31]

See Map: Judea; Galilee; Samaria

How was the church one?

[9:31]

The church was one. That is, they all served Jesus together.

How was the church built up?

[9:31]

The church in Jerusalem was built up. That is, more people became Christians.

See: Church

How did the church “walk in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit”?

[9:31]

The church walked in fear of the Lord. They honored God and did the things God wanted them to do. They knew God has power and is very holy. Yet, they did not fear people because the Holy Spirit comforted them.

See: Walk; Fear of God; Holy Spirit

Who were God’s holy people?

[9:32]

See: Holy Ones; Holy (Holiness, Set Apart); People of God

Where was Lydda?

[9:32]

See Map: Lydda

How did God completely heal Aenaes?

[9:33, 9:34]

God completely healed Aenaes when he was no longer paralyzed after eight years. That is, there was nothing to make him paralyzed. It was the same as if he was not paralyzed for eight years. Also, God healed him right away. Peter told him to make his bed because he was not going to need it there anymore. He was healed.

How did everyone in Lydda and Sharon turn to the Lord?

[9:35]

Everyone in Lydda and Sharon saw the healed man and they heard how he was healed, so they believed in Jesus. That is, they turned away from the things God did not want them to do and believed in Jesus.

See: Repent (Repentance)

See Map: Sharon; Lydda

9:36-43

Where was Joppa?

[9:36]

See Map: Joppa

Why did Luke write Tabitha was translated to Dorcas?

[9:36]

Luke wrote Tabitha was translated to Dorcas because Tabitha was the woman's name in the Aramaic language. Dorcas was her name in the Greek language. Peter and others called her Tabitha.

Why did they wash the dead woman and place her in the upper room?

[9:37]

In ancient times, some people washed a body before they buried it. These people heard Peter healed the paralyzed man in Lydda. So they put her body in the upper room and asked Peter to come there. They were Christians, and because Tabitha helped the poor, they hoped God will make her alive again.

According to the Law of Moses, these people needed to bury Tabitha before sundown so they sent two men to ask Peter to come right away. Even though Lydda was near Joppa, it took three or four hours for him to walk from Lydda to Joppa.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Law of Moses

See Map: Lydda; Joppa

Why did the widows show Peter the tunics and garments Tabitha made?

[9:39]

The widows showed Peter the clothes Tabitha made. They wanted Peter to know how generous and kind Tabitha was to them. It was a way for Peter to know who she really was and convince him to ask God to make her alive again.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

Why did Peter ask everyone to leave the room?

[9:40]

Peter asked everyone to leave the upper room so he was able to pray for her without anyone doing or saying anything against him praying to God. He prayed a similar prayer that Jesus prayed when Jesus made Jairus's daughter alive again (see: Mark 5:41).

See: Matthew 10:8

See: Pray (prayer)

Why did Peter stay in Joppa?

[9:43]

Luke did not write why Peter stayed in Joppa. Scholars think he stayed to teach the many Christians there because of the miracle God did for Tabitha (see Acts 9:42).

Acts 9:1

General Information:

Verses 1-2 give background information telling us what Saul has been doing since the stoning of Stephen.

Connecting Statement:

The story shifts back to Saul and his salvation.

still speaking threats even of murder against the disciples

The noun "murder" can be translated as a verb.
Alternate translation: "still speaking threats, even to murder the disciples"

Acts 9:2

General Information:

Verses 1-2 give background information telling us what Saul has been doing since the stoning of Stephen. Here the word "him" refers to the high priest and "he" refers to Saul.

for the synagogues

This refers to the people in the synagogues. Alternate translation: "for the people in the synagogues" or "for the leaders in the synagogues"

if he found any

"when he found people" or "if he found people"

who belonged to the Way

"who followed the teachings of Jesus Christ"

the Way

This term appears to have been a title for Christianity at that time.

he might bring them bound to Jerusalem

"he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem." Paul's purpose can be made clear by adding "so that the Jewish leaders could judge and punish them"

Acts 9:3

Connecting Statement:

After the high priest gave Saul the letters, Saul left for Damascus.

As he was traveling

Saul left Jerusalem and now travels to Damascus.

it happened that

This is an expression that marks a change in the story to show something different is about to happen.

there shone all around him a light out of heaven

"a light from heaven shone all around him"

out of heaven

Possible meanings are 1) out of heaven, where God lives or 2) out of the sky. The first meaning is preferable. Use that meaning if your language has a separate word for it.

Acts 9:4

he fell upon the ground and heard

Possible meanings are that 1) "Saul threw himself to the ground and heard" or 2) "the light caused Saul to fall to the ground, and he heard" or 3) "Saul fell to the ground the way one who faints falls, and he heard"

why are you persecuting me?

This rhetorical question communicates a rebuke to Saul. Alternate translation: "You are persecuting me!" or "Stop persecuting me!"

Acts 9:5

General Information:

Every occurrence of the word "you" here is singular.

Who are you, Lord?

Saul was not acknowledging that Jesus is the Lord. He uses that title because he understood that he spoke to someone of supernatural power.

Acts 9:6

but rise, enter into the city

"get up and go into the city Damascus"

it will be told you

This can be stated in the active form. Alternate translation: "someone will tell you"

Acts 9:7

stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one

This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "stood speechless. They heard the voice, but they did not see anyone"

but seeing no one

"but they saw no one" or "but they did not see anyone." Apparently only Saul experienced the light.

Acts 9:8

when he opened his eyes

This implies that he had closed his eyes because the light was too bright.

he could see nothing

"he could not see anything." Saul was blind.

Acts 9:9

was without sight

"was blind" or "could not see anything"

he neither ate nor drank

It is not stated whether he chose not to eat or drink as a form of worship, or if he had no appetite because he was too distressed from his situation. It is preferable not to specify the reason.

Acts 9:10

General Information:

The story of Saul continues, and Luke introduces another man named Ananias. This is not the same Ananias who died earlier in Acts [Acts 5:3]

Now there was

This introduces Ananias as a new character.

He said

"Ananias said"

Acts 9:11

go to the street which is called Straight

"go to Straight Street"

house of Judas

This Judas was not the disciple who had betrayed Jesus. This Judas was owner of a house in Damascus where Saul was staying.

a man from Tarsus named Saul

"a man from the city of Tarsus named Saul" or "Saul of Tarsus"

Acts 9:12

laying his hands on him

This was a symbol of giving a spiritual blessing to Saul.

he might see again

"he might regain his ability to see"

Acts 9:13

your holy people in Jerusalem

Here "holy people" refers to Christians. Alternate translation: "the people in Jerusalem who believe in you"

Acts 9:14

authority ... to put in bonds everyone here

It is implied that the extent of the power and authority granted Saul was limited to the Jewish people at this point in time.

put in bonds

Putting someone in bonds is a metonym for arresting that person. Alternate translation: "arrest"

calls upon your name

Here "your name" refers to Jesus.

Acts 9:15

he is a chosen instrument of mine

"chosen instrument" refers to something that is set apart for service. Alternate translation: "I have chosen him to serve me"

to carry my name

This is an expression for identifying or speaking out for Jesus. Alternate translation: "in order that he might speak about me"

Acts 9:16

for the cause of my name

This is an expression meaning "for telling people about me."

Acts 9:17

General Information:

The word "you" here is singular and refers to Saul.

Connecting Statement:

Ananias goes to the house where Saul is staying. After Saul is healed, the story shifts from Ananias back to Saul.

So Ananias departed, and entered into the house

It may be helpful to state that Ananias went to the house before he entered into it. Alternate translation: "So Ananias went, and after he found the house where Saul was, he entered it"

Laying his hands on him

Ananias put his hands on Saul. This was a symbol of giving a blessing to Saul.

so that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that you might see again and that the Holy Spirit might fill you"

Acts 9:18

something like scales fell

"something that appeared like fish scales fell"

he received his sight

"he was able to see again"

he arose and was baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he got up and Ananias baptized him"

Acts 9:19

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 9:20

General Information:

Here the first "he" refers to Saul. The second "he" refers to Jesus, the Son of God.

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

Acts 9:21

General Information:

Here "him" and "He" refer to Saul.

All who heard him

The word "All" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "Those who heard him" or "Many who heard him"

Is not this the man who destroyed those in Jerusalem who called on this name?

This is a rhetorical and negative question that emphasizes that Saul was indeed the man who had persecuted the believers. Alternate translation: "This is the man who destroyed those in Jerusalem who called on this name Jesus!"

this name

Here "name" refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "the name of Jesus"

Acts 9:22

causing distress among the Jews

They were distressed in the sense that they could not find a way to refute Saul's arguments that Jesus was the Christ.

Acts 9:23

General Information:

The word "him" in this section refers to Saul.

the Jews

This refers to the leaders of the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

Acts 9:24

But their plan became known to Saul

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But someone told their plan to Saul" or "But Saul learned about their plan"

They watched the gates

This city had a wall surrounding it. People could normally only enter and exit the city through the gates.

Acts 9:25

his disciples

people who believed Saul's message about Jesus and were following his teaching

let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket

"used ropes to lower him in a large basket through an opening in the wall"

Acts 9:26

General Information:

Here the words "he" and "him" refer to Saul.

but they were all afraid of him

Here "they were all" is a generalization, but it is possible that it refers to every person. Alternate translation: "but they were afraid of him"

Acts 9:27

General Information:

Here "him" refers to Saul and "he" refers to Barnabas.

had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus

This is a way of saying he preached or taught the gospel message of Jesus Christ without fear. Alternate translation: "had openly preached the message about Jesus"

Acts 9:28

He was with them, going in and out around Jerusalem

Here the word "He" refers to Saul, and the word "them" probably refers to the apostles and other disciples in Jerusalem. This is an idiom meaning that Paul was able to associate freely with the believers in Jerusalem.

in the name of the Lord Jesus

Possible meanings are 1) this simply refers to the Lord Jesus and tells who Paul spoke about. Alternate

translation: "about the Lord Jesus" or 2) "name" is a metonym for authority. Alternate translation: "under the authority of the Lord Jesus" or "with the authority that the Lord Jesus gave him"

Acts 9:29

debated with the Grecian Jews

Saul tried to reason with the Jews who spoke Greek.

Acts 9:30

the brothers

Here the words "the brothers" refer to the believers in Jerusalem.

brought him down to Caesarea

The phrase "brought him down" is used here because Caesarea is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.

sent him away to Tarsus

Caesarea was a seaport. They brothers probably sent Saul to Tarsus by ship.

Acts 9:31

General Information:

Verse 31 is a statement that gives an update on the church's growth.

the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria

This is the first use of the singular "church" to refer to more than one local congregation. Here it refers to all the believers in all the groups throughout Israel.

had peace

"lived peacefully." This means the persecution that started with the murder of Stephen was finished.

was built up

The agent was either God or the Holy Spirit. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God helped them grow" or "the Holy Spirit built them up"

walking in the fear of the Lord

"Walking" here is a metaphor for "living." Alternate translation: "living in obedience to the Lord" or "continuing to honor the Lord"

in the comfort of the Holy Spirit

"with the Holy Spirit strengthening and encouraging them"

Acts 9:32

Connecting Statement:

Here the story shifts from Saul to a new part of the story about Peter.

Now it came about

This phrase is used to mark a new part of the story.

throughout the whole region

This is an generalization for Peter's visiting the believers in many places in the region of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria.

he came down

The phrase "came down" is used here because Lydda is lower in elevation than the other places where he was traveling.

Lydda

Lydda is a city located about 18 kilometers southeast of Joppa. This city is called Lod in the Old Testament and in modern Israel.

Acts 9:33

There he found a certain man

Peter was not intentionally searching for a paralyzed person, but happened upon him. Alternate translation: "There Peter met a man"

a certain man named Aeneas

This introduces Aeneas as a new character in the story.

who had been in his bed ... was paralyzed

This is background information about Aeneas.

paralyzed

This means he was unable to walk. He probably was unable to move any part of his body below his waist.

Acts 9:34

make your bed

"roll up your mat"

Acts 9:35

everyone who lived in Lydda and in Sharon

This is a generalization referring to many of the people there. Alternate translation: "those who lived in Lydda and in Sharon" or "many people who lived in Lydda and Sharon"

in Lydda and in Sharon

The city of Lydda was located in the Plain of Sharon.

saw the man

It may be helpful to state that they saw that he was healed. Alternate translation: "saw the man whom Peter had healed"

and they turned to the Lord

Here "turned to the Lord" is a metaphor for starting to obey the Lord. Alternate translation: "and they repented of their sins and started obeying the Lord"

Acts 9:36

General Information:

Verses 36 and 37 give background information about the woman named Tabitha.

Connecting Statement:

Luke continues the story with a new event about Peter.

Now there was

This introduces a new part in the story.

Tabitha (which is translated "Dorcas"). This woman

Tabitha is her name in the Aramaic language, and Dorcas is her name in the Greek language. Both names

mean "gazelle." Alternate translation: "Tabitha, which in the Greek language was Dorcas. This woman"

was full of good works and merciful deeds

"doing many good things and performed merciful deeds"

Acts 9:37

General Information:

Verses 36 and 37 give background information about the woman named Tabitha.

It came about in those days

This refers to the time when Peter was in Joppa. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "It came about while Peter was nearby"

washed her

This was washing to prepare for her burial.

they laid her in an upper room

This was a temporary display of the body during the funeral process.

Acts 9:38

they sent two men to him

"the disciples sent two men to Peter"

Acts 9:39

to the upper room

"to the upstairs room where Dorcas' body was lying"

all the widows

It is possible that all the widows of the town were there since it was not a large town.

widows

women whose husbands had died and therefore needed help

while she had been with them

"while she was still alive with the disciples"

Acts 9:40

put them all out of the room

"told them all to leave the room." Peter had everyone leave so he could be alone to pray for Tabitha.

Acts 9:41

gave her his hand and raised her up

Peter took hold of her hand and helped her to sit up in the bed and then stand up on the floor.

God's holy people and the widows

The widows were possibly also believers but are mentioned specifically because Tabitha was so important to them.

Acts 9:42

Connecting Statement:

The story of Tabitha ends in verse 42. Verse 43 tells us what happens to Peter after the story ends.

This matter became known throughout all Joppa

This refers to the miracle of Peter's raising Tabitha from the dead. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People throughout all Joppa heard about this matter"

believed on the Lord

"believed in the gospel of the Lord Jesus"

Acts 9:43

Connecting Statement:

The story of Tabitha ends in verse 42. Verse 43 tells us what happens to Peter after the story ends.

It happened that

"It came about that." This introduces the beginning of the next event in the story.

Simon, a tanner

"a man named Simon who made leather from animal skins"

Acts 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Unclean

The Jews believed that they could become unclean in God's sight if they visited or ate food with a Gentile. This was because the Pharisees had made a law against it because they wanted to keep people from eating foods that the law of Moses said were unclean. The law of Moses did say that some foods were unclean, but it did not say that God's people could not visit or eat with Gentiles. (See: clean and lawofmoses)

Baptism and the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit "fell on" those who were listening to Peter. This showed the Jewish believers that Gentiles could receive the word of God and receive the Holy Spirit just as the Jewish believers had. After that, the Gentiles were baptized.

Links:

- [Acts 10:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 10

10: 1-8

Where was Caesarea?

[10:1]

See Map: Caesarea

What was a centurion in the "Italian Regiment"?

[10:1]

A centurion in the "Italian Regiment" was an officer in the Roman army. He lead about eighty soldiers. The Roman army recruited these soldiers in Italy.

See Map: Italy

Why was Cornelius a devout man?

[10:2]

Cornelius was a devout man because he worshipped God, but he was not a Jew. He was not circumcised. He helped the poor and he often prayed (see: Acts 10:4).

See: Circumcise (Circumcision); Pray (Prayer)

Who was included in Cornelius' household?

[10:2]

The household of Cornelius included his wife, children, and all relatives living in his home. It also included his servants and their children.

See: Serve

What time was "the ninth hour of the day"?

[10:3]

"The ninth hour of the day" was about 3 PM. It was during the hot part of the day. What was a vision?

See: Vision

Why was Cornelius "very afraid" of the angel?

[10:4]

Cornelius was "very afraid" of the angel because the angel knew him. Cornelius was not dreaming (see: Acts 10:10). Instead, Cornelius was fully awake.

See: Luke 2:9

See: Angel

What was a "memorial offering"?

[10:5]

The angel spoke about the prayers of Cornelius and his gifts to the poor as if they were a sacrifice that God had commanded the Israelites to give. Here the angel called what Cornelius had done a "memorial offering." A "memorial" is something that reminds someone about a person or about something that happened. A memorial offering was an offering that was burned. The aroma of the burnt offering was said to smell good to God. That is, God was pleased with the offering and accepted it. The memorial offering shows the person that God remembers them and hears their prayers. In this situation, God had heard the prayers of Cornelius and had seen what Cornelius had done.

See: Pray (Prayer); Sacrifice; Offer (Offering); Fragrant Offering (Aroma)

Where was Joppa?

[10:5]

See Map: Joppa

Why did the angel tell Cornelius to send for Peter?

[10:5]

The angel told Cornelius to send for Peter because he was the apostle Jesus called the rock (see: Matthew 16:18-19). Peter's name was Simon, but Jesus called him Peter. Peter was the name for "rock." Jesus was going to build his church upon Peter, the rock.

See: Angel; Apostle; Church

Where was Peter?

[10:6]

Peter was visiting with a tanner named Simon. A tanner worked with leather skin.

What was a house servant?

[10:7]

A house servant was a person who helped with housework by preparing food and cleaning. Sometimes they helped a leader of an army and did not do the cleaning. They were trusted servants. Scholars think they took horses since it was fifty kilometers away, and they brought an extra horse for Peter to ride on the way back to Joppa.

See: Serve

See Map: Joppa

How was this man a devout soldier?

[10:7]

Scholars think this soldier worshipped God since Cornelius told them everything about his vision (see: Acts 10:8). For the servants and this soldier to talk with Peter about the vision, they needed to believe and worship God in the way Cornelius did. They also needed to listen to and follow the Holy Spirit.

See: Worship; Vision; Holy Spirit

10:9-16

What time was the “sixth hour”?

[10:9]

The “sixth hour” was midday, about noon.

Why did Peter go up to the housetop to pray?

[10:9]

Peter went to the housetop to pray because he was able to pray to God alone there. The roofs were flat. People used an outer stairway to go up and down from the housetop. Often there was a cover to give people shade.

See: Pray (Prayer)

What was a “trance”?

[10:10]

A “trance” (ἐκστασις/g1611) was something that happened to a person. Sometimes it was a dream. Peter’s trance was stronger than the vision God gave to Cornelius. Often, a person focused on what God showed him and he was no longer aware of anything near him.

See: Vision

Why were there different animals in this large sheet?

[10:12]

The four-footed animals, things that crawled on the earth, and birds of the sky were the three groups of living things God created and delivered in Noah's ark (see: Genesis 6:20). God was saying all of creation was open to Peter. The news about Jesus was going to all of creation. This includes Gentiles, Jews, slaves, free people, women, and men (see: Galatians 3:28).

See: Clean and Unclean; Gentile; Serve

Why did the voice tell Peter to rise, kill, and eat?

[10:13]

God told Peter to rise, kill, and eat the unclean animals because he wanted people to know that it was not evil to eat these things. God did not want people to follow the Law of Moses anymore. God also wanted the Jews to know that the Gentiles could become Christians.

See: Clean and Unclean; Fellowship

Why did Peter not want to eat unclean food?

[10:14]

Peter did not want to eat unclean food because he always obeyed the law of Moses (see: Ezekiel 4:14). However, Peter did not know God's new and bigger plan. The new and bigger plan was that both Jews and Gentiles were joined together in some way and could both become Christians.

10:17-23

How many men looked for Peter?

[10:17]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that three men looked for Peter. Some scholars note it was the same number Luke wrote in verse seven. Fewer ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that two men looked for Peter. Some scholars say two men spoke to Peter and the third man was a guard. Some ancient copies did not say how many men looked for Peter. Some scholars say Luke did not write how many men there were in the same way he wrote verse seventeen. Scholars think Luke wrote that three men looked for Peter.

What nationality was Cornelius?

[10:22]

Cornelius was a Gentile from Italy (see: Acts 10:1).

See: Gentile

See Map: Italy

Who were the brothers from Joppa?

[10:23]

The brothers were Jewish Christian men from Joppa.

See: Family of God

See Map: Joppa

10:24-33

Why did Cornelius fall down at the feet of Peter?

[10:25]

Cornelius fell down at Peter's feet and honored him because God sent Peter. Cornelius did not want to worship Peter but Peter wanted to be sure of this so he told Cornelius to get up. Peter was only a man in the same way Cornelius was a man (see: Acts 10:26).

See: Worship

To whom was Peter talking?

[10:26]

Peter was talking with Cornelius when they entered into the house. Then Peter addressed the crowd of relatives and close friends of Cornelius. They were Gentiles so Peter wanted to let them know he was not permitted to come inside a Gentile home. However, God changed this and Peter went into the house of a Gentile (see: Acts 10:28).

See: Gentile

How did Peter know God did not want him to call any person unclean or impure?

[10:28]

Peter knew God did not want him to call any person unclean because Peter believed the vision God gave him. The vision was a sheet with all kinds of animals, both pure and impure, that he saw coming from heaven. It was a sign of God accepting all people if they believed in Jesus (see: Acts 10:35).

See: Clean and Unclean; Offer (Offering); Heaven; Sign

Whom did Cornelius see "in bright clothing"?

[10:30]

Cornelius saw an angel of God "in bright clothing" (see: Acts 10:3).

See: Angel; Light and Darkness (Metaphor)

What was a tanner?

[10:32]

A tanner was someone who worked with leather to make it certain colors and thicknesses.

What did Luke write in verse 32?

[10:32]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words about Peter coming and speaking at the end of verse 32. Older and more copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words.

10:34-43

Why did Peter say “God is not partial”?

[10:34]

Peter said “God is not partial” because God is just. God knows what a person thinks. Peter thought about how God equally judges and loves the Jews and the Gentiles.

See: People of God; Gentile

Why did Peter say Jesus will be the “Judge of the living and the dead”?

[10:42]

Peter said Jesus will be the “Judge of the living and the dead.” One day, Jesus will judge all people.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Judge (Judgment); Day of Judgment

10:44-48

How did the Holy Spirit fall on the Gentiles?

[10:44]

The Holy Spirit “fell”(ἐπιπίπτω/g1968) (see: Acts 10:44) on the Gentiles in the same way the Holy Spirit was “poured out”(ἐκχέω/g1632) (see: Acts 10:45) on the Gentiles to work in them. Some scholars think Peter was thinking about how the Holy Spirit came from heaven. Other scholars think this meant that people began to speak in tongues and began to praise God (see: Acts 2:4,11).

See: Gentile; Filling of the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit; Speaking in Tongues

What was the gift of the Holy Spirit poured out on the Gentiles?

[10:44]

Some scholars think the gift of the Holy Spirit was the power of God to help people live in a way that honors God (see: John 14:15-18; 16:5-15). Other scholars think it was the power of God to tell other people in the world about Jesus (see: Acts 1:8). In this story, the power caused the Gentile listeners to speak in tongues and to praise God(see: Acts 10:46,43).

See: Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Gentile; Speaking in Tongues

When did God save Cornelius and his household?

[10:44]

God saved Cornelius and his household when Peter they each believed in Jesus (see: Acts 11:14; 10:39-40,43). Before they were able to say they believed in Jesus, God gave them the Holy Spirit. That is, Peter did not even finish speaking. They believed in Jesus while Peter was still speaking.

See: Acts 11:17

See: Faith (Believe in); Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Angel

Who were the people who belong to the “circumcision group”?

[10:45]

The people who belonged to the “circumcision group” were the Jewish Christians who went with Peter from Joppa to the house of Cornelius. They were amazed God gave the Holy Spirit to the uncircumcised Gentiles in the same way God filled Jews with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (see: Acts 2:4).

See: Circumcise (Circumcision); Gentile; Filling of the Holy Spirit; Pentecost

See Map: Joppa

Why did Peter talk about baptizing Cornelius and his household?

[10:47]

Peter talked about baptizing Cornelius and his household because he saw the Holy Spirit work in these Gentiles. That is, they spoke in tongues in the same way the disciples did at Pentecost (see: Acts 2:4). Because of this, he knew they believed in Jesus in the same way Jewish disciples believed in Jesus (see Acts 11:16-17). Peter knew they must be baptized in the same way other Christians were baptized (see: Acts 2:37-41). They should be baptized because God accepted them (see: Acts 10: 35,46; 15:8).

See: Baptize (Baptism); Holy Spirit; Gentile; Speaking in Tongues; Disciple; Pentecost

Why did these people ask Peter to stay with them for several days?

[10:48]

These people asked Peter to stay with them for several days because they wanted to learn and ask questions. They had much to learn about Jesus and how to live in a way that honors God.

Acts 10:1

General Information:

The writer begins to give background information about Cornelius.

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of the part of the story about Cornelius.

Now there was a certain man

This was a way of introducing a new person to this part of the historical account.

in the city of Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of what was called the Italian Company of Soldiers

"from Caesarea whose name was Cornelius. He was an officer in charge of 60 soldiers from the Italian Company of Soldiers, in the Roman army"

Acts 10:2

General Information:

The writer finishes giving background information about Cornelius.

a devout man

a man who wanted to do what God expected of him

feared God

worshipped God with deep respect and awe

prayed to God constantly

The word "constantly" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "prayed to God often" or "he prayed to God regularly"

Acts 10:3

the ninth hour

"three o'clock in the afternoon." This was the normal afternoon prayer time for Jews.

he clearly saw

"Cornelius clearly saw"

Acts 10:4

Your prayers and your alms have gone up ... into God's presence

It is implied that his gifts and prayers had been accepted by God. Alternate translation: "God is pleased by your prayers and alms. They have gone up ... to him"

Acts 10:5

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 10:6

a tanner

a person who makes leather from animal skins

Acts 10:7

When the angel who spoke to him had left

"When Cornelius' vision of the angel had ended."

a devout soldier

a soldier who wanted to do what God expected of him. See how you translated "devout" in [Acts 10:2](#).

Acts 10:8

told them all that had happened

Cornelius explained his vision to his two servants and to one of his soldiers.

sent them to Joppa

"sent two of his two servants and the one soldier to Joppa."

Acts 10:9

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to Cornelius' two servants and the soldier under Cornelius' command (Acts 10:7).

Connecting Statement:

The story shifts away from Cornelius to tell us what God is doing with to Peter.

about the sixth hour

"around noon"

up upon the housetop

The roofs of the houses were flat, and people often did many different activities on them.

Acts 10:10

while the people were cooking some food

"before the people finished cooking the food"

a trance came on him

This metaphor means that Peter went into the trance without expecting it or desiring it. Alternate translation: "he went into a trance"

trance

Peter saw things in his mind, not with his physical eyes.

Acts 10:11

he saw the sky open

This was the beginning of Peter's vision. It can be a new sentence.

something like a large sheet ... four corners

The container holding the animals had the appearance of a large square piece of cloth.

let down by its four corners

"with its four corners suspended" or "with its four corners higher than the rest of it"

Acts 10:12

things that crawled on the earth

snakes and insects, as opposed to "four-footed animals"

Acts 10:13

a voice spoke to him

The person speaking is not specified. The "voice" was probably God, although it could possibly have been an angel from God.

Acts 10:14

Not so

"I will not do that"

I have never eaten anything that was defiled and unclean

It is implied that some of the "four-footed animals and things that crawled on the earth, and birds of the sky"

Acts 10:15

What God has made clean, you must not call defiled

This refers to the animals in the sheet.

What God has made clean

If God is the speaker, he is referring to himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "What I, God, have made clean"

Acts 10:16

This happened three times

Possible meanings are 1) Peter heard the words "What God has made clean, you must not call defiled" three times or 2) a total of three times the sheet came down from heaven and Peter heard and responded to the voice. It would be best to translate without adding information here.

Acts 10:17

Peter was very confused

This means that Peter was having difficulty understanding what the vision meant.

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows, in this case, the two men standing at the gate.

stood before the gate

"stood before the gate to the house." It is implied that this house had a wall with a gate one would use to enter the property.

after they had asked their way to the house

This happened before they arrived at the house. This could be stated earlier in the verse, as the UDB does.

Acts 10:18

They called out

Cornelius' men remained outside the gate while asking about Peter.

Acts 10:19

thinking about the vision

"wondering about the meaning of the vision"

the Spirit

"the Holy Spirit"

Behold, three

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

three men are looking for you

Some ancient texts have a different number of men.

Acts 10:20

go down

"go down from the roof of the house"

Do not hesitate to go with them

It would be natural for Peter not to want to go with them, because they were strangers and they were Gentiles.

Acts 10:21

I am he whom you are seeking

"I am the man you are looking for"

Acts 10:22

General Information:

The word "They" here refer to the two servants and the soldier from Cornelius (Acts 10:7).

A centurion named Cornelius ... listen to a message from you

This can be divided into several sentences and stated in active form as the UDB does.

fears God

worships God with deep respect and awe

all the nation of the Jews

This number of people is exaggerated with the word "all" to emphasize how widely this was known among the Jews.

Acts 10:23

General Information:

The word "them" here refer to the two servants and the soldier from Cornelius (Acts 10:7).

So Peter invited them to come in and stay with him

The journey to Caesarea was too long for them to begin that afternoon.

stay with him

"be his guests"

some of the brothers from Joppa

This refers to believers who lived in Joppa.

Acts 10:24

On the following day

This was the next day after they left Joppa. The journey to Caesarea took longer than one day.

Cornelius was waiting for them

"Cornelius expected them"

Acts 10:25

when Peter entered

"when Peter entered the house"

fell down at his feet to worship him

"he knelt down and put his face close to Peter's feet." He did this to honor Peter.

fell down

He purposely did this to show that he was worshiping.

Acts 10:26

Stand up! I too am a man

Peter was rebuking Cornelius mildly for worshiping Peter. Alternate translation: "Do not worship me! I am only a man, as you are"

Acts 10:27

General Information:

The word "him" here refers to Cornelius, and "he" refers to Peter.

Connecting Statement:

Peter addresses the people who are gathered in Cornelius' house.

many people gathered together

"many Gentile people gathered together." It is implied that these people Cornelius had invited were Gentiles.

Acts 10:28

General Information:

Here the words "You" and "yourselves" include Cornelius as well as the Gentiles who were present and so are plural.

it is not lawful for a Jewish man

"it is forbidden for a Jewish man." This refers to the Jewish religious law.

a foreigner

people who are not Jews

Acts 10:29

General Information:

Here both instances of "you" include Cornelius as well as the Gentiles who were present and so are plural.

Acts 10:30

General Information:

In verses 31 and 32 Cornelius quotes what the angel had said to him when he appeared to him at the ninth hour. The words "you" and "your" are all singular. The word "we" here does not include Peter.

Connecting Statement:

Cornelius responds to Peter's question.

Four days ago

Cornelius is referring to the day before the third night before he is speaking to Peter. Biblical culture counts the current day, so the day before three nights ago is "four days ago." Current Western culture does not count the current day, so many Western translations read, "three days ago."

praying

Some ancient authorities say "fasting and praying" instead of simply "praying."

at the ninth hour

The normal afternoon time that the Jews pray to God.

Acts 10:31

your prayer has been heard by God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has heard your prayer"

reminded God about you

"brought you to God's attention." This does not imply that God had forgotten.

Acts 10:32

call to you a man named Simon who is called Peter

"tell Simon who is also called Peter to come to you"

Acts 10:33

at once

"right away"

You are kind to have come

This expression is a polite way of thanking Peter for coming. Alternate translation: "I certainly thank you for coming"

we are all here

This refers to Cornelius and his family but not to Peter, so this is exclusive.

present in the sight of God

"present with God"

that you have been instructed by the Lord to say

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the Lord has told you to say"

Acts 10:34

Connecting Statement:

Peter begins speaking to everyone in the house of Cornelius.

opened his mouth

"began to speak"

Truly

This means that what he is about to say is especially important to know.

God is not partial

"God does not favor certain people"

Acts 10:35

anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him

"he accepts anyone who fears him and does what is right"

to him

to God

fears

worships with deep respect and awe

Acts 10:36

General Information:

All instances of "he" here refers to God.

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues to talk to Cornelius and his guests.

who is Lord of all

Here "all" means "all people."

Acts 10:37

throughout all Judea

The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "throughout Judea" or "in many places in Judea"

after the baptism that John announced

"after John preached to the people to repent and then baptized them"

Acts 10:38

the events ... and with power

This long sentence, which begins in verse 36, can be shortened into several sentences as in the UDB.

God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power

The Holy Spirit and God's power are spoken of as if they are something that can be poured out onto a person.

all who were oppressed by the devil

The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "those who were oppressed by the devil" or "many people who were oppressed by the devil"

God was with him

The idiom "was with him" means "was helping him."

Acts 10:39

General Information:

The word "We" refer to Peter and the apostles and believers who were with Jesus when he was on earth, not to his hearers. The word "him" here refers to Jesus.

in the country of the Jews

This refers mainly to Judea at that time.

hanging him on a tree

This is another expression that refers to crucifixion. Alternate translation: "nailing him to a wooden cross"

Acts 10:40

General Information:

Both instances of "him" refer to Jesus.

God raised him up

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "God caused him to live again"

the third day

"the third day after he died"

caused him to be seen

"permitted many people to see him after he was raised from the dead"

Acts 10:41

General Information:

The word "us" refers to Peter and the apostles and believers who were with Jesus when he was on earth,

not to his hearers. The words "him" and "he" here refers to Jesus.

from the dead

From among all those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld.

Acts 10:42

General Information:

Here the word "us" includes Peter and believers. It excludes his audience.

that this is the one who has been chosen by God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God chose this Jesus"

the living and the dead

This refers to people who are still living and people who have died. Alternate translation: "the people who are alive and the people who are dead"

Acts 10:43

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes his speech to everyone in the house of Cornelius, which he began in [Acts 10:34](#).

About him all the prophets testify

"All the prophets testify about Jesus"

everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins

This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive the sins of everyone who believes in Jesus because of what Jesus has done"

through his name

Here "his name" refers to the actions of Jesus. His name means God who saves. Alternate translation: "through what Jesus has done for them"

Acts 10:44

the Holy Spirit fell

Here the word "fell" indicates that the event happened suddenly. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit suddenly came"

all of those who were listening

Here "all" refers to all the Gentiles at the house who were listening to Peter.

Acts 10:45

the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out also

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God also poured out the Holy Spirit"

the gift of the Holy Spirit

That is, the Holy Spirit himself was the gift.

poured out

The Holy Spirit is spoken of as if he were something that could be poured out upon people. It implies a generous amount. Alternate translation: "generously given"

the gift

"the free gift"

also on the Gentiles

Here "also" refers to the fact that the Holy Spirit had already been given to the Jewish believers.

Acts 10:46

Gentiles speaking in tongues and exalting God

These were known spoken languages that caused the Jews to acknowledge that the Gentiles were indeed praising God.

speaking in tongues

Here "tongues" is a metonym for languages. Alternate translation: "speaking in other languages"

Acts 10:47

Can anyone keep water from these people so they should not be baptized, these people who have received ... we?

Peter uses this question to convince the Jewish Christians that the Gentile believers should be baptized. Alternate translation: "No one should keep water from these people! We should baptize them because they have received ... we!"

Acts 10:48

General Information:

The words "he" and "him" refer to Peter.

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about Cornelius.

he commanded them to be baptized

It is implied that the Jewish Christians were the ones who would baptize them. Alternate translation: "Peter

commanded the Gentile believers to allow the Jewish Christians to baptize them" or "Peter commanded the Jewish Christians to baptize them"

be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ

Here "in the name of Jesus Christ" expresses that the reason for their baptism was that they believed in Jesus. Alternate translation: "be baptized as believers in Jesus Christ"

Acts 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"The Gentiles also had received the word of God"

Almost all of the first believers were Jewish. Luke writes in this chapter that many Gentiles started to believe in Jesus. They believed that the message about Jesus was true and so began to "receive the word of God." Some of the believers in Jerusalem did not believe that Gentiles could truly follow Jesus, so Peter went to them and told them what had happened to him and how he had seen the Gentiles receive the Word of God and receive the Holy Spirit.

Links:

- [Acts 11:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Acts 11

11:1-10

Who were the "brothers"?

[11:1]

The "brothers" were men and women who believed in Jesus.

See: Family of God

Where was Judea?

[11:1]

See Map: Judea

How did the Gentiles receive "the word of God"?

[11:1]

The Gentiles "received the word of God" when they believed God's word about Jesus. That is, they believed Jesus is the messiah.

See: Gentile; Word of God; Messiah (Christ)

Who was "the circumcision group"?

[11:2]

"The circumcision group" was Jewish Christians.

See: Acts 10:45

See: Circumcise (Circumcision)

Why did the Jewish Christians think it was wrong to be with uncircumcised people and eat with them?

[11:3]

See: Acts 10:34.

What was a “trance” and what was a “vision”?

[11:5, 11:6]

See: Acts 10:10

Why did Peter add “wild beasts” to the animals Luke wrote about in Acts 10:12? Peter added “wild beasts” to the animals Luke wrote about in Acts 10:12 because Peter was thinking about how God created the animals (see: Genesis 1:25) when he said this. Elsewhere, Luke was thinking about the animals God delivered in Noah’s ark (see: Genesis 6:20; Acts 10:12).

Why did the voice tell Peter to get up, kill and eat?

[11:7]

See: Acts 10:13

Why did Peter refuse to kill and eat?

[11:8]

See: Acts 10:13.

See: Clean and Unclean

Why did God say defiled food was clean?

[11:9]

God said defiled food was clean. That is, God said that unclean foods were now clean. God made a way for Jewish Christians to worship God with Gentile Christians and visit Gentile houses. That is, since Jews were able to eat the food Gentiles ate, they were able to do other things with Gentiles.

See: Clean and Unclean; Worship; Gentile

11:11-18

Where was Caesarea?

[11:11]

See Map: Caesarea

Why did the Holy Spirit tell Peter to “make no distinction” about the men who came to him?

[11:12]

The Holy Spirit told Peter to “make no distinction” about the men who came to him. God wanted Peter to tell the Gentiles at Cornelius’ house about Jesus. God wanted him to do this even though they were Gentiles. He brought

other Jewish Christians with him. Six of those Jewish Christians also went with him to Jerusalem. They were also able to say what happened at Cornelius' house.

See: Holy Spirit; Gentile

Who were the six brothers who went with Peter into the house of Cornelius?

[11:12]

The six brothers were Jewish Christians from Joppa. They went with Peter into the house of Cornelius and saw what happened when the Holy Spirit came upon everyone and everyone spoke in tongues and praised God. They were able to say the good news about Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit were available to Gentiles.

See: Family of God; Holy Spirit; Speaking in Tongues; Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Gentile

Where was Joppa?

[11:13]

See Map: Joppa

What was the message Peter spoke to the people in the house of Cornelius?

[11:14]

Peter spoke about Jesus to the people in the house of Cornelius. That is, Peter told them about how Jesus healed people, but people killed Jesus and God made him alive again (see: Acts 10:38-40). Then Peter told them that Jesus is the one who all the prophets spoke about.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection); Prophet

How did the Holy Spirit come upon these people?

[11:15]

See: Acts 10:44-46.

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit

Who is "the Lord" in verse sixteen?

"The Lord" in verse sixteen is Jesus. Jesus is Lord and he is the one who rules from heaven.

See: Lord; Heaven

Why did Peter change his mind about salvation for the Gentiles?

[11:17]

Peter changed his mind about salvation for the Gentiles because he saw God give the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles. Peter knew that if God did that, then Peter knew this is what God wanted.

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Gentile; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

How did God give "repentance for life to the Gentiles also"?

[11:18]

God gave “repentance for life to the Gentiles also.” That is, God gave them repentance through the Holy Spirit. If the Gentiles repented of their sins, then they were at peace with God and God gave them eternal life and a new life. God also did this for the Jews. God helped them to repent, believe in Jesus, and be at peace with God.

See: Repent (Repentance); Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon); Gentile; Holy Spirit; Eternal Life; Born Again (New Life, Regeneration)

11:19-30

Where were Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch?

[11:19]

See Map: Phoenicia; Cyprus; Antioch

Why did the Christian Jews speak only to Jews in the areas where they went?

[11:19]

The Christian Jews from Jerusalem spoke only to the Jews in the areas where they went because they did not think the gospel was for the Gentiles. However, other Christian Jews from Cyprus and Cyrene went and told the Gentiles about Jesus and the gospel.

See: Gospel; Gentile

See Map: Cyprus; Cyrene

Who were “some of them” in verse 20?

[11:20]

“Some of them” in verse twenty were Greek-speaking Jews who believed in Jesus. They were not from Jerusalem but were from Cyprus and Cyrene.

See Map: Cyprus; Cyrene

Where is Cyrene?

[11:20]

See Map: Cyrene

Whom did the men from Cyprus and Cyrene speak to?

[11:20]

The men from Cyprus and Cyrene spoke about Jesus to both Jews and Gentiles. Luke wrote the word “also” because they treated the Jews and Gentiles the same. The gospel was for everyone.

See: Gentile

See Map: Cyprus; Cyrene

How was “the hand of the Lord was with them”?

[11:21]

Luke wrote that “the hand of the Lord was with them.” That is, when they taught people about Jesus, they had God’s power with them. God helped them. Because of this, many people believed and turned to the Lord Jesus.

How did people “turn to the Lord”?

[11:21]

See: Repent (Repentance)

Who was Barnabas?

[11:22]

Barnabas was a Christian leader named Joseph. He was from the Levite and he came from Cyprus. The apostles called him Barnabas, “son of encouragement” (see: Acts 4:36). He was a prophet and teacher (see: Acts 13:1). He was also an apostle but not one of the twelve apostles (see: Acts 14:14).

See: Prophet; Apostle; Tribes of Israel

Where was Antioch?

[11:22]

See Map: Antioch

How did Barnabus tell the people to “remain with the Lord with purpose of heart”?

[11:23]

Barnabus told the people to “remain with the Lord with purpose of heart.” That is, they completely served Jesus.

See: Heart (Metaphor)

How was Barnabas “full of the Holy Spirit and of faith”?

[11:24]

See: Galatians 3:2

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit; Faith (Believe in)

Where was Tarsus?

[11:25]

See Map: Tarsus

Why did Barnabus bring Saul to Antioch?

[11:26]

Barnabus brought Saul to Antioch because he wanted Paul to serve in Antioch. Many people there believed in Jesus. Later the Christians in Antioch sent out people to tell others about Jesus.

See Map: Antioch

Why did people at Antioch first call the disciples “Christians”?

[11:26]

People at Antioch first called the disciples “Christians”(Χριστιανός/g5546) because the people at Antioch knew they followed Jesus, who is the “Christ”(Χριστός/g5547). Scholars think the people at Antioch mocked the disciples of Jesus or were persecuting them when they called these people Christians (see: Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). In ancient times, Christians did not call themselves Christians. Instead, they called themselves disciples, holy ones, or brothers. They started calling themselves Christians about 100 years after Jesus died.

See: Messiah (Christ); Disciple; Holy Ones; Family of God

How did some prophets “came down” from Jerusalem?

[11:27]

Jerusalem was higher in elevation than Antioch. Some prophets went down the hill from Jerusalem rather than traveled south to get to Antioch.

See Map: Jerusalem; Antioch

Who were the prophets?

[11:27]

The prophets were Christians who had the gift of prophecy.

See: Prophet; Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Who was Agabus?

[11:28]

Agabus was a Christian prophet from Jerusalem. God revealed to him bad things that will happen in the future.

See: Prophet; Reveal (Revelation)

See: Acts 21:10

How did Agabus indicate “by the Spirit” a great famine?

[11:28]

Agabus indicated “by the Spirit” when the Holy Spirit helped Agabus to know to give a prophecy about the coming famine. This famine happened about 15 years after Jesus died.

See: Holy Spirit; Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Famine

What was “all the world”?

[11:28]

“All the world” was Rome, Greece, and Egypt, and Judaea. That is, it was the whole Roman empire. It was not the entire world.

See: Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar)

What were the “days of Claudius”?

[11:28]

Claudius ruled the Roman Empire. He did this starting about 10 years after Jesus died and stopped about 20 years after Jesus died. There were several famines during this time.

See: Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar); Famine

Where was Judea?

[11:29]

See Map: Judea

Why did God give Agabus a prophecy about the famine?

[11:29]

God gave Agabus a prophecy about the famine so the Christians in Antioch had time to prepare to help the Christians in Judea. The time allowed the Christians in Antioch to help them more than if they had not known the famine was going to happen.

