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Translation Notes (unfoldinWord)

Nehemiah - Introduction

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Nehemiah

1. Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem and inspects the walls (1:1-2:20)
2. The people rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (3:1-4:23)
3. Nehemiah helps the poor and provides an unselfish example (5:1-19)
4. Enemies try to slow down the work, but the people finish the walls (6:1-19)
5. Nehemiah lists the people who returned from exile (7:6-73)
6. Ezra reads the law of Yahweh and the people respond (8:1-10:39)
7. Nehemiah lists the people who lived in and around Jerusalem (11:1-36)
8. Nehemiah lists the priests and Levites (12:1-26)
9. The people dedicate the walls of Jerusalem (12:27-47)
10. Nehemiah corrects problems (13:1-31)

What is the Book of Nehemiah about?

A Jew named Nehemiah lived in Persia and worked for King Artaxerxes. Nehemiah received a report that the walls around Jerusalem were broken down. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to help rebuild the city walls. The walls around the city helped protect the city against armies and invaders.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The Book of Nehemiah is named for a Jewish leader named Nehemiah. Translators can use the

traditional title "Nehemiah." Or they may choose a more complete title, such as "The Book about Nehemiah." (See: How to Translate Names)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why were Israelites not allowed to marry people from other nations?

Foreigners worshiped many false gods. Yahweh did not allow his people to marry foreigners. He knew this would cause the people of Israel to worship false gods. (See: False God)

Did all of the people of Israel return to their homeland?

Many of the Jews remained in Babylon instead of returning to the Promised Land. Many of them were successful in Babylon and desired to remain there. However, this meant that they were unable to worship Yahweh in Jerusalem as their ancestors had done. (See: Promised Land)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How does the Book of Nehemiah use the term "Israel"?

The Book of Nehemiah uses the term "Israel" to refer to the kingdom of Judah. It was mostly made up of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The other ten tribes had ended their loyalty to any kings descended from David. God had allowed the Assyrians to conquer the other ten tribes and take them into exile around 275 years earlier. As a result, they mixed with other people groups and did not return to the land of Israel. (See: Israel)

Are the events in the Book of Nehemiah told in the order that they actually happened?

Some of the events in the Book of Nehemiah are told in an order that is different than the order in which they actually happened so that they events can be grouped by theme. Translators should pay attention to notes that signal when events are probably out of chronological order.

Nehemiah - Chapter 1 Introduction

Structure and formatting

"The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah:"

This phrase serves as an introduction to this entire book.

Special concepts in this chapter

Repentance

This chapter is a single long record of Nehemiah's repentance on behalf of the people of Israel. (See: Repent)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

I

In this book, the word "I" always refers to Nehemiah.

Israel

In this book, "Israel" probably does not refer to the northern kingdom of Israel. Neither does it likely refer to the twelve tribes of Israel. Instead, it is probably a reference to Israel in the sense of the surviving people group from the southern kingdom of Judah. At Nehemiah's time, these would be the people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin who survived the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon in 586 BC and the exile of many of them to Babylon. The other tribes had already been scattered throughout the entire Near East where most of them lost their identity as Israel.

Nehemiah 1:1 (#1)

"Nehemiah the son of Hakaliah"

Nehemiah is the name of a man, and Hakaliah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 1:1 (#2)

"And it happened"

This is a common way of beginning a historical story. Use a natural way of beginning a story about

something that actually happened. Alternate translation: "My story begins"

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 1:1 (#3)

"in the month of Kislev"

Kislev is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar.

See: Hebrew Months

Nehemiah 1:1 (#4)

"in year 20"

This is referring to the number of years that Artaxerxes had been reigning as king. You can include this information if you want to make this clear. Most scholars consider this to be the year 445 BC. Alternate translation: "in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 1:1 (#5)

"in Susa the citadel"

A **citadel** is a fortified castle or palace, usually inside a city. In this case, the city in which this palace was located was also called Susa, because the city was associated with the palace. Since this was where the kings of Persia lived, it was the capital city of their empire. Alternate translation: "the capital city of Susa"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:1 (#6)

"in Susa"

This was the name of a royal city of the Persian kings.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 1:1 (#7)

"the citadel"

This means a “castle” or “palace” or “stronghold,” usually inside a city, where a king would live.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 1:2 (#1)

"Hanani"

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 1:2 (#2)

"Hanani, one"

The term **brother** is often used in this book, but here it most likely means that Hanani was Nehemiah's biological brother.

Nehemiah 1:2 (#3)

"he and men"

This was a delegation that had come from one Jewish community to visit another Jewish community in another part of the world. So it's possible that it included women as well as men. Alternate translation: “along with some other people”

See: When Masculine Words Include Women

Nehemiah 1:2 (#4)

"from Judah"

Judah was formerly the southern kingdom of the Israelites. It was now a Persian province. Alternate translation: “the province of Judah”

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 1:2 (#5)

"the Jews who escaped, who were left behind from the captivity"

These two phrases mean the same thing. Nehemiah uses them together for clarity to describe one particular group of people, and perhaps also to express his particular concern for them. You do not

need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: “the Jews who had escaped the exile”

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:2 (#6)

"the Jews who escaped, who were left behind from the captivity"

These two phrases refer to the same group of people. This could mean: (1) the few Jews who were taken as exiles to Babylon but who later were able to return and live in Jerusalem or (2) the few Jews who had escaped from those who were trying to take them into exile in Babylon and so remained in Jerusalem. It is probably best to translate this in a way that can include both groups. Alternate translation: “the Jews who had escaped the exile and who remained in Jerusalem”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 1:2 (#7)

"the captivity"

Captivity is an abstract noun that refers to the Jews being taken away from their homeland. Judah had been conquered by the Babylonians about 150 years before this. At that time, the Babylonians took many people away from Judah and relocated them to different parts of their empire. About 50 years later, the Persian Empire conquered Babylon and so the Babylonian empire became the Persian empire. The Jews who had been captured by Babylon now lived in Persia, although some had since returned to Judah. You can translate the idea of **captivity** with a phrase such as “the time when the Jews were taken away” or “the time when soldiers forced many Jews to go to Babylon”

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 1:2 (#8)

"and about Jerusalem"

Jerusalem had been the capital city of the kingdom of Judah. Nehemiah was asking specifically about the physical condition of the buildings and walls in the city, in addition to asking about the welfare of

the Jewish community in Judah. Alternate translation: "about the condition of Jerusalem"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 1:3 (#1)

"The ones left behind, who were left behind from the captivity"

These two statements mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to show his concern for this group. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "the Jews who escaped the exile and remained"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:3 (#2)

"in the province"

Here **province** refers to Judah as an administrative district within the Persian Empire. Hanani is describing Judah by referring to something associated with it, its status as a province. Alternate translation: "in the province of Judah" or "in Judah"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:3 (#3)

"are in great evil and in reproach"

Difficulty and **reproach** mean similar things. Hanani uses them together to emphasize what a desperate situation the people are in. You do not need to repeat both words in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "in a perilous situation"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 1:3 (#4)

"are in great evil and in reproach"

The abstract noun **difficulty** refers to a situation that is very hard for the people to live in. It describes a situation that is dangerous and insecure for the people in it. You can translate this

idea with an adjective such as "bad." Alternate translation: "in a very bad situation"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 1:3 (#5)

"and in reproach"

Reproach is an abstract noun that describes how other people would see the situation of the Jews. The situation would lead them to say bad things about them. You could translate this idea with a verb such as "mock." Alternate translation: "and people are mocking them."

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 1:3 (#6)

"And the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire"

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "armies have broken open the wall of Jerusalem and have set its gates on fire"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 1:3 (#7)

"And the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire"

The implication is that the people are now defenseless. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "The people living there have no protection."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 1:3 (#8)

"have been burned with fire"

If saying that something is burned **with fire** is redundant in your language, you can just say, **completely burned**. Alternate translation: "burned down"

Nehemiah 1:4 (#1)**"And it happened that"**

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next episode in his story. You do not need to represent it this way in your translation, but use a natural way to introduce a new episode in the story. Alternate translation: "So the next thing I did"

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 1:4 (#2)**"when I heard these words"**

Here **words** refers to the things that were described by the words. Alternate translation: "after hearing about these things"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:4 (#3)**"I sat down and wept"**

Sitting down likely means that Nehemiah stopped going about his usual business because he was so overcome by grief. Alternate translation: "I could do nothing else but grieve"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 1:4 (#4)**"and I mourned for days"**

This means that Nehemiah kept on grieving. He did not get over being upset. The term "days" here suggests "many days" and it is a figurative expression for "a long time." Alternate translation: "I could not stop mourning for a long time."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 1:4 (#5)**"fasting and praying"**

Fasting means going without food. This was something that Jews often did in connection with prayer. It allowed them to concentrate on their prayers, and it showed how important those

prayers were. Alternate translation: "I went without food, and I prayed"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 1:4 (#6)**"and praying before the face of"**

Here **face** is a metonym for the action of seeing, which is a figurative way of referring to a person's notice or attention to something. Nehemiah is saying that he prayed in order to bring these matters to God's notice or attention. Alternate translation: "and I prayed to"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:4 (#7)**"the God of heaven"**

Alternate translation: "God, who is in heaven"

Nehemiah 1:5 (#1)**"And I said"**

Here Nehemiah tells what he prayed. Alternate translation: "Then I prayed"

Nehemiah 1:5 (#2)**"Ah"**

Nehemiah uses this word to call on God with strong feeling. Alternate translation: "O"

See: Exclamations

Nehemiah 1:5 (#3)**"Yahweh"**

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 1:5 (#4)**"the God of heaven"**

Since Nehemiah is addressing God directly, you can use "you" forms in your translation if that is natural. They should be singular but also respectful. Alternate translation: "you are the God who is in heaven"

See: Forms of You

Nehemiah 1:5 (#5)

"the great and fearsome God"

Great and **fearsome** mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize how much respect God deserves. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. However, there is a slight difference in meaning, and you could also bring that out in your translation. "Great" refers to how powerful God is objectively. "Fearsome" reflects how people should respond to God's greatness subjectively. They should "fear" God. This does not mean that they should be afraid of him, but that they should show him respect and reverence. Alternate translation: "the great and awesome God" or "the God who deserves total respect"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 1:5 (#6)

"who keeps the covenant and covenant faithfulness"

Covenant and **covenant faithfulness** mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how certain it is that God will keep his promises. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. However, there is a slight difference in meaning, and you could bring that out in your translation even if you combine the phrases. The "covenant" is God's promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants. "Covenant faithfulness" is a character quality of God. He is inwardly disposed to keep all of his promises, and so he always does so faithfully. Therefore, you could say something like, "Because of who you are, you always keep your promises faithfully."

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:5 (#7)

"to those who love him and to those who keep his commandments"

Nehemiah is not describing two different groups. These phrases mean similar things. The repetition is used for clarity and emphasis. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to express that those who love God show this by keeping his commandments. You can translate this so that it is clear that these words describe one group. Alternate translation: "those who love you and keep your commandments"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:5 (#8)

"to those who love him and to those who keep his commandments"

Since Nehemiah is speaking to Yahweh, the pronouns "him" and "his" can be translated as "you" and "your." Alternate translation: "who love you and keep your commandments"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 1:6 (#1)

"Please let your ear be attentive and your eyes opened"

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to urge God to pay attention to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "pay attention to me," otherwise "please listen to me and look at me."

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:6 (#2)

"your ear" - "attentive"

This request for God's ear to be attentive refers to the action of listening. In this context, Nehemiah is asking God to listen to his prayer, with the intention that God would do something about the bad situation in Jerusalem.

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:6 (#3)**"and your eyes opened"**

This request for God's eyes to be open refers to the action of seeing. Seeing is a metaphor meaning knowledge, perception, notice, attention, or judgment. In this case, Nehemiah is asking God to pay attention both to him and to the problem in Jerusalem.

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:6 (#4)**"the prayer of your servant"**

Nehemiah uses the word servant to refer to himself. This is how a person would address a superior in order to show humility and respect. Alternate translation: "my prayer"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 1:6 (#5)**"am praying before your face"**

Here **face** is a metonym for the action of seeing, which is figurative way of referring to a person's notice or attention to something. Nehemiah is repeating the fact that he is praying in order to bring these matters to God's notice or attention. Alternate translation: "praying to you"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:6 (#6)**"today"**

This does not necessarily mean on this particular day, but at this time. Alternate translation: "right now"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 1:6 (#7)**"today, day and night"**

When Nehemiah says that he has prayed both during the day and during the night, he means that he has also prayed at all times in between, that is, constantly. However, he does not mean that he has prayed non-stop all day long and all night long, without doing any other activities such as sleeping or eating. Alternate translation: "constantly," otherwise "during the day and at night"

See: Merism

Nehemiah 1:6 (#8)**"the sons of Israel"**

Here **sons** means **descendants**. Alternate translation: "on behalf of the people of Israel"

See: When Masculine Words Include Women

Nehemiah 1:6 (#9)**"your servants"**

In this context, the word **servants** refers to the special role that the people of Israel had in the world as a model community of God's followers. Alternate translation: "your chosen people"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 1:6 (#10)

"And" - "am confessing on account of the sins of the sons of Israel that we have sinned against you"

Here again **sons** means **descendants** and the phrase refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "I must confess the sins that we, the people of Israel, have committed against you"

See: When Masculine Words Include Women

Nehemiah 1:6 (#11)

"Even I and the house of my father, we have sinned"

Among the Israelites, the expression **father's house** or **house of the father** originally described an extended-family group who lived together. It later came to be used more generally to refer to a larger clan within a tribe. In this expression, the

word **house** describes all the people descended from a particular person. The term views all of those descendants as if they were one household living together. However, since Nehemiah is stressing his sense of personal responsibility here and identifying closely with the people in this group, he may be using the term in its original sense to refer to his nearest relatives. Alternate translation: "Both I and my family have also sinned"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:7 (#1)

"With extreme corruption we have acted corruptly against you"

The repetition here is used for emphasis. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. You could combine them into one phrase, with a word like **very** to convey emphasis. Alternate translation: "We have acted very corruptly toward you"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:7 (#2)

"With extreme corruption we have acted corruptly against you"

You can translate the idea of the abstract noun **corruption** with a verb such as **sinned**. Alternate translation: "We have sinned very much against you"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 1:7 (#3)

"the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments"

These three words mean basically the same thing. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how comprehensively the Israelites have disobeyed what God commanded them through Moses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: "the law of Moses" otherwise "the commands and rules and laws" (Note: A doublet can involve the use of more than two words.)

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 1:7 (#4)

"that you commanded Moses your servant"

Moses was the great leader who brought the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt centuries before and gave them God's law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "that you gave us many years ago through your servant Moses."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 1:8 (#1)

"Please remember"

Here **remember** is an idiom that means to think about someone and consider what action you can take on their behalf. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten the promise he made to Moses. Alternate translation: "Please think about"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 1:8 (#2)

"the word that you commanded Moses your servant"

The pronouns **you** and **your** refer to God and so are singular.

See: Forms of 'You' — Singular

Nehemiah 1:8 (#3)

"the word"

This refers to a promise that God made while giving the law to the people of Israel through Moses. Alternate translation: "the promise"

Nehemiah 1:8 (#4)

"If you yourselves act unfaithfully"

The pronouns **you** and **yourselves** refer to the Israelite people, and so they are plural. Alternate translation: "If you Israelites"

See: Forms of You

Nehemiah 1:8 (#5)

"If you yourselves act unfaithfully"

Here infidelity in marriage is used as a figurative description of the people of Israel not keeping God's commandments. Alternate translation: "If you Israelites do not keep my commandments"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 1:8 (#6)

"I" - "will scatter you among the peoples"

The implication is that God would do this to punish the Israelites for breaking his commandments. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "as a punishment, I will take you from your land and make you live among the other nations"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 1:9 (#1)

"But if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, although your banished ones are"

The pronouns **you** and **your** refer to the Israelite people, so they are plural.

See: Forms of You

Nehemiah 1:9 (#2)

"But if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, although your banished ones are"

Return is a figurative way of saying "become loyal again." Alternate translation: "If you become loyal to me again"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 1:9 (#3)

"and keep my commandments and do them"

These two statements mean similar things. They are used together for emphasis. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "start obeying my commandments once more"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:9 (#4)

"your banished ones"

This refers to the exile. Alternate translation: "all of you who were taken away"

Nehemiah 1:9 (#5)

"at the extremity of heaven"

This means "the most distant point under the sky." In this culture the sky was understood to be a solid dome with a flat earth beneath it. The phrase is describing a point beyond which no one could go any farther because they would have reached the edge of the dome of the sky. This is an overstatement because even from the perspective of this culture, no one could really reach such a point. Alternate translation: "places very far away"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 1:9 (#6)

"I will gather them and bring them"

Since God is actually addressing the Israelites here, you can say "you" in the plural. Alternate translation: "I will bring you back"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 1:9 (#7)

"I will gather them and bring them"

These two statements mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize that God will definitely keep this promise. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine the phrases. Alternate translation: "I will bring you back"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:9 (#8)

"to the place where I have chosen to cause my name to dwell there"

Here God's name is spoken of as if it were capable of living in a place. The phrase indicates the place from which God chose to start making himself famous throughout the world. You can say something like that as an alternate translation.

See: Personification

Nehemiah 1:9 (#9)

"to the place where I have chosen to cause my name to dwell there"

This phrase refers initially to Jerusalem because that was where God chose to put his temple. You could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "to Jerusalem, where I have chosen for my name to remain"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 1:9 (#10)

"to the place where I have chosen to cause my name to dwell there"

Nehemiah is actually using this phrase to refer to all of Judah. As the book explains later, when the Jews returned there, they each settled in their own former towns, though one in ten of them were recruited to live in Jerusalem. So Judah is being described by something associated with it, the capital city. Alternate translation: "to your homeland of Judah."

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:9 (#11)

"my name"

Here, **name** is a figurative way of referring to the fame or reputation of a person. Their fame is described by something associated with it, how well known their name is and how people react to hearing it. Alternate translation: "reputation"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:10 (#1)

"And they are your servants and your people"

The word **they** refers to the Israelite people. Since Nehemiah is speaking on their behalf and including himself, you could say "we" in your translation, If it would be helpful in your language. If your language marks the distinction, "we" should not include the addressee. Alternate translation: "we are your servants, your chosen people"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 1:10 (#2)

"And they are your servants and your people"

As in [1:6](#), **servants** refers to the special role that the people of Israel had as a model community of God's followers. So these two phrases are basically saying the same thing. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "we are your chosen people"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:10 (#3)

"whom you redeemed"

This is a reference to the way God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Alternate translation: "you rescued us from slavery in Egypt"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 1:10 (#4)

"by your great power and by your strong hand"

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize the intensity of Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "by your very great strength"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 1:10 (#5)

"and by your strong hand"

Here, **hand** represents a person's power, strength, or ability.

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 1:11 (#1)

"Ah"

As in [1:5](#), Nehemiah uses this word to call on God with strong feeling. Alternate translation: "O"

See: Exclamations

Nehemiah 1:11 (#2)

"My Lord, please let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant"

Nehemiah calls himself a **servant** and he calls God his **Lord** because this is how a person in his culture would address a superior in order to show humility and respect. See how you translated this in [1:6](#).

Nehemiah 1:11 (#3)

"My Lord"

This term in Hebrew can be understood as either a noun with a pronoun suffix ("my Lord") or as a simple title ("Lord").

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 1:11 (#4)

"please let your ear be attentive"

As in [1:6](#), this phrase refers to the action of listening. Alternate translation: "please pay careful attention."

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:11 (#5)

"the prayer of your servant"

Alternate translation: "to my prayer"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 1:11 (#6)

"the prayer of your servants"

Here, **servants** refers to the rest of the Israelite people who were also praying for Yahweh to act on behalf of his people and on behalf of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "and to the prayers of my fellow Israelites"

Nehemiah 1:11 (#7)

"the ones who delight to fear your name"

Here, **name** represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "who are glad to honor you" or "who are eager to uphold your reputation"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 1:11 (#8)

"the ones who delight"

To delight in doing something means to be glad to do it and to want to do it.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 1:11 (#9)

"to fear"

As in [1:5](#), **fear** means to show respect and reverence.

Nehemiah 1:11 (#10)

"And please cause your servant to succeed today, and give him mercies"

Once again Nehemiah calls himself a **servant** to show respect to a superior. He then refers to himself in the third person ("give him") to express humility before God. Alternate translation: "make me successful today and let the king be merciful to me"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 1:11 (#11)

"And please cause your servant to succeed today, and give him mercies"

These two statements mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how important it is for him to have God's help. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "grant that the king will have mercy on me"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 1:11 (#12)

"today"

This does not necessarily mean on this same day. Rather, Nehemiah is praying that God will give him the opportunity to speak with the king soon about helping the Jews in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "soon"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 1:11 (#13)

"and give him mercies"

Here, **him** refers to Nehemiah, who refers to himself in the third person to express his humility before God.

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 1:11 (#14)

"before the face of this man"

Here, **face** is a figurative way of referring to the action of seeing, and seeing is a figurative way of describing knowledge, perception, notice, attention, or judgment. In this context, Nehemiah is asking God to cause the king to make a favorable decision in response to a request he plans to make. Alternate translation: "Please grant that the king will agree to the request that I am going to make."

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 1:11 (#15)

"this man"

As we will discover in the next chapter, **this man** refers to Artaxerxes, the king of Persia. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the king"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 1:11 (#16)

"Now as for me, I was a cupbearer for the king"

This is background information about Nehemiah's role in the king's court. Your language may have a special way to mark background information. As a "cupbearer," it was Nehemiah's duty to serve the wine at the king's table, but he was much more than a waiter or butler. When the king gave him this assignment, this showed that he trusted Nehemiah completely to protect him from being poisoned. Nehemiah's work also allowed him to see the king frequently and get to know him. So this was an important office. Alternate translation: "At that time, I was an important official who served the wine at the king's table."

See: Background Information

Nehemiah - Chapter 2 Introduction***Structure and formatting***

This chapter begins the account of the construction of the wall. Many scholars believe these chapters teach valuable lessons on leadership ([Nehemiah 2–6](#)).

Special concepts in this chapter**Nehemiah's character**

Apparently, Nehemiah's character made an impression on the king. It was very unusual for a king to be so concerned with one of his servants. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Cultural Customs

In ancient Persia, people thought it was important for their conquered peoples to retain and practice their own cultural customs. It was thought that this

independence promoted peace in their vast kingdom. The rebuilding of Jerusalem may have been seen as a way to allow for the Jewish cultural practices.

Yahweh's control

Yahweh is seen as very powerful. He is able to provide for his people even through a foreign king. (See: People of God)

Nehemiah 2:1 (#1)

"And it happened that"

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses. Alternate translation: "Then one day"

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 2:1 (#2)

"in the month of Nisan, in year 20 of Artaxerxes the king"

Since there were twelve months in the Hebrew calendar, and it was still the same year in the reign of Artaxerxes, this means that four months had gone by since Hanani came and spoke with Nehemiah. The implication is that Nehemiah had been praying all this time in the way described in chapter 1. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "I prayed like this for four months"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:1 (#3)

"in the month of Nisan"

Nisan is the name of the first month of the Hebrew calendar.

See: Hebrew Months

Nehemiah 2:1 (#4)

"in year 20 of Artaxerxes the king"

This is referring to the number of years that Artaxerxes had been reigning as king. Alternate translation: "in year 20 of the reign of Artaxerxes as the king of Persia"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 2:1 (#5)

"wine was before his face"

Him means King Artaxerxes. Alternate translation: "when it was time to serve him the wine"

Nehemiah 2:1 (#6)

"wine was before his face"

Here, **face** is a figurative way of referring to the presence of a person. This sentence means that a time had come when Nehemiah needed to serve wine to the king.

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 2:1 (#7)

"And I lifted the wine, and I gave it to the king"

Alternate translation: "I poured a cup of wine and gave it to the king"

Nehemiah 2:1 (#8)

"and I was not unpleasant before his face"

In this context, **unpleasant** refers to a person looking sad or upset. Alternate translation: "I did not look sad in his presence"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:1 (#9)

"and I was not"

The context suggests that **I was not** actually means **I had never been**. It seems that King Artaxerxes always wanted his officials to be cheerful in his presence. That is why Nehemaiah became afraid when the king asked him why he was sad. If it

would be helpful in your language, you could say "I had never been"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:1 (#10)

"before his face"

Here, **face** is a figurative way of referring to the presence of a person. Alternate translation: "in his presence"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 2:2 (#1)

"And the king said to me"

The king must have noticed that Nehemiah looked sad because he asked about it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "But the king noticed that on this day I did look sad. So he asked me"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:2 (#2)

"Why is your face unpleasant"

The king refers to Nehemiah by one part of him, his **face**, because the face shows one's emotions. Alternate translation: "Why are you sad"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:2 (#3)

"Why is your face unpleasant"

As in [2:1](#), **unpleasant** refers to a person looking sad or upset. Alternate translation: "Why are you sad"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:2 (#4)

"Now as for you, you are not sick"

Alternate translation: "I can tell that you are not sick."

Nehemiah 2:2 (#5)

"This is nothing except unpleasantness of heart"

This phrase means **sadness of heart**. The king speaks as if Nehemiah's heart were a living thing capable of having emotions. Alternate translation: "You must be very sad inside"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 2:2 (#6)

"This is nothing except unpleasantness of heart"

You can state this in a positive form: Alternate translation: "This can only be sadness"

See: Double Negatives

Nehemiah 2:2 (#7)

"And I was extremely much afraid"

The implication is that Nehemiah was very afraid because no one was supposed to look unhappy in the king's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "This made me very afraid, because no one was supposed to look unhappy in the king's presence"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:3 (#1)

"May the king live to eternity"

Nehemiah is showing honor to King Artaxerxes. Here, **to eternity** is an exaggeration that refers to a long life. Alternate translation: "Long live the king" or "May you have a long life"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 2:3 (#2)

"May the king live to eternity"

Nehemiah addresses the king in the third person as a sign of respect. You can indicate this respect by adding an expression such as "Your Majesty."

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 2:3 (#3)

"Why should not my face be unpleasant"

Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect the king to give him reasons why he should not be sad. Instead, he is using the question form for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am sorry, but I cannot help being sad"

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 2:3 (#4)

"Why should not my face be unpleasant"

Nehemiah refers to himself by one part of him, his **face**, because the face shows one's emotions. Alternate translation: "I have very good reasons to be sad"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:3 (#5)

"Why should not my face be unpleasant"

Here, **unpleasant** refers to a person looking sad or upset. Alternate translation: "I have very good reasons to be sad"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:3 (#6)

"the city," - "is desolate"

The city means Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the city of Jerusalem ... lies in ruins"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:3 (#7)

"the house of the graves of my fathers"

Here, **house** is a figurative way of referring to a place. Alternate translation: "the place where my ancestors are buried"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 2:3 (#8)

"the house of the graves of my fathers"

Here, **fathers** means **ancestors**. Alternate translation: "the place where my ancestors are buried"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 2:3 (#9)

"and its gates have been consumed by fire"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "fire has destroyed its gates" or "our enemies have burned its gates"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 2:4 (#1)

"For what is this you are seeking"

Alternate translation: "What do you want me to do for you"

Nehemiah 2:4 (#2)

"And I prayed"

The implication is that Nehemiah prayed to God before he answered the king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Before I answered him, I prayed"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:4 (#3)

"the God of heaven"

Alternate translation: "the God who is in heaven"

Nehemiah 2:5 (#1)

"And I said to the king"

Alternate translation: "Then I replied to the king"

Nehemiah 2:5 (#2)

"If it is good to the king"

This is an idiom that means, "If it seems good in your judgment"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:5 (#3)

"If it is good to the king"

Nehemiah speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. Alternate translation: "If it seems good in your judgment"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 2:5 (#4)

"and if your servant is good before your face"

Here, **face** could be referring to the king himself by naming one part of him. What he thought and felt about Nehemiah's request would become evident in his face first, so that would be an appropriate part of him to use to represent all of him. Another possibility is that **face** means the presence of a person. Alternate translation: "if you are pleased with me" or "as I stand here before you"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:5 (#5)

"and if your servant is good before your face"

Nehemiah refers to himself as **your servant** to show his submission to the king.

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 2:5 (#6)

"that you would send me to Judah"

Nehemiah is really asking for permission to go, rather than asking the king to send him. But as a sign of respect, he speaks as if the king would be taking the initiative. Alternate translation: "please allow me to go to Judah"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:5 (#7)

"the city of the graves of my fathers"

This is similar to [2:3](#). Alternate translation: "the city where my ancestors are buried"

Nehemiah 2:5 (#8)

"and I will build it"

Nehemiah does not plan to do all of the building himself, but he will be the leader of the work. Alternate translation: "that I and my people may rebuild it"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:6 (#1)

"with the queen sitting beside him"

This detail indicates that this was a private meal, since the queen probably did not attend public banquets with the king. The implication is that the private meal gave Nehemiah the opportunity to speak freely. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. See UST. Alternate translation: "This was a private meal, with the queen sitting next to the king"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:6 (#2)

"Until when will be your journey? And when will you return"

These two phrases mean the same thing. The king says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to show that he is genuinely interested in Nehemiah's situation. You do not need to repeat

both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "How long would you be away?"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 2:6 (#3)

"And it was good before the face of the king, and he sent me"

The implication is that Nehemiah told the king how long he would need to be away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "I told him how long I would be gone. That was acceptable to him, and he gave me permission to go"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:6 (#4)

"And it was good"

As in verse 5, this is an idiom that means, "If it seems like a good idea to you." Alternate translation: "That was acceptable"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:6 (#5)

"before the face of the king"

Nehemiah refers to the king by one part of him, his **face**, likely because the face shows one's emotions. Alternate translation: "to him"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:6 (#6)

"and he sent me"

As in [2:5](#), Nehemiah was really asking for permission to go, rather than asking the king to send him. But as a sign of respect, he speaks as if the king took the initiative. Alternate translation: "he gave me permission to go"

Nehemiah 2:6 (#7)

"and I gave to him a time"

Alternate translation: "I told him what day I wanted to leave"

Nehemiah 2:7 (#1)

"And I said"

Alternate translation: "I also said"

Nehemiah 2:7 (#2)

"If it is good to the king"

Alternate translation: "If it seems like a good idea to you"

Nehemiah 2:7 (#3)

"to the king"

Nehemiah addresses the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "to you"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 2:7 (#4)

"let letters be given to me"

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "please give me letters"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 2:7 (#5)

"for the governors of"

Alternate translation: "that I can show to the governors"

Nehemiah 2:7 (#6)

"Beyond-the-River"

This is the name of the Persian province that lay west of the Euphrates River. Alternate translation: "the province Beyond the River"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:7 (#7)

"that they will bring me across as far as where I enter into Judah"

Nehemiah's request is not for these governors to provide him with transportation. Nehemiah explains in [2:9](#) that the king did that for him. These letter would instead request the governors to allow him safe passage through their provinces. Alternate translation: "Please tell them to give me safe passage through their provinces to Judah"

Nehemiah 2:8 (#1)

"and a letter to Asaph"

Nehemiah is continuing his requests to the king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Please also write a letter to Asaph for me"

Nehemiah 2:8 (#2)

"Asaph"

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:8 (#3)

"the keeper of"

Alternate translation: "the man who takes care of"

Nehemiah 2:8 (#4)

"the forest that belongs to the king"

The implication is that this forest was near where Nehemiah was going to need the wood. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "your royal forest in that area"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:8 (#5)

"the forest that belongs to the king"

Nehemiah addresses the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "your royal forest"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 2:8 (#6)

"that he will give to me timbers"

Alternate translation: "Please tell him to give me timber"

Nehemiah 2:8 (#7)

"the citadel, which is for the house"

As in [1:1](#), **citadel** refers to a fortress or stronghold. "House" here describes the temple as the "house" where God lives. Alternate translation: "the fortress that is near the temple"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 2:8 (#8)

"and for the house into which I will enter"

Alternate translation: "and for the house that I will live in"

Nehemiah 2:8 (#9)

"And the king gave to me"

Alternate translation: "The king agreed to all of my requests"

Nehemiah 2:8 (#10)

"according to the good hand of my God upon me"

Here, **hand** represents strength, power, control, or action. In this context, the expression means that God acted toward Nehemiah in a positive and favorable manner. Alternate translation: "because God's favor was upon me"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 2:8 (#11)

"according to the good hand of my God upon me"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could give this explanation (the reason) before the result that it accounts for, using a connecting word like "so." Alternate translation: "God's favor was upon me, and so the king agreed to all of my requests"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 2:9 (#1)

"And I came to the governors of Beyond-the-River"

Alternate translation: "When I reached the province Beyond the River, I went to see its governors"

Nehemiah 2:9 (#2)

"Beyond-the-River"

This is the name of a Persian province. See how you translated it in [2:7](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:9 (#3)

"and I gave to them the letters of the king"

Alternate translation: "I showed them the letters the king had given me."

