

## **Language: English**

### **Book: Acts**

### **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.

###### **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 intently 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"

**Chapter 2**

**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) 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)(../02/38.md)). 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.

#### **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"

## **Chapter 3**

### **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)

**Acts 3:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

One day Peter and John go to the temple.

**into the temple**

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"

**Acts 3:2**

**a man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people were carrying a man who was lame from from his mother's womb"

**from his mother's womb**

"ever since he was born"

**the temple gate called Beautiful**

This was one of the gates in the high, strong wall that surrounded the temple. People sometimes gathered near the gate.

**lame**

unable to walk

**Acts 3:3**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Acts 3:4**

**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"

**Chapter 4**

**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.

**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]

## **Chapter 5**

### **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.

**Acts 5:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Continuing the story of how the new Christians shared their belongings with other believers, Luke tells about two believers, Ananias and Sapphira.

**Now**

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story to tell a new part of the story.

**Acts 5:2**

**his wife also knew it**

"his wife also knew that he kept back part of the sale money"

**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 5:3**

**General Information:**

If your language does not use rhetorical questions, you may reword these as statements.

**why has Satan filled your heart to lie ... land?**

Peter uses this question to rebuke Ananias. Alternate translation: "you should not have let Satan fill your heart to lie ... land."

**Satan filled your heart**

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"

**to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the price**

This implies that Ananias had told the apostles that he was giving the entire amount that he had received from selling his land.

**Acts 5:4**

**While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own ... authority?**

Peter uses this question to rebuke Ananias. Alternate translation: "While it remained unsold, it was your own ... authority."

**While it remained unsold**

"Before you sold it"

**after it was sold, was it not under your authority?**

Peter uses this question to rebuke Ananias. Alternate translation: "after it was sold, you had control over the money that you received."

**after it was sold**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after you sold it"

**Why did you put it in your heart to do this?**

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."

**Acts 5:5**

**fell down and breathed his last**

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"

## **Chapter 6**

### **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.

#### **Acts 6:1**

##### **General Information:**

This is the beginning of a new part of the story. Luke gives important background information to understand the story.

##### **Now in these days**

Consider how new parts of a story are introduced in your language.

##### **was multiplying**

"was greatly increasing"

##### **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.

**Grecian Jews**

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.

**the Hebrews**

These were believers who had grown up as Jews or become converts in Israel speaking Hebrew or Aramaic.

**widows**

A widow is a woman who has not remarried since her husband died.

**their widows were being overlooked**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Hebrew believers were overlooking the Grecian widows"

**being overlooked**

"being ignored" or "being forgotten." There were so many who needed help that some were missed.

**daily distribution of help**

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.

**Acts 6:2**

**General Information:**

Here the word "us" refers to the 12 apostles and not to their hearers, so it is exclusive.

**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 freedmen

**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.

## **Chapter 7**

### **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.

**Acts 7:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

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.

**Acts 7:2**

**General Information:**

The word "our" includes both Steven, the Jewish council to whom he spoke, and the entire audience.

**Brothers and fathers, listen to me**

Stephen was being very respectful to the council in greeting them as extended family.

**Acts 7:3**

**General Information:**

The word "your" refers to Abraham and so is singular.

**Acts 7:4**

**General Information:**

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 7:5**

**He gave none of it**

"He did not give any of it"

**enough to set a foot on**

Possible meanings for this phrase are 1) enough ground to stand on or 2) enough ground to take a step. 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 7:6**

**God was speaking to him like this**

It may be helpful to state that this occurred later than the statement in the

previous verse. Alternate translation: "Later God told Abraham"

**four hundred years**

"400 years"

**Acts 7:7**

**I will judge the nation**

"nation" refers to the people in it. Alternate translation: "I will judge the people of the nation"

**the nation that they serve**

"the nation that they will serve"

**Acts 7:8**

**gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision**

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"

**so Abraham became the father of Isaac**

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 to do 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"

## **Chapter 8**

### **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.

##### **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 is 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"

**Chapter 9**

**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.

**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"

**Chapter 10**

**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.

**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**

worshiped 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"

## **Chapter 11**

### **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.

**Acts 11:1**

**General Information:**

This is the beginning of a new event in the story.

**Now**

This marks a new part of the story.

**the brothers**

The phrase "brothers" here refers to the believers in Judea.

**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 11:2**

**Connecting Statement:**

Peter arrives in Jerusalem and begins talking to the Jews there.

**had come up to Jerusalem**

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.

**they who belonged to the circumcision group**

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"

**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"

**Chapter 12**

**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.

**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 12:13), and the words "they" and "They" refer to the people who were inside praying (Acts 12:12).

**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"

## **Chapter 13**

### **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)

### **Acts 13:1**

#### **General Information:**

Verse 1 gives background information about the people in the church at Antioch.

#### **Connecting Statement:**

Luke begins to tell about the mission trips on which the church at Antioch send Barnabas and Saul.

#### **Now in the church in Antioch**

"At that time in the church at Antioch"

**Simeon ... Niger ... Lucius ... Manaen**

These are men's names.

**foster brother of Herod the tetrarch**

Manaen was probably Herod's playmate or close friend while they were growing up.

### **Acts 13:2**

#### **General Information:**

The words "they" refers to the other three leaders (Acts 13:1), not including Barnabas and Saul, and it could include other believers.

#### **Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul**

"Appoint Barnabas and Saul to serve me"

#### **I have called them**

The verb here means that God chose them to do this work.

### **Acts 13:3**

#### **General Information:**

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.

#### **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 that the Holy Spirit had called Barnabas and Saul to do this work.

#### **sent them off**

"sent those men off" or "sent those men off to do the work the Holy Spirit told them to do"

### **Acts 13:4**

#### **General Information:**

Here the word "they" refers to Barnabas and Saul.

#### **So**

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.

#### **went down**

The phrase "went down" is used here because Seleucia is lower in elevation than Antioch.

#### **Seleucia**

a city by the sea

### **Acts 13:5**

#### **General Information:**

Here the words "They" and "their" refer to Barnabas and Saul.

**city of Salamis**

The city of Salamis was on Cyprus Island.

**proclaimed the word of God**

"Word of God" here is a synecdoche for "message of God." Alternate translation: "proclaimed the message of God"

**synagogues of the Jews**

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.

**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 hearers 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**

This was a symbolic act to indicate to the unbelieving people that God had rejected them and would punish them.

**Acts 13:52**

**the disciples**

This probably refers to the new believers in the Antioch of Pisidia that Paul and Silas just left.

**Chapter 14**

**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.

**Acts 14:1**

**General Information:**

The story of Paul and Barnabas in Iconium continues.

**It came about in Iconium that**

Possible meanings here are 1) "It happened in Iconium that" or 2) "In Iconium, as usual,"

**spoke in such a way**

"spoke so powerfully." It may be helpful to state that they spoke the message about Jesus. Alternate translation: "spoke the message about Jesus so powerfully"

**Acts 14:2**

**the Jews who were disobedient**

This refers to the portion of the Jews who did not believe the message about Jesus.

**stirred up the minds of the Gentiles**

Causing the Gentiles to become angry is spoken of as if calm waters were disturbed.

**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 version 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.

**Chapter 15**

**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.

#### **Obeing 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.

### **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"

## **Chapter 16**

### **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.

**Acts 16:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

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.

**Paul also came**

Here "came" can be translated as "went."

**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**

**General Information:**

Here the word "they" refers to Paul and Silas. The word "them" refers to the believers in Philippi.

**Connecting Statement:**

This is the end of Paul and Silas' time in Philippi.

**came to the house**

Here "came" can be translated as "went."

**the house of Lydia**

"the home of Lydia"

**saw the brothers**

Here "brothers" refers to believers, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "saw the believers"

## **Chapter 17**

### **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.

### **Acts 17:1**

**General Information:**

Both instances of "they" refers to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:40).

**Connecting Statement:**

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."

**Now**

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.

**passed through**

"traveled through"

**cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia**

These are coastal cities in Macedonia.

**they came to the city**

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"

**Acts 17:2**

**went to them ... reasoned with them**

"went to the Jews ... reasoned with the Jews"

**as his custom was**

"as his habit was" or "as his common practice was." Paul usually went to the synagogue on the Sabbath when Jews would be present.

**for three Sabbath days**

"on each Sabbath day for three weeks"

**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 or "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 babbler**

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 be 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.

**Chapter 18**

**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)

**Acts 18:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

This is another part of the story of Paul's travels as he goes to Corinth.

**After these things**

"After these events took place in Athens"

**Athens**

Athens was one of the most important cities in Greece. See how you translated this in Acts 17:15.

**Acts 18:2**

**General Information:**

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"

**Chapter 19**

**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.

**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 to 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 worshipping 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:**

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**Acts 19:33**

**Alexander**

This is the name of a man.

**motioned with his hand**

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"

**to give a defense**

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."

**Acts 19:34**

**with one voice**

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"

**Acts 19:35**

**Connecting Statement:**

The clerk of Ephesus speaks to quiet the crowd.

**the town clerk**

This refers to the town "writer" or "secretary."

**what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper ... heaven?**

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."

**who does not know**

The town clerk uses "not" to emphasize that all of the people knew this.

**temple keeper**

The Ephesian people maintained and guarded the temple of Artemis.

**the image which fell down from heaven**

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 come directly from Zeus, the ruler of the Greek gods (idols).

#### **Acts 19:36**

##### **General Information:**

The word "you" is plural.

##### **Seeing then that these things are undeniable**

"Since you know these things"

##### **do nothing rash**

"do not do anything before you have had time to think about it"

##### **rash**

without careful thought

#### **Acts 19:37**

##### **General Information:**

The word "you" is plural.

##### **these men**

The words "these men" refer to Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions (Acts 19:29).

#### **Acts 19:38**

##### **Therefore**

"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.

##### **have an accusation against anyone**

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"

#### **Acts 19:39**

##### **Connecting Statement:**

The town clerk finishes speaking to the crowd.

##### **But if you are seeking anything more**

"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"

##### **the regular assembly**

This refers to a regular public gathering of citizens over which the county clerk presided.

#### **Acts 19:40**

##### **For we are in danger of being accused of rioting today**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in danger of the Roman authorities accusing us of starting this riot today"

## **Chapter 20**

## **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.

#### **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"

**Chapter 21**

**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.

**Acts 21:1**

**General Information:**

Here the word "we" refers to Luke, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

**Connecting Statement:**

The writer Luke, Paul, and his companions continue their travels.

**we took a straight course to the city of Cos**

"we went straight to the city of Cos" or "we went directly to the city of Cos"

**city of Cos**

Cos is a Greek island off the coast of modern day Turkey in the South Aegean Sea region.

**city of Rhodes**

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.

**city of Patara**

Patara is a city on the southwest coast of modern day Turkey south of the Aegean Sea in the Mediterranean Sea.

**Acts 21:2**

**When we found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia**

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"

**a ship crossing over**

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"

**Acts 21:3**

**General Information:**

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 about you ... not to walk according the traditional ways**

Apparently here there are some Jews that are distorting what Paul is teaching. He does not discourage the Jews from obeying the law of Moses. His message is that circumcision and the other customs are not necessary for Jesus to save them. You can make explicit that the leaders of the Jewish believers in Jerusalem knew that Paul was teaching God's true message.

**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 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"

## **Chapter 22**

### **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.

#### **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.

**Chapter 23**

**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.

**Acts 23:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul stands before the chief priests and the council members (Acts 22:30).

**Brothers**

Here this means "Fellow Jews."

**I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day**

"I know that even to this day I have done what God has wanted me to do"

**Acts 23:2**

**Ananias**

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"

## **Chapter 24**

### **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)(./02.md)) 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.

### **Acts 24:1**

#### **Connecting Statement:**

Paul is on trial in Caesarea. Tertullus presents Governor Felix with the charges against Paul.

#### **After five days**

"Five days after the Roman soldiers took Paul to Caesarea"

#### **Ananias**

This is the name of a man. He is not the same Ananias as in [Acts 5:1]

#### **an orator**

"a lawyer." Tertullus was an expert in Roman law who was there to accuse Paul in court.

#### **Tertullus**

This is the name of a man.

#### **went there**

"went to Caesarea where Paul was"

#### **before the governor**

"in the presence of the governor, who was judge in the court"

**brought charges against Paul**

"began to argue the case before the governor that Paul had broken the law."

**Acts 24:2**

**Because of you**

Here the word "you" refers to Felix, the governor.

**we have great peace**

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 group. Tertullus considers the Christians to be a small group within Judaism.

**Acts 24:6**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**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"

**Chapter 25**

**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.

**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.

## **Chapter 26**

### **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)

**Acts 26:1**

##### **Connecting Statement:**

Festus has brought Paul before King Agrippa.

##### **Agrippa**

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.

##### **stretched out his hand**

"held out his hand" or "gestured with his hand"

##### **made his defense**

The abstract noun "defense" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "began to defend himself against those who were accusing him"

**Acts 26:2**

##### **Connecting Statement:**

Paul gives his defense to King Agrippa.

##### **I consider myself happy**

Paul was happy because he considered his appearance before Agrippa to be an opportunity to speak about the gospel.

##### **to make my case**

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"

**against all the accusations of the Jews**

The abstract noun "accusations" can be stated as the verb "accuse." Alternate translation: "against all the Jews who are accusing me"

**the Jews**

This does not mean all the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

**Acts 26:3**

**questions**

You can make explicit what kinds of questions this means. Alternate translation: "questions about religious matters"

**Acts 26:4**

**all the Jews**

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"

**in my own nation**

Possible meanings are 1) among his own people, not necessarily in the geographical land of Israel or 2) in the land of Israel.

**Acts 26:5**

**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**

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"

**Acts 26:32**

**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"

## **Chapter 27**

### **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.

**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**

**The soldiers' plan was**

"The soldiers were planning"

**Acts 27:43**

**so he stopped their plan**

"so he stopped them from doing what they planned to do"

**jump overboard**

"jump off the ship into the water"

**Acts 27:44**

**some on planks**

"some on wooden boards"

**Chapter 28**

**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.

**Acts 28:1**

**General Information:**

Here the word "we" refers to Paul, the writer, and those who traveled with them, but not to the reader.

**Connecting Statement:**

After the shipwreck, people on the island of Malta helped Paul and everyone on the ship. They stay there for 3 months.

**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 thought 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:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**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"

**Book: Romans**

**Chapter 1**

**Romans 1 General Notes**

**Structure and formatting**

The first verse is a type of introduction. People in the ancient Mediterranean region often started their letters this way. Sometimes this is called a "salutation."

**Special concepts in this chapter**

### **The gospel**

When Paul writes of "the gospel" in this chapter (verses 1, 2, 9, 15, 16, 17), he is referring to the message about God's salvation for people through Jesus's sacrifice on the cross.

### **Harvest**

This chapter uses the image of a harvest (1:13) to speak of the Roman Christians doing good works because they believe what Paul has told them about Jesus. (See: fruit and faith and righteous)

### **Universal Condemnation and the Wrath of God**

This chapter explains that everyone is without excuse. We all know about the true God, Yahweh, from his creation all around us. Because of our sin and our sinful nature, every person justly deserves the wrath of God. This wrath was satisfied by Jesus dying on a cross for those who believe in him. (See: believe and sin)

### **Important figures of speech in this chapter**

#### **"God gave them over"**

Many scholars view the phrases "God gave them over" and "God gave them up" as theologically significant. In both cases, it means that God had stopped trying to teach the people the right way and had allowed them to do whatever they want, even though everything they wanted to do was evil.

### **Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

#### **Difficult phrases and concepts**

This chapter has many difficult ideas in it. The way Paul writes makes many of the phrases in this chapter difficult to translate. The translator may need to use the UDB to understand the meaning of the phrases and then translate them in a way that is easy for people to understand. Some of the difficult phrases include: "obedience of faith," "whom I serve in my spirit," "from faith to faith" and "exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for the likenesses of an image of perishable man."

### **Romans 1:1**

#### **Paul**

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter. You may also need to tell in this same verse who the people are to whom Paul wrote the letter

#### **Christ, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Christ. God called me to be an apostle and chose me to tell people about the gospel"

#### **called**

appointed or chosen by God to be his child, to be his servant and proclaimer of his message of salvation through Jesus

### **Romans 1:2**

#### **which he promised beforehand by his prophets in the holy scriptures**

God promised his people that he would set up his kingdom. He told the prophets to write these promises in the Scriptures.

### **Romans 1:3**

#### **concerning his Son**

This refers to "the gospel of God," the good news that God promised to send his Son into the world.

### **Son**

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

**who was a descendant of David according to the flesh**

Here the word "flesh" refers to the physical body. Alternate translation: "who is a descendant of David according to the physical nature" or "who was born into the family of David"

### **Romans 1:4**

**he was declared with power to be the Son of God**

The word "he" refers to Jesus Christ. You can translate this in an active form.

Alternate translation: "God declared him with power to be the Son of God"

**by the resurrection from the dead**

"by raising him from among the people who are dead." This expression speaks of all dead people together in the underworld, and coming alive again is spoken of as resurrection from among them.

**Spirit of holiness**

This refers to the Holy Spirit.

### **Romans 1:5**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul talks here about his obligation to preach.

**we have received grace and apostleship**

God has given Paul the gift of being an apostle. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God caused me to be an apostle. This is a special privilege"

**for obedience of faith among all the nations, for the sake of his name**

Paul uses the word "name" as a metonym to refer to Jesus. Alternate translation: "in order to teach all nations to obey because of their faith in him"

### **Romans 1:6**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

### **Romans 1:7**

**To all in Rome who are beloved of God and called to be his holy people**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I am writing this letter to all of you in Rome whom God loves and has chosen to become his people"

**Grace to you and peace**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "May God give you grace and peace" or "May God bless you and give you inner peace"

**God our Father**

The word "Father" is an important title for God.

### **Romans 1:8**

**the whole world**

the world Paul and his readers knew and could travel in, which was the Roman Empire

### **Romans 1:9**

**For God is my witness**

Paul emphasizes that he earnestly prays for them and that God has seen him praying. The word "for" is often left untranslated.

**in my spirit**

A person's spirit is the part of him that can know God and believe in him.

**the gospel of his Son**

The good news (gospel) of the Bible is that the Son of God has given himself as the Savior of the world.

**Son**

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

**I make mention of you**

"I talk to God about you"

**Romans 1:10**

**I always request in my prayers that ... I may at last be successful ... in coming to you**

"Every time I pray, I ask God that ... I may succeed ... in coming to visit you"

**by any means**

"in whatever way God allows"

**at last**

"eventually" or "finally"

**now by the will of God**

"now, because God desires it,"

**Romans 1:11**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues his opening statements to the people in Rome by stating his desire to see them in person.

**For I desire to see you**

"Because I really want to see you"

**some spiritual gift, in order to strengthen you**

Paul wants to strengthen the Roman Christians spiritually. Alternate translation: "some gift that will help you to grow spiritually"

**Romans 1:12**

**That is, I long to be mutually encouraged among you, through each other's faith, yours and mine**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I mean that I want us to encourage each other by sharing our experiences of faith in Jesus"

**Romans 1:13**

**I do not want you to be uninformed**

Paul is emphasizing that he wanted them to have this information. You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "I want you to know"

**brothers**

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**I was hindered until now**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "something has always prevented me"

**in order to have some fruit among you**

The word "fruit" is a metaphor that represents people in Rome whom Paul wants to believe the gospel. Alternate translation: "that more people among you might trust in Jesus"

**the rest of the Gentiles**

the Gentiles in the other regions where he had gone

**Romans 1:14**

**I am a debtor both to**

Using the metaphor "debtor," Paul speaks of his duty to serve God as if he owed God a financial debt. Alternate translation: "I must take the gospel to"

**Romans 1:15**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 1:16**

**I am not ashamed of the gospel**

You can translate this in a positive form. Possible meanings are that 1) Paul is not ashamed of believing the gospel because he knows it is true. Alternate translation: "I am confident in the gospel" 2) Paul is not ashamed of preaching the gospel because he knows that is true. Alternate translation: "I confidently preach the gospel"

**it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes**

Here "believes" means that one puts his trust in Christ. Alternate translation: "it is through the gospel that God powerfully saves those who put their trust in Christ"

**for the Jew first and for the Greek**

"for Jewish people and also for Greek people"

**first**

Here "first" means coming before all others in order of time.

**Romans 1:17**

**For in it**

Here "it" refers to the gospel. Paul explains why he completely trusts in the gospel.

**God's righteousness is revealed from faith to faith**

Paul speaks about the gospel message as if it were an object that God could physically show to people. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has told us that it is by faith from beginning to end that people become righteous"

**as it has been written**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "as someone has written in the Scriptures"

**The righteous will live by faith**

Possible meanings are 1) the words "by faith" describe "righteous," and those who by faith are righteous will live, or 2) the words "by faith" describe "will live," and those who are righteous will live by faith.

**The righteous**

The word "righteous" can be written as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Righteous people" or "A person who is righteous"

**Romans 1:18**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul reveals God's great anger against sinful man.

**For the wrath of God is revealed**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For God shows how angry he is"

**For**

Paul uses the word "for" to show he is about to tell why people know that what

he has said in Romans 1:17 is true.