See: Prophecy (Prophesy) ; Famine

See Map: Judea

Acts 11:1	Acts 11:2
General Information:	Connecting Statement:
This is the beginning of a new event in the story.	Peter arrives in Jerusalem and begins talking to the Jews there.
Now	had come up to Jerusalem
This marks a new part of the story.	Jerusalem was higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of coming up to Jerusalem and going down from it.
the brothers	they who belonged to the circumcision group
The phrase "brothers" here refers to the believers in Judea.	This is a reference to some of the Jews who believed that every believer must be circumcised. Alternate translation: "some Jewish believers in Jerusalem who wanted all followers of Christ to be circumcised"
who were in Judea	
"who were in the province of Judea"	
had received the word of God	
This expression refers to the fact that the Gentiles believed the gospel message about Jesus. Alternate translation: "believed the message of God about Jesus"	Acts 11:3
	uncircumcised men
	The phrase "uncircumcised men" refers to Gentiles.

ate with them

It was against Jewish tradition for Jews to eat with Gentiles.

Acts 11:4

Connecting Statement:

Peter responds to the Jews by telling them about his vision and about what had happened at Cornelius' house.

Peter started to explain

Peter did not criticize the Jewish believers but reacted in a friendly, explanatory manner.

in detail

"exactly what happened"

Acts 11:5

in a trance I saw

Peter saw something that was only in his mind. It was not physical. His mind was not working in its usual way. See how you translated similar words in Acts 10:10.

like a large sheet

The container holding the animals had the appearance of a large square piece of cloth. See how you translated this in Acts 10:11.

by its four corners

"with its four corners suspended" or "with its four corners higher than the rest of it." See how you translated this in Acts 10:11.

Acts 11:6

four-legged animals of earth

From Peter's response, it can be implied that the law of Moses commanded the Jews not to eat some of them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Acts 10:12]

wild beasts

This probably refer to the animals people do not or cannot tame or control.

things that crawled

snakes and insects, as opposed to "four-footed animals." See how you translated this in Acts 10:12.

Acts 11:7

I heard a voice

The person speaking is not specified. The "voice" was probably God, although it could possibly have been an angel from God. See how you translated "a voice" in [Acts 10:13]

Acts 11:8

Not so

"I will not do that." See how you translated this in Acts 10:14.

nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered into my mouth

Apparently the animals in the sheet were animals which the Jewish law in the Old Testament forbade the Jews to eat. This can be said in a positive way. Alternate translation: "I have eaten only meat from holy and clean animals"

unclean

In the Old Testament Jewish law, a person became ritually "unclean" in various ways, such as eating certain forbidden animals.

Acts 11:9

What God has made clean, you must not call defiled

This refers to the animals in the sheet.

Acts 11:10

This happened three times

Possible meanings are 1) Peter heard the words "What God has made clean, you must not call defiled" three times or 2) a total of three times the sheet came down from heaven and Peter heard and responded to the voice. It would be best to translate without adding information here. See how you translated "This happened three times" in Acts 10:16.

Acts 11:11

General Information:

Here "we" refers to Peter and the believers in Joppa. It does not include his current audience in Jerusalem.

Behold

This word alerts us to the new people in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

right away

"immediately" or "at that exact moment"

they had been sent

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had sent them"

Acts 11:12

that I should make no distinction regarding them

"that I should not be concerned that they were Gentiles"

These six brothers went with me

"These six brothers went with me to Caesarea"

These six brothers

"These six Jewish believers"

into the man's house

This refers to the house of Cornelius.

Acts 11:13

Simon who is called Peter

"Simon who is also called Peter." See how you translated the same phrase in Acts 10:32.

Acts 11:14

all your household

This refers to all the people in the household. Alternate translation: "everyone who lives in your house"

Acts 11:15

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to Peter, the other apostles, and all of the Jewish believers who had received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

As I began to speak to them, the Holy Spirit came on them

This implies that Peter had not finished speaking but had intended to say more.

the Holy Spirit came on them, just as on us in the beginning

Peter leaves out some things to keep the story short. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit came on the Gentile believers, just as he came on the Jewish believers at Pentecost"

in the beginning

Peter is referring to the day of Pentecost.

Acts 11:16

you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will baptize you with the Holy Spirit"

Acts 11:17

General Information:

The word "them" refers to Cornelius and his Gentile guests and household. The word "us" refers to the speaker and his hearers and so is inclusive.

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes his speech (which he began in Acts 11:4) to the Jews about his vision and about what had happened at the house of Cornelius.

Then if God gave to them ... who was I, that I could oppose God?

Peter uses this question to emphasize that he was only obeying God. Alternate translation: "Since God gave to them ... I decided that I could not oppose God!"

the same gift

Peter refers to the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 11:18

General Information:

The word "they" refers to the Jewish believers to whom Peter spoke.

they said nothing in response

"they did not argue with Peter"

God has given repentance for life to the Gentiles also

"God has given repentance that leads to life to the Gentiles also." Here "life" refers to eternal life. The abstract nouns "repentance" and "life" can be translated as the verbs "repent" and "live." Alternate translation: "God has also given the Gentiles the ability to repent and then live eternally" or "God has allowed the Gentiles also to repent and live eternally"

Acts 11:19

Connecting Statement:

Luke tells about what happened to the believers who fled after the stoning of Stephen.

Now

This introduces the new part of the story.

those who had been scattered by the persecution that arose over Stephen spread

The Jews began persecuting Jesus's followers because Stephen had said and done things that the Jews did not like. Because of this persecution, many of Jesus's followers left Jerusalem and went to many different places.

spread

"went in many different directions"

who had been scattered by the persecution that arose over Stephen spread

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Jews had been persecuting because of Stephen, and so had left Jerusalem, spread"

the persecution that arose over Stephen

the persecution that happened because of what Stephen had said and done

only to Jews

The believers thought God's message was for the Jewish people, and not for the Gentiles.

Acts 11:20

spoke also to Greeks

These Greek-speaking people were Gentiles, not Jews. Alternate translation: "also spoke to Gentiles who spoke Greek"

Acts 11:21

The hand of the Lord was with them

God's hand signifies his powerful help. Alternate translation: "God was powerfully enabling those believers to preach effectively"

turned to the Lord

Here "turned to the Lord" is a metaphor for starting to obey the Lord. Alternate translation: "they repented of their sins and began to obey the Lord"

Acts 11:22

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Barnabas. The word "they" refers to the believers of the church at Jerusalem.

ears of the church

Here "ears" refers to the believers' hearing about the event. Alternate translation: "the believers in the church"

Acts 11:23

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Barnabas. The word "them" refers to the believers he met on his way to Antioch.

saw the grace of God

"saw how God acted kindly toward the believers"

he encouraged them

"he kept on encouraging them"

to remain with the Lord

"to remain faithful to the Lord" or "to continue to trust in the Lord"

with purpose of heart

Here the "heart" refers to a person's will and desire. Alternate translation: "with all their will" or "with complete commitment"

Acts 11:24

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Barnabas.

full of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit controlled Barnabas as he obeyed the Holy Spirit.

many people were added to the Lord

Here "added" means they came to believe the same thing as the others. Alternate translation: "many more people also believed in the Lord"

Acts 11:25

out to Tarsus

"out to the city of Tarsus"

Acts 11:26

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Barnabas and "him" to Saul.

When he found him

It probably took some time and effort for Barnabas to locate Saul.

It came about

This begins a new event in the story.

they gathered together with the church

"Barnabas and Saul gathered together with the church"

The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch

This implies that it was other people who called the believers Christians. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People in Antioch were the first to call the disciples Christians"

Acts 11:27

General Information:

Here Luke tells background information about a prophecy in Antioch.

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main story-line.

came down from Jerusalem to Antioch

Jerusalem was higher in elevation than Antioch, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem or going down from it.

Acts 11:28

Agabus by name

"whose name was Agabus"

indicated by the Spirit

"the Holy Spirit enabled him to prophesy"

a great famine would occur

"a great shortage of food would happen"

over all the world

This was a generalization referring to the part of the world that they were interested in. Alternate translation: "all over the inhabited world" or "throughout the Roman Empire"

in the days of Claudius

Luke's audience would know that Claudius was the emperor of Rome at that time. Alternate translation: "when Claudius was the Roman emperor"

Acts 11:29

So

This word means marks an event that happened because of something else that happened first. In this case, they sent money because of Agabus' prophesy or the famine.

as each one was able

The richer people sent more; the poorer people sent less.

the brothers in Judea

"the believers in Judea"

Acts 11:30

General Information:

The words "They" and "they" refer to the believers in the church in Antioch (Acts 11:27).

by the hand of Barnabas and Saul

The hand is a synecdoche for the action of the whole person. Alternate translation: "by having Barnabas and Saul take it to them"

Acts 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 12 tells what happened to King Herod while Barnabas was bringing Saul back from Tarsus and they were delivering money from Antioch Jerusalem (11:25-30). He killed many of the leaders of the church, and he put Peter in prison. After God helped Peter escape the prison, Herod killed the prison guards, and then God killed Herod. In the last verse of the chapter, Luke tells how Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Personification

The "word of God" is spoken of as if it were a living thing that could grow and become many.

Links:

- [Acts 12:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 12

12:1-4

Who was king Herod?

[12:1]

This King Herod was Herod Agrippa. The Jewish people liked this Herod. He wanted them to like him. Because of this, he began to persecute the Christian leaders (see: Acts 12:3).

See: King Herod; Persecute (Persecution)

How did king Herod “lay hands on” some of the church?

[12:1]

Herod laid hands on people. That is, he persecuted Christians

See: Persecute (Persecution); Laying on of Hands ; King Herod

Who were “those in the church”?

[12:1]

“Those in the church” were people who believed in Jesus.

See: Church

What did Herod plan to do to Peter?

[11:3]

Herod planned to kill Peter. He planned to bring Peter before the people and kill him in the way he killed James. Herod wanted people to see Peter being killed.

See: King Herod

What were the “days of unleavened bread”?

[12:3]

The “days of unleavened bread” were seven days during the festival of Passover. Scholars say the seven days were after the night of Passover.

See: Festival of Unleavened Bread; Passover

How many soldiers were in a squad?

[12:4]

There were four soldiers in a squad. There were a total of sixteen soldiers who guarded Peter.

What was the Passover?

[12:4]

See: Passover

12:5-11

How did God answer the prayers of the church for Peter?

[12:5]

Some scholars think Luke did not write how God answered the prayers of the church for Peter. Other scholars think the prayers for Peter made God want to send an angel to rescue Peter.

See: Acts 16:25-26

See: Pray (Prayer); Angel

What was an angel?

[12:7]

See: Angel

How did a light come into the prison cell?

[12:7]

Luke did not write how a light came into the prison cell. Scholars think different things.

1. The light was part of the glory of God (see: Luke 2:9).
2. The light was from the glory of God that shone through the angel.

3. The light was from the angel.

See: Glory (Glorify); Light and Darkness (Metaphor); Angel

How did the light help Peter?

[12:7]

The light helped Peter find his clothes and sandals and put them on before they left the prison cell. It was very dark in the night of the prison and the angel wanted Peter to get up quickly before the guards woke up.

See: Angel

What was an outer garment?

[12:8]

An outer garment was worn for going outside a house or building. It is a type of coat.

What was a vision?

See: Vision

What was an iron gate?

[12:10]

An iron gate was a heavy, metal gate that allowed people to go in and out of a city.

How did Peter come to himself?

[12:11]

Peter “came to himself” when he knew his release from prison was real. That is, he knew he was not dreaming and he was thinking clearly. He was not confused. Peter knew God sent an angel.

See: Angel

12:12-19

Why did Luke write both names of Mary’s son?

[12:12}

Luke wrote both names of Mary’s son because he had both a Jewish name, John, and a Roman name, Mark. There were other people in Acts who had two names. Saul was also Paul (see: Acts 13:9). Scholars think this John Mark was the same Mark in other places in the Bible (see: Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24; 2 Timothy 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13). Scholars also think Mark wrote the gospel of Mark.

See: Gospel

How did the servant girl know Peter’s voice?

[12:14]

The servant knew Peter’s voice because Peter was from Galilee. People in Galilee spoke in the same way and this was different than how other people spoke (see: Matthew 26:73). She also knew the sound of Peter’s voice because she heard him speak before this.

See Map: Galilee

Why did the people not think it was Peter who was at the door?

[12:15]

Some scholars think the people did not think it was Peter who was at the door because they did not know Peter escaped from prison even though they prayed for him. They prayed for James but Herod killed him. Other scholars think they did not believe what a woman said about Peter in the same way the disciples did not believe the women who told them that Jesus was alive again (see: Luke 24:9-11).

See: Pray (Prayer); King Herod; Disciple; Resurrect (Resurrection)

Why did the disciples say, “it is his angel”?

[12:15]

Some scholars think the disciples believed it was Peter’s spirit that was outside the house. They thought Peter became an angel. In ancient times, some Jewish people wrongly thought that certain people become angels after they die. Other scholars think the disciples thought the angel was an angel who protected Peter. They believed there were angels guarding people (see: Psalm 91:11; Matthew 18:10; Hebrews 1:4; Acts 12:7-10).

See: Angel; Spirit (Spiritual); Disciple

Why did Peter want the people to be silent?

[12:17]

Peter wanted the people to be silent so they will not wake the neighbors or attract attention for any guards trying to find him. Perhaps the Jewish leaders lived near this house. Peter did not want to go back to prison and be killed. Also, Peter needed them to listen to him. The people were very excited to see Peter alive and free, and to know God rescued Peter.

Why did Peter want them to tell James and the brothers what happened to him?

[12:17]

Peter wanted James and others to know that he escaped prison. This is because they were Christian leaders in this area (see Acts: 15:13; 21:18).

See: Family of God

Why did Peter leave so soon?

[12:17]

Luke did not write why Peter left so soon. Scholars give several reasons.

1. Peter thought it was not safe for him to stay at the house very long.
2. He left for Antioch and told people in Antioch about Jesus (see: Galatians 2:11-14).
3. He went to Lydda and Joppa (see: Acts 10:9-48).
4. He was out of the area for a while but he came back to Jerusalem to meet with other Christian leaders (see: Acts 15:1-7).

See Map: Antioch; Lydda; Joppa

Why did Herod kill the guards?

[12:19]

Herod killed the guards because Roman law allowed the same penalty for the guards the prisoner was going to have if the guards let the prisoner escape. They failed to keep Peter in prison and Peter was going to be executed. Therefore, Herod carried out Peter's penalty on the guards. The guards were killed.

See: King Herod

Why did Herod go to Caesarea?

[12:19]

Herod went to Caesarea for two reasons.

1. He went to make celebrations in honor of Caesar. This was why many important officials from the region were there.
2. He went to help settle a trade disagreement between his country and the cities of Tyre and Sidon. The people of those cities persuaded King Herod's assistant, Blastus, to help them settle the dispute because their food came from the place Herod Agrippa ruled. The food was mostly wheat from Galilee. During the festival, Herod spoke so that people would know that there was peace between himself and the cities of Tyre and Sidon.

See: King Herod

See: Map: Judea; Caesarea; Tyre; Sidon; Galilee

12:20-25

Why did the people think Herod was a god and not a man?

[12:22]

The people thought Herod was a god and not a man because his royal clothing was made from silver that shone brightly and beautifully. It made the people afraid. Also, the people from Tyre and Sidon praised him in the same way they praised a god.

See: King Herod; False gods; Praise

See Map: Tyre; Sidon

What did the angel do to Herod?

[12:23]

The angel made Herod become sick and die. Herod accepted the praise of being a god and did not give God the glory for being God. Another ancient Jewish writer wrote that Herod did not tell the people to stop praising him.

See: Angel; King Herod; Praise; False gods; Glory (Glorify)

What were the "worms"?

[12:23]

The "worms" (σκωληκόβρωτος/g4662) were crawling insects. Some ate plants (see: Exodus 16:20) but others ate meat (see: Job 7:5). Sometimes they were inside a person's body and made the person ill. Some scholars think they

were a metaphor. Luke wrote that Herod died from a disease. Other scholars think Luke wanted to say God judged Herod (see: Isaiah 66:24).

See: Metaphor; King Herod; Judge (Judgment)

How did Herod die?

[12:23]

Herod died from the angel's blow to him. The angel either hit him or made him sick. Another ancient Jewish writer wrote that it took five days for Herod to die. Luke did not write how long it took for Herod to die but he wrote about how Herod died. When Luke wrote about Herod eating worms, he wanted people to know that Herod died in a terrible way. It was very painful for Herod to die in this way.

See: Deuteronomy 32:39; Luke 1:20; 19:44; Acts 5:1-11; 8:10,20-23

See: King Herod; Angel

How did the word of God increase and multiple?

[12:24]

The word of God increased and multiplied. This is a metaphor. More and more people believed in Jesus (see: Acts 6:7).

See: Word of God

What was the mission of Barnabas and Saul?

[12:25]

Paul and Silas served God in a certain way. The Christians in Antioch gave Barnabas and Saul money to bring to the poor Christians in Judea (see: Acts 11:29-30) to help them because they were about to have a famine.

See: Famine

See Map: Antioch; Judea

Did Luke write that Barnabas and Saul returned from or to Jerusalem?

[12:25]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that Barnabas returned from Jerusalem. Older and more ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem. Scholars think Luke wrote that Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem.

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

Acts 12:1

General Information:

This is background information about Herod's killing James.

Connecting Statement:

This begins the new persecution, first of James's death and then of Peter's imprisonment and then release.

Now

This begins a new part of the story.

about that time

This refers to the time of the famine.

laid hands on

This means Herod had the believers arrested. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:3]

some who belonged to the church

Only James and Peter are specified, which implies that these were leaders of the church in Jerusalem.

so that he might mistreat them

"in order to cause the believers to suffer"

Acts 12:2

He killed James ... with the sword

This tells the manner in which James was killed.

He killed James

Possible meanings are 1) Herod himself killed James or 2) Herod ordered someone to kill James. Alternate translation: "Herod gave the order and they killed James"

Acts 12:3

General Information:

Here the word "he" refers to Herod (Acts 12:1).

After he saw that this pleased the Jews

"When Herod realized that putting James to death pleased the Jewish leaders"

pleased the Jews

"made the Jewish leaders happy"

That was

"Herod did this" or "This happened"

the days of unleavened bread

This refers to the Jewish religious feast time during the Passover season. Alternate translation: "the festival when the Jewish people ate bread without yeast"

Acts 12:4

four squads of soldiers

"four groups of soldiers." Each squad had four soldiers that guarded Peter, one group at a time. The groups divided the 24 hour day into four shifts. Each time two soldiers would have been at his side and the other two soldiers by the entrance.

he was intending to bring him to the people

"Herod planned to judge Peter in the presence of the people" or "Herod planned to judge Peter before the Jewish people"

Acts 12:5

So Peter was kept in the prison

This implies that the soldiers continually guarded Peter in prison. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the soldiers guarded Peter in the prison"

prayer was made earnestly to God for him by those in the church

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the group of believers in Jerusalem earnestly prayed to God for him"

earnestly

continuously and with dedication

Acts 12:6

On the night before Herod was going to bring him out for trial

That Herod planned to execute him can be clarified. Alternate translation: "The happened on the day before Herod was going to bring Peter out from prison to put him on trial and then to execute him"

bound with two chains

"tied with two chains" or "fastened with two chains." Each chain would have been attached to one of the two guards who stayed beside Peter.

were keeping watch over the prison

"were guarding the prison doors"

Acts 12:7

General Information:

The words "him" and "his" refer to Peter.

Behold

This word alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

by him

"next to him" or "beside him"

in the prison cell

"in the prison room"

He struck Peter

"The angel tapped Peter" or "The angel poked Peter." Peter was evidently sleeping deeply enough that this was required to wake him.

his chains fell off his hands

The angel caused the chains to fall from Peter without touching them.

Acts 12:8

Gird yourself and put on your sandals

Peter had probably loosened his belt and taken off his sandals so he could go to sleep. The angel was telling Peter to get ready to leave the cell.

Peter did so

"Peter did what the angel told him to do" or "Peter obeyed"

Acts 12:9

General Information:

Here the word "He" refers to Peter. The words "they" and "They" refer to Peter and the angel.

He did not know

"He did not understand"

what was done by the angel was real

This could be changed to active form. Alternate translation: "the actions of the angel were real" or "what the angel did truly happened"

Acts 12:10

After they had passed by the first guard and the second

It is implied that the soldiers were not able to see Peter and the angel as they walked by. Alternate translation: "The first and second guards did not see them as they passed by, and then"

had passed by

"had walked by"

and the second

The word "guard" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and the second guard"

they came to the iron gate

"Peter and the angel arrived at the iron gate"

that led into the city

"that opened to the city" or "that went from the prison to the city"

it opened for them by itself

Here "by itself" means neither Peter nor the angel opened it. Alternate translation: "the gate swung open for them" or "the gate opened itself for them"

went down a street

"walked along a street"

left him right away

"left Peter suddenly" or "suddenly disappeared"

Acts 12:11

When Peter came to himself

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "When Peter became fully awake and alert" or "When Peter became aware that what had happened was real"

delivered me out of the hand of Herod

Here "the hand of Herod" refers to "Herod's hold" or "Herod's plans." Alternate translation: "brought me from the harm Herod had planned for me"

delivered me

"rescued me"

everything the Jewish people were expecting

Here "the people of the Jews" probably referred mainly to the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "all that the Jewish leaders thought would happen to me"

Acts 12:12

realized this

He became aware that God had rescued him.

John, also called Mark

John was also called Mark. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "John, whom people also called Mark"

Acts 12:13

he knocked

"Peter knocked." Tapping on the door was a normal Jewish custom to let others know you wish to visit them. You may need to change this to fit your culture.

at the door of the gate

"at the outer door" or "at the door of the entrance from the street to the courtyard"

came to answer

"came to the gate to ask who was knocking"

Acts 12:14

General Information:

Here all instances of "she" refer to the servant girl Rhoda ([Acts 12:13](#)).

out of joy

"because she was so joyful" or "being overly excited"

failed to open the gate

"did not open the gate" or "forgot to open the gate"

came running into the room

You may prefer to say "went running into the room in the house"

she reported

"she told them" or "she said"

Acts 12:15

General Information:

Here the words "she" and "her" both refer to the servant girl Rhoda ([Acts 10:13](#)), and the words "they" and "They" refer to the people who were inside praying ([Acts 10:12](#)).

You are insane

The people not only did not believe her, but rebuked her by saying she was crazy. Alternate translation: "You are crazy"

she insisted that it was so

"she insisted that what she said was true"

They said

"They answered"

It is his angel

"What you have seen is Peter's angel." Some Jews believed in guardian angels and may have thought that Peter's angel had come to them.

Acts 12:16

General Information:

Here both instances of "they" refer to the people in the house. The word "him" refers to Peter.

But Peter continued knocking

The word "continued" means that Peter kept knocking the entire time those inside were talking.

Acts 12:17

General Information:

Here both instances of "them" refer to the people who were inside praying (Acts 12:12).

Report these things

"Tell these things"

the brothers

"the other believers"

Acts 12:18

Now

This word is used to mark a break in the story-line. Time has passed; it is now the next day.

when it became day

"in the morning"

there was no small disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter

This phrase is used to emphasize what really happened. This could be said in a positive way. Alternate translation: "there was a great disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter"

there was no small disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter

The abstract noun "disturbance" can be expressed with the words "disturbed" or "upset." Alternate translation: "the soldiers were very disturbed about what had happened to Peter"

Acts 12:19

General Information:

The word "him" here refers to Peter, and both instances of "he" refers to Herod.

After Herod had searched for him and could not find him

"After Herod searched for Peter and could not find him"

After Herod had searched for him

Possible meanings are that 1) "Herod" here is a metonym for his soldiers, that is, when Herod heard Peter was missing, he sent other soldiers to search the prison, or 2) when Herod heard Peter was missing, he went himself to search the prison.

he questioned the guards and ordered them to be put to death

It was the normal punishment for the Roman government to kill the guards if their prisoner escaped.

Then Herod went down

The phrase "went down" is used here because Caesarea is lower in elevation than Judea.

Acts 12:20

Connecting Statement:

Luke continues with another event in Herod's life.

Now

This word is used here to mark the next event in the story.

very angry

This phrase translates a word that speaks of a person being so angry that he is ready to kill other people.

They went to him with one purpose

Here the word "They" is a generalization. It is unlikely that all the people of Tyre and Sidon went to Herod. Alternate translation: "Men representing the people of Tyre and Sidon went with one purpose to talk with Herod"

with one purpose

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

after persuading Blastus

"after these men persuaded Blastus"

Blastus

a man's name

the king's assistant

This phrase refers to a person who assists the king in his personal life, not necessarily his work as ruler.

they asked for peace

"these men requested peace"

their country received its food from the king's country

They probably purchased this food. Alternate translation: "the people of Tyre and Sidon bought all their food from the people that Herod ruled"

received its food

It is implied that Herod restricted this supply of food because he was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon.

Acts 12:21

On a set day

This was probably the day on which Herod agreed to meet with the representatives. Alternate translation: "On the day when Herod agreed to meet them"

royal clothing

expensive clothing that would demonstrate he was the king

sat on a throne

This was where Herod formally addressed people who came to see him.

Acts 12:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 12:23

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about Herod.

Immediately an angel

"Right away an angel" or "While the people were praising Herod, an angel"

struck him

"afflicted Herod" or "caused Herod to become very ill"

he did not give God the glory

Herod let those people worship him instead of telling them to worship God.

he was eaten by worms and died

Here "worms" refers to worms inside the body, probably intestinal worms. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "worms ate Herod's insides and he died"

Acts 12:24

the word of God increased and multiplied

The word of God is spoken of as if it were a living plant able to grow and reproduce. Alternate translation: "the message of God spread to more places and more people believed in him"

the word of God

"the message God sent about Jesus"

Acts 12:25

Connecting Statement:

This verse continues the history from [11:30]

completed their mission

This refers back to when they brought money from the believers at Antioch in [Acts 11:29-30]

they returned from Jerusalem

They went back to Antioch from Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch"

Acts 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 13:33-35 and 13:41.

This chapter is where the second half of the Book of Acts begins. Luke writes more about Paul than about Peter. Luke also writes about the believers preaching to the Gentiles rather than to the Jews.

Special concepts in this chapter

A light for the Gentiles

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. The Jews considered all Gentiles as walking in darkness, but Paul and Barnabas spoke of telling the Gentiles about Jesus as if they were going to bring them physical light. (See: and righteous)

Links:

- [Acts 13:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 13

13:1-12

Where was Antioch?

[13:1]

See Map: Antioch

What was a prophet?

[13:1]

See: Prophet

What was a foster brother?

[13:1]

A foster brother was a boy who was raised with a family that was not his family. This foster brother was a friend or companion to the son of the king. Manaen was a close childhood friend of King Herod the Tetrarch.

See: King Herod

Who was Herod the Tetrarch?

[13:1]

See: King Herod

Why did Luke write Christians fasted two times?

[13:2, 13:3]

Luke wrote Christians fasted two times because the Christians fasted in two ways.

1. Christians in Antioch worshiped God by fasting in the same way priests and others who served in the temple in Jerusalem did.
2. Christians fasted, prayed, and laid on hands when the Holy Spirit chose leaders to serve.

See: Fasting; Worship; Priest (Priesthood); Temple

Who worshiped the Lord and fasted?

[13:2, 13:3]

Luke did not write who worshiped the Lord and fasted. Some scholars think the Jews usually used the word “worshiped” when they were talking about the priests and Levites when these people served in the temple. Therefore, Luke was writing about the prophets and teachers. Other scholars think the priests and Levites were no longer the only ones who served and worshiped God. Everyone in the church served and worshiped God (see: Romans 12:1; 1 Peter 2:5). Thus, “they” were everyone in the church.

See: Worship; Priest (Priesthood); Tribes of Israel; Temple; Prophet; Church

How did the Christians set apart Barnabas and Saul?

[13:2]

The Christians set apart Barnabas and Saul when they separated or divided Barnabas and Saul from the others for the work of telling people about Jesus. The Christians also fasted, prayed, and laid on hands because the church wanted Barnabas and Saul to do this for God.

See: Fasting; Pray (Prayer); Laying on of Hands

What was the work the Holy Spirit called them to do?

[13:2]

Luke wrote about the work the Holy Spirit called them to do. The work was to go out and tell people about Jesus and the gospel.

See: Gospel; Call (Calling); Holy Spirit

See Map: Cyprus, Perga, Asia Minor

Why did the leaders lay their hands on Barnabas and Saul?

[13:3]

The leaders put their hands on Barnabas and Saul because they prayed for them to have God’s blessing and power. It was also a sign that they supported these men (see: Acts 6:6; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; Heb. 6:2).

See: Laying on of Hands ; Pray (Prayer); Bless (Blessing); Sign

How did the Holy Spirit send out Barnabas and Saul?

[13:4]

Luke did not write how the Holy Spirit sent out Barnabas and Saul. There were several ways the Holy Spirit led Christians.

1. Speech (see: Acts 13:2).
2. Prophecy (see: Acts 21:10-11).
3. Vision (See: Acts 16:6-10).
4. The Holy Spirit sent them out from the church in Antioch.

See: Prophecy (Prophecy); Vision); Church; Holy Spirit

See Map: Antioch

Where was Seleucia?

[13:4]

See Map: Seleucia

Where was Cyprus?

[13:4]

See Map: Cyprus

Why did Barnabas and Saul go to Cyprus?

[13:4]

There were several reasons why Barnabas and Saul went to Cyprus.

1. Barnabas was from Cyprus
2. It was easy to travel there.
3. Barnabas and others already told Jews there about Jesus (see: Acts 11:19-20).
4. Christians were there (see: Acts 21:16).
5. The Holy Spirit led them to go there.

See: Holy Spirit

See Map: Cyprus

Where was Salamis?

[13:5]

See Map: Salamis

What is the word of God?

[13:5]

See: Word of God

What was a synagogue?

[13:5]

See: Synagogue

Where was Paphos?

[13:6]

See Map: Paphos

What was a magician?

[13:6]

A magician did things using sorcery. This was evil. The Law of Moses commanded Jews not to do this (see: Leviticus 19:31). This was why Luke wrote Bar-Joshua was a false prophet (see: Acts 13:6).

See: Sorcery; Prophet

What was a proconsul?

[13:7]

A proconsul was a Roman leader who was given permission to rule a certain area.

How was Paul filled with the Holy Spirit?

[13:9]

Paul was filled with power from the Holy Spirit. Paul needed power from the Holy Spirit to defeat the evil power of the magician.

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit

Why was the magician a “son of the devil”?

[13:10]

The magician was a “son of the devil” because he did the same things the devil did and he served the devil.

See: Satan (The Devil); Sorcery

Why was the magician full of “deceit and wickedness”?

[13:10]

The magician was full of “deceit” because he said wrong things about God and Jesus. That is, he made people believe wrong things about God and Jesus. He was also full of “wickedness” because he made people do wrong things the devil wanted them to do.

See: Satan (The Devil); Sorcery

How was the magician an “enemy of every kind of righteousness”?

[13:10]

This magician was an “enemy of every kind of righteousness” because he did not love or do the things God wanted him to do. Instead he “made crooked”(διαστρέφω/g1406) the “straight paths of the Lord”. That is, he stopped people from doing the things God wanted people to do.

See: Righteous (Righteousness)

What were the “straight paths of the Lord”?

[13:10]

The “straight paths of the Lord” were the right and true ways of God. This is a metaphor. Luke was writing about doing the right thing and obeying God.

See: Righteous (Righteousness); Walk

What was the “hand of the Lord”?

[13:11]

“The hand of the Lord” was a metaphor. Luke was writing about God judging the magician. God caused him to be blind for a time. The words, “Now look,” told the magician that God revealed this judgement to Paul.

God also made Paul temporarily blind. The result was he was later able to see the truth about Jesus. God also healed his eyes. God sometimes struck people with blindness to stop them from doing evil or to get their attention (see: Genesis 19:11; 2 Kings 6:18-20, Acts 9:8-9).

See: Lord; Metaphor; Judge (Judgment)

Why did the proconsul believe in Jesus?

[13:12]

The proconsul believed in Jesus because he was amazed at the teaching about Jesus. Luke did not write that this man believed because of the power of God working through Paul. However, the teaching about Jesus included stories about Jesus healing people and becoming alive again. Scholars also think Paul talked about his own story about God blinding him on the way to Damascus (see: Acts 9:3-9).

This proconsul was an intelligent man (see: Acts 13:7). That is, he believed because of other things about Jesus and he knew Jesus is Lord and Savior. So the power of God over the magician helped him to believe in Jesus. When someone showed other people that Jesus had power over the devil, this helped people in Jesus (see: Mark 1:22, 27).

See: Faith (Believe in); Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Lord; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Satan (The Devil)

See Map: Damascus

13:13-16

Where were Paphos, Perga, and Pamphylia?

[13:13]

See Map: Paphos; Perga; Pamphylia

Why did John leave Barnabas and Paul and return to Jerusalem?

[13:13]

Luke did not write why John left Barnabas and Paul and returned to Jerusalem. Paul said John deserted them in Pamphylia (see: Acts 15:38), but years later Paul wrote Mark was useful (see: 2 Timothy 4:11). Some scholars think John Mark was not ready for the persecution that came when they told people about Jesus. Other scholars think John Mark wanted Barnabas to be the leader instead of Paul. Up to this time Luke always listed Barnabas first and then Saul. Now Luke wrote about Paul and “his friends.” All of them continued to serve. Barnabas took John Mark with him and Paul took Silas (see: Acts 15:39).

See: Persecute (Persecution)

Where was Antioch of Pisidia?

[13:14]

See Map: Antioch of Pisidia

What was a synagogue?

[13:14]

See: Synagogue

What was the Sabbath?

[13:14]

See: Sabbath

What were the law and the prophets?

[13:15]

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

How did the leaders of the synagogue sent a message to them?

[13:15]

The rulers of the synagogue sent someone to Paul and his friends inside the synagogue. The messenger told them the message during the synagogue meeting. The leaders of the synagogue did not sent a message to them over a longer distance or outside of the synagogue.

See: Synagogue

Why did Paul motion with his hand?

[13:16]

Paul motioned with his hand. People often did this to invite other people to listen. Also, Paul wanted people to be silent so they would pay attention to the things he said.

Who were those who honored God?

[13:16]

Those who honored God worshiped the God of Israel and obeyed the Law of Moses. However, they were not Jews themselves. People called them “God-fearers.” They were not born Jews and they did not become circumcised.

See: Worship; Law of Moses; Circumcise (Circumcision)

13:17-22

What happened to the Israelites in Egypt?

[13:17]

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt until God used Moses to free them from the Egyptians.

See: Serve

See Map: Egypt

What was God’s “uplifted arm”?

[13:17]

God’s “uplifted arm” was a metaphor to say God has great power. God led the Israelites out of slavery.

See: Metaphor

What were the seven nations in the land of Canaan?

[13:19]

The seven nations in the land of Canaan were the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites (see: Deuteronomy 7:1). Each nation was larger and stronger than the Israelites.

See: Canaan (Promised Land)

See Map: Canaan

Why did God drive out the seven nations from Canaan?

[13:19]

God drove out the seven nations from Canaan to give the Israelites an inheritance. This land promised to their ancestor Abraham (see: Genesis 15:18). Also, the nations from Canaan were evil so God punished them (see: Leviticus 18:24-25).

See: Inherit (Inheritance, Heir); Canaan (Promised Land); Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Punish (Punishment)

See Map: Canaan

What events made up the 450 years?

[13:19]

The 450 years included the time Israel spent in Egypt, 400 years, and the time they travelled in the wilderness, 40 years, and about 10 years of time it took to control Canaan. The time to control Canaan was the time they entered into Canaan to when they finished dividing the land among the tribes of Israel.

See: Canaan (Promised Land); Tribes of Israel

See Map: Canaan

What was a judge?

[13:20]

A judge was someone who helped lead or rule the Israelites in the Promised Land before there were kings in Israel

See: Judge (Judgment); Canaan (Promised Land)

Why was Samuel at the time when the period of the Judges ended?

[13:20]

God began to do something different with Israel after Samuel. Samuel was a priest, a prophet, and the last judge of Israel. Samuel anointed Saul as the first king of Israel (see: 1 Samuel 2:35; 3:20; 7:15–17).

See: Judge (Judgment); Priest (Priesthood); Prophet; Appoint

Why did the people ask for a king to rule over them?

[13:21]

The people asked for a king to rule over them because they rejected the judges. When they asked for a man to be king, they rejected God who was their king (see: 1 Samuel 8:6-7).

Why did God remove Saul from being king?

God removed Saul from being king because he did not obey the Lord (See: 1 Samuel 13:13-14; 15:23,26-28).

Why did Paul call David a man after God's heart?

[13:22]

Paul called David a man after God's heart because David did the things God wanted him to do. God was in the process of replacing King Saul with a new king, David.

See: Heart (Metaphor)

13:23-37

How did Paul know Jesus was a descendant of King David?

[13:23]

Paul was a Jewish teacher and he knew the promise of God to David that one of David's descendants rule forever (see: 2 Samuel 7:12-14). Because of this, the Jews kept records of everyone's ancestors.

See: Luke 3:23-38; Matthew 1:1-17

See: Covenant with David; Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Son of David

What was a savior?

[13:23]

See: Savior

What John was Luke writing about?

[13:24]

Luke wrote about John the Baptist. The Jews in Palestine knew John the Baptist at that time. John the Baptist was not the messiah, but he came before the messiah to prepare people to receive the messiah. John the Baptist preached repentance from sins and he baptized people for this repentance (See: Mark 1:4-5).

See: Messiah (Christ); Preach (Preacher); Repent (Repentance); Repent (Repentance); Baptize (Baptism)

Who is the “one”?

[13:25]

John spoke of the “one” to come after him who will be Jesus (see: Isaiah 40:3; Mark 1:3). John said this “one” is far greater than he was. Jesus is so much greater than John and John thought he was not even able to be his servant (see: Mark 1:7). John baptized with water, but this “one” that comes after John will baptize with the Holy Spirit (see: Mark 1:8).

See: Baptize (Baptism)

Who were children of the offspring of Abraham?

[13:26]

The children of the offspring of Abraham were the Jews. Paul spoke to both the Jews and Gentiles who were with the Jews in the synagogue and who worshiped God.

See: Gentile; Synagogue; Worship

What was the message of salvation?

[13:26]

The message of salvation is the gospel

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Gospel

How did the people and rulers of Jerusalem fulfill the voices of the prophets?

[13:27]

The people and rulers of Jerusalem fulfilled the voices of the prophets when they did not recognize Jesus. That is, they did not believe Jesus was the messiah, so they rejected Jesus (see: John 12:37-40; Romans 9:33). This was what the prophets prophesied would happen.

See: Isaiah 6:10; 2 Corinthians 4:4

See: Prophet; Messiah (Christ); Prophecy (Prophecy)

Who was Pilate?

[13:28]

Pilate was the Roman leader who ruled Judea when Jesus was alive on the earth.

See Map: Judea

What were “all the things that were written about him”?

[13:29]

“All the things that were written about him” were the things that happened to Jesus. These things were written about in the Old Testament, long before Jesus lived on the earth.

See: Isaiah 53:3-5,7; Psalm 22; 69; Zechariah 12:10

Why was Jesus on a “tree”?

[13:29]

When Luke wrote about a tree, he was writing about the cross.

See: Galatians 3:13

See: Cross

How did Jesus become alive again?

[13:30]

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

Where was Galilee?

[13:31]

See Map: Galilee

What did the people do after they saw Jesus alive again?

[13:31]

The people who saw Jesus alive again told other people about Jesus, his resurrection, and the gospel.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection); Gospel

What was the “promise that came to our fathers”?

[13:32]

The “promise that came to our fathers” were the promises God made to Abraham, Moses, and David.

See: Galatians 3:8-9; Isaiah 55:3

See: Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

Where did God say, “I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David”?

[13:34]

God said, “I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David,” to the prophet Isaiah (see Isaiah 55:3). Paul was thinking about Isaiah 55:3 when he repeated the second Psalm. David wrote about God saying he is the Father of his Son Jesus in the second Psalm (see: Acts 4:25-26).

See: God the Father; Son of God

When did God “become” the Father of the Son?

[13:33]

God has always been the Father of the Son. That is, Jesus was already God’s Son even before God and Jesus made the world (see: John 17:5; 1:1-3). Paul did not say the word “become”(γεννάω/g1080) to say God became the father of Jesus when Jesus came into the world, or when Jesus was baptized, or even when Jesus became alive again. Paul wrote God powerfully “declared” or “said”(ὁρίζω/g3724) Jesus is the Son of God when he made Jesus alive again (see: Romans 1:4).

See: God the Father; Son of God

See: Matthew 3:17; 17:5

Why did Jesus’ body not decay?

[13:35]

Jesus’ body did not decay because it was dead only three days.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

13:38-43

How did Jesus forgive sins?

[13:38]

See: John 3:16

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon); Sin; Atone (Atonement)

Why were Christians justified?

[13:39]

See: Romans 8:1-4; 10:9-10

See: Justify (Justification)

Why did Paul say “the prophets”?

[13:40]

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets)

Why did Paul say the same thing Habakkuk wrote?

[13:40]

Paul said the same thing the prophet Habakkuk wrote. He did not want people to reject Jesus in the way the Israelites of Habakkuk’s day rejected God.

What were “devout proselytes”?

[13:43]

“Devout proselytes” were Gentiles who became Jews. They worshiped God, obeyed the Law of Moses, and were circumcised.

See: Circumcise (Circumcision); Gentile

How did someone “continue in the grace of God”?

[13:43]

Luke wrote about continuing in the grace of God. Scholars think the people continued to believe in the gospel about Jesus.

See: Gospel; Grace

13:44-52

What was the word of the Lord?

[13:44]

See: Word of God; Lord

Why were the Jews envious?

[13:45]

The Jews were envious because they saw large crowds listening to Paul and Barnabas. They wanted the people to listen to them instead of Paul and Barnabas. Some Jews believed in Jesus but many did not. This is because some people did not want God to be at peace with Gentiles who did not obey the Law of Moses (see: Acts 13:39).

Why did Paul speak the word of God to the Jews first and then the Gentiles?

[13:46]

Paul spoke the word of God to the Jews first because God gave them promises, the covenants, the Law of Moses, and the temple (see: Romans 9:4). Also, Jesus was a Jew (see: Romans 9:5). Paul wanted the Jews to know their Messiah, Jesus. Also, God wanted the Jews to help the Gentiles know about God. However, because most of the Jews did not believe in Jesus, they were not able to do this.

See: Isaiah 42:6; 49:6; Galatians 2:7).

See: Word of God; Covenant; Law of Moses; Temple; Messiah (Christ); Gentile

How did the Gentiles glorify the word of the Lord?

[13:48]

The Gentiles glorified the word of the Lord when they believed in Jesus. They praised God that they were worthy to have God save them.

See: Glory (Glorify); Faith (Believe in); Word of God; Praise; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

What is “eternal life”?

[13:48]

See: Eternal Life

How did God appoint people to eternal life?

[13:48]

God appointed people to eternal life. Scholars think God chose who would have eternal life in some way. Scholars disagree about how and when God did this.

See: Eternal Life

How did the “word of the Lord” spread?

[13:49]

The “word of the Lord” spread. That is, Christians told other people about Jesus and more people knew about Jesus. As Christians began to do this, more and more people learned about Jesus and God.

See: Gospel; Faith (Believe in)

Why did the Jews incite leading men and women?

[13:50]

The Jews incited leading men and women. That is, they made these people angry. This is because these Jews rejected Jesus and they did not want people to believe in Jesus. These Jews did not want more Jews to become Christians so they tried to get people to force Paul and Barnabas out of the city.

See: Gospel; Faith (Believe in); Persecute (Persecution)

Why did Paul and Barnabas shake the dust off of their feet?

[13:51]

Jesus told his followers to shake the dust off their feet or sandals to warn people about rejecting his followers (see: Luke 9:5; 10:11). This was a sign that there will be judgment against their actions. Paul and the others did this against the Jews and the leaders who forced them out of the city.

See: Sign; Judge (Judgment)

Where was Iconmium?

[13:51]

See Map: Iconium

How were the disciples filled with joy and the Holy Spirit?

[13:52]

The disciples were filled with joy by the power and work of the Holy Spirit inside them. When people persecuted them, the Holy Spirit helped them to have joy.