Nehemiah 2:9 (#4)

"and I gave to them the letters of the king"

The implication is that when the governors saw the letters from the king, they allowed Nehemiah safe passage. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "and they gave me safe passage"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:9 (#5)

"And the king sent with me officers of the army and horsemen"

The implication is that the king did this when Nehemiah left for Judah, and that the purpose was to protect him on his journey. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "When I left to travel to Judah, the king sent along some army officers and soldiers riding on horses to protect me"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:9 (#6)

"And the king sent with me officers of the army and horsemen"

You can put this information first because it happened before Nehemiah showed his letters to the governors.

See: Order of Events

Nehemiah 2:10 (#1)

"And Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah, the servant, the Ammonite, heard"

Sanballat was the governor of Samaria, the area right next to Judah. So he was one of the people Nehemiah would have shown a letter from the king authorizing his trip. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "This was how Sanballat the Horonite and his deputy Tobiah the Ammonite learned"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:10 (#2)

"Sanballat the Horonite"

Sanballat is the name of a man, and Horonite is the name of his people group.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:10 (#3)

"and Tobiah," - "the Ammonite"

Tobiah is the name of a man, and Ammonite is the name of his people group. Tobiah's name occurs over a dozen times in the book of Nehemiah. It will be helpful to your readers if you translate it consistently each time.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:10 (#4)

"and Tobiah, the servant"

From the role that Tobiah plays in the book, this phrase seems to indicate that he was the official who served directly under Sanballat. Alternate translation: "Tobiah, his deputy"

Nehemiah 2:10 (#5)

"And it was evil to them, a great evil, that someone had come to seek good for the sons of Israel"

The implication is that Sanballat and Tobiah did not want to see Judah become strong again because that would be a threat to the power and influence of Samaria. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:10 (#6)

"And it was evil to them, a great evil"

Here **evil** means "bad," so this expression is the opposite of "if it is good to you" in [2:5](#) and [2:7](#). Alternate translation: "They thought it was a bad thing, a very bad thing"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:10 (#7)

"And it was evil to them, a great evil"

These two short phrases mean almost the same thing. Nehemiah uses them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: "they became very upset" or "they did not like it at all"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 2:10 (#8)

"that someone had come to seek good for the sons of Israel"

To seek good for means "to help." Alternate translation: "that someone had come to help the people of Israel"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:10 (#9)

"for the sons of Israel"

As in [1:6](#), **sons** means "descendants." Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

See: When Masculine Words Include Women

Nehemiah 2:11 (#1)

"And I came to Jerusalem"

Here the text might be implying that Nehemiah made it safely to Jerusalem anyway, despite the opposition of Sanballat and Tobiah. Alternate translation: "But I made it safely to Jerusalem despite their opposition."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:11 (#2)

"and I was there three days"

This phrase seems to look ahead to the next verse, and you could translate it that way and make it the start of the next sentence. Alternate translation: "After I had been there for three days"

Nehemiah 2:12 (#1)

"And I arose in the night"

The implication is that Nehemiah went out to inspect the city walls, as described in [1:13-15](#)(..01/13.md). The implication is also that he did this at night so that no one would know he was doing it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "I

got up secretly in the night to inspect the city walls."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:12 (#2)

"myself and a few men with me"

The word **men** here could conceivably include both men and women. However, for a nighttime mission through the ruins of the city walls, it's likely that Nehemiah brought along only other men. So in this context you could use a word that indicates that. Alternate translation: "I brought only a few other men with me."

See: When Masculine Words Include Women

Nehemiah 2:12 (#3)

"and I did not tell anyone what my God had been giving to my heart to do for Jerusalem"

Probably Nehemiah told at least some people, since he brought a few men with him when he went out to inspect the walls. So "not ... anyone" might be an exaggeration that emphasizes the secrecy Nehemiah maintained. Alternate translation: "I did not say publicly what God had led me to do for Jerusalem."

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 2:12 (#4)

"and I did not tell anyone what my God had been giving to my heart to do for Jerusalem"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could give this explanation before describing Nehemiah's nighttime mission, because it is the reason that explains the result of him maintaining so much secrecy.

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 2:12 (#5)

"what my God had been giving to my heart to do"

Here, Nehemiah's **heart** represents his thoughts and will. Alternate translation: "what God had inspired me to do" or "what God had led me to do"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 2:12 (#6)

"Now there was no animal with me"

The implication is that this was another measure to maintain secrecy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "To keep things quiet, there were no other animals with me"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:13 (#1)

"And I went out"

Even though he brought a few men with him, Nehemiah says "I" because he was the primary person conducting this inspection. In this narrative, he represents the entire group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say "we" in your translation to express this meaning. If your language makes this distinction, "we" would not include the addressee.

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:13 (#2)

"at the gate of the valley"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "at the Valley Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:13 (#3)

"even to the face of the spring of the dragon"

Here, **face** means the front of an object. This means that the group passed in front of the well. Alternate translation: "we went past the Dragon Well"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 2:13 (#4)

"the spring of the dragon"

This is the name of a spring-fed well outside Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Dragon Well"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:13 (#5)

"and to the gate of dung"

This is the name of another one of the gates of Jerusalem. It seems that rubbish was removed from the city through this gate. Alternate translation: "the Rubbish Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:13 (#6)

"And I was looking intently at the walls of Jerusalem, seeing"

Alternate translation: "We made a careful inspection of the walls of Jerusalem"

Nehemiah 2:13 (#7)

"that they were broken down, and its gates had been consumed by fire"

You can use active forms to express the meaning of these two passive verbs. Alternate translation: "which our enemies had broken open, and the wooden gates which they had destroyed with fire"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 2:14 (#1)

"the gate of the spring"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Fountain Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:14 (#2)

"the pool of the king"

This is the name of a pool outside Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Royal Pool"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:14 (#3)

"but there was no place for the animal under me to pass"

Alternate translation: "The opening there was so narrow that the animal I was riding could not get through"

Nehemiah 2:15 (#1)

"And I was going up by the wadi at night, and I was looking intently at the wall. And I turned back, and I came in at the gate of the valley, and I returned"

Nehemiah continues to speak of himself as representative of the whole group. Alternate translation: "Then we came to"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:15 (#2)

"And I was going up by the wadi at night, and I was looking intently at the wall. And I turned back, and I came in at the gate of the valley, and I returned"

Nehemiah is saying that because they could not continue going along the wall, they had to take a different route. You could use an introductory word like "so" to indicate this. Alternate translation: "So we followed the path of the Kidron Brook"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 2:15 (#3)

"And I was going up"

Nehemiah continues to speak of himself as representative of the whole group. Alternate translation: "So we followed"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:15 (#4)**"by the wadi"**

This refers to the Kidron Brook, which runs along the eastern side of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Kidron Brook"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 2:15 (#5)**"at night"**

The implication may be "even though it was night." The slippery, uneven ground of the path along the brook would have been more dangerous in the dark. (Nehemiah is writing a chronicle of all the things he did to help the Jews, and he records specific things that required risk or sacrifice.) Alternate translation: "even though it was night."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:15 (#6)**"and I was looking intently at the wall"**

The implication is that from the brook they were able to look up at the wall and see its condition. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "From there we were able to look up at the wall and see its condition."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:15 (#7)**"And I turned back"**

This likely means not that Nehemiah turned around, but that this route brought him and the other men back to where they started. So they were able to go all the way around the city and inspect the entire wall. Alternate translation: "This route brought us back to where we started."

Nehemiah 2:15 (#8)**"And I turned back"**

The other men with Nehemiah also followed him. Alternate translation: "This route brought us back to where we started."

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:15 (#9)**"and I came in at the gate of the valley"**

Alternate translation: "We re-entered the city through the Valley Gate"

Nehemiah 2:15 (#10)**"at the gate of the valley"**

See how you translated the name of this gate in [2:13](#). Alternate translation: "the Valley Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:15 (#11)**"and I returned"**

Here the expression probably means "and I went back home." The implication is that no one had seen him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "and I went back home without being seen."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:16 (#1)**"Now the prefects"**

Alternate translation: "the city officials"

Nehemiah 2:16 (#2)**"until this time I had not yet told"**

The implication is that Nehemiah had not yet told anyone that he was planning to repair the walls. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "had not yet told ... that I was planning to repair the walls."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:16 (#3)

"And" - "the Jews, or the priests, or the nobles, or the prefects"

The implication seems to be that Nehemiah had not said anything privately about his plans to any particular group of leaders. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "I had not even said anything about it privately to the Jewish leaders, the priests, the leading citizens, or the city officials"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:16 (#4)

"And" - "the Jews"

While this expression means "the Jewish people" in most of the book, in the contexts here and in [5:17](#) it seems to mean "the Jewish leaders." Nehemiah is describing some members of this people group, its leaders, as if they were the whole group. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 2:16 (#5)

"or the rest of the doers of the work"

This seems to refer to the people who would later rebuild the walls. Alternate translation: "the others who would later do the work of rebuilding the walls"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:17 (#1)

"And I said to them"

This might imply a contrast between what Nehemiah did previously (kept quiet) and what he did now (told everyone). You could use a word like "but" to indicate this. Alternate translation: "But now I said to them"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:17 (#2)

"You see the evil that we are in"

As in [1:3](#), here the abstract noun **evil** does not refer to something morally bad, but to a difficult situation. You can translate this idea with an adjective such as "desperate." Alternate translation: "You see what a desperate situation we are in"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 2:17 (#3)

"You see the evil"

Here **you** is plural, referring to all the people mentioned in [2:16](#).

See: Forms of You

Nehemiah 2:17 (#4)

"Jerusalem is desolate and its gates have been burned by fire"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning here using active forms. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem lies in ruins, and our enemies have burned down its gates"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 2:17 (#5)

"Jerusalem is desolate and its gates have been burned by fire"

The implication is, "We need to do something about this!" If it would be helpful in your language, you could add something like that explicitly.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:17 (#6)

"Come, and let us build the wall of Jerusalem"

Come does not mean "come over to this place" but "come on, let's do this!" Nehemiah is issuing both an invitation and a public challenge to everyone who is listening. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate his words in a way that reflects this. Alternate translation: "I challenge all of you to join me in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem."

Nehemiah 2:17 (#7)**"and we will no longer be a reproach"**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **reproach**, you can express the same idea with an adjective such as "ashamed." Alternate translation: "so we will no longer be ashamed"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 2:18 (#1)**"the hand of my God, that it was good upon me"**

Here hand is a metaphor meaning strength, power, control, or action. In this context, it means that God had been acting toward Nehemiah in a positive and favorable manner. See how you translated the similar expression in [2:8](#). Alternate translation: "God's favor had been upon me" or "God had been helping me"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 2:18 (#2)**"the words of the king that he had spoken to me"**

Alternate translation: "I also told them how the king had given me permission to come."

Nehemiah 2:18 (#3)**"We will rise up and build"**

The implication is that the people responded this way after they heard all that God had done for Nehemiah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "When they heard this, they said, 'Let's get going and begin building!'"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:18 (#4)**"We will rise up and build"**

In this context, **rise up** means to begin something. This was an enthusiastic response. Alternate translation: "Let's get going and start building!"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:18 (#5)**"And they strengthened their hands for good"**

The phrase "strengthened their hands" means that they encouraged one another. "For good" refers to the rebuilding project, which they recognized would be a great benefit. Alternate translation: "So they prepared themselves to do this good work"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:18 (#6)**"their hands"**

Hand in this context represents a person's strength or power. Alternate translation: "they prepared themselves"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 2:19 (#1)**"Sanballat the Horonite"**

Sanballat is the name of a man, and Horonite is the name of his people group. See how you translated this in [2:10](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:19 (#2)**"and Tobiah," - "the Ammonite"**

Tobiah is the name of a man, and Ammonite is the name of his people group.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:19 (#3)**"and Tobiah, the servant"**

See how you translated this in [2:10](#). Alternate translation: "Tobiah, his deputy"

Nehemiah 2:19 (#4)**"and Geshem the Arabian"**

Geshem is the name of a man, and Arabian is the name of his people group.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 2:19 (#5)**"And" - "heard"**

The implication is that these men learned that the Jews in Jerusalem had started to rebuild the city walls. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "learned that we had started to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:19 (#6)**"and they mocked us, and they despised us"**

These two statements mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how contemptuous and dismissive these enemies were being. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "they ridiculed us mercilessly," otherwise "they made fun of us and ridiculed us"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 2:19 (#7)**"What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"**

These enemies are not asking questions that they expect Nehemiah to answer. They are using the question form to mock him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate their words as statements. Alternate translation: "What you are doing is not going to amount to anything! But you should not be rebelling against the king!"

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 2:19 (#8)**"What is this thing that you are doing"**

The implication is that this **thing** is really "nothing" at all. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "What you are doing is not going to amount to anything!"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:20 (#1)**"And I returned them a word, and I said to them"**

This might imply a contrast between the intimidation his enemies wanted him to feel and the courage that God gave him. You could use a word like "but" to indicate this contrast. Alternate translation: "But in response I said"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 2:20 (#2)**"And I returned them a word, and I said to them"**

These two statements mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how firmly he responded to these enemies. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "But I answered them firmly"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 2:20 (#3)**"The God of heaven, he will cause us to succeed"**

Alternate translation: "The God who is in heaven will enable us to complete this project."

Nehemiah 2:20 (#4)**"and we ourselves, his servants, will rise up and build"**

As in [1:6](#), the word **servants** refers to the special role that the people of Israel had in the world as a

model community of God's followers. Alternate translation: "we are his chosen people, and we are going to begin rebuilding"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 2:20 (#5)

"we" - "will rise up and build"

As in [2:18](#), **rise up** means to begin something.
Alternate translation: "going to begin rebuilding"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 2:20 (#6)

"But for you there is neither share nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem"

The terms **share**, **right**, and **memorial** all mean something similar. Nehemiah uses them together for emphasis. The meanings are not entirely certain. "Share" may suggest that the Samaritans are not part of the community. "Right" may mean that they have no legal basis to say what should happen in Jerusalem. "Memorial" could mean that they had have no role in the city's history, or that there is no record of their Israelite ancestry. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these terms. Alternate translation: "But you have absolutely nothing to do with what happens in Jerusalem." (Note: A doublet can involve the use of more than two terms.)

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 2:20 (#7)

"But for you there is neither share nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem"

Depending on their meaning, the terms "share," "right," and "memorial" may be abstract nouns. If so, you could translate the idea behind them with a phrase that expresses their overall meaning. Alternate translation: "But you have absolutely nothing to do with what happens in Jerusalem."

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah - Chapter 3 Introduction

Special concepts in this chapter

Priests

The priests worked on rebuilding the city. Normally, the priests were exempt from this type of work. Because they helped, it emphasizes that this is a holy work and something done for Yahweh. (See: Priest and Holy and Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Cooperation

Everyone worked on this project. Many names are mentioned to emphasize the cooperation between the different families. Each was given a section of the wall to rebuild.

Nehemiah 3:1 (#1)

"And Eliashib the high priest rose up"

This chapter records the names of the people who repaired the wall of Jerusalem, and it describes what parts of the wall they worked on. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly at the start of the chapter. (In this book Nehemiah records everything he did to help the people of Judah, and he prays that God will remember him and bless him for what he did. We see in this chapter that he also wants God to remember and bless everyone else who helped.) Alternate translation: "These are the names of the people who helped to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. Now Eliashib the high priest rose up"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 3:1 (#2)

"And" - "rose up"

As in [2:18](#), **rise up** here means to begin something.
Alternate translation: "began to"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 3:1 (#3)

"Eliashib"

This is the name of a man. It occurs about a dozen times in the book of Nehemiah. It will be helpful to your readers if you translate it consistently each time.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:1 (#4)

"the high priest"

This means that Eliashib was the leader of the priests who conducted worship in the temple and performed many other religious and community functions. Alternate translation: "the priest who was in charge in the temple"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 3:1 (#5)

"with his brothers the priests"

Here, **brother** could mean Eliashib's biological brothers, but more likely it refers to the rest of the priests. Alternate translation: "with his fellow priests"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 3:1 (#6)

"and they built"

It is clear from the context that they were not building something brand new. Rather, they were rebuilding the walls that had been knocked down. This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: "rebuilt."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 3:1 (#7)

"the gate of sheep"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Sheep Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:1 (#8)

"They themselves consecrated it"

Consecrate means to set something apart for a special purpose. The Sheep Gate was the gate closest to the temple. By dedicating it to God, the priests were symbolically dedicating the entire wall to God. The rebuilt wall would define and protect the city of Jerusalem as the place from which God had chosen to start making himself famous throughout the world, as described in [1:9](#).

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 3:1 (#9)

"They themselves consecrated it"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say explicitly that by dedicating the Sheep Gate to God, the priests were symbolically dedicating the entire wall to God. Alternate translation: "They dedicated this gate to God as a symbolic way of dedicating the entire wall."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 3:1 (#10)

"and erected its doors"

Its refers to the Sheep Gate. **Erected** means "set up" or "set in place." This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: "set the doors in place."

Nehemiah 3:1 (#11)

"And they consecrated it as far as the tower of the hundred and as far as the tower of Hananel"

In this record of people who helped rebuild the wall, Nehemiah is writing more of a list than a narrative, so he often leaves out one or more words that a sentence normally would have in order to be complete. This sentence seems to mean, "They rebuilt the wall as far as the Tower of the Hundred, and beyond that to the Tower of Hananel. Then they dedicated that part of the wall to God as well." You could say something like that if it would be helpful to your readers.

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 3:1 (#12)

"the tower of the hundred" - "the tower of Hananel"

These are the names of two of the towers on the Jerusalem wall. Alternate translation: "the Tower of the Hundred ... the Tower of Hananel"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:1 (#13)

"the tower of the hundred"

It is not clear why this tower had this name. The tower could have been 100 cubits high (about 150 feet or about 45 meters), or 100 soldiers may have been stationed there. Since the reason is unknown, it might be best just to call this the "Tower of the Hundred." However, if it would be confusing to your readers not to explain the meaning of the number, you suggest one of these possibilities. Alternate translation: "The Tower of the Hundred Soldiers" or "The Hundred-Cubit Tower."

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 3:2 (#1)

"And" - "built at his hand"

Here, **at his hand** is a figurative way of saying "beside him" or "next to him." This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: "next to them"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 3:2 (#2)

"the men of Jericho"

The word **men** here can include women, and it does seem to include them in this context. Elsewhere in this chapter, [3:12](#) tells us that "Shallum and his daughters repaired part of the wall." So we know that both men and women worked on this project. Alternate translation: "people from Jericho"

See: When Masculine Words Include Women

Nehemiah 3:2 (#3)

"Jericho"

Jericho is the name of one of the cities in Judah. We see from this chapter that several cities and towns sent work parties to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:2 (#4)

"Zaccur the son of Imri"

Zaccur is the name of a man, and Imri is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:3 (#1)

"Hassenaah"

Hassenaah is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:3 (#2)

"the gate of fish"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Fish Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:3 (#3)

"and erected its doors, its bolts, and its bars"

This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: "They framed it with wooden beams, they set its doors in place, and they installed bolts and bars"

Nehemiah 3:3 (#4)

"its bolts, and its bars"

Bolts and bars locked the gates securely. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this

explicitly. Alternate translation: “bolts and bars for locking the gate”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 3:4 (#1)

"strengthened" - "strengthened"

Strengthened means “repaired.” It refers to repairing the wall, although Nehemiah does not specify this. This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: “repaired the next section of the wall”

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 3:4 (#2)

"Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz"

Meremoth is the name of a man, Uriah is the name of his father, and Hakkoz is the name of his grandfather. Alternate translation: “Meremoth, the son of Uriah and grandson of Hakkoz”

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:4 (#3)

"Meshullam, the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel"

Meshullam is the name of a man, Berechiah is the name of his father, and Meshezabel is the name of his grandfather. Alternate translation: “Meshullam, the son of Berechiah and grandson of Meshezabel”

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:4 (#4)

"Zadok the son of Baana"

Zadok is the name of a man, and Baana is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:5 (#1)

"the Tekoites strengthened"

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: “Tekoites repaired the wall”

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 3:5 (#2)

"the Tekoites"

Tekoa is the name of one of the cities in Judah that sent a work party to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The Tekoites are the people who came from this city. Alternate translation: “some people from Tekoa”

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:5 (#3)

"but their nobles"

Here Nehemiah is indicating a contrast between what these people should have done and what they actually did. You can use a word like “but” to indicate this. Alternate translation: “But the leading citizens of Tekoa”

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 3:5 (#4)

"did not bring their necks to the service of their lords"

Nehemiah does not state the reason why the nobles did not do the work, but it is implied. Alternate translation: “were too proud to do the work”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 3:5 (#5)

"did not bring their necks to the service of their lords"

Here, the **neck** represents the entire person, and specifically the person at work. The neck is likely associated with work because in this agrarian culture, draft animals would put their necks into yokes so that they could pull plows and drag loads.

Alternate translation: "were too proud to do the work"

See: Metonymy

Meshullam is the name of a man, and Besodeiah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:5 (#6)

"to the service of their lords"

Lords here most likely refers to the leaders of Judah, who had asked all the surrounding cities and towns to send work parties to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Another possibility is that the plural form of the word "lord" actually refers to God. Alternate translation: "the work that the leaders of Judah had asked them to do" or "the service of their Lord"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 3:5 (#7)

"to the service of"

Service is an abstract noun that refers to the work of rebuilding the wall. You can translate the idea behind it with a concrete noun such as "work."

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 3:6 (#1)

"the gate of old"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Old Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:6 (#2)

"Joiada the son of Paseah"

Joiada is the name of a man, and Paseah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:6 (#3)

"and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah"

Nehemiah 3:7 (#1)

"Melatiah the Gibeonite"

Melatiah is the name of a man. "Gibeonite" means that he was from the city of Gibeon.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:7 (#2)

"and Jadon the Meronothite"

Jadon is the name of a man. "Meronothite" probably means that he was from the town of Meronoth.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:7 (#3)

"men of Gibeon and the Mizpah"

Gibeon and Mizpah were two of the cities in Judah that sent work parties to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "other people from Gibeon and from the city of Mizpah"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:7 (#4)

"to the seat of authority of the governor of Beyond-the-River"

This is where the governor would have stayed when visiting Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "as far as the residence of the governor of the province Beyond the River"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 3:8 (#1)

"Uzziel, the son of Harhaiah"

Uzziel is the name of a man, and Harhaiah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:8 (#2)

"of the goldsmiths"

This means that Uzziel was one of the goldsmiths who worked in Jerusalem. A goldsmith is a person who makes jewelry and other objects from gold. The term "goldsmith" occurs several more times in the chapter, and if you include both the name and the definition here, that would help your readers understand it in its later occurrences. Alternate translation: "He was one of the goldsmiths, the workers who made jewelry and other objects from gold."

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 3:8 (#3)

"Hananiah"

Hananiah is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:8 (#4)

"a son of the perfumers"

Son of here is a figurative expression that indicates that a person shares the qualities of something. In this case, the book is describing someone who shares the quality of being a maker of perfume. Alternate translation: "one of the perfumers"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 3:8 (#5)

"And they restored Jerusalem as far as the broad wall"

This is the name of one of the features of the Jerusalem wall. This may have been a place where the wall had been built thicker and stronger for strategic purposes. Alternate translation: "They rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:9 (#1)

"And Rephaiah, the son of Hur, the administrator for half of the district of Jerusalem, strengthened at their hand"

In this chapter, when Nehemiah names a person, then names their father, and then describes a role, it is the first person, not their father, who was in that role. It will be helpful to your readers if you make this clear. Alternate translation: "Next to them, Rephaiah the son of Hur repaired part of the wall. Rephaiah ruled half of the district of Jerusalem"

Nehemiah 3:9 (#2)

"Rephaiah, the son of Hur"

Rephaiah is the name of a man, and Hur is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:9 (#3)

"half of the district of Jerusalem"

The city of Jerusalem and the surrounding area seem to have been divided into districts for administration. This is the name of one of those districts. Apparently it was so large and populous that it had been further divided into two parts, each with its own administrator. Alternate translation: "ruled half the district of Jerusalem"

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 3:10 (#1)

"Jedaiah the son of Harumaph"

Jedaiah is the name of a man, and Harumaph is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:10 (#2)

"And" - "strengthened at their hand, even in front of his house"

Alternate translation: "repaired the next part of the wall, which was in front his house"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:10 (#3)

"Hattush the son of Hashabneiah"

Hattush is the name of a man, and Hashabneiah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:11 (#1)

"a second section"

This expression occurs six times in the chapter. Two of those times, someone who has been named earlier is said to have repaired "a second section," suggesting, "in addition to the one they did previously." But the other four times, the people have not been named earlier. So in those cases it might mean "a further section of the wall," beyond the one just described that someone else worked on. Both of these likely meanings could be accommodated by saying something like "another section of the wall"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 3:11 (#2)

"Malkijah the son of Harim"

Malkijah is the name of a man, and Malkijah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:11 (#3)

"and Hasshub the son of Pahath-Moab"

Hasshub is the name of a man, and Pahath-Moab is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:11 (#4)

"the tower of ovens"

This is the name of one of the towers of the Jerusalem wall. Alternate translation: "the Tower of the Ovens"

Nehemiah 3:12 (#1)

"Shallum, the son of Hallohesh"

Shallum is the name of a man, and Hallohesh is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:12 (#2)

"the administrator for half of the district of Jerusalem"

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided. Since the first half has already been named, you could say as an alternate translation: "Shallum ruled the other half of the district of Jerusalem"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:12 (#3)

"he and his daughters"

Alternate translation: "along with his daughters"

Nehemiah 3:13 (#1)

"the gate of the valley"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Valley Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:13 (#2)

"Hanun"

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:13 (#3)

"and the inhabitants of Zanoah"

Zanoah is the name of one of the cities in Judah that sent a work party to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the people from Zanoah"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:13 (#4)

"and a thousand cubits"

Depending on what would be most helpful to your readers, you could express this either in ancient or modern measurements, "1,000 cubits" or "460 meters" or "1,500 feet."

See: Biblical Distance

Nehemiah 3:13 (#5)

"the gate of dung"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Dung Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:14 (#1)

"the gate of dung"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Dung Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:14 (#2)

"Malkijah, the son of Recab"

Malkijah is the name of a man, and Recab is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:14 (#3)

"the district of Beth-Hakkerem"

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:15 (#1)

"the gate of the spring"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Fountain Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:15 (#2)

"Shallun, the son of Kol-Hozeh"

Shallun is the name of a man, and Kol-Hozeh is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:15 (#3)

"the district of the Mizpah"

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:15 (#4)

"He himself was building it and covering it"

Alternate translation: "He rebuilt the gate and put a roof over it"

Nehemiah 3:15 (#5)

"the wall of the pool of Shelach"

Alternate translation: "the wall that surrounded the Pool of Siloam"

Nehemiah 3:15 (#6)

"at the garden of the king even as far as the stairs descending from the city of David"

Alternate translation: "next to the royal garden, as far as the steps that went down from the City of David."

Nehemiah 3:15 (#7)**"from the city of David"**

This was one part of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the City of David"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:16 (#1)**"Nehemiah, the son of Azbuk"**

Nehemiah is the name of a man, and Azbuk is the name of his father. (This is not the same Nehemiah who wrote this book.)

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:16 (#2)**"the district of Beth-Zur"**

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:16 (#3)

"as far as in front of the graves of David, and as far as the pool that was made, and as far as the house of the mighty men"

Alternate translation: "as far as the place opposite the tombs in the City of David, to the reservoir that the people had made and the army barracks"

Nehemiah 3:17 (#1)**"After him, the Levites strengthened"**

The Levites were descendants of Levi. They had the special assignment of helping the priests. Alternate translation: "Next to him, some Levites repaired parts of the wall."

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:17 (#2)**"Rehum the son of Bani"**

Rehum is the name of a man, and Bani is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:17 (#3)**"Rehum the son of Bani"**

It seems clear from the context that Rehum was a Levite. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "One of them was Rehum the son of Bani."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 3:17 (#4)**"Hashabiah"**

Hashabiah is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:17 (#5)

"at his hand, Hashabiah," - "strengthened for his district"

This does not mean that Hashabiah repaired this part of the wall for the benefit of his district, but rather that he did it leading a work party from his district. Alternate translation: "led a work party from his district that repaired the next section of the wall"

Nehemiah 3:17 (#6)**"half of the district of Keilah"**

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:18 (#1)**"their brothers strengthened"**

As in [3:1](#), **brother** could mean the biological brothers of the Levites mentioned in [3:17](#). However, more likely it means other Levites.

Alternate translation: "some other Levites repaired more of the wall"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 3:18 (#2)

"Binnui, the son of Henadad, the administrator for half of the district of Keilah"

Here Nehemiah does not say "at their hand" (next to them) or "strengthened" (repaired another section of the wall). Once again he is leaving out some of what a complete sentence would be expected to contain. You could fill in this information. Alternate translation: "Next to them, Binnui the son of Henadad, who ruled the other half of the district of Keilah, repaired more of the wall."

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 3:18 (#3)

"Binnui, the son of Henadad"

Binnui is the name of a man, and Henadad is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:18 (#4)

"the administrator for half of the district of Keilah"

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:19 (#1)

"Ezer, the son of Jeshua"

Ezer is the name of a man, and Jeshua is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:19 (#2)

"the administrator for the Mizpah"

Since the district of Mizpah is mentioned in [3:15](#), this probably means the city of Mizpah. Alternate translation: "Ezer ruled the city of Mizpah"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:19 (#3)

"And" - "was strengthening a second section"

Alternate translation: "repaired another section"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 3:19 (#4)

"opposite the ascent to the armory at the angle"

Alternate translation: "He started from the place in front of the steps that went up to the armory, and he finished at the place where the wall bends slightly."

Nehemiah 3:20 (#1)

"Baruch the son of Zabbai"

Baruch is the name of a man, and Zabbai is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:20 (#2)

"burned"

Here, **burned** is probably a figurative way of saying that Baruch worked with great enthusiasm. You could say that as an alternate translation.