**the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people**

The words "ungodliness" and "unrighteousness" are abstract nouns that can be expressed using the adjectives "ungodly," which describes the people, and "unrighteous," which describes their deeds. These nouns are metonyms for the people with whom God is angry. You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "God reveals from heaven how angry he is with people because they are ungodly and do unrighteous deeds"

**hold back the truth**

Here "truth" refers to true information about God. Alternate translation: "hide the true information about God"

**Romans 1:19**

**that which is known about God is visible to them**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "they can know about God because of what they can plainly see"

**For God has enlightened them**

Here "enlightened them" means God has shown them the truth about him. Alternate translation: "Because God has shown everyone what he is like"

**Romans 1:20**

**world**

This refers to the heavens and the earth, as well as everything in them.

**his invisible qualities, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen**

Paul speaks of people understanding God's invisible qualities as if people have seen those qualities. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people have clearly understood God's invisible qualities, namely his eternal power and divine nature"

**divine nature**

"all the qualities and characteristics of God" or "the things about God that make him God"

**having been discerned**

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "because people have discerned them" or "because people have understood them"

**in the things that have been made**

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "in the things that God has made"

**they are without excuse**

"people do not have an excuse" or "these people can never say that they did not know"

**Romans 1:21**

**became foolish in their thoughts**

"began to think foolish things"

**their senseless hearts were darkened**

Here "darkness" is a metaphor that represents the people's lack of understanding. Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "they became unable to understand what God wanted them to know"

**Romans 1:22**

**They claimed to be wise, but they became foolish**

"While they were claiming that they were wise, they became foolish"

**They ... they**

the people in Romans 1:18

**Romans 1:23**

**exchanged the glory of the imperishable God**

"traded the truth that God is glorious and will never die"

**exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for the likenesses of an image of**

"stopped loving the glory of the God who never dies and instead chose to worship idols that looked like"

**perishable man**

"human beings, who will die"

**of birds, of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things**

"or that looked like birds, four-footed beasts, or creeping things"

**Romans 1:24**

**Therefore**

"Because what I have just said is true"

**God delivered them over to**

"God allowed them to indulge in"

**them ... their ... themselves**

These words refer to the "people" of Romans 1:18.

**the lusts of their hearts for uncleanness**

Here "lusts of their hearts" is a synecdoche that represents the evil things they wanted to do. Alternate translation: "the morally impure things they desired greatly"

**for their bodies to be dishonored among themselves**

This is a euphemism that means they committed immoral sexual acts. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "and they committed sexually immoral and degrading acts"

**Romans 1:25**

**they**

This word refers to the "people" of Romans 1:18.

**who worshiped and served the creation**

Here "creation" refers to what God created. Alternate translation: "They worshiped things that God created"

**instead of**

"rather than"

**Romans 1:26**

**Because of this**

"Because of idolatry and sexual sin"

**God delivered them over to dishonorable lusts**

"God allowed them to do all the dishonorable things they very much wanted to do"

**dishonorable lusts**

"shameful sexual desires"

**lusts, for their women**

"lusts. For example, their women"

**exchanged natural relations for those that were unnatural**

The idea of relations "that were unnatural" is a euphemism for immoral

sexuality. Alternate translation: "started practicing sexuality in a way God did not design"

**Romans 1:27**

**men also left their natural relations with women**

Here "natural relations" is a euphemism for sexual relationships. Alternate translation: "many men stopped having natural sexual desire for women"

**burned in their lust for one another**

"experienced strong sexual desire for other men"

**committed shameless acts with men and**

"committed acts with men for which they should have been ashamed. But they were not ashamed, and they"

**men and received in themselves the penalty they deserved for their error**

"men, and God has punished them justly for the error they committed"

**error**

moral wrong, not a mistake about facts

**Romans 1:28**

**And just as they did not approve of having God in their awareness**

"They did not think it was necessary to know God"

**And just as**

Possible meanings are 1) God "gave them up to a corrupted mind ... proper" (see the words in this verse) because they not only "exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and ... worshiped and served the creation" (Romans 1:25), but they also "did not approve ... awareness," or 2) God "gave them up ... proper" because "they did not approve ... awareness," in which case "And just as" should be translated "Because."

**they ... their ... them**

These words refer to the "people" of Romans 1:18.

**he gave them up to a corrupted mind**

Here "a corrupted mind" means a mind that thinks only about immoral things. Alternate translation: "God allowed their minds, which they had filled with worthless and immoral thoughts, to completely control them"

**not proper**

"disgraceful" or "sinful"

**Romans 1:29**

**They have been filled with all**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "They have in them a strong desire for all" or "They strongly desire to do deeds of"

**They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and evil intentions**

"Many are constantly envying other people ... Many constantly desire to murder people ... to cause arguments and quarrels among people ... to deceive others ... to speak hatefully about others"

**Romans 1:30**

**slanderers**

A slanderer says false things about another person in order to damage that person's reputation.

**inventing ways of doing evil**

"thinking of new ways to do evil things to others"

**Romans 1:31**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 1:32**

**They understand the ordinance of God, that**

"They know how God wants them to live and that"

**that those who practice such things**

Here "practice" refers to continually or habitually doing things that are evil.

Alternate translation: "that those who keep on doing wicked things"

**are deserving of death**

"deserve to die"

**these things**

"these kinds of evil things"

**who do them**

Here the verb "do" refers to continuing to do things that are evil. Alternate translation: "who keep on doing evil things"

**Chapter 2**

**Romans 2 General Notes**

**Structure and formatting**

This chapter shifts its audience from Roman Christians to those who "judge" other people and do not believe in Jesus. (See: judge and believe)

**"Therefore you are without excuse"**

This phrase looks back at Chapter 1. In some ways, it actually concludes what Chapter 1 teaches. This phrase explains why everyone in the world must worship the true God.

**Special concepts in this chapter**

**"Doers of the Law"**

Those who try to obey the law will not be justified by trying to obey it. Those who are justified by believing in Jesus show that their faith is real by obeying God's commands. (See: justice and lawofmoses)

**Important figures of speech in this chapter**

**Rhetorical Questions**

Paul uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the readers see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: , guilt and sin and faith)

**Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

**"You who judge"**

At times, this could be translated in a simpler way. But it is translated in this relatively awkward way because when Paul refers to "people who judge" he is also saying that everyone judges. It is possible to translate this as "those who judge (and everyone judges)."

**Romans 2:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul has stated that all people are sinners and continues to remind his readers that all people are wicked.

**Therefore you are without excuse**

The word "therefore" marks a new section of the letter. It also makes a concluding statement based on what Paul has said in [Romans 1:1-32]  
**you are**

Paul is writing here as if he were addressing a Jewish person who is arguing with him. Paul is doing this to teach his audience that God will punish everyone who continually sins, whether Jew or Gentile.

**you**

Here the pronoun "you" is singular.

**excuse, you person, you who judge, for in things for which you judge the other person, you condemn yourself**

"excuse. You are just a human being, yet you judge others and say they deserve God's punishment. But you are only judging yourself because you do the same wicked deeds that they do"

**you person**

Another possible meaning is "whoever you are."

**Romans 2:2**

**But we know**

Here the pronoun "we" may include Christian believers and also Jews who are not Christians.

**God's judgment is according to truth when it falls on those**

Here Paul speaks of "God's judgment" as if it were alive and could "fall" on people. Alternate translation: "God will judge those people truly and fairly"

**those who practice such things**

"the people who do those wicked deeds"

**Romans 2:3**

**But consider this**

"So consider this" or "Therefore, consider this"

**consider this**

"think about what I am going to tell you"

**you person**

Use the phrase "you, whoever you are" or use "you," (with the comma), followed by a general word for a human being.

**you who judge those who practice such things although you do the same things**

"you who say someone deserves God's punishment while you do the same wicked deeds"

**Will you escape from the judgment of God?**

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. You can also translate this question as a strong negative statement. Alternate translation:

"You will certainly not escape God's judgment!"

**Romans 2:4**

**Or do you think so little of the riches of his kindness, his delayed punishment, and his patience ... repentance?**

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. You can also translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You should not act like it does not matter that God is good and that he patiently waits a long time before he punishes people so that his goodness will cause them to repent!"

**think so little of the riches ... patience**

"consider the riches ... patience unimportant" or "consider ... patience not good"

**Do you not know that his kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?**

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. You can also

translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You must know that God shows you he is good so that you might repent!"

**Romans 2:5**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to remind the people that all people are wicked.

**But it is to the extent of your hardness and unrepentant heart**

Paul uses a metaphor to compare a person who refuses to obey God to something hard, like a stone. He also uses the metonym "heart" to represent the person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "It is because you refuse to listen and repent"

**hardness and unrepentant heart**

This is a doublet that you can combine as "unrepentant heart."

**you are storing up for yourself wrath**

The phrase "storing up" implies a metaphor that usually refers to a person gathering his treasures and putting them in a safe place. Paul says, instead of treasures, that the person is gathering God's punishment. The longer they go without repenting, the more severe the punishment. Alternate translation: "you are making your punishment worse"

**on the day of wrath ... the day of the revelation of God's righteous judgment**

Both of these phrases refer to the same day. Alternate translation: "when God will show everyone that he is angry and that he judges all people fairly"

**Romans 2:6**

**pay back**

"give a fair reward or punishment"

**to every person according to his actions**

"each person according to what that person has done"

**Romans 2:7**

**who according to the perseverance of good deeds have**

who, by persevering and doing good deeds, have

**have sought**

have tried to get

**glory, honor, and incorruptibility**

They want God to praise and honor them, and they want to never die.

**incorruptibility**

This refers to physical, not moral, decay.

**Romans 2:8**

**self-seeking**

"selfish" or "only concerned with what makes themselves happy"

**disobey the truth but obey unrighteousness**

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second intensifies the first.

**wrath and fierce anger will come**

The words "wrath" and "fierce anger" mean basically the same thing and emphasize God's anger. Alternate translation: "God will show his terrible anger"

**wrath**

Here the word "wrath" is a metonym that refers to God's severe punishment of wicked people.

## **Romans 2:9**

### **Connecting Statement:**

Though this section is speaking to the non-religious wicked person, Paul sums it up by stating both non-Jews and Jews are wicked before God.

### **tribulation and distress on**

The words "tribulation" and "distress" mean basically the same thing here and emphasize how bad God's punishment will be. Alternate translation: "awful punishments to"

### **on every human soul**

Here, Paul uses the word "soul" as a synecdoche that refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "upon every person"

### **has practiced evil**

"has continually done evil things"

### **evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek**

"evil. He will judge the Jewish people first, and then those people who are not Jewish"

### **first**

Possible meanings are 1) "first in order of time" or 2) "most certainly"

## **Romans 2:10**

### **But glory, honor, and peace will come**

"But God will praise, honor, and give peace"

### **practices good**

"continually does what is good"

### **good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek**

"good. God will reward the Jewish people first, and then those people who are not Jewish"

### **first**

You should translate this the same way you did in Romans 2:9.

## **Romans 2:11**

### **For there is no partiality with God**

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "For God treats all people the same"

## **Romans 2:12**

### **For as many as have sinned**

"For all those who have sinned"

### **without the law will also perish without the law**

Paul repeats "without the law" to emphasize that it does not matter if people do not know the law of Moses. If they sin, God will judge them. Alternate translation: "without knowing the law of Moses will certainly still die spiritually"

### **as many as have sinned**

"all those who have sinned"

### **with respect to the law will be judged by the law**

God will judge sinful people according to his law. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "and who do know the law of Moses, God will judge them according to that law"

## **Romans 2:13**

### **Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to let the reader know that perfect obedience to God's law is required even for those who never had God's law.

**it is not the hearers of the law**

Here "the law" refers to the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "it is not those who only hear the law of Moses"

**who are righteous before God**

"whom God considers righteous"

**but it is the doers of the law**

"but it is those who obey the law of Moses"

**who will be justified**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom God will accept"

#### **Romans 2:14**

**For**

This verse is the beginning of an interruption of Paul's main argument, in which he gives the reader extra information. If you have a way to mark an interruption like this in your language, you can use it here.

**a law to themselves ... do not have the law**

This is an idiom that means that these people naturally obey God's laws. Alternate translation: "have God's laws already inside them ... actually do not have the law"

**they do not have the law**

Here "the law" refers to the law of Moses." Alternate translation: "they do not actually have the laws that God gave to Moses"

#### **Romans 2:15**

**General Information:**

This verse is the end of an interruption of Paul's main argument, in which he gives the reader extra information. If you have a way to mark an interruption like this in your language, you can use it here.

**By this they show**

"By naturally obeying the law they show"

**that the actions required by the law are written in their hearts**

Here "hearts" is a metonym for the person's thoughts or inner person. The phrase "written in their hearts" is a metaphor for knowing something in their mind. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that God has written on their hearts what the law requires them to do" or "that they know the actions that God wants them to do according to his law"

**bears witness to them**

Here "bears witness" refers to the knowledge they gain from the law that God has written in their hearts. Alternate translation: "tells them if they are disobeying or obeying God's law"

#### **Romans 2:16**

**when God will judge**

This finishes Paul's thought from Romans 2:13. You can put a period at the end of 2:15 and start a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "This will happen when God judges"

#### **Romans 2:17**

**Connecting Statement:**

Here begins Paul's discussion that the law the Jews possess actually condemns them because they do not obey it.

**if you say that you are a Jew**

"since you call yourself a Jew" or "if you want people to think of you as a Jew"

**rest upon the law**

The phrase "rest upon the law" represents believing that they can become righteous by obeying the law. Alternate translation: "rely on the law of Moses"

**Romans 2:18**

**know his will**

"and know God's will"

**because you have been instructed from the law**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because people have taught you what is right from the law" or "because you have learned from the law"

**Romans 2:19**

**that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness**

Here "the blind" and "those who walk in darkness" represent people who do not understand the law. Alternate translation: "that because you teach the law, you yourself are like a guide to blind people, and you are like a light to people who are lost in the dark"

**Romans 2:20**

**an instructor of the foolish**

"you correct those who do wrong"

**a teacher of little children**

Here Paul compares those who do not know anything about the law to very small children. Alternate translation: "you teach those who do not know the law"

**and that you have in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth**

The knowledge of the truth that is in the law comes from God. Alternate translation: "and you are sure you understand the truth that God has given in the law"

**Romans 2:21**

**You who teach others, do you not teach yourself?**

Paul is using a question to scold his listeners. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You teach others, but you do not teach yourself!" or "You teach others, but you do not do what you teach!"

**You who preach against stealing, do you steal?**

Paul is using a question to scold his listeners. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You tell people not to steal, but you steal!"

**Romans 2:22**

**You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?**

Paul is using a question to scold his listeners. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You tell people not to commit adultery, but you commit adultery!"

**You who hate idols, do you rob temples?**

Paul is using a question to scold his listener. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You say you hate idols, but you rob temples!"

Possible meanings are 1) "do you steal items from local pagan temples to sell and make a profit" or 2) "do you keep back from the Jerusalem temple all the money that is due to God"

**Romans 2:23**

**You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by transgressing the law?**

Paul uses a question to scold his listener. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "It is wicked that you claim to be proud of the law while at the same time you disobey it and bring shame to God!"

**Romans 2:24**

**the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "many Gentiles blaspheme the name of God"

**name of God**

The word "name" is a metonym that refers to the entirety of God, not just his name.

**Romans 2:25**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to show that God, by his law, condemns even the Jews who have God's law.

**For circumcision is profitable to you**

"I say all of this because it is good for you to be circumcised"

**if you are a transgressor of the law**

"if you do not obey the commandments found in the law"

**your circumcision becomes uncircumcision**

"it is as though you were no longer circumcised"

**Romans 2:26**

**the uncircumcised person**

"the person who is not circumcised"

**keeps the requirements of the law**

"obeys what God commands in the law"

**will not his uncircumcision be considered as circumcision?**

This is the first of two questions Paul asks here to emphasize that circumcision is not what makes one right before God. You can translate this question as a statement in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will consider him as circumcised."

**Romans 2:27**

**And will not the one who is naturally uncircumcised condemn you ... the law?**

This is the second of two questions that Paul asks here

**Romans 2:28**

**outwardly**

This refers to Jewish rituals, such as circumcision, which people can see.

**merely outward in the flesh**

This refers to the physical change to a man's body when someone circumcises him.

**flesh**

This is a synecdoche for the whole body. Alternate translation: "body"

**Romans 2:29**

**he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart**

These two phrases have similar meanings. The first phrase, "he is a Jew who is one inwardly," explains the second phrase, "circumcision is that of the heart."

**inwardly**

This refers to the values and motivations of the person whom God has transformed.

**of the heart**

Here "heart" is a metonym for the inner person.

**in the Spirit, not in the letter**

Here "letter" is a synecdoche that refers to written Scripture. Alternate translation: "through the work of the Holy Spirit, not because you know the Scriptures"

**in the Spirit**

This refers to the internal, spiritual part of a person that the Holy Spirit changes.

**Chapter 3**

**Romans 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 verses 4 and 10-18 of this chapter, which is from the Old Testament.

**Special concepts in this chapter**

Chapter 3 answers the question, "What advantage does being a Jew have over being a Gentile?" (See: lawofmoses and save)

**"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"**

Because God is holy, anyone with him in heaven must be perfect. Any sin at all will condemn a person. (See: heaven and condemn)

**The purpose of the law of Moses**

Obedying the law cannot make a person right with God. Obeying God's law is a way a person shows they believe in God. People have always been justified only by faith. (See: justice and faith)

**Important figures of speech in this chapter**

**Rhetorical Questions**

Paul frequently uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the readers see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: and guilt)

**Romans 3:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul proclaims the advantage that Jews have because God gave them his law.

**Then what advantage does the Jew have? And what is the benefit of circumcision?**

Paul presents ideas that people might have after they hear what he wrote in chapter 2. He does this in order to respond to them in verse 2. Alternate translation: "Some people might say, 'Then what advantage does the Jew have? And what is the benefit of circumcision?'" or "Some people might say, 'If that is true, then the Jews do not have any advantage, and there is no benefit in being circumcised.'"

**Romans 3:2**

**It is great in every way**

Paul now responds to the concerns brought up in verse 1. Here "It" refers to

being a member of the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "But there is great advantage to being a Jew"

**First of all**

Possible meanings are 1) "First in order of time" or 2) "Most certainly" or 3) "Most importantly."

**the Jews were entrusted with revelation from God**

Here "revelation" refers to God's words and promises. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God gave his words that contain his promises to the Jews"

**Romans 3:3**

**For what if some Jews were without faith? Will their unbelief nullify God's faithfulness?**

Paul uses these questions to make people think. Alternate translation: "Some Jews have not been faithful to God. We should not conclude from this that God will not fulfill his promise."

**Romans 3:4**

**May it never be**

This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have an expression in your language that you could use here. "That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!"

**Instead, let**

"We should say this instead, let"

**let God be found to be true**

God will always be true and will keep his promises. Alternate translation: "God always does what he has promised"

**even though every man is a liar**

The words "every" and "liar" are exaggerations here to add emphasis that God alone is always true to his promises. Alternate translation: "even if every man were a liar"

**As it has been written**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "The Scriptures themselves agree with what I am saying"

**That you might be shown to be righteous in your words, and that you might prevail when you come into judgment**

These two phrases have very similar meanings. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone must acknowledge that what you say is true, and you will always win your case when anyone accuses you"

**Romans 3:5**

**But if our unrighteousness shows the righteousness of God, what can we say? Can we say that God is unrighteous to bring his wrath upon us?**

Paul uses these questions to present what some people were arguing and to get his readers to think about whether or not this argument is true. Alternate translation: "Some people say that since our unrighteousness shows God's righteousness, then God is unrighteous when he punishes us."

**to bring his wrath upon us**

Here "wrath" is a metonym for punishment. Alternate translation: "to bring his punishment upon us" or "to punish us"

**I am using a human argument**

"I am saying here what some people say" or "This is what some people say"

**Romans 3:6**

**May it never be**

"We must never say that God is unrighteous"

**For then how would God judge the world?**

Paul uses this question to show that the arguments against the gospel are not valid, since the Jews believe that God will judge all people. Alternate translation: "We all know that God will in fact judge the world!"

**the world**

The "world" is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "the people who live in the world"

**Romans 3:7**

**But if through my lie the truth of God increases his glory, why am I still being judged as a sinner?**

Here Paul imagines someone continuing to reject the Christian gospel. That adversary argues that his sin shows that God is righteous, so God should not declare that person guilty of sin on judgment day.

**increases his glory**

"causes people to praise God for his glory"

**Romans 3:8**

**Why not say ... come?"**

Here Paul raises a question of his own, to show how ridiculous the argument of his imaginary adversary is. Alternate translation: "I might as well be saying ... come!"

**as we are slandered as saying**

"as some lie to others, claiming that this what we are saying"

**evil ... good**

These Greek words are plural: "evil deeds ... good things"

**good may come**

You may need to make explicit that the speakers expect to receive good things. Alternate translation: "good things may come to us" or "we may receive good things"

**Their condemnation is just**

God will be acting justly when he condemns these enemies of Paul for telling lies about what Paul has been teaching.

**Romans 3:9**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul sums up that all are guilty of sin, none are righteous, and no one seeks God.

**What then? Are we excusing ourselves?**

Paul asks these questions to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "We Jews should not try to imagine we are going to escape God's judgment, just because we are Jewish!"

**Not at all**

These words are stronger than a simple "no," but not as strong as "absolutely not!"

**Romans 3:10**

**This is as it is written**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "This is as the

prophets have written in the Scriptures"

**Romans 3:11**

**there is no one who understands**

There is no one who understands what is right. Alternate translation: "no one really understands what is right"

**there is no one who seeks God**

Here the phrase "seeks after God" means tries to have a relationship with God. Alternate translation: "no one sincerely tries to have a right relationship with God"

**Romans 3:12**

**They have all turned away**

This is an idiom that means the people do not even want to think about God. They want to avoid him. Alternate translation: "They have all turned away from God"

**together they have become useless**

Since no one does what is good, they are useless to God. Alternate translation: "Everyone has become useless to God"

**Romans 3:13**

**Their ... Their**

The word "their" refers to the "Jews and Greeks" of Romans 3:9.