See: Disciple; Holy Spirit; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Persecute (Persecution) ; Rejoice (Joy, Joyful)

Acts 13:1	that the Holy Spirit had called Barnabas and Saul to do this work.
General Information:	sent them off
Verse 1 gives background information about the people in the church at Antioch.	"sent those men off" or "sent those men off to do the work the Holy Spirit told them to do"
Connecting Statement:	Acts 13:4
Luke begins to tell about the mission trips on which the church at Antioch send Barnabas and Saul.	General Information:
Now in the church in Antioch	Here the word "they" refers to Barnabas and Saul.
"At that time in the church at Antioch"	So
Simeon ... Niger ... Lucius ... Manaen	This word marks an event that happened because of a previous event. In this case, the previous event is Barnabas and Saul being set apart by the Holy Spirit.
These are men's names.	went down
foster brother of Herod the tetrarch	The phrase "went down" is used here because Seleucia is lower in elevation than Antioch.
Manaen was probably Herod's playmate or close friend while they were growing up.	Seleucia
Acts 13:2	a city by the sea
General Information:	Acts 13:5
The words "they" refers to the other three leaders (Acts 13:1), not including Barnabas and Saul, and it could include other believers.	General Information:
Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul	Here the words "They" and "their" refer to Barnabas and Saul.
"Appoint Barnabas and Saul to serve me"	city of Salamis
I have called them	The city of Salamis was on Cyprus Island.
The verb here means that God chose them to do this work.	proclaimed the word of God
Acts 13:3	"Word of God" here is a synecdoche for "message of God." Alternate translation: "proclaimed the message of God"
General Information:	synagogues of the Jews
The words "they" and "their" refer to the other three leaders (Acts 13:1), not including Barnabas and Saul, and they could include other believers.	Possible meanings are that 1) there were multiple Jewish synagogues in the city of Salamis where Barnabas and Saul preached or 2) Barnabas and Saul started at the synagogue at Salamis and continued to preach in all the synagogues they found while they traveled around the Island of Cyprus.
laid their hands on these men	
"laid their hands on these men whom God had set apart for his service." This act showed that the leaders agreed	

They also had John for an assistant

"John went with them and was helping them"

John

John Mark

assistant

"helper"

Acts 13:6

General Information:

Here both instances of "they" refers to Paul, Silas, and John Mark.

the whole island

They crossed from one side of the island to the other and shared the gospel message in each town they passed through.

Paphos

a major city on Cyprus island where the proconsul lived

they found

Here "found" means they came upon him without looking for him. Alternate translation: "they met" or "they came upon"

a certain magician

"a particular person who practiced witchcraft" or "a person who practiced supernatural magic arts"

whose name was Bar-Jesus

"Bar-Jesus" means "Son of Jesus." There is no relation between this man and Jesus Christ. "Jesus" was a common name at that time.

Acts 13:7

General Information:

Here the word "he" refers to Sergius Paulus, the proconsul.

associated with

"was often with" or "was often in the company of"

proconsul

This was a governor in charge of a Roman province. Alternate translation: "governor"

who was an intelligent man

This is background information about Sergius Paulus.

This man summoned

The phrase "this man" refers to Sergius Paulus.

he sought to hear the word of God

"he wanted to hear the word of God"

Acts 13:8

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to Paul, Silas, and John Mark, and "he" refers to Elymas.

Elymas "the magician"

This was Bar Jesus, who was also called "the magician"

that is how his name is translated

"that was what he was called in Greek"

opposed them; he tried to turn

"resisted them by trying to turn" or "attempted to stop them by trying to turn"

tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith

Here "to turn ... away from" is a metaphor for convincing someone to not do something. Alternate translation: "attempted to persuade the governor not to believe the gospel message"

Acts 13:9

General Information:

The word "him" refers to the magician Elymas, who is also called Bar Jesus ([Acts 13:6-8](#)).

Connecting Statement:

While on the island of Paphos, Paul begins to talk to Elymas.

Saul, who is also called Paul

"Saul" was his Jewish name, and "Paul" was his Roman name. Since he was speaking to a Roman official, he used his Roman name. Alternate translation: "Saul, who now called himself Paul"

stared at him intensely

"looked at him intensely"

Acts 13:10

You son of the devil

Paul is saying the man is acting like the devil. Alternate translation: "You are like the devil" or "You act like the devil"

you are full of all kinds of deceit and wickedness

"you are always intent in causing others to believe what is not true using falsehood and are always doing what is wrong"

wickedness

The word in this context means laziness and lack of diligence in following God's law.

You are an enemy of every kind of righteousness

Paul is grouping Elymas with the devil. Just as the devil is an enemy of God and is against righteousness, so also was Elymas.

You will never stop twisting the straight paths of the Lord, will you?

Paul uses this question to rebuke Elymas for opposing God. Alternate translation: "You are always saying that the truth about the Lord God is false!"

the straight paths of the Lord

Here "straight paths" refer to the ways that are true. Alternate translation: "the true ways of the Lord"

Acts 13:11

General Information:

The words "you," "he," and "him" refer to Elymas the magician.

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes speaking to Elymas.

the hand of the Lord is upon you

Here "hand" represents the power of God and "upon you" implies punishment. Alternate translation: "The Lord will punish you"

you will become blind

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will make you blind"

You will not see the sun

Elymas will be so completely blind that he not even be able to see the sun. Alternate translation: "You will not even see the sun"

for a while

"for a period of time" or "until the time appointed by God"

there fell on Elymas a mist and darkness

"the eyes of Elymas became blurry and then dark" or "Elymas started seeing unclearly and then he could not see anything"

he started going around

"Elymas wandered around" or "Elymas started feeling around and"

Acts 13:12

General Information:

Both instances of "he" refer to the proconsul.

the proconsul

A proconsul was a governor in charge of a Roman province. Alternate translation: "the governor"

he believed

"he believed in Jesus"

he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
"the teaching about the Lord amazed him"

Acts 13:13

General Information:

Verse 13 gives background information about this part of the story. "Paul and his friends" were Barnabas and John Mark

Connecting Statement:

This is a new part of the story about Paul in Antioch in Pisidia.

Now

This marks the beginning of a new part of the story.

set sail from Paphos

"traveled by sailboat from Paphos"

came to Perga in Pamphylia

"arrived in Perga, which is in Pamphylia"

But John left them

"But John Mark left Paul and Barnabas"

Acts 13:14

General Information:

Verse 14 continues to give background information about this part of the story. The word "they" refers to Paul and his friends Barnabas and John Mark

Antioch of Pisidia

"the city of Antioch in the district of Pisidia." This is different from the city of Antioch that Paul and Barnabas left at the beginning of the chapter.

Acts 13:15

General Information:

The word "them" refers to Paul and his friends Barnabas and John Mark.

After the reading of the law and the prophets

The "law and the prophets" refer to parts of the Jewish scriptures which were read. Alternate translation:
"After someone read from the books of the law and the writings of the prophets"

sent them a message, saying

"told someone to say to them" or "asked someone to say to them"

Brothers

The term "brothers" is here used by the people in the synagogue to refer to Paul and Barnabas as fellow Jews.

if you have any message of encouragement

"if you want to say anything to encourage us"

encouragement

or "exhortation"

say it

"please speak it" or "please tell it to us"

Acts 13:16

General Information:

The words "he" and "his" refer to Paul. The word "you" is plural.

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins his speech to those in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch. He begins by talking about things that happened in Israel's history.

motioned with his hand

This could refer to moving his hands as a signal that he was ready to speak. Alternate translation: "moved his hands to show that he was about to speak"

you who fear God

This refers to Gentiles who had converted to Judaism.
"you who are not Israelites but who worship God"

God, listen

"God, listen to me" or "God, listen to what I am about to say"

Acts 13:17

General Information:

The word "our" includes the speaker and the hears and so is plural. The words "they" and "them" refer to "the people." The word "he" refers to God.

The God of this people Israel

"The God the people of Israel worship"

our fathers

"our ancestors"

exalted the people

"caused the people to become very numerous"

with an uplifted arm

This refers to God's mighty power. Alternate translation: "with great power"

out of it

"out from the land of Egypt"

Acts 13:18

he put up with them

"God tolerated the people of Israel." This means "he tolerated them." Some versions have have a different word that means "he took care of them." Alternate translation: "God endured their disobedience" or "God took care of them"

Acts 13:19

General Information:

Here both instances of "he" refer to God. The word "our" refers to Paul and his audience.

nations

Here the word "nations" refers to different people groups and not to lands with geographical boundaries.

Acts 13:20

General Information:

The word "them" refers to the people of Israel.

took place over 450 years

"took more than 450 years to accomplish"

until Samuel the prophet

"until the time of the prophet Samuel"

Acts 13:21

king for forty years

"their king for forty years" or "king, and he reigned over them for forty years"

Acts 13:22

General Information:

The quotation here is from Old Testament.

removed him from the kingship

This expression means God caused Saul to stop being king. Alternate translation: "rejected Saul from being king"

he raised up David to be their king

"God chose David to be their king"

their king

"the king of Israel" or "the king over the Israelites"

It was about David that God testified, saying,

"God gave this testimony about David:"

I have found David ... to be

"I have observed that David ... is"

a man after my heart

This expression means "a man who wants what I want."

Acts 13:23

From this man's descendants

"From David's descendants." This is placed at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize that the savior had to be one of David's descendants (Acts 13:22).

has brought to Israel

This refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "gave to the people of Israel"

as he promised to do

"just as God promised he would do"

Acts 13:24

a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel

You can translate the word "repentance" as the verb "repent." Alternate translation: "that all the people of Israel who wanted to repent of their sin needed to have him baptize them"

Acts 13:25

Who do you think I am?

John asked this question to compel the people to think about who he was. Alternate translation: "Think about who I am."

I am not the one

John was referring to the Messiah, whom they were expecting to come. Alternate translation: "I am not the Messiah"

But listen

This emphasizes the importance of what he will say next.

one is coming after me

This also refers to the Messiah. Alternate translation: "The Messiah will soon come"

the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie

"I am not worthy even to untie his sandals." The Messiah is so much greater than John that he did not even feel worthy to do the lowest job for him.

Acts 13:26

General Information:

Here the word "us" includes Paul and his entire audience in the synagogue.

Brothers, children of the offspring of Abraham, and those among you who fear God

Possible meanings are 1) this is a list with three items, and Paul is addressing three groups of people together, or 2) the phrases "children of the offspring of Abraham" and "those among you who fear God" refer to the two groups of people whom Paul addresses as "brothers."

those among you who fear God

These words refer specifically to Gentiles who worshiped in the synagogue and obeyed much of the law of Moses but had not been circumcised.

the message about this salvation has been sent

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has sent the message about this salvation"

about this salvation

The word "salvation" can be translated with the verb "save." Alternate translation: "that God will save people"

Acts 13:27

General Information:

The word "they" and "their" refers to the Jews who lived in Jerusalem.

did not recognize him

"did not realize that this man Jesus was the one whom God had sent to save them"

the voices of the prophets

Here the word "voices" is a metonym for the message that the voices spoke. Alternate translation: "the

writings of the prophets" or "the messages of the prophets"

that are read

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which someone reads"

Acts 13:28

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the Jewish people and their religious leaders in Jerusalem. The word him" here refers to Jesus.

they found no reason for the death penalty

It is implied that they found no legal reason for Jesus to be put to death. Alternate translation: "they found no legal reason for Jesus to be killed" or "they found no legal reason to kill Jesus"

Acts 13:29

When they had completed all the things that were written about him

"When they did to Jesus all the things that the prophets said would happen to him"

they took him down from the tree

It may be helpful to explicitly say Jesus died before this happened. Alternate translation: "they killed Jesus and then took him down from the cross after he died"

from the tree

"from the cross." This was another way people at that time referred to the cross.

Acts 13:30

But God raised him

"But" indicates a strong contrast between what the people did and what God did.

raised him from the dead

"raised him from among those who were dead." To be with "the dead" means to be dead. To raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "caused him to live again"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To raise someone from among them speaks of making that person alive again.

Acts 13:31

He was seen for many days by those who had come up with him ... Jerusalem

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The disciples who traveled with Jesus ... Jerusalem saw him for many days"

many days

We know from other writings that this period was 40 days. Translate "many days" with a term that would be appropriate for that length of time.

are now his witnesses to the people

"are now testifying to the people about Jesus" or "are now telling the people about Jesus"

Acts 13:32

So

This word marks an event that happened because of previous event. In this case, the previous event is God's raising Jesus from the dead.

our fathers

"our ancestors." Paul is still speaking to the Jews and Gentile converts in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia. These were the physical ancestors of the Jews, and the spiritual ancestors of the converts.

Acts 13:33

God has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus

You may need to rearrange the parts of this sentence, which begins in verse 32. "God has fulfilled for us, their children, the promise that he made to our fathers, by raising up Jesus"

for us, their children

"for us, who are the children of our ancestors." Paul is still speaking to the Jews and Gentile converts in the

synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia. These ancestors were the physical ancestors of the Jews and the spiritual ancestors of the converts.

by raising up Jesus

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "by making Jesus alive again"

As it is written in the second Psalm

"This is what was written in the second Psalm"

the second Psalm

"Psalm 2"

Son ... Father

These are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God.

Acts 13:34

General Information:

The quotation is from the prophet Isaiah.

As to his raising him from the dead, never to return to decay, he has spoken in this way:

"God has spoken in this way that he raised him up from the dead never to return to decay" "God used these words to say that he raised him up from the dead, and so he would never die again"

the dead

All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

never to return to decay

"and he will never die again"

he has spoken in this way

God has said using these words

sure blessings

"certain blessings"

Acts 13:35

This is why he also says in another Psalm

Paul's audience would have understood that this Psalm refers to the Messiah. Alternate translation: "In another Psalm of David, he also says about the Messiah"

he also says

"David also says." David is the author of Psalm 16, from which this quotation is taken.

You will not allow your Holy One to see decay

The phrase "see decay" is a metonym for "decay." Alternate translation: "You will not allow the body of your Holy One to rot"

You will not allow

David is speaking to God here.

Acts 13:36

in his own generation

"during his lifetime"

served the purpose of God

"did what God wanted him to do" or "did what pleased God"

he fell asleep

This was a polite way to refer to death. Alternate translation: "he died"

was laid with his fathers

"was buried with his ancestors who had died"

his body experienced decay

The phrase "his body experienced decay" is a less direct way of saying "his body decayed" or "his body rotted."

Acts 13:37

he whom God raised up experienced

"Jesus, whom God raised up, experienced"

God raised up

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "God caused to live again"

experienced no decay

The phrase "experienced no decay" is a way to say "his body did not decay." Alternate translation: "did not rot"

Acts 13:38

let it be known to you

"know this" or "this is important for you to know"

brothers

Paul uses this term because they are his fellow Jews and followers of Judaism. They are not Christian believers at this point. Alternate translation: "my fellow Israelites and other friends"

that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that we proclaim to you that your sins can be forgiven through Jesus"

forgiveness of sins

The abstract noun "forgiveness" can be translated with the verb "to forgive." Alternate translation: "that God can forgive your sins"

Acts 13:39

But by this man God makes righteous everyone who believes

"But God makes righteous everyone who believes in this man"

by this man

Here "this man" refers to Jesus Christ.

Acts 13:40

be careful

It is implied that the thing they should be careful about is Paul's message. Alternate translation: "give close attention to the things I have said"

that the thing the prophets spoke about

"so that what the prophets spoke about"

Acts 13:41

General Information:

In his message to the people in the synagogue, Paul quotes the prophet Habakkuk. Here the word "I" refers to God.

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes his speech in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, which he began in Acts 13:16.

you despisers

"you who feel contempt" or "you who ridicule"

be astonished

"be amazed" or "be shocked"

then perish

"then die"

am doing a work

"am doing something" or "am doing a great deed"

in your days

"during your lifetime"

days, a work that

"days. I am doing something that"

even if someone announces it to you

"even if someone tells you about it"

Acts 13:42

As Paul and Barnabas left

"When Paul and Barnabas were leaving"

begged them that they might

"begged them to"

these same words

Here "words" refers to the message that Paul had spoken. Alternate translation: "this same message"

Acts 13:43

When the synagogue meeting ended

Possible meanings are 1) this restates "As Paul and Barnabas left" in verse 42 or 2) Paul and Barnabas left the meeting before it ended and this occurs later.

proselytes

These were non-Jewish people who converted to Judaism.

who were speaking to them and persuading them

"and Paul and Barnabas were speaking to those people and persuading them"

to continue in the grace of God

It is implied that they believed Paul's message that Jesus was the Messiah. Alternate translation: "to continue to trust that God kindly forgives people's sins because of what Jesus did"

Acts 13:44

almost the whole city was

The "city" represents the people in the city. This phrase is used to show the great response to the Lord's word. Alternate translation: "almost all the people of the city were"

to hear the word of the Lord

It is implied that Paul and Barnabas were the ones who spoke the word of the Lord. Alternate translation: "to hear Paul and Barnabas speak about the Lord Jesus"

Acts 13:45

General Information:

Here the word "him" refers to Paul.

the Jews

Here "Jews" represents Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

were filled with envy

Here envy is spoken of as if it were something that could fill up a person. Alternate translation: "became very envious"

spoke against

"contradicted" or "opposed"

the things that were said by Paul

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that Paul said"

Acts 13:46

General Information:

Both instances of the word "you" and the word "yourselves" refer to the Jews to whom Paul is speaking and so are plural. The word "we" refers to Paul and Barnabas but not the crowd that was present.

It was necessary

This implies that God had commanded this be done. Alternate translation: "God commanded"

that the word of God should first be spoken to you

This can be stated in active form. "Word of God" here is a synecdoche for "message from God." Alternate translation: "that we speak the message from God to you first" or "that we speak the word of God to you first"

Seeing you push it away from yourselves

Their rejection of the word of God is spoken of as if it were something they pushed away. Alternate translation: "Since you reject the word of God"

consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life

"have shown that you are not worthy of eternal life" or "act as though you are not worthy of eternal life"

we will turn to the Gentiles

"we will go to the Gentiles." Paul and Barnabas were implying that they would preach to the Gentiles. Alternate translation: "we will leave you and start preaching to the Gentiles"

Acts 13:47

General Information:

The word "us" refers to Paul and Barnabas but not the crowd that was present, so it is exclusive.

commanded us ... 'I have appointed you as a light ... you should bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth.'

Both instances of "you" here are singular, but when Paul said, "... the Lord commanded us," Paul was applying those singular words to both himself and Barnabas. The words in the quotation were originally spoken by God through Isaiah the prophet to God's servant. By quoting Isaiah's prophecy, Paul was saying that he and Barnabas were doing what God commanded his servant to do. Paul was not saying that God had spoken directly to him.

as a light

Here the truth about Jesus that Paul was preaching is spoken of as if it were a light that allowed people to see.

bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth

The abstract word "salvation" can be translated with the verb "to save." The phrase "uttermost parts" refers to everywhere. Alternate translation: "tell people everywhere in the world that I want to save them"

Acts 13:48

glorified the word of the Lord

Here "word" refers to the message about Jesus that they had believed. Alternate translation: "glorified God for the message about the Lord Jesus" or "glorified the Lord for his word"

As many as were appointed to eternal life

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As many as God appointed to eternal life" or "All the people whom God had chosen to receive eternal life"

Acts 13:49

The word of the Lord was spread out through the whole region

Here "word" refers to the message about Jesus. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Those who believed spread the word of the Lord through the whole region" or "Those who believed went

everywhere in the region and told others about the message of Jesus"

Acts 13:50

the Jews

This probably refers to the leaders of the Jews.

Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

incited ... women ... and ... men

This means that they spoke to the women and men and caused them to be angry and act violently. Alternate translation: "stirred up ... women ... and ... men"

the devout women of high standing

The word "devout" means that these women feared God. The phrase "of high standing" means that people respected these women.

the leading men

"the most important men"

They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas

The word "they" here probably refers to the devout women and the leading men. They listened to the Jews and then convinced the rest of the people in the city to persecute the apostles and throw them out.

threw them out of their region

"made Paul and Barnabas leave their land"

region

Here this word refers to the area that the people of the city considered their own, not to land within an official government border.

Acts 13:51

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to Paul and Barnabas.

Connecting Statement:

Paul and Barnabas end their time in Antioch of Pisidia and go to Iconium.

shook off the dust from their feet against them

Acts 13:52

This was a symbolic act to indicate to the unbelieving people that God had rejected them and would punish them.

the disciples

This probably refers to the new believers in the Antioch of Pisidia that Paul and Silas just left.

Acts 14 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"The message of his grace"

The message of Jesus is the message that God will show grace to those who believe in Jesus. (See: grace and believe)

Zeus and Hermes

The Gentiles in the Roman Empire worshiped many different false gods who do not really exist. Paul and Barnabas told them to believe in the "living God." (See: falsegod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"We must enter into the kingdom of God through many sufferings."

Jesus told his followers before he died that everyone who followed him would suffer persecution. Paul is saying the same thing using different words.

Links:

- [Acts 14:1](#)

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Acts 14

14:1-7

Where was Iconium?

[14:1]

See Map: Iconium

What was a synagogue?

[14:1]

See: Synagogue

What did the Jews and Greeks believe?

[14:1]

Scholars think that the Jews and Greeks believed the message about Jesus. That is, Jesus was the one God had promised to send to save people from their sins.

See: Gentile; Messiah (Christ); Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Sin

What was “a great multitude”?

[14:1]

A great multitude means a very large number. Some scholars think there were several hundreds of people who believed in Jesus.

Who were disobedient Jews and what did they do?

[14:2]

When Luke wrote about Jews who were disobedient, he was speaking about Jews who refused to believe the message about Jesus. When Luke wrote that these Jews made the minds of the Gentiles “bitter”(κακώω/g2559) against the brothers, he meant the Jews turned the Gentiles away from believing the truth about Jesus.

See: Gentile; Family of God

How did Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly with the Lord’s power?

[14:3]

Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly with the Lord’s power. That is, Paul and Barnabas spoke without being afraid of who might hear them. Scholars think that Jesus gave Paul and Barnabas power to keep on teaching and preaching.

See: Preach (Preacher)

What was the message of God’s grace?

[14:3]

The message of God’s grace was the gospel.

See: Gospel; Grace

What were signs and wonders?

[14:3]

See: Sign

What was an apostle?

[14:4]

See: Apostle

Where were Lycaonia, Lystra, and Derbe?

[14:6]

See Map: Lycaonia; Lystra; Derbe

What was the gospel?

[14:7]

See: Gospel

14:8-18

How did the man have faith to be made well?

[14:9]

The man had faith to be made well. Scholars think that Paul saw something and he knew the man believed in Jesus. They think the Holy Spirit helped Paul to know that the man believed Jesus was going to make him well.

See: Acts 3:1-10

See: Faith (Believe in); Holy Spirit

Who were Zeus and Hermes?

[14:12]

In ancient times, some people worshipped the Greek gods. The king of the Greek gods was Zeus, and Hermes was the god who delivered messages to the people from Zeus. After the healing miracle, the people began to call Paul “Hermes” because he did most of the speaking. They also called Barnabas “Zeus”.

See: False gods; Miracle

Why did Paul and Barnabas tear their clothes?

[14:14]

Scholars think Paul and Barnabas tore their clothes as a sign of strong disapproval of what the people wanted to do. Paul and Barnabas wanted the crowds to know that they were just men and that the actions of the crowd were blaspheming God.

See: Sign; Blaspheme (Blasphemy)

Why did Paul tell the crowd that they should turn from these useless things?

[14:15]

When Paul urged the crowd to “turn from these useless things,” he wanted them to stop worshipping those things. Scholars think Paul was speaking about the idols because they had no power and were not real.

See: Worship; Idolatry (Idol)

How did God allow all the nations to walk in their own ways?

[14:16]

God allowed the nations to walk in their own ways. God allowed the Gentile nations to live in the way they wanted to live. That is, he allowed them to live without the Law of Moses. He allowed them to sin because they wanted to sin. The nations worshipped many things, but not the one true God.

See: Gentile; Sin

Advice to translators: When speaking about the nations here, it means the people who lived in those nations.

14:19-28

Where were Antioch and Iconium?

[14:19]

See Map: Antioch; Iconium

What was a disciple?

[14:20]

See: Disciple

Where was Derbe?

[14:20]

See Map: Derbe

How did Paul and Barnabas strengthen “the souls of the disciples”?

[14:22]

Paul and Barnabas strengthened the souls of the disciples. Scholars think that Paul and Barnabas taught people about the Bible to remind the disciples about the truth about God and God’s promises. When they did this, Paul and Barnabas encouraged the disciples to make choices to trust God even when they were persecuted.

See: Soul; Disciple; Persecute (Persecution)

What was the kingdom of God about which Paul and Barnabas spoke?

[14:22]

See: Kingdom of God

How does someone enter into the Kingdom of God through many sufferings?

[14:22]

Scholars think Paul and Barnabas taught that many Christians will experience suffering and persecution while they are living in this present world. Jesus himself said, “In this world you will have tribulation” (see: John 16:33). They think that Paul and Barnabas meant that when Jesus returns to the earth to rule, Christians will no longer experience the world’s sufferings.

See: Persecute (Persecution); Tribulation

What was an elder?

[14:23]

See: Elder

What was fasting?

[14:23]

See: Fasting

What did it mean that Paul and Barnabas entrusted the elders to the Lord?

[14:23]

When they “entrusted”(παρατίθημι/g3908) the elders to the Lord, Paul and Barnabas committed the care of the elders to Jesus. That is, they asked Jesus to protect the elders as they served the growing number of Christians.

See: Elder

Where were Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga, and Attalia?

[14:24]

See Map: Pisidia; Pamphylia; Perga; Attalia

What was meant by the words, “committed to the grace of God”?

[14:26]

Paul and Barnabas were first committed to the grace of God for their work among the Jews and Gentiles beyond Antioch with prayer, fasting and the laying on of hands of the Christians in Antioch (see: Acts 13:2,3). That is, they were set apart to do the work to which God had called them.

See: Grace; Gentile; Pray (Prayer); Fasting; Laying on of Hands ; Holy (Holiness, Set Apart); Call (Calling)

See Map: Antioch

What was a church?

[14:27]

See: Church

What was a “door of faith for the Gentiles”?

[14:27]

When Luke wrote about a “door of faith for the Gentiles,” this was a metaphor. He was writing that God opened the hearts and minds of the Gentiles to understand the gospel and believe in Jesus.

See: Heart (Metaphor); Mind; Gentile

Acts 14:1	translation: "spoke the message about Jesus so powerfully"
General Information:	Acts 14:2
The story of Paul and Barnabas in Iconium continues.	the Jews who were disobedient
It came about in Iconium that	This refers to the portion of the Jews who did not believe the message about Jesus.
Possible meanings here are 1) "It happened in Iconium that" or 2) "In Iconium, as usual,"	stirred up the minds of the Gentiles
spoke in such a way	Causing the Gentiles to become angry is spoken of as if calm waters were disturbed.
"spoke so powerfully." It may be helpful to state that they spoke the message about Jesus. Alternate	

the minds of the Gentiles

Here the word "minds" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "the Gentiles"

the brothers

Here "brothers" refers to Paul and Barnabas and the new believers.

Acts 14:3

General Information:

Here the words "he," "his," and "He" refer to the Lord.

So they stayed there

"Nevertheless they stayed there." Paul and Barnabas stayed in Iconium to help the many people who had believed in Acts 14:1. "So" could be omitted if it adds confusion to the text.

gave evidence about the message of his grace

"demonstrated that the message about his grace was true"

about the message of his grace

"about the message of the Lord's grace"

by granting signs and wonders to be done by the hands of Paul and Barnabas

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "by enabling Paul and Barnabas to perform signs and wonders"

by the hands of Paul and Barnabas

Here "hands" refers to the will and effort of these two men as guided by the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "by the ministry of Paul and Barnabas"

Acts 14:4

the people of the city were divided

"the people of the city disagreed with each other"

sided with the Jews

"supported the Jews" or "agreed with the Jews." The first group mentioned did not agree with the message about grace.

with the apostles

The second group mentioned agreed with the message about grace. It may be helpful to restate the verb. Alternate translation: "sided with the apostles"

the apostles

Luke refers to Paul and Barnabas. Here "apostle" might be used in the general sense of "ones sent out."

Acts 14:5

made an attempt to mistreat them

Here the words "made an attempt" implies that they were not able to mistreat Paul and Barnabas before Paul and Barnabas left the city.

to mistreat them and to stone

"to beat Paul and Barnabas and to kill them by throwing stones at them"

Acts 14:6

Lycaonia

A district in Asia Minor

Lystra

A city in Asia Minor south of Iconium and north of Derbe

Derbe

A city in Asia Minor south of Iconium and Lystra

Acts 14:7

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to Paul and Barnabas.

where they continued to proclaim the gospel

"where Paul and Barnabas continued to proclaim the good news"

Acts 14:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul and Barnabas are now in Lystra.

a certain man sat

This introduces a new person in the story.

powerless in his feet

"unable to move his legs" or "unable to walk on his feet"

a cripple from his mother's womb

"having been born as a cripple"

cripple

person who cannot walk

Acts 14:9

General Information:

The words "him" and "he" refer to the crippled man.

Paul fixed his eyes on him

"Paul looked straight at him"

had faith to be made well

The abstract noun "faith" can be translated with the verb "believe." Alternate translation: "believed that Jesus could heal him" or "believed that Jesus could make him well"

Acts 14:10

he said to him

"Paul said to the crippled man"

jumped up

"leaped in the air." This implies that his legs were completely healed.

Acts 14:11

what Paul had done

This refers to Paul's healing the crippled man.

they raised their voice

To raise the voice is to speak loudly. Alternate translation: "they spoke loudly"

in the dialect of Lycaonia

"in their own Lycaonian language." The people of Lystra spoke Lycaonian and also Greek.

The gods have become like men and come down to us

These people believed that the gods needed to change their appearance in order to look like men. A large number of people believed Paul and Barnabas were their pagan gods who had come down from heaven. Alternate translation: "The gods have come down from heaven to us in the form of men"

Acts 14:12

Zeus

The people of Iconium probably considered Zeus to be the king over all the other pagan gods.

Hermes

The people of Iconium probably considered Hermes to be the pagan god who brought messages to people from Zeus and the other gods.

Acts 14:13

The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought

It may be helpful to include additional information about the priest. Alternate translation: "There was a temple just outside the city where the people worshiped Zeus. When the priest who served in the temple heard what Paul and Barnabas had done, he brought"

oxen and wreaths

The oxen were to be sacrificed. The wreaths were either to crown Paul and Barnabas, or put on the oxen for sacrifice.

to the gates

The gates of the cities were often used as a meeting place for the people of the city.

wanted to offer sacrifice

"wanted to offer sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas as the gods Zeus and Hermes"

Acts 14:14

the apostles, Barnabas and Paul

Luke is here probably using "apostle" in the general sense of "one sent out."

they tore their clothing

This was a symbolic action to show that they were deeply distressed and upset that the crowd wanted to sacrifice to them.

Acts 14:15

Men, why are you doing these things?

Barnabas and Paul are rebuking the people for trying to sacrifice to them. Alternate translation: "Men, you must not do these things!"

doing these things

"worshiping us"

We also are human beings, with the same nature as you

By this statement, Barnabas and Paul are saying that they are not gods. Alternate translation: "We are just human beings like you. We are not gods"

with the same nature as you

"like you in every way"

telling you good news that you should turn

"telling you good news: you can turn" or "giving you good advice to turn." That is, the good news is that they can and should turn.

turn from these useless things to the living God

Here "turn from ... to" is a metaphor meaning to stop doing one thing and start doing something else. Alternate translation: "stop worshiping these false gods that cannot help you, and instead begin to worship the living God"

the living God

"the God who truly exists" or "the God who lives"

Acts 14:16

In the past ages

"In previous times" or "Until now"

to walk in their own ways

Walking in a way, or walking on a path, is a metaphor for living one's life. Alternate translation: "to live their lives the way they wanted to" or "to do whatever they wanted to do"

Acts 14:17

Connecting Statement:

Paul and Barnabas continue speaking to the crowd outside the city of Lystra (Acts 14:8).

he did not leave himself without witness

This could also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "God has certainly left a witness" or "God has indeed testified"

in that

"as shown by the fact that"

filling your hearts with food and gladness

Here "your hearts" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "giving you enough to eat and things about which to be happy"

Acts 14:18

Paul and Barnabas barely kept the multitudes from sacrificing to them

Paul and Barnabas stopped the multitude from sacrificing to them, but it was difficult to do so.

barely kept

"had difficulty preventing"

Acts 14:19

General Information:

Here the words "he" and "him" refer to Paul.

persuaded the crowds

It may be helpful to explicitly state what they persuaded the crowd to do. Alternate translation: "persuaded the people not to believe Paul and Barnabas, and to turn against them"

the crowds

This may not be the same group as the "multitude" in the previous verse. Some time had passed, and this might be a different group that gathered together.

thinking that he was dead

"because they thought that he was already dead"

Acts 14:20

the disciples

These were new believers in the city of Lystra.

entered the city

"Paul re-entered Lystra with the believers"

he went to Derbe with Barnabas

"Paul and Barnabas went to the city of Derbe"

Acts 14:21

General Information:

Here both instances of "they" refer to Paul and Barnabas.

that city

"Derbe" (Acts 14:20)

Acts 14:22

General Information:

Here the words "they" refer to Paul and Barnabas, and the word "We" includes Paul, Barnabas, and the disciples. The word "them" refers to the disciples.

They kept strengthening the souls of the disciples

Here "souls" refers to the disciples. This emphasizes their inner thoughts and beliefs. Alternate translation: "Paul and Barnabas urged the believers to continue to

believe the message about Jesus" or "Paul and Barnabas urged the believers to continue to grow strong in their relationship with Jesus

encouraging them to continue in the faith

"encouraging the believers to keep trusting in Jesus"

saying, "We must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations."

Some versions translate this as an indirect quote, "saying that we must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations." The word "we" here includes Luke and the readers.

We must enter

Paul includes his hearers, so the word "we" is inclusive.

Acts 14:23

they had appointed for them

"Paul and Barnabas had appointed for the believers"

they entrusted them ... they had believed

Possible meanings are 1) "Paul and Barnabas entrusted the elders they had appointed ... the elders had believed" or 2) "Paul and Barnabas entrusted the elders they had appointed and the other disciples ... the elders and other disciples had believed"

Acts 14:24

General Information:

The word "they" refers to Paul and Barnabas.

Acts 14:25

General Information:

Both instances of "they" refer to Paul and Barnabas.

had spoken the word

"Word" here is a metonym for "message of God." Alternate translation: "had spoken the message of God"

went down to Attalia

The phrase "went down" is used here because Attalia is lower in elevation than Perga.

Acts 14:26

where they had been committed to the grace of God

This can be stated in the active form. Alternate translation: "where believers and leaders in Antioch had committed Paul and Barnabas to the grace of God" or "where the people of Antioch prayed that God would care for and protect Paul and Barnabas"

Acts 14:27

General Information:

Here the words "they," "them," and "They" refer to Paul and Barnabas. The word "he" refers to God.

gathered the church together

"called the local believers to meet together"

he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles

God's enabling the Gentiles to believe is spoken of as if he had opened a door that had prevented them from entering into faith. Alternate translation: "God had made it possible for the Gentiles to believe"

Acts 14:28

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 15:16-17.

The meeting that Luke describes in this chapter is commonly called the "Jerusalem Council." This was a time when many church leaders got together to decide if believers needed to obey the whole law of Moses.

Special concepts in this chapter

Brothers

In this chapter Luke begins to use the word "brothers" to refer to fellow Christians instead of fellow Jews.

Obedying the law of Moses

Some believers wanted the Gentiles to be circumcised because God had told Abraham and Moses that everyone who wanted to belong to him had to be circumcised and that this was "an everlasting covenant." But Paul and Barnabas had seen God give uncircumcised Gentiles the gift of the Holy Spirit, so they did not want the Gentiles to be circumcised. Both groups went to Jerusalem to have the church leaders decide what they should do.

"Abstain from things sacrificed to idols, blood, things strangled, and from sexual immorality"

It is possible that the church leaders decided on these laws so that Jews and Gentiles could not only live together but eat the same foods together.

Links:

- [Acts 15:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Acts 15

15:1-5

Who were the brothers?

[15:1]

The brothers were Gentile Christians.

See: Family of God; Gentile

What did it mean to be "circumcised according to the custom of Moses"?

[15:1]

The “custom of Moses” referred to the Law of Moses. Some of the Jewish leaders were teaching that Gentiles could not be saved unless they, too, were circumcised according to the law of Moses.

See: Circumcise (Circumcision); Law of Moses; Gentile; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

Why did Luke write that people went up to Jerusalem?

[15:2]

Luke wrote people went up to Jerusalem because Jerusalem was on a mountain. Therefore, people said they went up to Jerusalem.

See Map: Antioch; Jerusalem

Where were Phoenicia and Samaria?

[15:3]

See Map: Phoenicia; Samaria

What were “all the things God had done” that Paul and Barnabas reported?

[15:4]

Some scholars think Luke was writing about the following events:

1. God filled the disciples with the Holy Spirit and with joy (see: Acts 13:52).
2. God did miracles (see: Acts 14:3).
3. Christians were persecuted (see: Acts 10:14:19; 15:26).
4. Christians became leaders in churches (see: Acts 14:23).

See: Filling of the Holy Spirit; Disciple; Rejoice (Joy, Joyful); Miracle; Persecute (Persecution)

Why did some Jews want to circumcise Gentile Christians?

[15:5]

Some scholars think that some Jews wanted to circumcise Gentile Christians men because they believed that Gentiles had to be circumcised to be at peace with God. They thought Christians needed to follow the Law of Moses. Other scholars think some of the Jews wanted to circumcise the Gentile christian men to show that they were joined together with Jewish Christians.

See: Circumcise (Circumcision); Law of Moses; Gentile

15:6-12

Why did Peter say, “making their hearts clean by faith”?

[15:9]

Peter said, “making their hearts clean by faith.” Scholars think Peter wanted people to know that God cleansed the Gentile Christians because they believed in Jesus and not because they followed the Law of Moses and were circumcision. They did not need to do these things to be at peace with God.

See: Heart (Metaphor); Clean and Unclean; Faith (Believe in); Law of Moses

Why did Peter ask the Jewish Christians, “why do you test God”?

[15:10]

Peter asked the Jewish Christians why they tested God. Some scholars think Peter told people that all Christians are at peace with God because they believe in Jesus. Here, Peter asked the Jewish Christians if they were putting God to the test to see if God really saved Gentiles simply by faith. Other scholars think Peter was asking the Jewish Christians if they were trying to make God angry by suggesting the Gentiles had to follow the Law of Moses to become Christians.

See: Test; Faith (Believe in); Gentile

What was a yoke?

[15:10]

When Peter spoke about a “yoke,” this was a metaphor. A “yoke” was a thick wooden beam that was set across the neck and shoulders of animals. This allowed the animals to pull heavy loads in a cart, or to pull a plow. Peter spoke about the Law of Moses as a yoke. He wanted to say that it was very hard to try to obey the Law of Moses.

See: Metaphor; Law of Moses

What did it mean to be “saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus”?

[15:11]

Peter wanted people to know that someone has peace with God because they believe in Jesus. They did not need to do certain things to be at peace with God. They do not need to follow the Law of Moses. When God does this, he is gracious.

See: Grace; Faith (Believe in); Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Law of Moses

What were signs and wonders?

[15:12]

See: Sign

15:13-21

Why did James speak about Peter using the name Simon?

[15:14]

James spoke about Peter using the name Simon because Simon was Peter’s name in Hebrew.

Why did James say, “take from them a people for his name”?

[15:14]

James said, “take from them a people for his name.” Some scholars think James was speaking about the Gentiles becoming God’s people. Other scholars think James wanted to say that both Jews and Gentiles could be Christians. This honored God.

See: Name; Gentile; People of God

Why did James say the same thing Amos wrote?

[15:15]

James said the same thing Amos wrote (see: Amos 9:11-12). He wanted people to know that even the prophets of the Old Testament spoke about Gentiles being called by God's name. That is, Amos prophesied that the Gentiles would one day worship God and be at peace with God.

See: Prophet; Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Gentile; Prophecy (Prophesy) ; Worship

What are the things that have been known from ancient times?

[15:18]

Luke wrote about things that have been known from ancient times. Scholars think Luke wanted people to know that God knew everything that would happen before he even made of the world. This included knowing that both Jews and Gentiles would worship God (see: Ephesians 1:4-5).

See: Gentile; Worship

What was the "pollution of idols"?

[15:20]

Luke wrote about the "pollution of idols." Scholars think Luke was writing about the animals used for sacrifices when people worshipped idols. James' did not want the Gentile Christians to eat these foods. This was not because it was wrong to eat these foods because they were unclean. However, it was wrong to eat these foods if it offended the Jewish Christians (see: 1 Corinthians 10:27-29).

See: Idolatry (Idol); Sacrifice; Gentile; Clean and Unclean

What was "sexual immorality"?

[15:20]

See: Sexual Immorality

What was "meat of strangled animals"?

[15:20]

"Meat of strangled animals" was meat from animals people killed but they did not drain the animal's blood. The Jews drained blood. This is the Law of Moses commanded people to eat blood (see: Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:10-14).

See: Law of Moses

Why did James want the Gentiles Christians to keep away "from blood"?

[15:20]

Some scholars think James did not want the Gentile Christians to eat blood. Other scholars think James wanted the Gentile Christians to hurt or kill other people.

Why did James say Moses was proclaimed from ancient times and in the synagogues every Sabbath?

[15:21]

James said that Moses was proclaimed from ancient times and in the synagogue every Sabbath. Scholars think that even though the Jewish Christians knew they did not need to follow the Law of Moses, they still felt they should do some of the things in the Law of Moses. They thought they should eat in the way taught in the Law of Moses. They think James wanted the Gentile Christians to respect the Jewish Christians and not offend the Jewish Christians.

See: Synagogue; Sabbath; Law of Moses

15:22-29

Who was Judas?

[15:22]

Judas Barsabbas known as a Christian prophet who was a leader in the Jerusalem church.

See: Prophet; Church

Who were the Gentile brothers?

[15:22]

The Gentile “brothers”(ἀδελφός/g0080) included both Christian men and women.

See: Family of God

Why did James say, “all of us have agreed”?

[15:25]

James said, “all of us have agreed.” Scholars think that after hearing what everyone said, the leaders all agreed with Paul and Barnabas. Because of this, the leaders send other people to help Paul and Barnabas.

Why did Luke write it “seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us”?

[15:28]

Some scholars think the words, “seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us” meant that because the leaders agreed about the Gentile Christians. They believed the Holy Spirit was helping them when they gathered together. That is, the Holy Spirit helped them to agree with one another.

See: Holy Spirit

Why did they write for Gentile Christians not to do four things?

[15:29]

See: Acts 15:13-21.

15:30-35

How was it that Judas and Silas “encouraged the brothers with many words”?

[15:32]

Scholars think Judas and Silas stayed in Antioch for a short time to instruct the Christians there from the scriptures and urge them to follow the teachings of Jesus. These scholars think Judas and Silas wanted to strengthen the faith of the Christians in Antioch.

See Map: Antioch

How were Paul and Silas “sent away in peace”?

[15:33]

In ancient times, it was common for people to welcome a visitor in peace and to also send them on a journey in peace. The Christians in Antioch were sending greetings with Paul and Silas back to the Christians in Jerusalem. They sent them on their way in peace.

See Map: Jerusalem; Antioch

Did Luke write the words in verse 34?

[15:34]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have the words in verse 34. Fewer ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words in verse 34. Scholars think Luke did not write these words. They think someone added these words to help people understand how Silas remained at Antioch.

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

How does someone “proclaim the word of the Lord”?

[15:35]

Scholars think that to “proclaim the word of the Lord” meant that Paul and Barnabas taught people about the gospel and the messiah (see: Romans 3:28; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9).

See: Gospel; Word of God; Messiah (Christ)

15:36-41

Where were Pamphylia, Cyprus, Syria, and Cilicia

[15:38, 15:39, 15:41]

See Map: Pamphylia; Cyprus; Syria; Cilicia

How did the church at Antioch entrust Paul to the grace of the Lord?

[15:40]

Some scholars say the church at Antioch entrusted Paul to the grace of the Lord by trusting that God would lead and protect Paul. This is because they knew God is kind and powerful. Other scholars think the church also entrusted Silas to the grace of the Lord.

See: Church; Grace; Lord

See Map: Antioch

Acts 15:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul and Barnabas are still in Antioch when there is a dispute about the Gentiles and circumcision.

Some men

"Some men." You can make explicit that these men were Jews who believed in Christ.

came down from Judea

The phrase "came down" is used here because Judea is higher in elevation than Antioch.

taught the brothers

Here "brothers" stands for believers in Christ. It is implied that they were in Antioch. Alternate translation: "taught the believers at Antioch" or "were teaching the believers at Antioch"

Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Unless someone circumcises you according to the custom of Moses, God cannot save you" or "God will not save you from your sins unless you receive circumcision according to the law of Moses"

Acts 15:2

This brought ... into a sharp dispute and debate with them

The abstract nouns "sharp dispute" and "debate" can be stated as verbs and where the men came from can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "... had confronted and debated with the men from Judea"

go up to Jerusalem

Jerusalem was higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem.

this question

"this issue"

Acts 15:3

General Information:

Both instances of "They" here refer to Paul, Barnabas, and certain others (Acts 15:2).