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 3:20 (#3)

"and strengthened a second section"

Alternate translation: "repaired another section"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 3:20 (#4)

"from the angle as far as the opening of the house of Eliashib the high priest"

Alternate translation: "from the bend in the wall as far as the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest"

Nehemiah 3:21 (#1)

"Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz"

Meremoth is the name of a man, Uriah is the name of his father, and Hakkoz is the name of his grandfather. See how you translated these names in [3:4](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:21 (#2)

"strengthened a second section"

Alternate translation: "repaired another section"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 3:21 (#3)

"from the opening of the house of Eliashib even as far as the end of the house of Eliashib"

Alternate translation: "from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of his house"

Nehemiah 3:22 (#1)

"the priests, the men of the valley"

Jerusalem is up on a mountain, so the area around it would be "the valley." Alternate translation: "some priests from the area around Jerusalem"

Nehemiah 3:23 (#1)

"Benjamin and Hasshub strengthened in front of their house"

Alternate translation: "repaired a section opposite their house"

Nehemiah 3:23 (#2)

"Benjamin and Hasshub"

Benjamin and Hasshub are the names of men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:23 (#3)

"strengthened beside his house"

Alternate translation: "repaired the next section, beside his house"

Nehemiah 3:23 (#4)

"Azariah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah"

Azariah is the name of a man, Maaseiah is the name of his father, and Ananiah is the name of his grandfather.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:24 (#1)

"strengthened a second section"

Alternate translation: "repaired another section"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 3:24 (#2)

"Binnui the son of Henadad"

Binnui is the name of a man, and Henadad is the name of his father. See how you translated these names in [3:18](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:24 (#3)

"from the house of Azariah as far as the angle and as far as the corner"

Alternate translation: "from the house of Azariah to the bend in the wall as far as the bulwark"

Nehemiah 3:24 (#4)**"Azariah"**

Azariah is a man, the same one mentioned in verse 23.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:25 (#1)**"Palal the son of Uzai"**

Palal is the name of a man, and Uzai is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:25 (#2)**"from opposite the angle and the tower projecting"**

Here again, Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: "He began at the place opposite the bend in the wall where the watchtower is taller than"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 3:25 (#3)**"from the upper house of the king"**

Here, it is likely that **house** means palace, referring to where the king had lived. Alternate translation: "the upper palace of the king"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 3:25 (#4)**"which is by the court of the guard"**

Alternate translation: "That is near the place where the guards stayed"

Nehemiah 3:25 (#5)**"Pedaiah the son of Parosh"**

Pedaiah is the name of a man, and Parosh is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:25 (#6)**"Pedaiah the son of Parosh"**

Once again Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: "Next to him, Pedaiah the son of Parosh repaired a section"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 3:26 (#1)**"And the Nethinim were dwelling in the Ophel, as far as in front of the gate of water to the east and the projecting tower"**

Yet again Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: "The temple servants who lived on Ophel Hill repaired the wall as far as the eastern side of the Water Gate where there is a tall tower"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 3:26 (#2)**"And the Nethinim"**

The term **Nethinim** describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple servants"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:26 (#3)**"in the Ophel"**

This is probably the name of a geographic feature, a fortified extension of the hill that the Jerusalem temple was located on. Alternate translation: "Ophel Hill"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 3:26 (#4)**"the gate of water"**

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem.
Alternate translation: "the Water Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:26 (#5)

"and the projecting tower"

The phrase refers to a tall tower that juts out from the wall. Alternate translation: "a tall tower"

Nehemiah 3:27 (#1)

"strengthened a second section"

Alternate translation: "repaired another section of the wall"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 3:27 (#2)

"the Tekoites"

Tekoa is the name of one of the cities in Judah that sent a work party to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The Tekoites were the people who lived there. See how you translated this name in verse [3:5](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:27 (#3)

"from in front of the high projecting tower even as far as the wall of the Ophel"

Alternate translation: "from opposite the very tall watchtower as far as the wall at Ophel Hill"

Nehemiah 3:28 (#1)

"The priests"

This does not mean all the priests. Nehemiah is using the name of the whole group to refer to part of it. Alternate translation: "a group of priests"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 3:28 (#2)

"from above the gate of horses"

The word **above** is used here because the houses of the priests were likely to have been located at a higher elevation than the Horse Gate. Alternate translation: "starting at the Horse Gate"

Nehemiah 3:28 (#3)

"the gate of horses"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Horse Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:28 (#4)

"a man to the front of his house"

Here **a man** means "each one." Alternate translation: "Each one repaired the section in front of his own house."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 3:29 (#1)

"Zadok the son of Immer"

Zadok is the name of a man, and Immer is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:29 (#2)

"Shemaiah, the son of Shecaniah"

Shemaiah is the name of a man, and Shecaniah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:29 (#3)

"the keeper of the gate of the east"

Alternate translation: "the person who looked after the East Gate" or "the person who opened and closed the East Gate"

Nehemiah 3:29 (#4)**"the gate of the east"**

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem.
Alternate translation: "the East Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:30 (#1)**"strengthened a second section"**

Alternate translation: "repaired another section"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 3:30 (#2)**"Hananiah the son of Shelemiah"**

Hananiah is the name of a man, and Shelemiah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:30 (#3)**"with Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph"**

Hanun is the name of a man, and Zalaph is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:30 (#4)**"sixth"**

Alternate translation: "son number six"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 3:30 (#5)**"Meshullam the son of Berechiah"**

Meshullam is the name of a man, and Berechiah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:30 (#6)**"in front of his chamber"**

Alternate translation: "in front of the rooms where he stayed"

Nehemiah 3:31 (#1)**"Malkijah"**

Malkijah is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:31 (#2)**"a son of the goldsmiths"**

As in [3:8](#), this is a figurative way of saying that Malkijah was one of the goldsmiths. In this figure of speech, the "son of" something shares its qualities. Since the goldsmiths have been mentioned previously (in [3:8](#), where their work is described), you could say as an alternate translation: "who was another one of the goldsmiths"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 3:31 (#3)**"as far as the house of the Nethinim and the merchants"**

Alternate translation: "as far as the building used by the temple servants and the merchants"

Nehemiah 3:31 (#4)**"the gate of mustering"**

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. "Mustering" refers to soldiers assembling to go out to battle. Alternate translation: "the Mobilization Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:31 (#5)**"even as far as the upper chamber of the corner"**

Alternate translation: "He built as far as the upper apartments of this building, which were on the corner."

Nehemiah 3:32 (#1)

"And" - "strengthened between the upper chamber of the corner to the gate of sheep"

This brings the description of the repairs back around to where they started. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this explicitly by saying "the last section." Alternate translation: "repaired the last section of the wall, from the corner apartments to the Sheep Gate"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 3:32 (#2)

"the goldsmiths and the merchants"

This does not mean all the goldsmiths and all the merchants. Nehemiah is once again using the names of whole groups to refer to parts of them. Alternate translation: "some of the other goldsmiths, along with some traders"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 3:32 (#3)

"to the gate of sheep"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Sheep Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah - Chapter 4 Introduction

Special concepts in this chapter

Dedication

The people were so dedicated to rebuilding the walls that they worked with their weapons ready for battle right next to them. Even when they were threatened with an attack, they continued to trust in Yahweh. (See: Trust)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Sanballat uses a series of rhetorical questions. These are intended to show his intense anger against the Israelites. (See: Rhetorical Question)

Nehemiah 4:1 (#1)

"And it happened"

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 4:1 (#2)

"Sanballat"

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [2:10](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 4:1 (#3)

"that," - "it burned him, and he was very angry"

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how angry Sanballat was. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases and say something like "he became furiously angry" or "he became very angry"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 4:1 (#4)

"that," - "it burned him, and he was" - "angry"

Here Nehemiah says that Sanballat's anger was a fire that burned inside of him. Alternate translation: "he became furious"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:2 (#1)**"And he spoke before the face of"**

Here, **face** represents the presence of a person. The expression means that Sanballat was speaking personally to the other people who are named. Alternate translation: "He said to"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:2 (#2)**"his brothers"**

Here, **brother** likely refers to Sanballat's fellow officials. Alternate translation: "the other provincial officials"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:2 (#3)**"and the army of Samaria"**

Sanballat was not speaking to the entire army. Nehemiah is using all of something to mean part of it. He is referring to the officers of the army by the name of the entire army. Alternate translation: "the army officers"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 4:2 (#4)

"What are the feeble Jews doing? Will they restore for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish in a day"

Sanballat actually is making a series of statements, not asking a series of questions. He does not expect the officials and officers to tell him what the Jews are doing and whether they will succeed. Instead, he is using the question form to mock the Jews. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the ideas in his questions as a series of statements. Alternate translation: "These feeble Jews can accomplish nothing. They will never restore the city for themselves. They will not offer sacrifices. They will not finish the work any time soon."

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 4:2 (#5)**"Will they sacrifice"**

The meaning of this phrase is not entirely clear. It could be that Sanballat is speaking of the Jews offering sacrifices to try to entice God to make their project successful. Alternate translation: "They will not get their God to help them"

Nehemiah 4:2 (#6)**"Will they finish in a day"**

In this context, the expression "day" means "a short time." Alternate translation: "any time soon"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:2 (#7)

"Will they bring to life the stones from piles of dust, when they have been burned"

Here Sanballat is speaking of stones as if they could come to life and stand up straight to form the wall. Alternate translation: "They will not be able to rebuild the city walls from useless stones that were burned and turned into rubble"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 4:2 (#8)

"from piles of dust, when they have been burned"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "useless stones that someone has burned and turned into rubble"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 4:3 (#1)**"And Tobiah the Ammonite"**

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [2:10](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 4:3 (#2)**"Yes"**

This word indicates that Tobiah agrees with Sanballat and that he is going to say something to support him. Alternate translation: "That's right!"

Nehemiah 4:3 (#3)

"if a fox goes up on what they are building, then he would break down their wall of stones"

Tobiah probably does not believe that the wall would really fall down if a fox walked along the top of it. He is exaggerating to mock the work the Jews are doing. You could use a plain expression in your translation instead, such as, "It wouldn't take much to make that wall fall over." However, Tobiah's expression is so colorful that you may want to retain it, but be sure that your readers understand he is exaggerating. Alternate translation: "Tobiah made fun of the Jews by saying, 'That wall they are building is so weak that if a fox climbed up on it, the stones would fall to the ground'"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 4:4 (#1)**"Hear, our God"**

Nehemiah starts talking directly to God at this point in the book. The implication is that he heard about what Sanballat and Tobiah were saying, and in response, he prayed the prayer that is recorded here in 2:4–5. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "When I heard about what they were saying, I prayed and said, 'Listen, our God'"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:4 (#2)**"Hear, our God"**

Nehemiah's prayer here is a particular type of aside. In an aside, someone who is speaking to or about one person or group will pause and speak confidentially to somebody else about them. Often an aside is spoken to the audience of a work about someone who is being addressed within the work. But in this case, Nehemiah pauses from addressing

the audience that is hearing his story; he speaks confidentially to God in prayer about two of the characters in the story. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this is a prayer is distinct from the story by making it a direct quotation.

See: Aside

Nehemiah 4:4 (#3)**"we are a contempt"**

The abstract noun **contempt** refers to the way Sanballat and Tobiah regarded the Jews, which led them to make fun of the Jews. You can translate the idea behind this term with a verb like "mocking." Alternate translation: "our enemies are mocking us"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 4:4 (#4)

"and cause their taunts to return on their heads"

Return on his head is an idiom that means that what a person expected to happen to someone else happens to them instead. Alternate translation: "Make them people whom others will mock"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:4 (#5)

"And give them for plunder in a land of captivity"

As in [1:2](#), the abstract noun **captivity** refers to a conquering army forcing all or some of a captured population to move to a different place. You can translate the idea behind it with verbs such as "capture" and "force." Alternate translation: "Allow their enemies to capture them and force them to go to a foreign land"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 4:5 (#1)

"And do not cover over their iniquity, and do not wipe out their sin from before your face"

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how guilty Sanballat and Tobiah are for opposing the work that God has sent him to do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "do not ever forgive them"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 4:5 (#2)

"And do not cover over their iniquity"

Nehemiah speaks of a person's sins as if they were an object that could be physically hidden. Alternate translation: "do not forgive their sins"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:5 (#3)

"and do not wipe out their sin"

Nehemiah speaks of a person's sins as if they were something written that could be erased. Alternate translation: "do not forget their sins"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:5 (#4)

"from before your face"

Here, **face** means the action of seeing or a person's notice or attention. A person can see what is in front of their face, so in this case the expression means, "from where you can see it"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:5 (#5)

"for they have provoked anger before the front of the builders"

This expression could mean one of the following three things: (1) It could mean that they have made God angry by opposing the work he has commanded Nehemiah to do. Alternate translation: "they have made you become angry." This possibility seems the most likely, since Nehemiah is praying that what these men are trying to do to others will happen to them. (2) It could mean that they have caused others to be angry at the people

who are rebuilding the wall. Alternate translation: "they have caused others to be angry at the people who are rebuilding the wall." (3) It could mean that Sanballat and Tobiah have made the builders angry by mocking them. Alternate translation: "they have made the builders become angry"

Nehemiah 4:6 (#1)

"So we built the wall"

As in chapter 3, it might be helpful to say "rebuilt." The Jews were not building something brand new. See the note to [3:1](#).

Nehemiah 4:6 (#2)

"and all the wall was joined together up to half of it"

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "we filled in the breaks as high as halfway up the wall"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 4:6 (#3)

"and all the wall was joined together up to half of it"

It appears from the context that this likely took some time and perseverance after Sanballat and Tobiah began to mock and oppose the project. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "after some time, we filled in the breaks"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:6 (#4)

"up to half of it"

"Half" means one part out of two equal parts.

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 4:6 (#5)

"And the heart of the people was for working"

Here the **heart** represents the thoughts and the will of the people. Alternate translation: "Everyone was determined to accomplish this."

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:7 (#1)

"And it happened"

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 4:7 (#2)

"Sanballat, and Tobiah"

This are the names of men. See how you translated them in [2:10](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 4:7 (#3)

"and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites"

These are the names of people groups.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 4:7 (#4)

"the health of the walls of Jerusalem was going up"

Here Nehemiah is speaking of the wall around Jerusalem as if it were a living thing that was sick because it was broken down. Nehemiah speaks of the repairs to the wall as if the wall is becoming healthy again. Alternate translation: "we were continuing to repair the walls of Jerusalem"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 4:7 (#5)

"was going up"

Alternate translation: "was increasing"

Nehemiah 4:7 (#6)

"and the breaks were beginning to be closed"

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "we were continuing to ... fill in the gaps"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 4:7 (#7)

"that," - "it burned them extremely"

Here Nehemiah says that the anger of these enemies was a fire that burned inside of them. Alternate translation: "they became very angry" or "they became enraged"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:8 (#1)

"to fight against Jerusalem"

Here, **Jerusalem** refers to the people who live there. These enemies were not coming to fight against the walls and buildings. Nehemiah is describing the people of Jerusalem by reference to something associated with them, the city where they live. Alternate translation: "to fight against the people of Jerusalem"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 4:8 (#2)

"and to make confusion for it"

The abstract noun **confusion** refers to the way these enemies hoped that their attack would make the people of Jerusalem not know what to do. The people might disagree among themselves about whether they should keep working on the wall or whether they should discontinue the work to appease the attackers. They might also disagree about how to defend themselves. You could translate the idea behind the term "confusion" with adjectives such as "confused" and "divided." Alternate translation: "They wanted to make the people inside the city confused and divided."

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 4:9 (#1)

"And we set up a guard on account of them"

Alternate translation: "and we put men around the wall to guard the city"

Nehemiah 4:9 (#2)

"by day and by night"

This does not mean that some people went up on the walls to look around at various parts of the day, and others went up at certain times of night. Nehemiah is describing how he maintained a constant guard by speaking of two times when people were on duty, the day and the night, in order to include all the time in between. Alternate translation: "at all times," otherwise "throughout the day and night"

See: Merism

Nehemiah 4:9 (#3)

"against their faces"

This term could mean two different things: (1) Here, probably **Their faces** means the front of a group. This likely means that the lookouts would see the front ranks of the army as they approached. Alternate translation: "to spot them as they approached". (2) Here, "their faces" could also be a figurative way of referring to the enemies and their hostile intentions toward the people doing the work. Alternate translations: "against them"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:10 (#1)

"And Judah said"

Nehemiah is describing the people of Judah by reference to something associated with them, the name of their province. Alternate translation: "Then the people of Judah started saying"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 4:10 (#2)

"The strength of the burden-bearers is failing"

Alternate translation: "The people who are carrying the stones are getting worn out"

Nehemiah 4:10 (#3)

"and" - "rubble"

Alternate translation: "and ... burned stone" or "and ... broken rock" or "and ... unusable stone"

Nehemiah 4:10 (#4)

"And as for us, we are not able to build the wall"

Alternate translation: "We are not going to be able to finish rebuilding the wall"

Nehemiah 4:11 (#1)

"They will not know, and they will not see until when we come into their midst"

These two phrases mean similar things. The enemies use the repetition to emphasize how confident they are of launching a surprise attack. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "They will not be expecting an attack until we are right there," otherwise "before they see us and know we are coming, we will rush down on them"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 4:11 (#2)

"and they will not see"

While the enemies could be referring to the Jews literally not seeing them approach, "seeing" could also be a way of describing knowledge, notice, or attention. In that case this expression would mean the same thing as "they will not know." Alternate translation: "they will not be expecting"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:12 (#1)**"came"**

The implication is that they came to Jerusalem to speak with the Jewish leaders there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "came to Jerusalem to speak with us"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:12 (#2)**"the Jews dwelling beside them"**

Them means the enemies Nehemiah has been talking about, so this expression likely refers to the Jews who lived near Nehemiah and those helping him. But it does not mean all of these Jews, just some who came to Jerusalem. Nehemiah is describing part of this group as if it were the whole group. Alternate translation: "some of the Jews who lived near our enemies"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 4:12 (#3)**"that," - "they said to us ten times"**

Here the number 10 is used to represent "many." Alternate translation: "spoke to us many times"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:12 (#4)**"From all the places where you turn, they are on us"**

The meaning of this Hebrew phrase is uncertain. However, one explanation that would fit the context is that these exposed Jewish communities sent representatives to Jerusalem to tell Nehemiah that they were afraid of being attacked in their villages. The "places where you return" could mean "anywhere we live," referring to the villages, and "they are on us" could mean that the enemies could attack these undefended towns at any time. Perhaps these representatives were asking Nehemiah to release their able-bodied men from work duty and send them home so they could help defend their families and neighbors. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say something

like this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Our enemies could attack us anywhere we live, so let our men return home so they can defend us!"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:12 (#5)**"From all the places"**

This phrase likely indicates "in every direction." The word "all" is an exaggeration for emphasis. Alternate translation: "anywhere we live"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 4:13 (#1)**"And I stationed"**

If you follow the suggestion in the previous note for translating the last phrase in [4:12](#), then you could show here that Nehemiah is indicating a contrast between what the representatives wanted him to do and what he actually did. Instead of scattering his forces by sending the men from other towns home, he concentrated them visibly in Jerusalem, expecting that the main attack would come there. Alternate translation: "But" or "Instead"

Nehemiah 4:13 (#2)**"And I stationed from the lowest of places behind the wall, in the bare places"**

Alternate translation: "I put guards behind the wall at the places where it was low or where there were gaps in it."

Nehemiah 4:13 (#3)**"and I stationed the people by families"**

This does not mean all the people, and it does not mean every member of every family. Nehemiah is describing part of the people as if they were all of them, and part of each family as if it were the whole family. Chapter 3 describes how Nehemiah organized the work on the wall by family and community groups. He seems to have organized the defense of the city the same way. Alternate translation: "I positioned people from each family"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 4:13 (#4)

"and their bows"

This means not just bows, but bows and arrows.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 4:14 (#1)

"And I looked"

This likely means that Nehemiah literally looked over all the defenses he had put in place. Alternate translation: "After I had inspected everything"

Nehemiah 4:14 (#2)

"and I rose up, and I said"

Since Nehemiah immediately addresses a group of people, the implication is that he gathered them together to speak to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "I summoned ... and I told them"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:14 (#3)

"and I rose up"

In this context, the expression "rose up" likely is a way of saying that Nehemiah took public action, not that he had been sitting or lying down and got up.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:14 (#4)

"to the nobles, and to the prefects"

See how you translated these terms in [2:16](#).
Alternate translation: "to the leading citizens and the city officials"

Nehemiah 4:14 (#5)

"the rest of the people"

This does not mean all of the other people who lived in Jerusalem, but rather many of them who came to hear Nehemiah speak on this occasion. He is describing part of the people as if they were all of them. Alternate translation: "many of the other people"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 4:14 (#6)

"Do not be afraid of their faces"

Here, **face** describes an entire person by reference to one part, the "face," likely because the face shows what the person is thinking and feeling. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid of our enemies"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 4:14 (#7)

"Remember"

In this context, **remember** does not refer to a person recalling something they have forgotten. Rather, it means, "keep in mind." Alternate translation: "keep in mind"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:14 (#8)

"my great and fearsome Lord"

Nehemiah is referring here to Yahweh, the God who promised to bless and protect the Jews as his chosen people. When he says **my**, he is using himself to represent the entire community. Alternate translation: "our great and awesome God"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 4:14 (#9)

"great and fearsome"

Nehemiah uses this same expression in [1:5](#). See how you translated it there. Review the note there

if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "great and glorious"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 4:14 (#10)

"your brothers"

Here, **brother** could mean biological brothers, but it is more likely that it refers to a person's relatives, that is, their whole family. Alternate translation: "your families"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:15 (#1)

"And it happened" - "when"

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 4:15 (#2)

"it was known to us"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "we found out about their plans"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 4:15 (#3)

"it was known to us"

It means the plan of these enemies to launch a surprise attack, as described in [4:11](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "we found out about their plans to launch a surprise attack"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:15 (#4)

"and God had frustrated their counsels"

Alternate translation: "and God had kept them from doing what they planned."

Nehemiah 4:15 (#5)

"that," - "all of us returned to the wall, a man to his work"

Here, **the wall** means the work on the wall. Nehemiah is describing this work by referring to something associated with it, the wall that was the object of the work. Alternate translation: "we all went back to working on the wall"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 4:15 (#6)

"that," - "all of us returned to the wall, a man to his work"

The implication is that when the enemies realized the Jews knew about their plans, they decided not to attack. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "They decided not to attack us, and we all went back to working on the wall"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:15 (#7)

"a man to his work"

In this context, **a man** means "each person." It does not refer only to an adult male. Alternate translation: "Each person continued doing the same work as before"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:16 (#1)

"from that day"

In this context, **day** may not refer to one specific day, but rather to a more general time. Alternate translation: "from that time on" or "after that"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:16 (#2)**"my young men were doing the work"**

This expression refers to the servants who worked for Nehemiah. While they probably were young adult males, the expression is specifically envisioning their role and status. Alternate translation: "my servants"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:16 (#3)**"were doing the work"**

This refers to the work on the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "worked on the wall"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:16 (#4)**"half of my young men"**

Half means one part out of two equal parts.

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 4:16 (#5)**"and the bows"**

As in [4:13](#), this means not just bows, but bows and arrows.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 4:16 (#6)**"And the officials were behind all the house of Judah"**

This likely means that certain officials literally stood behind the workers and the guards. That is, they were inside the wall and close to it, while the guards stood right at the wall and the workers worked on it. Alternate translation: "Officers stood behind all the workers and guards"

Nehemiah 4:16 (#7)**"And the officials were behind all the house of Judah"**

The implication is that the leaders were there to give orders in case there was an attack. But it is likely that Nehemiah also wanted them to offer encouragement and maintain good morale. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Officers stood behind all the workers and guards to encourage everyone and to give orders in case there was an attack"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:16 (#8)**"And the officials"**

From the context here and the use of this term in [7:2](#), it appears that these "officials" were responsible for giving commands in military situations. Alternate translation: "and officers"

Nehemiah 4:16 (#9)**"all the house of Judah"**

Here, the word **house** describes all the people descended from a particular person. All of the descendants of Judah are being described as if they were one household living together. So this would ordinarily mean "the people of Judah"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:16 (#10)**"all the house of Judah"**

However, in this context, the expression is not referring to all the people of Judah. Nehemiah is describing part of the people as if they were all of them. He means all of the workers and guards. The expression helps clarify that Nehemiah is no longer speaking just of his own servants, whom had divided into two groups to serve as workers and guards. Alternate translation: "all the workers and guards"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 4:17 (#1)

"and those who were carrying burdens, the loaders"

These two short phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together for clarity and emphasis. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "and those who carried the heavy loads"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 4:17 (#2)

"the loaders, they were doing the work with one of his hands and one grasping weaponry"

Here **his hands** means "their hands." This is an exaggeration. The builders and porters did not always work with only one hand. Rather, this means that they always had their weapons with them so that they would be prepared to fight off an attack. Alternate translation: "they always had their weapons with them while they were working on the wall"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 4:18 (#1)

"And the builders: a man girded his sword to his loins and built"

In this context, **a man** means "each person." Alternate translation: "each builder worked with his sword strapped to his side"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:18 (#2)

"And the one who blew the ram's horn was beside me"

The implication is that Nehemiah stationed this person next to him so that he could sound a signal if needed. (This becomes clear in [4:20](#).) If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly here. Alternate translation: "And I stationed someone next to me who would blow a ram's horn if we needed a signal"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:19 (#1)

"And I said"

See how you translated these terms in [2:16](#).
Alternate translation: "the leading citizens ... the city officials"

Nehemiah 4:19 (#2)

"the nobles" - "the prefects"

As in [4:14](#), this does not mean all of the other people who lived in Jerusalem, but rather many of them who came to hear Nehemiah speak on this occasion. He is describing part of the people as if they were all of them. Alternate translation: "many of the other people"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 4:19 (#3)

"The work is great and vast"

Great and **vast** mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize the scope of the rebuilding project. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "large-scale" or "huge"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 4:19 (#4)

"and we are separated on the wall, a man far from his brother"

In this context, **a man** means "each person," and **brother** means "fellow Jew." Alternate translation: "each of us is far apart from our fellow Jews along the wall"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:20 (#1)

"the sound of the ram's horn"

The implication is that the workers and guards would need to gather together to fight off an attack.

The implication is also that while the people were widely scattered, they would all be able to hear the ram's horn even from a distance, and so it would be an effective signal. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say these things explicitly. Alternate translation: "So if we all need to gather in one place to fight off an attack, I will have someone blow a ram's horn there. You will be able to hear this signal from anywhere along the wall."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:20 (#2)

"the ram's horn"

See how you translated this in [4:18](#). Review the explanation there if that would be helpful.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 4:20 (#3)

"Our God will fight for us"

This does not mean that God will fight instead of the Jews, but that God will take their side and help them win. Alternate translation: "God will help us defeat our enemies"

Nehemiah 4:21 (#1)

"So we were doing the work"

This means the **work** of rebuilding the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "So we continued to work on rebuilding the wall"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:21 (#2)

"And half of them were grasping spears"

"Them" means the men who would otherwise have been working as builders or carrying loads, but who were serving as guards instead. As verses [4:13](#) and [4:16](#) make clear, the weaponry included not just spears, but also shields and bows and arrows. So Nehemiah is using "spears" here to refer to all of the weaponry. Alternate translation: "half of the

men served as guards and kept their weapons ready"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 4:21 (#3)

"And half of them"

Here **half** means one part out of two equal parts.

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 4:21 (#4)

"from the rising of the dawn until the coming out of the stars"

Nehemiah is referring to the entire day by speaking of two extreme parts of it, the time when first light of morning appears and the time when it becomes dark enough to see the stars, in order to include everything in between. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "at all times," otherwise "from the time when the light of dawn appeared in the morning until the time when the stars appeared at night"

See: Merism

Nehemiah 4:21 (#5)

"from the rising of the dawn"

This phrase refers to the daily appearance of light rising in the east in the early morning hours prior to the sun rising above the horizon. Alternate translation: "the first light of day"

Nehemiah 4:21 (#6)

"the coming out of the stars"

Here Nehemiah describes the appearing of the stars as if they **came out** of an enclosed container. Alternate translation: "the very beginning of the night"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 4:22 (#1)**"a man"**

In this context, **a man** means "each person" and more specifically "each worker." As in 4:16, "young man" means servant. Alternate translation: "each worker and his servant"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:22 (#2)**"in the midst of Jerusalem"**

This could be referring to workers who had come from nearby cities and towns to help rebuild the wall. It could also include people who lived in the Jerusalem area but whose homes were outside the city, such as local farmers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "spend the night inside Jerusalem and not go home if they live outside the city"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 4:22 (#3)**"and they will be for us by night a guard and by day a worker"**

The idea is not that these men would be on guard duty all night and then work all day on the wall. Rather, their presence in the city would mean that a large number of defenders would be ready on short notice if needed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "That way the city will have plenty of defenders even at night, and they can still work on the wall during the daytime"

Nehemiah 4:23 (#1)**"And neither"**

In this verse Nehemiah is describing something else that was also true of the conditions in Jerusalem during the time period he is describing. You can make this clear in your translation with an appropriate connecting word or phrase. Alternate translation: "At that time, neither"

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 4:23 (#2)**"nor my brothers"**

Here **brother** likely refers to Nehemiah's close relatives. Elsewhere in the book he indicates that his brother Hanani lived in the city and that his relatives ate with him at the governor's table ([1:2](#), [5:14](#), [7:2](#)). Alternate translation: "nor my relatives"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 4:23 (#3)**"nor my young men"**

As in [4:16](#), this means "my servants."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 4:23 (#4)**"nor the men of the guard who were behind me"**

This likely refers to the personal bodyguard that the king would have assigned to Nehemiah when he appointed him to be the governor of Judah. (Nehemiah describes this appointment in [5:14](#).) Alternate translation: "my personal bodyguard"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 4:23 (#5)**"or a man his weapon at the water"**

Here the specific meaning of the Hebrew text is unknown, but Nehemiah is almost certainly leaving out some of the words that a sentence would normally have to have in order to be complete. He says that he and his relatives, servants, and bodyguards did not take off their clothes, **or anyone his weapon at the water**. This could mean that "no one took his weapon off even when he was washing himself" or that "no one took his weapon off even when going to get water." If it would be helpful in your language, you could explain what "at the water" might mean, you could choose one of these possibilities. Alternate translation: "Each of us always had our weapons with us, even when we were washing ourselves."

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 4:23 (#6)**"stripped off our clothes, or a man his weapon"**In this context, a **man** means **anyone**.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah - Chapter 5 Introduction*Special concepts in this chapter***Equality**

The rich made money from the poor. The rich oppressed the poor by charging interest on loans. Because Nehemiah wanted to treat everyone fairly, he did not collect any taxes from them. This chapter also emphasizes that it was wrong to enslave a fellow Jew. (See: oppress)

Governor

Nehemiah was a governmental leader in Jerusalem, but he was not a king. Jerusalem had a great deal of independence, but it was under the authority of the Persian king. The term "governor" reflects this idea, but a different term may be used in translation.