**Their throat is an open grave**

The word "throat" is a metonym for everything that people say. Here "open grave" is a metaphor that refers to the stench of dead bodies, a metaphor for the evil words of the people.

**Their tongues have deceived**

The word "tongues" is a metonym for the false words that people speak. Alternate translation: "People speak lies"

**The poison of snakes is under their lips**

Here "poison of snakes" is a metaphor that is used to represent the great harm of the evil words that the people speak. The word "lips" refers to the words of the people. Alternate translation: "Their evil words injure people just like the poison of a venomous snake"

**Romans 3:14**

**Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness**

Here "mouths" is a metonym that represents the evil words of the people. The word "full" exaggerates how often people speak bitterly and curse. Alternate translation: "They often speak curses and cruel words"

**Romans 3:15**

**Their feet are swift to pour out blood**

Here "feet" is a synecdoche that represents the people themselves. The word "blood" is a metaphor that refers to killing people. Alternate translation: "They are in a hurry to harm and murder people"

**Their feet**

The word "their" refers to the Jews and Greeks in Romans 3:9.

**Romans 3:16**

**their paths**

The word "their" refers to the Jews and Greeks in Romans 3:9.

**Destruction and suffering are in their paths**

Here "destruction and suffering" are metonyms that represent the harm that these people cause others to suffer. Alternate translation: "They try to destroy others and cause them to suffer"

**Romans 3:17**

**These people**

These words refer to the Jews and Greeks in Romans 3:9.

**a way of peace**

"how to live at peace with others." A "way" is a road or path.

**Romans 3:18**

**their**

This word refers to the Jews and Greeks in Romans 3:9.

**There is no fear of God before their eyes**

Here "fear" is a metonym that represents respect for God and willingness to honor him. Alternate translation: "They refuse to give God the respect he deserves"

**Romans 3:19**

**whatever the law says, it speaks to**

Paul speaks of the law here as if it were alive and had its own voice. Alternate translation: "everything that the law says people should do is for" or "all the commands that Moses wrote in the law are for"

**the ones who are under the law**

"those who must obey the law"

**so that every mouth may be shut**

Here "mouth" is a synecdoche that means the words people speak. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that no people will be able to say anything valid to defend themselves"

**the whole world held accountable to God**

Here "world" is a synecdoche that represents all the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "that God can declare everyone in the world guilty"

**Romans 3:20**

**flesh**

Here "flesh" refers to all human beings.

**For through the law**

Possible meanings are 1) "Therefore, through the law" or 2) "This is because through the law"

**through the law comes the knowledge of sin**

"when someone knows God's law, he realizes that he has sinned"

**Romans 3:21**

**Connecting Statement:**

The word "but" here shows Paul has completed his introduction and is now beginning to make his main point.

**now**

The word "now" refers to the time since Jesus came to the earth.

**apart from the law the righteousness of God has been revealed**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has made known a way to be right with him without obeying the law"

**to which the Law and the Prophets bear witness**

The words "the Law and the Prophets" refer to the parts of scripture that Moses and the prophets wrote. Paul describes them here as if they were people testifying in court. Alternate translation: "What Moses and the prophets wrote confirms this"

**Romans 3:22**

**the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ**

Here "righteousness" means being right with God. Alternate translation: "being right with God through trusting Jesus Christ"

**For there is no distinction**

Paul implies that God accepts all people in the same way. Alternate translation: "There is no difference at all between the Jews and the Gentiles"

**Romans 3:23**

**come short of the glory of God**

Here the "glory of God" is a metonym that refers to the image of God and his nature. Alternate translation: "have failed to be like God"

**Romans 3:24**

**they are freely justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus**

Here "justified" refers to being made right with God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God makes them right with himself as a free gift, because Christ Jesus sets them free"

**they are freely justified**

This means that they are justified without having to earn or merit being justified. God freely justifies them. Alternate translation: "they are made right with God without earning it"

**Romans 3:25**

**in his blood**

This is a metonym for the death of Jesus as a sacrifice for sins. Alternate translation: "in his death as a sacrifice for sins"

**his disregard**

Possible meanings are 1) his ignoring or 2) his forgiving.

**Romans 3:26**

**This was to show his righteousness at this present time**

"God did this to show at this present time that he is righteous"

**so he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus**

"By this he shows that he is both just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus"

**the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus**

"the one who declares everyone righteous who has faith in Jesus"

**Romans 3:27**

**Where then is boasting? It is excluded**

Paul asks this question to show that there is no reason for people to boast about obeying the law. Alternate translation: "So there is no way that we can boast that God favors us because we obeyed those laws. Boasting is excluded"

**It is excluded**

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "God does not allow it"

**Through what kind of law? Of works? No, but through a law of faith**

You may need to fill in the words omitted in the ellipsis. Alternate translation:

"Through what kind of law is boasting excluded? Is it excluded through a law of works? No, it is excluded through a law of faith" You can also translate using active forms. Alternate translation: "On what grounds does God exclude boasting? Does he exclude it through a law of works? No, he excludes it through a law of faith" or "Why does God exclude boasting? Is it because of something that we have done? No, it is because we have believed"

**Through what kind of law? ... through a law of**

"On what grounds? ... on the grounds of"

**Through what kind of law? Of works?**

Paul asks these questions to get his readers ready to receive the point he is making. Alternate translation: "Let me tell you what kind of law he excludes it through. It is not through a law of works."

**Romans 3:28**

**a person is justified by faith**

This can be translated in active form. Here the words "by faith" refers to either 1) the means by which God justifies a person. Alternate translation: "God justifies a person through that person's faith" Or 2) the reason for which God justifies a person. Alternate translation: "God justifies a person because he has faith" Faith is not the actor that justifies a person.

**without works of the law**

"even if he has done no works of the law"

**Romans 3:29**

**Or is God the God of Jews only?**

Paul asks this question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "You who are Jews certainly should not think that you are the only ones whom God will accept!"

**Is he not also the God of Gentiles? Yes, of Gentiles also**

Paul asks this question to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "He will also accept non-Jews, that is, Gentiles"

**Romans 3:30**

**he will justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith**

Here "circumcision" is a metonym that refers to Jews and "uncircumcision" is a metonym that refers to non-Jews. Alternate translation: "God will make both Jews and non-Jews right with himself through their faith in Christ"

**Romans 3:31**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul confirms the law though faith.

**Do we then nullify the law through faith?**

Paul asks a question that one of his readers might have. Alternate translation: "Someone might say that we can ignore the law because we have faith."

**May it never be**

This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question. You may have a similar express in your language that you could use here. Alternate translation: "This is certainly not true" or "Certainly not"

**we uphold the law**

"we obey the law"

**we**

This pronoun refers to Paul, other believers, and the readers.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Romans 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 verses 7-8 of this chapter, which is from the Old Testament.

#### **Special concepts in this chapter**

##### **The purpose of the law of Moses**

Paul builds upon material from chapter 3. He explains how Abraham, the father of Israel, was justified. Even Abraham could not be justified by what he did. Obeying the law of Moses does not make a person right with God. Obeying God's commands is a way a person shows they believe in God. People have always been justified only by faith. (See: justice and lawofmoses and faith)

##### **Circumcision**

Circumcision was important to the Israelites. It identified a male as a descendant of Abraham. It was also a sign of the covenant between Abraham and Yahweh. However, no person was justified only by being circumcised. (See: circumcise and covenant)

#### **Important figures of speech in this chapter**

##### **Rhetorical Questions**

Paul uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the readers see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: and guilt and sin)

#### **Romans 4:1**

##### **What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, found?**

Paul uses the question to catch the attention of the reader and to start talking about something new. Alternate translation: "This is what Abraham our physical ancestor found."

#### **Romans 4:2**

##### **General Information:**

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#### **Romans 4:3**

##### **For what does the scripture say?**

Paul uses this question to call attention to what he is about to say, not to receive an answer. He speaks of the Scriptures as if they were alive and could talk. Alternate translation: "For this is what is in the scripture:"

##### **it was counted to him as righteousness**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God considered Abraham to be a righteous person because he believed"

#### **Romans 4:4**

##### **his wage is not counted as a gift**

"no one counts what his employer pays him as a gift from his employer"

##### **but as what is owed**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "but as what his employer owes him"

#### **Romans 4:5**

##### **in the one who justifies**

"in God, who justifies"

**his faith is counted as righteousness**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God considers that person's faith as righteousness" or "God considers that person righteous because of his faith"

**Romans 4:6**

**David also pronounces blessing on the man to whom God counts righteousness without works**

"David also wrote about how God blesses the man whom God makes righteous without works"

**Romans 4:7**

**whose lawless deeds are forgiven ... whose sins are covered**

The same concept is stated in two different ways. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "who have broken the law, but the Lord has forgiven ... whose sins the Lord has covered"

**Romans 4:8**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 4:9**

**Then is this blessing pronounced only on those of the circumcision, or also on those of the uncircumcision?**

This remark appears in the form of a question to show that Paul is beginning a discussion about the relationship between blessing and circumcision. Alternate translation: "I want to show you how it is that God blesses not only those who are circumcised, but also those who are not circumcised"

**those of the circumcision**

This is a metonym that refers to the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "the Jews"

**those of the uncircumcision**

This is a metonym that refers to the people who are not Jews. Alternate translation: "the Gentiles"

**For we say**

Paul is going to show that because God counted Abraham as righteous by faith, we can infer that it is people who have faith that God counts righteous.

**Faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God considered the faith of Abraham as righteousness"

**Romans 4:10**

**How was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before!**

Paul asks two questions to introduce the third sentence. If your language does not allow speakers to use questions to introduce what they are talking about, you may need to translate these all as statements. Alternate translation: "This is when righteousness was counted to him: it was not after he had been circumcised, but before!"

**How was it counted to him?**

Paul is asking in a general way about the circumstances in which God considered Abraham righteous. He is not asking what procedure God followed to consider Abraham righteous. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "How did God consider Abraham to be righteous?"

**It was not after, but before**

This can be stated with the words that have been omitted in the ellipsis.

Alternate translation: "It happened before he was circumcised, not after he was circumcised"

**Romans 4:11**

**a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised**

Here "righteousness that he had by faith" means that God considered him to be righteous because he had faith. Alternate translation: "a visible sign that God considered him righteous because he had believed in God before he was circumcised"

**so that righteousness would be counted to them**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that God would consider them righteous"

**Romans 4:12**

**General Information:**

Paul is saying that circumcision alone does not make a man a descendant of Abraham, that is, a true Jew. A true Jew is one who has been circumcised and who lives by faith the way Abraham did.

**He is also the father of the circumcised**

Here "the circumcision" refers to Jews.

**who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had**

Here "walk in the footsteps of the faith" is an idiom that means to follow someone's example. Alternate translation: "who follow our father Abraham's example in the faith that he had" or "who have faith as our father Abraham did"

**Romans 4:13**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul confirms that even in the past believers were made right with God by faith and not by the law.

**law but through the righteousness of faith**

The words "the promise came" are understood from the first phrase. You can translate this by adding these implied words. Alternate translation: "law, but the promise came through faith, which God considers as righteousness"

**Romans 4:14**

**heirs**

The people to whom God has made promises are spoken of as if they were to inherit property and wealth from a family member.

**if those who live by the law are to be the heirs**

Here "live by the law" refers to obeying the law. Alternate translation: "if those who obey the law are the ones who will inherit the earth"

**faith is made empty, and the promise does nothing**

"faith has no value, and the promise is meaningless"

**Romans 4:15**

**there is no transgression**

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "transgression." Alternate translation: "no one has disobeyed the law" or "it is impossible to disobey the law"

**Romans 4:16**

**For this reason**

"So"

**it is by faith**

The word "it" refers to receiving what God had promised. Alternate translation: "it is by faith that we receive the promise" or "we receive the promise by faith"

**in order that the promise may rest on grace**

Here "the promise may rest on grace" represents God giving what he promised because of his grace. Alternate translation: "so that what he promised might be a free gift" or "so that his promise would be because of his grace"

**those who are under the law**

This refers to the Jewish people, who were obligated to obey the law of Moses.

**those who share the faith of Abraham**

This refers to those who have faith as Abraham did before he was circumcised. Alternate translation: "those who believe as Abraham did"

**father of us all**

Here the word "us" refers to Paul and includes all Jewish and non-Jewish believers in Christ. Abraham is the physical ancestor of the Jewish people, but he is also the spiritual father of those who have faith.

**Romans 4:17**

**as it is written**

Where it is written can be made explicit. You can also translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "as someone has written in the Scriptures"

**I have appointed you**

Here the word "you" is singular and refers to Abraham.

**Abraham was in the presence of him whom he trusted, that is, God, who gives life to the dead**

Here "of him whom he trusted" refers to God. Alternate translation: "Abraham was in the presence of God whom he trusted, who gives life to those who have died"

**calls the things that do not exist into existence**

"creates everything from nothing"

**Romans 4:18**

**In hope he believed against hope**

This idiom means that Abraham hoped and believed even though what he hoped for seemed to be impossible. That is, Abraham trusted God to give him many descendants, even though it seemed to be impossible for him to have children. Alternate translation: "Even though it seemed that there was no reason to hope, Abraham hoped and believed" or "Even though it seemed to be impossible for him to have descendants, Abraham believed God and confidently expected"

**according to what he had been told**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "just as God said to Abraham"

**So will your descendants be**

The full promise God gave to Abraham can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "You will have more descendants than you can count"

**Romans 4:19**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 4:20**

**did not hesitate in unbelief. Instead, he**

You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "kept on acting in faith. He"

**he was strengthened in faith**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "he became stronger in his faith"

**Romans 4:21**

**He was fully convinced**

"Abraham was completely sure"

**he was also able to accomplish**

"God was able to do"

**Romans 4:22**

**Therefore this was also "counted to him as righteousness."**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Therefore God counted Abraham's belief as righteousness" or "Therefore God considered Abraham righteous because Abraham believed him"

**also "counted to him as righteousness."**

"also, as the scripture says, 'counted to him as righteousness.'"

**Romans 4:23**

**for his sake alone**

"for Abraham only"

**it was counted to him**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God counted righteousness to him" or "God considered him righteous"

**Romans 4:24**

**for us**

The word "us" refers to Paul and includes all believers in Christ.

**They were written also for us**

You can translate this without the passive form "written." Alternate translation: "Those words were also for us"

**it will be counted to us who believe in him**

The word "it" refers to righteousness. You can translate this with an active form. Alternate translation: "God will count righteousness to us who believe in him" or "God will consider us righteous if we believe in him"

**him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead**

"Raised ... from the dead" here is an idiom for "caused to live again." Alternate translation: "him who caused Jesus our Lord to live again"

**Romans 4:25**

**who was delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom God gave over to enemies for our trespasses and whom God brought back to life so he could make us right with him"

**Chapter 5**

**Romans 5 General Notes**

**Structure and formatting**

Many scholars view verses 12-17 as some of the most important, but difficult, verses in Scripture to understand. Some of their richness and meaning has

likely been lost while being translated from how the original Greek was constructed.

### **Special concepts in this chapter**

#### **Results of justification**

How Paul explains the results of our being justified is an important part of this chapter. These results include having peace with God, having access to God, being confident about our future, being able to rejoice when suffering, being eternally saved, and being reconciled with God. (See: justice)

#### **"All sinned"**

Scholars are divided over what Paul meant in verse 12: "And death spread to all people, because all sinned." Some believe that all of mankind was present in the "seed of Adam." So, as Adam is the father of all mankind, all of mankind was present when Adam sinned. Others believe that Adam served as a representative head for mankind. So when he sinned, all of mankind "fell" as a result. Whether people today played an active or passive role in Adam's original sin is one way these views differ. Other passages will help one decide.

#### **The second Adam**

Adam was the first man and the first "son" of God. He was created by God. He brought sin and death into the world by eating the forbidden fruit. Paul describes Jesus as the "second Adam" in this chapter and the true son of God. He brings life and overcame sin and death by dying on the cross. (See: sonofgod and death)

#### **Romans 5:1**

##### **Connecting Statement:**

Paul begins to tell many different things that happen when God makes believers right with him.

##### **Since we are justified**

"Because we are justified"

##### **we ... our**

All occurrences of "we" and "our" refer to all believers and should be inclusive.

##### **through our Lord Jesus Christ**

"because of our Lord Jesus Christ"

##### **Lord**

Here "Lord" means that Jesus is God.

#### **Romans 5:2**

##### **Through him we also have our access by faith into this grace in which we stand**

Here "by faith" refers to our trust in Jesus, which allows us to stand before God. Alternate translation: "Because we trust in Jesus, God allows us to come into his presence"

##### **we boast in the hope of the glory of God**

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: "we rejoice because we confidently expect to share in the glory of God"

#### **Romans 5:3**

##### **Not only this**

The word "this" refers to the ideas described in Romans 5:1-2.

**we ... our ... We**

These words refer to all believers and should be inclusive.

**tribulation brings about perseverance**

"suffering helps us learn to endure"

**Romans 5:4**

**Perseverance produces character**

Perseverance is an abstract noun that can be translated as a verb. Here it is a metonym for the person who endures. You may need to make explicit what it is that a person endures. Alternate translation: "We develop character when we endure hardship"

**character**

the desire and ability to do what is right

**character produces hope**

"having character helps us to hope." Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen, and it refers to the confident expectation that God will fulfill all his promises. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "wait confidently" or "trust". Alternate translation: "character helps us to wait confidently" or "character helps us to trust God"

**Romans 5:5**

**our ... us**

These words refer to all believers and should be inclusive.

**hope does not make ashamed**

Paul uses personification here as he speaks of "hope" as if it were alive. "Hope" is an abstract noun that can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "we are very confident that we will receive the things that we wait for"

**make ashamed**

"make us ashamed"

**because the love of God has been poured into our hearts**

Here "hearts" represents a person's thoughts, feelings, or inner person. The phrase "the love of God has been poured into our hearts" is a metaphor for God showing love to his people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because he has loved us greatly" or "because God has shown us how much he loves us"

**Romans 5:6**

**we**

The word "we" here refers to all believers and so should be inclusive.

**Romans 5:7**

**For one will hardly die for a righteous person**

"It is hard to find someone who is willing to die, even for a righteous person"

**though perhaps someone would dare to die for a good person**

"but you might find someone who is willing to die for such a good person"

**Romans 5:8**

**proves**

You can translate this verb in past tense using "demonstrated" or "showed."

**us ... we**

All occurrences of "us" and "we" refer to all believers and should be inclusive.

**Romans 5:9**

**Much more, then, now that we are justified by his blood, we will be saved**

Paul is saying that because we are justified by Christ's blood, we can be much more certain that Christ will save us. Alternate translation: "Now that we are justified by his blood, we will more certainly be saved"

**now that we are justified by his blood**

Here "justified" means that God puts us in a right relationship with himself. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "now that God has made us right with himself because of Christ's death"

**blood**

This is a metonym for the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross.

**saved**

God forgives us and rescues us from being punished in hell for our sin.

**the wrath of God**

Here "wrath" is a metonym that refers to God's punishment of those who have sinned against him. Alternate translation: "God's punishment"

**Romans 5:10**

**we were**

All occurrences of "we" refer to all believers and should be inclusive.

**his Son ... his life**

"God's Son ... the life of God's Son"

**we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son**

The death of the Son of the God has provided eternal forgiveness and made all who believe in Jesus friends with God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God allowed us to have a peaceful relationship with him because his Son died for us"

**Son**

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

**after having been reconciled**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "now that God has made us his friends again"

**Romans 5:11**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 5:12**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul explains why death happened even before God gave the law to Moses.

**through one man sin entered ... death entered through sin**

Paul describes sin as a dangerous thing that came into the world through the actions of "one man," Adam. This sin then became an opening through which death, pictured here as another dangerous thing, also came into the world.

**Romans 5:13**

**For until the law, sin was in the world**

This means that the people sinned before God gave the law. Alternate translation: "People in the world sinned before God gave his law to Moses"

**but there is no accounting for sin when there is no law**

This means that God did not charge the people with sinning before he gave the law. Alternate translation: "but God recorded no sin against the law before he gave the law"

**Romans 5:14**

**Nevertheless, death**

"Even though what I have just said is true, death" or "There was no written law from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, but death" (Romans 5:13).

**death reigned from Adam until Moses**

Paul is speaking of death as if it were a king who ruled. Alternate translation: "people continued to die from the time of Adam until the time of Moses as a consequence of their sin"

**Moses, even over those who did not sin like Adam's disobedience, who is**

"Moses. Even people whose sins were different from Adam's continued to die, Adam being"

**who is a pattern of him who was to come**

Adam was a pattern of Christ, who appeared much later. He had much in common with him.

**Romans 5:15**

**how much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound for the many**

Here "grace" refers to God's free gift that he made available to everyone through Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "even more through the man Jesus Christ, who died for us all, did God kindly offer us this gift of everlasting life, although we do not deserve it"

**Romans 5:16**

**For the gift is not like the outcome of that one man's sin**

Here "the gift" refers to God's freely erasing the record of our sins. Alternate translation: "The gift is not like the result of Adam's sin"

**The judgment followed one trespass and brought condemnation**

The abstract nouns "judgment," "trespass," and "condemnation," can be expressed with verbs. Alternate translation: "After one man trespassed, God judged all people and condemned them to be punished" or "God declared that all people deserved to have him punish them because one man committed one sin"

**but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification**

The abstract nouns "gift," "trespass," and "justification" can be expressed as verbs. It is implied that God's gift of justification is greater than his judgement. Alternate translation: "but after people trespassed many times, God gave the gift and justified them" or "but the gift is greater because he gave it after many people had committed many sins, and by giving the gift he justified them"

**Romans 5:17**

**trespass of the one**

This refers to the sin of Adam.