They therefore, being sent by the church

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Therefore the community of believers sent them from Antioch to Jerusalem"

passed through ... announced

The words "passed through" and "announced" indicate they spent some time in different places sharing in detail what God was doing.

announced the conversion of the Gentiles

The abstract noun "conversion" means the Gentiles were rejecting their false gods and believing in God. Alternate translation: "announced to the community of believers in those places that Gentiles were believing in God"

They brought great joy to all the brothers

Their message causing the brothers to be joyful is spoken of as if "joy" were an object that they brought to the brothers. Alternate translation: "What they said caused their fellow believers to rejoice"

the brothers

Here "brothers" refers to fellow believers.

Acts 15:4

General Information:

All instances of "they" and "them" here refer to Paul, Barnabas, and certain others (Acts 15:2).

they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the apostles, the elders, and the rest of the community of believers welcomed them"

with them

"through them"

Acts 15:5

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to non-Jewish believers who were not circumcised and did not keep the Old Testament laws of God.

Connecting Statement:

Paul and Barnabas are now in Jerusalem to meet with the apostles and elders there.

But certain men

Here Luke contrasts those who believe that salvation is only in Jesus to others who believe salvation is by Jesus but also believe that circumcision is required for salvation.

to keep the law of Moses

"to obey the law of Moses"

Acts 15:6

to consider this matter

The church leaders decided to discuss whether or not Gentiles needed to be circumcised and obey the law of Moses in order for God to save them from their sins.

Acts 15:7

General Information:

The word "them" refers to apostles and elders

Connecting Statement:

Peter begins to speak to the apostles and elders who met to discuss whether Gentiles had to receive circumcision and keep the law ([Acts 15:5-6](#)).

Brothers

Peter is addressing all of the believers who are present.

by my mouth

Here "mouth" refers to Peter. Alternate translation: "from me" or "by me"

the Gentiles should hear

"the Gentiles would hear"

the word of the gospel

Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "the message about Jesus"

Acts 15:8

General Information:

The word "them" refers to the Gentiles, and both instances of "you" are plural.

who knows the heart

Here "heart" refers to the "minds" or "inner beings." Alternate translation: "who knows the people's minds" or "who knows what people think"

has testified to them

"has testified to the Gentiles"

giving them the Holy Spirit

"causing the Holy Spirit to come upon them"

Acts 15:9

General Information:

The word "he" refers to God, the word "us" refers to the speaker and the hearers, and the word "them" refers to the Gentiles.

made no distinction

God did not treat Jewish believers differently from Gentile believers.

having cleansed their hearts by faith

God's forgiving the Gentile believers' sins is spoken of as though he cleaned their hearts. Here "heart" stands for the person's inner being. Alternate translation: "forgiving their sins because they believe in Jesus"

Acts 15:10

General Information:

Peter includes his audience by his use of "our" and "we."

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

why do you test God, that you should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

Peter uses a question with a word picture to tell the Jewish believers they should not require the non-Jewish believers to perform circumcision to be saved. Alternate translation: "Do not test God by putting a burden on the non-Jewish believers which we Jews were not able to bear!"

our fathers

This refers to their Jewish ancestors.

Acts 15:11

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes speaking to the apostles and elders.

But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they were

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But we believe the Lord Jesus will save us by his grace, just as he saved the non-Jewish believers"

Acts 15:12

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to Paul and Barnabas.

All the multitude

"Everyone" or "The whole group" (Acts 15:6)

God had worked

"God had done" or "God had caused"

Acts 15:13

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:12).

Connecting Statement:

James begins to speak to the apostles and elders (Acts 15:6).

Brothers, listen

"Fellow believers, listen." James was probably speaking only to men.

Acts 15:14

in order to take from them a people

"so that he might choose from among them a people"

for his name

"for God's name." Here "name" refers to God. Alternate translation: "for himself"

Acts 15:15

Connecting Statement:

James quotes the prophet Amos from the Old Testament.

The words of the prophets agree

Here "words" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "What the prophets said agrees" or "The prophets agree"

agree with this

"confirm this truth"

as it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as they wrote" or "as the prophet Amos wrote long ago"

Acts 15:16

General Information:

Here "I" refers to God, who spoke through the words of his prophet.

I will build again the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down ... its ruins again

This speaks of God's again choosing one of David's descendants to rule over his people as though he were setting up a tent again after it fell down.

tabernacle

Here the word "tabernacle," a dwelling place, stands for David's family. The same word is used for the tent that Yahweh told Moses to construct.

Acts 15:17

the remnant of men may seek the Lord

This speaks about people wanting to obey God and learn more about him as if they were literally looking for him.

remnant of men

Here "men" includes males and females. Alternate translation: "remnant of people"

may seek the Lord

God is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "may seek me, the Lord"

including all the Gentiles called by my name

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "including all the Gentiles who belong to me"

my name

Here "my name" stands for God.

Acts 15:18

that have been known

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that people have known"

Acts 15:19

General Information:

Here "we" includes James, the apostles, and the elders.

we should not trouble those of the Gentiles

You can make explicit in what way James does not want to trouble the Gentiles. Alternate translation: "we should not require the Gentiles to become circumcised and obey the laws of Moses"

who turn to God

A person who starts obeying God is spoken of as if the person is physically turning towards God.

Acts 15:20

they must keep away from the pollution of idols ... sexual immorality ... strangled ... blood

Sexual immorality, strangling animals, and consuming blood were often part of ceremonies to worship idols and false gods.

pollution of idols

This possibly refers to eating the meat of an animal that someone has sacrificed to an idol or to anything to do with idol worship.

from the meat of strangled animals, and from blood

God did not allow Jews to eat meat that still had the blood in it. Also, even earlier in Moses's writings in Genesis, God had forbidden the drinking of blood. Therefore, they could not eat an animal that someone strangled because the blood was not properly drained from the body of the animal.

Acts 15:21

Connecting Statement:

James finishes speaking to the apostles and elders. (See: Acts 15:2 and [Acts 15:13](#))

Moses has been proclaimed in every city ... and he is preached in the synagogues every Sabbath

James is implying that Gentiles know how important these rules are because Jews preach them in every city where there is a synagogue. It also implies the Gentiles

can go to the teachers from the synagogues to learn more about these rules.

Moses has been proclaimed ... he is preached

Here "Moses" represents the law of Moses, and so does "he." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The law of Moses has been proclaimed ... the law is read" or "Jews have taught the law of Moses ... they read the law"

in every city

The word "every" here is a generalization. Alternate translation: "in many cities"

Acts 15:22

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to Judas and Silas.

Judas called Barsabbas

This is the name of a man. "Barsabbas" is a second name that people called him.

leaders of the brothers

The word "brothers" here refers to the people there who believed in Jesus. Alternate translation: "leaders of the believers" or "leaders of the church"

Acts 15:23

They wrote this with their hands

One or more of the apostles and elders wrote the letter and gave it to Judas and Silas so Judas and Silas could give it to the Gentile brothers.

From the apostles and elders, your brothers, to the Gentile brothers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings!

This is the introduction of the letter. Your language may have a way of introducing the author of the letter and to whom it is written. Alternate translation: "This letter is from your brothers, the apostles and elders. We are writing to you Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Greetings to you" or "To our Gentile brothers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Greetings from the apostles and elders, your brothers"

your brothers ... the Gentile brothers

Here the word "brothers" refers to fellow believers. By using these words, the apostles and elders assure the Gentile believers that they accept them as fellow believers.

Cilicia

This is the name of a province on the coast in Asia Minor north of the Island of Cyprus.

Acts 15:24

General Information:

Here all instances of "we" and "us" refer to the writers but not the readers

that certain men

"that some men"

with no orders from us

"even though we gave no orders for them to go"

disturbed you with words that upset your souls

Here "souls" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "taught things that have troubled you"

Acts 15:25

General Information:

Here the words "us" and "our" refer to the writers but not the readers

who have come to one mind

"who are now agree completely"

one mind

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

to choose men

The men they sent were Judas, who was called Barsabbas, and Silas (Acts 15:22).

Acts 15:26

men who have risked their lives

These words refer to Barnabas and Paul, not to Judas and Silas.

for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

Here "name" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "because they believe in our Lord Jesus Christ" or "because they serve our Lord Jesus Christ"

Acts 15:27

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to the writers of the letter [Acts 15:22]

who will report to you the same things in their own words

This phrase emphasizes that Judas and Silas will say the same things that the apostles and elders had written. Alternate translation: "who themselves will tell you the same things about which we have written"

Acts 15:28

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to the writers of the letter [Acts 15:22]

to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things

This speaks about laws that people need to obey as if they were objects that people carry on their shoulders.

Acts 15:29

Connecting Statement:

This concludes the letter from the Jerusalem church to the Gentile believers in Antioch.

from things sacrificed to idols

This means they are not allowed to eat the meat of an animal that someone sacrifices to an idol.

blood

This refers to drinking blood or eating meat from which the blood has not been drained.

things strangled

A strangled animal was killed but its blood was not drained.

Farewell

This announces the end of the letter. Alternate translation: "Goodbye"

Acts 15:30

Connecting Statement:

Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas leave for Antioch.

So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch

The word "they" refers to Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas. Alternate translation: "So when the four men were dismissed, they came down to Antioch"

when they were dismissed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the apostles and elders dismissed the four men" or "when the believers in Jerusalem sent them"

came down to Antioch

The phrase "came down" is used here because Antioch is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.

Acts 15:31

they rejoiced

"the believers in Antioch rejoiced"

because of the encouragement

The abstract noun "encouragement" can be expressed with the verb "encourage." Alternate translation: "because what the apostles and elders wrote encouraged them"

Acts 15:32

also prophets

Prophets were teachers authorized by God to speak for him. Alternate translation: "because they were prophets" or "who were also prophets"

the brothers

"the fellow believers"

strengthened them

Judas and Silas' helping them to depend even more on Jesus is spoken of as if they were making them physically stronger.

Acts 15:33

Connecting Statement:

Judas and Silas return to Jerusalem while Paul and Barnabas remain in Antioch.

After they had spent some time there

This speaks about time as if it were a commodity that a person could spend. The word "they" refers to Judas and Silas. Alternate translation: "After they stayed there for a while"

they were sent away in peace from the brothers

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the brothers sent Judas and Silas back in peace"

the brothers

This refers to the believers in Antioch.

to those who had sent them

"to the believers in Jerusalem who sent Judas and Silas" (Acts 15:22)

Acts 15:34

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 15:35

the word of the Lord

Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "the message about the Lord"

Acts 15:36

Let us return now

"I suggest we now return"

visit the brothers

"care for the brothers" or "offer to help the believers"

the word of the Lord

Here "word" stands for the message. Alternate translation: "the message about the Lord"

see how they are

"learn how they are doing." They want to learn about the current condition of the brothers and how they are holding on to God's truth.

Acts 15:37

to also take with them John, who was called Mark

"to take John, who was also called Mark"

Acts 15:38

Paul thought it was not good to take Mark

The words "not good" are used to say the opposite of good. Alternate translation: "Paul thought that taking Mark would be bad"

Pamphylia

This was a province in Asia Minor. See how you translated this in Acts 2:10.

did not go further with them in the work

"did not continue to work with them then" or "did not continue to serve with them"

Acts 15:39

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to Barnabas and Paul.

Then there arose a sharp disagreement

The abstract noun "disagreement" can be stated as the verb "disagree." Alternate translation: "They strongly disagreed with each other"

Acts 15:40

after he was entrusted by the brothers to the grace of the Lord

To entrust to someone means to place the care and responsibility for someone or something to another person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after the believers in Antioch entrusted Paul to the grace of the Lord" or "after the believers in Antioch prayed for the Lord to take care of Paul and show kindness to him"

Acts 15:41

he went

The previous sentence implies that Silas was with Paul. Alternate translation: "they went" or "Paul and Silas went" or "Paul took Silas and went"

went through Syria and Cilicia

These are provinces or areas in Asia Minor, near the island of Cyprus.

strengthening the churches

Encouraging the believers in the churches is spoken of as though Paul and Silas were making the believers physically stronger. The word "churches" refers to the groups of believers in Syria and Cilicia. Alternate translation: "encouraging the believers in the churches" or "helping the community of believers to depend even more in Jesus"

Acts 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Timothy's circumcision

Paul circumcised Timothy because they were telling the message of Jesus to Jews and Gentiles. Paul wanted the Jews to know that he respected the law of Moses even though the church leaders in Jerusalem had decided that Christians did not need to be circumcised.

The woman who had a spirit of divination

Most people want very much to know the future, but the law of Moses said that speaking with the spirits of dead people to learn about the future is a sin. This woman seems to have been able to tell the future very well. She was a slave, and her masters made much money from her work. Paul wanted her to stop sinning, so he told the spirit to leave her. Luke does not say that she began to follow Jesus or tell us anything more about her.

Links:

- [Acts 16:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 16

16:1-5

Where were Derbe and Lystra?

[16:1]

See Map: Derbe; Lystra

Why did Paul circumcise Timothy?

[16:3]

Paul wanted Timothy to be circumcised. Scholars think this is because Timothy's mother was Jewish, Timothy was also a Jew even though his father was a Greek. Because he was not circumcised, the Jews rejected Timothy. Paul wanted Timothy to be circumcised so that the Jews would allow him to teach into the synagogues.

See: Circumcise (Circumcision); Synagogue

What "instructions" did Paul deliver to the churches that they should obey them?

[16:4]

Paul delivered the "decisions" (δόγμα/g1378) about how to live as Christians from the things the Christian leaders taught in Jerusalem.

16:6-10

Where were Phrygia and Galatia?

[16:6]

See Map: Phrygia; Galatia

How was Paul forbidden by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the word in Asia?

[16:6]

Scholars think there may have been various ways in which Paul and Barnabas were forbidden the Holy Spirit to proclaim the word of God in Asia. They think the Holy Spirit helped Paul to know this in some way.

See: Holy Spirit; Word of God

See Map: Asia; Mysia; Bithynia; Troas

What did Luke mean by writing “Spirit of Jesus”?

[16:7]

Most scholars think that when Luke wrote about the “Spirit of Jesus” he was referring to the Holy Spirit. These scholars think Luke was writing about one Spirit when he wrote about either the “Spirit of Jesus”, the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God.

See: Holy Spirit; Trinity

What was a “vision”?

[16:9]

See: Vision)

Why did Luke write “immediately”?

[16:10]

Luke wrote “immediately”(εὐθέως/g2112) because Paul and his friends immediately obeyed God and went to Macedonia.

Why did Luke start writing “we” instead of “they”?

[16:10]

Luke started writing “we” instead of “they” because Luke joined Paul and his friends at that time. Luke then saw the things about which he wrote.

16:11-15

What was a “place of prayer”?

[16:13]

In ancient Israel, places of prayer were often rock enclosures with trees surrounding them. Some scholars think Paul and his companions may have noticed a place to sit near the water that they thought could be used for prayer.

See Map: Troas; Samothrace; Neapolis; Philippi

Who was Lydia?

[16:14]

Lydia was a Gentile woman who wanted to worship God in the way Jews worshiped God. She was from Thyatira, a place famous for making purple dyes.

See: Gentile; Worship

See Map: Thyatira; Asia

What was meant by the words, “The Lord opened her heart”?

[16:14]

When Luke wrote that God opened Lydia’s heart, he used a metaphor. It meant that God helped Lydia to understand all that Paul taught and that God greatly encouraged her through Paul’s words.

See: Heart (Metaphor); Metaphor

What did it mean that “she and her house were baptized”?

[16:15]

The words, “she and her house were baptized” meant that Lydia and all who lived in her house were baptized. This would have included any servants, children and relatives.

See: Baptize (Baptism)

What was meant by the words, “if you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord”?

[16:15]

Scholars think Lydia was saying, “if you have judge me to be a woman believer in Jesus.” That is, she told Paul that she believed in Jesus and was a Christian.

16:16-24

What was a “spirit of divination”?

[16:16]

Some scholars think the girl that “spirit of divination” was a demon who told the future. Scholars think the girl had no control over how the demon spoke through her, and that the demon used many kinds of voices to speak through her.

See: Demon; Sorcery; Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons)

Why did the demon possessed woman shout out that Paul and his friends proclaimed the way of salvation?

[16:17]

Scholars think the demon possessed woman shouted that Paul and his friends proclaimed the way of salvation for several reasons:

1. Some scholars think she did not glorify or respect God. When she said Paul and his friends were servants of the Most High God she was not thinking about the one God of the Bible. She was thinking about many false gods where one god was greater than the other gods.
2. Some scholars think the girl shouted out that Paul spoke about “a way of salvation”, and not “the way of salvation.” They think she spoke the truth but only some things she said were true.
3. Some scholars think she was trying to get people not to serve Paul and his friends. That is, she wanted people to watch her and not to listen to what Paul said about Jesus.
4. Some scholars think the demons said similar things to Jesus (see: Luke 4:41). Perhaps they did this to confuse people.

See: Demon; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Demon Possession (Casting Out Demons); Glory (Glorify); False gods

Why did Paul command the spirit “in the name of Jesus Christ”?

[16:18]

Scholars think that when Paul commanded the spirit “in the name of Jesus Christ” to come out, he wanted people to know that Jesus gave him permission and power to do these things. This honored Jesus.

See: Name

What was the marketplace?

[16:19]

Most ancient cities had a city square in the center of town called a marketplace. The marketplace was where people gathered to buy things, to talk, and to plan things. Sometimes leaders resolved arguments between people in the marketplace.

Who were the magistrates?

[16:20]

Magistrates were leaders of a city. They could decide what to do if there was a problem or trouble in the city. They could also decide how a person should be punished if the person did something wrong.

Why did the magistrates tear the garments off of Paul and Silas?

[16:22]

The magistrates tore the garments off of Paul and Silas because they planned to beat Paul and Silas. People who were beaten were struck with whips or rods on their bare backs.

What were the “stocks” fastened to Paul and Silas’ feet when they were put in prison?

[16:24]

The “stocks”(ξύλον/g3586) fastened to Paul and Silas’ feet were wooden blocks that locked their feet into one position. This made it very difficult for them to walk.

16:25-34

Why was the jailer about to kill himself?

[16:27]

The jailer was about to kill himself because he knew the penalty for allowing prisoners to escape was death (see: Acts 16:12). Scholars think he did not want to be dishonored.

Why did the other prisoners not escape?

[16:28]

Scholars give several reasons why the other prisoners did not escape.

1. They were afraid of the prison guards.
2. They wanted to hear Paul and Silas talk about salvation from Jesus because they heard Paul and Silas pray and sing to God.
3. Perhaps the jailer secured the other prisoners before he fell down and talked to Paul and Silas.

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Pray (Prayer)

Why did the jailer ask how to be saved?

[16:30]

Some scholars say the jailer might have heard the girl's announcement that Paul and Silas knew the way of salvation. Also, he just experienced an earthquake that opened all the prison doors, yet no one escaped. Scholars think the jailer was full of fear. He wanted to know how to be at peace with God.

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins)

What did Paul tell the jailer in order for him to be saved?

[16:31]

Paul told the jailer how to be at peace with God. All he needed to do was to believe in Jesus. Paul told the jailer about the forgiveness of sins found in Jesus.

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Sin

What did it mean that the jailer and his household were baptized immediately?

[16:33]

Scholars think that when the jailer took Paul and Silas to cleanse their wounds, he likely took them to a well in the prison courtyard. While there, Paul and Silas baptized the jailer and his family in the water of the same well.

See: Baptize (Baptism)

How did the jailer and his household rejoice greatly?

[16:34]

The jailer and his household rejoiced greatly with a meal at his house for Paul and Silas. They rejoiced because they had believed in God and they now had peace with God.

16:35-40

Why did the magistrates command the jailer to release Paul and Silas the next day?

[16:35]

Scholars give several reasons why the magistrates commanded the jailer to release Paul and Silas the next day.

- 1. They thought the earthquake was a sign from their false gods.
- 2. Lydia persuaded the magistrates to release Paul and Silas.
- 3. They thought the shame from beating Paul and Silas and putting them in prison would make Paul and Silas stop talking and causing trouble in Philippi.

See: Sign; False gods

See Map: Philippi

Why did Paul want the magistrates to lead them out of prison?

[16:37]

During that time, when the magistrates led a person out from the prison, it showed that the person had been treated unjustly. That is, they were accused falsely. Paul knew if the magistrates led them out from the prison, they would still have a good reputation with the people of Philippi.

Why did the magistrates ask Paul and Silas to leave Philippi?

[16:39]

Scholars think the magistrates asked Paul and Silas to leave Philippi because they did not want the crowds to cause another riot. Other scholars think the magistrates did not want the crowd to favor Paul and Silas and turn against the magistrates. Also, they did not want Paul and Silas to report that the magistrates beat Roman citizens and put them in prison without a trial.

See: Citizen

How did Paul and Silas encourage the Christians at Lydia’s house?

[16:40]

Scholars think the Christians at Lydia’s house were encouraged because they saw that God answered their prayers for the release of Paul and Silas.

Acts 16:1	Paul also came
Connecting Statement:	Here "came" can be translated as "went."
This continues the missionary journeys of Paul with Silas. Timothy is introduced into the story and joins Paul and Silas. Verses 1 and 2 give background information about Timothy.	Derbe This is the name of a city in Asia Minor. See how you translated it in Acts 14:6.

behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the narrative. Your language may have a way of doing this.

who was a believer

The words "in Christ" are understood. Alternate translation: "who was a believer in Christ" or "who believed in Christ"

Acts 16:2

He was well spoken of by the brothers

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The brothers spoke well of him" or "Timothy had a good reputation among the brothers" or "The brothers said good things about him"

by the brothers

Here "brothers" refers to believers. Alternate translation: "by the believers"

Acts 16:3

wanted him ... took him ... circumcised him ... his father

"wanted Timothy ... took Timothy ... circumcised Timothy ... Timothy's father"

with him ... he took

"with Paul ... Paul took"

circumcised him

It is possible that Paul himself circumcised Timothy, but it is more likely that he had someone else circumcise Timothy.

because of the Jews that were in those places

"because of the Jews living in the areas where Paul and Timothy would be traveling"

for they all knew that his father was a Greek

Since Greek men did not have their sons circumcised, the Jews would have known Timothy was not circumcised, and they would have rejected Paul and Timothy before hearing their message about Christ.

Acts 16:4

General Information:

The word "they" here refers to Paul, Silas (Acts 15:40), and Timothy ([Acts 16:3](#)).

the decrees to obey

"the decrees for the church members to obey" or "the decrees for the believers to obey"

that were decided on by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the apostles and elders in Jerusalem had decided on"

Acts 16:5

the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the believers became stronger in their faith, and there were more and more people becoming believers every day"

the churches were strengthened in the faith

This speaks of helping someone to believe more confidently as if it were making them physically stronger.

Acts 16:6

Phrygia

This is a region in Asia. See how you translated this name in Acts 2:10.

they had been forbidden by the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit had forbidden them" or "the Holy Spirit did not permit them"

the word

Here "word" stands for "message." Alternate translation: "the message about Christ"

Acts 16:7

When they came

Here "came" can be translated as "went" or "arrived."

Mysia ... Bithynia

These are two more regions in Asia.

the Spirit of Jesus

"the Holy Spirit"

Acts 16:8

they came down to the city of Troas

The phrase "came down" is used here because Troas is lower in elevation than Mysia.

they came down

Here "came" can be translated as "went."

Acts 16:9

A vision appeared to Paul

"Paul saw a vision from God" or "Paul had a vision from God"

begging him

Or "inviting him."

Come over into Macedonia

The phrase "Come over" is used because Macedonia is across the sea from Troas.

Acts 16:10

we sought to go to Macedonia ... God had called us

Here the words "we" and "us" refer to Paul and his companions, including Luke, the author of Acts.

we sought to go to Macedonia

"we looked for a way to go to Macedonia" or "we prepared to go to Macedonia"

Acts 16:11

Samothrace ... Neapolis

These are coastal cities near Philippi in Macedonia.

we came to Neapolis

Here "came to" can be translated as "went to" or "arrived at."

Acts 16:12

a Roman colony

This is a city outside of Italy where many people who came from Rome lived. The people there had the same rights and freedoms as people who lived in cities in Italy. They could govern themselves and they did not have to pay taxes.

Acts 16:13

Connecting Statement:

Paul and his companions are now in Philippi on their missionary trip. The story of Lydia begins here. This short story happens during Paul's travels.

Acts 16:14

A certain woman named Lydia

Here "A certain woman" introduces a new person in the story. Alternate translation: "There was a woman named Lydia"

a seller of purple

Here "cloth" is understood. Alternate translation: "a merchant who sold purple cloth"

Thyatira

This is the name of a city.

worshiped God

A worshiper of God is a Gentile who gives praise to God and follows him, but does not obey all of the Jewish laws.

The Lord opened her heart to pay attention

For the Lord to cause someone to pay attention and believe a message is spoken of as if he were opening a person's heart. Alternate translation: "The Lord caused her to listen well and to believe"

opened her heart

Here "heart" stands for a person's mind. Also, the author speaks about the "heart" or "mind" as if it were a box that a person could open so it is ready for someone to fill it.

what was said by Paul

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what Paul said"

Acts 16:15

Connecting Statement:

The story of Lydia ends here.

When she and her house were baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When they baptized Lydia and members of her household"

her house

Here "house" represents the people who live in her house. Alternate translation: "the members of her household" or "her family and household servants"

Acts 16:16

General Information:

Background information is given here to explain that this young fortune teller brought much financial gain to her masters by guessing people's futures.

Connecting Statement:

This begins the first event in another short story during Paul's travels; it is about a young fortune teller.

It came about that

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

a certain slave girl ... encountered

The phrase "a certain" introduces a new person to the story. Alternate translation: "there was a slave girl ... who encountered"

a spirit of divination

An evil spirit spoke to her often about the immediate future of people.

Acts 16:17

the way of salvation

How a person can be saved is spoken of here as if it were a way or path that a person walks on. Alternate translation: "how God can save you"

Acts 16:18

But Paul, being greatly annoyed by her, turned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But she greatly annoyed Paul, so he turned around"

in the name of Jesus Christ

Here "name" stands for speaking with the authority or as the representative of Jesus Christ.

it came out at that same hour

"the spirit came out immediately"

Acts 16:19

her masters

"the owners of the slave girl"

their hope of profit was now gone

Here the word "hope" is the reason for which a person can expect that what he desires will happen. Now that the spirit was gone, the girl's masters could not expect to earn money from the spirit's telling people things. Alternate translation: "their opportunity to make money was now gone" or "they could no longer expect to make money"

their hope of profit was now gone

It can be stated clearly why they no longer expected to make money. Alternate translation: "she could no longer earn money for them by telling fortunes"

into the marketplace

"into the public square." This is a public place of business, where buying and selling of goods, cattle, or services takes place.

before the authorities

"into the presence of the authorities" or "so that the authorities could judge them"

Acts 16:20

When they had brought them to the magistrates

"When they had brought them to the judges"

magistrates

rulers, judges

These men are causing trouble in our city

Here the word "our" refers to the people of the city and includes the magistrates who ruled it.

Acts 16:21

to accept or practice

"to believe or to obey" or "to accept or to do"

Acts 16:22

General Information:

Here the words "their" and "them" refer to Paul and Silas.

commanded them to be beaten with rods

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "commanded the soldiers to beat them with rods"

Acts 16:23

they had ... upon them, they threw them ... guard them

"the magistrates had ... upon Paul and Silas, the magistrates threw Paul and Silas ... keep Paul and Silas"

had laid many blows upon them

"had hit them many times with rods"

commanded the jailer to guard them securely

"told the jailer to make sure they did not get out"

jailer

a person responsible for all the people held in the jail or prison

Acts 16:24

he got this command

"he heard this command"

fastened their feet in the stocks

"securely locked their feet in the stocks"

stocks

a piece of wood with holes for preventing a person's feet from moving

Acts 16:25

General Information:

The word "them" refers to Paul and Silas.

Connecting Statement:

This continues Paul and Silas' time in Philippi in prison and tells what happens to their jailer.

Acts 16:26

earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "earthquake which shook the foundations of the prison"

the foundations of the prison

When the foundations shook, this caused the entire prison to shake.

all the doors were opened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the doors opened"

everyone's chains were unfastened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone's chains came loose"

Acts 16:27

The jailer was awakened from sleep

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The jailer woke up"

was about to kill himself

"was ready to kill himself." The jailer preferred to commit suicide rather than suffer the consequences of letting the prisoners escape.

Acts 16:28

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Paul, Silas, and all of the other prisoners but excludes the jailer.

Acts 16:29

called for lights

The reason why the jailer needed light can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "called for someone to bring light so he could see who was still in the prison"

for lights

The word "lights" stands for something that makes light. Alternate translation: "for torches" or "for lamps"

rushed in

"quickly entered the jail"

fell down before Paul and Silas

The jailer humbled himself by bowing down at the feet of Paul and Silas.

Acts 16:30

brought them out

"led them outside the jail"

what must I do to be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what must I do for God to save me from my sins"

Acts 16:31

you will be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will save you" or "God will save you from your sins"

your house

Here "house" stands for the people who live in the house. Alternate translation: "all the members of your household" or "your family"

Acts 16:32

General Information:

The word "They" refers to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25), and the word "him" refers to the jailer.

They spoke the word of the Lord to him

Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "They told him the message about the Lord Jesus"

Acts 16:33

General Information:

The words "them" and "their" refer to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25), and the words "he" and "his" refer to the jailer.

he and those in his entire house were baptized immediately

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Paul and Silas immediately baptized the jailer and all the members of his household"

Acts 16:34

General Information:

All instances of "he" and "his" refer to the jailer.

Acts 16:35

General Information:

This is the last event in the story of Paul and Silas in Philippi (Acts 16:12).

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke tells the last event in the story that started in Acts 16:16.

sent word to the guards

Here "word" stands for "message" or "command." Alternate translation: "sent a message to the guards" or "sent a command to the guards"

sent word

Here "sent" means the magistrates told someone to go tell the guards their message.

Let those men go

"Release those men" or "Allow those men to leave"

Acts 16:36

come out

"come outside of the jail"

Acts 16:37

General Information:

The word "they" refers to the magistrates. All instances of "we" and "us" refer only to Paul and Silas and so are exclusive.

said to them

Probably Paul is speaking to the jailer, but he intends for the jailer to tell the magistrates what he says. Alternate translation: "said to the jailer"

They have publicly beaten us

Here "They" refers to the magistrates who commanded their soldiers to beat them. Alternate translation: "The magistrates ordered their soldiers to beat us in public"

without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens—and they threw us into prison

"men who are Roman citizens, and they had their soldiers put us in jail though they had not proven in court that we were guilty"

Do they now want to send us away secretly? No!

Paul uses a question to emphasize that he will not allow the magistrates to send them out the city in secret after they had mistreated Paul and Silas. Alternate translation: "I will certainly not let them send us out of the city in secret!"

Let them come themselves

Here "themselves" is used for emphasis.

Acts 16:38

when they heard that Paul and Silas were Romans, they were afraid

To be a Roman meant to be a legal citizen of the Empire. Citizenship provided freedom from torture and the right to a fair trial. The city leaders were afraid that more important Roman authorities might learn how the city leaders had mistreated Paul and Silas.

they heard ... they were afraid

"the magistrates heard ... the magistrates were afraid"

Acts 16:39

General Information:

All instances of "them" refer to Paul and Silas.

Acts 16:40	came to the house
General Information:	Here "came" can be translated as "went."
Here the word "they" refers to Paul and Silas. The word "them" refers to the believers in Philippi.	the house of Lydia
Connecting Statement:	"the home of Lydia"
This is the end of Paul and Silas' time in Philippi.	saw the brothers
	Here "brothers" refers to believers, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "saw the believers"

Acts 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Misunderstandings about the Messiah

The Jews expected the Christ or Messiah to be a powerful king because the Old Testament says so many times. But it also says many times that the Messiah would suffer, and that was what Paul was telling the Jews. (See: christ)

The religion of Athens

Paul said that the Athenians were "religious," but they did not worship the true God. They worshiped many different false gods. In the past they had conquered other peoples and begun to worship the gods of the people they had conquered. (See: falsegod)

In this chapter Luke describes for the first time how Paul told the message of Christ to people who knew nothing of the Old Testament.

Links:

- [Acts 17:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 17

17:1-9

Where were Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica?

[17:1]

See Map: Amphipolis; Apollonia; Thessalonica

Why did Luke write that Paul reasoned from the scriptures for three Sabbath days?

[17:2]

Luke wrote that Paul reasoned from Scripture for three Sabbath days. Scholars think that the regular meaning of "three Sabbath days" during Paul's time meant three weeks of time. Paul taught people about Jesus from the Old Testament for three weeks.

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Sabbath

Why did Paul say "it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again"?

[17:3]

Paul said "it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again" because the Old Testament prophets spoke of these events, and Jesus himself also spoke of these events.

See: Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; Luke 18:31-33; 24:25-26

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Prophet; Resurrect (Resurrection)

What was meant by the words, “not a few of the leading women”?

[17:4]

The words “not a few of the leading women” meant a large number of women. These women were likely wives of the city’s leaders.

Why were the unbelieving Jews jealous of Paul and Silas?

[17:5]

Scholars think the unbelieving Jews were jealous of Paul and Silas because many more Gentiles than Jews believed in Jesus. More people became Christians. Perhaps the unbelieving Jews were also afraid they will lose control of their synagogue.

See: Synagogue; Gentile

Advice to translators: The unbelieving Jews were Jews who rejected Jesus. They were not Christians.

How did the unbelieving Jews create an uproar?

[17:5]

There were several things the unbelieving Jews did to create an uproar.

1. They went to the marketplace and gathered wicked men to cause trouble. These wicked men did not work in the marketplace. They were always there wanting to do wrong things.
2. The wicked men helped them start a riot in the city.
3. They went to the house of Jason and broke down the door of his house. They then dragged him and other Christians in front of the city leaders. Paul and Silas were in another part of the city.
4. They made the crowd and the city leaders angry by shouting lies against Paul and the Christians.

Who was Jason?

[17:6]

Jason was a relative of Paul and scholars think Paul and Silas stayed with him while they were in Thessalonica.

See Map: Thessalonica

What did it mean to “act against the decrees of Caesar”?

[17:7]

When Paul and Silas were accused of acting “against the decrees of Caesar” it meant they were accused of rebelling against all the Roman laws. This is because Jesus is a king. However, Jesus is not a king in the same way that the Roman Caesar was a king. People said that Paul and Silas were trying to get people to serve a different king other than Caesar. They wanted Paul and Silas to be arrested.

Why did the city leaders make Jason pay money as a security?

[17:9]

The leaders of the city made Jason pay a security. That is, Jason assured the city leaders that Paul and Silas would leave the city and not to return.

17:10-15

How were the people in Berea more noble than the people in Thessalonica?

[17:11]

When Luke said that the people in Berea were more noble than the people in Thessalonica, he meant they wanted to learn about Jesus from Paul and Silas. That is, they wanted Paul and Silas to teach them about the Bible.

See Map: Berea; Thessalonica

What was meant by the words, “examining the scriptures daily”?

[17:11]

When Luke said that the Bereans “examined”(ἀνακρίνω/g0350) the scriptures daily, he meant they examined the Bible and compared the Bible to the things Paul and Silas taught. They wanted to prove that Paul and Silas taught the same thing the Bible taught. They wanted to know if Paul said correct things about Jesus.

How was it that the Jews from Thessalonica “stirred up and troubled the crowds”?

[17:13]

When Luke wrote that the Jews from Thessalonica “stirred up and troubled the crowds” he meant they caused confusion among the people. That is, they kept insisting that people follow the Law of Moses instead of what Paul and Silas taught.

See: Law of Moses

See Map: Thessalonica

Where was Athens?

[17:15]

See Map: Athens

17:16-21

Why did idols “provoke” Paul’s spirit?

[17:16]

Idols “angered”(παροξύνω/g3947) Paul because idols made Israel sin against God (see: 2 Kings 17:12). Also, the Christian leaders in Jerusalem did not want Christians to worship idols (see: 15:29).

See: Idolatry (Idol); Sin

What was the marketplace?

[17:17]

See: Acts 16:19

What were philosophers?

[17:18]

Philosophers were people who loved wisdom. Philosophers taught different things about the world. In ancient Israel, many philosophers went to Athens. Paul warned that things they taught Christians were the wrong things and stopped Christians from believing the right things (see: Colossians 2:8).

See Map: Athens

What did Epicureans believe?

[17:18]

Epicureans followed a man named Epicurus who lived about 300 years before Paul. They taught certain things. They believed several things differently from Jews and Christians.

1. They taught that people should avoid pain .
2. They taught that God or other gods did not do anything with people. There were no miracles or prophecy. They did not think God or other gods controlled anything.
3. When a person died, nothing happened.

See: False gods; Miracle; Prophecy (Prophecy)

What did Stoics believe?

[17:18]

Stoics followed a man named Zeno who lived about 300 years before Paul. They believed several things differently from Jews and Christians.

1. They believed that some power created things and people.
2. They wanted people to think the same way gods thought.
3. They followed their conscience.
4. They did not want to feel pleasure, pain, joy, and sadness.

See: Conscience

What was a babbler?

[17:18]

A babbler was a bird pecking grain. It was a metaphor to say Paul was not a real teacher and a worthless person.

See: Metaphor

What was meant by the words “follow strange gods”?

[17:18]

People said that Paul followed strange gods. They said that Paul was teaching about foreign gods. In the ancient world, people did not worship foreign gods. When someone did this, people thought they rejected the nation where they lived.

See: False gods

What was the Areopagus?

[17:19]

The Areopagus was the highest court in Athens. It was on the hill of Ares or Mars Hill.

See Map: Athens; Ares; Mars Hill

Why did they take Paul to the Areopagus?

[17:19]

They took Paul to the Areopagus because of the things he said about Jesus and becoming alive again. They wanted to know about the things Paul taught. They were polite to Paul. They always wanted to hear new things.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

17:22-31

Why did Paul say they were “religious”?

[17:22]

Paul said these people were “religious”(δεδαισμονιστῶν/g1174). That is, they worshipped and obey their false gods. Some scholars think Paul said something good about them. That is, they honored their gods and built altars for their gods. Other scholars think Paul said this so they will listen to him. He did not say that because he thought they were right.

See: Worship; False gods; Altar

Why did they build an altar to an unknown god?

[17:23]

They built an altar to an unknown god because they believed some god controlled the world. Because of this, they knew there may be a god who made all things. However, they did not understand anything else about this god.

See: Altar; False gods

What did Paul have to say about the altar that said, “To an Unknown God”?

[17:24, 17:25, 17:26, 17:27]

Paul saw the altar with the words “To an Unknown God” written on it. After he saw this, he wanted to teach them about God. People can know about God. However, God is not one god of many God. There is only one God.

How did Paul try to correct the wrong thinking with regard to the various altars?

[17:24, 17:25, 17:26, 17:27]

Paul told them it was wrong to worship idols. This was taught in the Old Testament.

1. God created everything (see: Genesis 1:1).
2. God is ruler over everything (see: Isaiah 45:23; Daniel 5:23).
3. God is too great to live in a temple (see: 1 Kings 8:27; Isaiah 57:15; 66:1-2).

4. People do not need to serve God in the way pagans served gods with sacrifices. God does not need anything. God gives everything people need (see: Psalm 50:8-13; Genesis 2:7; James 1:17).

See: Idolatry (Idol); Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Altar; Temple; Pagan; Offer (Offering); Sacrifice

Did Luke write the word blood in verse 26?

[17:26]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the word blood in verse 26. Older ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Scholars do not think Luke wrote this word. Paul was thinking about Adam when he said God made every nation of people (see: Luke 3:38; Genesis 3:20). Everyone is a descendant of Adam (see: Genesis 3:20).

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

Why did Paul say the same thing a pagan poet said?

[17:28]

Paul said the same thing a pagan poet said because that pagan poet was right when he wrote God gave life to people. God makes everyone alive (see: Job 12:10). However, the pagan poet was wrong about many other things. Paul only repeated the part where the pagan was right.

See: Pagan

What was a deity?

[17:29]

Deity was a word for a divine being. It can be used to talk about the one true God or false gods.

See: God; False gods

Why did God overlook times of ignorance?

[17:30]

God overlooked times of ignorance. That is, God does not judge people when they know they are doing something wrong. This is because he loves people in the world and he did not judge them yet. People were said to be ignorant because they did not know God created them and that he rules everything. They did not know it was wrong to worship idols. However, Jesus came and God wanted everyone to repent. That is, God wanted people to stop worshipping idols and worship God.

See: Repent (Repentance); Judge (Judgment); Idolatry (Idol)

How will God judge all the people in the world in righteousness?

[17:31]

God will judge all the people in the world according to his righteousness when he judges everyone through Jesus. That is, the same righteous standard will be used by God to judge all peoples of the world.

See: Righteous (Righteousness); Judge (Judgment)

Who is the man God “has chosen”?

[17:31]

Paul spoke about the man God has chosen. Paul was speaking about Jesus. God has “chosen”(ᾠρίσεν/g3724) to judge the world through Jesus. Paul taught that God chose Jesus to be the judge by raising him from the dead.

See: Righteous (Righteousness); Judge (Judgment)

17:32-34

Why did some of the men of Athens mock Paul when he said God made Jesus alive again?

[17:32]

Some of the men of Athens mocked Paul when he said God made Jesus alive again because they believed that God will not judge and God did not do miracles. They also thought the world will never end.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Judge (Judgment); Miracle

See Map: Athens

What was an Areopagite?

[17:34]

An Areopagite was a member of the Areopagus court. Some scholars think Dionysius was one of the twelve judges of the Athenian court.

See: Judge (Judgment)

See Map: Athens

Acts 17:1	they came to the city
General Information:	Here "came to" can be translated as "went to" or "arrived at." Alternate translation: "they went to the city" or "they arrived at the city"
Both instances of "they" refers to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:40).	
Connecting Statement:	Acts 17:2
This continues the story of Paul, Silas, and Timothy's missionary trip. They arrive in Thessalonica, apparently without Luke, since he says "they" and not "we."	went to them ... reasoned with them
Now	"went to the Jews ... reasoned with the Jews"
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke, the author, starts to tell a new part of the story.	as his custom was
passed through	"as his habit was" or "as his common practice was." Paul usually went to the synagogue on the Sabbath when Jews would be present.
"traveled through"	for three Sabbath days
cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia	"on each Sabbath day for three weeks"
These are coastal cities in Macedonia.	reasoned with them from the scriptures
	"gave them reasons to believe from the scriptures" or "debated with them about the scriptures" or "discussed the scriptures with them." Paul explained what the

scriptures mean in order to prove to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah.

Acts 17:3

General Information:

Here the word "He" refers to Paul (Acts 17:2).

He was opening the scriptures

Possible meanings are 1) to explain the scriptures in a way that people can understand is spoken of as if Paul were opening something so people can see what is inside of it) or 2) Paul was literally opening a book or scroll and reading from it.

it was necessary

"it was part of God's plan"

to rise again

"to come back to life"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

Acts 17:4

the Jews were persuaded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Jews believed" or "the Jews understood"

joined Paul

"became associated with Paul"

devout Greeks

This refers to Greeks who worshiped God but had not converted to Judaism through circumcision.

not a few of the leading women

This is an understatement to emphasize that many leading women joined them. Alternate translation: "many leading women"

Acts 17:5

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the unbelieving Jews and wicked men from the marketplace.

being moved with jealousy

The feeling of jealousy is spoken of as if jealousy were actually moving the person. Alternate translation: "feeling very jealous" or "feeling very angry"

with jealousy

It can be stated explicitly that these Jews were jealous because some of the Jews and Greeks believed Paul's message.

took certain wicked men

Here "took" does not mean the Jews took these people by force. It means the Jews persuaded these wicked men to help them.

certain wicked men

"some evil men." The word "men" here refers specifically to males.

from the marketplace

"from the public square." This is a public place of business, where buying and selling of goods, cattle, or services take place.

set the city in an uproar

Here "the city" stands for the people in the city. Alternate translation: "caused the people of the city to be in an uproar" or "caused the people of the city to riot"

Assaulting the house

"Violently attacking the house." This probably means the people were throwing rocks at the house and trying to break down the door of the house.

Jason

This is the name of a man.

they were seeking to bring Paul ... out

The word "seeking" here means that the people wanted to bring Paul out and were trying to bring him out.

out to the people

Possible meanings of "people" are 1) a governmental or legal group of citizens gathered to make a decision or 2) a mob.

Acts 17:6

certain other brothers

Here "brothers" refers to believers. Alternate translation: "some other believers"

before the officials

"into the presence of the officials"

These men who have

The Jewish leaders were speaking, and the phrase "These men" refers to Paul and Silas.

turned the world upside down

This phrase is another way of saying Paul and Silas were causing trouble everywhere they went. The Jewish leaders were exaggerating the influence Paul and Silas were having with their teaching. Alternate translation: "caused trouble everywhere in the world" or "caused trouble everywhere they have gone"

Acts 17:7

Jason has welcomed

This phrase signals that Jason was in agreement with the apostles' troubling message.