Nehemiah 5:1 (#1)**"And there was"**

Nehemiah now relates something else that was happening even while the Jews were trying to rebuild the wall and defend themselves against their enemies. You can make this clear in your translation with an appropriate connecting word or phrase. Alternate translation: "Around this same time"

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 5:1 (#2)**"a great outcry of the people and their wives"**

Outcry is an abstract noun that refers to the complaints that the poorer Jews made to Nehemiah about how the wealthier and more powerful Jews were treating them. If it would be helpful in your

language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a verb such as "complain." Since Nehemiah says this was a "great" outcry, involving many serious grievances, you could intensify the verb with an adverb such as "bitterly." Alternate translation: "many of the men and their wives complained bitterly"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 5:1 (#3)**"the people and their wives"**

Here, **the people** seems to indicate certain men who lived in Jerusalem, since Nehemiah also mentions their wives. Alternate translation: "many of the men and their wives"

Nehemiah 5:1 (#4)**"their brothers"**

Here, **brother** does not seem to mean biological brothers, but to refer to other members of the same people group. Alternate translation: "their fellow Jews"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:1 (#5)**"their brothers, the Jews"**

These two short phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize how inappropriate it was for people to treat members of their own group in the ways described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "their fellow Jews"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 5:2 (#1)**"And there were those who said"**

Verses 2, 3, 4, and 5 do not seem to be different complaints that people brought to Nehemiah separately. Rather, the whole group seems to be complaining that because they need to get food for their families, wealthier and more powerful Jews

are exploiting them. They are forcing them to take mortgages and loans and even sell their children into slavery. Nehemiah is probably depicting one speaker after another in the crowd adding details to this picture. You could suggest this to the readers of your translation by introducing these comments with a translation such as, "some of them began to say"

Nehemiah 5:2 (#2)

"Our sons and our daughters, we are many"

Alternate translation: "We have many children"

Nehemiah 5:2 (#3)

"And let us take grain"

This does not mean only grain. The people complaining to Nehemiah are using one kind of food, grain, the staple of their diet, to refer to all the foods they would need to eat. Alternate translation: "we need food"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 5:2 (#4)

"And let us take grain"

The implication is that because the families are large, a lot of food is needed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "we need to get a lot of food"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:2 (#5)

"so we can eat, and we can live"

These two short phrases mean similar things. The people use them together to emphasize the urgency and importance of having food. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "to get enough food to stay alive"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 5:3 (#1)

"And there were those who said"

(See the applicable note to [2:2](#)) Alternate translation: "Others added"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:3 (#2)

"We are mortgaging our fields and our vineyards and our houses so we can get grain during the famine"

It might be helpful to explain to your readers what a **mortgage** is, if you think they might not know. Alternate translation: "We have had to promise to give someone our fields, vineyards, and houses if we do not pay back the money we borrowed. We had to borrow the money to buy food during this time when food is scarce."

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 5:4 (#1)

"And there were those who said"

Different people in the crowd apparently continue to add details to the complaint. Alternate translation: "Still others said"

Nehemiah 5:4 (#2)

"We have borrowed silver"

Silver here means "money." Nehemiah is describing money by reference to the commodity that is being used as a means of exchange, silver. Alternate translation: "We have had to borrow money"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 5:4 (#3)

"for the tribute of the king on our fields and our vineyards"

Tribute means "taxes" here. Alternate translation: "the taxes that the king commanded us to pay on our fields and our vineyards"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 5:5 (#1)

"And now"

This term indicates that the sentence that follows is a further development of the thought from the previous sentence.

See: Connecting Words and Phrases

Nehemiah 5:5 (#2)

"our flesh is as the flesh of our brothers, our sons are as their sons"

Here the Jews are insisting that they are of the same Jewish descent as the other Jews and that they of the same importance as the others. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Yet our families are Jews just like the other Jews' families, and our children are just as important to us as their children are to them"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:5 (#3)

"our flesh is as the flesh of our brothers, our sons are as their sons"

These two phrases mean similar things. The people complaining to Nehemiah are using the repetition to emphasize how shameful it is for the wealthy and powerful to sell their own fellow Jews into slavery. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "And we are Jews, just like the people who are doing these things to us!"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 5:5 (#4)

"our flesh is as the flesh of our brothers, our sons are as their sons"

You could move this sentence to the end of the verse, since it is the culmination of the argument.

Nehemiah 5:5 (#5)

"our brothers"

Here, **brother** describes the Jews who are exploiting their poor and vulnerable fellow Jews. Alternate translation: "And we are Jews, just like the people who are doing these things to us!"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:5 (#6)

"And behold"

Behold is a term meant to focus the attention of the listener on what the speaker is about to say. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use some emphatic term or expression in your language that would have this same effect.

Nehemiah 5:5 (#7)

"we are putting our sons and our daughters into bondage as slaves. There are those even of our daughters who have been put into bondage"

In this context, the construction **are putting** likely indicates that the poor are on the verge of selling their children into slavery. The next sentence shows that they have already done this in some instances. It appears that in this culture, in dire situations, girls were sold before boys, perhaps because they could become either domestic servants or concubines. A concubine was a woman who was both a slave and a secondary wife to her master. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this statement that way. Alternate translation: "We are on the verge of selling our children into slavery. In fact, we have already sold some of our daughters as servants and concubines."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:5 (#8)

"and there is nothing to God in our hand, for our fields and our vineyards belong to others"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases because the second phrase gives the reason why the first phrase is true. Alternate translation: "because our

creditors took the fields and vineyards we pledged as security for loans, there is nothing else we can do in this situation."

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 5:5 (#9)

"and there is nothing to God in our hand"

There is nothing to God in our hand is an idiom that means that the speaker does not have the power to do what they are describing. Alternate translation: "there is nothing else we can do in this situation"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:5 (#10)

"for our fields and our vineyards belong to others"

The implication is that when the poor could not pay back their loans, their creditors took the fields and vineyards they had pledged as collateral. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "because our creditors took the fields and vineyards we pledged as security for loans."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:6 (#1)

"And it burned me extremely"

Here Nehemiah says that his anger was a fire that burned inside of him. Alternate translation: "I got very angry"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:6 (#2)

"when I heard their outcry and these words"

Outcry is an abstract noun that refers to complaints that the poorer Jews made to Nehemiah about how the wealthier and more powerful Jews were treating them. You can translate the idea behind this word with a verb such as "complain." Alternate translation: "when I heard how they were complaining"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 5:6 (#3)

"their outcry and these words"

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize the urgency and severity of these complaints. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "everything that they were complaining about"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 5:7 (#1)

"And my heart reigned over me"

Here Nehemiah is speaking about his heart as if it were a living thing that could act like a king and rule over him. However, he is not saying that his feelings commanded his actions. (He says in the previous verse that he became very angry, but in the next verse he describes acting in a careful and deliberate manner.) Instead, this means that his heart "took counsel" with him, the way a king would take counsel with advisors. In effect, Nehemiah is saying that he talked the matter over with himself. Alternate translation: "I thought hard about what to do"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 5:7 (#2)

"And my heart reigned over me"

Here, the **heart** represents the thoughts and the will. Alternate translation: "I thought hard about what to do"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:7 (#3)

"and I contended"

Contended is a technical term that means "to bring charges." It means to initiate a lawsuit that would require the defendants to answer for themselves

publicly, in the presence of their fellow citizens.
Alternate translation: "Then I brought charges"

Nehemiah 5:7 (#4)

"the nobles" - "the prefects"

See how you translated these terms in [2:16](#).
Alternate translation: "the leading citizens and the city officials"

Nehemiah 5:7 (#5)

"You are lending interest"

This expression means to charge interest when loaning money to another person. Alternate translation: "You are charging interest"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:7 (#6)

"interest, a man against his brother"

The Law of Moses specifically forbade charging interest on a loan to a fellow Jew. So this was not just an exploitative business practice, it was a violation of God's Law. The rich and powerful Jews would certainly have been expected to know this. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "You are charging interest on loans to your fellow Jews. You know that is forbidden in the Law of Moses."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:7 (#7)

"a man against his brother"

In this context, "a man" means "each person." It does not mean only an adult male.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:7 (#8)

"a man against his brother"

Here, **brother** could conceivably include even biological brothers, but in context it likely refers to

fellow Jews. Alternate translation: "to your fellow Jews"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:7 (#9)

"And I put forth a great assembly against them"

This means that, as part of conducting the lawsuit against these wealthy and powerful Jews, Nehemiah brought together a large group of their fellow citizens to hear the charges against them. This group was the "assembly." Alternate translation: "I put them on trial in front of their fellow citizens"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 5:7 (#10)

"And I put forth a great assembly against them"

To present the events in chronological order, if that would be helpful to your readers, you could put this before the previous sentence, which describes the first charge that Nehemiah brought at this trial.

See: Order of Events

Nehemiah 5:8 (#1)

"We ourselves," - "have bought back"

We likely means Nehemiah and his relatives, as in 4:23. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "My relatives and I have bought back"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:8 (#2)

"We" - "have bought back our brothers, the Jews, the ones who were sold to the nations"

To present the events in chronological order, if that would be helpful to your readers, you could put the information that some Jews had to sell themselves into slavery before the information that Nehemiah and his relatives bought their freedom. Alternate translation: "Whenever our Jewish relatives have had to sell themselves into slavery to people from other nations ... we have been buying them back"

See: Order of Events

Nehemiah 5:8 (#3)

"according to our ability"

Alternate translation: "to the best of our ability"

Nehemiah 5:8 (#4)

"our brothers, the Jews"

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize that buying them back was an honorable and expected action. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "our Jewish relatives"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 5:8 (#5)

"our brothers"

Here, **brother** likely refers to fellow Jews. Alternate translation: "our fellow Jews"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:8 (#6)

"the Jews, the ones who were sold"

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "our fellow Jews have had to sell themselves"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 5:8 (#7)

"But even you yourselves are selling your brothers, and they are being bought back by us"

This means that they are selling their family members, both men and women, as slaves to their fellow Jews. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Now you are selling your own people to be slaves of your fellow Jews, so that they might later sell them back to us"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:8 (#8)

"the ones who were sold to the nations"

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "who people had sold as slaves to the nations"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 5:8 (#9)

"But even" - "yourselves"

This is an emphatic expression. Nehemiah uses it to show how serious the offense is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this emphasis in some way in your translation. Alternate translation: "you are actually"

Nehemiah 5:8 (#10)

"you" - "are selling your brothers"

This means that the creditors were selling the debtors into slavery to recover the money they owed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "you are actually selling your fellow Jews into slavery to get back the money they owe you"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:8 (#11)

"your brothers"

Here, **brother** likely refers to fellow Jews. Alternate translation: "your fellow Jews"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:8 (#12)

"and they are being bought back by us"

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "They are some of the very people we have been buying back!"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 5:8 (#13)

"Then they were silent, and they did not find a word"

The implication is that the accused said nothing because they knew that Nehemiah's charges were true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "They knew that these charges were true, so they were silent. They could not answer a single word."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:8 (#14)

"Then they were silent, and they did not find a word"

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how completely guilty the accused people were. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "there was absolutely nothing they could say in response."

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 5:9 (#1)

"This thing that you are doing is not good"

In this context, **good** does have a moral connotation. Nehemiah is saying more than that this is not a good idea. Alternate translation: "What you are doing is wrong!"

Nehemiah 5:9 (#2)

"Should you not walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies"

Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect the accused to give him reasons why they should not obey God. Instead, he is using the question form to emphasize how important it is for these wealthy and powerful Jews to stop doing these wrong things. Alternate translation: "You really ought to live your life in a way that honors God!"

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 5:9 (#3)

"Should you not walk in the fear of our God"

In this context, **fear** does not mean to be afraid. It means to show respect and reverence, specifically by obeying instead of disobeying. Alternate translation: "live your life in a way that honors God"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:9 (#4)

"you" - "walk"

Here, **walk** is an idiom that describes a person's conduct in life. Alternate translation: "live your life"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:9 (#5)

"because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies"

This may be a reference to the way the enemies of the Jews were already mocking them, or to the way they would mock them if they learned of what was happening. It could mean both things. Alternate translation: "Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more"

Nehemiah 5:9 (#6)

"because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies"

Reproach is an abstract noun that refers to the way the enemies of the Jews were mocking them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the same idea with a verb such as "mock." Alternate translation: "to keep the nations who are our enemies from mocking us"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 5:9 (#7)

"the nations, our enemies"

These two short phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize the identity and hostility of the people who are opposing the Jews. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: "our enemies"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 5:10 (#1)

"Also, even I, my brothers, and my young men"

As in [4:23](#), this means, "I myself, my relatives, and my servants." The term "brother" here likely includes one or more of Nehemiah's biological brothers, but more generally it refers to his close relatives. Alternate translation: "I myself, my relatives, and my servants"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:10 (#2)

"are lending against them silver and grain"

The implication is that Nehemiah and his companions are lending without charging any interest. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "have been lending money and grain to those in need without charging interest"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:10 (#3)

"silver"

Silver here means "money." Nehemiah is describing money by reference to the commodity that is being used as a means of exchange, silver. Alternate translation: "money"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 5:10 (#4)

"Please, let us forsake this interest"

It is clear from the context that **us** in this sentence does not mean Nehemiah and his companions, but rather the entire Jewish community, of which they are a part. Nehemiah could say to the defendants,

accusingly, "You must stop charging interest!" But he includes himself and the entire community as a way of being encouraging rather than condemning. (This would be a use of "we/us" that includes the addressees. You should make this clear in your translation if your language makes that distinction.) Alternate translation: "All of us should stop charging interest on loans."

Nehemiah 5:11 (#1)

"Please," - "return to them"

This is worded as a polite request, but it is really a demand. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express it with an imperative. "Give them back"

Nehemiah 5:11 (#2)

"even today"

This does not necessarily mean on this same day, but without waiting. Alternate translation: "Do it right away!"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:11 (#3)

"and a hundred of"

In this context, this expression means "the hundredth part," or one per cent. In this culture, this was likely charged monthly, so it would have amounted to 12% annual interest. In an economy that was based more on commodities than on cash, this would have been an exorbitant amount. If your culture typically calculates interest at an annual rate, you could express it that way here to help your readers understand the likely meaning. Alternate translation: "the 12% annual interest"

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 5:11 (#4)

"the silver"

Silver means "money" here, as in verse 10. Alternate translation: "money"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 5:11 (#5)

"are lending against them"

Alternate translation: "charging them" or "making them pay"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:12 (#1)

"And they said"

They means the leading citizens and the city officials. Alternate translation: "These leaders replied"

Nehemiah 5:12 (#2)

"We will return"

The implication is that they will return the fields, vineyards, olive orchards, and houses that they took from the poor, as Nehemiah demanded in [5:11](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "We will give back their fields, vineyards, olive orchards, and houses"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:12 (#3)

"and we will seek nothing from them"

Alternate translation: "And we will stop charging them interest"

Nehemiah 5:12 (#4)

"we will do according to what you say"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this statement first, since it is the reason for the results that follow, the return of property and the cancelling of interest. Alternate translation: "Yes, we will do what you say"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 5:12 (#5)

"And I called the priests, and I caused them to swear to do according to this word"

The implication is that the priests would have these leaders swear an oath before God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Then I called the priests, and I made the leaders swear to God in front of them that they would do what they had promised."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:13 (#1)

"I shook out my bosom"

Bosom here refers to Nehemiah's robe. It refers specifically by association to the part that he could gather together in front of him to form a pouch. Alternate translation: "I shook out the folds of my robe"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 5:13 (#2)

"I shook out my bosom"

Nehemiah gathered his robe together in front of him, the way someone would if they wanted to carry something in its folds. Then he flung the robe open and shook it, so that anything that was in it would have scattered. By doing this, he demonstrated symbolically to the Jewish leaders what would happen to them if they broke the promise they made. Alternate translation: "I shook out the folds of my robe"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 5:13 (#3)

"Thus may God shake out from his house and from his labor every man who does not cause this word to stand. And thus may he be shaken out and emptied"

Alternate translation: "In the same way, may God take away the home and all the possessions of anyone who does not keep this promise"

Nehemiah 5:13 (#4)**"every man"**

In this context, this expression means "anyone." It could include women as well as men. Alternate translation: "anyone"

See: When Masculine Words Include Women

Nehemiah 5:13 (#5)**"cause this word to stand"**

The **word** means the promise that the leaders have made and the oath they have taken to confirm it. Nehemiah is speaking of this promise as if it were a living thing that could stand, that is, stay in place rather than go away. Alternate translation: "keep this oath"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 5:13 (#6)**"from his house and from his labor"**

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to express the totality of what a person owns. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: "everything he owns"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 5:13 (#7)**"and from his labor"**

Labor here refers to the "fruits of labor," that is, the possessions that a person acquires through labor. Alternate translation: "all his possessions"

Nehemiah 5:13 (#8)**"And thus may he be shaken out and emptied"**

This sentence repeats the meaning of the previous one. Nehemiah uses the repetition for emphasis. You would not need to use the same repetition in your translation if it were already clear that Nehemiah is speaking emphatically in the first sentence. However, you could also rephrase the

meaning. Alternate translation: "Yes, may that person be separated from everything he owns"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 5:13 (#9)**"shaken out and emptied"**

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize how completely Nehemiah wants God to punish anyone who breaks the oath. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "be separated from everything he owns"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 5:13 (#10)**"all the assembly"**

This means everyone who was there, both the leaders who were the defendants and the citizens Nehemiah had gathered to hear the charges against them. Alternate translation: "everyone who was there"

Nehemiah 5:13 (#11)**"Amen"**

This is an expression that means, "Truly, it is so." It expresses agreement with what someone has just said. You could express the meaning with a phrase such as, "We agree!" Or you could use the Hebrew term and explain its meaning: "Amen! It is true."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:13 (#12)**"And they praised Yahweh"**

Alternate translation: "they worshipped God"

Nehemiah 5:13 (#13)**"and the people did according to this word"**

The people means “the Jews.” “This word” means the promises they made. Alternate translation: “After that, none of the Jews took houses or fields to guarantee loans, and none of them charged interest”

Nehemiah 5:14 (#1)

“Also”

As explained in the note to [3:1](#), in this book, Nehemiah is recording everything that he did to help the people of Judah. He hopes and prays that God will bless him for what he did. He has just described how he rescued the poor from foreclosures and interest. Now he is going to describe something further that he did to help them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Here is something else I did to help the people”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:14 (#2)

“from the day that he appointed me to be their governor in the land of Judah, from year 20” - “of Artaxerxes the king”

This is background information that helps explain what Nehemiah will say next. Alternate translation: “Artaxerxes, the king of Persia, had appointed me to be the governor of the province of Judah during the twentieth year of his reign”

Nehemiah 5:14 (#3)

“from the day” - “even until year 32 of Artaxerxes the king”

Alternate translation: “During the twelve years from that time until the thirty-second year of his reign”

Nehemiah 5:14 (#4)

“from the day”

This is an idiom that means “from the time.” Alternate translation: “from that time”

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:14 (#5)

“from year 20 even until year 32”

Alternate translation: “from the 20th year until the 32nd year of the reign of Artaxerxes as king” or “from year 20 until year 32 in the reign of Artaxerxes as king”

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 5:14 (#6)

“twelve years”

Alternate translation: “12 years” or “during those 12 years”

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 5:14 (#7)

“I myself did not eat the bread of the governor, nor did my brothers”

As Nehemiah explains in the next verse, he recognized that the people were poor and could not afford to provide very much for the expenses of the governor. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly here. Alternate translation: “Because I knew that the people were poor and could not afford to pay for it, I did not accept the governor’s food allowance, and I did not use it to feed my relatives”

Nehemiah 5:14 (#8)

“I myself did not eat” - “did”

Alternate translation: “I did not accept”

Nehemiah 5:14 (#9)

“the bread of the governor”

Nehemiah is using bread to refer to the entire food allowance that he was entitled to as the governor of Judah. He is describing all the food by the name of one part of it, the bread. Alternate translation: “the food that the people provided for the governor” or “the governor’s food allowance”

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 5:14 (#10)

"nor" - "my brothers"

As in [4:23](#), **brother** here likely refers to Nehemiah's actual brother Hanani and the other close relatives who were with him. Alternate translation: "and I did not use it to feed my relatives"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:15 (#1)

"But the former governors who were before my face"

Former and **before my face** mean similar things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: "The men who were governors before me"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 5:15 (#2)

"were before my face"

Here **face** describes an entire person by reference to one part of them, the "face." Alternate translation: "before me"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 5:15 (#3)

"had been heavy on the people"

Here Nehemiah speaks as if these governors had been a great burden that the people were carrying, making their lives very difficult. Alternate translation: "made life very difficult for the people"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:15 (#4)

"and they took from them bread and wine, after forty silver shekels"

After indicates that the supplies of bread and wine were in addition to the money. Nehemiah is likely describing what the former governors required of the people each day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "They demanded that they supply them with bread and wine and forty silver shekels every day."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:15 (#5)

"forty silver shekels"

In ancient times, a silver shekel weighed about 11 grams or about a third of an ounce. You could try to express this in terms of modern money values, but if you did, that could cause your Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate over time, since those values can change from year to year. Instead, you could say something general like "40 silver coins," or give the equivalent weight, or use the biblical term in the text and give the weight in a note.

See: Biblical Money

Nehemiah 5:15 (#6)

"forty silver shekels"

Alternate translation: "forty silver shekels" or "40 pieces of silver"

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 5:15 (#7)

"Also, their young men had acted dominantly over the people"

Alternate translation: "Even their servants oppressed the people."

Nehemiah 5:15 (#8)

"But I myself did not do thus, from the face of the fear of God"

In this sentence, If it would be helpful in your language, you could put the reason before the

result. Alternate translation: "But because of my fear of God, I did not take the food"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 5:15 (#9)

"from the face of the fear of God"

Here, **face** represents Nehemiah's personal perception. "Fearing" God does not mean being afraid of God, but recognizing that God deserves respect and honor. Nehemiah is speaking of this perception figuratively, as if this recognition was always directly in front of him in a place where he could see it. He means that he was always aware of it. Alternate translation: "because I knew I needed to respect God"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:16 (#1)

"I held fast to the work of this wall"

Nehemiah describes himself as **holding fast to**, meaning "holding onto," the work of rebuilding the wall. This means that he was devoted to it, and he did not pursue other interests, including ones that could have made money for him. Alternate translation: "I devoted myself to the work of rebuilding of the wall"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:16 (#2)

"and we did not buy a field"

We likely refers to Nehemiah and his relatives, since he mentions his servants next.

Nehemiah 5:16 (#3)

"and we did not buy a field"

Nehemiah is using the term **field** to describe any kind of real property that he and his relatives might have bought. Verse 11 shows that this could have included not just fields but also things like vineyards, olive orchards, and houses. He is describing all real property by reference to one

kind, a field. Alternate translation: "My relatives and I did not buy any property"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 5:16 (#4)

"and we did not buy a field"

The implication is that they could have bought property cheaply because the poor were so desperate. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "My relatives and I did not buy any property, even though we could have gotten it cheaply because the poor were so desperate"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:16 (#5)

"And all my young men were gathered there for the work"

There means at the wall, and **for the work** means the work of rebuilding the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "I gathered all of my servants there to work on the wall"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 5:17 (#1)

"Now the Jews"

While this expression means "the Jewish people" in most of the book, in the context here and in 2:16 it seems to mean "Jewish leaders." Nehemiah is describing some members of this people group, its leaders, as if they were the whole group. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 5:17 (#2)

"and the prefects"

See how you translated this term in [2:16](#). Alternate translation: "city officials"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 5:17 (#3)**"were 150 men at my table"**

Nehemiah is using the word **table** to refer to the act of feeding people. He is describing that act by reference to something associated with it, the table that the food was served on. Alternate translation: "every day I was responsible to feed 150 Jewish leaders and officials"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 5:17 (#4)**"with the ones coming to us from the nations that were around us"**

This likely refers to Jews who lived in other countries but who came to Jerusalem. Their own communities may have sent them as representatives, or they may have come on their own for business or personal reasons. Alternate translation: "and we also fed the Jewish visitors who came from other countries around us"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 5:18 (#1)**"And what was made for one day was one bull, six choice sheep, and birds were made for me"**

Nehemiah seems once again to be leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. He probably means something like, "What was prepared for one day is as follows: One bull, six choice sheep, and birds; that is what was prepared for me." You could simplify the sentence for your readers by not including "were prepared for me" again at the end. Alternate translation: "Each day I told my servants to prepare one ox, six good sheep, and various kinds of poultry"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 5:18 (#2)**"And what was made for" - "day was one"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who

did the action. Alternate translation: "Each day I told my servants to prepare" or "Each day I told my servants to serve us the meat from"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 5:18 (#3)**"and birds"**

It is likely that the birds were domesticated rather than wild, and if it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a term that indicates this. Alternate translation: "and various kinds of poultry"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 5:18 (#4)**"and between ten days all kinds of wine in abundance"**

Nehemiah is once again leaving out some words that a sentence would ordinarily need to be complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you express the meaning more fully. Alternate translation: "Every ten days I also had my servants bring in an abundant supply of various kinds of wine"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 5:18 (#5)**"and between ten days"**

This expression means "every ten days."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:18 (#6)**"wine in abundance"**

Alternate translation: "enough wine for everyone"

Nehemiah 5:18 (#7)**"So with this I did not seek the bread of the governor"**

As in [5:14](#), "the bread of the governor" means "the governor's food allowance." The implication is that,

at his own expense, Nehemiah paid for all of the things he has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "I paid for all of these things at my own expense. I did not accept the governor's food allowance"

Nehemiah 5:18 (#8)

"the bondage was heavy on this people"

The abstract noun **bondage** refers to the way the people were struggling to survive in difficult times. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as "struggle." Alternate translation: "I knew that the people were struggling to survive"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 5:18 (#9)

"the bondage was heavy on this people"

Here Nehemiah is speaking of bondage or struggle as if it were a great burden that the people were carrying, making their lives very difficult. Alternate translation: "I knew that the people were struggling to survive"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 5:18 (#10)

"the bondage was heavy on this people"

You can put this before Nehemiah's statement that he did not accept the governor's food allowance, because it gives the reason why he refused it. Alternate translation: "I knew that the people were struggling to survive, so I did not accept the governor's food allowance."

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 5:19 (#1)

"Remember me, my God, for good"

As in [4:4](#), here Nehemiah speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at 4:4 about asides like this if that would be helpful.

See: Aside

Nehemiah 5:19 (#2)

"Remember me," - "for good"

To remember someone **for good** is an idiom that means to reward someone with good things for the good that they have done.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:19 (#3)

"Remember me, my God, for good"

In this context, **remember** means to think about someone and consider what action you can take on their behalf. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten him. Alternate translation: "think of me"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 5:19 (#4)

"all that I have done for this people"

Nehemiah is once again leaving out some words that a sentence would ordinarily need. He is asking God to do good things for him because of all the good things he has done for the people of Judah as their governor. Alternate translation: "reward me because of all the good that I have done for the people of Judah"

Nehemiah - Chapter 6 Introduction

Structure and formatting

The building of the wall is completed in this chapter.

The ULT sets the lines in 6:6–7 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are part of a long quotation.

Special concepts in this chapter

Miracle

Completing this city wall in only 52 days was considered proof that God had helped the Jews,

especially given the opposition that they had experienced from the people in surrounding areas.

Nehemiah 6:1 (#1)

"And it happened"

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 6:1 (#2)

"it was heard"

This means that these enemies learned somehow that the wall was finished. Perhaps someone came and told them, or perhaps they received a written report. Nehemiah uses hearing, one means of discovering things, to describe these men learning this. Alternate translation: "when our enemies learned"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 6:1 (#3)

"when it was heard" - "and by the rest of our enemies"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "when our enemies learned"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 6:1 (#4)

"by Sanballat and Tobiah"

These are the names of men. See how you translated them in [2:10](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:1 (#5)

"and by Geshem"

This is the name of a man and his people group. See how you translated these names in [2:19](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:1 (#6)

"I had built the wall"

As in [4:14](#), Nehemiah is using himself to represent the entire community that he is a part of. Alternate translation: "that we had finished rebuilding the wall"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 6:1 (#7)

"although"

This term expresses a weak contrast between the sentence that comes before and the sentence that comes after. There was no break in the wall except for the spaces where the doors had not yet been hung in the gates. Alternate translation: "however"

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 6:1 (#8)

"until that time I had not set up the doors in the gates"

Once again Nehemiah is using himself to represent the entire community that he is a part of. Alternate translation: "we had not yet put the doors in the gates"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 6:2 (#1)

"that" - "sent to me"

Alternate translation: "sent me a messenger to me"

Nehemiah 6:2 (#2)

"Come, and let us appoint a time to meet together"

These enemies use the word **come** to encourage Nehemiah to accept their invitation. If it would be

helpful in your language, you could translate the word as something other than an imperative to make the message sound inviting. Alternate translation: "We would like to arrange to meet with you"

Nehemiah 6:2 (#3)**"among the villages in the valley of Ono"**

Ono is the name of a place about twenty miles from Jerusalem. It is down from the mountains towards the Mediterranean coast, so it can be described as a "valley" or "plain." Alternate translation: "in one of the villages in the plain of Ono"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:2 (#4)**"And they were thinking to do evil to me"**

In this context, **evil** means "harm." Alternate translation: "they wanted to harm me"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 6:2 (#5)**"And they were thinking to do evil to me"**

The implication is that Nehemiah figured this out even though in their invitation these enemies pretended to be sincere. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "But I recognized that they were saying this because they wanted to harm me."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:3 (#1)**"I am doing a great work"**

Nehemiah is once again using himself to represent the whole community and its work of rebuilding of the wall. Alternate translation: "We are doing a great work"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 6:3 (#2)**"and I am not able to go down"**

Nehemiah does not mean that he is physically unable to travel to Ono. He means that he cannot leave his supervision of the work for the several days it would take to travel there and back. Alternate translation: "I am not able to travel while it is going on"

Nehemiah 6:3 (#3)**"to go down"**

Nehemiah uses the word **down** because the plain of Ono is at a lower elevation than Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "meet with you"

Nehemiah 6:3 (#4)**"Why should the work stop while I abandon it and go down to you"**

Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect Sanballat and Geshem to give him reasons why the work should stop as he travels to meet with them. Instead, Nehemiah is using the question form to emphasize how important it is for the work of rebuilding the walls to continue. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate his question as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot let the work stop and come down to you"

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 6:3 (#5)**"and go down to you"**

The word **down** is used here because the plain of Ono where they were requesting Nehemiah to come is at a lower elevation than Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 6:4 (#1)**"And they sent to me according to this word four times"**

Alternate translation: "They sent me the same message four times"

Nehemiah 6:4 (#2)**"and I turned them back"**

Turned them back means **refused them** The implication is that Nehemiah did this each time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "and each time I refused them"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:4 (#3)**"according to this word"**

Alternate translation: "for this same reason"

Nehemiah 6:5 (#1)

"Then Sanballat sent his young man to me a fifth time according to this word"

Alternate translation: "Sanballat sent his servant to me with this same message for a fifth time" or "this was time number five that Sanballat sent his servant to me with this same message"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 6:5 (#2)**"and an opened letter was in his hand"**

This means that this fifth message was written in a letter, but the letter was unsealed. Alternate translation: "This time the message was written, but it was not sealed"

Nehemiah 6:5 (#3)**"and an opened letter was in his hand"**

As a diplomatic communication, the letter should have been sealed. Because it was not, others could read it and spread its contents among the people of the region. It appears that Sanballat deliberately left the letter unsealed to pressure Nehemiah to meet with him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Sanballat left the letter unsealed so that others would find out what it said, because he wanted to pressure me to meet with him"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:6 (#1)**"In it was written"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "The letter said"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 6:6 (#2)**"It is heard among the nations," - "that"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "The rumor in the region is"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 6:6 (#3)**"and Gashmu is saying"**

The claim appears to be that Geshem has investigated these rumors and told Sanballat that they are true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "and Geshem confirms that it is true"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:6 (#4)**"and Gashmu"**

Gashmu here is an alternate form of the name **Geshem** found in [6:1](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the name as **Geshem** here as well.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:6 (#5)

"you and the Jews are thinking to rebel, therefore you are building the wall"

This means specifically that the Jews would rebel against Artaxerxes, the Persian king, who was currently ruling them. If it would be helpful in your

language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "you and the Jewish people are rebuilding the wall because you are planning to rebel against King Artaxerxes"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:6 (#6)

"and the Jews"

Here this expression means **the Jewish people** specifically the ones living in Judah and Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Jewish people"

Nehemiah 6:6 (#7)

"And you are becoming a king over them"

Alternate translation: "They are also saying that you intend to make yourself the king of the Jews"

Nehemiah 6:7 (#1)

"And also"

This phrase indicates that what follows is more of the report that Sanballat claims he is hearing from the people in the surrounding countries. If it would be helpful in your language, you could put something in your translation to indicate this. Alternate translation: "These people are also saying that"

See: Connecting Words and Phrases

Nehemiah 6:7 (#2)

"you have set up prophets to call out concerning you in Jerusalem"

Alternate translation: "you have appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem"

Nehemiah 6:7 (#3)

"saying, 'A king is in Judah"

The proclamation can be presented as a direct quotation. "Saying" can be represented by the quotation marks and whatever punctuation you

language uses to introduce a quotation. Alternate translation: "The Jews now have a king of their own"

Nehemiah 6:7 (#4)

"And now"

This is not a reference to time. Sanballat is using this expression to introduce a further inference. Alternate translation: "certainly"

Nehemiah 6:7 (#5)

"it will be heard by the king according to these words"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "King Artaxerxes will certainly hear these reports"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 6:7 (#6)

"it will be heard by the king according to these words"

The implication is that when Artaxerxes hears these reports, he will be very angry with Nehemiah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "King Artaxerxes will certainly hear these reports, and when he does, he will be very angry with you"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:7 (#7)

"And now"

This is not a reference to time. Sanballat is using this expression to introduce his conclusion. This term expresses that the sentences that came before provide the reason for the sentence that comes after. Alternate translation: "Therefore"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 6:7 (#8)

"come, and let us consult together"

As in [6:2](#), “come” is a word of encouragement rather than a command. Alternate translation: “So we really should meet together and talk about this”

that explicitly. Alternate translation: “I knew that they were all just trying to frighten us”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:8 (#1)

"And I sent to him"

Alternate translation: “I sent a message back to him”

Nehemiah 6:8 (#2)

"No such thing has been done according to these words that you are saying"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “I have not done any of the things you have written”

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 6:8 (#3)

"but you are inventing them out of your own heart"

Here, the **heart** represents someone’s thoughts and feelings. Sanballat’s thoughts and feelings, in turn, represent him as a person. Alternate translation: “you have made all this up in your own imagination”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 6:8 (#4)

"but"

This term expresses a contrast between the clause that comes before and the clause that comes after.