**death ruled**

Here Paul speaks of "death" as a king who ruled. The "rule" of death causes everyone to die. Alternate translation: "everyone died"

**Romans 5:18**

**as one trespass led to condemnation for all people**

The abstract nouns "trespass" and "condemnation" can be expressed with the verbs "sin" and "condemn." Alternate translation: "as one trespass caused all people to be condemned" or "as all people are condemned because one person

sinned against God"

**one trespass**

This refers to Adam's sin.

**condemnation for all people**

Here "condemnation" refers to God's punishment. Alternate translation: "all people deserve God's punishment for sin"

**through the one act of righteousness came justification and life for all people**

The abstract nouns "justification" and "life" can be expressed with the verbs "justify" and "live." Alternate translation: "one act of righteousness allows all people to be justified and live" or "all people can be justified and live because one person did that one righteous act"

**the one act of righteousness**

This refers to Jesus's obedience to God in dying for our sins.

**Romans 5:19**

**one man's disobedience**

the disobedience of Adam

**the many were made sinners**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "many people sinned"

**the obedience of the one**

the obedience of Jesus

**of the one will the many be made righteous**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "of the one, God will make many people right with him"

**Romans 5:20**

**the law came in**

Here Paul speaks of the law as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "God gave his law to Moses"

**sin abounded**

"sin increased"

**grace abounded even more**

Here "grace" refers to God's undeserved blessings. Alternate translation: "God continued to act even more kindly toward them, in a way that they did not deserve"

**Romans 5:21**

**sin reigned in death ... grace might reign through righteousness for everlasting life**

Here Paul speaks of sin as if it were a king who ruled over people and made them unable to obey God and ultimately killing them, and he speaks of grace as if it were a king who might rule over people and enable them to be right with God. Alternate translation: "as people obeyed their desire to sin and therefore had to die ... God might show grace to people and allow them to be right with him, resulting in everlasting life"

**our Lord**

Paul includes himself, his readers, and all believers.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Romans 6 General Notes**

#### **Structure and formatting**

Paul begins this chapter by answering how someone might object to what he

taught in Chapter 5.

### **Special concepts in this chapter**

#### **Against the Law**

In this chapter, Paul refutes the teaching that Christians can live however they want after they are saved. Scholars call this "antinomianism" or being "against the law." To motivate godly living, Paul recalls the great price Jesus paid for a Christian to be saved. (See: save and godly)

#### **Servants of sin**

Before they believe in Jesus, people are servants of sin, that is, they are unable to resist their desire to sin. God frees Christians from serving sin. They are able to choose to serve Christ in their lives. Paul explains that when Christians choose to sin, they willingly choose to sin. (See: faith and sin)

#### **Fruit**

This chapter uses the imagery of fruit. The image of fruit usually refers to a person's faith producing good works in their life. (See: fruit and righteous)

### **Important figures of speech in this chapter**

#### **Rhetorical Questions**

Paul uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the readers see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: and guilt and sin)

### **Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

#### **Death**

Paul uses "death" to refer to many different things in this chapter: physical death, spiritual death, sin reigning in the heart of man, and the end of something. He contrasts sin and death with the new life provided by Christ and the new way Christians are supposed to live after they are saved. (See: death)

#### **Romans 6:1**

##### **Connecting Statement:**

Under grace, Paul tells those who believe in Jesus to live a new life as though dead to sin and alive to God.

##### **What then will we say? Should we continue in sin so that grace may abound?**

Paul asks these rhetorical questions to get the attention of his readers.

Alternate translation: "So, what should we say about all of this? We certainly should not keep on sinning so that God will give us more and more grace!

##### **we say**

The pronoun "we" refers to Paul, his readers, and other people.

#### **Romans 6:2**

##### **We who died to sin, how can we still live in it?**

Here "We who died to sin" refers to those who follow Jesus, who are now like dead people who cannot be affected by sin. Paul uses this rhetorical question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "We are now like dead people on whom sin has no effect! So we certainly should not keep on sinning!"

#### **Romans 6:3**

##### **Do you not know that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?**

Paul uses this question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "Remember, when someone baptized us to show that we have a relationship with Christ, this also shows that we died with Christ on the cross!

#### **Romans 6:4**

**We were buried, then, with him through baptism into death**

Here Paul speaks of a believer's baptism in water as if it were a death and burial. Alternate translation: "When someone baptized us, it is just like that person buried us with Christ in the tomb"

**just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life**

To raise from the dead is an idiom for causing a person to live again. This compares a believer's new spiritual life to Jesus coming back to life physically. The believer's new spiritual life enables that person to obey God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "just as the Father brought Jesus back to life after he died, we might have new spiritual life and obey God"

**the dead**

All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To be raised from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

**Romans 6:5**

**become united with him in the likeness of his death ... be united with his resurrection**

Paul compares our union with Christ to death. Those who are joined with Christ in death will share in his resurrection. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "died with him ... come back to life with him"

**Romans 6:6**

**our old man was crucified with him**

The "old man" is a metaphor that refers to the person before he believes in Jesus. Paul describes our old sinful person as dying on the cross with Jesus when we believe in Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "our sinful person died on the cross with Jesus"

**old man**

This means the person who once was, but who does not exist now.

**the body of sin**

This is a metonym that refers to the whole sinful person. Alternate translation: "our sinful nature"

**might be destroyed**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "might die"

**we should no longer be enslaved to sin**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "sin should no longer enslave us" or "we should no longer be slaves to sin"

**we should no longer be enslaved to sin**

Slavery to sin is a metaphor meaning having such a strong desire to sin that one is unable to stop himself from sinning. It is as if sin controls the person. Alternate translation: "we should no longer be controlled by sin"

**Romans 6:7**

**He who has died is declared righteous with respect to sin**

Here "righteous" refers to being right with God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "When God declares a person right with him, that person is no longer controlled by sin"

**Romans 6:8**

**we have died with Christ**

Here "died" refers to the fact that believers are no longer controlled by sin.

### **Romans 6:9**

#### **We know that since Christ has been raised from the dead**

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "We know since God brought Christ back to life after he died"

#### **the dead**

All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To be raised from among them is to become alive again.

#### **death no longer rules over him**

Here "death" is described as if it were a king or ruler that has power over people. Alternate translation: "He cannot ever die again"

### **Romans 6:10**

#### **he died once for all**

Possible meanings are 1) he died once, and he will not die again, nor will anyone else need to die, or 2) it is true now and will be true for all time that he died.

### **Romans 6:11**

#### **In the same way, you also must consider**

"For this reason consider"

#### **consider yourselves to be**

"think of yourselves as" or "see yourselves as"

#### **dead to sin**

Just as one cannot force a corpse to do anything, sin has no power to force believers to dishonor God. Alternate translation: "as if you were dead to the power of sin"

#### **dead to sin, but alive to God**

"dead to the power of sin, but living to honor God"

#### **alive to God in Christ Jesus**

"living to honor God through the power Christ Jesus gives you"

### **Romans 6:12**

#### **Connecting Statement:**

Paul reminds us that grace rules over us, not the law; we are not sin's slaves, but God's slaves.

#### **do not let sin rule in your mortal body**

Paul speaks of people sinning as if sin were their master or king that controlled them. Alternate translation: "Do not let sinful desires control you"

#### **your mortal body**

This phrase refers to the physical part of a person, which will die. Alternate translation: "you"

#### **so that you obey its lusts**

Obedying the mortal body's lusts would be the result of letting sin rule in the body. That is why Paul commands people not to let sin rule in their mortal body—so they they do not obey its lusts. Paul speaks of people doing the evil things they desire as if the body had evil desires and commanded people to do what it desires.

### **Romans 6:13**

#### **Do not present the members of your bodies to sin, to be tools used for unrighteousness**

The picture is of the sinner offering his "members," the parts of his body to his

master or king. One's "members" are a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "Do not offer yourselves to sin so that you do what is not right"

**But present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life**

Here the words "brought ... to life" refer to the believer's new spiritual life.

Alternate translation: "But offer yourselves to God because he has given you new spiritual life" or "But offer yourselves to God as those who had died and are now alive"

**present the members of your bodies to God as tools to be used for righteousness**

Here "members" is a synecdoche that refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "let God use you for what is pleasing to him"

#### **Romans 6:14**

**Do not allow sin to rule over you**

Paul speaks of "sin" here as if it were a king who rules over people. Alternate translation: "Do not let sinful desires control what you do" or "Do not allow yourselves to do the sinful things you want to do"

**For you are not under law**

To be "under law" means to be subject to its limitations and weaknesses. You can make the full meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "For you are no longer bound to the law of Moses, which could not give you the power to stop sinning"

**but under grace**

To be "under grace" means that God's free gift provides the power to keep from sinning. You can make the full meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "but you are bound to God's grace, which does give you the power to stop sinning"

#### **Romans 6:15**

**What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law, but under grace? May it never be**

Paul is using a question to emphasize that living under grace is not a reason to sin. Alternate translation: "However, just because we are bound to grace instead of the law of Moses certainly does not mean we are allowed to sin"

**May it never be**

"We would never want that to happen!" or "May God help me not to do that!"

This expression shows an extremely strong desire that this does not take place. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated it in Romans 3:31.

#### **Romans 6:16**

**Do you not know that if you present yourselves as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey?**

Paul uses a question to scold anyone who may think God's grace is a reason to keep sinning. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You should know that if you present yourselves as slaves to anyone, you are slaves to whomever you obey!"

**which leads to death ... which leads to righteousness**

"which results in death ... which results in righteousness"

#### **Romans 6:17**

**But thanks be to God!**

"But I thank God!"

**For you were slaves of sin**

Being "slaves of sin" is a metaphor meaning they have such a strong desire to sin that they are unable to keep from sinning. It is as if sin controls the person. Alternate translation: "you were like slaves of sin" or "you were unable to keep from sinning"

**but you have obeyed from the heart**

Here the word "heart" refers to having sincere or honest motives for doing something. Alternate translation: "but you truly obeyed"

**the pattern of teaching that you were given**

Here "pattern" refers to the way of living that leads to righteousness. The believers change their old way of living to match this new way of living that Christian leaders teach to them. You can translate this in an active form.

Alternate translation: "the teaching that Christian leaders gave you"

**Romans 6:18**

**You have been made free from sin**

Here "free from sin" is a metaphor for them no longer having a strong desire to sin and therefore being able to stop themselves from sinning. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Christ has freed you from sin" or "Your strong desire to sin has been taken away" or "You have been made free from sin's control over you" (See: and )

**you have been made slaves of righteousness**

Slavery of righteousness is a metaphor meaning having a strong desire to do what is right. It is as if righteousness controls the person. Alternate translation: "you have been made like slaves of righteousness" or "you are now controlled by righteousness"

**you have been made slaves of righteousness**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Christ has made you slaves of righteousness" or "Christ has changed you so that now you are controlled by righteousness"

**Romans 6:19**

**I speak like a man**

Paul may have expected his readers to wonder why he was speaking of slavery and freedom. Here he is saying that he is using these ideas from their everyday experience to help them understand that people are controlled either by sin or by righteousness. Alternate translation: "I am speaking about this in human terms" or "I am using examples from everyday life"

**because of the weakness of your flesh**

Often Paul uses the word "flesh" as the opposite of "spirit." Alternate translation: "because you do not fully understand spiritual things"

**presented the members of your bodies as slaves to uncleanness and to lawlessness**

Here, the word "members" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "offered yourselves as slaves to everything that is evil and not pleasing to God"

**present the members of your bodies as slaves to righteousness for sanctification**

Here the word "members" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "offer yourselves as slaves to what is right before God so that he might set you apart and give you the power to serve him"

**Romans 6:20**

**you were free from righteousness**

Here "free from righteousness" is a metaphor for not having to do what is righteous. The people were living as though they thought that they did not have to do what was right. Alternate translation: "it was as though you were free from righteousness" or "you behaved as though you did not have to do what was right" or

#### **Romans 6:21**

**At that time, what fruit then did you have of the things of which you are now ashamed?**

"Fruit" here is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome." Paul is using a question to emphasize that sinning results in nothing good. Alternate translation: "Nothing good came from those things that now cause you shame." or "You gained nothing by doing those things that now cause you shame."

#### **Romans 6:22**

**But now that you have been made free from sin and are enslaved to God**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But now that you have become free from sin and have become God's slaves" or "But now that God has freed you from sin and made you his slaves"

**But now that you have been made free from sin**

Being "free from sin" is a metaphor for being able not to sin. Alternate translation: "But now that God has made you able not to sin"

**and are enslaved to God**

Being "enslaved" to God is a metaphor for being able to serve and obey God. Alternate translation: "and God has made you able to serve him"

**you have your fruit for sanctification**

Here "fruit" is a metaphor for "result" or "benefit." Alternate translation: "the benefit is your sanctification" or "the benefit is that you live in a holy way"

**The result is eternal life**

"The result of all of this is that you will live forever with God"

#### **Romans 6:23**

**For the wages of sin are death**

The word "wages" refers to a payment given to someone for their work. "For if you serve sin, you will receive spiritual death as payment" or "For if you continue sinning, God will punish you with spiritual death"

**but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord**

"but God gives eternal life to those who belong to Christ Jesus our Lord"

### **Chapter 7**

#### **Romans 7 General Notes**

##### **Structure and formatting**

**"Or do you not know"**

Paul uses this phrase to discuss a new topic and connects what follows with the previous teaching.

##### **Special concepts in this chapter**

**"We have been released from the law"**

Paul explains that the law of Moses is no longer in effect. While this is true, the timeless principles behind the law reflect the character of God. (See: lawofmoses)

##### **Important figures of speech in this chapter**

##### **Marriage**

Scripture commonly uses marriage as a metaphor. Here Paul uses it to describe

how the church relates to the law of Moses and now to Christ.

**Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

**Flesh**

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive ("in the flesh"), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: flesh and sin)

**Romans 7:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul explains how the law controls those who want to live under the law.

**Or do you not know, brothers ... that the law rules over a person for whatever time he lives?**

Paul asks this question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "So you certainly know brothers ... that people have to obey laws only while they are alive"

**brothers**

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**Romans 7:2**

**Connecting Statement:**

This verse begins a description of what Paul means by "the law controls a person for as long as he lives" (Romans 7:1).

**the married woman is bound by law to the husband**

Here "bound by law to the husband" is a metaphor for a woman being united to her husband according to the law of marriage. Alternate translation: "according to the law, the married woman is united to the husband"

**the married woman**

This refers to any woman who is married.

**Romans 7:3**

**Connecting Statement:**

This verse ends a description of what Paul means by "the law controls a person for as long as he lives" (Romans 7:1).

**she will be called an adulteress**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will consider her an adulteress" or "people will call her an adulteress"

**she is free from the law**

Here being free from the law means not having to obey the law. In this case, the woman does not have to obey the law that says that a married woman cannot marry another man. Alternate translation: "she does not have to obey that law"

**Romans 7:4**

**Therefore, my brothers**

This relates back to Romans 7:1.

**brothers**

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**you were also made dead to the law through the body of Christ**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "you also died to the law when through Christ you died on the cross"

**to him who was raised from the dead**

"Raised" here is an idiom for "caused to live again." This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "to him who was caused to live again" or "to him whom God raised from the dead" or "to him whom God caused to live again"

**we might produce fruit for God**

Here "fruit" is a metaphor for actions that please God. Alternate translation: "we might be able to do things pleasing to God"

**Romans 7:5**

**to bear fruit for death**

Here "fruit" is a metaphor for a "result of one's actions" or "outcome of one's actions." Alternate translation: "which resulted in spiritual death" or "the outcome of which was our own spiritual death"

**Romans 7:6**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul reminds us that God does not make us holy by the law.

**we have been released from the law**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has released us from the law"

**we**

This pronoun refers to Paul and the believers.

**to that by which we were bound**

This refers to the law. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "to the law, which bound us"

**the letter**

This refers to the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "the law of Moses"

**Romans 7:7**

**What will we say then?**

Paul is introducing a new topic.

**May it never be**

"Of course that is not true!" This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated this in Romans 9:14.

**I would never have known sin, if it were not through the law**

Paul is speaking of sin as if it were a person who can act.

**sin**

"my desire to sin"

**Romans 7:8**

**But sin took the opportunity ... produced every kind of coveting**

Paul continues comparing sin to a person who can act.

**coveting**

This word includes both the desire to have what belongs to other people and wrong sexual desire.

**apart from the law, sin was dead**

"if there were no law, there would be no breaking of the law, so there would be no sin"

**Romans 7:9**

**sin regained life**

This can mean 1) "I realized that I was sinning" or 2) "I strongly desired to sin"

**Romans 7:10**

**The commandment that was to bring life turned out to be death for me**

Paul speaks of God's condemnation as if it resulted primarily in physical death. Alternate translation: "God gave me the commandment so I would live, but it killed me instead"

**Romans 7:11**

**For sin took the opportunity through the commandment and deceived me. Through the commandment it killed me**

As in [Romans 7:7-8]

**sin**

"my desire to sin"

**took the opportunity through the commandment**

Paul is comparing sin to a person who can act. See how you translated this in [Romans 7:8]

**it killed me**

Paul speaks of God's condemnation on sinners as if it resulted primarily in physical death. Alternate translation: "it separated me from God"

**Romans 7:12**

**the law is holy**

Possible meanings are that it is holy because 1) it comes from God or 2) it reveals God's true nature.

**Romans 7:13**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul talks about the struggle inside his inner man between sin in his inner man and his mind with the law of God—between sin and good.

**So**

Paul is introducing a new topic.

**did what is good become death to me?**

Paul uses this question to add emphasis.

**what is good**

This refers to God's law.

**become death to me**

"cause me to die"

**May it never be**

This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. Alternate translation: "Of course that is not true"

**sin ... brought about death in me**

Paul speaks of sin as though it were a person who could act.

**brought about death in me**

Paul speaks of being separated from God as if he were literally dead. Alternate translation: "separated me from God"

**through the commandment**

"because I disobeyed the commandment"

**Romans 7:14**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 7:15**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul talks about the struggle inside his inner man between his flesh and the law of God—between sin and good.

**For what I do, I do not really understand**

"I am not sure why I do some of the things that I do"

**For what I do**

"Because what I do"

**what I want to do, I do not do**

The words "I do not do" are an exaggeration to emphasize that Paul does not do what he wants to do as often as he would like or that he does what he does not want to do too often. Alternate translation: "I do not always do what I want to do"

**what I hate, I do**

The words "I do," which implies that he always does what he hates to do, are an exaggeration to emphasize that Paul does what he does not want to do too often. Alternate translation: "the things that I know are not good are the things that I sometimes do"

**Romans 7:16**

**But if I do**

"However, if I do"

**I agree with the law that the law is good**

To agree with the law here is to agree with God about the law. Alternate translation: "I agree with God that the law is good"

**Romans 7:17**

**the sin that lives in me**

Paul describes sin as a living being that has the power to influence him.

**Romans 7:18**

**my flesh**

Here "flesh" is a metonym for the sinful nature. Alternate translation: "my sinful nature"

**Romans 7:19**

**the good**

"the good deeds" or "the good actions"

**the evil**

"the evil deeds" or "the evil actions"

**Romans 7:20**

**rather sin that lives in me**

Paul speaks of "sin" as if it were alive and living inside him.

**Romans 7:21**

**this law: When I want to do good, evil is present with me**

The words "this law" refer to the natural human desire to rebel against God and disobey him. Paul calls this a law because he has observed that this is the way people live. It is not a collection of written commands.

**evil is present with me**

Paul speaks of evil here as if it were alive and living with him.

**Romans 7:22**

**with my inner person**

Here the phrase "inner person" refers to the personality, heart, or soul.  
Alternate translation: "with my heart" or "with my soul"

**Romans 7:23**

**a different law in the members of my body ... fights against that new law in my mind**

Paul has a desire to obey God, but at times he also has a desire to do things that God hates. He writes of the two desires he has as if they were two men fighting each other.

**a different law**

These words refer to the natural human desire to rebel against God and disobey him. Paul calls this a law because he has observed that this is the way people live. It is not a collection of written commands.

**in the members of my body**

The phrase "the members of my body" is another way of saying "my flesh"

**that new law in my mind**

These words refer to the law of Moses, which was God's commands in written form (Romans 7:22).

**the law of sin that is in the members of my body**

This "law of sin" is the same as the "different law," the natural human desire to rebel against God and disobey him. Paul calls this a law because he has observed that this is the way people live. It is not a collection of written commands.

**Romans 7:24**

**Who will deliver me from this body of death?**

Paul uses this question to express great emotion. If your language has a way of showing great emotion through an exclamation or a question, use it here.

Alternate translation: "I want someone to set me free from the control of what my body desires!"

**deliver me**

"rescue me"

**this body of death**

This is a metaphor that means a body that will experience physical death.

**Romans 7:25**

**But thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord**

This is the answer to the question in 7:24.