Acts 17:8

They troubled the crowd

"They caused the people in the city to be afraid"

Acts 17:9

the rest

The words "the rest" refers to other believers that the Jews brought before the officials.

they took security ... they let them go

"the officials took security ... they let Jason and the other believers go"

took security

Jason and the others gave the money to the officials to show that they would not cause any more trouble. This was not a fine or a punishment, so they might have expected the officials to give the money back later.

Acts 17:10

General Information:

Paul and Silas travel on to the town of Berea.

the brothers

The word "brothers" here refers to men and women believers. Alternate translation: "the believers"

Acts 17:11

Now

The word "now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke tells background information about the people in Berea and how they were willing to listen to Paul and examine what he said.

more noble

These "well-born" people were willing to think more objectively about new ideas than other people. Alternate translation: "more open minded" or "more willing to listen"

received the word

Here "word" refers to a teaching. Alternate translation: "listened to the teaching"

with all readiness of mind

These Bereans were prepared to examine earnestly Paul's teachings about the scripture.

examining the scriptures daily

"carefully reading and evaluating the scriptures every day"

these things were so

"the things Paul said were true"

Acts 17:12

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 17:13

General Information:

Athens was south of Berea. Both were on the coast of Macedonia. Athens was one of the most important cities in Greece.

went there and stirred up

This speaks about their agitating people as though it were a person stirring a liquid and causing the things at the bottom of the liquid to rise to the surface. Alternate translation: "went there and agitated" or "went there and disturbed"

troubled the crowds

"worried the crowds" or "caused dread and fear among the people"

Acts 17:14

brothers

The word "brothers" here refers to men and women believers. Alternate translation: "believers"

to go to the sea

"to go to the coast." From here Paul would probably sail to another city.

Acts 17:15

who were leading Paul

"who were accompanying Paul" or "who were going along with Paul"

they received from him instructions for Silas and Timothy

"he told them to instruct Silas and Timothy." This can also be stated as a direct quotation as in the UDB.

Acts 17:16

General Information:

This is another part of the story of Paul and Silas' travels. Paul is now in Athens where he is waiting for Silas and Timothy to join him.

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke starts to tell a new part of the story.

his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city full of idols

Here "spirit" stands for Paul himself. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he became upset because he saw that there were idols everywhere in the city" or "seeing the idols everywhere in the city upset him"

Acts 17:17

he reasoned

"he debated" or "he discussed." This means that his listeners also spoke and asked him questions. He was not the only speaker.

others who worshiped God

This refers to Gentiles who gave praise to God and followed him but did not obey all of the Jewish laws.

in the marketplace

"in the public square." This is a public place of business, where buying and selling of goods, cattle, or services take place.

Acts 17:18

General Information:

Here the words "him," "He," and "he" refer to Paul.

Epicurean and Stoic philosophers

Philosophers are people who think about the world and try to understand how people should live. The Epicureans and the Stoics were two groups of philosophers. They believed that a god or gods existed, but they did not trust in or obey any god. Alternate translation: "thinkers called Epicureans and Stoics"

encountered him

"happened upon him"

Some said

"Some of the philosophers said"

What is this babblers

The word "babbler" was used to refer to birds picking up seeds as food. It refers negatively to a person who only knows a little bit of information. The philosophers said Paul had bits of information which were not worth listening to. Alternate translation: "What is this uneducated person"

Others said

"Other philosophers said"

He seems to be one who calls people to follow

"He seems to be a proclaimer" or "He seems to be on a mission to add people to his philosophy"

strange gods

This is not in the sense of "odd," but in the sense of "foreign," that is, gods that Greeks and Romans do not worship or know about.

Acts 17:19

They took ... brought him

This does not mean they arrested Paul. The philosophers invited Paul to speak formally to their leaders.

to the Areopagus

The "Areopagus" was the place where the leaders met. Alternate translation: "to the leaders that met on the Areopagus"

the Areopagus, saying

Here the leaders on the Areopagus are speaking. This can stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "the Areopagus. The leaders said to Paul"

Areopagus

This is a prominent rock outcropping or hill in Athens upon which the supreme court of Athens may have met.

Acts 17:20

For you bring some strange things to our ears

Paul's teachings about Jesus and the resurrection are spoken of as an object that a person can bring to another person. Here "ears" refers to what they hear. Alternate translation: "For you are teaching some things that we have never heard before"

Acts 17:21

Now all the Athenians and the strangers living there

The word "all" is a generalization referring to many. Alternate translation: "Now many of the Athenians and the strangers living there"

all the Athenians

"Athenians" are people from Athens, a city near the coast below Macedonia

the strangers

"the foreigners"

spent their time in nothing but either telling or listening

Here "time" is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could spend. Alternate translation: "used their time doing nothing but either telling or listening" or "were always doing nothing but telling or listening"

spent their time in nothing but either telling or listening

The phrase "spent their time in nothing" is an exaggeration. Alternate translation: "did not do much but tell or listen" or "spent much of their time telling or listening"

telling or listening about something new

"discussing new philosophical ideas" or "talking about what was new to them"

Acts 17:22

General Information:

Paul begins his speech to the philosophers on the Areopagus.

very religious in every way

Paul is referring to the Athenians' public display of honoring the gods through prayers, building altars, and offering sacrifices.

Acts 17:23

as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship

"as I walked among the objects of your worship and observed them" or "as I walked around in the city, I observed the objects of your worship"

To an Unknown God

Possible meanings are 1) "to a certain unknown god" or 2) "to a god not known." This was a specific writing or inscription on that altar.

Acts 17:24

the world

In the most general sense, the "world" refers to the heavens and the earth and everything in them.

since he is Lord

"because he is the Lord." Here "he" is referring to the unknown god mentioned in Acts 17:23 that Paul is explaining is the Lord God.

of heaven and earth

The words "heaven" and "earth" are used together to mean all beings and things in heaven and earth.

built with hands

Here "hands" stands for people. Alternate translation: "built by the hands of people" or "that people built"

Acts 17:25

Neither is he served by men's hands

Here "served" has the sense of a doctor treating a patient to make the patient well again. Alternate translation: "Neither do men's hands take care of him"

by men's hands

Here "hands" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "by humans"

since he himself

"because he himself." The word "himself" is added for emphasis.

Acts 17:26

General Information:

Here the word "he" refer to God, the creator, and both instances of "their" refer to every nation of people living on the surface of the earth.

one man

This means Adam, the first person God created. This can be stated to include Eve. It was through Adam and Eve that God made all other people. Alternate translation: "one couple"

having determined their appointed seasons and the boundaries of their living areas

This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "and he determined when and where they would live"

Acts 17:27

General Information:

All instances of "they" and "their" refer to the people who live on earth, all instances of "him" and "he" refer to God, and the word "us" includes the speaker, the hearers, and the people who live on earth.

so that they should search for God and perhaps they may feel their way toward him and find him

Here "search for God" represents desiring to know him, and "feel their way toward him and find him" represents praying and having a relationship with him.

Alternate translation: "so that they should want to know God and perhaps pray to him and become one of his people"

Yet he is not far from each one of us

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Yet he is very near to every one of us"

Acts 17:28

General Information:

Here the words "him" and "his" refer to God

For in him

"Because of him"

Acts 17:29

General Information:

Both instances of "we" include the speaker, the hearers, and other people.

are God's offspring

Because God created everyone, all people are spoken of as if they were God's literal children.

the qualities of deity are like

Here "deity" refers to God's nature or attributes. Alternate translation: "God is like"

images created by the art and imagination of man

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which a man then uses his skill to make it into something that he has designed" or "images that people make by using their art and imagination"

Acts 17:30

General Information:

Here the word "he" refers to God.

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true"

God overlooked the times of ignorance

"God decided not to punish people during the time of ignorance"

times of ignorance

This refers to the time before God fully revealed himself through Jesus Christ and before people truly knew how to obey God.

all men

This means all people, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "all people"

Acts 17:31

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes his speech to the philosophers in the Areopagus, which he began in Acts 17:22.

when he will judge the world in righteousness by the man he has appointed

"when the man he has chosen will judge the world in righteousness"

he will judge the world

Here "world" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "he will judge all people"

in righteousness

"justly" or "fairly"

God has given proof of this man

"God has demonstrated his choice of this man"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

Acts 17:32

General Information:

Here the word "We" refers to the men of Athens but not to Paul, so this is exclusive. Though some of them

probably did want to hear Paul again, they may only have been being polite.

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about Paul in Athens.

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke changes from Paul's teachings to the reaction of the people of Athens.

the men of Athens

These are the people who were present at the Areopagus and were listening to Paul.

some mocked Paul

"some ridiculed Paul" or "some laughed at Paul." These did not believe it was possible for someone to die and then return to life.

Acts 17:33

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 17:34

Dionysius the Areopagite

Dionysius is a man's name. Areopagite implies that Dionysius was one of the judges at the council of Areopagus.

Damaris

This is the name of a woman.

Acts 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The baptism of John

Some Jews who lived far away from Jerusalem and Judea had heard of John the Baptist and followed his teachings. They had not yet heard about Jesus. One of these Jews was Apollos. He followed John the Baptist, but he did not know that the Messiah had come. John had baptized people to show that they were sorry for their sins, but this baptism was different from Christian baptism. (See: faithful and christ and repent)

Links:

- [Acts 18:1](#)

<< | >>

Acts 18

18:1-11

Why did Paul leave Athens?

[18:1]

Luke did not write why Paul left Athens. Some scholars think Paul was not able to make tents there because Athens was not a city where people made tents. Other scholars think Corinth needed someone to preach the gospel. Also, Corinth was a city where people made tents.

See: Gospel

See Map: Athens

Where was Corinth?

[18:1]

See Map: Corinth

Where were Pontus, Italy, and Rome?

[18:2]

See Map: Pontus; Italy; Rome

Who was Claudius?

[18:2]

Claudius was the fourth Roman Emperor. He ruled the Roman Empire about 10 years after Jesus died. He allowed the Jews to obey the Law of Moses and to do things the religious things the Jews did.

See: Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar); Law of Moses

Why did Claudius make all the Jews leave Rome?

[18:2]

The Roman Emperor Claudius made all the Jews leave Rome because the Jews caused many riots in Rome. Scholars do not know if Aquila and Priscilla participated in those riots at Rome or if they did not.

See: Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar)

Why did Paul go to Aquila and Priscilla?

[18:2, 18:3]

Some scholars think Paul went to Aquila and Priscilla because they were Christians. Perhaps they helped start the church in Rome. Other scholars think they were not Christians and Paul went to them because they also made tents. Then Paul taught them and they became Christians. Aquila and Priscilla helped Paul many times.

See: Acts 18:18, 26; Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19).

See Map: Rome

How did the church in Corinth begin?

[18:4] The church in Corinth began when Paul persuaded Jews and Greeks to believe that Jesus is the messiah. Paul talked to these Jews and Greeks at the synagogue in Corinth. At first, the synagogue allowed Paul to tell people about Jesus. Later, they did not want Paul to talk about Jesus.

See: Church; Synagogue; Messiah (Christ)

Did Luke write that the Holy Spirit led Paul?

[18:5] Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words, the Holy Spirit led Paul in verse. However, more and older copies of the Greek News Testament have the words, Paul was devoted to the word. Scholars think Luke wrote that Paul was devoted to the word.

See: Word of God

Where was Macedonia?

[18:5]

See Map: Macedonia

Why did Paul shake out his garment at the Jews who opposed and insulted him?

[18:6] Paul shook out his garment at the Jews who opposed and insulted him. This was a sign that he stop talking to them about Jesus. Paul also warned them God will judge them. However, God will not judge Paul because Paul warned them. This was similar to what God told Ezekiel to do (see: Ezekiel 3:16-21).

See: Sign; Judge (Judgment)

Advice to translators: A garment was a piece of clothing.

What did Paul do when Silas and Timothy went to Corinth?

[18:7, 18:8]

Paul stopped making tents and give all of time to telling people about Jesus when Silas and Timothy went to Corinth. They were in Corinth with Paul. Some scholars think Silas and Timothy brought money so that Paul did not need to make tents. Other scholars think Silas and Timothy worked and made enough money so that Paul did not need to make tents.

See Map: Corinth

What was a vision?

[18:9]

See: Vision

Why did the Lord speak to Paul in a vision at night?

[18:9]

The Lord spoke to Paul in a vision at night because Paul was afraid he would have to leave Corinth. Persecution in other cities forced Paul to leave when he wanted to continue serving God. However, Paul was not afraid to suffer (see: 21:10-14). Also, the vision helped Paul know he pleased God by the way he served God in Corinth.

See: Persecute (Persecution)

18:12-17

Who was Gallio?

[18:12]

Gallio was the leader of Achaia in Greece for two years. He began ruling about 20 years after Jesus died. He was killed by a Roman emperor.

See Map: Achaia; Greece

What was the judgement seat?

[18:12]

See: Judge (Judgment)

Why did the Jews bring Paul before Gallio?

[18:12]

The Jews brought Paul before Gallio because they wanted to persuade him to judge against Paul. However, their plan failed. The Lord's promise in the vision to protect Paul at Corinth came true.

See: Judge (Judgment); Vision)

See Map: Corinth

Which law did the Jews talk about?

[18:13]

Some scholars think the law the Jews talked about was the Law of Moses. They wanted the governor to allow them to follow the Law of Moses. Other scholars think the Jews talked about Roman laws. Roman laws allowed the Jews to worship God and follow the Law of Moses. If these Jews were able to convince Gallio the Christians

were different from the Jews, then Roman law would not allow Christians to worship God. Other scholars think the Jews talked about both the law of Moses and Roman laws.

See: Law of Moses

Who was Sosthenes?

[18:17]

Sosthenes was the ruler of the synagogue in Corinth. If he was the same person in 1 Corinthians 1:1, then he became a Christian at sometime and later he helped Paul write the first letter to the Corinthian church.

See: Synagogue

Why did people beat Sosthenes?

[18:17]

Scholars give several reasons why people beat Sosthenes.

1. Some scholars think the Jews beat Sosthenes because he was not able to persuade Gallio to judge Paul.
2. Some scholars think the Jews beat Sosthenes because he became a Christian.
3. Some scholars think the Gentiles beat Sosthenes because they did not like Jews.

See: Gentile

18:18-23

Why did Paul do a third missionary journey?

[18:8]

This was the beginning of Paul's third missionary journey. He wanted to visit and help the churches he established in his first and second missionary journeys. He wanted them to know he did not forget about them.

See: Paul's Missionary Journeys; Church

See Map: Syria; Cenchrea; Ephesus; Caesarea; Antioch; Galatia; Phrygia

What vow did Paul take?

[18:8]

Scholars have several ideas of what vow Paul took.

1. Some scholars think Paul made a Nazarite vow (see: Numbers 6)
2. Some scholars think Paul made a vow of thanksgiving because God protected him in Corinth.
3. Sometimes ancient sailors shaved their heads after living through a difficult journey. This was a type of vow.
4. Some scholars think Paul made a private vow.

See: Vow

Why did Paul say “if it is God’s will”?

[18:21]

Paul said “if it is God’s will” because he always depended on God leading him by the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the Holy Spirit sent Paul to a certain place (see: Acts 13:2). Other times God allowed Paul to visit churches he wanted to visit (see: Acts 15:36). Paul wanted to do God’s will.

See: Will of God; Holy Spirit

18:24-28

Where was Alexandria?

[18:24]

See Map: Alexandria

What spirit was Apollos fervent in?

[18:24]

Scholars think Apollos was fervent in his own spirit. This was a metaphor. He loved to speak about Jesus and was excited to speak about Jesus (see: Romans 12:11). Fewer scholars think Luke was writing about the Holy Spirit. Fewer scholars think Luke was writing about both Apollos’ spirit and the Holy Spirit.

See: Spirit (Spiritual); Holy Spirit; Metaphor

How did Priscilla and Aquila tell Apollos the way of God more accurately?

[18:26]

Some scholars think Priscilla and Aquila told Apollos the way of God more accurately by telling him about Christian baptism in water. The Holy Spirit already live him. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit did not yet live in Apollos but Priscilla and Aquila explained that to him (see: 2:1-4). In the same way, many of the five-hundred who saw Jesus alive again did not go to Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit began to live in the apostles and other Christians (1 Corinthians 15:6).

See: Baptize (Baptism); Holy Spirit; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit: Pentecost; Apostle

See Map: Jerusalem

Acts 18:1	Athens
Connecting Statement:	Athens was one of the most important cities in Greece. See how you translated this in Acts 17:15.
This is another part of the story of Paul's travels as he goes to Corinth.	Acts 18:2
After these things	General Information:
"After these events took place in Athens"	The writer begins to give background information about Aquila and Priscilla.

There he met

Possible meanings are that 1) Paul happened to find by chance or 2) Paul intentionally found.

a Jew named Aquila

Here the phrase "a certain" indicates this is introducing new person in the story.

a native of Pontus

Pontus was a province on the southern coast of the Black Sea.

had recently come

This is probably sometime in the past year.

Italy

This is the name of land. Rome is the capital city of Italy.

Claudius had commanded

Claudius was the current Roman emperor. See how you translated this in Acts 11:28.

Acts 18:3

General Information:

The writer finishes giving background information about Aquila and Priscilla.

he worked at the same trade

"he did the same kind of work that they did"

Acts 18:4

So Paul reasoned

"So Paul debated" or "So Paul discussed." He gave reasons. This means that rather than just preaching, Paul talked and interacted with the people.

trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks

Possible meanings are 1) "and he caused both Jews and Greeks to believe" or 2) "and he kept trying to persuade the Jews and the Greeks."

Acts 18:5

General Information:

Silas and Timothy rejoin Paul.

Acts 18:6

shook out his garment

This is a symbolic action to indicate that Paul will no longer try to teach the Jews there about Jesus. He is leaving them to God's judgment.

May your blood be upon your own heads

Here "blood" stands for the guilt of their actions. Here "heads" refers to the whole person. Paul tells the Jews they are solely responsible for the judgment they will face for their stubbornness if they refuse to repent.

Alternate translation: "You alone bear the responsibility for your punishment for sin"

I am clean

The word "clean" here is a metaphor for Paul being innocent of wrong against either the people or God. Alternate translation: "I am innocent" or "God will not punish me when he punishes you"

Acts 18:7

he left ... His house

"Paul left ... Titius' Justus's house"

Titius Justus

This is the name of a man.

worshiped God

A worshiper of God is a Gentile who gives praise to God and follows him but does not necessarily obey all of the Jewish laws.

Acts 18:8

Crispus

This is the name of a man.

leader of the synagogue

a layperson who sponsored and administered the synagogue, not necessarily the teacher

all his household

Here "his household" refers to the people who lived together in his house. Alternate translation: "the people who lived with him in his house"

his household

Crispus's household

were baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "received baptism"

Acts 18:9

Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent

The Lord is giving one command in two different ways to emphasize that Paul should certainly continue preaching. Alternate translation: "You must not be afraid; instead, you should continue to speak and not become silent"

speak and do not be silent

The Lord gives the same command in two different ways to strongly command Paul to speak. Alternate translation: "you must certainly continue to speak"

do not be silent

It can be stated explicitly what the Lord wants Paul to speak. Alternate translation: "do not stop speaking about the gospel"

Acts 18:10

I have many people in this city

"there are many people in this city who have put their faith in me" or "many people in this city will put their faith in me"

Acts 18:11

Paul lived there ... teaching the word of God among them

This is a concluding statement for this part of the story. "Word of God" here is a synecdoche for the entire scriptures. Alternate translation: "Paul lived there ... teaching the scriptures among them"

Acts 18:12

General Information:

Achaia was the Roman province in which Corinth was located. Corinth was the largest city in southern Greece and the capital of the province.

Connecting Statement:

The unbelieving Jews bring Paul to the judgment seat before Gallio.

Gallio

This is the name of a man.

the Jews

This stands for the Jewish leaders that did not believe in Jesus.

rose up

This phrase means that the Jews began to act, not that they rose into the air or rose to stand from a sitting position. If your language has a different idiom for beginning to act, you may use it here.

with one mind

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

brought him before the judgment seat

The Jews took Paul by force to bring Paul before the court. Here "judgment seat" refers to the place where Gallio sat when he made legal decisions in court. Alternate translation: "took him so that the governor could judge him at the judgment seat"

Acts 18:13

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 18:14

Gallio said

Gallio was the Roman governor of the Province.

Acts 18:15

your own law

Here "law" can refer to either the law of Moses or the Jewish customs of Paul's time. Gallio is simply telling the Jews that they are to do what they think right and that he is not interested in being the judge.

I do not wish to be a judge of these matters

"I refuse to make a judgment about these matters"

Acts 18:16

Gallio made them leave the judgment seat

"Gallio dismissed the Jews from the judgment seat." Here "judgment seat" refers to the place where Gallio sits to make legal decisions in court. Alternate translation: "Gallio made them leave his presence in the court" or "Gallio made them leave the court"

Acts 18:17

General Information:

It is not clear what events this verse describes. The Jews had been accusing Paul, but it appears that they ended up beating Sosthenes and not Paul.

So they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the judgment seat

Possible meanings are 1) the Gentiles beat Sosthenes in the court in front of the judgment seat because he was the Jewish leader or 2) Sosthenes was a believer in Christ, so even though he was "the ruler of the synagogue," the Jews beat him in front of the court.

they all seized

This may be an exaggeration to emphasize the strong feelings the people had. Alternate translation: "many people seized" or "many of them grabbed"

Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue

Sosthenes was "the ruler of the synagogue" at Corinth.

beat him

"repeatedly hit him" or "repeatedly punched him."

Acts 18:18

General Information:

Here both instances of "he" refer to Paul.

left the brothers

The word "brothers" refers to men and women believers. Alternate translation: "left the fellow believers"

sailed for Syria with Priscilla and Aquila

Paul got on a ship that sailed for Syria. Priscilla and Aquila went with him.

Cenchreae

This was a town near Corinth in Greece. It was on the coast, and Paul probably got on the ship there.

he had his hair cut off

This is a symbolic action that indicates that he had done something he had vowed to do. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he had someone cut off the hair on his head"

Acts 18:19

Connecting Statement:

This continues Paul's missionary journey as Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila leave Corinth. This seems to indicate that Silas and Timothy remain, since it says "he" here and not "they." The word "they" refers to Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila.

reasoned with the Jews

"gave the Jews reasons to believe" or "debated with the Jews about the scriptures" or "discussed the scriptures with the Jews." Paul explained what the scriptures mean in order to prove to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah. See how you translated "reasoned with" in [Acts 17:2]

Acts 18:20

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the Jews in Ephesus.

Acts 18:21

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to the Jews in Ephesus. The word "you" is plural.

taking his leave of them

"saying good-bye to them"

Acts 18:22

General Information:

Phrygia is a province in Asia which is now modern day Turkey. See how you translated this in Acts 2:10.

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues his missionary journey.

landed at Caesarea

"arrived at Caesarea." The word "landed" is used to show that he arrived by ship.

he went up

He traveled to the city of Jerusalem. The phrase "went up" is used here because Jerusalem is higher in elevation than Caesarea.

greeted the Jerusalem church

Here "church" refers to the believers in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "greeted the members of the church of Jerusalem"

then went down

The phrase "went down" is used here because Antioch is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.

Acts 18:23

Paul departed

"Paul went away" or "Paul left"

After having spent some time there

This speaks about "time" as if it were a commodity that a person could spend. Alternate translation: After staying there for a while"

Acts 18:24

General Information:

Apollos is introduced to the story. Verses 24 and 25 give background information about him.

Connecting Statement:

Luke tells what happens in Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila.

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story.

a certain Jew named Apollos

The phrase "a certain" indicates that Luke is introducing a new person in the story.

an Alexandrian by birth

"a man who was born in the city of Alexandria." This was a city in Egypt on the north coast of Africa.

eloquent in speech

"a good speaker"

mighty in the scriptures

"he knew the scriptures thoroughly." He understood the Old Testament writings well.

Acts 18:25

Apollos had been instructed in the teachings of the Lord

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Other believers had taught Apollos how the Lord Jesus wanted people to live"

Being fervent in spirit

Here "spirit" refers to the entire person of Apollos. Alternate translation: "Being very enthusiastic"

the baptism of John

"the baptism that John performed." John's baptism was with water, but Jesus's baptism is with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 18:26

the way of God

How God wants people to live is spoken of as if it were a road that a person travels.

more accurately

"correctly" or "more fully"

Acts 18:27

General Information:

Here the he words "he" and "him" refer to Apollos ([Acts 18:24](#)).

to pass over into Achaia

"to go to the region of Achaia." The phrase "pass over" is used here because Apollos had to cross the Aegean Sea to get to Achaia from Ephesus.

Achaia

Achaia was a Roman Province in the southern section of Greece. See how you translated this in Acts 18:12.

brothers

The word "brothers" here refers to men and women believers. You can make explicit that these are believers in Ephesus. Alternate translation: "fellow believers in Ephesus"

wrote to the disciples

"wrote a letter to the Christians in Achaia"

those who believed by grace

"those who had believed in salvation by grace" or "those who by God's grace believed in Jesus"

Acts 18:28

Apollos powerfully refuted the Jews in public debate

"In public debate Apollos powerfully showed that the Jews were wrong"

showing by the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ

"as he showed them by the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ"

Acts 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Baptism

John baptized people to show that they were sorry for their sins. Jesus's followers baptized people who wanted to follow Jesus.

Temple of Diana

The temple of Diana was an important place in the city of Ephesus. Many people came to Ephesus to see this temple, and they bought statues of the goddess Diana while they were there. The people who sold statues of Diana were afraid that if people did not believe Diana was a real goddess, they would stop giving the sellers money for statues.

Links:

- [Acts 19:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 19

19:1-7

Who were these disciples?

[19:1]

1. Some scholars think these disciples were Christians. They were not only disciples of John the Baptist but they were also disciples of Jesus. They think that only people who followed and believed in Jesus were disciples in the book of Acts.
2. Some scholars think these disciples were not Christians. They did not have the Holy Spirit in them. Only people who had the Holy Spirit were Christians (see: John 3:5; Romans 8:9). They did not know about baptism in the name of Jesus.
3. Some scholars think people believed these people were disciples. However, Paul did think they really were disciples.
4. Some scholars think Apollos persuaded people to believe in Jesus before Priscilla and Aquila taught Apollos.

See: Disciple; Holy Spirit; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Baptize (Baptism)

How did Paul ask these disciples when they believed?

[19:2]

Scholars have two ideas of how Paul asked these disciples when they believed.

1. Paul asked them if God gave them the Holy Spirit when they believed in Jesus. That is, God filled Christians with the Holy Spirit when they believed in Jesus. Christians knew they already had the Holy Spirit. However, these disciples did not know God gave the Holy Spirit (see: John 7:39).
2. Paul asked them if God gave them the Holy Spirit after they believed in Jesus. That is, Christians had the Holy Spirit when they believed in Jesus. However, God filled Christians with the Holy Spirit at a later time so that they could better serve God. The Jews and the people John the Baptist baptized knew about the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when they said they did not hear about the Holy Spirit they were thinking about God filling people with the Holy Spirit.

See: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit; Disciple; Filling of the Holy Spirit

Why did these disciples say they were baptized with John's baptism?

[19:3]

These disciples said they were baptized by John the Baptist. However, they were not baptized as Christians. This was a different baptism.

See: Baptize (Baptism)

Why did Paul lay his hands on these disciples?

[19:6]

See: Laying on of Hands ; Disciple

How did the Holy Spirit come on these disciples?

[19:6]

The Holy Spirit came on these disciples in the same way God filled disciples with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and they spoke in "tongues"(γλῶσσα/g1100) (see: Acts 2:4) and prophesied.

See: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Filling of the Holy Spirit; Pentecost; Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Speaking in Tongues

19:8-20

What was the "Way"?

[19:9]

In ancient Israel, people called Christians the "Way"(ὁδός/g3598). A "way" was a road or path from one place to another. It is a metaphor of how a person lived their life. That is, when a person lived in a way that honored God, they were following the right way. Christians did more than believe the right things about God and Jesus. Christians also honored God in the way they lived (see: Acts 15:11; 18:25-26; John 14:6).

See: Acts 9:2; 22:4; 24:14,22

What was the "lecture hall of Tyrannus"?

[19:9]

The "lecture hall of Tyrannus" was a place where people taught others. Here, Paul was able to speak every day rather than just one day a week at the synagogue. Paul made tents in Ephesus (see: Acts 20:34) in the mornings

and taught people at the hall of Tyrannus in the afternoons. Then in the evenings he served at houses (see: Acts 20:20).

See: Synagogue

See Map: Ephesus

How did all the Jews and Greeks in Asia hear the word of the Lord?

[19:10]

All the Jews and Greeks in Asia heard the word of the Lord when Christians went to cities in Asia and told people about Jesus. Many of these people went to Ephesus to do trade with others.

See: Word of God

See Map: Asia; Ephesus

What were “extraordinary miracles”?

[19:11]

See: Miracle

Who was Sceva?

[19:14]

Some scholars think Sceva was a “chief” priest rather than the “high” priest. That is, he was not the high priest who stayed in Jerusalem but he was a priest who serve the high priests Annas and Caiphas. Other scholars think Sceva gave himself this title and Luke wrote what Sceva called himself this. He was not truly a priest in Israel. In ancient Israel, some people said they were priests when they were not priests.

See: High Priest; Priest (Priesthood)

Why did the evil spirit take control over the sons of Sceva?

[19:14]

The evil spirit took control over the sons of Sceva because they tried to do it themselves, rather than trusting in Jesus. They tried to force the evil spirit out the same way other Jewish leaders did except they also said the name of Jesus. This did not help them because they did not believe in Jesus.

See: Demon

Why did many believers have magic books?

[19:19]

Many believers had magic books because they were recently became Christians. The ancient city of Ephesus had many magicians with books of formulas for casting spells. Many people did magic all their lives before they began to believe in Jesus. However, the failure of the sons of Sceva to force out an evil spirit made Christians know their magic formulas did not have the same power as Jesus. Therefore, they burned their magic books and honored the Lord Jesus.

See Map: Ephesus

How much was fifty-thousand pieces of silver?

[19:19]

Fifty-thousand pieces of silver was the same amount two-hundred workers or soldiers earned in a year.

19:21-22

What were “these things”?

[19:21]

Some scholars “these things” were the two years Paul served the Christians in Ephesus. Other scholars think he was writing about the things in 19:13-19. Paul believed he finished serving the Christians in Ephesus. The church grew and became strong. It was time for Paul to serve in other places.

See: Church

How did Paul decide in the Spirit?

[19:21]

Some scholars think Paul decided in his own spirit to go through Macedonia and Achaia on his way to Jerusalem. More scholars think the Holy Spirit led Paul to travel. This was how the Holy Spirit led Paul.

See: Spirit (Spiritual); Holy Spirit

See Map: Macedonia; Achaia; Jerusalem

Why did Paul say he must see Rome?

[19:21]

Paul said he must see Rome because he knew God wanted him to go there. Later, God told this to Paul (see: Acts 23:11) and also an angel told this to Paul (see: Acts 27:23-24).

See: Angel

See Map: Rome

How did Paul go to Rome?

[19:21]

Paul did not go to Rome right away. He needed to visit other churches first. However, from here to the end of the book of Acts Paul’s purpose was to go to Rome.

See: Church; Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar)

See Map: Rome

Why did Paul send Timothy and Erastus ahead to the churches in Macedonia and Achaia?

[19:22]

Paul sent Timothy and Erastus ahead to the churches in Macedonia and Achaia because he wanted them to prepare those churches for his visit.

19:23-41

What was Artemis?

[19:24]

Artemis was a pagan fertility goddess with many breasts, or planets, or fruits, or bee or ostrich eggs, or castrated organs. The ancient Ephesians built a temple to Artemis. The temple was a bank and people put money there. The temple was destroyed and rebuilt many times. During the time of Paul, people made many small silver shrines of the temple. That is, they made little copies or models of the temple. Many people went to Ephesus and bought the silver shrines and used them to worship false gods in their houses. However, when many people no longer believed in idols because they believed in Jesus, then the people who made these idols did not make as much money.

See: Idolatry (Idol); False gods; Temple

Why did Demetrius say Paul persuaded many people in Ephesus and most of Asia?

[19:24]

Demetrius said Paul persuaded many people in Ephesus and most of Asia because he wanted to gather people against Paul. However, Demetrius did not know he said Paul was very successful in persuading people to believe in Jesus.

See: Luke 13:18-20

Why did Luke write about Gaius and Aristarchus?

[19:29]

Luke wrote about Gaius and Aristarchus because he wanted people to know Paul persuaded many people to believe in Jesus when he served in Macedonia, especially in Thessalonica (see: Acts 20:4).

See Map: Macedonia; Thessalonica

Why did Luke write most of the people did not know why they gathered?

[19:32]

Luke wrote most of the people did not know why they gathered because he wanted people to laugh at the crowd. In ancient Greece, writers often wanted the people to laugh when people did stupid things.

Why did the Jews push forward Alexander to make a defense?

[19:33]

The Jews wanted Alexander to make a defense because they wanted the crowd not to think they were Christians. The people knew the Jews also did not believe in idols. The Jews wanted the people to know they had nothing to do with Paul or the Christians.

See: Idolatry (Idol)

What was the town clerk?

[19:35]

The town clerk was the highest official in the city. He kept the city and temple records. He reigned over city meetings. He also talked to Rome about the city.

See: Temple

How did the town clerk know the Christians did not rob the temples or blaspheme the goddess?

[19:37]

The town clerk knew the Christians did not rob temples or blaspheme the goddess because Christians were in Ephesus for at least three years and the Christians did not do these things. The Christians preached about Jesus and fewer people bought silver shrines of the goddess.

See: Temple; Blaspheme (Blasphemy); False gods; Preach (Preacher)

See Map: Ephesus

Acts 19:1

General Information:

The "upper country" was an area of Asia which today is part of modern-day Turkey to the north of Ephesus. Paul must have traveled by land around the top of the Aegean Sea in order to come to Ephesus (also in Turkey today), which is directly east of Corinth by sea.

Connecting Statement:

Paul travels to Ephesus.

It came about that

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

passed through

"traveled through"

Acts 19:2

receive the Holy Spirit

This means to have the Holy Spirit come upon them.

we did not even hear about the Holy Spirit

"we have not even heard about the Holy Spirit"

Acts 19:3

General Information:

The word "They" refers to the disciples ([Acts 19:1](#)). The word "you" is plural.

Into what then were you baptized?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "What kind of baptism did you receive?"

Into John's baptism

You can translate this as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "We were baptized into John's baptism" or "We received the kind of baptism about which John taught"

Acts 19:4

the baptism of repentance

You can translate the abstract noun "repentance" as the verb "repent." Alternate translation: "the baptism that people requested when they wanted to repent"

the one who would come

Here "the one" refers to Jesus.

come after him

This means to come after John the Baptist in time and not following after him physically.

Acts 19:5

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues staying in Ephesus.

When the people

Here "people" refers to the disciples in Ephesus who were talking with Paul (Acts 19:1),

they were baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they received baptism"

in the name of the Lord Jesus

Here "name" refers to Jesus's power and authority. Alternate translation: "as believers in the Lord Jesus"

Acts 19:6

General Information:

All instances of "them" and "they" refer to "the people" ([Acts 19:5](#))

laid his hands on them

"placed his hands on them." He probably placed his hands on their shoulders or heads. Alternate translation: "placed his hands on their heads as he prayed"

they spoke in tongues and prophesied

Unlike in Acts 2:3-4, there are no details of who understood their messages.

Acts 19:7

General Information:

All instances of "them" and "they" refer to "the people" ([Acts 19:5](#))

In all they were about twelve men

This tells how many men were baptized.

twelve men

"12 men"

Acts 19:8

Paul went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months

"Paul regularly attended the synagogue meetings for three months and spoke there boldly"

reasoning and persuading them

Probable meanings are 1) the words "reasoning" and "persuading" are a hendiadys that means "arguing persuasively" or 2) the words describe two separate activities, "giving them reasons to believe" and "convincing them"

about the kingdom of God

Here "kingdom" stands for God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "about God's rule as king" or "about how God would show himself as king"

Acts 19:9

some Jews were hardened and disobedient

People who were stubbornly refusing to believe are spoken of as though they were becoming hard and unable to move. Alternate translation: "some Jews were stubborn and did not believe" or "some Jews stubbornly refused to accept and obey the message"

to speak evil of the Way before the crowd

What Christ wants people to believe is spoken of as though it were a road that a person travels. The phrase, "the Way," seems to have been a title for Christianity at the time. Alternate translation: "to speak evil about Christianity to the crowd" or "to speak to the crowd evil things about those who follow Christ and who obey his teaching about God" (See: and Acts 9:2)

to speak evil of

"to speak bad things about"

in the lecture hall of Tyrannus

"in the large room where Tyrannus had taught people"

Tyrannus

This is the name of a man.

Acts 19:10

all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord

Here "all" is a generalization that means very many people throughout Asia heard the gospel.

the word of the Lord

Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "the message about the Lord"

Acts 19:11

God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul

Here "hands" stands for Paul's whole person. Alternate translation: "God was causing Paul to do extraordinary miracles" or "God was doing extraordinary miracles through Paul"

Acts 19:12

General Information:

Here the words "them" and "their" refer to those who were sick.

even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick and

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when they took to sick people even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched Paul"

even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him

Possible meanings are 1) these were cloth items that Paul had touched or 2) these were cloth items that Paul had worn or used.

handkerchiefs

cloths worn around the head

aprons

clothing worn on the front of the body to protect the clothes of people

the sick

This refers to sick people. Alternate translation: "sick people" or "those who were sick"

their illnesses left them

"those who were sick became healthy"

Acts 19:13

General Information:

This is the beginning of another event that happened while Paul was in Ephesus. It is about Jewish exorcists.

exorcists

people who send evil spirits away from people or places

the name of the Lord Jesus

Here "name" refers to Jesus's power and authority.

By the Jesus whom Paul proclaims

"Jesus" was a common name at the time, so these exorcists wanted people to know of whom they spoke.

By the Jesus

This stands for the power and authority of Jesus. Alternate translation: "by the authority of Jesus" or "by the power of Jesus"

Acts 19:14

Sceva

This is the name of a man.

Acts 19:15

Jesus I know, and Paul I know

"I know Jesus and Paul" or "I know Jesus, and I know Paul"

but who are you?

The spirit asked this question to emphasize that the exorcists had no authority over evil spirits. Alternate translation: "but I do not know you!" or "but you have no authority over me!"

Acts 19:16

The evil spirit in the man leaped

This means that the evil spirit caused the man whom it was controlling to leap on the exorcists.

exorcists

This refers to people who send evil spirits from people or places. See how you translated this in Acts 19:13.

they fled ... naked

The exorcists fled with their clothes ripped off them.

Acts 19:17

the name of the Lord Jesus was honored

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they honored the name of the Lord Jesus" or "they considered the name of the Lord Jesus to be great"

the name

This stands for the power and authority of Jesus.

Acts 19:18

Connecting Statement:

This ends the story about the Jewish exorcists.

Acts 19:19

brought their books

"collected their books." The word "books" refers to scrolls on which magical incantations and formulas were written.

in the sight of everyone

"in front of everyone"

the value of them

"the value of the books" or "the value of the scrolls"

fifty thousand

"50,000"

pieces of silver

A "piece of silver" was the approximate daily wage for a common laborer.

Acts 19:20

So the word of the Lord spread very widely in powerful ways

"So because of these powerful deeds, more and more people heard the message about the Lord Jesus"

Acts 19:21

Connecting Statement:

Paul talks about going Jerusalem but does not leave Ephesus yet.

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke starts to tell a new part of the story.

these things were completed

"Paul completed the work that God had for him to do in Ephesus"

Paul decided in the Spirit

Possible meanings are 1) Paul decided with the help of the Holy Spirit or 2) Paul decided within his own spirit, which means he made up his mind.

Achaia

Achaia was the Roman province in which Corinth was located. It was the largest city in southern Greece and the capital of the province. See how you translated this in Acts 18:12.

I must also see Rome

"I must also travel to Rome"

Acts 19:22

Erastus

This is the name of a man.

But he himself stayed in Asia for a while

It is made explicit in the next few verses that Paul remains in Ephesus.

he himself

This is repeated for emphasis.

Acts 19:23

Connecting Statement:

Luke tells about a riot that broke out while Paul was in Ephesus.

there was no small disturbance in Ephesus concerning the Way

This is a summary opening statement.

there was no small disturbance

"the people became very upset" See how you translated this in Acts 12:18

the Way

This was a term used to refer to Christianity. See how you translated this title in Acts 9:1.

Acts 19:24

General Information:

The writer introduces Demetrius to the story and gives background information about him. Ephesus had a large temple dedicated to the goddess Artemis, sometimes translated as "Diana." She was a false goddess of fertility.

A certain silversmith named Demetrius

The use of the words "a certain" introduces a new person in the story.

silversmith

a craftsman who works with silver metal to make statues and jewelry

named Demetrius

This is the name of a man. Demetrius was a silversmith in Ephesus who was against Paul and the local church.

brought in much business for the craftsmen

"enabled those who made the idols to make much money"

shrines of Artemis

These were probably carved or molten images of the temple of Artemis or of the part of the temple in which the statue of Artemis stood.

Acts 19:25

the workmen of that occupation

An occupation is a profession or job. Alternate translation: "others who did that kind of work"

Acts 19:26

Connecting Statement:

Demetrius continues to speak to the craftsmen.

You see and hear that

"You have come to know and understand that"

persuaded and turned away many people

Paul's stopping people from worshiping idols is spoken of as though Paul were turning the people in a different direction. Alternate translation: "persuaded many people and caused them to stop worshiping the local gods"

He is saying that gods made by hands are not gods

Here the word "hands" can refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "He is saying that the idols that people make are not real gods"

Acts 19:27

that our trade will be discredited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that what Paul is saying will discredit our trade" or "that people will think that our trade is false"

our trade

This refers to their business of making and selling idols.

the temple of the great goddess Artemis might be regarded as worthless

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will think that the temple of the great goddess Artemis is worthless" or "people will think there is no benefit in going to the temple to worship the great goddess Artemis"

her greatness would be brought to nothing

"Her greatness" is a metonym for her reputation of being great. Being "brought to nothing" is a metaphor for becoming nothing or no longer existing. Alternate translation: "People would no longer recognize how great she is" or "She will lose her reputation of being great"

whom all Asia and the world worship

This was an exaggeration to show how popular the goddess Artemis was. Here the words "Asia" and "the world" refer to the people in the province of Asia and the known world. Alternate translation: "whom many people in Asia and in other parts of the world worship"

Acts 19:28

General Information:

Here "they" refers to the craftsmen who made the idols ([Acts 19:24-25](#)).

they were filled with anger

This speaks of the craftsmen as though they were containers. Here "anger" is spoken of as if it were the contents that fill a container. Alternate translation: "they became very angry"

cried out

"shouted aloud" or "shouted loudly"

Acts 19:29

The whole city was filled with confusion

Here "city" refers to the people. The city is spoken of as if it were a container. And, "confusion" is spoken of as if it were the contents that filled the container. Alternate translation: "Then people all over the city became upset and started shouting"

the people rushed with one mind

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

into the theater

The Ephesus theater was used for public meetings and for entertainment such as plays and music. It was an outdoor semi-circular area with bench seats that could hold thousands of people.

Paul's travel companions

The men who had been with Paul.

Gaius and Aristarchus

These are names of men. Gaius and Aristarchus came from Macedonia but were working with Paul in Ephesus at this time.

Acts 19:30

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 19:31

officials of the province of Asia

Ephesus was in the Roman Empire's province of Asia.

enter the theater

The Ephesus theater was used for public meetings and for entertainment such as plays and music. It was an outdoor semi-circular area with bench seats that could hold thousands of people. See how you translated "theater" in Acts 19:29.