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 6:9 (#1)

"For all of them were frightening us"

This likely means, “they were all trying to frighten us.” The implication is that Nehemiah recognized that this was the motive behind the letters. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say

Nehemiah 6:9 (#2)

"saying"

Alternate translation: “They were thinking”

Nehemiah 6:9 (#3)

"Their hands will drop from the work"

Here, **hand** represents strength, power, control, or action. Alternate translation: “The workers will stop doing the work on the wall”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 6:9 (#4)

"Their hands will drop from the work"

The implication is that the enemies expected the Jews to become so afraid of being accused of rebelling for rebuilding the wall that they would stop doing that. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “The Jews will become so afraid that they will stop working on the wall”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:9 (#5)

"from the work"

This means specifically the work on the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “working on the wall”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:9 (#6)

"and it will not be done"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who

will do the action. Alternate translation: "they will never finish rebuilding it"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 6:9 (#7)

"So now, strengthen my hands"

Nehemiah speaks directly to God once again here. This instance is like the one in [4:4](#), where Nehemiah records what he prayed at the time of the events he is describing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this by introducing the prayer with a phrase such as "so I prayed," by presenting the prayer as a direct quotation, and by having Nehemiah address God directly at the beginning. Alternate translation: "So I prayed, 'O God, give me courage'"

See: Aside

Nehemiah 6:9 (#8)

"strengthen my hands"

Here the strength of a person's hands stands for the courage they are feeling inside. Alternate translation: "strengthen me"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 6:10 (#1)

"Now as for me"

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce something else that happened around this same time. Alternate translation: "Around this time"

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 6:10 (#2)

"I entered the house of"

Alternate translation: "I went to visit"

Nehemiah 6:10 (#3)

"Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel"

Shemaiah is the name of a man, Delaiah is the name of his father, and Mehetabel is the name of his grandfather. Alternate translation: "Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:10 (#4)

"and he was confined"

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "he was not leaving his house."

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 6:10 (#5)

"and he was confined"

Nehemiah does not say why Shemaiah was not leaving his house. He could have been sick or he could have been ceremonially unclean, so you might choose not to specify any reason. However, the context suggests that Shemaiah may have been trying to symbolize that it was not safe for Jewish leaders to go around in public. A man by the name of Shemaiah is listed in [10:8](#) as one of the priests who signed the community agreement. This could be the same person since he has access to the temple and is therefore likely a priest. If it would be helpful in your language, you could suggest this reason explicitly. Alternate translation: "He was a priest, and he was trying to show that it was not safe for Jewish leaders to go out in public, so he was not leaving his house"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 6:10 (#6)

"Let us appoint a time to meet in the house of God, in the midst of the temple"

Shemaiah seems to be proposing that he and Nehemiah move their meeting to the temple, suggesting that they are not even safe in his house. Alternate translation: "We are not safe even here. We need to go into the temple, to the sacred place inside the temple"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:10 (#7)**"in the house of God, in the midst of the temple"**

These two phrases mean similar things. Shemaiah uses the repetition to emphasize the danger he is suggesting they are in. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "into the temple"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 6:10 (#8)**"the house of God"**

Shemaiah is referring to the temple as the "house of God," as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 6:10 (#9)**"And let us shut the doors of the temple"**

This means to not just close the doors but lock them. Alternate translation: "and lock the doors"

Nehemiah 6:10 (#10)**"for they are coming to kill you"**

Shemaiah does not say who these people are. It would be possible to say something based on what can reasonably be inferred. For example, "Your enemies have hired people to kill you." However, the vagueness seems to be part of Shemaiah's strategy to frighten Nehemiah. So it might be more effective to leave this indefinite. Alternate translation: "because people are trying to kill you"

Nehemiah 6:10 (#11)**"Yes, at night they are coming to kill you"**

Shemaiah's confidence in the detail of "at night" seems designed to make Nehemiah even more afraid because this means that the killers will come in the dark when he is asleep, so he won't be able to protect himself. It could be helpful to your readers for your translation to reflect this

confidence. Alternate translation: "I know that one night they are going to come and kill you"

Nehemiah 6:11 (#1)**"And I said"**

Alternate translation: "I responded"

Nehemiah 6:11 (#2)**"Should a man such as I run away"**

Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect Shemiah to tell him whether or not he should run away. Instead, Nehemiah is using the question form to emphasize that he is not going to do what Shemaiah has suggested. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "A man like me would not run away."

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 6:11 (#3)**"And who, such as I, is it that could go in to the temple and live"**

Once again Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect Shemiah to tell him whether going into the temple would save his life. Alternate translation: "A man like me would not go into the temple just to hide to stay alive."

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 6:11 (#4)**"And who, such as I, is it that could go in to the temple and live"**

It is not entirely clear what Nehemiah means by this. He could be saying that he should not go into the temple because he is not a priest. However, the Bible records instances of other people who were not priests going into the temple to seek sanctuary. So Nehemiah may be saying instead that because he is the governor he is too well known to escape from assassins by hiding in the temple. You could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Besides, I am the governor, and everyone knows me, so I

could not save my life by trying to hide in the temple”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:11 (#5)

"I will not go in"

Alternate translation: “I refuse to do it!”

Nehemiah 6:12 (#1)

"And I recognized, and behold"

The term “behold” is used to focus attention on the words that follow. Within this episode as a whole, it creates the impression of Nehemiah suddenly realizing something that had not been clear to him before. Alternate translation: “All of a sudden I realized”

Nehemiah 6:12 (#2)

"God had not sent him"

Shemaiah seems to have been pretending that God had revealed to him prophetically that people would be coming secretly at night to kill Nehemiah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “God had not given Shemaiah a prophetic message for me”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:12 (#3)

"But he spoke the prophecy against me, for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him"

Alternate translation: “Instead, he was saying these things to hinder my work because Tobiah and Sanballat had paid him to say them”

Nehemiah 6:13 (#1)

"For this purpose he was hired, so that I would be afraid"

This is the reason why Nehemiah’s enemies had hired Shemaiah; because they wanted to cause Nehemiah to be afraid. If it would be helpful in your

language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “The reason they had hired him was to scare me. They hoped that as a result”

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 6:13 (#2)

"For this purpose"

This term introduces the purpose for the sentence contained in the verse.

See: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

Nehemiah 6:13 (#3)

"and I would do thus and sin"

This phrase expresses the goal for the sentence contained in the verse.

See: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

Nehemiah 6:13 (#4)

"and I would do thus and sin"

It is not entirely clear why Nehemiah says it would have been a sin for him to hide in the temple since it was a time-honored tradition in Israel to allow people to seek sanctuary there. Perhaps the explanation is that Nehemiah knew God had sent him to Judah on a special mission to help and protect the Jewish community there. And so, if he had abandoned that mission to save his life, he would have been disobeying God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say something like that explicitly. Alternate translation: “They were hoping they could make me sin by abandoning my responsibilities and hiding in the temple.”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:13 (#5)

"And it might become an evil name to them, so that they could reproach me"

Here, **name** is a figurative way of referring to the fame or reputation of a person. If he hid in the temple to save his own life, Nehemiah would get a bad reputation as a coward who was concerned

only for himself. Alternate translation: "this would give me a bad reputation, and they could say bad things about me to everyone"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 6:13 (#6)

"so that"

This term expresses that the clause that comes after is the goal for the clause that comes before.

See: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

Nehemiah 6:14 (#1)

"My God"

As in [4:4](#) and [6:9](#), Nehemiah records here what he prayed at the time of the events he is describing. You can indicate this by introducing these words as a prayer and presenting the prayer as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "So I prayed, 'My God ...'"

Nehemiah 6:14 (#2)

"remember Tobiah, and Sanballat according to these deeds of his"

His refers to both Sanballat and Tobiah. In this context, "remember" means to think about someone and consider what action you should take in their regard. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten about Tobiah and Sanballat. Alternate translation: "treat Tobiah and Sanballat the way they deserve for what they have done"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 6:14 (#3)

"and also Noadiah the prophetess, and the rest of the prophets who are frightening me"

Alternate translation: "Do the same for the female prophet Noadiah and all the other prophets who are trying to make me afraid"

Nehemiah 6:14 (#4)

"Noadiah"

This is the name of a woman.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:15 (#1)

"And the wall was finished"

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "We finished rebuilding the wall"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 6:15 (#2)

"on 25 of Elul"

Elul is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. Alternate translation: "on the twenty-fifth day of the month of Elul"

See: Hebrew Months

Nehemiah 6:15 (#3)

"on 25 of Elul"

Alternate translation: "on day 25 of the month of Elul"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 6:15 (#4)

"on day 52"

Alternate translation: "after working on it for 52 days"

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 6:16 (#1)

"And it happened"

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 6:16 (#2)

"when all our enemies heard"

This means that these enemies learned by some means that work had been completed. Nehemiah uses hearing, one means of discovering things, to describe the enemies learning this. Alternate translation: "when all of our enemies learned"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 6:16 (#3)

"when all our enemies heard"

This means specifically, "When all our enemies learned that we had completed the rebuilding in such a short time." If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:16 (#4)

"that," - "all the nations that were around us were afraid, and they fell extremely in their eyes"

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how intimidated the people in the surrounding countries felt. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "they thought much less of themselves" or "they lost confidence in themselves," otherwise "they became afraid and felt humiliated"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 6:16 (#5)

"and they fell extremely in their eyes"

Here, **fell** is a figurative way of saying "become less."

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 6:16 (#6)

"and they fell extremely in their eyes"

Here, **eyes** stand for "seeing," and "seeing" means judgment. This means that these people were no longer so great or powerful in their own estimation. Alternate translation: "they lost confidence in themselves"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 6:16 (#7)

"And they knew that this work was done by our God"

You can put this right before the statement that the enemies were afraid and thought less of themselves, because it is the reason that explains that result. Alternate translation: "They realized that our God had helped us complete this work"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 6:16 (#8)

"this work was done by our God"

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "our God had helped us complete this work"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 6:17 (#1)

"Also, in those days"

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce something else that was happening at the same time as the other events he has just described. Alternate translation: "During this time"

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 6:17 (#2)

"in those days"

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "at this time"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 6:17 (#3)**"the nobles of Judah"**

See how you translated this term in [2:16](#). Alternate translation: "the leading citizens of Judah"

Nehemiah 6:17 (#4)**"were multiplying their letters"**

The implication is these citizens were sending information to Tobiah about Nehemiah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "sent many messengers with letters to Tobiah to give him information about me"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:17 (#5)**"and those belonging to Tobiah were coming to them"**

Here Nehemiah speaks of Tobiah's letters as if they could come on their own to the people he was answering. Alternate translation: "Tobiah sent letters" or "Tobiah sent many messengers with letters"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 6:17 (#6)**"and those belonging to Tobiah were coming to them"**

The implication is that Tobiah was sending back instructions to his allies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Tobiah sent many messengers with letters back to them with instructions"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:17 (#7)**"Tobiah"**

This is the name of a man. See how you translated it in [2:10](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:18 (#1)**"For many in Judah were masters of oath to him"**

This means that many Judeans were "owners of oaths" to Tobiah. That is, they had sworn oaths to be loyal to him. Alternate translation: "Many people in Judah had sworn an oath to be loyal to him"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 6:18 (#2)**"For many in Judah were masters of oath to him"**

You can put this information last in the verse because it is a result, and the rest of the verse gives the reason why the people swore these oaths.

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 6:18 (#3)**"because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah"**

This statement means that Tobiah was married to the daughter of Shecaniah. The implication is that Shecaniah was a powerful and influential member of the community. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Tobiah was married to the daughter of a powerful and influential member of the community, Shecaniah the son of Arah"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:18 (#4)**"of Shecaniah the son of Arah"**

Shecaniah is the name of a man, and Arah is the name of his father. This is probably the same Shecaniah who is mentioned in 3:29. See how you translated his name there.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:18 (#5)

"And Jehohanan his son had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah"

The implication is that Meshullam was another powerful and influential member of the community. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Tobiah's son Jehohanan was married to the daughter of another powerful and influential man, Meshullam the son of Berechiah"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 6:18 (#6)

"And Jehohanan"

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:18 (#7)

"his son"

His means that Jehohanan was the son of Tobiah.

Nehemiah 6:18 (#8)

"had taken the daughter of"

Alternate translation: "was married to the daughter of"

Nehemiah 6:18 (#9)

"Meshullam the son of Berechiah"

Meshullam is the name of a man, and Berechiah is the name of his father. He is mentioned in [3:4](#) and [3:30](#). See how you translated his name there.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 6:19 (#1)

"they were saying his good deeds before my face"

Here, **face** represents the presence of a person. Alternate translation: "told me personally about Tobiah's good deeds"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 6:19 (#2)

"they were"

They means the people who were loyal to Tobiah.

Nehemiah 6:19 (#3)

"and they were taking out my words to him"

Taking out here is an idiom that means these people were "reporting" Nehemiah's responses to Tobiah. Alternate translation: "and then told him about my responses"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah - Chapter 7 Introduction

Special concepts in this chapter

Genealogy

The people who returned from Persia were counted according to their families. Nehemiah ensured that those who lived in Jerusalem had a completely Jewish ancestry.

Different lists

This list is paralleled in [Ezra 2](#). The lists do contain some differences in numbers. This is probably due to the timing of their counting. They were likely counted at different times.

Nehemiah 7:1 (#1)

"And it happened"

This expression introduces a new event in the story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 7:1 (#2)**"when the wall was built"**

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "when we had finished the wall"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 7:1 (#3)**"and I had set up the doors"**

As in [4:14](#) and [6:1](#), Nehemiah is using himself to represent the entire community that he is a part of. Alternate translation: "and we had put the doors in the gates"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 7:1 (#4)**"that," - "the gatekeepers and the ones who sang and the Levites were appointed"**

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Nehemiah may have done this personally, or the people in charge of each of these groups may have done it. Because of the uncertainty, a good approach might be to say "we" to indicate the community. Alternate translation: "we assigned the gatekeepers and singers and Levites to their tasks"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 7:1 (#5)**"the gatekeepers"**

These were people who were assigned to each gate of Jerusalem. They were responsible for controlling access to the city. They would open and close the gates at times and for reasons set by the city administrators. For example, Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah is named in 3:29 as the keeper of the East Gate.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:1 (#6)**"and the ones who sang"**

This means vocal musicians who led in worship, in processions, and ceremonies, producing music and chants that emphasized and enhanced the occasion. Alternate translation: "singers"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:2 (#1)**"And I gave Hanani, my brother, and Hananiah,"
- "charge over Jerusalem"**

Alternate translation: "I appointed two men to help me govern Jerusalem, my brother Hanani and Hananiah"

Nehemiah 7:2 (#2)**"Hanani, my brother"**

As in [1:2](#), **brother** here most likely indicates that Hanani was Nehemiah's biological brother. Alternate translation: "my brother Hanani"

Nehemiah 7:2 (#3)**"Hanani"**

This is the name of a man. See how you translated it in [1:2](#)

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:2 (#4)**"Hananiah"**

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:2 (#5)**"the official for the citadel"**

Alternate translation: "who was in charge of the fortress"

Nehemiah 7:2 (#6)**"For he was according to a faithful man"**

He means Hananiah. “He was as a faithful man” is a way of saying “he was such as only a faithful man would be.” Alternate translation: “I appointed Hananiah because he was trustworthy”

Nehemiah 7:2 (#7)

“and he feared God more than many”

Here, **fear** does not mean to be afraid of God, but to show God reverence and respect. Alternate translation: “because he showed God more reverence and respect than most people do”

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 7:3 (#1)

“Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened”

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “Do not order the gates of Jerusalem to be opened”

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 7:3 (#2)

“Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened”

Hanani and Hananiah would not have opened the gates physically themselves. Rather, they would have ordered this to be done. Alternate translation: “Do not order the gates of Jerusalem to be opened”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 7:3 (#3)

“until the sun becomes hot”

Here Nehemiah probably uses the heat of the sun to represent the light of the sun. His intent is to open the gates some time after the sun rises regardless of how hot the sun shines on any particular day. Alternate translation: “until broad daylight”

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 7:3 (#4)

“until the sun becomes hot”

The implication is that the gatekeepers should not open the gates at sunrise, as would have been customary, because the enemies of the Jews could launch a surprise attack in the dim light before most of the city was up and ready for the day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “until broad daylight. That way we will be able to see anything our enemies are doing”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 7:3 (#5)

“And while they are still standing, let them shut the doors, and they must bar them”

They means the gatekeepers, and “standing” means keeping guard. Alternate translation: “Order the doors to be shut and locked while the gatekeepers are still on guard”

Nehemiah 7:3 (#6)

“And set up watches for those who dwell in Jerusalem, a man in his watch, and a man in front of his house”

In this context, **a man** means **each man**. It is likely that adult males were intended for this dangerous night duty. “A man in his watch” means that each man should take a turn, and “a man in front of his house” means that each man should keep watch in his own neighborhood. Alternate translation: “Have the men who live in Jerusalem take turns keeping watch in their own neighborhoods”

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 7:4 (#1)

“Now the city was wide on two hands and great”

These two short phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize how large Jerusalem was. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: “The city of Jerusalem covered a large area”

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 7:4 (#2)**"was wide on two hands"**

Here, **hand** means "side." The image is that if you stood in the city, there would be a lot of it on both sides of you. Alternate translation: "covered a large area"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 7:4 (#3)**"and the people were few in the midst of it"**

Alternate translation: "but not many people lived there"

Nehemiah 7:4 (#4)**"And there were no built houses"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "the people had not yet rebuilt the houses"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 7:5 (#1)**"And my God gave to my heart"**

The implication is that registering the people was a first step toward filling Jerusalem with people again, a process that Nehemiah will describe in chapter 11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "as a first step towards filling Jerusalem with people again, God led me"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 7:5 (#2)**"And my God gave to my heart"**

As in [2:12](#), Nehemiah's **heart** represents his thoughts and will. Alternate translation: "God inspired me" or "led me"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:5 (#3)**"and I gathered together"**

This word indicates that what Nehemiah did was in response to the situation just described. Alternate translation: "so I gathered together"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 7:5 (#4)**"the nobles and the prefects"**

See how you translated these terms in [2:16](#). Alternate translation: "the leading citizens and the city officials"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:5 (#5)**"and the people"**

In context, this likely means "the other people living in the city."

Nehemiah 7:5 (#6)**"to be enrolled by genealogy"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "and to register them by genealogies"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 7:5 (#7)**"to be enrolled by genealogy"**

Alternate translation: "to be enrolled according to their family histories"

Nehemiah 7:5 (#8)**"And I found the book of the genealogy for the ones who came up at the first"**

This means a list of the first group of Jews who had returned from exile, about a hundred years earlier.

Alternate translation: "I also found a book containing the records of the first group of people who had returned to Jerusalem from the exile."

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:5 (#9)

"And I found written in it"

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "I found that those people had written the following in it"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 7:6 (#1)

"the sons of the province"

The document speaks here of the province of Judah as if it were the ancestor of all the Jews who lived there. Alternate translation: "the people from the province of Judah"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 7:6 (#2)

"the province"

The province means the province of Judah. The document is referring to Judah by something associated with it, its status as a province.

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 7:6 (#3)

"the ones who went up"

Went up means "traveled from Babylon back to Judah," since that involves going from a river valley up into the mountains. Alternate translation: "returned to Judah from Babylon"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 7:6 (#4)

"from the captivity of the exiles, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon exiled"

Captivity and **exile** are abstract nouns. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind them with verbs. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, captured their ancestors and took them away"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 7:6 (#5)

"from the captivity of the exiles"

Captivity and **exile** mean basically the same thing. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "after being taken away"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 7:6 (#6)

"a man to his city"

Here, **a man** means "each one" or "each person" Alternate translation: "They went to live in the same towns where their families had lived before."

Nehemiah 7:7 (#1)

"the ones who came with"

This phrase introduces a list of the men who led this group back to Judah. Alternate translation: "The leaders of this group were"

Nehemiah 7:7 (#2)

Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah"

These are the names of twelve men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:7 (#3)

"The number of the men of the people of Israel"

In keeping with the practices of the time, the totals in the list that follows likely include just the men

and not also the women and children. While all of these people were from Judah, they were from the Israelite people group. Alternate translation: "This is how many men came back from each Israelite clan and town"

Nehemiah 7:8 (#1)**"The sons of Parosh were 2, 172"**

This means, "From the descendants of Parosh, 2,172 returned." To help make this clear for your readers, you could say something like "returned" throughout verses 8–45, after the name of each group and the number that is given.

Nehemiah 7:8 (#2)**"The sons of Parosh"**

Sons means "descendants" Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Parosh"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:8 (#3)**"Parosh"**

Parosh is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:9 (#1)**"The sons of Shephatiah"**

Sons means "descendants" Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Shephatiah"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:9 (#2)**"Shephatiah"**

Shephatiah is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:10 (#1)**"The sons of Arah"**

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Arah"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:10 (#2)**"Arah"**

Arah is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:11 (#1)**"The sons of Pahath-Moab, of the sons of Jeshua and Joab"**

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Pahath-Moab who were descendants of Jeshua and Joab"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:11 (#2)**"Pahath-Moab," - "Jeshua and Joab"**

Pahath-Moab is the name of a man, and Jeshua and Joab are the names of two of his descendants.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:12 (#1)**"The sons of Elam"**

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Elam"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:12 (#2)**"Elam"**

Elam is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:13 (#1)

"The sons of Zattu"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation:
"from the descendants of Zattu"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:13 (#2)

"Zattu"

Zattu is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:14 (#1)

"The sons of Zakkai"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation:
"from the descendants of Zakkai"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:14 (#2)

"Zakkai"

Zakkai is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:15 (#1)

"The sons of Binnui"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation:
"from the descendants of Binnui"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:15 (#2)

"Binnui"

Binnui is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:16 (#1)

"The sons of Bebai"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation:
"from the descendants of Bebai"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:16 (#2)

"Bebai"

Bebai is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:17 (#1)

"The sons of Azgad"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation:
"from the descendants of Azgad"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:17 (#2)

"Azgad"

Azgad is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:18 (#1)

"The sons of Adonikam"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation:
"from the descendants of Adonikam"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:18 (#2)

"Adonikam"

Adonikam is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:19 (#1)

"The sons of Bigvai"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Bigvai"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:19 (#2)

"Bigvai"

Bigvai is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:20 (#1)

"The sons of Adin"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Adin"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:20 (#2)

"Adin"

Adin is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:21 (#1)

"The sons of Ater, of Hezekiah"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Ater who were descendants of Hezekiah"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:21 (#2)

"Ater"

Ater is the name of a man, and Hezekiah is the name of one of his descendants.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:22 (#1)

"The sons of Hashum"

Sons means **descendants**. Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Hashum"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:22 (#2)

"Hashum"

Hashum is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:23 (#1)

"The sons of Bezai"

Sons means **descendants**. Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Bezai"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:23 (#2)

"Bezai"

Bezai is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:24 (#1)

"The sons of Hariph"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Hariph"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:24 (#2)

"Hariph"

Hariph is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:25 (#1)

"The sons of Gibeon"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Gibeon"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:25 (#2)

"Gibeon"

Gibeon is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:26 (#1)

"Bethlehem and Netophah"

Bethlehem and Netophah are the names of towns. Alternate translation: "from the towns of Bethlehem and Netophah"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:27 (#1)

"Anathoth"

Anathoth is the name of a town. Alternate translation: "from the town of Anathoth"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:28 (#1)

"Beth Azmaveth"

Beth Azmaveth is the name of a town. Alternate translation: "from the town of Beth Azmaveth"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:29 (#1)

"Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth"

Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth are the names of towns. Alternate translation: "from the towns of Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:30 (#1)

"Ramah and Geba"

Ramah and Geba are the names of towns. Alternate translation: "from the towns of Ramah and Geba"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:31 (#1)

"Michmas"

Michmas is the name of a town. Alternate translation: "from the town of Michmas"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:32 (#1)

"Bethel and Ai"

Bethel and Ai are the names of towns. Alternate translation: "from the towns of Bethel and Ai"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:33 (#1)

"the" - "Nebo"

Nebo is the name of a town. Alternate translation: "from another town called Nebo"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:34 (#1)

"the other Elam"

Elam is the name of a town. Alternate translation: "from another town called Elam"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:34 (#2)

"the" - "Elam"

The document speaks here of the town of Elam as if it were the ancestor of all the people who lived there. It is saying that these men were from families

that had originally lived in that town. Alternate translation: "from another town called Elam"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 7:35 (#1)

"The sons of Harim"

The document speaks here of the town of Harim as if it were the ancestor of all the people who lived there. It is saying that these men were from families that had originally lived in that town. Alternate translation: "from the town of Harim"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 7:35 (#2)

"Harim"

Harim is the name of a town.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:36 (#1)

"The sons of Jericho"

The document speaks here of the city of Jericho as if it were the ancestor of all the people who lived there. It is saying that these men were from families that had originally lived in that city. Alternate translation: "from the city of Jericho"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 7:36 (#2)

"Jericho"

Jericho is the name of a city.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:37 (#1)

"The sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono"

The document speaks here of the towns of Lod, Hadid, and Ono as if they were the ancestors of all the people who lived in them. It is saying that these men were from families that had originally lived in

those towns. Alternate translation: "from towns of Lod, Hadid, and Ono"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 7:37 (#2)

"Lod, Hadid, and Ono"

Lod, Hadid, and Ono are the names of towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:38 (#1)

"The sons of Senaah"

The document speaks here of the town of Senaah as if it were the ancestor of all the people who lived there. It is saying that these men were from families that had originally lived in that town. Alternate translation: "from the town of Senaah"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 7:38 (#2)

"Senaah"

Senaah is the name of a town.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:39 (#1)

"The priests"

Alternate translation: "This is how many men returned from each family of priests"

Nehemiah 7:39 (#2)

"the sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Jedaiah who were descendants of Jeshua"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:39 (#3)**"Jedaiah," - "Jeshua"**

Jedaiah is the name of a man, and Jeshua is the name of one of his descendants.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:39 (#4)**"of the house of Jeshua"**

Here, the word **house** describes all the people descended from a particular person. The document is describing all of the descendants of Jeshua as if they were one household living together. Alternate translation: "who were descendants of Jeshua"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 7:40 (#1)**"the sons of Immer"**

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Immer"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:40 (#2)**"Immer"**

Immer is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:41 (#1)**"the sons of Pashhur"**

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Pashhur"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:41 (#2)**"Pashhur"**

Pashhur is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:42 (#1)**"the sons of Harim"**

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Harim"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:42 (#2)**"Harim"**

Harim is the name of a man. Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Harim"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:43 (#1)**"The Levites"**

Alternate translation: "Some of the descendants of Levi also returned."

Nehemiah 7:43 (#2)**"the sons of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, of the sons to Hodevah"**

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel, who were descended from Hodevah"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:43 (#3)**"Jeshua, of Kadmiel," - "to Hodevah"**

Jeshua and Kadmiel are men's names, and Hodevah is the name of their ancestor.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:44 (#1)**"The ones who sang"**

As in [7:1](#), this refers to vocal musicians who led in worship, in processions, and ceremonies, producing music and chants that emphasized and

enhanced the occasion. Alternate translation: "singers"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:44 (#2)

"The ones who sang"

Alternate translation: "Some of the descendants of the singers also returned."

Nehemiah 7:44 (#3)

"the sons of Asaph"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Asaph"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:44 (#4)

"Asaph"

Asaph is a man's name.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:45 (#1)

"The gatekeepers"

See how you translated this term in [7:1](#). Alternate translation: "Some of the descendants of the gatekeepers also returned"

Nehemiah 7:45 (#2)

"the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:45 (#3)

"Shallum," - "Ater," - "Talmon," - "Akkub," - "Hatita," - "Shobai"

These are the names of six men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:46 (#1)

"The Nethinim were"

As in [3:26](#), the term "Nethinim" describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple servants"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:46 (#2)

"The Nethinim were"

Alternate translation: "Some of the descendants of the temple servants also returned"

Nehemiah 7:46 (#3)

"the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "from the descendants of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:46 (#4)

"Ziha," - "Hasupha," - "Tabbaoth"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:47 (#1)

"the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Keros, Sia, Padon,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:48 (#1)

"the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagaba, the sons of Shalmai"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Lebana, Hagaba, Shalmai,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:49 (#1)

"the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Hanan, Giddel, Gahar,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:50 (#1)

"the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Reaiah, Rezin, Nekoda,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:51 (#1)

"the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Gazzam, Uzza, Paseah,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:52 (#1)

"the sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephushesim"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Besai, Meunim, Nephushesim,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:53 (#1)

"the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:54 (#1)

"the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:55 (#1)

"the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Barkos, Sisera, Temah,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:56 (#1)

"the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:46](#), you can just list the names of

these two men, and end the series in this verse.
Alternate translation: "Neziah, and Hatipha."