**So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind. However, with the flesh I serve the law of sin**

The law of God and the law of sin are spoken of as if they were masters whom Paul serves as a slave. With the mind or intellect Paul chooses to please and obey God, and with the flesh or physical nature he chooses to disobey God and to sin. Alternate translation: "My mind chooses to please God by obeying the law of Moses, but my flesh chooses to disobey God and sin"

**the law of God**

These words refer to the law of Moses, which was God's commands in written form.

**the law of sin**

These words refer to the natural human desire to rebel against God and disobey him. Paul calls this a law because he has observed that this is the way people live. It is not a collection of written commands.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Romans 8 General Notes**

#### **Structure and formatting**

The first verse of this chapter is a transitional sentence. Paul concludes his teaching of Chapter 7 and leads into the words of Chapter 8.

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 verse 36. Paul quotes these words from the Old Testament.

#### **Special concepts in this chapter**

##### **Indwelling of the Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is said to live inside a person or inside their heart. If the Spirit is present, this signifies that a person is saved. (See: save)

##### **"These are sons of God"**

Jesus is the Son of God in a unique way. God also adopts Christians to be his children. (See: sonofgod and adoption)

##### **Predestination**

Twice in verses 29-30 Paul uses the word "predestined." Some take this to indicate that God has, from before the foundation of the world, chosen his own people to be eternally saved. Christians have different views on what the Bible teaches on this subject. So translators need to take extra care when translating this chapter, especially with regards to elements of causation. (See: predestine and save)

#### **Important figures of speech in this chapter**

##### **Metaphor**

Paul poetically presents his teaching in verses 38 and 39 in the form of an extended metaphor. He explains that nothing can separate a person from the love of God in Jesus.

#### **Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

##### **No condemnation**

This phrase must be translated carefully to avoid doctrinal confusion. People are still guilty of their sin. God disapproves of sinful acts, even those that believers in Jesus commit. God still punishes the sins of believers, but Jesus has paid the punishment for their sin. This is what Paul expresses here. The word "condemn" has several possible meanings. Here Paul emphasizes that people who believe in Jesus are no longer punished eternally for their sin by being "condemned to hell." (See: guilt and faith and condemn)

##### **Flesh**

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive ("in the flesh"), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: flesh)

### **Romans 8:1**

#### **Connecting Statement:**

Paul gives the answer to the struggle he has with sin and good.

#### **There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**

Here "condemnation" refers to the punishment of people. Alternate translation: "God will not condemn and punish those who are joined to Christ Jesus"

#### **There is therefore now**

"For that reason, there is now" or "Because what I have just told you is true, there is now"

**Romans 8:2**

**the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus**

This refers to God's Spirit. Alternate translation: "God's Spirit in Christ Jesus"

**has set you free from the law of sin and death**

Being free from the law of sin and death is a metaphor for not being controlled by the law of sin and death. Alternate translation: "has caused the law of sin and death to no longer control you"

**the law of sin and death**

Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) the written law, which provokes people to sin, which in turn causes them to die. Alternate translation: "the law which causes sin and death" or 2) the "different law" (see Romans 7:23) that people sin and die.

**Romans 8:3**

**For what the law was unable to do because it was weak through the flesh, God did**

Here the law is described as a person who could not break the power of sin.

Alternate translation: "For the law did not have the power to stop us from sinning, because the power of sin within us was too strong. But God did stop us from sinning"

**through the flesh**

"because of people's sinful nature"

**He ... sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh ... an offering for sin ... he condemned sin**

The Son of God forever satisfied God's holy anger against our sin by giving his own body and human life as the eternal sacrifice for sin.

**Son**

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

**in the likeness of sinful flesh**

"who looked like a sinful human being"

**to be an offering for sin**

"so that he could die as a sacrifice for our sins"

**he condemned sin in the flesh**

Possible meanings are 1) "flesh" refers to our human nature or lives. Alternate translation: "he destroyed sin in our human nature" or 2) "flesh" refers to Christ's body, and "in the flesh" refers to Christ's death. Alternate translation: "in Christ's flesh God condemned sin" or "by Christ's death God condemned sin."

**he condemned sin**

In this verse, "condemned" is a metonym for "destroyed." Alternate translation: "he destroyed sin" or "he broke the power of the sin"

**Romans 8:4**

**the requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "we might fulfill what the law requires"

**we who walk not according to the flesh**

Walking on a path is a metaphor for how a person lives his life. The flesh is an idiom for sinful human nature. Alternate translation: "we who do not obey our sinful desires"

**but according to the Spirit**

"but who obey the Holy Spirit"

**Romans 8:5**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 8:6**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to contrast the flesh with the Spirit we now have.

**the mind set on the flesh ... the mind set on the Spirit**

Here Paul speaks of both the "flesh" and the "spirit" as if they were living persons. Alternate translation: "the way sinful people think ... the way people who listen to the Holy Spirit think"

**death**

Here this means the separation of a person from God.

**Romans 8:7**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 8:8**

**Those who are in the flesh**

This refers to people who do what their sinful nature tells them to do.

**Romans 8:9**

**in the flesh**

"acting according to your sinful natures." See how "the flesh" was translated in Romans 8:5.

**in the Spirit**

"acting according to the Holy Spirit"

**Spirit ... God's Spirit ... Spirit of Christ**

These all refer to the Holy Spirit.

**if indeed**

This phrase does not mean Paul doubts that some of them have God's Spirit.

Paul wants them to realize that they all have God's Spirit. Alternate translation:

"since" or "because"

**Romans 8:10**

**If Christ is in you**

How Christ lives in a person could be made explicit. Alternate translation: "If Christ lives in you through the Holy Spirit"

**the body is dead with respect to sin**

Possible meanings are 1) a person is spiritually dead to the power of sin or 2) the physical body will still die because of sin.

**the spirit is alive with respect to righteousness**

Possible meanings are 1) a person is spiritually alive because God has given him power to do what is right or 2) God will bring the person back to life after he dies because God is righteous and gives believers eternal life.

**Romans 8:11**

**If the Spirit ... lives in you**

Paul assumes that the Holy Spirit lives in his readers. Alternate translation:

"Since the Spirit ... lives in you"

**of him who raised ... from the dead lives**

"of God, who raised ... from the dead, lives"

**raised Jesus**

Here to raise is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "caused Jesus to live again"

**mortal bodies through his Spirit**

"physical bodies through his Spirit" or "bodies, which will die someday, through his Spirit"

**Romans 8:12**

**So then**

"Because what I have just told you is true"

**brothers**

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**we are debtors, but not to**

Paul is speaking of obedience as if it were paying back a debt. Alternate translation: "we need to obey, but not"

**but not to the flesh to live according to the flesh**

Again Paul speaks of obedience as if it were paying back a debt. You can include the implied word "debtors." Alternate translation: "but we are not debtors to the flesh, and we do not have to obey our sinful desires"

**Romans 8:13**

**For if you live according to the flesh**

"Because if you live only to please your sinful desires"

**you are about to die**

"you will certainly be separated from God"

**but if by the Spirit you put to death the body's actions**

Paul speaks of the "old man," crucified with Christ, as the person who is responsible for his sinful desires. Alternate translation: "but if by the power of the Holy Spirit you stop obeying your sinful desires"

**Romans 8:14**

**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For all the people whom the Spirit of God leads"

**sons of God**

Here this means all believers in Jesus and is often translated as "children of God."

**Romans 8:15**

**by which we cry**

"who causes us to cry out"

**Abba, Father**

"Abba" is "Father" in the Aramaic language.

**Romans 8:16**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 8:17**

**heirs of God**

Paul speaks of the Christian believers as if they will inherit property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: "and we also will one day receive what God has promised us"

**we are joint heirs with Christ**

Paul speaks of the Christian believers as if they will inherit property and wealth from a family member. God will give to us what he gives to Christ. Alternate translation: "we will also receive what God has promised us and Christ together"

**that we may also be glorified with him**

God will honor Christian believers when he honors Christ. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that God may glorify us along with him"

**Romans 8:18**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul begins to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

**For**

This emphasizes "I consider." It does not mean "because."

**I consider that ... are not worthy to be compared with**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I cannot compare ... with"

**will be revealed**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will reveal" or "God will make known"

**Romans 8:19**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

**the eager expectation of the creation waits for**

Paul describes everything that God created as a person who eagerly waits for something.

**for the revealing of the sons of God**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "for the time when God will reveal his children"

**sons of God**

Here this means all believers in Jesus. You can also translate this as "children of God."

**Romans 8:20**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

**For the creation was subjected to futility**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For God caused what he had created to be unable to achieve what he intended"

**not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it**

Here Paul describes "creation" as a person who can desire. Alternate translation: "not because this is what the created things wanted, but because it is what God wanted"

**in hope**

Here the word "hope" is confident expectation that what one desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs

"confidently expect" or "confidently wait." God could be absolutely sure that what he intended would happen. Alternate translation: "confidently expecting" or "confidently waiting"

**Romans 8:21**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

**the creation itself will be delivered**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will save creation"

**from slavery to decay**

Here being in slavery to decay is a metaphor for being certain to decay.

Alternate translation: "from being like a slave to decay"

**that it will be brought into the freedom of the glory of the children of God**

"Freedom" here is in contrast with slavery to decay. It is a metaphor meaning that the creation will not decay. Alternate translation: "that it will become gloriously free from decay like the children of God"

**Romans 8:22**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

**For we know that the whole creation groans and labors in pain together even now**

The creation is compared to a woman groaning while giving birth to a baby.

Alternate translation: "For we know that everything that God created wants to be free and groans for it the way a woman giving birth groans for her baby to be born"

**Romans 8:23**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

**as we wait eagerly for our adoption, the redemption of our body**

The abstract nouns "adoption" and "redemption" can be stated as verbs.

Alternate translation: "as we wait eagerly for God to adopt us and redeem our bodies"

**Romans 8:24**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

**For in this hope we were saved**

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "For God saved us so that we might have this hope" 2) "For God saved us because we have this hope"

**in this hope we were saved**

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: "it was so that we might confidently wait for this that we were saved" or "we were saved that we might trust God to do this"

**this hope**

The phrase "this hope" refers to the hope of our adoption, the redemption of our bodies (8:23).

**Now hope that is seen is not hope**

"Hope that is seen" is hope that has already been fulfilled. Alternate translation: "If we already have what we hope for, that is not hope" or "If we have what we want, we would not say that we hope for it"

**For who hopes for what he can see?**

Paul uses a question to help his audience understand what "hope" is. Alternate translation: "No one hopes for what he already has." or "No one waits for what has already happened."

**Romans 8:25**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul finishes reminding the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

**if we hope for what we do not see**

Here the word "hope" means confidently expect that what one desires will happen. The person who hopes in this way believes that what he desires will happen. Alternate translation: "If we confidently expect to receive what we do not see" or "if we trust God for what we do not see"

**what we do not see**

Not seeing what we hope for represents not yet having it or experiencing it. Alternate translation: "what we do not yet have" or "what has not yet happened"

**we wait for it with patience**

"we wait for it patiently"

**Romans 8:26**

**Connecting Statement:**

Though Paul has been emphasizing that there is a struggle in believers between the flesh and the Spirit, he affirms that the Spirit is aiding us.

**inexpressible groans**

"groanings that we cannot express in words"

**Romans 8:27**

**He who searches out the hearts knows**

Here "He" refers to God. Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's thoughts and emotions. The phrase "searches out the hearts" is a metaphor for examining thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "God, who knows what all our thoughts and feelings are, knows"

**Romans 8:28**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul reminds the believers that nothing can separate them from God's love.

**for those who are called**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "for those whom God chose"

**Romans 8:29**

**those whom he foreknew**

"those whom he knew before he even created them"

**he also predestined to be conformed**

"he also planned in advance that they would be conformed"

**to be conformed to the image of his Son**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that he would change them to be like his Son"

**Son**

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

**that he might be the firstborn**

"so that his Son would be the firstborn"

**among many brothers**

Here "brothers" refers to all believers, both male and female. Alternate translation: "among many brothers and sisters who belong to the family of God"

**Romans 8:30**

**Those whom he predestined**

"Those whom God made plans for in advance"

**these he also justified**

Here "justified" is in the past tense to emphasize that this will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "these he also put right with himself"

**these he also glorified**

The word "glorified" is in the past tense to emphasize that this will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "these he will also glorify"

**Romans 8:31**

**What, therefore, can we say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?**

Paul uses questions to emphasize the main point of what he said previously. Alternate translation: "This is what we should know from all of this: since God is helping us, no one can defeat us."

**Romans 8:32**

**He who did not spare his own Son**

God the Father sent the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to the cross as the holy, infinite sacrifice necessary to satisfy God's infinite, holy nature against the sin of humanity. Here "Son" is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

**but delivered him up**

"but put him under the control of his enemies"

**how will he not also with him freely give us all things?**

Paul is using a question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "he will certainly and freely give us all things!"

**freely give us all things**

"kindly give us all things"

**Romans 8:33**

**Who will bring any accusation against God's chosen ones? God is the one who justifies**

Paul uses a question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "No one can accuse us before God because he is the one who makes us right with him"

**Romans 8:34**

**Who is the one who condemns?**

Paul uses a question for emphasis. He does not expect an answer. Alternate translation: "No one will condemn us!"

**who is at the right hand of God**

To be at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor

and authority from God. Alternate translation: "who is at the place of honor beside God"

**Romans 8:35**

**Who will separate us from the love of Christ?**

Paul uses this question to teach that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Alternate translation: "No one will ever separate us from the love of Christ!" or "Nothing will ever separate us from the love of Christ!"

**Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?**

The words "shall separate us from the love of Christ" are understood from the previous question. Alternate translation: "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword separate us from the love of Christ?"

**Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?**

Paul uses this question to emphasize that even these things cannot separate us from the love of Christ. Alternate translation: "Even tribulation, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger, and sword cannot separate us from the love of Christ."

**Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?**

The abstract nouns can be expressed with verb phrases. Here "sword" is a metonym that represents being killed violently. Alternate translation: "Even if people cause us trouble, hurt us, take away our clothes and food, or kill us, they cannot separate us from the love of Christ."

**Tribulation, or distress**

These words both mean the same thing.

**Romans 8:36**

**For your benefit**

Here "your" is singular and refers to God. Alternate translation: "For you"

**we are killed all day long**

Here "we" refers to the writer and to other people, but not his audience, who was God. The phrase "all day long" is an exaggeration to emphasize how much danger they are in. Paul uses this part of Scripture to show that all who belong to God should expect difficult times. This can be translated in an active form. Alternate translation: "our enemies continually seek to kill us"

**We were considered as sheep for the slaughter**

Here Paul compares to livestock those whom people kill because they are loyal to God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Our lives have no more value to them than the sheep they kill"

**Romans 8:37**

**we are more than conquerors**

"we have complete victory"

**through the one who loved us**

You can make explicit the kind of love that Jesus showed. Alternate translation: "because of Jesus, who loved us so much he was willing to die for us"

**Romans 8:38**

**I have been convinced**

"I am convinced" or "I am confident"

**governments**

Possible meanings are 1) demons or 2) human kings and rulers.

**nor powers**

Possible meanings are 1) spiritual beings with power or 2) human beings with power.

**Romans 8:39**

**General Information:**

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**Chapter 9**

**Romans 9 General Notes**

**Structure and formatting**

In this chapter, Paul changes what he is teaching about. In Chapters 9-11, he focuses on the nation of Israel.

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 verses 25-29 and 33 of this chapter. Paul quotes all of these words from the Old Testament.

**Special concepts in this chapter**

**Flesh**

Paul uses the word "flesh" in this chapter only to refer to Israelites, people physically descending from Abraham through Jacob, whom God named Israel. (See: flesh)

In other chapters, Paul uses the word "brother" to mean fellow Christians. However, in this chapter, he uses "my brothers" to mean his kinsmen the Israelites.

Paul refers to those who believe in Jesus as "children of God" and "children of the promise."

**Important figures of speech in this chapter**

**Stone of stumbling**

Paul explains that while some Gentiles accepted Jesus as their savior by believing in him, most Jews were trying to earn their salvation and so rejected Jesus. Paul, quoting the Old Testament, describes Jesus as a stone that the Jews stumble over when walking. This "stone of stumbling" causes them to "fall."

**Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

**"It is not everyone in Israel who truly belongs to Israel"**

Paul uses the word "Israel" in this verse with two different meanings. The first "Israel" means the physical descendants of Abraham through Jacob. The second "Israel" means those who are God's people through faith. The UDB reflects this.

**Romans 9:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul tells of his personal desire that the people of the nation of Israel will be saved. Then he emphasizes the different ways in which God has prepared them to believe.

**I tell the truth in Christ. I do not lie**

These two expressions mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them to emphasize that he is telling the truth.

**my conscience bears witness with me in the Holy Spirit**

"the Holy Spirit controls my conscience and confirms what I say"

**Romans 9:2**

**that for me there is great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart**

Here "unceasing pain in my heart" is an idiom that Paul uses to share his emotional distress. Alternate translation: "that I grieve very greatly and deeply"

**great sorrow and unceasing pain**

These two expressions mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them together to emphasize how great his emotions are.

**Romans 9:3**

**For I could wish that I myself would be cursed and set apart from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I personally would be willing to let God curse me and keep me apart from Christ forever if that would help my fellow Israelites, my own people group, to believe in Christ"

**Romans 9:4**

**They are Israelites**

"They, like me, are Israelites. God chose them to be Jacob's descendants"

**They have adoption, the glory**

Here Paul uses the metaphor of "adoption" to indicate that the Israelites are like God's children. Alternate translation: "They have God as their father, and they have the glory"

**Romans 9:5**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 9:6**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul emphasizes that those who are born in the family of Israel can really only be a true part of Israel through faith.

**But it is not as though the word of God has failed**

The word "word" is a metonym for the promise that God used the words to make. Alternate translation: "But we should not think that God has failed to keep his promises" or "We should know that God has kept his promises"

**For it is not everyone in Israel who truly belongs to Israel**

God did not make his promises to all the physical descendants of Israel (or Jacob), but to his spiritual descendants, that is, those who trust in Jesus.

**Romans 9:7**

**Neither are all Abraham's descendants truly his children**

"Nor are they all children of God just because they are Abraham's descendants"

**Romans 9:8**

**the children of the flesh are not**

Here "children of the flesh" is a metonym that refers to the physical descendants of Abraham. Alternate translation: "not all of Abraham's descendants are"

**children of God**

This is a metaphor that refers to people who are spiritual descendants, those who have faith in Jesus.

**children of the promise**

This refers to people who will inherit the promises that God gave to Abraham.

**Romans 9:9**

**this is the word of promise**

"these are the words God used when he made the promise"

**a son will be given to Sarah**

You can translate this in an active form to express that God will give a son to Sarah. Alternate translation: "I will give Sarah a son"

**Romans 9:10**

**our father**

Paul refers to Isaac as "our father" because Isaac was the ancestor of Paul and of the Jewish believers in Rome.

**had conceived**

"had become pregnant"

**Romans 9:11**

**for the children were not yet born and had not yet done anything good or bad**

"before the children were born and before they had done anything, whether good or bad"

**so that the purpose of God according to choice might stand**

"so that what God wants to happen according to His choice will happen"

**for the children were not yet born**

"before the children were born"

**Romans 9:12**

**Connecting Statement:**

It may be necessary in your language to place this verse between verse 10 and verse 11: "... our father Isaac, it was said to her, 'The older will serve the younger.' For the children were not yet born and had not yet done anything good or bad, but so that the purpose of God according to choice might stand—not because of actions, but because of him who calls. It is just...."

**because of him**

because of God

**it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger."**

"God said to Rebekah, 'The older son will serve the younger son'"

**Romans 9:13**

**Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated**

The word "hated" is an exaggeration. God loved Jacob much more than he loved Esau. He did not literally hate Esau.

**Romans 9:14**

**What then will we say?**

Paul is using the question to get the attention of his readers.

**Is there unrighteousness with God?**

"Is God unrighteous?" or "Is God unjust?"

**May it never be**

"That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!" This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here.

**Romans 9:15**

**For he says to Moses**

Paul speaks about God's talking with Moses as if it is being done in the present time. Alternate translation: "For God said to Moses"

**Romans 9:16**

**it is not because of him who wills, nor because of him who runs**

"it is not because of what people want or because they try hard"

**nor because of him who runs**

Paul speaks of a person who does good things in order to gain God's favor as if that person were running a race.

**Romans 9:17**

**For the scripture says**

Here the scripture is personified as if God were talking to Pharaoh. Alternate translation: "The scripture records that God said"

**I ... my**

God is referring to himself.

**you**

The word "you" in this verse is singular.

**I raised you up**

"Raised" here is an idiom for "caused something to be what it is." Alternate translation: "I made you the powerful man that you are"

**so that my name might be proclaimed**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that people might proclaim my name"

**my name**

This metonym refers either 1) to God in all of his being. Alternate translation: "who I am" or 2) To his reputation. Alternate translation: "how great I am"

**in all the earth**

"wherever there are people"

**Romans 9:18**

**whom he wishes, he makes stubborn**

God makes stubborn whomever he wishes to make stubborn.

**Romans 9:19**

**You will say then to me**

Paul is talking to the critics of his teaching as though he were only talking to one person. You may need to use the plural here.

**Why does he still find fault? For who has ever withstood his will?**

These rhetorical questions are complaints against God. You can translate them as strong statements. Alternate translation: "He should not find fault with us. No one has ever been able to withstand his will."

**he ... his**

The words "he" and "his" here refer to God.

**has ... withstood his will**

"has ... stopped him from doing what he wanted to do"

**Romans 9:20**

**Will what has been molded say to the one who molds it, "Why ... way?"**

Paul uses the potter's right to make any kind of container he wants from the clay as a metaphor for the creator's right to do whatever he wants with his creation. Paul asks questions to emphasize his point. This can be translated as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "What a person has molded should never say to the one who molds it, 'Why ... way?'"