Acts 19:32

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 19:33

Alexander

This is the name of a man.

motioned with his hand	come directly from Zeus, the ruler of the Greek gods (idols).
You can make explicit that Alexander was showing the crowd that he wanted them to be quiet. Alternate translation: "gestured to the crowd to be quiet"	Acts 19:36
to give a defense	General Information:
It is not clear whom or what Alexander wanted to defend. If your language requires this information, it might be best to use a general phrase like "to explain what was going on."	The word "you" is plural.
Acts 19:34	Seeing then that these things are undeniable
with one voice	"Since you know these things"
The shouting together of the people at the same time is spoken of as though they were speaking with one voice. Alternate translation: "in unison" or "together"	do nothing rash
Acts 19:35	"do not do anything before you have had time to think about it"
Connecting Statement:	rash
The clerk of Ephesus speaks to quiet the crowd.	without careful thought
the town clerk	Acts 19:37
This refers to the town "writer" or "secretary."	General Information:
what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper ... heaven?	The word "you" is plural.
The clerk asked this question to assure the crowd they were right and to comfort them. Alternate translation: "every man knows that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper ... heaven."	these men
who does not know	The words "these men" refer to Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions (Acts 19:29).
The town clerk uses "not" to emphasize that all of the people knew this.	Acts 19:38
temple keeper	Therefore
The Ephesian people maintained and guarded the temple of Artemis.	"Because what I have just said is true." The town clerk had said in Acts 19:37 that Gaius and Aristarchus were not robbers or blasphemers.
the image which fell down from heaven	have an accusation against anyone
Within the temple of Artemis was an image of the goddess. It had been fashioned from a meteorite which fell from the sky. People thought that this rock had	The word "accusation" can be stated as the verb "accuse." Alternate translation: "want to accuse someone"
	proconsuls
	the Roman governor's representatives who made legal decisions in court
	Let them accuse one another
	This does not mean Demetrius and those with him will accuse each other. It means this is a place where people

in general can speak their accusation. Alternate translation: "There people can accuse one another"

the regular assembly

Acts 19:39

This refers to a regular public gathering of citizens over which the county clerk presided.

Connecting Statement:

Acts 19:40

The town clerk finishes speaking to the crowd.

For we are in danger of being accused of rioting today

But if you are seeking anything more

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in danger of the Roman authorities accusing us of starting this riot today"

"But if you want to ask about anything more" or "But if you have something to discuss about other matters"

it should be resolved in the regular assembly

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let us settle it in the regular assembly"

Acts 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter Luke describes Paul's last visits to believers in the provinces of Macedonia and Asia before he went to Jerusalem.

Special concepts in this chapter

Race

Paul spoke of living for Jesus as if he were running in a race. By this he meant that he needed to keep working hard even when things were difficult and he wanted to quit. (See: and discipline)

"Compelled by the Spirit"

Paul thought that the Holy Spirit wanted him to go to Jerusalem even if Paul did not want to go there. The same Holy Spirit told other people that when Paul arrived in Jerusalem, people would try to harm him.

Links:

- [Acts 20:1](#)

<< | >>

Acts 20

20:1-6

How did Paul encourage the disciples?

[20:1]

Paul encouraged the disciples by telling them to continue trusting in God and to live in a way that honors God. Paul wrote these things in his letters when he encouraged Christians.

See: Disciple

What was the plot the Jews formed against Paul?

[20:3]

The plot the Jews formed against Paul was a plan to do something evil to Paul or even kill him. Because of this, Paul changed his plans and went by land back to Macedonia rather than sail on a ship toward Syria.

See Map: Macedonia; Greece; Syria

Why did Luke write “us” in verse five?

[20:5]

Some scholars think Luke wrote “us” in verse five because Luke began to travel with Paul. Fewer scholars think “us” also included other Christians who traveled with Paul and Luke.

Why did the Christian men meet Paul and Luke at Troas?

[20:5]

Christian men met Paul and Luke at Troas because they sailed on a ship and arrived there before Paul did because he traveled on land. Scholars think these men had money to give to the poor Christians in Jerusalem (see: 1 Corinthians 16:1-4).

See Map: Berea; Thessalonica; Derbe; Asia; Troas

What were the days of unleavened bread?

[20:6]

The days of unleavened bread was the festival of Passover.

See: Passover; Festival of Unleavened Bread

20:7-12

How did they break bread?

[20:7]

Some scholars think they broke bread by eating a meal (see: 2:46). Other scholars think they ate a meal and had the Lord’s supper (see: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

See: Lord's Supper

Why did Luke write there were many lamps?

[20:8]

Some scholars think Luke wrote there were many lamps because the odor, heat, or smoke of the lamps took away the air to breath in the upper room. This made Eutychus sleep even though he sat near a window. Other scholars think the lamps gave much light so that Paul was able to continue speaking to the Christians all night.

How did Eutychus die?

[20:9]

Some scholars think Eutychus died from the fall. They say Paul prayed when he stretched himself and embraced Eutychus. Eutychus then became alive again. Luke was a doctor so he knew Eutychus was dead. Fewer scholars think they do not know if Eutychus really died. They say Eutychus did not wake up until later.

See: Pray (Prayer); Resurrect (Resurrection)

20:13-16

Why did Paul travel by land from Troas to Assos?

[20:13]

Luke did not write why Paul traveled by land from Troas to Assos. Scholars think Paul wanted time alone to talk to God. The Holy Spirit told Paul many times he will go to prison (see: 20:22-23). Paul was alone and God strengthened Paul to accept God's will and serve Jesus until Paul died (see: 20:24).

See: Acts 9:15-16

See: Holy Spirit; Will of God

See Map: Troas; Assos

Why did Paul hurry to go to Jerusalem?

[20:16]

Paul hurried to go to Jerusalem to be there for the Day of Pentecost. Many Jewish Christians were in Jerusalem for Pentecost. Paul wanted the Gentile Christians from Macedonia and Greece to give the money to the poor Jewish Christians. He knew this would help join the Gentile and Jewish Christians together.

See: Pentecost

See Map: Mitylene; Chios; Samos; Miletus; Ephesus; Asia; Jerusalem; Macedonia; Greece

20:17-35

What were the “elders” in the church?

[20:17]

The “elders”(πρεσβύτερος/g4245) were the leaders in the church. They were also called “overseers”(ἐπίσκοπος/g1985) or “shepherds”(ποιμαίνω/g4165) (see: Acts 20:28).

See: Elder; Overseer; Shepherd

How did Paul do the things he wanted the church leaders to do?

[20:18, 20:19, 20:24]

There were many ways Paul did the things he wanted the church leaders to do (see: 1 Corinthians 4:6; 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:6).

1. He was with them all the time.
2. He served Jesus even when he was persecuted.
3. He did not think he was greater than other people (see: 2 Corinthians 12:7).
4. He was innocent of all blood. That is, Paul preached the gospel to all people and warned them to repent and believe in Jesus (see: Ezekiel 3:18,20; 33:6,8).
5. He warned them about people who did not teach the truth.
6. He did not want people to give him things.
7. He worked and did not rely on people to give him money.

See: Persecute (Persecution) ; Preach (Preacher); Gospel; Repent (Repentance)

How did the Holy Spirit testify to Paul?

[20:23]

The Holy Spirit testified to Paul through prophecy. That is Paul knew what the Holy Spirit wanted him to know through prophecies. Luke wrote about the prophecy in Caesarea because it was an example of prophecies in other cities (see: 21:10-11). The Holy Spirit was able to testify to Paul through visions (see: 16:9-10) or talking to Paul when he worshipped God or fasted (see: 13:2). Paul knew the Holy Spirit did not want to stop Paul from going to Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit told Paul about God's plan for Paul to tell people about the gospel and God's grace (see: 20:24).

See: Testify (Testimony); Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Holy Spirit; Vision); Worship; Fasting; Grace

See Map: Caesarea ; Jerusalem

What was "the grace of God"?

[20:24]

See: Grace

What was "the whole will of God"?

[20:27]

The "whole will of God" was the whole plan of God to save people. That is, it was God's plan in the whole Bible. Jesus fulfilled all of God's plan.

See: Will of God; Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Fulfill (Fulfillment)

What were "vicious wolves"?

[20:29]

When Paul spoke about "vicious wolves," this was a metaphor. He was speaking about people from outside the church who came into the church and taught wrong things about God and Jesus. Paul called them "vicious" because they were wild and cruel. Jesus called them false prophets (see: Matthew 7:15).

See: Church; False Prophet

What was the "flock"?

[20:29]

The "flock" was a metaphor for the church. Wolves attacked the "flock" and killed sheep. False teachers will teach wrong things about God and Jesus until Jesus returns.

See: Shepherd; Metaphor; Church; False Teacher; Jesus' Return to Earth

What was the inheritance?

[20:32]

See: Inherit (Inheritance, Heir)

What was sanctification?

[20:32]

See: Sanctify (Sanctification)

Who were the “weak”?

[20:35]

The “weak”(ἄσθενέω/g0770) were people who were poor people or people who were sick or suffering.

Why did Paul repeat what Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than receive”?

[20:35]

Paul repeated what Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive,” because Paul did not want anyone to think he preached to make money. Therefore, he worked to meet his own needs. Paul was talking about how he helped a new church. That is, Paul was at the church in Ephesus when it just started. However, after a church grew Paul wanted them to support the leaders in this church (see: Galatians 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:17-18). Also, Paul was an example to them of how to help the weak.

See: Bless (Blessing); Preach (Preacher); Church

See Map: Ephesus

20:36-38

Why did Paul kneel down to pray?

[20:36]

Paul knelt down to pray because this was a time of strong feelings for Paul (see: 21:5; 9:40). Christians prayed standing or sitting.

See: Pray (Prayer)

Acts 20:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul leaves Ephesus and continues his travels.

After the uproar

"After the riot" or "Following the riot"

he said farewell

"he said goodbye"

Acts 20:2

had spoken many words of encouragement to them

"had greatly encouraged the believers" or "had said many things to encourage the believers"

Acts 20:3

After he had spent three months there

"After he had stayed there three months." This speaks about time as if it were something a person could spend.

a plot was formed against him by the Jews

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Jews formed a plot against him" or "the Jews formed a secret plan to harm him"

by the Jews

This means only some of the Jews. Alternate translation: "by some of the Jews"

as he was about to sail for Syria

"as he was ready to sail for Syria"

Acts 20:4

Accompanying him

"Traveling with him." Here the word "him" refers to Paul (Acts 20:1).

Sopater ... Pyrrhus ... Secundus ... Tychicus ... Trophimus

These are names of men.

Berea ... Derbe

These are names of places.

Aristarchus ... Gaius

These are names of men. See how you translated these names in Acts 19:29.

Acts 20:5

these men had gone before us

"these men had traveled ahead of us"

before us ... for us

Here "us" refers to the writer and Paul and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

Troas

This is the name of a place.

Acts 20:6

General Information:

All instances of "we" refer to the writer and Paul and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

the days of unleavened bread

This refers to the Jewish religious feast time during the Passover season. See how you translated this in Acts 12:3.

Acts 20:7

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to the writer, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader. (See: and [Acts 20:4-6](#))

Connecting Statement:

Luke tells about Paul's preaching in Troas and about what happened to Eutychus.

the next day

"when the sun came up again." If the writer was using the Jewish system of determining days, Paul was planning to travel after sunrise on "the first day of the week." If the writer was using the Greek system, Paul was planning to travel on the second day of the week.

to break bread

Bread was part of their meals. Possible meanings are 1) this refers simply to eating a meal together. Alternate translation: "to eat a meal" or 2) this refers to the meal they would eat together in order to remember Christ's death and resurrection. Alternate translation: "to eat the Lord's Supper"

he prolonged his message

"he continued to speak"

Acts 20:8

upper room

This may have been on the third floor of the house.

Acts 20:9

In the window

This was an opening in the wall with a ledge that was wide enough on which a person could sit.

Eutychus

This is the name of a man.

who fell into a deep sleep

This speaks about sleep as if it were a deep hole into which a person could fall. Alternate translation: "who slept soundly" or "who became more and more tired until finally he was sleeping soundly"

third story and was picked up dead

When they went down to check his condition, they saw he was dead. This can be stated in active form.

Alternate translation: "third story; and when they went to pick him up, they found that he was dead"

third story

This means two floors above the ground floor. If your culture does not count the ground floor, you may state this as the "second story."

Acts 20:10

on him ... embraced him ... he is alive

Here "him" and "he" refers to the young man, Eutychus.

he said

Here "he" refers to Paul.

Acts 20:11

General Information:

Here the word "he" refers to Paul.

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about Paul's preaching at Troas and about Eutychus.

broke bread

Bread was a common food during meals. Here "broke bread" probably means that they shared a meal with more kinds of food than just bread.

he left

"he went away"

Acts 20:12

the boy

This refers to Eutychus (Acts 20:9). Possible meanings are 1) he was a young man over 14 years old or 2) he was a boy between 9 and 14 years old or 3) the word "boy" implies that he was a servant or a slave.

Acts 20:13

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to the writer and those traveling with him, but not to the reader.

Connecting Statement:

The writer Luke, Paul, and his other companions continue their travels; however, Paul goes separately for part of the trip.

We ourselves went

The word "ourselves" adds emphasis and separates Luke and his traveling companions from Paul, who did not travel by boat.

sailed away to Assos

Assos is a town located directly below present day Behram in Turkey on the coast of the Aegean sea.

he himself desired

Here "he himself" refers to Paul. "Himself" is used to emphasize that this is what Paul wanted.

to go by land

"to travel on land"

Acts 20:14

he met ... took him

Here "he" and "him" refer to Paul.

met us ... we took

Here the words "we" and "us" refer to the writer and those traveling with him, but not to the reader.

went to Mitylene

Mitylene is a town located in present day Mitilini in Turkey on the coast of the Aegean sea.

Acts 20:15

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Paul, the writer, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

opposite the island

"near the island" or "across from the island"

the island of Chios

Chios is an island off the coast of modern day Turkey in the Aegean Sea.

we touched at the island of Samos

"we arrived at the island of Samos"

island of Samos

Samos is an island south of Chios in the Aegean Sea off the coast of modern day Turkey.

the city of Miletus

Miletus was a port city in western Asia Minor near the mouth of the Meander River.

Acts 20:16

For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus

Paul sailed south past the port city of Ephesus, further south in order to land at Miletus.

so that he would not spend any time

This speaks about "time" as if it were a commodity that a person could spend or use up. Alternate translation: "so that he would not have to remain for a time" or "so that he would not have a delay"

Acts 20:17

General Information:

Here the word "he" refers to Paul.

Connecting Statement:

Paul calls the elders of the church of Ephesus and begins to speak to them.

Miletus

Miletus was a port city in western Asia Minor near the mouth of the Meander River. See how you translated this in [Acts 20:15]

Acts 20:18

You yourselves

Here "yourselves" is used for emphasis.

I set foot in Asia

Here "foot" stands for the entire person. Alternate translation: "I entered Asia"

how I always spent my time with you

This speaks about time as if it were something that a person could spend. Alternate translation: "how I always conducted myself when I was with you"

Acts 20:19

lowliness of mind

This speaks about something humble as if it were low to the ground. The word "mind" stands for a person's inner attitude. Alternate translation: "humility" or "humbleness"

with tears

Here "tears" stands for feeling sad and crying. Alternate translation: "with crying as I served the Lord"

in trials that happened to me

"Trials" is an abstract noun. The meaning can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "while God was testing me"

of the Jews

This does not mean every Jew. This lets us know who plotted. Alternate translation: "of some of the Jews"

Acts 20:20

You know how I did not keep back from declaring to you

"You know how I was never silent, but I always declared to you"

from house to house

"I also taught when I was in your homes"

Acts 20:21

about repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus

The abstract nouns "repentance" and "faith" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "that they need to repent before God and believe in our Lord Jesus Christ"

our Lord Jesus

The word "our" refers to Paul and the elders to whom he is speaking.

Acts 20:22

General Information:

Here the word "I" refers to Paul.

compelled by the Spirit

They can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the Spirit compels me to go there"

not knowing what will happen to me there

"and I do not know what will happen to me there"

Acts 20:23

chains and afflictions await me

Here "chains" refers to Paul's being arrested and put in prison. Alternate translation: "people will put me in prison and cause me to suffer"

Acts 20:24

if only I may finish the race and complete the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus

This speaks about Paul's "race" and "ministry" as if they are objects that Jesus gives and Paul receives. Here "race" and "ministry" mean basically the same thing. Paul repeats this for emphasis. Alternate translation: "so that I may complete the work that the Lord Jesus has commanded me to do"

finish the race

Paul speaks about completing the work that Jesus has commanded him to do as if he were running a race.

to testify to the gospel of the grace of God

"to tell people the good news about God's grace." This is the ministry that Paul received from Jesus.

Acts 20:25

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to talk to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17).

Now look, I know

"Now, pay careful attention, because I know"

I know that you all

"I know that all of you"

among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom

Here "kingdom" stands for God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "to whom I preached the message about God's reign as king" or "to whom I preached about how God will show himself as king"

will see my face no more

The word "face" here represents Paul's physical body. Alternate translation: "will not see me anymore on this earth"

Acts 20:26

I am innocent of the blood of any man

Here "blood" stands for a person's death, which, in this case, is not physical death but spiritual death when God declares a person guilty of sin. Paul had told them God's truth. Alternate translation: "I am not responsible for anyone whom God judges guilty of sin because they did not trust in Jesus"

any man

Here this means any person whether male or female. Alternate translation: "any person"

Acts 20:27

For I did not hold back from declaring to you

"For I did not keep silent and not tell you." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "For I certainly declared to you"

Acts 20:28

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true," referring to all that Paul has said so far in his speech about his leaving them.

the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers. Be careful to shepherd the church of God

Believers are likened to a "flock" of sheep here. Church leaders are entrusted by God with the care of the community of believers just as a shepherd would care for his flock of sheep and protect them from wolves. Alternate translation: "the group of believers the Holy spirit has entrusted to you. Be sure to take care of the church of God"

the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood

The shedding of the blood of Christ here is likened to a payment to God for our sins. Alternate translation: "the people Christ saved from their sins by shedding his blood on the cross"

his own blood

Here "blood" stands for Christ's death.

Acts 20:29

vicious wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock

This is a picture of people who teach false doctrine and who harm the community of believers as though they were wolves that eat the sheep of the flock. Alternate translation: "many enemies will come among you and try to harm the community of believers"

Acts 20:30

to draw away the disciples after them

A false teacher convincing believers to start believing his false teaching is spoken of as if he were leading sheep away from the flock to follow him. Alternate translation: "in order to convince people who are disciples of Christ to become his disciples instead"

Acts 20:31

be on guard. Remember

"be on guard and remember" or "be on guard as you remember"

be on guard

"be awake and alert" or "watch out." Christian leaders being alert about anyone that may harm the community of believers is spoken of as if they were guards in an army watching out for the enemy army.

Remember that

"Continue to remember that" or "Do not forget that"

for three years I never stopped warning ... night and day

Paul taught them over the space of three years, but not necessarily every day for three years.

I never stopped warning ... you

This does not mean that the only words he spoke were words of warning. Rather, Paul is using hyperbole to remind them that he had told them often that evil men would try to deceive them. Alternate translation: "I warned ... you as often as I could"

with tears

Here "tears" refers to Paul's crying because of the strong emotion of concern he felt while he was warning the people.

Acts 20:32

I commit you to God and to the word of his grace

Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "I ask God to take care of you and to help you to keep believing the message I spoke to you about his grace"

which is able to build you up

A person's faith becoming stronger is spoken of as if the person were a wall and someone were building him higher and stronger. Alternate translation: "which is able to make become stronger and stronger in your faith"

to give you the inheritance

This speaks about the "word of his grace" as if the word itself would give the inheritance to believers. Alternate translation: "God will give you the inheritance"

the inheritance

The blessings that God gives believers are spoken of as if they were money or property that a child inherits from his father.

Acts 20:33

I coveted no man's silver

"I did not desire someone's silver" or "I did not want for myself anyone's silver"

man's silver, gold, or clothing

Clothing was considered a treasure; the more you had, the richer you were.

Acts 20:34

You yourselves

The word "yourselves" is used here to add emphasis.

these hands served my own needs

The word "hands" here represents the entire person. Alternate translation: "I worked to earn money and pay for my own expenses"

Acts 20:35

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes speaking to the elders of the church of Ephesus; he began to speak them in Acts 20:18.

you should help the weak by laboring

"you should work so as to have money to help people who cannot earn it for themselves"

the weak

You can state this nominal adjective as an adjective. Alternate translation: "weak persons" or "those who are weak"

weak

"sick"

the words of the Lord Jesus

Here "words" refers to what Jesus has said.

It is more blessed to give than to receive

This means a person receives the favor of God and experiences more joy when he gives to other people rather than always receiving from other people.

Acts 20:36

Connecting Statement:

Paul ends his time with the elders of the church of Ephesus by praying with them.

he knelt down and prayed

It was a common custom to kneel down while praying. It was a sign of humility before God.

Acts 20:37

embraced Paul

"hugged him closely" or "put their arms around him"

kissed him

Kissing someone on the cheek is an expression of brotherly or friendly love in the Middle East.

Acts 20:38

they would never see his face again

The word "face" here represents Paul's physical body. Alternate translation: "they would not see him anymore on this earth"

Acts 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Acts 21:1-19 describes Paul's journey to Jerusalem. After he arrived in Jerusalem, the believers there told him that the Jews wanted to harm him and what he should do so they would not harm him (verses 20-26). Even though Paul did what the believers told him to do, the Jews tried to kill him. The Romans rescued him and gave him a chance to speak to the Jews.

The last verse of the chapter ends with an incomplete sentence. Most translations leave the sentence incomplete, as the ULB does.

Special concepts in this chapter

"They are all determined to keep the law"

The Jews in Jerusalem were following the law of Moses. Even those who were following Jesus still kept the law. Both groups thought that Paul had been telling Jews in Greece not to keep the law. But it was only the Gentiles to whom Paul was saying that.

Nazarite vow

The vow that Paul and his three friends made was probably a Nazarite vow, because they shaved their heads ([Acts 21:23](#)).

Gentiles in the temple

The Jews accused Paul of bringing a Gentile man into a part of the temple into which God only allowed Jews to go. They thought that God wanted them to punish Paul by killing him. (See: holy)

Roman citizenship

The Romans thought that they needed to treat only Roman citizens justly. They could do as they desired with people who were not Roman citizens, but they had to obey the law with other Romans. Some people were born Roman citizens, and others gave money to the Roman government so they could become Roman citizens.

Links:

- [Acts 21:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 21

21:1-6

Why did Paul and his friends find the disciples at Tyre?

[21:3]

Paul and his friends found the disciples at Tyre because they did not know where the disciples were in Tyre. When Paul and his friends found the disciples they were in Tyre for seven days while merchants unloaded cargo from the ship.

See: Disciple

See Map: Cos; Rhodes; Patara; Phoenicia; Cyprus; Syria; Tyre

Why did the disciples at Tyre urge Paul not to go to Jerusalem?

[21:4]

The disciples at Tyre did not want Paul not to go to Jerusalem because they did not want Paul to suffer and go to prison in Jerusalem. However, the Holy Spirit was sending Paul to Jerusalem to suffer (see: Acts 19:21; 20:22-23). The disciples at Tyre did not tell Paul what the Holy Spirit told them to say when they told Paul not to go. Instead, they told Paul to not go because the Holy Spirit said Paul will suffer in Jerusalem. Luke wrote more about this when the same thing happened in Caesarea (see: Acts 21:12).

See: Disciple; Holy Spirit

See Map: Tyre; Jerusalem; Caesarea

21:7-14

How was Philip an “evangelist”?

[21:8]

Scholars have several ideas of how Philip was an “evangelist”(εὐαγγελιστής/2099). He was not the same Philip who was an apostle (see: Luke 6:13-14).

1. He helped people to believe in Jesus in Samaria and Judea.
2. God gave him the gift of “evangelist.”
3. He started the church at Caesarea.

See: Apostle; Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Gospel

See Map: Samaria; Judea; Ptolemais; Caesarea

Why did Paul and his friends stay for several days in Philip’s house?

[21:8]

Scholars say there were two reasons why Paul and his friends stayed in Philip’s house for several days.

1. Philip’s daughters prophesied to Paul and encouraged him.
2. Philip told Luke about the Christians in Jerusalem (see: 6:5).

See: Prophecy (Prophecy)

Why did Luke write Philip’s daughters were virgins?

[21:9] Luke wrote Philip’s daughters were virgins because they were under sixteen years of age and not married. Some ancient pagan leaders wanted people who served in their temples to be virgins. However, Christians did not have to be virgins to prophesy or serve (see: 1 Corinthians 9:5).

See: Pagan; Temple; Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Serve

How did God did fulfill Agabus' prophecy?

[21:10, 21:11]

Some scholars think God did not fulfill all of Agabus' prophecy because the Romans in Jerusalem tied Paul's feet and hands. Other scholars think God fulfilled all of Agabus' prophecy because the Jews in Jerusalem accused Paul of doing evil things and made the Romans tie his feet and hands.

See: Acts 23:27

See: Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Fulfill (Fulfillment)

Why did the Holy Spirit give prophecies to say Paul will suffer in Jerusalem?

[21:11]

The Holy Spirit gave prophecies to say Paul will suffer in Jerusalem. The Jewish enemies of Paul will not be able to say God judged Paul because he preached a wrong gospel. These Jews were wrong to think that Gentiles need to become Jews before they became Christians (see: Acts 15:1-29). The prophecies stopped people from thinking wrong things about how Paul served God. The church continued to grow after Paul went to Jerusalem.

See: Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Preach (Preacher); Gospel; Gentile; Church

See Map: Jerusalem

Why did the Christians say, "May the will of the Lord be done"?

[21:14]

The Christian said, "May the will of the Lord be done," because they finally accepted God's plan for Paul to suffer in Jerusalem. They agreed with Paul and prayed for the things to happen as God said (see: Luke 2:42).

See: Lord; Will of God; Pray (Prayer)

21:15-26

Why did Luke write they went up to Jerusalem?

[21:15]

Luke wrote they went up to Jerusalem because Jerusalem was on a mountain. Even when people traveled from the north to Jerusalem the Bible wrote they went up to Jerusalem.

See Map: Jerusalem; Caesarea; Cyprus

Who was this James?

[21:18]

This James was the brother of Jesus. He was the leader of the church in Jerusalem.

See: Church; Family of Jesus

Why did not any of the other apostles meet Paul?

[21:18]

None of the other apostles met Paul because none of them were in Jerusalem. All of the other apostles left Jerusalem to go and tell people about Jesus.

See: Apostle

When did the things God did for the Gentiles happen?

[21:19]

The things God did for the Gentiles happened after Paul visited Jerusalem (see: Acts 15). This was during Paul's second and third missionary journeys.

See: Paul's Missionary Journeys; Gentile

What vow did the four men make?

[21:23]

The four men vowed a Nazirite Vow (see: Numbers 6:14-20). At the end of the time of the vow, the person who made the vow shaved their heads and offered sacrifices. James and the leaders did not ask Paul to take the Nazirite Vow himself. However, they thought if Paul paid for the sacrifices of the four men, then the Jews will know it was wrong to say Paul did not keep the law of Moses.

See: Vow; Offer (Offering); Law of Moses

What did Luke write in verse 25?

[21:25]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that the Gentiles do not do these things. Older and more copies of the Greek New Testament do not say this. Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words.

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

Why did James repeat the letter from Acts 15?

[21:25]

James repeated the letter from Acts 15 because he wanted everyone to know the church in Jerusalem did not change what they thought about Gentile Christians. That is, even though the Jerusalem church asked Paul to pay for sacrifices in the Law of Moses, they still did not ask Gentile Christians to become Jews.

See: Church; Gentile; Offer (Offering); Sacrifice; Law of Moses

See Map: Jerusalem

21:27-36

How did the Jews from Asia lay hands on Paul?

[21:27]

The Jews from Asia laid hands on Paul. That is, they tried to hurt or kill Paul.

See Map: Asia

How did the Jews from Asia say wrong things about Paul?

[21:28]

The Jews from Asia lied about Paul by saying Paul spoke against the Jews, the Law of Moses, and the temple. They also lied and said that Paul brought a Gentile into a part of the temple where Gentiles were not supposed to go.

See: Law of Moses; Temple

See Map: Asia

Why did they close the doors of the temple?

[21:30]

They closed the doors of the temple so the crowd in an uproar will not defile the temple. If the crowd killed Paul in the temple it will defile the temple.

See: Temple

Who was “the chief captain of the cohort”?

[21:31]

“The chief captain of the cohort” was a Roman officer. He commanded between six hundred and one thousand Roman soldiers.

Where was the fortress?

[21:34]

The fortress was a tower northwest of the temple. It was called the Antonia tower. A person was able to see the temple from the tower. It was used to protect the temple.

See: Temple

Why did the crowd shout, “Away with him!”?

[21:36]

Some scholars think the crowd shouted, “Away with him!” because they wanted to kill Paul. Fewer scholars think they wanted to take Paul away and judge him.

See: 22:22; Luke 23:18

See: Judge (Judgment)

21:37-40

Why did the captain ask Paul if he was the Egyptian who started a rebellion?

[21:38]

The captain asked Paul if he was the Egyptian who started a rebellion because Paul spoke Greek. Many people in Egypt spoke Greek. Paul defended himself by saying he was a Jew from the city of Tarsus. That gave him Roman citizenship.

See: Citizen

See Map: Egypt; Tarsus

Who were the “Assassins”?

[21:38]

The “Assassins” were a group of certain people who fought against the Romans. They carried small knives and they killed people in crowds at festivals.

Why was Tarsus an important city?

[21:39]

Tarsus was an important city because many people lived there and they ruled themselves. Many people in Tarsus were rich.

How did Paul speak in the Hebrew language?

[21:40]

Some scholars think Paul spoke Aramaic. Aramaic was the language the Jews spoke when they lived in Babylon. At this time, the people in Israel spoke Aramiac. Only certain Jewish teachers read or spoke Hebrew. Fewer scholars think the Jews in Jerusalem read the Hebrew Old Testament.

See: Old Testament (Law and Prophets); Babylon

See Map: Babylon

Acts 21:1	city of Patara
General Information:	Patara is a city on the southwest coast of modern day Turkey south of the Aegean Sea in the Mediterranean Sea.
Here the word "we" refers to Luke, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.	
Connecting Statement:	Acts 21:2
The writer Luke, Paul, and his companions continue their travels.	When we found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia
we took a straight course to the city of Cos	Here "a ship crossing over" stands for the crew that would sail the ship. Alternate translation: "When we found a ship with a crew sailing over to Phoenicia"
"we went straight to the city of Cos" or "we went directly to the city of Cos"	a ship crossing over
city of Cos	Here "crossing" does not mean it was presently crossing but that it would be crossing to Phoenicia soon. Alternate translation: "a ship that would be going across the water" or "a ship that would be going"
Cos is a Greek island off the coast of modern day Turkey in the South Aegean Sea region.	Acts 21:3
city of Rhodes	General Information:
Rhodes is a Greek island off the coast of modern day Turkey in the South Aegean Sea region south of Cos and northeast of Crete.	Here the word "we" refers to Luke, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

Cyprus, leaving it on the left side of the boat

The left is the "port" side of a boat. Here this means they sailed south of Cyprus. Alternate translation: "Cyprus, sailing south of it"

where the ship was to unload its cargo

Here "ship" stands for the crew that was sailing the ship. Alternate translation: "the crew would unload the cargo from the ship"

Acts 21:4

Through the Spirit they kept urging Paul not to go to Jerusalem

"The Spirit caused them to urge Paul again and again not to go to Jerusalem." The Spirit may have revealed to them that Paul would suffer in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Because the Spirit had told them that Paul would suffer in Jerusalem, they urged him again and again not to go there"

Acts 21:5

General Information:

Here the word "They" refers to the believers from Tyre.

When our days there were over

"When the seven days were over" or "When it was time to leave"

knelt down on the beach, prayed

It was a common custom to kneel down while praying. This was a sign of humility before God.

Acts 21:6

said farewell to each other

"said goodbye to one another"

Acts 21:7

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Luke, Paul and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

we arrived at Ptolemais

Ptolemais was a city south of Tyre, Lebanon. Ptolemais is modern day Acre, Israel.

the brothers

"fellow believers"

Acts 21:8

Connecting Statement:

This begins Paul's time in Caesarea.

one of the seven

The "seven" refers to the men chosen to distribute food and aid to the widows in Acts 6:5.

evangelist

a person who tells people good news

Acts 21:9

this man

"Philip" from verse 8.

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke tells background information about Philip and his daughters.

four virgin daughters who prophesied

"four virgin daughters who regularly received and passed along messages from God"

Acts 21:10

General Information:

Here the words "we" and "us" refers to Luke, Paul, and those with them, but not to the reader.

a certain prophet named Agabus

This introduces a new person in the story.

named Agabus

Agabus was a man from Judea.

Acts 21:11

Connecting Statement:

This tells about a prophecy made about Paul in Caesarea by the prophet Agabus.

took Paul's belt

"removed Paul's belt from Paul's waist"

Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up ... of the Gentiles.'

This is a quotation within a quotation. The inner quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit says that this will be how the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up ... of the Gentiles."

the Jews

This does not mean all the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders" or "some of the Jews"

hand him over

"deliver him"

into the hands of the Gentiles

The word "hands" here represents control. Alternate translation: "into the legal custody of the Gentiles" or "to the Gentiles"

the Gentiles

This stands for the authorities among the Gentiles. Alternate translation: "the Gentile authorities"

Acts 21:12

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Luke and the other believers but does not include the reader.

Acts 21:13

What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart?

Paul asks this question to show the believers they should stop trying to persuade him. Alternate translation: "Stop what you are doing. Your weeping is breaking my heart."

breaking my heart

This is a metaphor for making someone sad or discouraging them. Here "heart" stands for a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "discouraging me" or "making me very sad"

not only to be tied up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "not only for them to tie me up"

for the name of the Lord Jesus

Here "name" refers to the person of Jesus. Alternate translation: "for the sake of the Lord Jesus" or "because I believe in the Lord Jesus"

Acts 21:14

Paul would not be persuaded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Paul would not allow us to persuade him" or "we were unable to persuade Paul"

persuaded

You may need to make explicit what they could not persuade Paul not to do. Alternate translation: "persuaded not to go up to Jerusalem"

May the will of the Lord be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May everything happen as the Lord has planned it"

Acts 21:15

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Luke, Paul, and those traveling with them, and not to the reader.

Connecting Statement:

This ends Paul's time in Caesarea.

Acts 21:16

They brought with them a man

"Among them was a man"

Mnason, a man from Cyprus

Mnason was a man from the island of Cyprus.

an early disciple

This means Mnason was one of the first to believe in Jesus.

Acts 21:17

General Information:

Here the words "we" and "us" refer to Luke, Paul, and those traveling with them, and not to the reader.

Connecting Statement:

Paul and his companions arrive in Jerusalem.

the brothers welcomed us

Here "brothers" refers to the believers in Jerusalem, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "the fellow believers welcomed us"

Acts 21:18

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 21:19

General Information:

Here the words "he" and "his" refer to Paul. The word "them" refers to the elders.

he reported one by one

"he gave a detailed account of all"

Acts 21:20

Connecting Statement:

The elders in Jerusalem begin their response to Paul.

they heard ... they glorified ... they said to him

Here the word "they" refers to James and the elders. The word "him" refers to Paul.

brother

Here "brother" means "fellow believer."

They are

The word "they" refers to Jewish believers who wanted all believing Jews to keep the Jewish laws and customs.

the law

this phrase here refers to the law of Moses

Acts 21:21

They have been told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People have told the Jewish believers"

to abandon Moses

Here "Moses" stands for the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "to stop obeying the laws that Moses gave us"

not to walk according to the traditional ways

A person who obeys the traditions and customs is spoken of as if he were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "not to obey the old customs" or "not to practice the old customs"

the traditional ways

"the usual Jewish customs"

Acts 21:22

we do

Here the word "we" refers to James and the elders

They will

The word "They" refers to the Jewish believers in Jerusalem who wanted to teach Jewish believers that they could still follow the laws of Moses ([Acts 21:20-21](#)).

you have come

The word "you" refers to Paul.

Acts 21:23

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to James and the elders

four men who made a vow

"four men who made a promise to God." This was the kind of vow where a person would not drink alcohol or cut his hair until the end of a set period of time.

Acts 21:24

Connecting Statement:

James and the elders continue speaking to Paul.

Take these men and purify yourself with them

They had to make themselves ritually pure so they could worship in the temple.

pay their expenses for them

"pay for what they will need." The expenses would go toward buying a male and female lamb, a ram, and grain and drink offerings.

they may shave their heads

This was a sign that the person had completed what they promised God they would do.

the things they have been told about you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that people are saying about you"

Acts 21:25

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to James and the elders.

Connecting Statement:

James and the elders in Jerusalem finish their request to Paul (Acts 21:18).

they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled

All of these are rules about what they can eat. They are forbidden to eat meat of animals sacrificed to an idol, meat with blood still in it, and meat from a strangled

animal because it would still have blood in the meat. See how you translated similar phrases in [Acts 15:20]

they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they stay away from the meat of an animal that someone sacrificed to an idol"

from what is strangled

This can be stated in active form. You can also state explicitly the assumed information about strangled animals. Alternate translation: "from animals that a person has strangled" or "from animals that a person killed for food but did not drain its blood"

Acts 21:26

took the men

These are the 4 men who made a vow.

he purified himself along with them

Before entering the temple area the Jews were required to be ceremonially or ritually clean. This cleansing had to do with Jews having contact with Gentiles.

went into the temple

They did not go into the temple itself where only the high priest was allowed to enter. They entered the temple courtyard. Alternate translation: "went into the temple courtyard"

the days of purification

This is a separate purification process from the purification process which they were required to fulfill in order to enter the temple area.

the offering would be presented

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they presented the animals for an offering"

Acts 21:27

Connecting Statement:

This begins the story of Paul's arrest.

the seven days

These are the seven days for purification.

in the temple

Paul was not in the temple itself. He was in the temple courtyard. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard"

stirred up the whole crowd

People who incited a crowd to become very angry at Paul are spoken of as if they stirred up the crowd's emotions. Alternate translation: "caused a large number of people to be very angry at Paul"

laid hands on him

Here "laid hands on" means to "seized" or to "grabbed." See how you translated "laid hands on" in [Acts 5:18]

Acts 21:28

the people, the law, and this place

"the people of Israel, the law of Moses, and the temple"

Besides, he has also brought Greeks into the temple

Only Jewish males were allowed in certain areas of the courtyard of the Jerusalem temple.

Acts 21:29

General Information:

Verse 29 gives background information about the Jews from Asia.

For they had previously ... into the temple

This is background information. Luke is explaining why the Jews from Asia thought Paul brought a Greek into the temple.

Trophimus

This was a Greek man that they accused Paul of having brought into the inner temple area that was only for Jews. See how you translated his name in Acts 20:4.

Acts 21:30

All the city was excited

The word "All" here is an exaggeration for emphasis. The word "city" represents the people in Jerusalem.

Alternate translation: "Many people in the city became angry at Paul"

laid hold of Paul

"seized Paul" or "grabbed Paul"

the doors were immediately shut

They shut the doors so that there would not be rioting in the temple area. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some of the Jews immediately shut the temple doors" or "the temple guards immediately shut the doors"

Acts 21:31

news came up to the chief captain of the company of soldiers

Here "news" refers to the messenger who went to speak the news. Alternate translation: "someone gave news to the chief captain of the cohort"

news came up to the chief captain

The phrase "came up to" is used because the chief captain was in a fortress connected to the temple that was higher in elevation than the temple courtyard.

the chief captain

This is a Roman military leader of about 1,000 soldiers.

the company of soldiers

A company is a group of about 1,000 soldiers.

all Jerusalem was in an uproar

The word "Jerusalem" here represents the people of Jerusalem. The word "all" is an exaggeration to show a large crowd was upset. Alternate translation: "all the people in Jerusalem were in an uproar" or "the large crowd in Jerusalem was in an uproar" (See: and)

Acts 21:32

General Information:

The first word "he" refers to the chief captain of the guard mentioned in Acts 21:31.

ran down

From the fortress, there are stairs going down into the court.

Acts 21:33

laid hold of Paul

"took hold of Paul" or "arrested Paul"

commanded him to be bound

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "commanded his soldiers to bind him"

with two chains

This means they bound Paul to two Roman soldiers, one on each side of him.

he asked who he was and what he had done.

This can be stated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "he asked, 'Who is this man? What has he done?'"

he asked who he was

The chief captain is speaking to the crowd, not to Paul.

Acts 21:34

and others another

The words "were shouting" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and others were shouting another" or "and others in the crowd were shouting something else"

he ordered that Paul be brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he ordered his soldiers to bring Paul"

into the fortress

This fortress was connected to the outer temple court.

Acts 21:35

When he came to the steps, he was carried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When Paul came to the steps of the fortress, the soldiers carried him"

Acts 21:36

Away with him

The crowd is using somewhat milder and less exact language to ask for Paul's death. Alternate translation: "Put him to death" or "Kill him"

Acts 21:37

As Paul was about to be brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As the soldiers were ready to bring Paul"

the fortress

This fortress was connected to the outer temple court. See how you translated this in Acts 21:34.

The captain said, "Do you know Greek?"

The chief captain uses this questions to express surprise that Paul is not who he thought he was. Alternate translation: "So you know Greek." or "I didn't know you knew Greek."

know Greek

know how to speak and understand the Greek language

Acts 21:38

Are you not then the Egyptian ... wilderness?

The chief captain uses this question and the question "Do you speak Greek?"

Are you not then the Egyptian

Shortly before Paul's visit, an unnamed man from Egypt had launched a revolt against Rome in Jerusalem. Later he escaped into the wilderness and the commander wonders if Paul might be the same man.

started a rebellion

This word "rebellion" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "caused people to rebel against the Roman government"

the four thousand men

"the 4,000 terrorists"

Assassins

This refers to a group of Jewish rebels who killed Romans and anyone who supported the Roman government.

Acts 21:39

Connecting Statement:

Paul is correcting the chief captain's wrong idea about who Paul is.

Tarsus in Cilicia

Cilicia was a Roman province across the Mediterranean Sea from Egypt, and Tarsus was a large, well-known city.

I am a citizen of no unimportant city

Paul uses the double negative in the phrase "no unimportant city" to emphasize that the chief captain should have known that Tarsus was an important city. Alternate translation: "I am a citizen of an important city"

I beg you

Or "I plead with you."

allow me

"please allow me" or please permit me"

Acts 21:40

the captain had given him permission

The word "permission" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the captain permitted Paul to speak" or "the captain allowed Paul to speak"

Paul stood on the steps

The word "steps" here refers to the steps on the stairway to the fortress.

motioned with the hand to the people

It can be stated explicitly why Paul motioned with the hand. Alternate translation: "motioned with his hand for the people to be quiet"

When there was a deep silence

"When the people were completely silent"

Acts 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the second account of Paul's conversion in the book of Acts. Because this is such an important event in the early church, there are three accounts of Paul's conversion. (See: Acts 9 and Acts 26)

Special concepts in this chapter

"In the Hebrew language"

Most Jews at this time spoke Aramaic and Greek. Most of the people who spoke Hebrew were educated Jewish scholars. This is why the people paid attention when Paul started speaking in Hebrew.

"The Way"

No one knows for sure who first started calling believers "followers of the Way." This is probably what the believers called themselves, because the Bible often speaks of a person living his life as if that person were walking on a path or "way." If this is true, the believers were "following the way of the Lord" by living in a way that pleased God.

Roman citizenship

The Romans thought that they needed to treat only Roman citizens justly. They could do as they desired with people who were not Roman citizens, but they had to obey the law with other Romans. Some people were born Roman citizens, and others gave money to the Roman government so they could become Roman citizens. The "chief captain" could have been punished for treating a Roman citizen the same way he would treat a non-citizen.

Links:

- [Acts 22:1 Notes](#)

<< | >>

Acts 22

22:1-21

Why did speaking in Hebrew make the crowd quiet?

[22:2]

Speaking in Hebrew made the crowd quiet. When they heard Paul speaking Hebrew, they knew Paul was a Jew.

Who was Gamaliel?

[22:3]

Gamaliel was a Pharisee and teacher in Jerusalem. People respected this man. He taught many other Jewish teachers.

See: Acts 5:34

How did Paul study at the feet of Gamaliel?

[22:3]

When Paul he studied at the feet of Gamaliel, he used a metaphor. Gamaliel taught Paul. Some scholars think Gamaliel taught and raised Paul. Other scholars think Gamaliel taught Paul but he did not raise him. Because Gamaliel taught Paul, Paul had the best education in the Law of Moses and the things the Jews taught.

See: Metaphor; Law of Moses

Why did Paul say he was zealous for God?

[22:3]

Paul said he was 'zealous' (ζηλωτής/g2207) for God because he wanted the Jewish crowd to know he was not angry at them for beating him and wanting to kill him. He did the same things to Christians before he believed in Jesus. What was the Way? "The way" was a name for Christians (see: Acts 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

See: John 14:6

Why was the high priest able to bring Christians from another country to Jerusalem in bonds?

[22:4]

At that time the high priest in Jerusalem had permission to bring back a prisoner to Jerusalem from other areas under Roman control. Saul looked for Christians who left Jerusalem when the people persecuted Christians (see: Acts 8:1).

See: High Priest; Persecute (Persecution)

See Map: Jerusalem

How did Paul persecute Jesus?

[22:7]

Paul persecuted Jesus when he persecuted the followers of Jesus. That is, Christians represented Jesus (see: Luke 10:16).