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:57 (#1)

"The sons of the servants of Solomon were"

By **servants of Solomon**, this document does not mean officials who served in Solomon's court. Rather, this phrase refers to people whom Solomon first conscripted as laborers. They were descendants of the groups that were living in the land of Canaan before the Israelites occupied it. They and their descendants remained conscripted laborers under later kings. You could call these people "the laborers that King Solomon first conscripted." Alternate translation: "laborers who had worked for the kingdom"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:57 (#2)

"The sons of the servants of Solomon were"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "Some of the descendants of the laborers who had worked for the kingdom also returned."

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:57 (#3)

"the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Perida"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "They were from the descendants of Sotai, Sophereth, Perida"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:57 (#4)

"Sotai," - "Sophereth," - "Perida"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:58 (#1)

"the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:57](#), you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: "Jaala, Darkon, Giddel,"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:59 (#1)

"the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth Hazzebaim, the sons of Amon"

Sons means "descendants." If you continue the sentence from [7:57](#), you can just list the names of these four men and end the series in this verse. Alternate translation: "Shephatiah, Hattil, Pochereth Hazzebaim, and Amon"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:60 (#1)

"All the Nethinim and the sons of the servants of Solomon were 392"

Alternate translation: "Altogether 392 men returned who were descendants of temple servants or of laborers who had worked for the kingdom"

Nehemiah 7:61 (#1)

"And these are the ones who went up"

As in [7:6](#), "went up" means "traveled from Babylon back to Judah," since that involves going from a river valley up into the mountains. Alternate translation: "Some others returned to Judah from Babylon"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 7:61 (#2)

"from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer"

These are the names of five towns in Babylonia. Alternate translation: "who had been living in the towns of Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer."

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:61 (#3)

"but they were not able to tell"

Alternate translation: "They had no records to prove"

Nehemiah 7:61 (#4)

"the house of their fathers and their seed, whether they were from Israel"

These two longer phrases mean similar things. The second phrase explains the meaning of the first for clarity and emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "that their ancestors had been Israelites," otherwise "what clan they were from or who their ancestors were, whether they were really Israelites"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 7:61 (#5)

"the house of their fathers and their seed"

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize that accurate records would be required to prove a person's lineage. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "what their lineage was"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 7:61 (#6)

"the house of their fathers and their seed"

Among the Israelites, the expression **father's house** or **house of the father** originally described an extended clan. It later came to be used more generally to refer to a larger clan within a tribe. (For example, the two expressions are used

interchangeably in Exodus 6:14, "These were the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, were Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Karmi. These were the clan ancestors of Reuben.") In this expression, the word **house** describes all the people descended from a particular person. The term views all of those descendants as if they were one household living together. Alternate translation: "what clan they were from"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:61 (#7)

"and their seed"

"Here, **seed** means "ancestors." In the Bible, the term often describes a person's descendants. But here, ""their seed"" means "whose seed they were," so the term is describing the ancestors of these people. Alternate translation: "or who their ancestors were""

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 7:62 (#1)

"The sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, were 642"

Alternate translation: "Altogether 642 men returned who were from the descendants of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda"

Nehemiah 7:62 (#2)

"The sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda"

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "They were from the descendants of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:62 (#3)

"Delaiah," - "Tobiah," - "Nekoda"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:63 (#1)**"And from the priests"**

Alternate translation: "Some of the men who returned from those towns were descendants of the priests"

Nehemiah 7:63 (#2)**"the sons of Habaiah; the sons of Hakkoz; the sons of Barzillai"**

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "They were from the descendants of Habaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:63 (#3)**"Habaiah;" - "Hakkoz;" - "Barzillai"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:63 (#4)**"Barzillai the Gileadite"**

Barzillai is the name of a man, and Gileadite means that he was from the region of Gilead.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:63 (#5)**"who took a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite"**

Alternate translation: "Barzillai married a woman who was one of the descendants of Barzillai the Gileadite"

Nehemiah 7:63 (#6)**"from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite"**

Daughters means "descendants." Alternate translation: "the descendants of Barzillai the Gileadite"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:63 (#7)**"and he was called by their name"**

Alternate translation: "and he took the name of her clan as his own name"

Nehemiah 7:64 (#1)**"These ones sought their record among the ones who were enrolled by genealogy, but it was not found"**

Alternate translation: "They were not able to find any mention of their names in the lists of people who were descendants of the priests"

Nehemiah 7:64 (#2)**"And they were desecrated from the priesthood"**

Alternate translation: "So they were not allowed to serve as priests."

Nehemiah 7:65 (#1)**"the Tirshatha"**

This was the formal Persian title of the governor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the title and then explain it. Alternate translation: "The Tirshatha, that is, the governor"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:65 (#2)**"And the Tirshatha said to them that they must not eat from the holiest holy food"**

In this case, the **holy of holies** does not refer to the inmost part of the Temple. Rather, it refers to the most sacred part of the food offerings, which was reserved for the priests. Alternate translation: "told

them that they would not be allowed to eat the most sacred food"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:65 (#3)

"until the priest stood with Urim and Thummim"

Here, **stand** is a figurative way of saying that a person has assumed the duties of their office. The priest means specifically the high priest, since he had the objects described. Alternate translation: "Until the high priest was once again on duty"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:65 (#4)

"with Urim and Thummim"

This was a pair of objects that the high priest kept in the breastpiece of his robe. It is unknown exactly what type of objects they were, but they were used to answer yes-or-no questions and to decide between two alternatives. If the priest, without looking, pulled out the Urim, that meant one answer, while if he pulled out the Thummim, that meant the other answer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could describe these objects by their function rather than by their names. Alternate translation: "and could use the sacred objects to decide their cases."

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:66 (#1)

"All the assembly, as one, was 42, 360"

Alternate translation: "The total number of men who returned was 42,360"

Nehemiah 7:67 (#1)

"apart from their male servants and their female servants, these were 7, 337"

Alternate translation: "not counting their 7,337 male and female servants"

Nehemiah 7:67 (#2)

"and for them, the men who sang and the women who sang were 245"

This is a different group from "the ones who sang" in [7:44](#). Those were Levites who sang in connection with Israel's worship. The group here is a class of servants who were employed to provide music for public and private events. Alternate translation: "and the 245 male and female singers they employed."

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:68 (#1)

"The horses were 736."

Alternate translation: "The group also brought back with them 736 horses, 245 mules"

Nehemiah 7:69 (#1)

"The camels were 435."

Alternate translation: "435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys."

Nehemiah 7:70 (#1)

"the heads of the fathers"

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "father's house" or "house of the father" is used in verse 61. See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "some of the clan leaders"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 7:70 (#2)

"the heads of"

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: "the leaders of"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:70 (#3)**"gave to the treasury"**

Even though in the book of Nehemiah **the work** typically means the work of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem, in this document it refers to the work of re-establishing the temple. That was the project that Zerubbabel and the group that returned under his leadership worked on. Alternate translation: "gave gifts towards the costs of re-establishing the temple"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:70 (#4)**"The Tirshatha gave to the treasury 1,000 gold darics, 50 basins, 530 tunics of priests"**

Alternate translation: "The Tirshatha, that is, the governor, donated to the temple treasury 1,000 gold coins, 50 bowls to be used in the temple, and 530 garments for the priests to wear"

Nehemiah 7:70 (#5)**"The Tirshatha"**

As in [7:65](#), this was the formal Persian title of the governor. Alternate translation: "The Tirshatha, that is, the governor"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:70 (#6)**"1,000 gold darics"**

In ancient times, a gold daric weighed about 8 or 8.5 grams or about a quarter of an ounce. You could try to express this in terms of modern money values, but if you did, that could cause your Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate over time, since those values can change from year to year. Instead, you could say something general like "1,000 gold coins," or give the equivalent weight, or use the biblical term in the text and give the weight in a note.

See: Biblical Money

Nehemiah 7:70 (#7)**"50 basins"**

These were large, flat bowls that were used in the temple to collect the blood of sacrifices. When the Law called for some of this blood to be sprinkled on the altar, in the air, or on a person or a garment, that would be done from one of these bowls. Alternate translation: "50 bowls to be used in the temple"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:70 (#8)**"530 tunics of priests"**

These were the special garments that priests would wear while performing their duties in the temple. Alternate translation: "530 garments for the priests to wear"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:71 (#1)**"And some from the heads of the fathers gave to the treasury of the work"**

As in [7:70](#), **the heads of the fathers** seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." See how you translated that expression in [7:61](#), and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "Some of the clan leaders donated to the temple treasury"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 7:71 (#2)**"And some from the heads of"**

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: "leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:71 (#3)**"20,000 gold darics"**

See the note about **darics** in verse [7:70](#). Alternate translation: "20,000 gold coins"

See: Biblical Money

Nehemiah 7:71 (#4)

"and 2, 200 silver minas"

In ancient times, a silver mina weighed about half a kilogram or about 1.25 pounds. However, as in the case of darics, it would probably be best to say something general like "2,200 silver bars," or give the equivalent weight, or use the biblical term and give the equivalent weight in a note.

See: Biblical Money

Nehemiah 7:72 (#1)

"And what the remnant of the people gave was 20,000 gold darics, and 2,000 silver minas, and 67 tunics of priests"

See the notes in [7:70](#) and [7:71](#) about "darics," "minas," and "tunics." Alternate translation: "The rest of the people donated 20,000 gold coins, 2,000 silver bars, and 67 garments for the priests to wear"

See: Biblical Money

Nehemiah 7:73 (#1)

"And" - "dwelt"

At the end of [7:72](#), Nehemiah stops quoting from the document about the first group of people who returned to Judah. The story now goes on to tell what happened next. You could introduce this verse with a word or phrase that indicates this. Alternate translation: "And so ... dwelt"

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 7:73 (#2)

"the priests, and the Levites, and the gatekeepers, and the ones who sang, and some from the people, and the Nethinim, and all Israel"

Five of the groups in this list are also named in the document about the people who returned from exile: the priests (verses 39–43), the Levites (verse 43), the gatekeepers (verse 45), the singers (verse

44), and the temple servants (verses 46–56). You can use those same names for these groups here. It is not immediately clear who "some from the people" are, and why they are not included in "all Israel." You could just say "many ordinary people." However, there is very similar list in [10:28](#) that names these same five groups and also describes people who dedicated themselves to following the law of God. That would unfortunately not have included all of Israel at this point, so that may be the distinction that is in view here. Alternate translation: "the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, some people who dedicated themselves to follow the law, and the rest of the Israelites"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 7:73 (#3)

"And" - "dwelt in their cities. And the seventh month came, and the sons of Israel were in their cities"

The rebuilding of the wall was completed that year near the end of Elul, the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. The implication is that everyone who had come to Jerusalem to work on the wall was then allowed to return home. Within about a week, by the beginning of the seventh month, they were all back home. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "So ... returned to their homes, because the rebuilding of the wall had been completed. By the beginning of the next month, they were all back home."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 7:73 (#4)

"the seventh month"

Alternate translation: "month seven"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah - Chapter 8 Introduction

Special concepts in this chapter

Reading of the law

During the exile, the Hebrew language was no longer spoken. Only the priests and Levites still understood it. Ezra read the book of the law to the people in Hebrew and the Levites walked among the crowd translating it into Aramaic for the people to understand. (See: Priest and Law of Moses)

Festival of Shelters

After they heard Ezra read the law of Moses, the people obeyed it by making temporary shelters for themselves with tree branches. They did this to remember that their ancestors slept in shelters when they came out of slavery in Egypt.

Nehemiah 8:1 (#1)

"all the people"

The word **all** is a generalization that indicates that everyone who was able and available came to Jerusalem for this occasion. By "the people," Nehemiah means the groups he described in the previous verse who had come back to live in Judah and Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 8:1 (#2)

"And" - "gathered as one man"

Verses 8 and 9 explain that the people had gathered for a festival, and [8:2](#) states that this was the first day of the seventh month, which means that the people had gathered in Jerusalem for the Festival of Trumpets. In the Law of Moses, Yahweh had commanded the people to observe this celebration on this date. If it would be helpful to your readers to know why the people came together on this day, you could say that specifically. Alternate translation: "gathered in Jerusalem in a huge crowd for a special celebration known as the Festival of Trumpets."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:1 (#3)

"as one man"

As one man is an idiom that means "as if they were a single person," that is, all in once place at the same time. Alternate translation: "gathered in a huge crowd"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 8:1 (#4)

"to the open area"

This means a "plaza" or "square" in the city where there were no buildings and so where public events like this could be held. Alternate translation: "in the square"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 8:1 (#5)

"is before the face of the gate of water"

Here, **face** means the front of an object. Alternate translation: "in front of the Water Gate"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 8:1 (#6)

"the gate of water"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in [3:26](#). Alternate translation: "the Water Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 8:1 (#7)

"And they said to Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses"

They means the crowd, though they likely made this request to Ezra through their leaders. The implication is that they wanted him not just to bring the book forward, but to read to them from it out loud (as [8:3](#) indicates he did). This was because they wanted to learn what was in it. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "The crowd had

asked Ezra the scribe to read to them from a scroll that contained the Law of Moses because they wanted to know what it commanded."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:1 (#8)

"And they said to Ezra"

Since the rest of the chapter describes arrangements that the leaders must have made in advance, the crowd, once it gathered, did not start shouting spontaneously for Ezra to come forward and read. Rather, they had made this request in advance. Alternate translation: "And the crowd had asked Ezra"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:1 (#9)

"to Ezra the scribe"

This introduces Ezra as a new character in the story. The expression "the scribe" identifies him as a teacher who had carefully studied the Law of Moses. Since he is a new participant, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could call him something like "a man named Ezra, who was a teacher of the Law of Moses"

See: Introduction of New and Old Participants

Nehemiah 8:1 (#10)

"to Ezra the scribe"

The biblical book of Ezra indicates that this man returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon 13 years before Nehemiah did. He led many reforms in the community. But in this book, Nehemiah does not say whether Ezra had remained in the city all that time, or whether he had gone back to Babylon and had recently returned to Jerusalem again. Even if your language, in telling a story, ordinarily accounts for how a person came to be on the scene, it might be best not to try to address that question here in your translation. Even though Nehemiah seems to expect that his readers will know where Ezra had been, Nehemiah does not say specifically where he was, and so the answer is unknown.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:1 (#11)

"the book of the law of Moses"

This **book** was most likely a scroll, and it most likely contained what is now known as the Torah or the "five books of Moses." Alternate translation: "a scroll that contained the law of Moses"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 8:1 (#12)

"which Yahweh had commanded Israel"

Alternate translation: "These were the commandments that Yahweh had told Israel to follow"

Nehemiah 8:2 (#1)

"Ezra the priest"

This information serves to introduce Ezra further. In addition to being a teacher and learned student of the Law of Moses, he was also a priest whose duties would have included offering sacrifices in the temple and helping people make sure they were following the law in everyday matters. It might be helpful to your readers to explain that here because it shows why Ezra would have been such an effective teacher for everyone on this occasion. Alternate translation: "Ezra was also a priest who served in the temple and helped people follow the law" (See: Introduction of New and Old Participants)

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:2 (#2)

"And" - "brought the law before the face of the assembly"

Here, **face** means the front of a group. Alternate translation: "He read the law out loud in front of the whole crowd."

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 8:2 (#3)

"of both men and women and all who were understanding to hear"

All who were understanding to hear is an idiom that means "everyone who could hear with understanding," that is, "who understood what they were hearing." This phrase likely refers to children and it would mean "children who were old enough to understand." Alternate translation: "for the men, the women, and the children who were old enough to understand."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 8:2 (#4)

"on day one of the seventh month"

Since Nehemiah does not say otherwise, the implication is that this happened in the same year that the wall was rebuilt. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "He did this on the first day of the seventh month of that same year."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:2 (#5)

"on day one of the seventh month"

Alternate translation: "On day 1 of month 7"

See: Hebrew Months

Nehemiah 8:3 (#1)

"And he read it aloud"

Here, **it** means the book of the Law of Moses.

Nehemiah 8:3 (#2)

"before the face of the open area that is before the face of the gate of water"

Here, **face** means the front of both places, the square and the gate. Alternate translation: "from the front of the square that is in front of the Water Gate"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 8:3 (#3)

"the gate of water"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in [3:26](#) and [8:1](#). Alternate translation: "the Water Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 8:3 (#4)

"from the light until the middle of the day"

The **light** means sunrise, that is, the time of morning when the sun itself becomes visible above the horizon. "The middle of the day" means noon. Alternate translation: "from sunrise until noon"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 8:3 (#5)

"from the light until the middle of the day"

Verse [8:7](#) explains that other teachers circulated within the crowd to answer questions that people had about what Ezra was reading. It is unlikely that they did this while he was still talking. Instead, he probably paused from time to time to allow this. So this expression is actually referring to a whole time period by describing its beginning and ending, but it does not mean that the activity took place without interruption the whole time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "throughout the morning"

See: Merism

Nehemiah 8:3 (#6)

"in front of the men and the women, and the ones who were understanding"

This is the same group that was described in [8:2](#). Many of the phrases here in verse 3 echo similar phrases in verse 2. The repetition emphasizes the importance and solemnity of this occasion. However, you do not need to repeat this phrase a second time in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers.

Nehemiah 8:3 (#7)

"And the ears of all the people listened"

Here, Nehemiah uses the **ears** of the people to represent the people themselves, in the act of listening. Alternate translation: "all the people listened carefully"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 8:4 (#1)

"on a platform of wood"

As [8:5](#) explains, this was a raised platform that allowed the large crowd to see and hear Ezra as he read. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly here. Alternate translation: "a raised wooden platform"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:4 (#2)

"that they had made for the purpose"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say who built this platform, and what the purpose was. Alternate translation: "that the people had built so that they could see and hear Ezra as he read"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:4 (#3)

"beside him" - "on his right hand"

Here, **hand** is a metonym that means "side." Alternate translation: "next to him, on his right side"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 8:4 (#4)

"Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Uriah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah"

These are the names of six men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 8:4 (#5)

"and from his left"

Alternate translation: "and next to him, on his left side"

Nehemiah 8:4 (#6)

"Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malkijah, and Hashum, and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, Meshullam"

These are the names of seven men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 8:5 (#1)

"And Ezra opened the book before the eyes of all the people, for" - "higher than all the people"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the first phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "Ezra was up on the platform above the people, so they were able to see him when he opened the book."

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 8:5 (#2)

"before the eyes of all the people"

Here, Nehemiah uses the **eyes** of the people to represent the people themselves, in the act of observing. Alternate translation: "where all the people could see"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 8:5 (#3)

"all the people stood"

The people stood up as a symbolic way of showing respect for Yahweh and his law. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the people stood up to show their respect for Yahweh and his law"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 8:5 (#4)

"all the people"

In this verse, **all** is not a generalization as it is in verse 1. Rather, it means **all the people who were there**. Alternate translation: "the people"

Nehemiah 8:6 (#1)

"And Ezra blessed Yahweh the great God"

This means that before Ezra read from the law, he prayed out loud. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Before he read from the law, Ezra prayed to Yahweh, the great God"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:6 (#2)

"And all the people answered, "Amen! Amen"

Since the people lifted their hands to show that they were joining Nehemiah in prayer, they would have done this before they said "Amen" at the end of his prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could describe the events in that order. Alternate translation: "The people lifted their hands to show that they were praying with Ezra, and when he finished praying, they shouted, 'Amen! Amen!'"

See: Order of Events

Nehemiah 8:6 (#3)

"Amen! Amen"

As in [5:13](#), **Amen** is a Hebrew word that means, "Truly, it is so." The word expresses agreement with what someone has just said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that meaning with a phrase such as, "We agree!" Or you could use the Hebrew term and explain what it means in this context: "Amen! Yahweh is truly great!"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 8:6 (#4)

"with their hands uplifted"

In ancient Israel, lifted hands were the posture of prayer. By this gesture, the people showed that they were joining Nehemiah in prayer before he read from the law.

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 8:6 (#5)

"And they knelt and prostrated themselves to Yahweh, nostrils to the ground"

Nostrils here represent the nose, and the nose represents all of the face. Alternate translation: "they knelt down and then lay down with their faces on the ground to worship Yahweh."

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 8:7 (#1)

"And Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah"

These are the names of thirteen men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 8:7 (#2)

"and the Levites"

This expression could mean something like, "yes, the Levites," indicating that all of these men were Levites. That means that they were descendants of Levi and had a special assignment, helping the priests. Alternate translation: "who were Levites."

Nehemiah 8:7 (#3)

"were causing the people to understand the law. And the people were in their place"

The implication is that Ezra paused regularly throughout the morning to allow this. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "explained the meaning of the Law to the people as they stood in

their places in the crowd. Ezra paused regularly to allow this."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:8 (#1)

"And they read aloud carefully from the book, from the law of God"

This probably indicates that each of the Levites who circulated among the crowd likely had his own written copy of the Law of Moses and used that to teach the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Each of these Levites had his own the scroll of the law of God and read aloud from it"

Nehemiah 8:8 (#2)

"carefully"

The exact meaning of this Hebrew term is unknown. This expression could mean that the Levites read loudly and clearly so that the groups they were talking to within the crowd could hear and understand them. It could also mean that they went over one section at a time with the people, after Ezra had read that section to everyone. It might also imply that the people could not understand the language in which the book of the Law was written, so the Levites needed to interpret it into the language that the people could understand. However, none of these possibilities are certain. Alternate translation: "clearly" or "one section at a time"

Nehemiah 8:8 (#3)

"from the book, from the law of God"

These two phrases mean similar things. You do not need to repeat both of them in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "from the Law of Moses"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 8:8 (#4)

"and set the interpretation"

The exact meaning of this phrase in Hebrew is unknown. Most likely, it means either: (1) that the Levites were interpreting from one language into another, because the people could not understand the language in which the book of the Law was written, or (2) that the Levites were explaining the meaning of the Law to the people because it was difficult to understand. Alternate translateion: "and they explained what it meant"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 8:8 (#5)

"the interpretation"

Interpretation is an abstract noun that refers to the meaning of the Law of Moses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a phrase that uses a verb such as "mean." Alternate translation: "what it meant"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 8:8 (#6)

"And they understood the reading"

Here **they** refers to the people in the crowd. Alternate translation: "That way the people in the crowd could understand what Ezra was reading"

Nehemiah 8:9 (#1)

"Nehemiah, who was the Tirshatha"

As in [7:65](#) and [7:70](#), **Tirshatha** is the formal Persian title of the governor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could simply say "governor," or you could state the title and then explain it. Alternate translation: "Nehemiah the governor" or "Nehemiah the Tirshatha (that is, the governor)"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 8:9 (#2)

"Nehemiah, who was the Tirshatha"

This is the first time that Nehemiah appears as a character while someone else is telling the story. Previously in the book, he has been the one telling the story, and so he has referred to himself as "I."

To give him more of an introduction here, you could say something like, "Nehemiah, who was the governor" or "Nehemiah, who was the Tirshatha (that is, the governor)."

See: Introduction of New and Old Participants

Nehemiah 8:9 (#3)

"and Ezra, the priest, the scribe"

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Ezra was. Alternate translation: "Ezra, who was a priest and a scribe"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 8:9 (#4)

"and the Levites who were causing the people to understand"

See how you translated this phrase in [8:7](#). Alternate translation: "The Levites who were explaining the meaning of the Law to the people."

Nehemiah 8:9 (#5)

"Today is holy; it belongs to Yahweh"

As a note to verse [8:1](#) explains, this particular holiday was the Festival of Trumpets. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "This is a holy day, set apart to worship Yahweh. It is the Festival of Trumpets."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:9 (#6)

"Today is holy; it belongs to Yahweh"

These two phrases mean similar things. The leaders were reminding the people that this was one of the festival days that Yahweh had told them to set apart as special times of worship and celebration. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "This is a special day for worshiping Yahweh."

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 8:9 (#7)

"Do not mourn and do not weep"

The leaders are saying that since this is a day for celebration, it is not appropriate for the people to be weeping. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this connection by beginning this sentence with a word such as "so." Alternate translation: "So do not mourn or cry."

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 8:9 (#8)

"Do not mourn and do not weep"

Mourn and **weep** mean the same thing. The leaders use both words together to emphasize that the people should be cheerful, not sad, on a festival day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words in a single expression. Alternate translation: "So you should not be crying"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 8:9 (#9)

"all the people were weeping after they heard the words of the law"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this sentence first in the verse, since it gives the reason for the results that are described in the rest of the verse. Alternate translation: "The people in the crowd began to weep when they heard what was in the Law of Moses."

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 8:9 (#10)

"all the people were weeping after they heard the words of the law"

The implication is that the people began to weep because they recognized that they had not been obeying what God had commanded them in the Law of Moses. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "The people in the crowd began to weep when they heard what was in the Law of Moses, because they

recognized that they had not been obeying what it commanded."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:9 (#11)

"all the people"

This is a generalization that indicates there was great weeping among the people. Alternate translation: "the people in the crowd"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 8:10 (#1)

"And he said to them"

The story does not specify who said this. However, it is probably either Nehemiah or Ezra, since they are named at the beginning of the previous verse. And since what follow are instructions for how to observe a religious occasion, it is most likely Ezra. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could suggest that. Alternate translation: "Ezra told them"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:10 (#2)

"Go, eat the fat and drink the sweet"

This could mean, "Go home" and do this, since the people would likely have their holiday meals at home. Or it could mean, "Go ahead" and do this, even though you are feeling sad. Alternate translation: "Go home and celebrate with a good meal" or "Go ahead, celebrate with a good meal."

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 8:10 (#3)

"eat the fat and drink the sweet"

The fat and **the sweet** are figurative ways of referring to food and drink that is particularly tasty and shared in celebrations. The speaker is describing this food and drink by things associated with it, the fatness and the sweetness. Alternate translation: "Celebrate with a good meal."

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 8:10 (#4)

"eat the fat and drink the sweet"

Eating and drinking are used together here to convey a single idea, celebrating. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: "Celebrate with a good meal."

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 8:10 (#5)

"and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "Share some of your meal with those who have not prepared anything for themselves"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 8:10 (#6)

"and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared"

This may actually refer to the poor and indicate that they would not be able to afford rich food and drink. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "share some of your meal with the poor, who cannot afford rich food and drink."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:10 (#7)

"for today is holy, belonging to our Lord"

These two phrases mean similar things. As in [8:9](#), together they mean, "This is a special day for worshiping our Lord." If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases like that.

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 8:10 (#8)**"for today is holy, belonging to our Lord"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could move this phrase to the beginning of the quotation because it gives the reason for the resulting actions that are described in the rest of the quotation. You could also connect this phrase to the ones that would then follow with a word like "so," to show the connection. Alternate translation: "Today is a holy day set apart to worship our Lord. So ..."

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 8:10 (#9)**"And do not grieve"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this same idea with an active form, and you could say what is causing the action. Alternate translation: "You have recognized that you have not obeyed the Law of Moses, but do not let that make you sad"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 8:10 (#10)**"for, the joy of Yahweh, it is your strength"**

The implication is that if a person is truly sorry for disobeying, Yahweh does not want that person to fear punishment or to grieve for the way they have offended. Instead, Yahweh wants them to be encouraged that they can live in a new way and to be happy about that. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh wants you to be happy and encouraged about living in a new way"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:10 (#11)**"the joy of" - "your strength"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the ideas behind the abstract nouns **joy** and **strength** with adjectives. Alternate translation: "happy ... encouraged"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 8:11 (#1)**"caused all the people to be silent"**

These are two overstatements that emphasize how encouraging the Levites were trying to be. **All the people** does not mean everyone in the crowd, but those who were crying. **Be silent** does not mean "say nothing" or "make no noise," but "stop crying." (Certainly the Levites hoped that these people would soon be talking and laughing with others at celebration meals.) Alternate translation: "encouraged the people who were weeping to stop crying"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 8:11 (#2)**"Hush, for today is holy. And do not grieve"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put your translation of "for today is holy" first since it gives the reason for the resulting actions in the other two phrases. You could also show the connection by using a word such as "so." Alternate translation: "This is a day of celebration, so stop crying now, and do not be sad"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 8:11 (#3)**"Hush"**

This is a word that signals to a person that they should be quiet. If your language has a similar expression, you can use it in your translation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could also give the meaning in this context. Alternate translation: "Shhh" or "Stop crying now"

Nehemiah 8:11 (#4)**"And do not grieve"**

If you expressed the idea behind this phrase with an active form in [8:10](#) and you said there what was causing the action, you would not need to repeat that information here. Alternate translation: "do not be sad"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 8:12 (#1)

"And all the people went to eat and to drink and to send away portions and to make a great rejoicing"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put the last phrase at the beginning of the sentence since it gives the reason for the rest of the actions. Alternate translation: "So the people celebrated by eating and drinking and sharing with the poor"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 8:12 (#2)

"to eat and to drink"

The implication is that they enjoyed the special food and drink described in [8:10](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "eating rich foods and drinking sweet drinks"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:12 (#3)

"to eat and to drink"

Eating and drinking are used together here to convey a single idea, celebrating. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: "celebrating with festive meals"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 8:12 (#4)

"and to send away portions"

The implication is that they sent these portions to the poor, who would not have been able to afford rich food and drink, as described in [8:10](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "sharing with the poor"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:12 (#5)

"and to make a great rejoicing"

The abstract noun **rejoicing** can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "and to rejoice greatly"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 8:12 (#6)

"for they understood the words that had been made known to them"

The implication is that the leaders helped the people recognize that being able to understand Yahweh's law should be a source of joy and encouragement to them. They should not be sad or discouraged because they had disobeyed in the past, because now they would know how to obey. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "because now that they were able to understand God's law, they would be able to obey it in the future"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:12 (#7)

"for they understood the words that had been made known to them"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this phrase at the beginning of the verse since it gives the reason for the rest of the actions that the verse describes. You could show the connection by using a word like "so" after this phrase. Alternate translation: "the people realized that they would be able to obey God's law in the future because now they were able to understand it. So ... "

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 8:12 (#8)

"they understood the words that had been made known to them"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "they understood God's law when Ezra and the Levites explained it to them"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 8:13 (#1)**"And on the second day"**

Alternate translations: "On day 2" or "On the next day"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 8:13 (#2)**"were gathered to"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "gathered to meet with"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 8:13 (#3)**"the heads of the fathers of all the people"**As in [7:70](#), this seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "father's house" or "house of the father" is used in [7:61](#). See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "some clan leaders from throughout Judah"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 8:13 (#4)**"the heads of"****Head** here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: "leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 8:13 (#5)**"Ezra the scribe"**

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Ezra was. Alternate translation: "Ezra, who was a scribe"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 8:13 (#6)**"even to give attention to the words of the law"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this phrase at the beginning of the verse, since it gives the reason for the rest of the actions that the verse describes. You could show the connection by using a word like "so" after this phrase. Alternate translation: "the people realized that they needed to understand God's law much better. So ... "

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 8:13 (#7)**"even to give attention to the words of the law"**

The implication is that while the people realized this, they also realized it would not be practical for large crowds to gather in Jerusalem every day so that all the people could receive Ezra's teaching at once. Instead, they asked the family and religious leaders in Judah to meet with Ezra and learn from him so that they could then pass the teachings along. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "The people realized that they needed to understand God's law much better, so they asked their family and religious leaders to meet with Ezra and learn more things from him that they could then pass along."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:14 (#1)**"And they found written in the law that Yahweh commanded by the hand of Moses"****Found** does not mean that these leaders were looking for something, but that they learned this as they were studying with Ezra. Alternate translation: "they learned that in the Law, Yahweh had commanded through Moses"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 8:14 (#2)**"And they found written in the law that Yahweh commanded by the hand of Moses"**

Because it was already the seventh month, it seems likely that Ezra showed this passage to the leaders intentionally because it was something they could and should obey immediately. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Ezra showed them something that Yahweh had commanded through Moses that they could do right away"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:14 (#3)

"by the hand of Moses"

Here, **hand** represents control and action. Alternate translation: "through Moses"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 8:14 (#4)

"that the sons of Israel should live in huts during the feast in the seventh month"

This refers to the commandment establishing the Festival of Tabernacles. The purpose of this festival was to remind the Israelites that their ancestors had lived in temporary shelters when they traveled through the wilderness from Egypt to Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel should live in temporary shelters during the Festival of Tabernacles to remind them that their ancestors lived in shelters when they traveled through the wilderness from Egypt to Canaan"

Nehemiah 8:14 (#5)

"the sons of Israel"

Sons here means **descendants**. In this context it includes both men and women. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 8:14 (#6)

"should live in huts"

As [8:15](#) explains, these **huts** or temporary shelters were to be made from leafy tree branches. The

people were supposed to live in these shelters as their home for a week. This was a way of remembering and celebrating the way Yahweh had protected their ancestors when they had only temporary shelters to live in. Alternate translation: "stay in temporary shelters"

Nehemiah 8:14 (#7)

"during the feast in the seventh month"

This means the Festival of Tabernacles, which Yahweh commanded the people to celebrate in the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 8:14 (#8)

"in the seventh month"

This means the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. Alternate translation: "month 7"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 8:15 (#1)

"and that they should cause others to hear and cause a sound to pass"

These two phrases mean similar things. They describe how the family and religious leaders were supposed to send a message to everyone in Judah. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "they should publicly proclaim"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 8:15 (#2)

"throughout all their cities and in Jerusalem"

Here the story describes the whole population of the province of Judah by referring to its smaller cities and towns and to its large capital city of Jerusalem. The expression includes everything in between these two extremes. Alternate translation: "to everyone in Judah," otherwise "both in Jerusalem and in all the towns"

See: Merism

Nehemiah 8:15 (#3)

"Go out to the mountain, and bring branches of olive, and branches of oil trees, and branches of myrtle, and branches of palms, and branches of leafy trees, to make huts, as it is written"

This is the content of the message that the leaders sent out to the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "The Law of Moses commands us to go out into the hill country and get branches from olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make shelters"

Nehemiah 8:15 (#4)

"to the mountain"

The phrase can refer either to a single mountain or to a range of mountains and hills, which seems to be the meaning here. In this case one mountain would be used to represent the entire range. Alternate translation: "into the hill country"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 8:15 (#5)

"as it is written"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say what is doing the action. Alternate translation: "as the Law of Moses commands us to do"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 8:16 (#1)

"And the people went out and brought"

Here the story is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning is clear from the context. Alternate translation: "the people went out and got branches"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 8:16 (#2)

"and made huts for themselves, a man on his roof"

In this context, **a man** is an idiom that means "each person" and likely "each family." It does not mean only an adult male. Alternate translation: "and each family built shelters on their roofs"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 8:16 (#3)

"on his roof"

In this culture, roofs were flat and were reached by stairs that led up to them from outside the house. So a shelter could stand on the flat roof and the family could use it as a temporary home. Alternate translation: "on their flat roofs"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:16 (#4)

"and in their courtyards"

In this culture, houses were built around an open courtyard. So a shelter could be set up there, within the walls of the house. Alternate translation: "and in the courtyards within the walls of their homes"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:16 (#5)

"and in the courtyards of the house of God"

As in [6:10](#), here the book speaks of the temple as the "house of God," as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "and in the temple courtyards"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 8:16 (#6)

"and in the open area of the gate of water"

Here the story is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning is clear from the context, since this same location is described in [8:1](#) and [8:3](#).