**Why did you make me this way?**

This question is a rebuke and can be translated as a strong statement.  
Alternate translation: "You should not have made me this way!"

**Romans 9:21**

**Does the potter not have the right ... for dishonorable use?**

This rhetorical question is a rebuke. Alternate translation: "The potter certainly has the right ... for dishonorable use."

**honorable use ... dishonorable use**

Some modern translations read, "special use ... daily use."

**Romans 9:22**

**containers of wrath prepared for destruction**

Paul speaks of people as if they were containers. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people to whom he would show wrath and whom he will certainly destroy"

**Romans 9:23**

**he ... his**

The words "he" and "his" here refer to God.

**containers of mercy, which**

Paul speaks of people as if they were containers. Alternate translation: "those to whom he would show mercy, whom"

**the riches of his glory upon**

Paul compares God's wonderful actions here to great "riches." Alternate translation: "his glory, which is of great value, upon"

**which he had previously prepared for glory**

Here "glory" refers to life in heaven with God. Alternate translation: "whom he prepared ahead of time in order that they might live with him"

**Romans 9:24**

**also for us**

The word "us" here refers to Paul and fellow believers.

**called**

Here "called" means God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.

**Romans 9:25**

**Connecting Statement:**

In this section Paul explains how Israel's unbelief as a nation was told ahead of time by the prophet Hosea.

**As he says also in Hosea**

Here "he" refers to God. Alternate translation: "As God says also in the book that Hosea wrote"

**Hosea**

Hosea was a prophet.

**I will call them 'my people' who were not my people**

"I will choose those who were not my people to be my people"

**her 'beloved' who was not beloved**

Here "her" refers to Hosea's wife, Gomer, who represents the nation of Israel. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I will choose her whom I did not love to be one whom I love"

**Romans 9:26**

**sons of the living God**

The word "living" may refer to the fact that God is the only true God, and not like the false idols. Alternate translation: "children of the true God"

**Romans 9:27**

**cries out**

"calls out"

**as the sand of the sea**

Here Paul compares the number of the people of Israel to the number of grains of sand in the sea. Alternate translation: "too many to count"

**will be saved**

Paul uses the word "saved" in a spiritual sense. If God saves a person, it means that through believing in Jesus's death on the cross, God has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished for his sin. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will save"

**Romans 9:28**

**the Lord will execute his word on the earth**

"the Lord will punish people on the earth as he has said he will"

**Romans 9:29**

**us ... we**

Here the words "us" and "we" refer to Isaiah and those to whom he spoke.

**we would be like Sodom, and we would have become like Gomorrah**

God killed all of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sin. Alternate translation: "we all would have been destroyed like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah" or "God would have destroyed all of us as he destroyed the people in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah"

**Romans 9:30**

**What will we say then?**

Paul uses this question to get the attention of his readers. Alternate translation: "So this is what we must say."

**That the Gentiles**

"We will say that the Gentiles"

**who were not pursuing righteousness**

"who were not trying to get righteousness" or "who were not trying to be righteous"

**righteousness, the righteousness by faith**

Here "by faith" refers to placing one's trust in Christ. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "righteousness because God made them right with him when they trusted in Christ"

**Romans 9:31**

**who did pursue a law of righteousness**

"who tried to obey a law in order to get righteousness" or "who tried to be righteous by obeying a law"

**did not arrive at that law**

"could not keep that law" or "did not succeed at keeping that law"

**Romans 9:32**

**Why not? Because they**

You can translate this rhetorical question as a statement and include the words from the ellipsis in your translation. Paul asks this question to get the attention of his readers. Alternate translation: "Why could they not attain righteousness?"

Because they" or "This is why they could not attain righteousness: they"

**by works**

This refers to things that people do to try to please God. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "by trying to do things that would please God" or "by keeping the Law"

**Romans 9:33**

**as it has been written**

You can indicate that Isaiah wrote this. You can also translate it in an active form. Alternate translation: "as Isaiah the prophet wrote"

**in Zion**

Here Zion is a metonym that represents Israel. Alternate translation: "in Israel"

**stone of stumbling and a rock of offense**

These phrases mean basically the same thing and are metaphors that refer to Jesus and his death on the cross. It was as if the people stumbled over a stone because they were disgusted when they considered Jesus's death on the cross.

**believes in it**

Because the words "stone" and "rock" are a metaphors for a person, you may need to translate this as "believes in him."

**Chapter 10**

**Romans 10 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 verses 18-20 of this chapter. These lines of poetry are from the Old Testament.

Some translations also set prose quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted words in verse 8.

**Special concepts in this chapter**

**God's righteousness**

Paul teaches here that while many Jews earnestly tried to be righteous, they did not succeed. We cannot earn God's righteousness. God gives us Jesus's righteousness when we believe in him. (See: righteous and faith)

**Important figures of speech in this chapter**

**Rhetorical questions**

Paul uses many rhetorical questions in this chapter. He does this to convince his readers that God does not save only the Hebrew people, so Christians must be ready to go and share the gospel with the whole world. (See: and save)

**Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

**"I will provoke you to jealousy by what is not a nation"**

Paul uses this prophecy to explain that God will use the church to make the Hebrew people jealous. This is so they will seek God and believe the gospel.

**Romans 10:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul continues stating his desire for Israel to believe but emphasizes that both those who are Jews and those who are not can only be saved by faith in Jesus.

**Brothers**

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**my heart's desire**

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's emotions or inner being. Alternate translation: "my greatest desire"

**is for them, for their salvation**

"is that God will save the Jews"

**Romans 10:2**

**I testify about them**

"I declare truthfully about them"

**Romans 10:3**

**For, failing to understand the righteousness that comes from God**

Here "righteousness" refers to the way God puts people right with himself. You can make this explicit in the translation. Alternate translation: "For because they did not know how God puts people right with himself"

**they did not submit to God's righteousness.**

"they did not accept God's way of putting people right with himself"

**Romans 10:4**

**For Christ is the fulfillment of the law**

"For Christ completely fulfilled the law"

**law for righteousness for everyone who believes**

Here "believes" means "trusts." Alternate translation: "law, and he makes everyone who trusts in him right before God"

**Romans 10:5**

**the righteousness that comes from the law**

Paul speaks of "righteousness" as if it were alive and able to move. Alternate translation: "how the law makes a person right before God"

**"The man who does these things will live by them."**

In order to be made right with God through the law, a person would have to keep the law perfectly, which is not possible. Alternate translation: "The person who perfectly obeys the law will live because the law will make him right before God"

**will live**

The words "will live" can refer to 1) eternal life or 2) mortal life in fellowship with God.

**Romans 10:6**

**But the righteousness that comes from faith says this**

Here "righteousness" is described as a person who can speak. Alternate translation: "But Moses writes this about how faith makes a person right before God"

**Do not say in your heart**

Moses was addressing the people as if he were speaking to only one person. Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "Do not say to yourself"

**Who will ascend into heaven?**

Moses uses a question to teach his audience. His previous instruction of, "Do not say" requires a negative answer to this question. You can translate this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one is able to go up to heaven"

**that is, to bring Christ down**

"in order that they might have Christ come down to earth"

**Romans 10:7**

**Who will descend into the abyss?**

Moses uses a question to teach his audience. His previous instruction of, "Do not say" requires a negative answer to this question. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "No person can go down and enter the place where the spirits of dead persons are."

**the dead**

All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To be brought up from among them is to become alive again.

**dead**

This word speaks of physical death.

**Romans 10:8**

**But what does it say?**

The word "it" refers to the scripture. Alternate translation: "But this is what Moses says"

**The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart**

Paul speaks of God's message as if it were a person who can move. The word "mouth" is a metonym that refers to what a person says. The phrase "in your heart" is metonym that refers to what a person thinks and believes. Alternate translation: "You have heard the message. You know how to speak it, and you know what it means"

**the word of faith**

"God's message that tells us that we must believe in him"

**Romans 10:9**

**if with your mouth you confess Jesus as Lord**

"if you confess that Jesus is Lord"

**believe in your heart**

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner person. Alternate translation: "believe in your mind" or "truly believe"

**raised him from the dead**

"Raised" here is an idiom for "caused to live again." Alternate translation: "caused him to live again"

**you will be saved**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will save you"

**Romans 10:10**

**For with the heart one believes and has righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved**

Here "heart" is a metonym that represents the mind or will. Alternate translation: "For it is with the mind that a person trusts and is right before God, and it is with the mouth that a person confesses so that God saves him"

**with the mouth**

Here "mouth" is a synecdoche that represents a person's capacity to speak.

**Romans 10:11**

**For scripture says**

Paul speaks of the scripture as if it were alive and had a voice. You can make explicit who wrote the scripture that Paul uses here. Alternate translation: "For

Isaiah wrote in the scripture"

**Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame**

This is equivalent to: "If a person believes, then that person will not be shamed." The negative is used here for emphasis. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will honor everyone who believes in him" or "God will shame only those who do not believe in Jesus"

**Romans 10:12**

**For there is no difference between Jew and Greek**

Paul implies that God will treat all people the same. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "In this way, God treats the Jews and the non-Jews the same"

**he is rich to all who call upon him**

Here "he is rich" means that God blesses richly. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "he richly blesses all who trust in him"

**Romans 10:13**

**For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved**

Here the word "name" is a metonym for Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "The Lord will save everyone who trusts in him"

**Romans 10:14**

**How then can they call on him in whom they have not believed?**

Paul uses a question to emphasize the importance of taking the good news of Christ to those who have not heard. The word "they" refers to those who do not yet belong to God. Alternate translation: "Those who do not believe in God cannot call on him!"

**How can they believe in him of whom they have not heard?**

Paul uses another question for the same reason. Alternate translation: "And they cannot believe in him if they have not heard his message!" or "And they cannot believe in him if they have not heard the message about him!"

**believe in**

trust and desire to obey

**How can they hear without a preacher?**

Paul uses another question for the same reason. Alternate translation: "And they cannot hear the message if someone does not tell them!"

**Romans 10:15**

**How beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim good news**

Paul uses "feet" to represent those who travel and take the message to those who have not heard it. The feet were considered a dirty and ugly part of the body, so the idea of beautiful feet would have seemed odd to Paul's readers. Alternate translation: "How beautiful are even the feet of those who proclaim good news" or "It is wonderful when messengers go and tell others the good news"

**Romans 10:16**

**not all of them obeyed**

Here "they" refers to the Jews. "not all of the Jews obeyed"

**Lord, who has believed our report?**

Paul is using this question, which Isaiah prophesied in the Scriptures, to emphasize that many Jews would not believe in Jesus. You can translate this as

a statement. Alternate translation: "Lord, so many of them do not believe our message!"

**our report**

Here, "our" refers to God and Isaiah and so is inclusive.

**Romans 10:17**

**So faith comes from hearing**

The abstract noun "faith" can be stated as the verb "believes." There are also words that Paul left out, but they are understood. Alternate translation: "So a person believes in Christ by hearing the message about Christ

**and hearing by the word of Christ**

Here "word" is a metonym that means "message." There are also words that Paul left out, but they are understood. Alternate translation: "and a person hears the message by someone preaching the message about Christ"

**Romans 10:18**

**But I say, "Did they not hear?" Yes, most certainly**

Paul uses a question for emphasis. You can translate this as a statement.

Alternate translation: "But, I say the Jews certainly have heard the message about Christ"

**Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.**

Both of these statements mean basically the same thing and Paul uses them for emphasis. The word "their" refers to the sun, moon, and stars. Here they are described as human messengers that tell people about God. This refers to how their existence shows God's power and glory. You can make explicit that Paul is quoting Scripture here. Alternate translation: "As the Scriptures record, 'The sun, moon, and the stars are proof of God's power and glory, and everyone in the world sees them and knows the truth about God.'"

**Romans 10:19**

**Moreover, I say, "Did Israel not know?"**

Paul uses a question for emphasis. The word "Israel" is a metonym for the people who lived in the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "Again I tell you the people of Israel did know the message."

**First Moses says, "I will provoke you ... I will stir you up**

This means that Moses wrote down what God said. "I" refers to God, and "you" refers to the Israelites. Alternate translation: "First Moses says that God will provoke you ... God will stir you up"

**by what is not a nation**

"by those you do not consider to be a real nation" or "by people who do not belong to any nation"

**By means of a nation without understanding**

Here "without understanding" means that the people do not know God.

Alternate translation: "By a nation with people who do not know me or my commands"

**I will stir you up to anger**

"I will make you angry" or "I will cause you to become angry"

**you**

This refers to the nation of Israel.

**Romans 10:20**

**General Information:**

Here the words "I" and "me" refer to God.

**Then Isaiah was very bold when he says**

This means the prophet Isaiah wrote what God had said.

**I was found by those who did not seek me**

Prophets often speak of things in the future as if they have already happened. This emphasizes that the prophecy will certainly come true. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Even though the Gentile people will not look for me, they will find me"

**I appeared**

"I made myself known"

**he says**

"He" refers to God, who is speaking through Isaiah.

**Romans 10:21**

**General Information:**

Here the word "my" refers to God.

**All the day long I**

This phrase is used to emphasize God's continual effort. "I continually"

**I reached out my hands to a disobedient and stubborn people**

"I tried to welcome you and to help you, but you refused my help and continued to disobey"

## **Chapter 11**

### **Romans 11 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 verses 9-10, 26-27, and 34-35, which is from the Old Testament.

#### **Special concepts in this chapter**

##### **Grafting**

Paul uses the image of "grafting" to refer to the place of the Gentiles and Jews in the plans of God. Making one plant to be permanently part of another plant is called "grafting." Paul uses the picture of God grafting the Gentiles as a wild branch into his saving plans. But God has not forgotten about the Jews, who are spoken of as the natural plant. God will also save Jews who believe in Jesus.

##### **Romans 11:1**

##### **Connecting Statement:**

Though Israel as a nation has rejected God, God wants them to understand salvation comes by grace without works.

**I say then**

"I, Paul, say then"

**did God reject his people?**

Paul asks this question so that he can answer the questions of other Jews who are upset that God has included the Gentiles among his people, while the hearts of the Jewish people have been hardened.

**May it never be.**

"That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!" This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated this in Romans 9:14.

**tribe of Benjamin**

This refers to the tribe descended from Benjamin, one of the 12 tribes into which God divided the people of Israel.

**Romans 11:2**

**whom he foreknew**

"whom he knew ahead of time"

**Do you not know what the scripture says about Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel?**

You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you know what the Scriptures record about when Elijah pleaded with God against Israel."

**what the scripture says**

Paul is referring to the scripture as if they were able to speak.

**Romans 11:3**

**they have killed**

"They" refers to the people of Israel.

**I alone am left**

The pronoun "I" here refers to Elijah.

**seeking my life**

"desiring to kill me"

**Romans 11:4**

**But what does God's answer say to him?**

Paul is using this question to bring the reader to his next point. Alternate translation: "But this is God's answer to him:"

**him**

The pronoun "him" refers to Elijah.

**seven thousand men**

"7,000 men"

**Romans 11:5**

**remnant**

Here this means a small part of people whom God chose to receive his grace.

**Romans 11:6**

**But if it is by grace**

Paul continues to explain how God's mercy works. Alternate translation: "But since God's mercy works by grace"

**Romans 11:7**

**What then?**

"What should we conclude?" Paul asks this question to move his reader to his next point. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is what we need to remember" or "So"

**Romans 11:8**

**God has given them a spirit of dullness, eyes so that they should not see, and ears so that they should not hear**

This is a metaphor about the fact that the people are spiritually dull. They are not able to hear or receive spiritual truth.

**spirit of**

Here this means "having the characteristics of," such as the "spirit of wisdom."

**eyes so that they should not see**

The concept of seeing with one's eyes was considered to be equivalent to gaining understanding.

**ears so that they should not hear**

The concept of hearing with the ears was considered to be equivalent to obedience.

**Romans 11:9**

**Let their table become a snare and a trap**

"Table" here is a metonym that represents feasting, and "snare" and "trap" are metaphors that represent punishment. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Please, God, make their feasts like a trap that catches them"

**a stumbling block**

A "stumbling block" is anything that causes a person to trip so that he falls down. Here it represents something that tempts a person to sin. Alternate translation: "something that tempts them to sin"

**a retribution for them**

"something that allows you to take revenge on them"

**Romans 11:10**

**bend their backs continually**

Here "bend their backs" is a metonym for forcing slaves to carry heavy loads on their backs. This is a metaphor for making them suffer. Alternate translation: "make them suffer like people carrying heavy loads"

**Romans 11:11**

**Connecting Statement:**

With Israel as a nation rejecting God, Paul warns the Gentiles to be careful they do not make the same mistake.

**Did they stumble so as to fall?**

Paul uses this question to add introduce the next thing he wants to say. If your language uses a different way to introduce new topics, you can use it here. Here the words "stumble" and "fall" are metaphors for sinning and having God reject the sinner. Alternate translation: "Has God rejected them forever because they sinned?"

**May it never be.**

"That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!" This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated this in Romans 9:14.

**provoke ... to jealousy**

See how you translated this phrase in Romans 10:19.

**Romans 11:12**

**if their trespass is the riches of the world, and if their loss is the riches of the Gentiles**

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. If you need to, you can combine them in your translation. Alternate translation: "when the Jews trespassed, the result was that God abundantly blessed the non-Jews"

**the riches of the world**

Because the Jews rejected Christ, God richly blessed the Gentiles by giving them the opportunity to receive Christ.

**the world**

Here the "world" is a metonym that refers to the people who live in the world, especially the Gentiles.

**how much greater will their fulfillment be?**

This can be translated as a statement. The words "their fulfillment" refer to either 1) the time when God blesses the Jews 2) when the Jews believe in Jesus. Alternate translation: "their fulfillment will be much greater." or "how much better will it be for the non-Jews when all the Jews believe in Jesus?" or "how much better will it be for the non-Jews when God fully blesses the Jews?"

**Romans 11:13**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 11:14**

**provoke to jealousy**

See how you translated this phrase in Romans 10:19.

**those who are of my own flesh**

This refers to "my fellow Jews."

**Perhaps we will save some of them**

God will save those who believe. Alternate translation: "Perhaps some will believe and therefore God will save them"

**Romans 11:15**

**For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world**

"For if because God rejected them, he will reconcile the rest of the world to himself"

**their rejection**

The pronoun "their" refers to Jewish unbelievers.

**the world**

Here "the world" is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "the people in the world"

**what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?**

Paul asks this question to emphasize that when God accepts the Jews, it will be a wonderful thing. The abstract noun "acceptance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "how will it be when God accepts them? It will be like they have come back to life from among the dead!" or "then when God accepts them, it will be like they have died and become alive again!"

**the dead**

These words speak of all dead people together in the underworld.

**Romans 11:16**

**If the firstfruits are holy, so is the lump of dough**

Paul is speaking of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Israelites' ancestors, as if they were the first grain or "firstfruits" to be harvested. He is also speaking of the Israelites who are descendants of those men as if they were a "lump of dough" made from the grain. Alternate translation: "If Abraham is counted as the first of what has been offered to God, all of our ancestors who followed should also be counted as God's possession"

**firstfruits**

The people always dedicated to God the first crops that they harvested. Here "firstfruits" stands for the first people to believe in Christ.

**If the root is holy, so are the branches**

Paul is speaking of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Israelites' ancestors, as if they were the root of a tree, and the Israelites, who are descendants of those men, as if they were the tree's "branches."

**Romans 11:17**

**But if some of the branches were broken off**

Here Paul refers to the Jews who rejected Jesus as "broken branches." You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "But if someone broke off some of the branches"

**if you, a wild olive branch, were grafted in among them**

Here Paul speaks of the Gentile Christians as if they were "grafted branches." You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "if God grafted you, a wild olive branch, among them"

**if you, a wild olive branch**

The pronoun "you" is singular. Here "you" and the phrase "a wild olive branch," refer to a Gentile person, in general, who has accepted salvation through Jesus.

**the rich root of the olive tree**

Here "the rich root" is a metaphor that refers to the promises of God.

**Romans 11:18**

**do not boast over the branches**

Here "the branches" is a metaphor that stands for the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "do not say you are better than the Jewish people God has rejected"

**it is not you who supports the root, but the root that supports you**

Again Paul implies that the Gentile believers are branches. God saves them only because of the covenant promises that he made to the Jews.

**Romans 11:19**

**Branches were broken off**

Here "branches" refers to the Jews who rejected Jesus and whom God has now rejected. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God broke branches off"

**I might be grafted in**

Paul uses this phrase to refer to the Gentile believers whom God has accepted. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "he might attach me in"

**Romans 11:20**

**their ... they**

The pronouns "their" and "they" refer to the Jewish people who did not believe.

**but you stand firm because of your faith**

Paul speaks of the Gentile believers remaining faithful as if they were standing firm and no one could move them. Alternate translation: "but you remain because of your faith"

**be arrogant in your thoughts**

"think that you are better than you are" or "be proud"

**Romans 11:21**

**For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you**

Here the "natural branches" refers to the Jewish people who rejected Jesus. Alternate translation: "Since God did not spare those unbelieving Jews, who grew up like a tree's natural branches that came from the root, then know that if you do not believe, he will not spare you either"

**Romans 11:22**

**the kind actions and the severity of God**

Paul is reminding the Gentile believers that although God may act very kindly toward them, he will not hesitate to judge and punish them.