See: Persecute (Persecution)

Why did Paul say those with him did not understand the voice of Jesus?

[22:9]

Paul said those with him did not understand the voice of Jesus, because Jesus spoke only to Paul. Why did Paul say his old name "Saul" when he talked about when Jesus appeared to him?

Paul said his name "Saul" when he talked about when Jesus appeared to him. Perhaps he did this because Paul wanted to say exactly what Jesus said to him.

See: Acts 9:4

How did Paul call Jesus "Lord"?

[22:10]

Paul called Jesus “Lord” two times. The first time Paul gave respect in the same way people gave respect to any leader. Paul did not know it was Jesus (see: Acts 22:8). The second time Paul knew Jesus reigned over everything and everyone. Paul was ready to obey Jesus (see: Acts 22:10).

See: Lord

Why did Jesus say things were appointed for Paul to do?

[22:10]

Jesus said things were appointed for Paul to do and God wanted Paul to be a part of his plan. Because Jesus said these things to Paul, Paul waited to hear what God had appointed for him to do.

What did it mean that Ananias was devout according to the Law of Moses?

[22:12]

When Paul said Ananias was devout according to the Law of Moses, he meant that Ananias obeyed the Lord of Moses. Ananias was also a Christian.

See: Law of Moses

Why did Ananias call Paul “brother”?

[22:13]

Ananias called Paul “brother”(αδελφος/g0080) because Ananias knew Paul was a Christian.

See: Family of God

Why did Ananias tell Paul to be baptized in water?

[22:16]

Ananias told Paul to be baptized in water because Paul needed to make others aware he believed in Jesus.

See: Baptize (Baptism)

When did Paul return to Jerusalem?

[22:17]

Some scholars think Paul returned to Jerusalem for a brief visit after becoming a Christian. Other scholars think Paul did not return to Jerusalem until three years after he became a Christian.

See: Acts 9:26-30

What was a “vision”?

[22:17]

See: Vision)

What was meant by the words, “they will not accept your testimony about me”?

[22:18]

Jesus told Paul that people would not accept the testimony about Jesus. That is, people would not believe in Jesus when Paul told them about Jesus. Scholars think this was because they would not be able to believe Paul since had persecuted people for believing in Jesus.

See: Testify (Testimony); Persecute (Persecution)

Why did Paul talk about Gentiles?

[22:21]

Paul talked about Gentiles because God wanted everyone to hear about Jesus. Paul did that even though he knew the Jews would become angry.

See: Gentile

22:22-29

Why did the Jewish crowd want to kill Paul when he talked about Gentiles?

[22:22]

The Jewish crowd did not think God wanted to do anything good for the Gentiles. They forgot God cared about Gentiles (see: Genesis 12:3). Jews hated the Gentiles because they thought they were evil. Because they hated the Gentiles, this made them want to kill Paul.

See: Gentile

Why did the Jewish crowd shout, take off their cloaks, and throw dust?

[22:23]

Some scholars think the crowds were taking off their cloaks because they were preparing to fight Paul. Other scholars think that taking off cloaks and making dust was a way of rejecting the person speaking. Other scholars think this was a sign that they believed Paul was blaspheming God.

See: Blaspheme (Blasphemy)

What was scourging?

[22:24]

Scourging was a type of whipping. People were whipped with pieces of bone and metal sown into the leather whip. It caused permanent physical damage and sometimes people died.

Why did Paul's Roman citizenship stop the soldiers from scourging him?

[22:25, 22:26]

According to Roman law, it was not permitted to scourge a person who was a Roman citizen. It was also not permitted to punish a Roman citizen without first having a trial to determine guilt.

See: Citizen; Punish (Punishment)

How did the chief captain pay a large amount of money for his citizenship?

[22:28]

Roman Citizenship was often sold for money. Often it was a bribe. Certain Roman leaders became wealthy from selling citizenships. The chief captain used this to become an officer in the Roman army.

See: Citizen

22:30

What was the council?

[22:30]

See: Jewish Council-Sanhedrin

Acts 22:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul speaks to the Jewish crowd in Jerusalem.

Brothers and fathers

This is a polite way of addressing men who are Paul's age as well as the older men in the audience.

I will now make to you

"I will now explain to you" or "I will now present to you"

Acts 22:2

the Hebrew language

The Hebrew language was the language of the Jews.

Acts 22:3

but educated in this city at the feet of Gamaliel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but I was a student of Gamaliel here in Jerusalem"

at the feet of Gamaliel

Here "feet" stands for the place where a student would sit while learning from a teacher. Alternate translation: "by Gamaliel"

Gamaliel

Gamaliel was one of the most prominent teachers of the Jewish law. See how you translated this name in Acts 5:34.

I was instructed according to the strict ways of the law of our fathers

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He instructed me how to carefully obey every law of our forefathers" or "The instruction I received followed the exact details of the law of our forefathers"

law of our fathers

"law of our ancestors." This refers to the law that God gave to the people of Israel through Moses.

I am zealous for God

"I am completely dedicated to obeying God" or "I am passionate about my service to God"

just as all of you are today

"in the same way all of you are today." Paul compares himself with the crowd.

Acts 22:4

I persecuted this Way to the death

Here "this Way" represents the people who belonged to the group called "the Way." The word "death" can be translated with the verb "kill." Alternate translation: "I persecuted the people who belonged to this Way and I looked for ways to kill them"

this Way

This was a term used to refer to Christianity. See how you translated "the Way" in Acts 9:2.

binding up and delivering to prison both men and women

"tying up both men and women and taking them to prison"

Acts 22:5

I received letters from them

"The high priests and elders gave me letters"

for the brothers in Damascus

Here "brothers" refers to "fellow Jews."

to bring them back in bonds to Jerusalem

"to bind those of the Way with chains and bring them back to Jerusalem"

to be punished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that they would receive punishment" or "so that the Jewish authorities could punish them"

Acts 22:6

Connecting Statement:

Paul describes his encounter with Jesus.

It happened that

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Acts 22:7

heard a voice say to me

Here "voice" stands for the person speaking. Alternate translation: "I heard someone say to me"

Acts 22:8

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 22:9

they did not understand the voice of him who spoke to me

Here "voice" stands for the person speaking. Alternate translation: "they did not understand what the one who spoke to me was saying"

Acts 22:10

There you will be told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There someone will tell you" or "There you will learn"

Acts 22:11

I could not see because of that light's brightness

"I was left blind because of that light's brightness"

being led by the hands of those who were with me, I came into Damascus

Here "hands" stands for those leading Paul. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those with me guided me into Damascus"

Acts 22:12

Ananias

Though this is not the same Ananias who died earlier in [Acts 5:3]

devout man according to the law

Ananias was very serious about following God's law.

law and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there

This can be stated in active form in a new sentence. Alternate translation: "law. All the Jews who lived there spoke well of him"

Acts 22:13

General Information:

The words "He" and "him" refer to Ananias.

Brother Saul

Here "Brother" is a polite way to address someone. Alternate translation: "My friend Saul"

receive your sight

The word "sight" can be translated with the verb "see." Alternate translation: "see again"

In that very hour

This was a customary way of saying something happened immediately. Alternate translation: "At that instant" or "Instantly" or "Immediately"

Acts 22:14

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Ananias (Acts 22:12).

his will

"what God is planning and will cause to happen"

to hear the voice coming from his own mouth

Both "voice" and "mouth" refer to the one speaking. Alternate translation: "to hear him speak directly to you"

Acts 22:15

to all men

Here "men" means all people whether male or female. Alternate translation: "to all people"

Acts 22:16

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes telling what had happened to him in Damascus. He quotes what Ananias said to him. This is still part of his speech to the crowd in Jerusalem.

Now

Here "now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

why are you waiting?

This question was asked to exhort Paul to be baptized. Alternate translation: "do not wait!" or "do not delay!"

be baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let me baptize you" or "receive baptism"

wash away your sins

As washing one's body removes dirt, calling on the name of Jesus for forgiveness cleanses one's inner being from sin. Alternate translation: "ask forgiveness for your sins"

calling on his name

Here "name" refers to the Lord. Alternate translation: "calling on the Lord" or "trusting in the Lord"

Acts 22:17

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins to tell the crowd about his vision of Jesus.

a trance came on me

This metaphor means that Paul went into the trance without expecting it or desiring it. See how you translated similar words in [Acts 10:10]

Acts 22:18

I saw him say to me

"I saw Jesus as he said to me"

they will not accept your testimony about me

"those who live in Jerusalem will not believe what you tell them about me"

Acts 22:19

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the non-believing Jews in Jerusalem.

they themselves know

The word "themselves" is used for emphasis.

in every synagogue

Paul went to synagogues to find Jews who believed in Jesus.

Acts 22:20

the blood of Stephen your witness was spilled

Here "blood" stands for Stephen's life. To spill blood means to kill. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they killed Stephen, who testified about you"

Acts 22:21

Connecting Statement:

This ends what Paul was able to say to the crowd of Jewish people by the fortress.

Acts 22:22

General Information:

Here the words "him" and "he" refer to Paul.

until that statement

"until Paul said that"

Away with such a fellow from the earth

The phrase "from the earth" adds emphasis to "Away with such a fellow." Alternate translation: "Kill him"

Acts 22:23

As they were

"While they were." The phrase "As they were" is used to mark two events that are happening at the same time.

throwing off their cloaks, and throwing dust into the air

These actions show that the Jews there are outraged because they feel Paul has spoken against God.

Acts 22:24

chief captain

This is a Roman military leader of about 1,000 soldiers. See how you translated this in Acts 21:31.

commanded Paul to be brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "ordered his soldiers to bring Paul"

the fortress

This fortress was connected to the outer temple court. See how you translated this in Acts 21:34.

He ordered that he should be questioned with scourging

The commander wants soldiers to torture Paul by whipping him to ensure he tells the truth. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He ordered his soldiers to whip Paul to force him to tell the truth"

He ordered that he

The first "he" refers to chief captain. The second "he" refers to Paul.

that he himself

The word "himself" is used for emphasis.

Acts 22:25

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the soldiers.

the thongs

These were strips of leather or animal hide.

Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and who has not been put on trial?

Paul uses this question to make the centurion check the validity of having his soldiers whip Paul. Alternate translation: "It is not lawful for you to whip a man who is a Roman and who was not given his legal right to a trial!"

Acts 22:26

What are you about to do?

This question is used to urge the commander to reconsider his plan to whip Paul. Alternate translation: "You should not do this!"

Acts 22:27

General Information:

Here the word "him" refers to Paul.

The chief captain came

Here "came" can be translated as "went."

Acts 22:28

It was only with a large amount of money

"It was only after I paid a lot of money to the Roman authorities." The captain makes this statement because he knows how hard it is to become a Roman citizen, and he suspects Paul is not telling truth.

I acquired citizenship

"I got citizenship." The word "citizenship" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "I became a citizen"

I was born a Roman citizen

If a man was a Roman citizen, then his children become Roman citizens automatically when they were born.

Acts 22:29

the men who were going to question

"the men who planned to question" or "the men who were preparing to question"

Acts 22:30

General Information:

Here the word "he" refers to the chief captain.

So he untied his bonds

Possibly the "chief captain" stands for the chief captain's soldiers. Alternate translation: "So the chief captain ordered his soldiers to untie Paul's bonds"

he brought Paul down

There was a stairway going down from the fortress to the temple courts.

Acts 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted material in 23:5.

Special concepts in this chapter

Resurrection of the dead

The Pharisees believed that after people died, they would become alive again and God would either reward them or punish them. The Sadducees believed that once people died, they stayed dead and would never become alive again. (See: raise and reward)

"Called a curse"

Some Jews promised God that they would not eat or drink until they killed Paul, and they asked God to punish them if they did not do what they had promised to do.

Roman citizenship

The Romans thought that they needed to treat only Roman citizens justly. They could do as they desired with people who were not Roman citizens, but they had to obey the law with other Romans. Some people were born Roman citizens, and others gave money to the Roman government so they could become Roman citizens. The "chief captain" could have been punished for treating a Roman citizen the same way he would treat a non-citizen.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Whitewashed

This is a metaphor in scripture describing someone who appears to be good or clean or righteous when that person is evil or unclean or unrighteous.

Links:

- [Acts 23:1](#)

<< | >>

Acts 23

23:1-11

Why did Paul look directly at the council?

[23:1]

Paul looked directly at the council because he did not fear them. Some scholars think Paul was confident because he was also confident of the message he was about to give to them. He knew he was in God's will. He also knew the Holy Spirit led him.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Will of God; Holy Spirit

When did Paul have a good "conscience"?

[23:1]

Some scholars think Paul always had a good "conscience" (συνείδησις/g4893). That is, he always thought he did the right things. He even thought this when he persecuted Christians. Other scholars think Paul had a good "conscience" only after he became a Christian.

Paul wanted the Jewish council to know that he believed he did nothing wrong.

See: Conscience; Persecute (Persecution)

Why did the high priest command someone to strike Paul on the mouth?

[23:2]

Some scholars think Ananias had someone strike Paul on the mouth because they did not like something Paul said. Other scholars think Ananias was a man with a quick temper to become very angry.

See: High Priest

What was a whitewashed wall?

[23:3]

A whitewashed wall was a crumbling or decaying wall painted to make it look better. Whitewashed walls were usually walls facing streets. This was a metaphor. Scholars think Paul was saying that they wanted other people to think they did things that honor God. However, they did not want to do things that honor God. They wanted to do evil things. Paul thought that Ananias was being a hypocrite.

See: Metaphor; Hypocrisy (Hypocrite)

Why did Paul call the high priest a whitewashed wall?

[23:3]

Paul called the high priest a whitewashed wall to say the high priest did not obey the Law of Moses himself even when he judged Paul for not obeying the law of Moses (see: Leviticus 19:15).

See: High Priest; Law of Moses; Judge (Judgment)

Why did Paul not know the high priest?

[23:5]

Scholars think Paul did not know the high priest because Paul had been away from Jerusalem. Also, the high priest did not sit in his usual seat because the Roman leader wanted the Jewish council to meet.

See: Exodus 22:28

See: High Priest; Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)

Why did Paul say he was a Pharisee?

[23:6]

Scholars think Paul knew he would not receive justice from the council. Paul had been a Pharisee. He knew the Pharisees believed in the resurrection. Therefore, Paul spoke about the resurrection. This caused people in the Jewish council to fight with one another.

See: Pharisees; Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)

How did Jesus stand beside Paul and speak to Paul?

[23:11]

Some scholars think Jesus stood beside Paul and helped him. Other scholars think Paul had a vision of Jesus standing with him. Other scholars think Paul must have dreamed that the Lord encouraged him.

See: Vision

23:12-22

What was meant by the words, “called a curse down upon themselves with an oath”?

[23:14]

See: Curse; Swear (Oath)

Why did the Jews want to kill Paul on the way to the council?

[23:15]

Some scholars think a group of Jews were very disappointed that the Jewish council did not kill Paul. They made a plan to have the council bring Paul back to answer more questions. They wanted to kill Paul while he was on his way to speak to the council once again.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)

23:23-35

Why did the chief captain send Paul to Caesarea?

[23:23]

The Roman soldier sent Paul to Caesarea because Paul was a Roman citizen. Roman law required the chief captain to keep Roman citizens safe. The chief captain sent Paul to Caesarea because he thought Paul would be safer there.

See: Citizen

See Map: Caesarea

Who was Claudius Lysias?

[23:26]

Claudius Lysias was the chief captain, a Roman soldier and leader. He was born a Greek because Lysias was a Greek name. Claudius was the name of a Roman Emperor. The chief captain took the name of the Roman Emperor who reigned when he became a Roman citizen.

See: Citizen; Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar)

Why did the chief captain write that he rescued Paul from the Jews when he knew Paul was a Roman citizen?

[23:27]

The Roman soldier wrote that he rescued Paul from the Jews when he knew Paul was a Roman citizen because he wanted the governor to think he protected Paul. He wanted the governor to know that he wanted to know for himself if Paul was guilty of the things people said he did.

See: Citizen

Where was Antipatris?

[23:31]

See Map: Antipatris

Why did the governor ask Paul what province he was from?

[23:34]

The governor asked Paul what area he was from because Roman leaders usually heard trials for people from the places over which they reigned. Some scholars think the province of Cilicia was a large territory and the Roman leader over it did not want to hear a small court case. Therefore, Felix decided to hear Paul's case. Other scholars think the governor wanted an easy way to give Paul's case to another Roman ruler.

See Map: Cilicia

What was Herod's government headquarters?

[23:35]

Herod's government headquarters was a palace Herod the Great built. It was in Caesarea.

See: King Herod

See Map: Caesarea

Acts 23:1	I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day
Connecting Statement:	"I know that even to this day I have done what God has wanted me to do"
Paul stands before the chief priests and the council members (Acts 22:30).	Acts 23:2
Brothers	Ananias
Here this means "Fellow Jews."	This is the name of a man. Although he has the same name, the Ananias here is neither the Ananias mentioned in [Acts 5:1]

Acts 23:3

whitewashed wall

This refers to a wall that was painted white to make it look clean. Paul told Ananias that just as a wall can be painted to look clean so Ananias appeared to look morally clean, but he was really full of evil intent. Alternate translation: "white-painted wall" or "wall painted white"

Are you sitting to judge ... against the law?

Paul uses a question to point out Ananias' hypocrisy. Some modern translations read this as a statement, "You are sitting to judge ... against the law." Alternate translation: "You are wrong to sit there to judge ... against the law."

order me to be struck

This can be stated in active form. You can use the same word for "strike" as you did in the phrase "God will strike you." Alternate translation: "command people to strike me"

Acts 23:4

Is this how you insult God's high priest?

The men use this question to scold Paul for what he has said in [Acts 23:3]

Acts 23:5

For it is written

Paul is about to quote what Moses wrote in the law. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For Moses wrote in the law"

Acts 23:6

Brothers

Here "Brothers" means "Fellow Jews"

a son of Pharisees

Here "son" means he is the literal son of a Pharisee and also the descendant of Pharisees. Alternate translation: "and my father and forefathers were Pharisees"

I have the hope of the resurrection of the dead

Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." The abstract noun "resurrection" can be expressed with the verb phrase "become alive again." Alternate translation: "I confidently expect the resurrection of the dead" or "I trust that the dead will become alive again"

the dead

The phrase "the dead" can be expressed as "those who have died."

I am being judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you are judging me"

Acts 23:7

the crowd was divided

"the people in the crowd strongly disagreed with one another"

Acts 23:8

For the Sadducees ... but the Pharisees

This is background information about the Sadducees and Pharisees.

Acts 23:9

So a large uproar occurred

"So they began shouting loudly at one another." The word "so" marks an event that happened because of something else that happened previously. In this case, the previous event is Paul's stating his belief in the resurrection.

What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?

The Pharisees use this question to suggest that Paul may have gotten his teaching from an angel or a spirit. They may be rebuking the Sadducees for not believing that spirits and angels exist and can speak to people. Alternate translation: "Maybe a spirit or an angel has spoken with him!"

Acts 23:10

When there arose a great argument

The words "a great argument" can be re-stated as "argue violently." Alternate translation: "When they began to argue violently"

chief captain

This is a Roman military leader of about 1,000 soldiers. See how you translated this in Acts 21:31.

Paul would be torn to pieces by them

This can be stated in active form. The phrase "be torn to pieces" might be an exaggeration of how the people might harm Paul. Alternate translation: "they might tear Paul to pieces" or "they would cause Paul great physical harm"

take him by force

"use physical force to take him away"

into the fortress

This fortress was connected to the outer temple court. See how you translated this in Acts 21:34.

Acts 23:11

The following night

This means the night after the day Paul went before the council. Alternate translation: "That night"

testify in Rome

The words "about me" are understood. Alternate translation: "testify about me in Rome"

Acts 23:12

Connecting Statement:

While Paul is in the prison at the fortress, the disbelieving religious Jews vow to kill him.

formed a conspiracy

"organized a group with a shared purpose." The purpose for organizing this group was to kill Paul.

put themselves under an oath

The noun "oath" is an abstract noun that refers to a promise that the men made to God to kill Paul. It can also be made explicit what would happen to the men if they did not do what they had promised to do. Alternate translation: "asked God to curse them if they did not do what they promised"

Acts 23:13

forty men

"40 men"

who formed this conspiracy

"who made this plan" or "who planned to kill Paul"

Acts 23:14

General Information:

Here the word "They" refers to the forty Jews in Acts 23:13.

We have sworn a great oath to eat nothing until we have killed Paul

"We have sworn to eat nothing until we have killed Paul. We asked God to curse us if we do not do what we promised to do"

Acts 23:15

General Information:

Here "you" is plural and refers to the chief priests and elders. Both "us" and "we" refer to the forty Jews who planned to kill Paul.

Now, therefore

"Because what we have just said is true" or "Because we have put ourselves under this curse"

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

bring him down to you

"bring Paul from the fortress to meet with you"

as if you would decide his case more precisely

"as though you want to learn more about what Paul has done"

Acts 23:16

Paul's sister's son

"the son of Paul's sister" or "Paul's nephew"

they were lying in wait

"they were ready to ambush Paul" or "they were waiting to kill Paul"

the fortress

This fortress was connected to the outer temple court. See how you translated this in Acts 21:34.

Acts 23:17

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 23:18

Paul the prisoner called me to him

"Paul the prisoner asked me to come talk with him"

this young man

Since the chief captain calls him a young man, this suggests Paul's nephew may have been 12 to 15 years old.

Acts 23:19

chief captain took him by the hand

Since the chief captain took the young man by the hand and calls him a young man (verse 18), this suggests Paul's nephew may have been 12 to 15 years old.

Acts 23:20

The Jews have agreed

This does not mean all Jews, but all of the group that was there. Alternate translation: "Some of the Jews have agreed"

to bring down Paul

"to bring Paul down from the fortress"

they were going to ask more precisely about his case

"they wanted to learn more about what Paul has done"

Acts 23:21

forty men

"40 men"

lying in wait for him

"ready to ambush Paul" or "ready to kill Paul"

They have put themselves under oath neither to eat nor to drink until they have killed him

"They have sworn to eat and drink nothing until they have killed Paul. And they asked God to curse them if they do not do what they promised to do"

for your approval

"for you to agree to do what they have asked you to do"

Acts 23:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 23:23

he called to him

"he called to himself." Both "he" and "him" refer to the chief captain.

two of the centurions

"2 of the centurions"

seventy horsemen

"70 horsemen"

two hundred spearmen

"200 soldiers that are armed with spears"

third hour of the night

This was about 9:00 p.m. at night.

Acts 23:24

Felix the governor

Felix, who resided at Caesarea, was the roman governor of the area.

Acts 23:25

General Information:

Here "he" refers to the chief captain.

Acts 23:26

General Information:

Claudius Lysias was the name of the chief captain. Governor Felix was the Roman governor over the whole region.

Claudius Lysias to the most excellent Governor Felix, greetings

This is a formal introduction to the letter. The chief captain begins by referring to himself. You can translate it in the first person. The words "am writing" are understood. Alternate translation: "I, Claudius Lysias, am writing to you, the most excellent Governor Felix, and I greet you"

to the most excellent Governor Felix

"to Governor Felix, you who deserve the greatest honors"

Acts 23:27

This man was arrested by the Jews

Here "Jews" means "some of the Jews." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Some of the Jews arrested this man"

was about to be killed by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they were ready to kill him"

I came upon them with soldiers

"I with my soldiers arrived at the place where Paul and these Jews were"

Acts 23:28

General Information:

Here the word "I" refers to Claudius Lysias, the chief captain. The word "they" refers to the Jews who accused Paul. The word "him" refers to Paul.

Acts 23:29

that he was being accused about questions concerning

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that they were accusing him of questions about"

but that there was no accusation against him that deserved death or imprisonment

The abstract nouns "accusation," "death," and "imprisonment" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "but nobody accused him of anything that should cause Roman authorities to kill him or to send him to prison"

Acts 23:30

Connecting Statement:

The chief captain ends his letter to Governor Felix.

Then it was reported to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then someone told me" or "Then I learned"

sent him to you

Here "you" refers to Governor Felix.

Acts 23:31

Connecting Statement:

This ends Paul's time under arrest in Jerusalem and begins his time of arrest in Caesarea with Governor Felix.

So the soldiers obeyed their orders

The word "so" marks an event that happened because of something else that happened previously. In this case, the previous event is the chief captain's commanding the soldiers to escort Paul.

They took Paul and brought him by night

Here "brought" can be translated as "took." Alternate translation: "They got Paul and took him at night"

Antipatris

Antipatris was a city built by Herod in honor of his father, Antipater. It stood at a site located today in central Israel.

Acts 23:32

to go with him

Here "him" refers to Paul.

Acts 23:33

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 23:34

he asked what province Paul was from. When he learned that he was from Cilicia

This can be stated with direct quotations. Alternate translation: "he asked Paul, 'What province are you from?' Paul said, 'I am from Cilicia.' When the governor learned this"

When he learned that he

"When the governor learned that Paul"

Acts 23:35

he said

"the governor said"

I will hear you fully

"I will listen to all you have to say"

he commanded him to be kept

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he commanded soldiers to keep him" or "commanded soldiers to restrain him"

Acts 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul told the governor that he had not done what the Jews were accusing him of doing and that the governor should not punish him for what he did do.

Special concepts in this chapter

Respect

Both the Jewish leaders ([Acts 24:2-4](#)) and Paul ([Acts 24:10](#)) began their speeches with words that show respect to the governor.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Governmental leaders

The words "governor," "commander," and "centurion" may be difficult to translate into some languages.

Links:

- [Acts 24:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 24

24:1-9

What was an orator?

[24:1]

An orator was a person who made money speaking in front of many other people. The Jews hired Tertullus to speak against Paul in the Roman court. Scholars do not know if Tertullus was Jewish or not.

See: High Priest; Ancient Trials (Lawsuit)

What was the Nazarene sect?

[24:5]

The Nazarene sect was a group of followers of the Man of Nazareth. The Man of Nazareth is Jesus. However, the orator wanted to make Felix think these people will cause fighting. The orator wanted Felix to judge Paul.

See: JJudge (Judgment)

What did Luke write in verse 6-7?

[24:6, 24:7]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that the Jews wanted to judge Paul by their law but Lysias took Paul away from them. Other ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Scholars do not know whether Luke wrote these words.

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

How did the Jews join the accusation against Paul?

[24:9]

The Jews joined the accusation against Paul by saying again and again these lies were really true.

See: Ancient Trials (Lawsuit)

24:10-21

How did Paul talk to the governor?

[24:10, 24:11]

Paul talked to the governor with confidence because the governor had judged the Jews for years. Paul was glad because Paul did not act against Jewish laws. Paul believed the governor would make the right judgment.

Why did Paul say it was not more than twelve days since he went to Jerusalem to worship?

[24:11]

Scholars think it would have been very easy for the governor to find out whether Paul was guilty of doing evil things. This is because it had only been a period of twelve days.

See: Worship

Why was Christianity called the Way?

[24:14]

“The way” was a name for Christians (see: Acts 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

See: John 14:6

24:22-27

Why did Felix say he will decide Paul's case when Lysias came?

[24:22]

Felix said he will decide Paul's case when Lysias came because Felix did not want to make a decision. Some scholars think Felix knew about the Christians and did not want to make things difficult for Christians.

See: Ancient Trials (Lawsuit)

Why did Felix give Paul some freedom?

[24:23]

Felix gave Paul some freedom because he knew Paul did not do the crimes of which he was accused. Also, Paul was a Roman citizen.

See: Citizen

Why did Luke write Drusilla was Jewish?

[24:24]

Luke wrote Drusilla was Jewish because the wife of the governor influenced the governor's thinking. Some scholars think her faith made Felix listen to Paul. Other scholars think Felix wanted Paul to give him personal advice in the same way some other Roman leaders paid people to give them personal advice.

See: Faith (Believe in)

Why did Felix become frightened?

[24:25]

Felix became frightened because he and his wife, Drusilla, did many evil things. Paul's speech about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment reminded Felix of the evil things he did. However, Felix did not repent.

See: Righteous (Righteousness); Judge (Judgment); Day of Judgment; Repent (Repentance)

Why did Felix want Paul to give him money?

[24:26]

Felix wanted Paul to give him money because Felix wanted to be rich from bribes. Some scholars think Paul received an inheritance. Other scholars think Felix wanted Paul's friends to give Felix money.

See: Inherit (Inheritance, Heir)

Acts 24:1	went there
Connecting Statement:	"went to Caesarea where Paul was"
Paul is on trial in Caesarea. Tertullus presents Governor Felix with the charges against Paul.	before the governor
After five days	"in the presence of the governor, who was judge in the court"
"Five days after the Roman soldiers took Paul to Caesarea"	brought charges against Paul
Ananias	"began to argue the case before the governor that Paul had broken the law."
This is the name of a man. He is not the same Ananias as in [Acts 5:1]	Acts 24:2
an orator	Because of you
"a lawyer." Tertullus was an expert in Roman law who was there to accuse Paul in court.	Here the word "you" refers to Felix, the governor.
Tertullus	we have great peace
This is the name of a man.	Here "we" refers to the citizens under Felix. Alternate translation: "we, the people that you govern, have great peace"

and your foresight brings good reform to our nation

"and your planning has greatly improved our nation"

Acts 24:3

so with all thankfulness we welcome everything that you do

The word "thankfulness" is an abstract noun. It can be stated as an adjective or verb. Alternate translation: "so we are very thankful and we welcome everything that you do" or "so we thank you very much and welcome everything that you do"

most excellent Felix

"Governor Felix, who deserves greatest honor." Felix was the roman governor over the whole region. See how you translated a similar phrase in Acts 23:25.

Acts 24:4

So that I detain you no more

Possible meanings are 1) "so that I will not take up too much of your time" or 2) "so that I will not tire you"

in your kindness to hear us briefly

"to be kind and listen to the short speech I am giving to state these men's case"

Acts 24:5

General Information:

The word "we" refers to Ananias, certain elders, and Tertullus.

this man to be a pest

Here "pest" is a metaphor for a person who causes trouble. Alternate translation: "this man to be a trouble maker"

all the Jews throughout the world

The word "all" here is probably an exaggeration used to strengthen their accusation against Paul.

He is a leader of the Nazarene sect

The phrase "Nazarene sect" is another name for the Christians. Alternate translation: "He also leads the

entire group whom people call the followers of the Nazarene"

sect

This is a smaller group of people within a larger group. Tertullus considers the Christians to be a small group within Judaism.

Acts 24:6

General Information:

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Acts 24:7

General Information:

Here the word "you" is singular and refers to Governor Felix.

Acts 24:8

Connecting Statement:

Tertullus finishes presenting the charges against Paul before Governor Felix.

to learn about all the things of which we are accusing him

"to learn whether or not these charges that we bring against him are true" or "to learn whether or not he is guilty of the things we accuse him of"

Acts 24:9

The Jews

This refers to the Jewish leaders who were there at Paul's trial.

Acts 24:10

Connecting Statement:

Paul responds to Governor Felix about the charges brought against him.

the governor motioned

"the governor gestured"

a judge to this nation

Here "nation" refers to the people of the Jewish nation.
Alternate translation: "a judge for the people of the Jewish nation"

explain myself

"explain my situation"

Acts 24:11

twelve days since

"12 days since"

Acts 24:12

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the Jews who were accusing Paul.

I did not stir up a crowd

"Stir up" here is a metaphor for agitating people into unrest, just as stirring a liquid agitates it. Alternate translation: "I did not cause a crowd to riot"

Acts 24:13

the accusations

"the blames for wrongdoings" or "the charges for crimes"

Acts 24:14

I confess this to you

"I acknowledge this to you"

that according to the Way

The phrase "the Way" was a title used for Christianity during Paul's time.

a sect

This is a smaller group of people within a larger group. Christianity was originally considered to be a small group within Judaism. See how you translated "sect" in Acts 24:5.

the law

Paul is referring to the law of Moses.

Acts 24:15

I have a hope in God, which these men also have, that there will be a resurrection

Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." Alternate translation: "Just as these men, I trust in God that there will be a resurrection"

these men

the Jews who are accusing Paul in court

that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked

The abstract noun "resurrection" can be stated with the verb "resurrect." Alternate translation: "that God will resurrect all who have died, both the righteous and the unrighteous"

the righteous and the wicked

These nominal adjectives refer to righteous people and wicked people. Alternate translation: "righteous people and wicked people" or "those who have done what is right and those who have done what is evil"

Acts 24:16

I always strive

"I always work hard" or "I do my best"

to have a blameless conscience

Here "conscience" refers to a person's inner morality that chooses between right and wrong. Alternate translation: "to be blameless" or "to always do what is right"

before God

"in the presence of God"

Acts 24:17

Now

This word marks a shift in Paul's argument. Here he explains the situation in Jerusalem when some of the Jews arrested him.

after many years

"after many years away from Jerusalem"

I came to give alms to my nation and present sacrifices

Here "I came" can be translated as "I went." Alternate translation: "I went to help my people by bringing them money as a gift; I also went to present sacrifices"

Acts 24:18

in a purification ceremony in the temple

"in the temple after I had finished a ceremony to purify myself"

in the temple, not with a crowd or an uproar

This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "in the temple. I had not gathered a crowd nor was I trying to start a riot"

Acts 24:19

These men

"The Jews from Asia"

if they have anything

"if they have anything to say"

Acts 24:20

these same men

This refers to the members of the council who were present in Jerusalem at Paul's trial.

should say what wrong they found in me

"should say the wrong thing I did that they were able to prove"

Acts 24:21

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes responding to Governor Felix about the charges brought against him.

It is concerning the resurrection of the dead

The abstract noun "resurrection" can be stated as "God brings back to life." Alternate translation: "It is because I believe that God will bring back to life those who have died"

I am on trial before you today

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you are judging me today"

Acts 24:22

General Information:

Felix is the Roman governor of the area who resides at Caesarea. See how you translated this name in [Acts 23:24]

the Way

This is a title for Christianity. See how you translated this in Acts 9:2.

When Lysias the commander comes down

"when Lysias the commander comes down" or "at the time Lysias the commander comes down"

Lysias

This is the name of the chief captain. See how you translated this name in Acts 23:26.

comes down from Jerusalem

Jerusalem was higher than Caesarea so it was normal to speak of coming down from Jerusalem.

I will decide your case

"I will make a decision concerning these accusations against you" or "I will judge whether you are guilty"

Acts 24:23

to have some freedom

"to have some freedom not otherwise granted to prisoners"

Acts 24:24

After some days

"After several days"

Drusilla his wife

Drusilla is a woman's name.

Acts 24:25

Felix became frightened

Felix may have felt conviction of his sins.

for now

"for the present time"

Acts 24:26

he hoped that Paul would give money to him

Here the word "hope" means think that what one desires might happen. Sometimes prisoners gave money to government officials so that the officials would free them from prison early, and Felix hoped that Paul would do that. Alternate translation: "he thought that Paul might give money to him"

so he often sent for him and spoke with him

"so Felix often sent for Paul and spoke with Paul"

Acts 24:27

Porcius Festus

This was the Roman Governor who replaced Felix.

wanted to gain favor with the Jews

Here "the Jews" refers to the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "wanted the Jewish leaders to like him"

he left Paul bound

"he left Paul in prison"

Acts 25 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Favor

This word is used in two different ways in this chapter. When the Jewish leaders asked Festus for a favor, they were asking him to do something special for them on that day. They wanted him to do for them something that he would not usually do. When Festus "wanted to gain the favor of the Jews," he wanted them to like him and be willing to obey him in the months and years to come. (See: favor)

Roman citizenship

The Romans thought that they needed to treat only Roman citizens justly. They could do as they desired with people who were not Roman citizens, but they had to obey the law with other Romans. Some people were born Roman citizens, and others gave money to the Roman government so they could become Roman citizens. Roman officials could have been punished for treating a Roman citizen the same way they would treat a non-citizen.

Links:

- [Acts 25:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 25

25:1-12

Where was Caesarea and Jerusalem?

[25:1]

See Map: Caesarea; Jerusalem

Why did Festus refuse to bring Paul to Jerusalem?

[25:3]

Festus refused to bring Paul to Jerusalem. Some scholars think that because Paul was a Roman citizen, Festus could not transfer Paul to the court in Jerusalem. Other scholars think Festus did not want to stay in Jerusalem long enough for there to be a trial.

See: Citizen; Ancient Trials (Lawsuit)

What was a "judgment seat"?

[25:6]

A "judgment seat" was an actual chair in a court upon which the governing ruler sat to make legal decisions for the court.

See: Judge (Judgment); Ancient Trials (Lawsuit)

Why did Paul appeal to Caesar?

[25:10]

Any Roman citizen accused of crimes for which they could be killed, had the right to appeal to Caesar. The Jewish leaders wanted Paul to be killed. People accused Paul of doing wrong things, but no one tried to find out if he did these things. Felix had the opportunity and the right to release Paul earlier. Because Felix did not release Paul, Paul wanted the Roman emperor to judge him and release him.

See: Citizen; Rome (Roman Empire, Caesar)

25:13-22

Who were the chief priests and elders of the Jews?

[25:15]

See: Chief Priest; Elder

What was a sentence of condemnation?

[25:15]

A “sentence of condemnation” was a decision made by the courts to convict a person of a crime. In this case, the Jews were hoping for Paul to be judged and killed.

See: Ancient Trials (Lawsuit); Condemn (Condemnation); Judge (Judgment)

What was the “religion” about which Festus spoke?

[25:19]

Some scholars think when Festus spoke about a “religion”(δεισιδαιμονία/g1175), he was speaking about the Jewish religion. That is, it was how the Jews followed the Law of Moses and did certain things to worship God. Fewer scholars think when Festus spoke about a religion, he was speaking about Christians.

See: Law of Moses; Worship

Why did Agrippa say he wanted to hear Paul?

[25:22]

Agrippa said he wanted to hear Paul. Agrippa wanted to be able to give advice to Festus about Paul (see: 25:26). Also, sometimes Roman leaders wanted to hear people teach about God (see: Luke 23:8).

See: Ancient Trials (Lawsuit)

25:23-27

Why did Festus not have something more to write about Paul’s case?

[25:26]

Festus did not have anything more to write about Paul’s case because there was no evidence that Paul did something wrong. Therefore, Festus did not think Paul was guilty of the things people said he did.

Acts 25:1

General Information:

Festus becomes the governor of Caesarea. See how you translated this name in Acts 24:27.

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to be a prisoner in Caesarea.

Now

This word marks the beginning of a new event in the story.

Festus entered the province

Possible meanings are 1) Festus arrived in the area to begin his rule or 2) Festus simply arrived in the area.

he went from Caesarea up to Jerusalem

The phrase "went up" is used here because Jerusalem is higher in elevation than Caesarea.

Acts 25:2

The chief priests and the prominent Jews brought their charges against Paul

This speaks about accusations as if they were an object that a person could bring to someone else. Alternate translation: "The chief priests and the important Jews accused Paul to Festus"

Acts 25:3

to summon him to Jerusalem

Some versions translate this as "to have him summoned to Jerusalem." The word "him" refers to Paul. The Jews wanted Festus to have his soldiers take Paul to Jerusalem.

for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way

They were going to hide along the road and kill Paul as he was passing by, but Festus was not aware of this part of their plan.

Acts 25:4

Festus answered that Paul was being held in custody at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there soon.

This can be stated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "But Festus said, 'Paul is being held in custody in Caesarea, and I myself will soon return there.'"

Acts 25:5

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to Festus and the Romans traveling with him, but not to his audience.

"Therefore, those who can," he said, "should go there with us

The phrase "he said" can be moved to the beginning of the sentence. Alternate translation: "Then he said, 'Therefore, those who are able to go to Caesarea should go there with us'"

If there is something wrong with the man

"If Paul has done something wrong"

you should accuse him

"you should accuse him of violating laws" or "you should bring charges against him"

Acts 25:6

down to Caesarea

Jerusalem is higher geographically than Caesarea. It was common to speak of coming down from Jerusalem.

sat on the judgment seat

Here "judgment seat" refers to Festus' ruling as judge over Paul's trial. Alternate translation: "sat upon the seat where he acted as judge" or "sat down as judge"

Paul to be brought to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his soldiers bring Paul to him"

Acts 25:7

When he arrived

"When Paul came and stood before Festus"

they brought many serious charges

Charging a person with a crime is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could bring to court. Alternate translation: "they spoke against Paul many serious things"

Acts 25:8

against the temple

Paul says he did not break any rules about who could enter the Jerusalem temple. Alternate translation: "against the entry rules of the temple"

Acts 25:9

wanted to gain the favor of the Jews

Here "the Jews" means the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "wanted to please the Jewish leaders"

to go up to Jerusalem

Jerusalem was higher geographically than Caesarea. It was common to speak of going up to Jerusalem.

and to be judged by me about these things there

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where I will judge you with regard to these charges"

Acts 25:10

I stand before the judgment seat of Caesar where I must be judged

The "judgment seat" refers to Caesar's authority to judge Paul. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I ask to go before Caesar, so he can judge me"

Acts 25:11

Though if I have done wrong ... I do not refuse to die

Paul does not believe that he has done wrong, but he shows that he will submit to the law and will not refuse to be punished if he really has done wrong.

if I have done what is worthy of death

"if I have done some wrong that deserves the death penalty"

if their accusations are nothing

"if the charges against me are not true"

no one can hand me over to them

Possible meanings are 1) Festus does not have the legal authority to hand Paul over to these false accusers or 2) the governor should not give in to the request of the Jews.

I appeal to Caesar

"I ask to go before Caesar so he can judge me"

Acts 25:12

with the council

This is not the Sanhedrin that is referred to as "council" throughout Acts. This is a political council in the Roman government. Alternate translation: "with his own government advisors"

Acts 25:13

General Information:

King Agrippa and Bernice are new people in the story. Though he ruled over only a few territories, King Agrippa was the current reigning king in Palestine. Bernice was Agrippa's sister.

Now

This word marks the beginning of a new event in the story.

to pay an official visit to Festus

"to visit Festus concerning official matters"

Acts 25:14

After they

"After King Agrippa and Bernice"

A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When Felix left office, he left a man in prison here"

Felix

Felix was the Roman governor of the area and resided in Caesarea. See how you translated this name in Acts 23:24.

Acts 25:15

brought charges against this man to me

This is a metaphor that means to accuse someone in court. Alternate translation: "spoke to me against this man"

they asked for a sentence of condemnation against him

The abstract nouns "sentence" and "condemnation" can be expressed as verbs. The phrase "a sentence of condemnation" implies that they were requesting that Paul be executed. Alternate translation: "they asked me to sentence him to death" or "they asked me to condemn him to death"

Acts 25:16

to hand over anyone

Here "hand over" represents sending someone to people who will punish or kill him. Alternate translation: "let someone punish anyone" or "to condemn anyone to death"

before the accused had faced his accusers

Here "faced his accusers" is an idiom that means to meet with the people who accuse him. Alternate translation: "before the person whom others have accused of a crime had met directly with those who accused him"

Acts 25:17

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true." Festus has just said that an accused man should be able to face his accusers and make his defense.

when they came together here

"when the Jewish leaders came to meet with me here"

I sat in the judgment seat

Here "judgment seat" refers to Festus ruling over Paul's trial as judge. Alternate translation: "I sat upon the seat to act as judge" or "I sat down as judge"

I ordered the man to be brought in

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I ordered the soldiers to bring Paul before me"

Acts 25:18

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 25:19

their own religion

Here "religion" means the belief system people have toward life and the supernatural.

Acts 25:20

to stand trial there about these charges

To "stand trial" is an idiom meaning to speak to a judge so the judge can decide if a person is right or wrong. Alternate translation: "to go to trial about these charges" or "for a judge to decide if these charges against him are true or not"

Acts 25:21

Connecting Statement:

Festus finishes explaining Paul's case to King Agrippa.

But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody while awaiting the decision of the emperor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But when Paul insisted that he stay under Roman guard until the time when the emperor could decide his case"

I ordered him to be held in custody

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I ordered the soldiers to keep him in custody" or "I told the soldiers to guard him"

Acts 25:22

"Tomorrow," Festus said, "you will hear him."

The phrase "Festus said" can be moved to the beginning of the sentence. Alternate translation: "Festus said, 'I will arrange for you to listen to Paul tomorrow.'"

Acts 25:23

General Information:

Though he ruled over only a few territories, Agrippa was the current reigning king in Palestine. Bernice was his sister. See how you translated these names in Acts 25:13.

with much ceremony

"with a great ceremony to honor them"

the hall

This was a large room where people gathered for ceremonies, trials, and other events.

Paul was brought to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the soldiers brought Paul to appear before them"

Acts 25:24

Connecting Statement:

Festus again gives information about Paul's case to King Agrippa.

all the multitude of Jews

The word "all" is an exaggeration used to emphasize that a great number of Jews wanted Paul to die. Alternate translation: "a great number of the Jews" or "many of the Jewish leaders"

they shouted to me

"they spoke very strongly to me"

he should no longer live

This statement is made in the negative to emphasize the positive equivalent. Alternate translation: "he should die immediately"

Acts 25:25

because he appealed to the emperor

"because he said that he wanted the emperor to judge him"

the emperor

The emperor was the ruler of the Roman empire. He ruled over many countries and provinces.