Alternate translation: "and in the square in front of the Water Gate"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 8:16 (#7)

"the gate of water"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in [3:26](#), [8:1](#), and [8:3](#). Alternate translation: "the Water Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 8:16 (#8)

"and in the open area of the gate of Ephraim"

Here the story is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning is clear from the context. Alternate translation: "and in the square in front of the Ephraim Gate"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 8:16 (#9)

"the gate of Ephraim"

This is the name of another one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the Ephraim Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 8:17 (#1)

"all the assembly, the ones who returned from the captivity"

These two phrases mean similar things. They refer to the people of Judah who had returned to their homeland from the exile. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "all the people of Judah who had returned home from exile"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 8:17 (#2)

"the assembly"

The Old Testament often uses this expression to refer to the main body of the people of Israel. The expression envisions the way God called them out of Egypt and brought them together as a nation. At this point in their history, this main body was the people who had returned to Judah from exile. Alternate translation: "all the people of Judah who had returned home from exile"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 8:17 (#3)

"the sons of Israel had not done thus from the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day"

Alternate translation: "the people of Israel had never before celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles by living in shelters, going all the way back to the time of Joshua the son of Nun"

Nehemiah 8:17 (#4)

"from the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day"

Since it was Joshua who led the people of Israel into the land of Canaan, his time was the earliest time when they could have celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles to commemorate the journey from Egypt to Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "from the time that Joshua the son of Nun had first led them into this land until the present day"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:17 (#5)

"from the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day"

Here the story is describing an entire time period by speaking of its beginning and ending in order to include everything in between. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "for the entire time they had lived in this land"

See: Merism

Nehemiah 8:17 (#6)

"from the days of Joshua the son of Nun"

The term **day** is used here to refer to a period of time. Alternate translation: "from the time of Joshua the son of Nun"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 8:17 (#7)

"Joshua the son of Nun"

Joshua is the name of a man, and Nun is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 8:17 (#8)

"the sons of Israel"

Sons here means "descendants." In this context it includes both men and women. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 8:17 (#9)

"And there was extremely great rejoicing"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **rejoicing** with an adjective. Alternate translation: "the people were very joyful"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 8:18 (#1)

"And he read aloud from the book of the law of God"

He means Ezra, as stated explicitly in [8:3](#) and [8:13](#). The implication is that Ezra continued to read to the family and religious leaders who had asked him to keep teaching them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Each day throughout the festival, Ezra

continued to read to the leaders from the Law of Moses"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:18 (#2)

"day by day"

This is an idiom that means **each day** or **every single day**.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 8:18 (#3)

"from the first day to the last day"

The story is describing the entire festival by speaking of two extreme parts of it, its first day and its last day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "throughout the entire festival"

See: Merism

Nehemiah 8:18 (#4)

"And they made a seven-days feast, and on the eighth day an assembly, according to the ordinance"

They means the people of Judah. The **ordinance** refers to the command in the Law of Moses to end the Festival of Tabernacles by gathering all of the Israelites together for a closing ceremony after seven days. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah celebrated the Festival of Tabernacles for seven days, and on the eighth day they held a closing ceremony together, as the Law of Moses commanded"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 8:18 (#5)

"and on the eighth day"

Alternate translation: "on day 8"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah - Chapter 9 Introduction

Structure and formatting

This chapter and the next one form a single section.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prayer to God

The people prayed and thanked God for his care for them and the blessings he gave to them. They also confessed their sin of disobeying him. (See: Bless and Confess and Sin)

Learning from their ancestor's mistakes

This chapter teaches that the Jews learned from the mistakes of their ancestors. They became determined to worship Yahweh alone, to not intermarry with other peoples, and to worship Yahweh as the law of Moses instructed them. (See: Law of Moses)

Recalling the great power of God

It was common to recall the great things God did for Israel. This is a reminder to Israel of God's power. It is intended to bring the people to repentance and proper worship of Yahweh. (See: Repent)

Nehemiah 9:1 (#1)

"And on day 24 of this month"

This month means the seventh month of that year according to the Hebrew calendar, as specified in [8:2](#) and [8:14](#). The Law of Moses said to observe the Festival of Tabernacles from the fifteenth through the twenty-second days of that month. The implication is that after that joyful celebration, the people were given one full day to rest and prepare for the gathering that this chapter describes. It had a different and more solemn purpose. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "On the twenty-fourth day of the seventh month of that year, two days after the joyful Festival of Tabernacles had ended"

See: Hebrew Months

Nehemiah 9:1 (#2)

"And on day 24 of this month"

Alternate translation: "On day 24 of month 7"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 9:1 (#3)

"the sons of Israel were gathered"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel gathered together"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 9:1 (#4)

"the sons of Israel were gathered"

The implication is that people from all the cities and towns the province of Judah gathered together again in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "people from all over Judah gathered together again in Jerusalem"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:1 (#5)

"the sons of Israel"

Sons here means "descendants." In this context it includes both men and women, and it refers specifically to the Israelites who were now living in Judah. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel" or "people from all over Judah"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:1 (#6)

"and in sackcloth, and dust was upon them"

The people did these things to show symbolically how sorry they were for their sins. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "The people refrained from eating, wore rough clothing, and put dust on their heads to show that they were sorry for their sins"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 9:1 (#7)**"and dust was upon them"**

Them in this sentence refers to the people, but it does not mean that they covered themselves entirely in dust. The story is using the whole person to refer to one part of the person, the head, which is where people in this culture put dust to express sorrow. Alternate translation: "the people ... put dust on their heads"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 9:2 (#1)**"And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all the sons of a foreigner"**

The Israelites were conducting this ceremony as a special act of repentance for how they and their ancestors had disobeyed God. They were acknowledging how they had failed to fulfill the special assignment God had given them of modeling the blessings of living according to his ways, so it would not have been appropriate for people from other nations to take part in the ceremony. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel did not allow anyone from any other nation to take part in this ceremony because it was going to be a time of repentance for how they and their ancestors had disobeyed Yahweh"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:2 (#2)**"the seed of Israel"**

Here, **seed** means "descendants." Alternate translation: "the descendants of Israel" or "the Israelites"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:2 (#3)**"from all the sons of a foreigner"**

Sons here means **descendants**. Alternate translation: "all people from other nations"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:2 (#4)**"And they stood, and they confessed concerning their sins and the iniquities of their fathers"**

Here, **stood** probably does not mean "standing up," since the next verse says that they "rose up," which probably means that they got up from kneeling. As they were showing sorrow for their sins, they would likely have knelt to worship God, as in 8:6. So **stood** probably means instead that they remained in place, by implication for some time, and made a thorough confession. Alternate translation: "they remained in place as they confessed all the wrong things that they and their ancestors had done"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:2 (#5)**"their fathers"**

Fathers here means "ancestors." Alternate translation: "their ancestors"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:3 (#1)**"And they rose up in their place"**

Rose up here likely means **stood up**. As in 8:5, the people would have stood up to show respect as they listened to the reading from the Law of Moses. Alternate translation: "Then the people stood up where they were"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 9:3 (#2)**"and they read aloud the book of"**

The people themselves did not read from the book. **They** here likely means Ezra and the Levites, who read similarly to the crowd that gathered on the occasion described in 8:1-12. Alternate translation: "as their leaders read to them"

Nehemiah 9:3 (#3)**"the book of the law of Yahweh their God"**

This is another of the various ways that this story describes a book containing the Law of Moses. Alternate translation: "from the Law of Moses" or "from the law that Yahweh had given through Moses"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:3 (#4)

"a fourth of the day, and a fourth of the day"

In this culture the day and the night were each divided into four equal parts of three hours each. So this means that the people listened to a reading of the Law for three hours, and then they spent the next three hours in prayer and confession. Alternate translation: "for three hours, and then for another three hours"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:4 (#1)

"And Jeshua rose up on the stairs of the Levites, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, Kenani"

The name of the stairs suggests that the men listed were Levites. That is, they were descendants of Levi who had the special assignment of helping the priests. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could suggest this in your translation. Alternate translation: "Eight Levites named Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani climbed up the stairs leading to the platform"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:4 (#2)

"And" - "rose up on the stairs of the Levites"

In context, the **stairs of the Levites** seem to be stairs that led up to the platform that was built for the occasion described in chapter 8, or to another platform or platforms similar to it that allowed religious leaders to be seen and heard during large gatherings. The stairs likely had this name because they enabled the Levites to move back and forth from up on the platform to down among the people. Here, they also serve as a raised platform of their own on which the Levites can stand and be seen

and heard. Alternate translation: "climbed up onto the stairs to the platform" or "the stairs that had been built for the Levites"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:4 (#3)

"And" - "rose up on"

Rose up in this context seems to mean that these men climbed up onto the stairs and stood on them. Alternate translation: "climbed up onto"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:4 (#4)

"And" - "rose up"

It seems that in this verse the story is describing something that happened during the second three-hour period, at the same time as the people were praying and confessing. You could indicate this with an introductory phrase. Alternate translation: "While the people were doing this"

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 9:4 (#5)

"Jeshua" - "and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, Kenani"

These are the names of eight men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:4 (#6)

"And they cried out with a loud voice to Yahweh their God"

The implication is that they did this to offer public prayers of confession on behalf of the people, and perhaps also to guide the people to pray themselves on particular topics. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "They prayed to Yahweh their God on behalf of the people, speaking loudly so that everyone could hear them."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:5 (#1)**"the Levites"**

This phrase indicates that the eight men listed were Levites. If you said in your translation that the eight men listed in 8:4 were also Levites, here you could say, "Eight more Levites named."

Nehemiah 9:5 (#2)**"Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, Pethahiah"**

These are the names of eight men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:5 (#3)**"Rise up"**

Here, **rise up** seems to mean "get up from a kneeling posture." This would have symbolized that a new part of the ceremony was beginning. The people were to move from sorrowful confession to a resolute and joyful rededication of their community to God.

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 9:5 (#4)**"Bless Yahweh your God from eternity to eternity"**

The Levites speak these words to the people. They are not telling the people to praise God during all the time from eternity past to eternity future. Rather, they are using an idiom, "from eternity to eternity," to mean that Yahweh is the God who has always existed and will always exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could put it in those terms. Alternate translation: "Praise Yahweh, your God, who has always existed and will always exist"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:5 (#5)**"And may they bless your glorious name"**

In this sentence, the Levite who is speaking turns abruptly from addressing the people to addressing

God. (**Your** in the previous sentence meant the people, while **your** here refers to God.) This is somewhat like the places earlier in the book where Nehemiah stops addressing his readers and speaks directly to God in prayer. However, here the people are meant to hear and do what is being described. So if it would be helpful in your language, you could express these as words that continue to be directed to the people, as in the previous sentence. Alternate translation: "Praise his glorious name"

See: Aside

Nehemiah 9:5 (#6)**"And may they bless your glorious name"**

As in 1:9, **name** is a figurative way of referring to the fame or reputation of a person. This is described by something associated with it, how well known someone's name is and how people react to hearing it. God's reputation, in turn, is based on what he has done and what this reveals about who he is, and so his "name" would also represent that. Alternate translation: "praise you for who you are and what you have done"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:5 (#7)**"which is exalted above all blessing and praise"**

Here God's name is described in a spatial metaphor as being higher than or lifted up above blessing and praise. This means that all of the things that people could do to honor and praise God could never be sufficient to acknowledge how much honor and praise he actually deserves. Alternate translation: "we can never bless you and praise you as much as you deserve"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:5 (#8)**"above all blessing and praise"**

Blessing and **praise** are abstract nouns that refer to the act of openly honoring someone for their character and actions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind these words with the verb forms of these words.

Alternate translation: "we can never bless you and praise you as much as you deserve"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 9:5 (#9)

"above all blessing and praise"

In this context, **blessing** and **praise** mean basically the same thing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: "we can never acknowledge you sufficiently"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:6 (#1)

"You alone are he, Yahweh"

At the end of the previous verse, the Levites started speaking to God, but they still meant for the people to hear their words and do what they said. Now the Levites are addressing God directly in prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this with an introductory phrase. Alternate translation: "Then these Levites prayed to God and said, 'Yahweh, you are the only true God'"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:6 (#2)

"You alone are he, Yahweh"

This means **you alone are the one** or **you are the only one**. Alternate translation: "You, Yahweh, are the only true God"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:6 (#3)

"the heavens, the heavens of the heavens"

In the ancient Hebrew cosmology, the first phrase likely referred to the sky, which was envisioned as a solid dome above the earth (See: the note to [1:9](#)). The second phrase likely referred to the realm beyond the sky, which was understood to be the dwelling place of God. Alternate translation: "the sky and everything beyond it"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:6 (#4)

"and all their host"

Host means army. The "host of heaven" is likely a figurative expression for the stars, which seem like a large army in the sky. However, this phrase might refer to heavenly beings which dwell in heaven with God. Alternate translation: "and all the stars"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:6 (#5)

"and you cause all of them to live"

Them means everything living on the land and in the seas. Alternate translation: "You give life to all of these creatures" or "you are the one who created all of these living things"

Nehemiah 9:6 (#6)

"and the host of the heavens prostrates themselves to you"

Earlier in the sentence, the **host of heaven** was a figurative way of describing the stars as if they were an army. Now here, the stars themselves represent the angels of heaven. Alternate translation: "all the angels bow down and worship you"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:7 (#1)

"You are he, Yahweh, the God who chose Abram"

Alternate translation: "You, Yahweh, are the God who chose Abram"

Nehemiah 9:7 (#2)

"chose Abram"

Abram was the ancestor of the Israelites. God chose to make him and his descendants a community that would model for the whole world the blessings of

living according to his ways. The Levites mention this first because it is the very beginning of the Israelites' history as God's chosen people. They will describe the rest of this history, up to their present day, in the rest of their prayer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain this. Alternate translation: "chose Abram to be the ancestor of your people"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:7 (#3)

"Abram"

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:7 (#4)

"Also, you brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees"

Throughout their prayer, the Levites assume that the people listening will understand the significance of the details they mention for the Israelites' history as God's chosen people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could give the reason why God brought Abram out of this city. Alternate translation: "He was living among the Chaldean people in the city of Ur, but you told him to leave there and go to a land that you would give to his descendants"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:7 (#5)

"from Ur of the Chaldees"

This is the name of a city and a people group. Alternate translation: "the city of Ur, where the Chaldean people lived"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:7 (#6)

"Also, you made his name 'Abraham"

Once again the Levites assume that their listeners will understand the significance of this detail. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could give

the reason why God changed Abram's name to Abraham. Alternate translation: "You changed his name to Abraham, 'father of a multitude,' because he would be like a father to many nations"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:8 (#1)

"Also, you found his heart faithful before your face"

Here, **found** is an idiom for someone discovering something to be true. It does not mean that God was looking for something he had lost. Alternate translation: "You recognized that he was completely loyal to you"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:8 (#2)

"Also, you found his heart faithful before your face"

Here, Abraham's **heart** represents his thoughts and will, that is, his inner being. Alternate translation: "You recognized that he was completely loyal to you"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:8 (#3)

"Also, you found his heart faithful before your face"

Here, **face** is a metaphor for a person's perception, referring to God's perception of Abraham. Alternate translation: "You recognized that he was completely loyal to you"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:8 (#4)

"and cut with him the covenant"

To **cut** a covenant is a Hebrew idiom for making a solemn agreement with a person. The expression comes from the way animals were cut into pieces during covenant ceremonies to show what the parties wanted God to do to anyone who broke the agreement. But the meaning here is idiomatic. It is

not a direct reference to such a ceremony, but only to the making of the covenant. Alternate translation: "you made an agreement with him" or "you made a promise to him"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:8 (#5)

"to his seed"

As in verse 2, **seed** means "descendants." Alternate translation: "to his descendants"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:8 (#6)

"the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Gergashites"

These are the names of six people groups.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:8 (#7)

"and you have caused your words to stand"

As in [5:13](#), **words** means the promises that God made to Abraham, and **stand** means stay in place rather than go away. The Levites are speaking of God's promises as if they were a living thing that could move around or not. Alternate translation: "you have kept all of your promises"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 9:8 (#8)

"for you are righteous"

Alternate translation: "because you always do what is right"

Nehemiah 9:9 (#1)

"And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and you heard their cry at the sea of reeds"

Here the Levites are describing how, centuries later, God rescued their ancestors, Abraham's descendants, from slavery in Egypt. In this verse they describe that entire experience generally by reference to its first episode and its final episode, to include everything in between. (In [9:10](#) and [9:11](#) they will add further specific details.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could describe the entire experience in a single phrase here. (However, you could also explain these episodes separately. See the next two notes.) Alternate translation: "You rescued our fathers from slavery in Egypt by defeating Pharaoh"

See: Merism

Nehemiah 9:9 (#2)

"And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt"

Affliction is an abstract noun that refers to the way the Israelites suffered when Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, forced them to serve him as slaves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as "suffer." Alternate translation: "you saw how badly our ancestors were suffering as slaves in Egypt"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 9:9 (#3)

"And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt"

The implication is that God not only saw how the Israelites were suffering, but also was moved to action out of compassion for them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "you saw how badly our ancestors were suffering as slaves in Egypt, and so you delivered them from slavery"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:9 (#4)

"our fathers"

Fathers here means "ancestors." Alternate translation: "our ancestors"

See: Metaphor

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:9 (#5)

"and you heard their cry at the sea of reeds"

The Levites continue to rehearse the details of Israelite history without explaining their significance because they assume their listeners will already understand this. This is a reference to something that happened after God had freed their ancestors from slavery and they had left Egypt. Pharaoh regretted letting them go and pursued them with his army. Helplessly trapped against the shores of the Red Sea as Pharaoh's army approached, the Israelites cried out to God for rescue. Alternate translation: "you answered their prayer when they cried to you for help from the shores of the Red Sea"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:9 (#6)

"and you heard their cry"

Heard is an idiom that means that God both heard and answered the Israelites' prayer in the way described in [9:11](#). Alternate translation: "you answered their prayer"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:9 (#7)

"the sea of reeds"

This is the name of a body of water near Egypt. Alternate translation: "the Red Sea"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:10 (#1)

"And you gave signs and wonders to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all the people of his land"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why God did this. Alternate translation: "You did amazing things that were signs to Pharaoh, his officials, and the people of Egypt that you are the one true God and that they should not have enslaved your people"

Nehemiah 9:10 (#2)

"And you gave signs and wonders"

Signs and **wonders** are words that mean similar things. They both describe powerful things that God did. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: "you did miracles"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:10 (#3)

"because you knew that they were acting presumptuously toward them"

They means Pharaoh, his officials, and the people of Egypt. **Them** means the Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this sentence first in the verse since it gives the reason for the results that are described in the rest of the verse. You could show the connection by using a word like "so" after this sentence. Alternate translation: "You knew that Pharaoh, his officials, and the people of Egypt were oppressing our ancestors, and so"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:10 (#4)

"And you made for yourself a name, as it is this day"

As in [9:5](#), **name** is a figurative way of referring to the fame or reputation of a person. Alternate translation: "When you did this, you won the reputation that you still have today"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:11 (#1)

"And you split open the sea before their face"

In [9:10](#) the Levites provided more specific details about how God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. In this verse they focus on the details of the final episode in the deliverance experience. Still, they assume that their readers

will be familiar with these details and understand their significance. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain these details more fully. Alternate translation: "When the Israelites left Egypt, Pharaoh pursued them with his army, and they were trapped by the shores of the Red Sea. But you opened up the sea in front of them"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:11 (#2)

"And" - "the sea"

As in [9:9](#), this refers to the Red Sea, a body of water near Egypt. Alternate translation: "the Red Sea"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:11 (#3)

"before their face"

Here, **face** refers the front of a group. Alternate translation: "in front of them"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:11 (#4)

"and they passed through the midst of the sea on the dry land"

They refers to the Israelites. Alternate translation: "so that they were able escape through the Red Sea by walking on dry ground"

Nehemiah 9:11 (#5)

"And you cast their pursuers into the depths"

This is a figurative way of describing how that God made the waters of the Red Sea come back over the Egyptian army so that all of its soldiers were drowned. It was as if God had thrown them into deep water. Alternate translation: "but you made the waters come back and drown the army that was chasing them"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:11 (#6)

"their pursuers"

Alternate translation: "the soldiers of the Egyptian army, who were chasing them"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:11 (#7)

"like a stone in mighty waters"

In this image, the Levites describe God throwing the Egyptians into the sea the way a person would throw a stone into water. The picture is that, just as a stone would disappear completely under the water, the Egyptian soldiers did the same. Alternate translation: "They disappeared completely, the way a stone would that was thrown into deep water"

See: Simile

Nehemiah 9:12 (#1)

"And you led them with a pillar of cloud by day, and with a pillar of fire by night to shine for them on the way in which they should go"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the first phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "To show the people the way that they should go, you sent a pillar of cloud to go ahead of them during the day and a pillar of fire to light up the way at night"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:12 (#2)

"And you led them with a pillar of cloud by day, and with a pillar of fire by night to shine for them on the way in which they should go"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why did this. Alternate translation: "To get from Egypt to the land you had promised them, the Israelites had to cross a trackless desert. To show them what way they should go, you went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire by night. The pillar of fire lit up the way ahead"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:13 (#1)

"And you came down on the mountain of Sinai and spoke with them"

Came down is a way of saying that God appeared to the people. Since God spoke to them from heaven, he did not actually come down from heaven to earth. So this is a figurative expression. Alternate translation: "you appeared to the people of Israel at Mount Sinai, where you spoke to them from heaven"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:13 (#2)

"the mountain of Sinai"

This is the name of a mountain. Alternate translation: "Mount Sinai"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:13 (#3)

"just judgments and laws of truth, good statutes and commandments"

Just judgments and **laws of truth** mean similar things. The expressions **good statutes** and **commandments** also mean something similar to each other and to the first two expressions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine all of these phrases into one comprehensive phrase. Alternate translation: "many trustworthy instructions about how to live in the right way," otherwise "instructions and rules that are just and reliable, and laws and commands that are good"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:13 (#4)

"judgments"

This term refers to Yahweh giving the Israelites instructions in the law. It may or may not include a sense of Yahweh passing sentence as a judge. Alternate translation: "instructions"

Nehemiah 9:14 (#1)

"And you made known to them your holy sabbath"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain what the Sabbath was. Alternate translation: "You commanded them to set apart the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath, a special day for rest and worship"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:14 (#2)

"sabbath"

This is the name of a religious observance.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:14 (#3)

"And you charged them with commandments, and statutes, and a law"

Commandments, statutes, and **law** mean similar things. Together they are a comprehensive description of the Law of Moses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them in a single phrase. Alternate translation: "You told them to obey everything you had commanded," otherwise "you gave them commands and rules and laws"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:14 (#4)

"by the hand of Moses"

Here, **hand** represents control and action. Alternate translation: "you gave them to Moses to give to the people"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:14 (#5)

"your servant"

The Old Testament often describes Moses by the title "servant of Yahweh." While Moses was also God's servant in a more literal sense, this title is a figurative expression that indicates that God used Moses to give his law to his people, the way a master would have a servant deliver a message. Alternate translation: "your special messenger"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:15 (#1)

"And you gave to them bread from heaven for their hunger"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the first phrase gives the reason for the resulting action that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "because they were hungry, you provided a special food for them"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:15 (#2)

"And you gave to them bread from heaven for their hunger"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why the people were hungry. Alternate translation: "because they were hungry in the desert where no crops could grow, you provided a special food for them"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:15 (#3)

"And" - "bread from heaven"

This is a figurative way of describing the special food that God provided for the Israelites in the desert. Because it had not grown from the ground, it was as if God had sent it from heaven. The Israelites gave this food the name "manna." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could call it by this name after providing a plain description. Alternate translation: "and a special food, manna."

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:15 (#4)

"And" - "bread from heaven"

This expression used bread to refer to food in general. It describes all food by the name of one kind of food, bread. Alternate translation: "special food"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 9:15 (#5)

"and you brought out for them water from a rock for their thirst"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the first phrase gives the reason for the resulting action that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "because they were thirsty, you made water flow out of a rock for them to drink"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:15 (#6)

"and you brought out for them water from a rock for their thirst"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why the people were thirsty. Alternate translation: "because they were thirsty in the desert where there was no water, you made water flow out of a rock for them to drink"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:15 (#7)

"And you said to them to go in to possess"

Alternate translation: "you commanded them to enter and occupy"

Nehemiah 9:15 (#8)

"the land that you had raised your hand to give to them"

In this culture, a person would raise their hand when they swore an oath. Here the Levites are describing the action of swearing an oath by referring to the gesture associated with that action,

raising a hand. Alternate translation: "the land that you swore to give them"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 9:15 (#9)

"the land that you had raised your hand to give to them"

The Levites assume that their listeners will understand that this means the land of Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the land of Canaan, which you swore to give them"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:16 (#1)

"But they and our fathers, they acted presumptuously"

They could mean the Israelites at the time of Moses, and **our fathers** could mean the Israelites after the time of Moses. However, the next verse says that the people who showed this pride and stubbornness disobeyed God's command to enter Canaan and instead chose a leader to take them back to Egypt. So this expression could also mean "they, yes, our fathers." Alternate translation: "they, our own ancestors, were arrogant"

Nehemiah 9:16 (#2)

"and our fathers"

Fathers here means **ancestors**. Alternate translation: "our ancestors"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:16 (#3)

"And they stiffened their neck and did not listen"

These two phrases mean similar things. The Levites are using the repetition to acknowledge how serious it was that their own ancestors disobeyed God's command. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "they stubbornly refused to

obey," otherwise "they were proud and stubborn, so they refused to obey"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 9:16 (#4)

"And they stiffened their neck"

This is a figurative way of saying that the people stubbornly refused to obey.

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:16 (#5)

"and did not listen to your commandments"

Listen in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear a commandment, but to obey it. Alternate translation: "They refused to obey what you commanded them to do."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:17 (#1)

"And they refused to hear"

Alternate translation: "And they would not obey"

Nehemiah 9:17 (#2)

"And they refused to hear"

This is a reference to the command that is described in [9:15](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "they would not obey your command to enter and occupy the land of Canaan"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:17 (#3)

"and they did not remember your wonderful deeds that you performed with them"

The implication is that if they had done this, they would not have been afraid to go into Canaan and fight to take possession of it. They would have realized that the same God who defeated Pharaoh to deliver them from slavery could also defeat the

nations living in Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "They did not remember the miracles that you had done to deliver them from Egypt, and so they were afraid that the nations that lived in Canaan would defeat them."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:17 (#4)

"And they stiffened their neck"

As in [9:16](#), this is a metaphor meaning that the people stubbornly refused to obey.