**severity came on the Jews who fell ... God's kindness comes on you**

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "severity" and "kindness."

Alternate translation: "God dealt harshly with the Jews who fell ... God acts kindly toward you"

**the Jews who fell**

Here "fell" is a metaphor that means to have done something wrong. Alternate translation: "the Jews who have done wrong" or "the Jews who have refused to trust in Christ"

**if you continue in his kindness**

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "kindness." Alternate

translation: "if you continue doing what is right so that he continues being kind to you"

**Otherwise you also will be cut off**

Paul again uses the metaphor of a branch, which God can "cut off" if he needs to. Here "cut off" is a metaphor for rejecting someone. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Otherwise God will also cut you off" or "Otherwise God will also reject you"

**Romans 11:23**

**if they do not continue in their unbelief**

The phrase "do not continue in their unbelief" is a double negative. You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "if they start believing"

**will be grafted in**

Paul speaks of the Jews as if they were branches that could be grafted back into a tree if they start to believe in Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will graft back in"

**graft**

This is a common process in which the end of a live branch of one tree is inserted into another tree so that the new branch will continue to grow in that tree.

**they ... them**

All occurrences of "they" or "them" refer to the Jews.

**Romans 11:24**

**For if you were cut out of what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree?**

Paul continues speaking of the Gentile believers and Jews as if they were branches of a tree. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For if God had cut you out of what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature had grafted you into a good olive tree, how much more will he graft these Jews, who are the natural branches, into their own olive tree?"

**how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree?**

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "then these Jews, who are the natural branches, will certainly be grafted back into their own olive tree."

**branches**

Paul is speaking of the Jews and Gentiles as if they were branches. The "natural branches" represent the Jews, and the "grafted branches" represent the Gentile believers.

**Romans 11:25**

**I do not want you to be uninformed**

Here Paul uses a double negative to emphasize the positive. You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "I very much want you to be informed"

**brothers**

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**I**

The pronoun "I" refers to Paul.

**you ... you ... your**

The pronouns "you" and "your" refer to the Gentile believers.

**so that you may not be wise in your own thinking**

Paul does not want the Gentile believers to think they are wiser than the Jewish unbelievers. Alternate translation: "so that you will not think you are wiser than you are"

**A partial hardening has come upon Israel**

This is the mystery that Paul referred to earlier in the sentence. This can be made explicit. "A partial hardening" is a metaphor for many of the people remaining stubborn. Paul said this because some of the Jews stubbornly refused to trust Jesus. Alternate translation: "This mystery is that a partial hardening has come upon Israel" or "Many people of Israel remain stubborn"

**until the full number of the Gentiles**

Here "full number" means the amount determined by God. It does not mean all Gentiles. Alternate translation: "until the number of Gentiles determined by God"

**comes in**

This is a metaphor meaning to be saved or to become a Christian. Alternate translation: "is saved" or "believes in Christ"

**Romans 11:26**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul says that, to the glory of God, a deliverer will come out of Israel.

**Thus all Israel will be saved**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Thus God will save all Israel"

**just as it is written**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "just as the scriptures record"

**Out of Zion**

Here "Zion" is used as a metonym for the place where God dwells. Alternate translation: "From where God is among the Jews"

**the Deliverer**

"the one who brings his people to safety"

**He will remove ungodliness**

Paul speaks of ungodliness as if it were an object that someone could remove,

such as a garment..

**from Jacob**

Here "Jacob" is used as a metonym for Israel. Alternate translation: "from the Israelite people"

**Romans 11:27**

**I will take away their sins**

Here Paul speaks of sins as if they were objects that someone could take away. Alternate translation: "I will remove the burden of their sins"

**Romans 11:28**

**As far as the gospel is concerned**

You can make explicit why Paul mentions the gospel. Alternate translation: "Because the Jews rejected the gospel"

**they are enemies for your sake**

You can make explicit whose enemies they are, and how this was for the Gentiles' sake. Alternate translation: "they are God's enemies for your sake" or "God has treated them as enemies in order that you also might hear the gospel"

**as far as election is concerned**

You can make explicit why Paul mentions election. Alternate translation: "because God has elected the Jews" or "because God has chosen the Jews"

**they are beloved because of the patriarchs**

You can make explicit who loves the Jews and why Paul mentions their forefathers. You can also translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God still loves them because of what he promised to do for their ancestors"

**Romans 11:29**

**For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable**

Paul speaks of the spiritual and material blessings that God promised to give his people as if they were gifts. The call of God refers to the fact that God called the Jews to be his people. Alternate translation: "For God will never change his mind about what he has promised to give them, and about how he has called them to be his people" or "God will never take back his gifts or his call"

**are irrevocable**

"can never be taken back"

**Romans 11:30**

**you were formerly disobedient to God**

"you did not obey God in the past"

**you have received mercy because of their disobedience**

Here mercy means God's undeserved blessings. Alternate translation: "because the Jews have rejected Jesus, you have received blessings that you did not deserve"

**you**

This refers to Gentile believers, and is plural.

**Romans 11:31**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 11:32**

**God has shut up all into disobedience**

God has treated people who disobey him like prisoners who are unable to escape from prison. Alternate translation: "God has made prisoners of those who disobey him. Now they cannot stop disobeying God"

**Romans 11:33**

**Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God**

Here "wisdom" and "knowledge" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "How amazing are the many benefits of both God's wisdom and knowledge"

**How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering**

"We are completely unable to understand the things that he has decided and to find out the ways in which he acts toward us"

**Romans 11:34**

**For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has become his advisor?**

Paul uses this question to emphasize that no one is as wise as the Lord. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one has ever known the mind of the Lord, and no one has become his advisor."

**the mind of the Lord**

Here "mind" is a metonym for knowing things or thinking about things.

Alternate translation: "all that the Lord knows" or "what the Lord thinks about"

**Romans 11:35**

**Or who has first given anything to God, that God must repay him?"**

Paul uses this question to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "No one has ever given anything to God that he did not first receive from God"

**Romans 11:36**

**For from him ... through him ... to him**

Here, all occurrences of "him" refers to God.

**To him be the glory forever**

This expresses Paul's desire for all people to honor God. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "May all people honor him forever"

**Chapter 12**

**Romans 12 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 verse 20, which is from the Old Testament.

Many scholars believe Paul uses the word "therefore" in Romans 12:1 to refer back to all of Chapters 1-11. Having carefully explained the Christian gospel, Paul now explains how Christians should live in light of these great truths.

Chapters 12-16 focus on living out one's Christian faith. Paul uses many different commands in these chapters to give these practical instructions. (See: faith)

**Special concepts in this chapter**

**Christian living**

Under the law of Moses, people were required to offer temple sacrifices of animals or grain. Now Christians are required to live their lives as a type of sacrifice to God. Physical sacrifices are no longer required. (See: lawofmoses)

## **Important figures of speech in this chapter**

### **Body of Christ**

The body of Christ is an important metaphor or image used in Scripture to refer to the church. Each church member has a unique and important function. Christians need each other.

### **Romans 12:1**

#### **Connecting Statement:**

Paul tells what the life of a believer should be and how believers should serve.

#### **I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present**

Here "brothers" refers to fellow believers, both male and female. Alternate translation: "Fellow believers, because of the great mercy that God has given you I very much want you to present"

#### **to present your bodies a living sacrifice**

Here Paul uses the word "bodies" to refer to the entire beings of all those he is addressing. Paul is comparing a believer in Christ who completely obeys God to the animals that the Jews killed and then offered to God. Alternate translation: "to offer yourselves completely to God while you are alive as if you were a dead sacrifice on a temple altar"

#### **holy, acceptable to God**

Possible meanings are 1) "a sacrifice that you give to God alone and that pleases him" or 2) "acceptable to God because it is morally pure"

#### **This is your reasonable service**

"This is the right way to worship God"

### **Romans 12:2**

#### **Do not be conformed to this world**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not behave as this world behaves" or "Do not do what this world does"

#### **this world**

This refers to unbelievers who live in the world.

#### **but be transformed by the renewal of your mind**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "but let God change the way you think and behave"

### **Romans 12:3**

#### **by the grace that was given to me I say**

Here "grace" refers to God's choosing Paul to be an apostle and leader of the church. You can make this explicit in your translation. You can also translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "because God freely chose me to be an apostle, I can say"

#### **Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought**

"Do not think you are better than other people"

#### **rather, think with sober judgment**

"instead, you should be wise in how you think about yourselves"

#### **each according to the measure of faith that God has given you**

Paul implies here that believers have different abilities that correspond to their faith in God. Alternate translation: "since God has given each of you different abilities because of your trust in him"

### **Romans 12:4**

For

Paul uses this word to show that he will now explain why some Christians should not think they are better than others.

**we have many members in one body**

Paul refers to all the believers in Christ as if they were different parts of the human body. He does this to illustrate that although believers may serve Christ in different ways, each person belongs to Christ and serves in an important way.

**members**

Such parts of the body as eyes, ears, and hands.

**Romans 12:5**

**are individually members of each other**

Paul speaks of the believers as if God had physically joined them together like the parts of the human body. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has joined each believer together with all other believers"

**Romans 12:6**

**We have different gifts according to the grace that was given to us**

Paul speaks of believers' different abilities as being free gifts from God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has freely given each of us different abilities to do things for him"

**let it be done according to the proportion of his faith**

Possible meanings are 1) "let him speak prophecies that do not go beyond the amount of faith God has given us" or 2) "let him speak prophecies that agree with the teachings of our faith."

**Romans 12:7**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 12:8**

**If one's gift is giving, let him do it**

Here "giving" refers to giving money and other things to people. You can make this meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "If one has the gift of giving money or other goods to people in need, let him give"

**Romans 12:9**

**Let love be without hypocrisy**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "You must love people sincerely and truly"

**love**

The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.

**Romans 12:10**

**Concerning love of the brothers, be affectionate**

Here Paul begins a list of nine items, each of the form "Concerning ... be" to tell the believers what kind of people they should be. You may need to translate some of the items as "Concerning ... do." The list continues to Romans 12:13.

**Concerning love of the brothers**

"As for how you love your fellow believers"

**love**

In the original language a different word is used for "love" here than is used in 12:9. This word means brotherly love or love for a friend or family member.

This is natural human love between friends or relatives.

**be affectionate**

"show affection"

**Concerning honor, respect one another**

"Honor and respect one another" or "Honor your fellow believers by respecting them"

**Romans 12:11**

**Concerning diligence, do not be hesitant. Concerning the spirit, be eager. Concerning the Lord, serve him**

"Do not be lazy in your duty, but be eager to follow the Spirit and to serve the Lord"

**Romans 12:12**

**Rejoice in hope**

"Rejoice because of your hope" or "Rejoice as you hope." 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: "Rejoice because of what you confidently wait for" or "Rejoice as you confidently wait"

**endure tribulation**

"be patient when you suffer" or "wait patiently whenever you have troubles"

**be faithful in prayer**

"pray faithfully"

**Romans 12:13**

**General Information:**

This is the last item in the list that began in Romans 12:9.

**Share in the needs of God's holy people**

"When fellow Christians are in trouble, help them with what they need"

**Find many ways to show hospitality**

"Always welcome Christians into your home when they need a place to stay"

**Romans 12:14**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 12:15**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 12:16**

**Be of the same mind toward one another**

This is an idiom that means to live in unity. Alternate translation: "Agree with one another" or "Live in unity with each other"

**Do not think in proud ways**

"Do not think that you are more important than others"

**accept lowly people**

"welcome people who do not seem important"

**Do not be wise in your own thoughts**

"Do not think of yourselves as having more wisdom than everyone else"

**Romans 12:17**

**Repay no one evil for evil**

"Do not do evil things to anyone who has done evil things to you"

**Do good things in the sight of all people**

"Do things that everyone considers to be good"

**Romans 12:18**

**as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all people**

"do whatever you can to live in peace with everyone"

**Romans 12:19**

**give way to the wrath of God**

Here "wrath" is a metonym for God's punishment. Alternate translation: "allow God to punish those who harm you"

**For it is written**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For someone has written"

**Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay**

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that God will avenge his people. Alternate translation: "I will certainly avenge you"

**Romans 12:20**

**your enemy ... feed him ... give him a drink ... if you do this, you will heap**

All forms of "you" and "your" are addressed as to one person.

**But "if your enemy is hungry ... his head."**

Paul quotes another part of scripture. Alternate translation: "But the scripture also says, 'If your enemy is hungry ... his head.'"

**feed him**

"give him some food"

**you will heap coals of fire on his head**

Paul speaks of the blessings that the enemies will receive as if someone were pouring hot coals on their heads. Possible meanings are 1) "you will make the person who harmed you feel ashamed about how he has mistreated you" or 2) "you will give God a reason to judge your enemy more harshly"

**Romans 12:21**

**Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good**

Paul describes "evil" as though it were a person. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let those who are evil defeat you, but defeat those who are evil by doing what is good"

**Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil**

These verbs are addressed as to one person and so are singular.

## **Chapter 13**

### **Romans 13 General Notes**

#### **Structure and formatting**

In the first part of this chapter, Paul teaches Christians to obey rulers who govern them. At that time, ungodly Roman rulers governed the land. (See: godly)

#### **Special concepts in this chapter**

##### **Ungodly rulers**

Some readers will find it difficult to understand what Paul teaches about obeying rulers, especially if they are in places where rulers persecute the church. Christians must obey their rulers as well as obey God, unless the rulers do not allow Christians to do something God explicitly commands them to do. There are times when a believer must submit to these rulers and suffer at their

hands. Christians understand that this world is temporary and they will ultimately be with God forever. (See: eternity)

**Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

**Flesh**

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive ("in the flesh"), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: flesh and sin)

**Romans 13:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul tells believers how to live under their rulers.

**Let every soul be subject to**

Here "soul" is a synecdoche for the whole person. "Every Christian should obey" or "Everyone should obey"

**higher authorities**

"government officials"

**for**

because

**there is no authority unless it comes from God**

"all authority comes from God"

**The authorities that exist have been appointed by God**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "And the people who are in authority are there because God put them there"

**Romans 13:2**

**that authority**

"that government authority" or "the authority that God placed in power"

**those who oppose it will receive judgment on themselves**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will judge those who oppose government authority"

**Romans 13:3**

**For**

Paul uses this word to begin his explanation of Romans 13:2 and to tell about what will result if the government condemns a person.

**rulers are not a terror to those who do good deeds, but to those who do evil deeds**

"rulers do not cause terror for those who do good deeds, but for those who do evil deeds"

**Do you desire to have no fear of the one in authority?**

Paul uses this question to get people to think about what they need to do in order not to be afraid of rulers. Alternate translation: "Let me tell you how you can be unafraid of the ruler."

**you will receive his praise**

"the one in authority will say good things about you"

**Romans 13:4**

**he does not carry the sword for no reason**

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "he carries the sword for a very good reason" or "he has the power to punish people, and he will punish people"

**carry the sword**

Roman governors carried a short sword as a symbol of their authority.

**an avenger for wrath on the one who does evil**

Here "wrath" represents the punishment people receive when they do evil deeds. Alternate translation: "a person who punishes, on God's behalf, those who do evil"

**Romans 13:5**

**not only because of the wrath, but also because of conscience**

"not only so the government will not punish you, but also so you will have a clear conscience before God"

**Romans 13:6**

**Because of this**

"Because the government punishes evildoers"

**you pay**

Paul is addressing the believers here, so this is plural.

**For authorities**

"This is why you should pay taxes: authorities"

**attend to**

"administer" or "work on"

**Romans 13:7**

**Pay to everyone**

Paul is addressing the believers here, so this is plural.

**tax to whom tax is due, toll to whom toll is due, fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due**

The word "pay" is understood from the previous phrase in the general sense of "give." Alternate translation: "pay tax to whom tax is due, pay toll to whom toll is due, pay fear to whom fear is due, and pay honor to him to whom honor is due"

**fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due**

Here paying fear and honor is a metaphor for fearing and honoring those who deserve to be feared and honored. Alternate translation: "fear those who deserve to be feared, and honor those who deserved to be honored" or "respect those whom you ought to respect, and honor those whom you ought to honor"

**toll**

This is a kind of tax.

**Romans 13:8**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul tells believers how to act toward neighbors.

**Owe no one anything, except to love one another**

This is a double negative. You can translate it in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Pay all you owe to everyone, and love one another"

**Owe**

This verb is plural and applies to all the Roman Christians.

**anything, except to love one another**

This elliptical command includes the idea of "owe" from earlier in the sentence. Owing things or service to other people is a metaphor for the duty Christians have, in this case to love one another. Alternate translation: "anything, but remember that God has given you the duty to love one another"

**love**

The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.

**Romans 13:9**

**covet**

To covet is to desire to have or possess something that another person possesses.

**Romans 13:10**

**Love does no harm to a neighbor**

This phrase portrays love as a person who is being kind to other people.

Alternate translation: "People who love their neighbors do not harm them"

**Romans 13:11**

**you know the time, that it is already the hour for you to awake out of sleep**

Paul speaks of the need for the Roman believers to change their behavior as if they needed to wake up from being asleep.

**hour**

"time"

**Romans 13:12**

**The night has advanced**

Paul speaks of the time when people do evil deeds as night. Alternate translation: "The sinful time is almost over" or "It is as though the night is almost finished"

**the day is near**

Paul speaks of the time when people do what is right as the day. Alternate translation: "the time of righteousness will begin soon" or "it is as though it will soon be day"

**Let us therefore put aside the works of darkness**

Paul speaks of "works of darkness" as if they are clothing that a person puts aside. Here to "put aside" means to stop doing something. Here "darkness" is a metaphor for evil. Alternate translation: "Let us therefore stop doing the evil things that people do in the dark"

**let us put on the armor of light**

Here "light" is a metaphor for what is good and right. Paul speaks of people who are doing what is right as if they were putting on armor to protect themselves. Alternate translation: "let us start doing what is right. Doing this will protect us from what is evil, like armor protects a soldier"

**Romans 13:13**

**Let us**

Paul includes his readers and other believers with himself.

**Let us walk appropriately, as in the day**

Paul speaks of people living as true believers as if they were walking while it is day. Alternate translation: "Let us walk in a visible way knowing, that everyone can see us"

**sexual immorality or in uncontrolled lust**

These concepts mean basically the same thing. You can combine them in your translation. Alternate translation: "sexually immoral acts"

**strife**

This refers to plotting against and arguing with other people.

**jealousy**

This refers to negative feelings against another person's success or advantage over others.

**Romans 13:14**

**put on the Lord Jesus Christ**

Paul speaks of accepting the moral nature of Christ as if he were our outer clothing that people can see.

**put on**

If your language has a plural form for commands, use it here.

**make no provision for the flesh**

Here the "flesh" refers to the self-directed nature of people who oppose God. This is the sinful nature of human beings. Alternate translation: "do not allow your old evil heart any opportunity at all for doing wicked things"

**Chapter 14**

**Romans 14 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 verse 11 of this chapter, which Paul quotes from the Old Testament.

**Special concepts in this chapter**

**Weak in faith**

Paul teaches that Christians can have real faith and at the same time be "weak in faith" in a given situation. This describes Christians whose faith is immature, not strong, or misunderstood. (See: faith)

**Dietary restrictions**

Many religions in the ancient Near East restricted what was eaten. Christians have freedom to eat what they want. But they need to use this freedom wisely, in a way that honors the Lord and does not cause others to sin. (See: sin)

**The judgment seat of God**

The judgment seat of God or Christ represents a time when all people, including Christians, will be held accountable for the way they lived their lives.

**Romans 14:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul encourages believers to remember that they are answerable to God.

**weak in faith**

This refers to those who felt guilty over eating and drinking certain things.

**without giving judgment about arguments**

"and do not condemn them for their opinions"

**Romans 14:2**

**One person has faith to eat anything**

Here "faith" refers to doing what a person believes God is telling him to do.

**another who is weak eats only vegetables**

This describes a person who believes God does not want him to eat meat.

**Romans 14:3**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 14:4**

**Who are you, you who judge a servant belonging to someone else?**

Paul is using a question to scold those who are judging others. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are not God, and you are not allowed to judge one of his servants!"

**you, you**

The form of "you" here is singular.

**It is before his own master that he stands or falls**

Paul speaks of God as if he were a master who owned servants. Alternate translation: "Only the master can decide if he will accept the servant or not"

**But he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand**

Paul speaks of the servant who is acceptable to God as if he were being "made to stand" instead of falling. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "But the Lord will accept him because he is able to make the servant acceptable"

**Romans 14:5**

**One person values one day above another. Another has concluded that every day is equal**

"One person thinks one day is more important than some of the others, but another person thinks that all days are the same"

**Let each person be convinced in his own mind**

You can make the full meaning explicit. You can also translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Let each person be sure what he is doing is to honor the Lord"

**Romans 14:6**

**He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord**

Here "observes the day" refers to considering a day as a special day on which to worship the Lord. Alternate translation: "Whoever treats a day as special does so to honor the Lord" or "The person who worships on a certain day does it to honor the Lord"

**he who eats**

The word "everything" is understood from [Romans 14:3]

**eats for the Lord**

"eats to honor the Lord" or "eats that way in order to honor the Lord"

**He who does not eat**

The word "everything" is understood from [Romans 14:3]

**refrains from eating for the Lord**

His purpose in refraining from eating certain foods is to honor the Lord.

Alternate translation: "refrains from eating certain foods in order to honor the Lord"

**Romans 14:7**

**For none of us lives for himself**

Here "lives for himself" means to live only to please oneself. Alternate translation: "None of us should live merely to please himself"

**none of us**

Paul is including his readers, so this is inclusive.