Acts 25:26

to write to my lord

Festus used the word "lord" to refer to the emperor. Alternate translation: "to write to the emperor"

I have brought him to you, especially to you, King Agrippa

Here the first "you" is plural and refers to all the men to whom Festus is speaking. The second "you" is singular and refers to King Agrippa. Alternate translation: "I have brought Paul to all of you, but especially to you, King Agrippa"

so that I might have something more to write

"so that I will have something else to write" or "so that I will know what I should write"

Acts 25:27

it seems unreasonable for me to send a prisoner and to not also state

The negative words "unreasonable" and "to not ... state" can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "it seems reasonable to me to send a prisoner and to also state"

the charges against him

Possible meanings are 1) the accusations that the Jewish leaders have brought against him or 2) the charges under Roman law that apply to Paul's case.

Acts 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the third account of Paul's conversion in the book of Acts. Because this is such an important event in the early church, there are three accounts of Paul's conversion. (See: Acts 9 and Acts 22)

Paul told the King Agrippa why he had done what he had done and that the governor should not punish him for that.

Special concepts in this chapter

Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)

Links:

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Acts 26

26:1-11

Why did Paul stretch out his hand?

[26:1]

Some scholars think it was common in those days to raise a hand toward the king in order to greet him. Other scholars think Paul stretched out his hand toward the king because it indicated he was about to make a speech.

What did Paul mean by saying he was happy?

[26:2]

When Paul said he was happy, he meant he felt fortunate or blessed to make his case before King Agrippa. King Agrippa was also a Roman and he knew Roman laws.

See: Ancient Trials (Lawsuit); Bless (Blessing)

Who were the fathers?

[26:6]

Some scholars think the fathers about which Paul spoke were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about other ancestors of Israel.

See: Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs)

What was the promise God made to the fathers?

[26:6]

God promised many things to these fathers. God promised the messiah, resurrection from the dead, the kingdom of God, and eternal life with God the Father.

See: Messiah (Christ); Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Kingdom of God; Eternal Life; God the Father

What did Paul mean when he said, “I cast my vote against them”?

[26:10]

Some scholars think Paul meant that he wanted Christians to be punished and killed. More scholars do not think Paul was a ruler on the Jewish council.

See: Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); Punish (Punishment)

What did it mean to “blaspheme”?

[26:11]

See: Blaspheme (Blasphemy)

26:12-18

Why did Jesus say, “It is hard for you to kick a goad”?

[26:14]

Scholars think that when Jesus said, “It is hard for you to kick a goad” he used a metaphor. In ancient times, people used a goad to make an ox move. If an ox kicked against the stick, this caused more discomfort for the ox. Scholars think Jesus said this to Paul in order to tell Paul that he was resisting God. That is, when Paul wanted to persecute Christians, this fought against God. It was not what God wanted Paul to do.

See: Metaphor; Persecute (Persecution)

How did Paul persecute Jesus?

[26:14]

Paul persecuted Jesus when he persecuted Christians. When he did this, he persecuted Jesus (see: Luke 10:16).

See: Persecute (Persecution)

Why did Paul use his old name “Saul” when he talked about when Jesus appeared to him?

[26:14]

Paul said his old name “Saul” when he talked about when Jesus appeared to him because Paul wanted to say exactly what Jesus said to Paul.

How was Paul able to “open their eyes”?

[26:18]

Paul was able to open people’s eyes. This is a metaphor. God gave Paul the ability to teach the Gentiles about sin. Before Paul taught them, the Gentiles did not know they sinned. They now knew they sinned.

See: Metaphor; Gentile; Sin

What did it mean to turn, “from darkness to light”?

[26:18]

See: Light and Darkness (Metaphor)

26:19-23

What was the heavenly vision?

[26:19]

Scholars think the heavenly vision was the revelation Jesus gave Paul on the road to Damascus.

See: Heaven; Vision)

Who were the small and the great?

[26:22]

When Paul wrote about the small and the great, he was speaking about all people. The small included poor and servants. The great included rich people and free people, including King Agrippa.

See: Galatians 3:28; Job 3:19

26:24-32

What did Festus mean when he said, “your great learning makes you insane”?

[26:24]

Scholars give several reasons why Festus said Paul was insane.

1. Festus thought it was insane to believe dead people will become alive again.
2. Festus thought it was insane to believe Jesus became King by suffering and dying.
3. Festus thought it was insane to write a report to government leaders in Rome about becoming alive again.
4. Because King Agrippa was a Jew, he understood Paul. However, he did not think Paul was thinking in the right way.

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

Advice to translators: Someone who is insane is crazy or is ill and cannot think the right way.

What was meant by the words, “this has not been done in a corner”?

[26:26]

When Paul said, “this has not been done in a corner” he used a metaphor. He meant that all the events that were fulfilled God’s promises and people could see these promises being fulfilled. People saw Jesus resurrected. Paul also said that all these events were prophesied by Moses and the ancient prophets of Israel.

See: Metaphor; Fulfill (Fulfillment); Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Prophet

Why did Paul want people to be like him but without prison chains?

[26:29]

Paul wanted people to be like him, but without prison chains. Paul prayed that Agrippa would believe Jesus as Paul believed Jesus. However, Paul did not wish Agrippa to be imprisoned. Paul was imprisoned, but he did not do anything wrong.

Why did the king stand up?

[26:30]

Scholars think that both Agrippa and Festus had heard everything they wanted to hear from Paul. When they stood up, this meant that their meeting had ended.

Acts 26:1

against all the accusations of the Jews

Connecting Statement:

The abstract noun "accusations" can be stated as the verb "accuse." Alternate translation: "against all the Jews who are accusing me"

Festus has brought Paul before King Agrippa.

Agrippa

the Jews

Agrippa was the current reigning king in Palestine, though he ruled over only a few territories. See how you translated this name in Acts 25:13.

This does not mean all the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

stretched out his hand

Acts 26:3

"held out his hand" or "gestured with his hand"

questions

made his defense

You can make explicit what kinds of questions this means. Alternate translation: "questions about religious matters"

The abstract noun "defense" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "began to defend himself against those who were accusing him"

Acts 26:4

Acts 26:2

all the Jews

Connecting Statement:

This is a generalization. Possible meanings are 1) Jews in general who knew about Paul. Alternate translation: "the Jews" or 2) Pharisees who knew Paul. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

Paul gives his defense to King Agrippa.

I consider myself happy

in my own nation

Paul was happy because he considered his appearance before Agrippa to be an opportunity to speak about the gospel.

Possible meanings are 1) among his own people, not necessarily in the geographical land of Israel or 2) in the land of Israel.

to make my case

Acts 26:5

This phrase means to describe one's situation, so that those in court can discuss and make a decision about it. Alternate translation: "to defend myself"

the strictest party of our religion

"a group within Judaism that lives by very strict rules"

Acts 26:6

Now

This word marks a shift from Paul discussing his past to talking about himself in the present.

I stand here to be judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am here, where they are putting me on trial"

because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers

Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "trust" or "confidently wait." Alternate translation: "because I trust in the promise made by God to our fathers"

because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers

Hope in a promise is the expectation that the promise will be fulfilled. Alternate translation "because of my hope that God will do what he promised our forefathers he would do" or "because I confidently wait for God to do what he promised our forefather he would do"

Acts 26:7

this promise that our twelve tribes hope to receive

This speaks about a promise being fulfilled as if it were an object that is received. Alternate translation: "the promise that our twelve tribes confidently wait for God to fulfill"

our twelve tribes

The phrase "our twelve tribes" stands for the people in those tribes. Alternate translation: "our fellow Jews in the twelve tribes"

worship God earnestly night and day

The extremes "night" and "day" are used together to mean consistently mean Alternate translation: "continually worship God earnestly"

king

Paul is addressing King Agrippa by his title, not by his name. Your language may require that you add another

word or part of a word, as in older English "O King," or that you add the king's name, as in "King Agrippa," or that you use another expression such as "Your Majesty."

that the Jews

This does not mean all the Jews. Alternate translation: "that the leaders of the Jews"

Acts 26:8

General Information:

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people who were listening to Paul.

Why should any of you judge it to be incredible that God raises the dead?

Paul uses a question to challenge the Jews there. They believe that God can raise the dead, but they do not believe that God brought Jesus back to life. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not judge it to be unbelievable that God raises the dead" Or "You should not say that it is impossible to believe that God raises the dead."

raises the dead

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "makes dead people come alive again"

Acts 26:9

Now indeed

Paul uses this phrase to mark another shift in his defense. He is now beginning to describe how he formerly persecuted Jesus's people.

against the name of Jesus

The word "name" here stands for the teaching about the person. Alternate translation: "to stop people from teaching about Jesus"

Acts 26:10

when they were killed, I cast my vote against them

The phrase "were killed" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I voted in agreement with the other Jewish leaders to condemn believers to die"

Acts 26:11

I punished them many times

Possible meanings are 1) Paul punished some believers many times or 2) Paul punished many different believers.

Acts 26:12

Connecting Statement:

While talking to King Agrippa, Paul tells about when the Lord spoke with him.

While I was doing this

Paul uses this phrase to mark another shift in his defense. He is now telling about when he saw Jesus and became his disciple.

While

This word is used to mark two events that are happening at the same time. In this case, Paul went to Damascus during the time when he persecuted Christians.

with authority and orders

Paul had letters from the Jewish leaders granting him authority to persecute the Jewish believers.

Acts 26:13

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 26:14

I heard a voice speaking to me that said

Here "voice" stands for the person speaking. Alternate translation: "I heard someone speaking to me who said"

Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?

This is a rhetorical question. The speaker is alerting Saul to what Saul is doing to him, and implying that Saul should not do that. Alternate translation: "Saul, Saul, you are persecuting me." or "Saul, Saul, stop persecuting me."

It is hard for you to kick a goad

For Paul to resist Jesus and to persecute believers is spoken of as if he were an ox kicking at the sharp stick that a person uses to prod

Acts 26:15

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues giving his defense to King Agrippa, quoting his conversation with the Lord.

Acts 26:16

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues giving his defense to King Agrippa, quoting his conversation with the Lord.

Acts 26:17

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues giving his defense to King Agrippa, quoting his conversation with the Lord.

Acts 26:18

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues giving his defense to King Agrippa, quoting his conversation with the Lord.

to open their eyes

Paul helping people to understand the truth is spoken of as if he were helping them to open their physical eyes. Alternate translation: "to make them able to understand the truth"

to turn them from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God

Paul convincing people to stop obeying Satan and doing evil things and to start obeying God and doing good things is spoken of as if Paul were taking them out of a dark place where Satan controlled them and into a place where there was light and God controlled them. Alternate translation: "to help them stop doing what is evil, stop obeying Satan, and start trusting and obeying God"

they may receive from God the forgiveness of sins

The abstract noun "forgiveness" can be stated as the verb "forgive." Alternate translation: "God may forgive their sins and they may receive"

the inheritance that I give

The abstract noun "inheritance" may be stated as the verb "inherit." Alternate translation: "they may inherit that which I give"

the inheritance

The blessings that Jesus gives to those who believe in him are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that children receive from their father.

sanctified by faith in me

Jesus choosing some people to belong to him is spoken of as if he literally set them apart from other people.

by faith in me

"because they believe in me." Here Paul finishes quoting the Lord.

Acts 26:19

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true." Paul had just explained what the Lord had commanded him in his vision.

I did not disobey

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I obeyed"

the heavenly vision

This refers to what the person in the vision told Paul. Alternate translation: "what the person from heaven told me in the vision"

Acts 26:20

turn to God

To start trusting God is spoken of as if a person turns to start walking toward God. Alternate translation: "trust in God"

doing deeds worthy of repentance

The abstract noun "repentance" can be stated as the verb "repented." Alternate translation: "and start doing good deeds to show they truly have repented"

Acts 26:21

the Jews

This does not mean all of the Jews. Alternate translation: "some Jews"

Acts 26:22

to both small and great about nothing

Here "small" and "great" refer to people who are unimportant and important, respectively, and are used together to mean "all people." Alternate translation: "to all people, whether unimportant or important, about nothing"

about nothing more than what

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "about the exact thing that"

what the prophets

Paul is referring to the collective writings of the Old Testament prophets.

Acts 26:23

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes giving his defense to King Agrippa.

that Christ must suffer

You can make explicit that Christ must also die. Alternate translation: "that Christ must suffer and die"

from the dead

The phrase "the dead" refers to the spirits of people who have died. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

he would proclaim light

"he would proclaim the message about the light." To tell people about how God saves people is spoken of as if a person were speaking about the light. Alternate

translation: "he would proclaim the message about how God saves people"

Acts 26:24

Connecting Statement:

Paul and King Agrippa continue to talk together.

you are insane

"you are speaking nonsense" or "you are crazy"

your great learning makes you insane

"you have learned so much that you are now crazy"

Acts 26:25

I am not insane ... but

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I am sane ... and" or "I am able to think well ... and"

most excellent Festus

"Festus, who deserves highest honors"

Acts 26:26

For the king ... to him ... from him

Paul is still speaking to King Agrippa, but he is referring to him in the third person. Alternate translation: "For you ... to you ... from you"

I am persuaded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am sure"

that none of this is hidden from him

This can be stated in active and positive form. Alternate translation: "that he is aware of this" or "that you are aware of this"

has not been done in a corner

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has not happened in a corner"

in a corner

This means doing something in secret as if a person went and did something in the corner of a room where no one can see him. Alternate translation: "in a dark place" or "in secret"

Acts 26:27

Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa?

Paul asks this question to remind Agrippa that Agrippa already believes what the prophets said about Jesus. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You already believe what the Jewish prophets said, King Agrippa."

Acts 26:28

In a short time would you persuade me and make me a Christian?

Agrippa asks this question to show Paul that he cannot convince Agrippa so easily without more proof. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you do not think you can convince me so easily to believe in Jesus!"

Acts 26:29

but without these prison chains

Here "prison chains" stands for being a prisoner. Alternate translation: "but, of course, I do not want you to be a prisoner, as I am"

Acts 26:30

General Information:

Bernice was the sister of King Agrippa (Acts 25:13).

Connecting Statement:

This ends Paul's time before King Agrippa.

Then the king stood up, and the governor

"Then King Agrippa stood up, and Governor Festus"

Acts 26:31

the hall

This was a large room for ceremonies, trials, and other events.

This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds

Acts 26:32

The abstract noun "death" can be stated as the verb "die." Here "bonds" stands for being in prison. Alternate translation: "This man does not deserve to die or to be in prison"

This man could have been freed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This man could have gone free" or "I could have freed this man"

Acts 27 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sailing

People who lived near the sea traveled by boat powered by the wind. During some months of the year, the wind would blow in the wrong direction or so hard that sailing was impossible.

Trust

Paul trusted God to bring him safely to land. He told the sailors and soldiers to trust that God would also keep them alive. (See: trust)

Paul breaks bread

Luke uses almost the same words here to describe Paul taking bread, thanking God, breaking it, and eating it that he used to describe the last supper Jesus ate with his disciples. However, your translation should not make your reader think that Paul was leading a religious celebration here.

Links:

- [Acts 27:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 27

27:1-12

Why did Luke write “we”?

[27:1]

Luke wrote “we” because he went with Paul on the ship. Luke was writing about things that he saw. Some scholars think Luke and Aristarchus were Paul’s servants on the ship. Other scholars think “we” included everyone on the ship.

What was the Imperial Regiment?

[27:1]

The Imperial Regiment was a group of eighty soldiers. This regiment was under the command of a centurion named Julius.

Where was Adramyttium?

[27:2]

See Map: Adramyttium

Why did Paul go to his friends “to receive their care”?

[27:3]

When Paul received the care of his friends, it meant they cared for Paul and helped him.

Where was Cyprus, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Myra, and Lycia?

[27:4, 27:5]

See Map: Cyprus; Cilicia; Pamphylia; Myra; Lycia

What was an Alexandrian ship?

[27:6]

An Alexandrian ship was a ship from Egypt. These ships were very large and carried a lot of grain.

See: Grain (Grain Offering)

See Map: Mediterranean Sea; Alexandria; Egypt; Rome; Italy; Cnidus; Salmone; Fair Havens; Lasea

When was the Jewish Fast?

[27:9]

The Jewish fast was usually in September or October. It was also called the Day of Atonement.

See: Atone (Atonement); Fasting

How did Paul know the voyage will bring loss?

[27:10]

Paul knew the voyage will bring loss because he was already in three shipwrecks (see: 2 Corinthians 11:25) and he knew winter storms were dangerous.

See Map: Phoenix; Crete

27:13-38

Why did Paul remind the sailors they did not listen to him?

[27:21]

Paul reminded the sailors they did not listen to him because he wanted them to know he spoke wisely when he first spoke to them. He was hoping they would listen to the things he said now. That is, he was going to give them wise advice once again.

See Map: Crete; Cauda

How did Paul talk about salvation?

[27:22]

Paul talked about salvation from the storm and shipwreck. He was not talking about the forgiveness of sins. Paul wanted them to eat so they will have the strength to survive.

See: Save (Salvation, Saved from Sins); Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon); Sin

What did Paul mean when he said, “not one of you will lose a single hair from his head”?

[27:34]

When Paul said they will not lose a single hair from their head, he used a metaphor. It meant the men would not die in the storm or shipwreck.

Why did they want the ship to be lighter in weight?

[27:38]

They wanted the ship to be lighter in weight so that the ship would not sink and they would be able to get closer to land.

27:39-44

Why did the soldiers want to kill the prisoners to keep them from escaping?

[27:42]

The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners to keep them from escaping because Roman leaders killed Roman soldiers when a prisoner escaped (see: Acts 12:18-19; 16:27). However, God wanted to bring Paul to Rome. The Roman soldier did God’s will when he stopped the soldiers from killing the prisoners.

See: Will of God

See Map: Rome

Acts 27:1

General Information:

Adramyttium was a city possibly located on the west coast of modern-day Turkey. The word "we" includes the author of Acts, Paul, and the others traveling with Paul, but not the reader.

Connecting Statement:

Paul, as a prisoner, begins his journey to Rome.

When it was decided

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When the king and the governor decided"

sail for Italy

Italy is the name of the province Rome was in. See how you translated "Italy" in Acts 18:2.

they committed Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Augustan company of soldiers.

"they put a centurion named Julius, of the Imperial Regiment, in charge of Paul and some other prisoners"

they committed

Possible meanings are that 1) "they" refers to the governor and the king or 2) "they" refers to other Roman officials.

a centurion named Julius

Julius is a man's name.

the Augustan company of soldiers

Some versions translate the word Augustan as "Imperial" or "emperor's."

company of soldiers

This was a group of about 1,00 soldiers. See how you translated this in Acts 21:31.

Acts 27:2

We boarded a ship from Adramyttium which was about to sail along the coast of Asia

If your language requires a person to act here, you can add human actors: "We boarded a ship that people had brought from Adramyttium; they were about to sail it along."

a ship from Adramyttium

Possible meanings are 1) a ship that had come from Adramyttium or 2) a ship that was registered or licensed in Adramyttium.

about to sail

"soon going to sail" or "would depart soon"

went to sea

"began our journey on the sea"

Aristarchus

Aristarchus came from Macedonia but had been working with Paul in Ephesus. See how you translated his name in Acts 19:29.

Acts 27:3

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to the writer, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

Julius treated Paul kindly

"Julius treated Paul with a friendly concern." See how you translated "Julius" in Acts 27:1.

go to his friends to receive their care

The abstract noun "care" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "go to his friends so they could care for him" or "go to his friends so they could help him with whatever he needed"

Acts 27:4

we went to sea and sailed

"we started sailing and went"

sailed under the lee of Cyprus, close to the island

"the lee of Cyprus" is the side of that island that blocks the strong wind, so sailing vessels are not forced off their course.

Acts 27:5

Pamphylia

This was a province in Asia Minor. See how you translated this in Acts 2:10.

we landed at Myra, a city of Lycia

You can make explicit that they got off of the ship in Myra. Alternate translation: "came to Myra, a city of Lycia, where we got off the ship"

a city of Lycia

Lycia was a Roman province, located on the southwestern coast of modern-day Turkey.

Acts 27:6

found a ship from Alexandria that was going to sail to Italy

It is implied that a crew would sail the ship to Italy. Alternate translation: "found a ship that a crew had sailed from Alexandria and was about to sail to Italy"

Alexandria

This is the name of a city.

Acts 27:7

When we had sailed slowly ... finally arrived with difficulty

You can make explicit that the reason they were sailing slowly and with difficulty was because the wind was blowing against them.

near Cnidus

This is an ancient settlement located in modern-day Turkey.

the wind no longer allowed us to go that way

"we could no longer go that way because of the strong wind"

we sailed along the sheltered side of Crete

"we sailed along the side of Crete where there was less wind"

opposite Salmone

This is a coastal city in Crete.

Acts 27:8

We sailed along the coast with difficulty

You can make explicit that even though the winds were not as strong as before, they were still strong enough to make sailing difficult.

Fair Havens

This was a port near Lasea, located on the south coast of Crete.

near the city of Lasea

This is a coastal city in Crete.

Acts 27:9

We had now taken much time

Because of the direction the wind was blowing, the journey from Caesarea to Fair Havens had taken more time than planned.

We had now taken

The writer includes himself, Paul, and those who were traveling with them, but not the reader.

the time of the Jewish fast also had passed, and it had now become dangerous to sail

This fast took place on the Day of Atonement, which was usually either in the last part of September or the first part of October according to Western calendars. After this time, there was a higher risk of seasonal storms.

Acts 27:10

I see that the voyage we are about to take will be with injury and much loss

"if we travel now, we will suffer much injury and loss"

with injury

If your language has a word for "injury" that results from wrongdoing, you may want to use it here.

we are about to take ... our lives

Paul includes himself and his hearers, so this is inclusive.

loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives

Here "loss" means destruction when referring to things and death when referring to people.

not only of the cargo and the ship

Cargo is something that a person transports from one place to another by boat. Alternate translation: "not only the ship and the goods on the ship"

Acts 27:11

that were spoken by Paul

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Paul said"

Acts 27:12

harbor was not easy to spend the winter in

You can make explicit why it was not easy to stay in the harbor. Alternate translation: "harbor did not sufficiently protect docked ships during winter storms"

harbor

a place near land that is usually safe for ships

city of Phoenix

Phoenix was a port city on the south coast of Crete.

to spend the winter there

This speaks about the season of winter as if it were a commodity that someone can spend. Alternate translation: "to stay there for the cold season"

facing both southwest and northwest

Here "faces northwest and southwest" means the opening of the harbor was toward those directions.

Alternate translation: "it opened to the northwest and southwest"

southwest and northwest

These directions are based on what one sees as one faces the setting sun. Northwest is a little to the right of the setting sun, and southwest is a little to the left of the setting sun.

Acts 27:13

weighed anchor

Here "weighed" means "pulled out of the water." An anchor is a heavy object attached to a rope that is secured to the boat. The anchor is tossed into the water and sinks to the bottom of the sea to keep the ship from drifting about.

Acts 27:14

Connecting Statement:

Paul and those traveling on the boat encounter a fierce storm.

after a short time

"after a little while"

a wind of hurricane force

"a very strong, dangerous wind"

called the northeaster

"called 'a strong wind from the northeast.'" The word for "the northeaster" in the original language is "Euroclydon." You can transliterate this word for your language.

began to beat down from the island

"came in from the island of Crete, and it blew strongly against our ship"

Acts 27:15

When the ship was caught by the storm and could no longer head into the wind

"When the wind blew so strongly against the front of the ship that we could not sail against it"

we had to give way to the storm and were driven along by the wind

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we stopped trying to sail forward, and we let the wind push us whichever way it blew"

Acts 27:16

We sailed along the lee of a small island

"We sailed on the side of the island where the wind was not so strong"

a small island called Cauda

This island was located on the south coast of Crete.

lifeboat

This was a smaller boat towed behind or secured onto a ship, used to take people and goods across water too shallow for the ship and also to escape from the ship if it sank. At this point the lifeboat was in the water being towed by the ship.

Acts 27:17

they had hoisted the lifeboat up

"they had lifted up the lifeboat" or "they had pulled the lifeboat aboard the ship"

they used its ropes to bind the hull of the ship

The "hull" is the body of the ship. They tied ropes around it so that the ship would not come apart during the storm.

sandbars of Syrtis

Sandbars are very shallow areas in the sea where ships can get stuck in the sand. Syrtis is located on the coast of Libya, northern Africa.

they lowered the sea anchor

A sea anchor is something that is towed in the water behind a ship to slow the ship down and make it more stable. It may be a large cloth or a stiff board. Alternate translation: "they let the floating anchor down into the water"

were driven along

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "had to go in whatever direction the wind blew us"

Acts 27:18

We took such a violent battering by the storm

"The wind blew us so roughly back and forth that all of us were badly battered and bruised by the storm"

they began throwing the cargo overboard

The word "they" refers to the sailors. This is done to lighten the weight of the ship in an effort to prevent the ship from sinking.

cargo

Cargo is something that a person transports from one place to another by boat. See how you translated this in Acts 27:10. Alternate translation: "goods on the ship"

Acts 27:19

the sailors threw overboard the ship's equipment with their own hands

Here "equipment" refers to the sailors' equipment needed to sail the ship: tackle, hoists, beams of wood, block and tackle, ropes, lines, sails, and the like. This indicates how desperate the situation was.

Acts 27:20

When the sun and stars did not shine on us for many days

They could not see the sun and stars because of the dark storm clouds. Sailors needed to see the sun and stars in order to know where they were and what direction they were headed.

the great storm still beat upon us

"the terrible storm still blew us roughly back and forth"

any more hope that we should be saved was abandoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone abandoned hope that we would be saved"

any more hope that we should be saved was abandoned

Here the word "hope" is a person's thought that what he desires might happen. Here the men on the boat had no reason to believe that they would be rescued, so they quit hoping. Alternate translation: "we quit thinking that we might be saved"

be saved

"be rescued." Since there is no mention of the people praying for God to save them, this might simply have the sense of "survive."

Acts 27:21

Connecting Statement:

Paul speaks to the sailors on the ship.

When they had gone long without food

Here "they" refers to the sailors. It is implied that Luke, Paul, and those with them had not eaten either. Alternate translation: "When we had gone a long time without food"

among the sailors

"among the men"

so as to get this injury and loss

"and as a result suffer this harm and loss"

Acts 27:22

there will be no loss of life among you, but only the loss of the ship

Paul is speaking to the sailors. It is implied that Paul also means that he and those with him will not die either. Alternate translation: "none of us will die: the storm will destroy only the ship"

Acts 27:23

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 27:24

You must stand before Caesar

The phrase "stand before Caesar" refers to Paul's going to court and letting Caesar judge him. Alternate translation: "You must stand before Caesar so he can judge you"

has given to you all those who are sailing with you

"has decided to allow all those who are sailing with you to live"

Acts 27:25

just as it was told to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as the angel told me"

Acts 27:26

we must run aground upon some island

"we must steer our boat so that it wrecks on some island"

Acts 27:27

Connecting Statement:

The fierce storm continues.

When the fourteenth night had come

The ordinal number "fourteenth" can be translated as "fourteen" or "14." Alternate translation: "After 14 days since the storm started, that night"

as we were driven this way and that

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as the wind blew us back and forth"

the Adriatic Sea

This is the sea between Italy and Greece.

Acts 27:28

They took soundings

"They measured the depth of the sea water." They measured the depth of water by dropping a line with a weight tied to the end of it into the water.

found twenty fathoms

"found 20 fathoms." A "fathom" is a unit of measurement for measuring the depth of water. One fathom is about two meters. Alternate translation: "found 40 meters"

found fifteen fathoms

"found 15 fathoms." A "fathom" is a unit of measurement for measuring the depth of water. One fathom is about two meters. Alternate translation: "found 30 meters"

Acts 27:29

anchors

An anchor is a heavy object attached to a rope that is secured to the boat. The anchor is tossed into the water and sinks to the bottom of the sea, keeping the ship from drifting about. See how you translated this in Acts 27:13.

from the stern

"from the back of the ship"

Acts 27:30

the lifeboat

This was a smaller boat towed behind or secured onto a ship, used to take people and goods across water too shallow for the ship and also to escape from the ship if it sank. See how you translated this in Acts 27:16.

from the bow

"from the front of the ship"

Acts 27:31

General Information:

Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the centurion and the Roman soldiers.

Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved

Paul meant that if those men left the ship, then no one on the ship would be saved. This can be stated positively, and the passive phrase "be saved" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You can be saved only if these men stay in the ship" or "Only if these men stay in the ship will you survive"

Acts 27:32

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 27:33

When daylight was coming on

"When it was almost sunrise"

This day is the fourteenth day that

The ordinal number "fourteenth" can be stated as "fourteen." Alternate translation: "For 14 days"

Acts 27:34

not one of you will lose a single hair from his head

This was a customary way of saying no harm would come upon them. Alternate translation: "every one of you will survive this disaster unharmed"

Acts 27:35

broke the bread

"tore the bread" or "tore off a piece from the loaf of bread"

Acts 27:36

Then they were all encouraged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This encouraged all of them"

Acts 27:37

We were 276 souls on the ship

"There were two hundred and seventy-six of us in the ship." This is background information.

souls

This is a metonym for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "people"

Acts 27:38

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Acts 27:39

bay

a large area of water partly surrounded by land

did not recognize the land

"saw land but could not recognize it as any place they knew"

Acts 27:40

cut loose the anchors and left them

"cut the ropes and left the anchors behind"

rudders

large oars or pieces of wood at the back of the ship used for steering

the foresail

"the sail at the front of the ship." The sail was a large piece of cloth that caught the wind to move the ship.

they headed to the beach

"they steered the ship toward the beach"

Acts 27:41

a sandbar

an underwater pile of sand that made the water suddenly shallow

The bow

the front end of the ship

the stern

"the back end of the ship"

Acts 27:42

jump overboard

The soldiers' plan was

"jump off the ship into the water"

"The soldiers were planning"

Acts 27:44

Acts 27:43

some on planks

so he stopped their plan

"some on wooden boards"

"so he stopped them from doing what they planned to do"

Acts 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

No one knows for sure why Luke ends his history without telling what happened to Paul after he had been in Rome for two years.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Letters" and "brothers"

The Jewish leaders were surprised that Paul wanted to speak with them, because they had received no letters from the high priest in Jerusalem telling them that Paul was coming.

When the Jewish leaders spoke of "brothers," they were referring to fellow Jews, not to Christians.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"He was a god"

The native people believed that Paul was a god, but they did not believe that he was the one true God. We do not know why Paul did not tell the native people that he was not a god.

Links:

- [Acts 28:1 Notes](#)

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Acts 28

28:1-10

What did it mean that the natives offered more than "ordinary kindness"?

[28:2]

The people of Malta showed the shipwrecked people more than ordinary "kindness" (φιλιανθρωπία/g5363). That is, they were more kind to these people than other would have been.

See Map: Malta; Phoenicia

What did it mean that a viper "fastened" onto Paul's hand?

[28:3]

Scholars think the viper bit into Paul's hand and kept hanging on. That is, it attached itself to Paul's hand.

What was meant by the words, "justice does not permit him to live"?

[28:4]

The people of Malta believed in a goddess named “justice.” This false god judged a person who escaped from captivity. Other scholars think the people in Malta believed that the justice of their god would not let Paul live.

See: False gods; Judge (Judgment)

See Map: Malta

Who was Publius?

[28:7]

Some scholars think Publius was a Roman whom the Roman government appointed Publius to rule the island of Malta. Other scholars think Publius was very rich and many people knew him. He then became the leader of the island.

See Map: Malta

What kind of illness did Publius’ father have?

[28:8]

Scholars think Publius’ father often had fever and dysentery. That is, he was often ill.

How was Publius’ father, and the rest of the people healed?

[28:9]

Scholars think Publius’ father and the rest of the people were miraculously healed when Paul placed his hands upon them and prayed for them. That is, God healed the people for whom Paul prayed.

See: Miracle; Pray (Prayer)

28:11-16

What were “the twin gods”?

[28:11]

“The twin gods” were Castor and Pollux. The Greeks believed these false gods were the sons of another false god, Zeus. The Greeks thought that these gods protected ships. Pagan sailors prayed to them for protection in storms.

See: Idolatry (Idol); False gods; Pagan

See Map: Syracuse; Rhegium; Puteoli

Where was Puteoli?

[28:13]

See Map: Puteoli

Who were the “brothers” about whom Luke wrote?

[28:15]

Luke wrote “brothers”(ἀδελφός/g0080) to let his readers know they were Christians. They also included Christian women.

See: Family of God

What was the market of Appius?

[28:15]

The Market of Appius was a market on a paved road to Rome. The paved road was about 60 kilometers from Rome.

What was the Three Taverns?

[28:15]

The Three Taverns was a place on the Appian Way. It was about 50 kilometers from Rome.

How did the soldier guard Paul?

[28:16]

The soldier guarded Paul with a small chain on Paul's wrist (see: Acts 28:20).

28:17-29

What did Paul mean by the word, "brothers" in this context?

[28:17]

When Paul spoke to the "brothers" (ἀδελφός/g0080) here, he was speaking to the Jewish leaders. They ruled over several synagogues in Rome.

See: Synagogue

See Map: Rome

What was the hope of Israel?

[28:20]

Scholars say the hope of Israel was two things.

1. They had hope of becoming alive again after death. This was made possible because Jesus died and became alive again.
2. They had hope of the coming of the messiah. This hope was fulfilled when Jesus came to earth.

See: Hope; Resurrect (Resurrection) ; Messiah (Christ); Fulfill (Fulfillment)

What was the "sect" about which the Jewish leaders spoke?

[28:22]

The Jewish leaders wanted to hear from Paul regarding the "sect." That is, they wanted to know about Christianity and about the things he believed and taught. The Jewish leaders also heard the "sect" was called the Nazarenes.

Advice to translators: A sect is a group of religious people who believe the same thing.

What was meant by the words, “testified about the kingdom of God”?

[28:23]

When Luke wrote that Paul “testified about the kingdom of God,” he meant that Paul taught the Jewish leaders about Jesus. He taught them that Jesus is the messiah whom God promised to Israel.

See: Testify (Testimony); Kingdom of God; Messiah (Christ)

Why did Paul say the same thing Isaiah wrote?

[28:25]

Scholars think Paul said the same thing Isaiah wrote because he wanted people to know something. He wanted them to remember what happened when Isaiah lived. At that time, people would not understand what God said to them through the prophets. Now, Paul wanted people to know that the Jewish leaders did not understand what God said to them through the apostles and prophets (see: Isaiah 6:9-10).

See: Apostle; Prophet

What did it mean that the people’s hearts had become “dull”?

[28:27]

Some scholars think that when the people’s hearts had become “dull” it meant that the people simply refused to listen and understand God’s messengers. Other scholars think the people’s hearts were dull because they had been disobedient to God’s word for so long, they could no longer understand the things God wanted them to know.

See: Heart (Metaphor); Word of God

What did Luke write in verse 29?

[28:29]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words in verse 29. Older and more ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have the words of verse 29. Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words.

See: Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible

28:30-31

What did Luke mean when he wrote that Paul taught the things about Jesus “with all boldness”?

[28:31]

Scholars think that during these two years Paul was able to teach anyone and anywhere, and no one attempted to stop him from teaching.

Acts 28:1

Connecting Statement:

General Information:

After the shipwreck, people on the island of Malta helped Paul and everyone on the ship. They stay there for 3 months.

Here the word “we” refers to Paul, the writer, and those who traveled with them, but not to the reader.

When we were brought safely through

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When we arrived safely"

we learned

Paul and Luke learned the name of the island.
Alternate translation: "we learned from the people" or "we found out from the residents"

the island was called Malta

Malta is an island located south of the modern-day island of Sicily.

Acts 28:2

The native people

"The local people"

offered to us not just ordinary kindness

Being kind to someone is spoken of as if it were an object that someone offers. Alternate translation: "were not only very kind to us"

not just ordinary kindness

This phrase is used to emphasize the opposite of what is said. Alternate translation: "a great deal of kindness"

they lit a fire

"they put together twigs and branches and burned them"

welcomed us all

Possible meanings are 1) "welcomed all of the people from the ship" or 2) "welcomed Paul and all his companions."

Acts 28:3

a viper came out

"a poisonous snake came out of the bundle of sticks"

fastened onto his hand

"bit Paul's hand and did not let go"

Acts 28:4

This man certainly is a murderer

"For sure, this man is a murderer" or "This man is truly a murderer"

Justice

"Justice" was the name of a goddess that the people on the island worshiped. Alternate translation: "the goddess called Justice"

Acts 28:5

shook the animal into the fire

"shook his hand so that the snake fell from his hand into the fire"

suffered no harm

"Paul was not hurt at all"

Acts 28:6

waiting for him to swell up

They they that his body would swell because of the snake venom.

nothing was wrong with him

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "everything about him was as it should be"

they changed their minds

To think differently about a situation is spoken of as if a person is changing his mind. Alternate translation: "they thought again"

said that he was a god.

Perhaps the people believed that someone who lived after a poisonous snake bite was divine or a god. This can be stated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "said, 'This man must be a god.'"

Acts 28:7

General Information:

Here the words "us" and "we" refer to Paul, Luke, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

Now in a nearby place

"Now" is used to introduce a new person or event in the account.

chief man of the island

Possible meanings are 1) the main leader of the people or 2) someone who was the most important person on the island, perhaps because of his wealth.

Acts 28:8

It happened that the father of Publius ... fever and dysentery

This is background information about Publius' father that is important to understanding the story.

was lying afflicted

"was in bed, ill"

afflicted with a fever and dysentery

Dysentery is an infectious disease of the intestines.

placed his hands on him

"touched him with his hands"

Acts 28:9

were healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he healed them too"

Acts 28:10

honored us with many honors

Probably they honored Paul and those with him by giving them gifts.

Acts 28:11

Connecting Statement:

Paul's journey to Rome continues.

that had spent the winter at the island

"that the crew left at the island for the cold season"

a ship of Alexandria

Possible meanings are this refers to 1) a ship that came from Alexandria, or 2) a ship that was registered or licensed in Alexandria.

the twin gods

On the bow of the ship, there was a carving of the two idols called "the twin gods." Their names were Castor and Pollux.

Acts 28:12

city of Syracuse

Syracuse is a city on the southeast coast of the modern-day island of Sicily, just southwest of Italy.

Acts 28:13

city of Rhegium

This is the port city located at the southwestern tip of Italy.

a south wind sprang up

"the wind began to blow from the south"

city of Puteoli

Puteoli is located in modern-day Naples on the west coast of Italy.

Acts 28:14

There we found

"There we met"

brothers

These were followers of Jesus, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "fellow believers"

were invited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they invited us"

In this way we came to Rome

Once Paul reached Puteoli, the rest of the journey to Rome was on land. Alternate translation: "And after we stayed seven days with them, we went to Rome"

Acts 28:15

General Information:

The Market of Appius was a popular market village about 60 kilometers south of the city of Rome on a road called the Appian Way. The Three Taverns was another village about 50 kilometers south of Rome.

after they heard about us

"after they heard we were coming"

he thanked God and took courage

Courage is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could take. Alternate translation: "this encouraged him, and he thanked God"

Acts 28:16

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to the writer, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

Connecting Statement:

Paul arrives in Rome as a prisoner but with the freedom to stay in his own place. He calls the local Jews together to explain what has happened to him.

When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After we had arrived in Rome, the Roman authorities gave Paul permission to"

Acts 28:17

Then it came about that

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

the leaders among the Jews

These are the Jewish civil or religious leaders present in Rome.

Brothers

Here this means "Fellow Jews."

against the people

"against our people" or "against the Jews"

I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some of the Jews arrested me in Jerusalem and placed me in the custody of the Roman authorities"

into the hands of the Romans

Here "hands" stands for power or control.

Acts 28:18

there was no reason for the death penalty in my case

"there was no reason for them to execute me" or "I had done nothing to cause them to kill me"

Acts 28:19

the Jews

This does not mean all of the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

spoke against their desire

"complained about what the Roman authorities wanted to do"

I was forced to appeal to Caesar

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I had to ask for Caesar to judge me"

although it is not as if I were bringing any accusation against my nation

The abstract noun "accusation" can be stated as the verb "accuse." Here "nation" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "but it was not because I wanted to accuse the people of my nation before Caesar"

Acts 28:20

the hope of Israel

Here the word "hope" is what a person desires to happen and is confident will happen. In this case it is what the people of Israel hope for. Alternate translation: "what Israel joyfully waits for" or "what the people of Israel confidently expect"

the hope of Israel

Paul did not state clearly what Israel hoped for. He may have been referring 1) to their hope that the Messiah would come or 2) to their hope that God would cause those who have died to live again.

Israel

Here "Israel" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel" or "the Jews"

that I am now wearing this chain

Here "wearing this chain" stands for being a prisoner. Alternate translation: "that I am a prisoner"

Acts 28:21

General Information:

Here the word "We" refers to the Jewish leaders in Rome.

Connecting Statement:

The Jewish leaders respond to Paul.

nor did any of the brothers

Here "brothers" stands for fellow Jews. Alternate translation: "nor did any of our fellow Jews"

Acts 28:22

General Information:

Here the words "we" and "us" refer to the Jewish leaders in Rome.

you think about this sect

A sect is a smaller group within a larger group. Here it refers to those who believe in Jesus. Alternate

translation: "you think about this group to which you belong"

because it is known by us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because we know"

it is spoken against everywhere

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "many Jews all over the Roman Empire are saying bad things about it"

Acts 28:23

General Information:

Here all instances of "they" and "them" refer to the Jewish leaders in Rome. All instances of "him," "his," and "He" refer to Paul (Acts 28:17).

had appointed a day for him

"had chosen a time for him to speak to them"

testified about the kingdom of God

Here "kingdom of God" stands for God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "told them about God's rule as king" or "told them how God would show himself as king"

from the prophets

Here "the prophets" refers to what they wrote. Alternate translation: "from what the prophets wrote"

Acts 28:24

Some were convinced about the things which were said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Paul was able to convince some of them"

Acts 28:25

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the Jewish leaders in Rome (Acts 28:17). The word "your" refers to the people to whom Paul had been speaking.

Connecting Statement:

As the Jewish leaders were ready to leave, Paul quoted the Old Testament scriptures that were appropriate for this time.

after Paul had spoken this one word

Here "word" stands for a message or statement.
Alternate translation: "after Paul had said one more thing" or "after Paul had made this statement"

The Holy Spirit spoke well through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers.

This sentence contains quotations within quotations.

Acts 28:26

General Information:

Paul begins to quote the book that the prophet Isaiah wrote.

He said, 'Go to this people and say, "Hearing you will hear, but you will never understand; seeing, you will see, but you will never know.

This is the end of the sentence that begins with the words "The Holy Spirit spoke" in verse 25 and that contains quotations within quotations. You can translate one of the inner quotations as an indirect quotation, or you can translate two of the inner quotations as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "The Spirit told Isaiah to go tell them that they will hear but will not understand and they will see but they will not know"

Hearing you will hear ... seeing, you will see

The words "hear" and "see" are repeated for emphasis. "You will listen carefully ... you will look intently"

but you will never understand ... but you will never know

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. They emphasize that the Jewish people will not understand God's plan.

Acts 28:27

General Information:

Translate Paul's quotation of Isaiah as a direct quotation or an indirect quotation according to how you translated it in [Acts 28:25-26](#).

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes quoting Isaiah the prophet.

For the heart of this people has become dull

People who stubbornly refuse to understand what God is saying or doing are spoken of as if their heart is dull. Here "heart" is a metonym for the mind.

with their ears they hardly hear, and they have shut their eyes

People who stubbornly refuse to understand what God is saying or doing are spoken of as if they are unable to hear and are shutting their eyes so that they will not see.

understand with their heart

Here "heart" stands for the mind.

turn again

To start obeying God is spoken of as though the person were physically turning toward God.

I would heal them

This does not mean God would only heal them physically. He would also heal them spiritually by forgiving their sins.

Acts 28:28

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes speaking to the Jewish leaders in Rome.

this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles

God's message about how he saves people is spoken of as if it were an object that is sent. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is sending his messengers to the Gentiles to tell them about how he will save them"

they will listen

"some of them will listen." This response of the Gentiles is in contrast to the way the Jews of that time responded.

Acts 28:29

General Information:

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Acts 28:30

General Information:

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Acts 28:31

Connecting Statement:

Luke ends the story of Paul in the book of Acts.

He was proclaiming the kingdom of God

Here "kingdom of God" refers to God's rule as king.
Alternate translation: "He was preaching about God's rule as king" or "He was preaching about how God will show himself as king"