**none dies for himself**

Here "dies for himself" means to die only to please oneself. Alternate translation: "None of us should die merely to please himself"

**Romans 14:8**

**General Information:**

Paul is speaking of both himself and his readers, so all instances of "we" are inclusive.

**Romans 14:9**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 14:10**

**why do you judge your brother? And you, why do you despise your brother?**

By using these questions, Paul is demonstrating how he might need to scold individuals among his readers. Alternate translation: "it is wrong for you to judge your brother, and it is wrong for you to despise your brother!" or "stop judging and despising your brother!"

**brother**

Here this means a fellow Christian, male or female.

**For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God**

The "judgment seat" refers to God's authority to judge. Alternate translation: "For God will judge us all"

**Romans 14:11**

**For it is written, "As**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For someone has written in the Scriptures: 'As"

**As I live**

This phrase is used to start an oath or solemn promise. Alternate translation: "You can be certain that this is true"

**to me every knee will bend, and every tongue will confess to God**

Paul uses the words "knee" and "tongue" to refer to the whole person. Also, the Lord uses the word "God" to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "every person will bow and give praise to me"

**Romans 14:12**

**will give an account of himself to God**

"will have to explain his actions to God"

**Romans 14:13**

**but instead decide this, that no one will place a stumbling block or a snare for his brother**

Here "stumbling block" and "snare" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "but instead make it your goal not to do or say anything that might cause a fellow believer to sin"

**brother**

Here this means a fellow Christian, male or female.

**Romans 14:14**

**I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus**

Here the words "know" and "am persuaded" mean basically the same thing; Paul uses them to emphasize his certainty. Alternate translation: "I am certain because of my relationship with the Lord Jesus"

**nothing is unclean by itself**

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "everything by itself is clean"

**by itself**

"by its nature" or "because of what it is"

**Only for him who considers anything to be unclean, for him it is unclean**

Paul implies here that a person should stay away from anything that he thinks is unclean. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "But if a person thinks something is unclean, then for that person it is unclean and he should stay away from it"

**Romans 14:15**

**If because of food your brother is hurt**

"If you hurt your fellow believer's faith over the matter of food." Here the word "your" refers to those who are strong in faith and "brother" refers to one who is weak in faith.

**brother**

Here this means a fellow Christian, male or female.

**you are no longer walking in love**

Paul speaks of the behavior of believers as if it were a walk. Alternate translation: "then you are no longer showing love"

**Romans 14:16**

**So do not allow what you consider to be good to be spoken of as evil**

"If someone thinks that something is evil, do not do it, even if you consider it to be good"

**Romans 14:17**

**For the kingdom of God is not about food and drink, but about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit**

Paul argues that God set up his kingdom so he could give us a right relationship with himself, and could provide peace and joy. Alternate translation: "For God did not set up his kingdom so that he could rule over what we eat and drink. He set up his kingdom so we could have a right relationship with him, and so he could give us peace and joy"

**Romans 14:18**

**approved by people**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "people will approve of him" or "people will respect him"

**Romans 14:19**

**let us pursue the things of peace and the things that build up one another**

Here "build up one another" refers to helping each other grow in faith. Alternate translation: "let us seek to live peacefully together and help one another grow stronger in faith"

**Romans 14:20**

**Do not destroy the work of God on account of food**

You can make explicit the full meaning of this sentence. Alternate translation: "Do not undo what God has done for a fellow believer just because you want to eat a certain kind of food"

**but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone to stumble**

Here anything that "causes someone to stumble" means it causes a weaker brother to do something that is against his conscience. Alternate translation: "but it would be a sin for someone to eat food that another brother thinks is wrong to eat, if by eating this causes the weaker brother to do something that is against his conscience"

**Romans 14:21**

**It is good not to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything over which your brother**

**stumbles**

"It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that might cause your brother to sin"

**brother**

Here this means a fellow Christian, male or female.

**your**

This refers to the strong in faith and "brother" refers to the weak in faith.

**Romans 14:22**

**The faith you have**

This refers back to the beliefs about food and drink.

**you ... yourself**

singular. Because Paul is addressing the believers, you may have to translate this using plural.

**Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves**

"Blessed are those who do not feel guilty for what they decide to do"

**Romans 14:23**

**He who doubts is condemned if he eats**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will say that a person does wrong if he is not sure if it is right to eat a certain food, but he eats it anyway" or "A person who is not sure if it is right to eat a certain food, but then eats it anyway, will have a troubled conscience"

**because it is not from faith**

Anything that is "not from faith" is something that God does not want you to do. You can make explicit the full meaning here. Alternate translation: "and God will say that he is wrong because he is eating something he believes God does not want him to eat"

**whatever is not from faith is sin**

Anything that is "not from faith" is something that God does not want you to do. You can make explicit the full meaning here. Alternate translation: "you are sinning if you do something that you do not believe God wants you to do"

**Chapter 15**

**Romans 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 in verses 9-11 and 21 of this chapter. These lines of poetry are from the Old Testament.

Some translations also set prose quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted words in verse 12.

In Romans 15:14, Paul begins to speak more personally. He shifts from teaching to telling of his personal plans.

**Important figures of speech in this chapter**

**Strong/Weak**

These terms are used to refer to people who are mature and immature in their faith. Paul teaches that those who are strong in faith need to help those who are weak in faith. (See: faith)

**Romans 15:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul concludes this section about believers' living for others by reminding them how Christ lived.

**Now**

Translate this using the words your language uses to introduce a new idea into an argument.

**we who are strong**

Here "strong" refers to the people who are strong in their faith. They believe that God allows them to eat any kind of food. Alternate translation: "we who are strong in faith"

**we**

This refers to Paul, his readers, and other believers.

**the weak**

Here "the weak" refers to the people who are weak in their faith. They believe that God does not allow them to eat some kinds of food. Alternate translation: "those who are weak in faith"

**Romans 15:2**

**to build him up**

By this, Paul means to strengthen someone's faith. Alternate translation: "to strengthen his faith"

**Romans 15:3**

**it was just as it is written**

Here Paul refers to a scripture where Christ

**The insults of those who insulted you fell on me**

Those who blasphemed God insulted Christ. This is an indirect way of saying that those who slandered Christ were blaspheming God.

**Romans 15:4**

**For whatever was previously written was written for our instruction**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For in times past, the prophets wrote everything in the Scriptures to teach us"

**our ... we**

Paul includes his readers and other believers.

**in order that through patience and through encouragement of the scriptures**

The meanings in the abstract nouns "patience" and "encouragement" can be expressed with the verbs "endure" and "encourage." Alternate translation "in order that by enduring and by being encouraged by the scriptures" or "in order that as we endure and as the scriptures encourage us"

**we would have hope**

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." What the hope is about can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "we would confidently wait for God" or "we would confidently expect that God will do what he has promised"

**Romans 15:5**

**Now**

This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Paul starts to tell a new part of the teaching.

**may ... God ... grant**

"I pray that ... God ... will grant"

**to be of the same mind with each other**

Here to be of the "same mind" is a metonym that means to be in agreement with each other. Alternate translation: "to be in agreement with each other" or "to be united"

**Romans 15:6**

**with one mind you may glorify with one mouth**

The phrases "one mind" and "one mouth" both represent people being united together. Alternate translation: "you may be united when you praise"

**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.

**Romans 15:7**

**receive one another ... received you**

"accept one another ... accepted you"

**Romans 15:8**

**For I say**

The word "I" refers to Paul.

**Christ has been made a servant of the circumcision**

Here "the circumcision" is a metonym that refers to the Jews. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus Christ has become a servant of the Jews"

**in order to confirm the promises**

This is one of the two purposes for which Christ became a servant of the circumcision.

**the promises given to the patriarchs**

Here "the fathers" refers to the ancestors of the Jewish people. You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "the promises that God gave to the ancestors of the Jews"

**Romans 15:9**

**and for the Gentiles to glorify God for his mercy**

This is the second reason for which Christ became a servant of the circumcision. Alternate translation: "and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy"

**As it is written**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "As someone has written in the Scriptures"

**sing praise to your name**

Here "your name" is a metonym that refers to God. Alternate translation: "sing praise to you"

**Romans 15:10**

**Again it says**

"Again the scripture says"

**with his people**

This refers to God's people. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "with the people of God"

**Romans 15:11**

**praise him**

"praise the Lord"

**Romans 15:12**

**root of Jesse**

Jesse was the physical father of King David. Alternate translation: "descendant of Jesse"

**in him the Gentiles will have hope**

Here "him" refers to the descendant of Jesse and King David, the Messiah. The Gentiles will trust him to fulfill his promises. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "trust" or "confidently wait" or "confidently expect." Alternate translation: "the Gentiles will trust in him" or "the Gentiles will confidently wait for him to fulfill his promises"

**Romans 15:13**

**the God of hope**

"the God who gives hope" or "the God who causes us to hope." The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." Alternate translation: "the God who causes us to confidently wait for him to fulfill his promises" or "the God who helps us to trust in him"

**fill you with all joy and peace**

Here "fill you" is a metaphor for "cause you to have." Alternate translation: "cause you to have great joy and peace" or "give you great joy and peace"

**in believing**

"as you believe in him"

**Romans 15:14**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul reminds the believers in Rome that God chose him to reach the Gentiles.

**I myself am also convinced about you, my brothers**

Paul is quite sure that the believers in Rome are honoring each other in their behavior. Alternate translation: "I myself am completely sure that you yourselves have acted toward others in a completely good way"

**brothers**

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**filled with all knowledge**

Paul exaggerates here to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "filled with sufficient knowledge to follow God"

**Romans 15:15**

**the grace given me by God**

Paul speaks of grace as if it were a physical gift that God had given him. God had appointed Paul an apostle even though he had persecuted believers before he decided to follow Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "the grace that God gave me"

**Romans 15:16**

**the offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable**

Paul speaks of the Gentiles as if they were an offering brought to God.

Alternate translation: "the Gentiles might be like an offering that pleases God"

**sanctified by the Holy Spirit**

"having been made holy by the Holy Spirit." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which the Holy Spirit made holy" or "which the Holy

Spirit dedicated to God"

**Romans 15:17**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 15:18**

**I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished**

This double negative emphasizes that what Christ has accomplished is the only thing that Paul wants to speak about. Alternate translation: "I will dare to speak only of what Christ has accomplished"

**for the obedience of the Gentiles**

"so that the Gentiles will obey God"

**These are things done by word and action**

This can be translated in active form: Alternate translation: Alternate translation: "These are things that Christ has accomplished through what I have said and done"

**Romans 15:19**

**signs and wonders**

These two words mean basically the same thing and refer to various kinds of miracles.

**so that from Jerusalem, and round about as far as Illyricum**

This is from the city of Jerusalem as far as the province of Illyricum, a region close to Italy.

**Romans 15:20**

**In this way, my desire has been to proclaim the gospel, but not where Christ is known by name**

Paul only wants to preach to people who have never heard of Christ. Alternate translation: "And so, my desire has been to preach the good news in places where people have never heard of Christ"

**in order that I might not build upon another man's foundation**

Paul speaks of his ministry work as if he were building a house on a foundation. Alternate translation: "in order that I might not be simply continuing the work that someone else already started. I do not want to be like a man who builds a house on someone else's foundation"

**Romans 15:21**

**It is as it is written**

Here Paul refers to what Isaiah wrote in the scriptures. You can translate this in an active form and make the meaning explicit. Alternate translation: "What is happening is like what Isaiah wrote in the scriptures"

**Those to whom no report of him came**

Here Paul speaks of the "report" or message about Christ as if it were alive and able to move by itself. Alternate translation: "Those whom no one had told the news about him"

**Romans 15:22**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul tells the believers in Rome about his personal plans to visit them and asks the believers to pray.

**I was also hindered**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "they also hindered me" or "people also hindered me"

**Romans 15:23**

**I no longer have any place in these regions**

Paul implies that the reason he no longer has any place is because the Gospel had been preached in all these regions. Alternate translation: "there are no more places in these regions where people have not heard about Christ"

**Romans 15:24**

**I hope to see you**

Paul wanted to see the believers in Rome. He did not know if he actually would be able to see them. Alternate translation: "I want to see you" or "I plan to see you"

**Spain**

This is a roman province west of Rome that Paul desired to visit.

**to be helped by you on my journey**

Here Paul implies that he wants the Roman believers to provide some financial assistance to him for his journey to Spain. You may have to translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that you will help me on my journey"

**have enjoyed your company**

"have enjoyed spending some time with you" or "have enjoyed visiting you"

**Romans 15:25**

**serving God's holy people**

You may need to make explicit how Paul was serving the people. Alternate translation: "bringing aid to God's holy people" )

**Romans 15:26**

**it was the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia**

Here the words "Macedonia" and "Achaia" are synecdoches for the people who live in those areas. Alternate translation: "the believers in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia were happy"

**Romans 15:27**

**Yes, it was their good pleasure**

"The believers in Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to do it"

**and they owe it to them**

"and the people of Macedonia and Achaia owe it to God's people in Jerusalem" or "and they are obligated to help them"

**if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things**

"since the Gentiles have shared in the spiritual things of the Jerusalem believers"

**minister to them**

The word "minister" here means to serve in a formal way as part of their service to God, much like the priests offered sacrifices in the temple.

**with their material things**

"by giving them material things"

**Romans 15:28**

**and have made sure that they receive all that was collected**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and have safely delivered this offering to them"

**Romans 15:29**

**I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ**

This phrase means that Christ will bless Paul and the Roman believers.

Alternate translation: "And I know that when I visit you, Christ will abundantly bless us"

**Romans 15:30**

**Now**

If your language has a way to show that Paul has stopped talking about the good things he is confident of (Romans 15:29) and is now starting to talk about the dangers he faces, use it here.

**I urge you**

"I encourage you"

**brothers**

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**you strive**

"you work hard" or "you struggle"

**Romans 15:31**

**I may be rescued from those who are disobedient**

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God may rescue me from those who are disobedient" or "God may keep those who are disobedient from harming me"

**that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to God's holy people**

Here Paul expresses his desire that the believers in Jerusalem will gladly accept the money from the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. Alternate translation: "pray that the believers in Jerusalem will be glad to receive the money that I am bringing them"

**Romans 15:32**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 15:33**

**May the God of peace**

The "God of peace" means the God who causes believers to have inner peace. Alternate translation: "I pray that God, who causes all of us to have inner peace, will"

**Chapter 16**

**Romans 16 General Notes**

**Structure and formatting**

In this chapter, Paul gives personal greetings to some of the Christians in Rome. It was common to end a letter in the ancient Near East with this type of personal greeting.

**Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

Because of the personal nature of this chapter, much of the context is unknown. This will make translation more difficult.

**Romans 16:1**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul now greets many of the believers in Rome by name.

**I commend to you Phoebe**

"I want you to respect Phoebe"

**Phoebe**

This is a woman's name.

**our sister**

The word "our" refers to Paul and all believers. Alternate translation: "our sister in Christ"

**Cenchreae**

This was a town in Greece.

**Romans 16:2**

**receive her in the Lord**

Paul encourages the Roman believers to welcome Phoebe as a fellow believer. Alternate translation: "welcome her because we all belong to the Lord"

**in a manner worthy of God's holy people**

"in the way that believers should welcome other believers"

**provide her with whatever help she may need from you**

"help her by giving her whatever she needs"

**has been a great help to many and to myself as well**

"has supported many people, and she has also supported me"

**Romans 16:3**

**Priscilla and Aquila**

Priscilla was the wife of Aquila.

**my fellow workers in Christ Jesus**

Paul's "fellow workers" are people who also tell others about Jesus. Alternate translation: "who work with me to tell people about Christ Jesus"

**Romans 16:4**

**General Information:**

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**Romans 16:5**

**Greet the church that is in their house**

"Greet the believers who meet in their house to worship"

**Epaenetus**

This is the name of a man.

**firstfruit of Asia to Christ**

Paul speaks of Epaenetus as if he were a fruit that he harvested. Alternate translation: "first person in Asia to believe in Jesus"

**Romans 16:6**

**Mary**

This is a woman's name.

**Romans 16:7**

**Andronicus**

This is a man's name.

**Junia**

"Junia" is a woman's name. Some versions have "Junias," which would be a man's name.

**They are well known among the apostles**

You can translate this in an active form. "The apostles Alternate translations: "The apostles know them very well"

**Romans 16:8**

**Ampliatius**

This is a man's name.

**my beloved in the Lord**

"my dear friend and fellow believer"

**Romans 16:9**

**Urbanus ... Stachys**

These are the names of men.

**Romans 16:10**

**Apelles ... Aristobulus**

These are the names of men.

**the approved in Christ**

The word "approved" refers to someone who has been tested and proved to be genuine. Alternate translation: "whom Christ has approved"

**Romans 16:11**

**Herodion ... Narcissus**

These are the names of men.

**who are in the Lord**

This refers to those who trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: "who are believers" or "who belong to the Lord"

**Romans 16:12**

**Tryphaena ... Tryphosa ... Persis**

These are women's names.

**Romans 16:13**

**Rufus**

This is a man's name.

**chosen in the Lord**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Lord has chosen"

**his mother and mine**

Paul speaks of the mother of Rufus as if she were his own mother. Alternate translation: "his mother, whom I also think of as my mother"

**Romans 16:14**

**Asyncretus ... Phlegon ... Hermes ... Patrobas ... Hermas**

These are men's names.

**brothers**

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**Romans 16:15**

**Philologus ... Nereus ... Olympas**

These are men's names.

**Julia**

The name of a woman. Julia was probably the wife of Philologus.

**Romans 16:16**

**a holy kiss**

an expression of affection for fellow believers

**All the churches of Christ greet you**

Here Paul speaks in a general manner concerning the churches of Christ.

Alternate translation: "The believers in all the churches in this area send their greetings to you"

**Romans 16:17**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul gives one last warning to the believers about unity and living for God.

**brothers**

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**who cause divisions and stumbling**

This refers to those who argue and cause others to stop trusting in Jesus.

Alternate translation: "who cause believers to argue with one another and to stop having faith in God"

**contrary to the teaching that you have learned**

"teaching things that do not agree with the truth you have already learned"

**Turn away from them**

"Turn away" here is an metaphor for "refuse to listen." Alternate translation:

"Do not listen to them"

**Romans 16:18**

**Christ, but their own stomach**

The words "they serve" are understood from the previous phrase. This can be expressed as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "Christ. Rather, they serve their own stomach"

**but their own stomach**

Here "stomach" is a metonym that refers to physical desires. Serving there stomach represents satisfying their desires. Alternate translation: "but they only want to satisfy their own selfish desires"

**By their smooth and flattering speech**

The words "smooth" and "flattering" mean basically the same thing. Paul is emphasizing how these people are deceiving believers. Alternate translation:

"By saying things that seem to be good and true"

**they deceive the hearts of the innocent**

Here "hearts" is a metonym for the minds and inner beings of people. Alternate translation: "they deceive the innocent believers"

**innocent**

This refers to those who are simple, inexperienced, and naive. Alternate translation: "those who innocently trust them" or "those who do not know these teachers are fooling them"

**Romans 16:19**

**For your example of obedience reaches everyone**

Here Paul speaks of the Roman believers' obedience as if it were a person who could go to people. Alternate translation: "For everyone has heard how you obey Jesus"

**innocent to that which is evil**

"not involved in doing evil things"

**Romans 16:20**

**The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet**

To say that a person will crush their enemy under their feet means that the person will have complete victory over their enemy. Here Paul speaks of the victory over Satan as if the Roman believers were trampling an enemy under their feet. Alternate translation: "Soon God will give you peace and complete victory over Satan"

**Romans 16:21**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul gives greetings from the believers who are with him.

**Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater**

These are men's names.

**Romans 16:22**

**Tertius, who write this epistle down**

Tertius is the man who wrote down what Paul spoke.

**greet you in the Lord**

"greet you as a fellow believer"

**Romans 16:23**

**Gaius ... Erastus ... Quartus**

These are men's names.

**the host**

This refers to Gaius, the person in whose house Paul and his fellow believers gathered for worship.

**the treasurer**

This is a person who takes care of the money for a group.

**Romans 16:24**

**General Information:**

This page has intentionally been left blank.

**Romans 16:25**

**Connecting Statement:**

Paul closes with a prayer of blessing.

**Now**

Here the word "now" marks the closing section of the letter. If you have a way of doing this in your language, you can use it here.

**to make you strong**

"to make your faith strong"

**according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ**

"by the good news that I have preached about Jesus Christ"

**according to the revelation of the mystery that had been kept secret for long ages**

Paul says that God has revealed previously hidden truths to the believers. He speaks of these truths as if they were a secret. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "because God has revealed to us believers the secret that he was keeping for long ages"

**for long ages**

since the beginning of time

**Romans 16:26**

**but now has been revealed and made known through the prophetic writings to all nations, by the command of the eternal God**

The verbs "revealed" and "made known" mean basically the same thing. Paul uses both of them to emphasize his point. You can combine these words and translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "but the eternal God has now made known to all the nations through the prophetic writings"

**to bring about the obedience of faith**

Here "obedience" and "faith" are abstract nouns. You can use the verbs "obey" and "trust" in your translation. You may need to make explicit who will obey and trust. Alternate translation: "so that all nations will obey God because they trust in him"

**Romans 16:27**

**to the only wise God ... be glory forever. Amen**

Here "through Jesus Christ" refers to what Jesus did. To give "glory" means to praise God. Alternate translation: "Because of what Jesus Christ has done for us, we will praise forever the one who alone is God and who alone is wise. Amen"