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:17 (#5)

"and in their rebellion chose a head in order to return to their servitude"

The Israelites would know that this referred to their ancestors wanting to return to Egypt. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "they disobeyed God and appointed a leader to take them back to Egypt, where they had been slaves"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:17 (#6)

"a head"

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: "leader"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:17 (#7)

"in order to return to their servitude"

Servitude is an abstract noun that refers to the condition of slavery that the Israelites experienced in Egypt. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a concrete noun such as "slave." Alternate translation: "back to Egypt where they had been slaves"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 9:17 (#8)

"are a God of forgiveness"

Forgiveness is an abstract noun that represents a readiness not to hold a person's offenses against them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a verb such as "forgive." Alternate translation: "a God who is always ready to forgive"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 9:17 (#9)

"gracious and compassionate"

Gracious and **compassionate** mean similar things. The Levites use them together to emphasize how merciful God is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words into a single expression. Alternate translation: "genuinely merciful," otherwise "who acts kindly and mercifully toward us"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:17 (#10)

"long of nostrils"

This is a figurative way of saying that a person does not lose their temper easily or quickly. Alternate translation: "very patient"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:17 (#11)

"and abounding in covenant faithfulness"

Faithfulness is an abstract noun that describes the quality of a person who will dependably keep their word and fulfill their responsibilities. **Covenant faithfulness** refers specifically to God keeping all the promises he made to the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with an expression such as "keep promises." Alternate translation: "you always keep the promises you make to your people"

See: Abstract Nouns

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:17 (#12)

"and abounding in covenant faithfulness"

Here the Levites speak of this quality of Yahweh as if it were an abundant food crop that he could share with people. Alternate translation: "who loves his people very much"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:17 (#13)

"and you did not forsake them"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could elaborate on what this means. Alternate translation: "so you did not abandon them there in the desert"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:18 (#1)

"Even when they made for themselves a calf image and said, 'This is your God who brought you up from Egypt"

The Levites continue to recount details of Israelite history and assume that their listeners will understand the significance of these details. This was a particularly grievous act of disobedience, which is why the Levites say "even when." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance in your translation. Alternate translation: "Even when the Israelites made an idol in the shape of a calf and gave it credit for delivering them from slavery in Egypt, right at Mount Sinai where you were giving Moses the Ten Commandments"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:18 (#2)

"and they performed great blasphemies"

Blasphemy means to worship or honor something other than God as divine. The Old Testament stresses repeatedly that this is offensive and insulting to God. Alternate translation: "When they did this, they insulted you horribly"

Nehemiah 9:19 (#1)

"still you, in your great mercies, did not forsake them in the wilderness"

Alternate translation: "Even so, because you are always merciful, you did not abandon them in the desert"

Nehemiah 9:19 (#2)

"He did not take away the pillar of cloud from over them by day to lead them on the way, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine for them and on the way in which they should go"

See how you translated the similar sentence in [10:12](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the first phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "To show the people the way that they should go, the pillar of cloud continued to go ahead of them during the day, and the pillar of fire continued to light up the way ahead at night"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:20 (#1)

"And" - "your good spirit"

This seems to be a reference to God in person. If your language uses capitalization or some other convention to indicate that a word is referring to God, you could use it here. Alternate translation: "your good Spirit"

Nehemiah 9:20 (#2)

"And you did not withhold your manna from their mouth, and you gave them water for their thirst"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of the phrases in each clause since in both cases the first phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "Because they were hungry,

you continued to feed them with manna, and because they were thirsty, you gave them water"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:20 (#3)

"And" - "your manna"

This was the special food that Yahweh provided for the Israelites in the desert. See the note in [9:15](#). Alternate translation: "special food" or "that special food, manna"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:20 (#4)

"you did not withhold" - "from their mouth"

Here the Levites describe being nourished by food by referring to something associated with it, the mouth that eats the food. If it would be helpful in your language, you could describe this more generally. Alternate translation: "you continued to feed them"

Nehemiah 9:20 (#5)

"you did not withhold" - "from their mouth"

This is a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. Alternate translation: "you generously gave them manna"

See: Litotes

Nehemiah 9:21 (#1)

"And you sustained them forty years in the wilderness; they did not lack"

The first phrase is implicitly giving a reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make that explicit. "Because you took care of them for forty years in the desert, they did not lack anything all that time."

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:21 (#2)

"and their feet did not swell"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why the feet of the Israelites would otherwise have swollen as they traveled through the desert. Alternate translation: "their feet did not swell up, even though they were walking all the time"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:22 (#1)

"And you gave to them kingdoms and peoples"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say explicitly how Yahweh did this. Alternate translation: "You helped our ancestors to defeat stronger armies so that they could conquer kingdoms and the people who lived in them"

Nehemiah 9:22 (#2)

"And you gave to them kingdoms and peoples"

Kingdoms and **peoples** mean similar things. They are two different ways of describing the groups that the Israelites defeated. The repetition emphasizes how remarkable it was for Yahweh to enable the Israelites to defeat these stronger opponents. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words into a single expression. Alternate translation: "you enabled them to defeat the nations that were living there"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:22 (#3)

"and you allocated to them as far as the corners"

Here the land of Canaan is described as if it were a regular shape that had defined corners. Alternate translation: "you enabled them to possess every part of the land"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:22 (#4)

"the land of Sihon, even the land of the king of Heshbon"

These two phrases mean the same thing. The repetition is used for clarity. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "the land over which King Sihon ruled from the city of Heshbon"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 9:22 (#5)

"and the land of Og, the king of Bashan"

Alternate translation: "Bashan, the land where King Og ruled"

Nehemiah 9:22 (#6)

"Sihon," - "Og"

These are the names of two kings.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:22 (#7)

"Heshbon," - "Bashan"

These are names of the places where these two kings ruled.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 9:23 (#1)

"And you multiplied their sons like the stars of the heavens"

Their refers to the Israelites. This is a comparison, a figure of speech that says the number of children the Israelites had was like the number of stars in the sky. Alternate translation: "You enabled them to have as many children as there are stars in the sky"

See: Simile

Nehemiah 9:23 (#2)

"And you multiplied their sons like the stars of the heavens"

This is an exaggeration for emphasis. Alternate translation: "You enabled them to have a very large number of children"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 9:23 (#3)

"And" - "their sons"

Sons here means "descendants." In this context it includes both boys and girls. Alternate translation: "and children"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:23 (#4)

"And you brought them to the land that you said to their fathers to enter in order to possess it"

This is the same **land** described in verse 15, the land of Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "You brought them back to the land of Canaan, the land that you had commanded the previous generation to enter and occupy"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:23 (#5)

"to their fathers"

While **fathers** means "ancestors" throughout much of this prayer, in this case the word is intended more literally. It means the previous generation of Israelites, who had disobeyed when God told them the first time to occupy the land. But since both men and women were involved in the disobedience, you could use a term that would not limit the meaning to men, if it would be helpful in your language. Alternate translation: "to the previous generation"

See: When Masculine Words Include Women

Nehemiah 9:24 (#1)

"And the sons went in and possessed the land, and before their face you subdued the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites"

These two phrases mean similar things. The Israelites of the next generation possessing the land is equivalent to Yahweh defeating its inhabitants when the Israelites fought against them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "You enabled the next generation of Israelites to defeat the people who were living in the land of Canaan so that they could occupy the land themselves"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 9:24 (#2)

"the sons"

This means literally the children of the generation that refused to enter the land. But since both men and women were involved in occupying the land, you could use a term that would not limit the meaning to men, if it would be helpful in your language. Alternate translation: "the next generation of Israelites"

See: When Masculine Words Include Women

Nehemiah 9:24 (#3)

"and before their face you subdued the inhabitants of the land"

Here, **face** means the front of a group, in this case the Israelite army that was fighting against the Canaanites. Alternate translation: "when the Israelites opposed them in battle, you defeated the people who were living in the land"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:24 (#4)

"the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites"

These two phrases mean similar things. The repetition is used for clarity. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them. Alternate translation: "the Canaanites who lived there,"

otherwise "the people who lived here in this land, the descendants of Canaan"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:24 (#5)

"And you gave them into their hands, and their kings, and the peoples of the land, to do with them according to their will"

The Levites continue to recount details of Israelite history and assume that their listeners will understand the significance of these details. This sentence means, "You gave the Canaanites into the hands of the Israelites, that is, you gave their kings and the Canaanite people into the hands of the Israelites." The implication is that once the Israelites had defeated the armies that the kings were leading, they could then do anything they wanted with the people who were living in the land. In other words, Yahweh gave the kings "into their hands" by defeating them, and as a result, the people were "in their hands" to do with whatever they wanted. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "You enabled them to defeat the armies that the Canaanite kings were leading, and then they could do whatever they wanted with the people of Canaan"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:24 (#6)

"And you gave them into their hands"

Here, **hand** represents power and control. To give something into a person's hand is to give that person control over that thing. Alternate translation: "enabled the Israelites to defeat them"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:25 (#1)

"And they captured fortified cities and fat ground"

They means the Israelites who were entering Canaan.

Nehemiah 9:25 (#2)**"and fat ground"**

This means land that can produce abundantly and make its inhabitants fat (as described later in this verse). The rich character of the soil is being described by something associated with it, the well-fed character of the people it sustains. Alternate translation: "fertile land"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:25 (#3)**"And they possessed"**

This means that, from people who had already built or planted them, they took possession of the things on the list that follows. Alternate translation: "they took possession of"

Nehemiah 9:25 (#4)**"hewn cisterns"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. (This verse is not saying that the Israelites did three things, captured cities, possessed houses, and dug cisterns.) Alternate translation: "cisterns that someone else had already dug"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 9:25 (#5)**"cisterns"**

Cisterns are underground reservoirs where people store water. In this area they were typically hewn out of the underlying rock. Alternate translation: "water storage areas"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:25 (#6)**"and food trees"**

This means trees that grow things that are good to eat. In this area, these would have included both

fruit and nut trees. Alternate translation: "and fruit and nut trees"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:25 (#7)**"and were satisfied"**

It is clear from the context that this was likely true literally, but this statement could also be a figurative way of saying that just as a person who has more than enough to eat stops being concerned, so the Israelites became complacent and stopped thinking about Yahweh. Alternate translation: "and they became complacent"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:26 (#1)**"And they disobeyed and rebelled against you"**

Disobeyed and **rebelled** mean similar things. The Levites use them together to emphasize how serious an offense it was for the Israelites to turn against Yahweh after he had blessed them so greatly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: "they turned against you"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:26 (#2)**"and they cast your law behind their back"**

The Levites are saying that the Israelites treated the law as if it were a worthless item that a person would toss away. Alternate translation: "They considered your law worthless and paid no attention to it"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:26 (#3)**"testified against them"**

Alternate translation: "warned them about all the wrong things they were doing"

Nehemiah 9:26 (#4)**"And they performed great blasphemies"**

As in [9:18](#), **blasphemy** means to worship as divine or give honor to something other than God. This is likely a reference to the way the Israelites started worshiping other gods. (That is why the prophets needed to try to "bring them back" to Yahweh.) Alternate translation: "they worshiped other gods"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:27 (#1)**"And you gave them into the hand of their adversaries"**

Here, **hand** represents power and control. Alternate translation: "you allowed their enemies to defeat them"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:27 (#2)**"and they harassed them"**

They means the enemies, and **them** means the Israelites. Alternate translation: "The enemies of the Israelites made them suffer"

Nehemiah 9:27 (#3)**"And, according to your many mercies"**

Alternate translation: "because of your great mercy" or "because you are very merciful"

Nehemiah 9:27 (#4)**"you gave to them saviors"**

This is a reference to the time in Israelite history when God sent the judges to lead the Israelite tribes in fighting back against their enemies. Alternate translation: "you sent the judges to rescue them"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 9:27 (#5)**"and they saved them from the hand of their adversaries"**

Here, **hand** represents power and control. Alternate translation: "they rescued them from their enemies"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:28 (#1)**"And after rest belonged to them, they returned to doing evil before your face"**

This sentence draws a contrast between how the Israelites should have responded when God delivered them and how they actually responded. You could begin the sentence with a word like "but" or "however" or "nevertheless" to indicate this contrast.

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 9:28 (#2)**"And after rest belonged to them"**

Rest is an abstract noun that indicates that the Israelites had relief from suffering and that there was no more war in the land after they defeated their enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the same idea with a different phrase. Alternate translation: "after they had defeated their enemies"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 9:28 (#3)**"they returned to doing evil before your face"**

Here, **face** seems to refer to a person's opinion or judgment, by association with the way they use the eyes in their face to see things and the way their facial expression shows what they think of those things. So this would mean that the Israelites did things that Yahweh considered to be wrong. Alternate translation: "they went back to doing things that you consider wrong"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:28 (#4)

"And you left them to the hand of their enemies, and they oppressed them"

Here, **hand** represents power and control. Alternate translation: "you allowed their enemies to defeat them, and they ruled over them harshly"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:28 (#5)

"And you left them"

This phrase indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: "and so you left them"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:28 (#6)

"And they returned and cried out to you"

They means the Israelites. **Returned** and **cried out** mean similar things. Both terms describe how the Israelites realized that they should have remained loyal to Yahweh and that they desperately needed his help. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use one expression for both terms. Alternate translation: "The Israelites asked you again to help them"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:28 (#7)

"according to your mercies"

Alternate translation: "because of your mercy" or "because you are merciful"

Nehemiah 9:29 (#1)

"And you testified against them"

Yahweh did not personally tell the Israelites all the wrong things they were doing. Rather, as [9:26](#) explains by using the same expression, Yahweh sent prophets to do this. The Levites are describing the prophets by association with Yahweh, whose message they were bringing. Alternate translation:

"you sent prophets to warn the Israelites about all the wrong things they were doing"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:29 (#2)

"to bring them back to your law"

The prophets were actually trying to make the people loyal to Yahweh himself once again by calling them to obey Yahweh's law. The Levites are describing Yahweh by reference to something associated with him, his law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "to make them loyal to you once again"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:29 (#3)

"and did not listen to your commandments"

As in [9:16](#), **listen** in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear a command, but to obey it. If your language has a word for "listen" that also means "obey," you could use it here. Alternate translation: "did not heed your commands"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:29 (#4)

"And, concerning your judgments, they sinned against them"

The people were actually sinning against Yahweh himself. The Levites are describing Yahweh by reference to something associated with him, his "judgments," meaning the instructions in his law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "they sinned against you by disobeying your instructions"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:29 (#5)

"And, concerning your judgments"

As in [9:13](#), this term refers to Yahweh giving the Israelites instructions in the law. It may or may not include a sense of Yahweh passing sentence as a

judge. Alternate translation: "And concerning your instructions"

Nehemiah 9:29 (#6)

"which, if a person does, then he will live by them"

Live here does not mean physically live or die. Rather, "live" means to be spiritually alive in relationship with God and to be happy and blessed as a result. The difference between being alive in this way and being separated from God is like the difference between being alive and being dead. Alternate translation: "If a person follows your law, then he is spiritually alive and happy and blessed"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:29 (#7)

"And they gave a stubborn shoulder, and stiffened their neck"

These are images of an ox refusing to allow its owner to put a yoke on its shoulders. Here they are a metaphor that represents the people being stubborn. Alternate translation: "They became stubborn"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:29 (#8)

"and did not hear"

Like **listen** earlier in this verse, "hear" in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear a command, but to obey it. If your language has a word for "hear" that also means "obey," you could use it here. Alternate translation: "did not heed"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:30 (#1)

"And you continued with them many years"

Alternate translation: "you put up with them for a long time"

Nehemiah 9:30 (#2)

"many years"

This is a figurative expression for "a long time." The Levites are describing time by referring to something associated with it, the years in which time is measured. Alternate translation: "for a long time"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:30 (#3)

"and you testified against them with your spirit by the hand of your prophets"

As in [9:20](#), **spirit** here seems to be a reference to God in person. If your language uses capitalization or some other convention to indicate that a word is referring to God, you could use it here. Alternate translation: "you spoke through the prophets by your Spirit to warn the Israelites about all the wrong things they were doing"

Nehemiah 9:30 (#4)

"by the hand of your prophets"

This is a figurative way of saying that God had the prophets deliver his message to the Israelites the way a servant would carry a message in his hand. Alternate translation: "through the prophets"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:30 (#5)

"but they did not give an ear"

The Levites are describing the act of listening here by reference to something associated with it, the ear that hears. Alternate translation: "but they refused to listen"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:30 (#6)

"but they did not give an ear"

Listening in this context means not just to hear but to obey. Alternate translation: "but they refused to obey"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:30 (#7)

"And you gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands"

Here, **hand** represents power and control. See how you translated this expression in verse 27, where it occurs twice. Alternate translation: "you allowed the neighboring peoples to defeat them"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:30 (#8)

"And you gave them"

This word indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: "As a result, you gave them"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:31 (#1)

"But, in your" - "mercies"

This sentence draws a contrast between what God could have done to the people, based on what they deserved, and what God actually did in his mercy. You could begin the sentence with a word like "but" or "however" to indicate this contrast.

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:31 (#2)

"But, in your many mercies"

As in [9:27](#), alternate translation: "because you are very merciful"

Nehemiah 9:31 (#3)

"you did not make a complete end of them, and you did not forsake them"

These two phrases do not describe separate things. They mean something similar. They describe what the people deserved for refusing to obey Yahweh.

The first phrase describes what the people would have experienced in their lives. They would have been completely destroyed. The second phrase describes what they would have experienced in their relationship with Yahweh. He would have given up on them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "You did not abandon them to complete destruction"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 9:31 (#4)

"and you did not forsake them"

Alternate translation: "you did not give up on them"

Nehemiah 9:31 (#5)

"gracious and merciful"

Gracious and **merciful** mean similar things. The Levites use them together to emphasize that God did not punish the Israelites the way they deserved. You do not need to repeat both words in your translation if that would make the meaning less clear for your readers. Alternate translation: "very merciful"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:32 (#1)

"So now"

This phrase indicates that the Levites believe that what they are about to ask for should be the results of what they have just described. Specifically, because he is merciful, God helped the Israelites in the past even though they did not deserve it. And so the Levites are praying for God to be merciful and help the Israelites now even though they do not deserve it. Alternate translation: "and that is why we are praying this now"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:32 (#2)

"the great, mighty, and fearsome God"

As in [1:5](#), **great** and **fearsome** mean similar things. “Mighty” also means something similar. The Levites use all of these words together to emphasize how much respect God deserves. You do not need to repeat all three words in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. However, there is a slight difference in meaning, and you could also bring that out in your translation. “Great” and “mighty” refer to how powerful God is objectively. “Fearsome” reflects how people should respond to God’s greatness subjectively. They should “fear” God. This does not mean that they should be afraid of him, but that they should show him respect and reverence. Alternate translation: “the God who deserves total respect” (A doublet can involve the use of more than two words.)

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:32 (#3)

“who keeps the covenant and covenant faithfulness”

As in [1:5](#), **covenant** and **covenant faithfulness** mean similar things. The Levites said the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how certain it is that God will keep his promises. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. However, there is a slight difference in meaning, and you could bring that out in your translation even if you combine the phrases. The “covenant” is God’s promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants. “Covenant faithfulness” is a character quality of God. He is inwardly disposed to keep all of his promises, and he always does so faithfully. So you could say something like, “you always keep your promises faithfully because of who you are.”

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 9:32 (#4)

“do not let all the hardship be little before your face”

Here the Levites speak of something being small to mean that it is insignificant and not worthy of being noticed and addressed. Alternate translation: “do not regard our sufferings as insignificant”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:32 (#5)

“do not let all the hardship be little before your face”

As in [9:28](#), **face** refers to a person’s opinion or judgment, by association with the way they use the eyes in their face to see things and the way their facial expression shows what they think of those things. So the Levites would be praying that God would not regard their suffering as insignificant. Alternate translation: “do not regard our sufferings as insignificant”

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:32 (#6)

“the hardship” - “that has found us”

Here the Levites speak of the suffering that the Israelites have experienced as if it were a living thing that has looked for them and found them in order to cause them harm. Alternate translation: “the sufferings we have experienced”

See: Personification

Nehemiah 9:32 (#7)

“the hardship” - “that has found us”

Hardship is an abstract noun that refers to the suffering that the Israelites have experienced as a result of being conquered and dominated by foreign nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as “suffer.” Alternate translation: “how much we have suffered”

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 9:32 (#8)

“and our fathers”

Fathers here means **ancestors**. Alternate translation: “our ancestors”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:32 (#9)

"from the days of the kings of Assyria until this day"

The implication is that the Levites are talking about the suffering that the Israelites have experienced specifically because foreign nations have conquered them, beginning with the Assyrians who first conquered the northern part of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "from the time Israel was first conquered by the Assyrian kings until now"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:32 (#10)

"from the days of the kings of Assyria until this day"

This is a figure of speech in which the Levites are describing an entire time period by reference to its beginning and end, in order to include everything in between. Alternate translation: "the entire time we have been under foreign domination"

See: Merism

Nehemiah 9:33 (#1)

"And you are righteous concerning all that has come upon us"

Here the word **righteous** refers to God's actions as being a reflection of his righteous character. Alternate translation: "we acknowledge you have done the right thing in allowing all this to happen to us"

Nehemiah 9:33 (#2)

"all that has come upon us"

Here the Levites speak of the suffering that the Israelites have experienced as if it were a living thing that has come up to them in order to cause them harm. Alternate translation: "everything we have suffered"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 9:33 (#3)

"For you have acted faithfully; but as for us, we have acted wickedly"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could place this sentence before the previous one since it gives the reason for the results that are described in that other sentence. You could show the connection by using a word like "so" after this sentence. Alternate translation: "You have always done what you said you would do, and you have never abandoned us. But we have done many wrong things. And so"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:34 (#1)

"and our fathers"

Fathers here means "ancestors." Alternate translation: "our ancestors"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:34 (#2)

"have not done your law. And they have not attended to your commandments or to your testimonies"

These two phrases mean similar things. The Levites use the repetition to confess how completely the people have disobeyed what God told them to do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "have completely disobeyed everything you told them to do"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 9:34 (#3)

"And they have not attended to"

Not paying attention to a command, like not listening to it, is a figurative way of saying not obeying it. Alternate translation: "have disobeyed"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:34 (#4)**"your commandments or to your testimonies"**

These two terms mean similar things. You do not need to repeat both of them in your translation if that would make the meaning less clear for your readers. Alternate translation: "everything you told them to do"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:34 (#5)**"or to your testimonies that you testified against them"**

As in [9:26](#), [9:29](#), and [9:30](#), this expression means to warn someone about what they are doing. So here it is referring to "the warnings that you gave them to warn them." You do not need to repeat the idea of "warn" twice in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "the many warnings you gave them"

Nehemiah 9:35 (#1)**"And as for them, they did not serve you in their kingdom"**

Them means the people and their leaders, as listed in [9:32](#) and [9:34](#). **Serve** is another way of saying "obey." The implied meaning is that the Israelites did not obey Yahweh even when they had a kingdom of their own, before other nations conquered them. Alternate translation: "They did not obey you even while they had a kingdom of their own"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:35 (#2)**"and in your great goodness that you gave to them"**

Goodness is an abstract noun that refers to all the good things that God gave to the Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with an adjective such as "good." Alternate translation: "even while they enjoyed the good things you gave them"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 9:35 (#3)**"and in the wide and fat land"**

These two terms mean similar things. They both indicate that the land God gave to the Israelites was good for growing crops. There was a lot of room in it, and the soil was good. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these terms. Alternate translation: "the fertile land"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:35 (#4)**"and in the" - "and fat land"**

As in [9:25](#), "fat" means land that can produce abundantly and feed its inhabitants well. The rich character of the soil is being described by something associated with it, the well-fed character of the people it sustains. Alternate translation: "fertile land"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 9:35 (#5)**"that you gave before their face"**

Here, **face** means the front of a person. This expression is saying that God "put this land right in front of" the Israelites, emphasizing that God enabled them to defeat their enemies to get it. It was a gift from God, not something that the Israelites got for themselves. Alternate translation: "that you freely gave to them"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:35 (#6)**"And they did not turn away from their evil deeds"**

Here, **turning away from** something is a figurative expression that means giving it up. Alternate translation: "they would not stop doing wrong things"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:36 (#1)**"Behold"**

Behold is a term meant to focus the attention of the listener on what the speaker is about to say. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use some emphatic term or expression in your language that would have this same effect.

Nehemiah 9:36 (#2)**"today"**

This does not necessarily mean on this particular day, but rather at this time. Alternate translation: "This is how things are now"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:36 (#3)**"to our fathers"**

Fathers here means "ancestors." Alternate translation: "our ancestors"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 9:36 (#4)**"its fruit and its goodness"**

These two expressions mean similar things. They both refer to the crops that grow in the land the Israelites were promised. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these expressions. Alternate translation: "all the good things that grow here"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 9:36 (#5)**"its fruit"**

This means all the crops of the land, not just the fruit that grew on the trees. The Levites are using one particular food to refer to all food.

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 9:36 (#6)**"its goodness"**

Goodness is an abstract noun that refers to the tasty and nourishing food that grows in the land. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a different phrase. Alternate translation: "the good things that grow here"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 9:36 (#7)**"Behold"**

Behold is a term meant to focus the attention of the listener on what the speaker is about to say. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use some emphatic term or expression in your language that would have this same effect.

Nehemiah 9:37 (#1)**"And its great produce"**

Produce (pró-duce) is an abstract noun that refers to the crops that grow in the land. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as "produce" (prodúce). Alternate translation: "all that this land produces"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 9:37 (#2)**"belongs to the kings whom you have given to be over us in our sins"**

The implication is that foreign kings now rule over the Israelites because Yahweh is punishing the Israelites for disobeying him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the kings who now rule over us because you are punishing us for disobeying you"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:37 (#3)

"belongs to the kings whom you have given to be over us" - "and to be ruling over our bodies and over our livestock"

These two phrases mean similar things. In each phrase, the Levites are describing how foreign kings now rule over the Israelites. The second phrase intensifies the first by specifying that the Israelites serve these kings as slaves, and that the Israelites do not even own the animals they work with. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that might be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "You have allowed foreign kings to rule over us as slaves who own nothing"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 9:37 (#4)

"according to their will"

Alternate translation: "as they see fit"

Nehemiah 9:38 (#1)

"And in all of this"

This phrase indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the actions that the people are taking in response to everything that the Levites have just said. That is, they are doing this because they and their ancestors had disobeyed and Yahweh had punished them. Alternate translation: "In light of all this"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 9:38 (#2)

"we are cutting a faithful covenant"

The word **faithful** here does not mean that the covenant will act in a certain way, but that the people themselves are promising to be faithful to this covenant. Alternate translation: "we are making a covenant that we promise to keep"

Nehemiah 9:38 (#3)

"we are cutting a" - "covenant"

As in [9:8](#), to "cut" a covenant is a Hebrew idiom for making a solemn agreement with a person. Review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "we are making a covenant"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 9:38 (#4)

"and writing even on a sealed document our leaders, our Levites, our priests"

The implication is that the Israelites had scribes write this covenant on a scroll, the leaders wrote their names on it representing all the people, and then the Israelites sealed the document to make it official and to preserve it. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "We are writing this covenant on a scroll. The community leaders, the Levites, and the priests will sign it. And then we will seal it"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 9:38 (#5)

"our leaders"

This means the community leaders. From the document itself, it appears that these included both Nehemiah as the governor (10:1) and various tribal and extended-family leaders (10:14–27).

Nehemiah - Chapter 10 Introduction*Structure and formatting*

This chapter concludes the passage beginning in chapter 9.

*Special concepts in this chapter***The vow**

By signing this document, the people vowed or agreed to obey God, not to buy things on the Sabbath, and to pay their temple tax. (See: vow and Sabbath and Temple)

Nehemiah 10:1 (#1)**"And on the sealed documents were"**

Alternate translation: "These are the names that the leaders signed on the scroll before it was sealed."

Nehemiah 10:1 (#2)**"Nehemiah, the Tirshatha, the son of Hakaliah"**

As in [7:65](#) and [7:70](#), this was the formal Persian title of the governor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the title and then explain it. Alternate translation: "Nehemiah son of Hakaliah, the Tirshatha (that is, the governor)"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:1 (#3)**"Nehemiah," - "the son of Hakaliah, and Zedekiah"**

As in [1:1](#), Nehemiah is the name of a man, and Hakaliah is the name of his father. Zedekiah is also the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:1 (#4)**"and Zedekiah"**

This could mean the same man who is called "Zadok the scribe" in [13:13](#). That man seems to have been the official secretary for Nehemiah. Other documents from this time suggest that the name of the scribe would have come second in a list like this, right after the government official in charge. Alternate translation: "Zedekiah the scribe" or "Zedekiah the secretary."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:2 (#1)**"Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:3 (#1)**"Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:4 (#1)**"Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluk"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:5 (#1)**"Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:6 (#1)**"Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:7 (#1)**"Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:8 (#1)**"Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:8 (#2)**"These were the priests"**

Alternate translation: "These are the names of the priests who signed the covenant."

Nehemiah 10:8 (#3)**"These were the priests"**

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could place this sentence at the beginning of verse 2 since it introduces the list of priests. That way the list of priests would be like the list of Levites in verses 9–13 and the list of leaders in verses 14–27. Both of those lists have an introductory phrase like this at the beginning. Alternate translation: "These are the names of the priests who signed the covenant"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 10:9 (#1)**"And the Levites were"**

Alternate translation: "These are the names of the Levites who signed the covenant."

Nehemiah 10:9 (#2)**"And the Levites were"**

From the contexts in which the names of these men appear elsewhere in the book of Nehemiah, it seems that they were leaders of the Levites. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "These are the names of the Levites who signed the covenant. First, their leaders"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:9 (#3)**"even Jeshua, the son of Azariah"**

Jeshua is the name of a man, and Azariah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:9 (#4)**"Binnui," - "Henadad"**

Binnui and Henadad are both names of men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:9 (#5)**"Binnui, from the sons of Henadad"**

Sons here means **descendants** Alternate translation: "Binnui, one of the descendants of Henadad"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:9 (#6)**"Kadmiel"**

Kadmiel is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:10 (#1)**"also their brothers"**

Here, **brother** likely refers to the rest of the Levites who signed the covenant as fellow Levites of the three leaders. Alternate translation: "Next, their fellow Levites"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:10 (#2)**"Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan"**

These are the names of five men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:11 (#1)**"Mika, Rehob, Hashabiah"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:12 (#1)**"Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah"**

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:13 (#1)

"Hodiah, Bani, Beninu"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:14 (#1)

"The heads of the people were"

Alternate translation: "These are the names of the community leaders who signed the covenant"

Nehemiah 10:14 (#2)

"The heads of the people were"

Here, **head** is a figurative way of saying "leader."
Alternate translation: "community leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:14 (#3)

"Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani"

These are the names of five men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:15 (#1)

"Bunni, Azgad, Bebai"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:16 (#1)

"Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:17 (#1)

"Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:18 (#1)

"Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:19 (#1)

"Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:20 (#1)

"Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:21 (#1)

"Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:22 (#1)

"Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:23 (#1)

"Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:24 (#1)

"Halohesh, Pilha, Shobek"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:25 (#1)

"Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:26 (#1)

"Ahia, Hanan, Anan"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:27 (#1)

"Malluk, Harim, Baanah"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:28 (#1)

"And the rest of the people"

This means everyone else in the groups that are listed next, even if they did not sign the covenant personally. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "And everyone else in the following groups, whether or not they signed their name on the scroll"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:28 (#2)

"the gatekeepers"

This means the people who were responsible to open and close the gates that controlled access to the city and the temple. See how you translated this term in 7:1.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:28 (#3)

"the ones who sing"

As in [7:1](#), this means vocal musicians who led in worship, in processions, and ceremonies, producing music and chants that emphasized and enhanced the occasion. Alternate translation: "the singers"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:28 (#4)

"the Nethinim"

As in [3:26](#), the term **Nethinim** describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple servants"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:28 (#5)

"and all the ones who were separating themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God"

This could mean one of two things. (1) It could be referring to people from other nations who had converted and become Jews. Alternate translation: "people from other nations who had become Jews and would now obey the law of God" (2) It might not be a reference to a distinct group, but rather a description of something that was true of everyone from any of the previously named groups who agreed to the covenant. As in [9:2](#), it would be a description of how the Israelites needed to reject the influence and practices of other people groups in order to follow the law of God faithfully. Alternate translation: "that is, everyone who resolved to reject foreign influences and obey the law of God"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:28 (#6)

"the ones who were separating themselves from the peoples of the lands"

Separate is a figurative way of describing the act of rejecting an influence, as if this were a physical separation. In [9:2](#) the separation actually was physical (only Israelites could attend that assembly), but here it would be figurative. Alternate translation: “resolved to reject foreign influences”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:28 (#7)

“their sons and their daughters, all who were knowing, being able to understand”

Like the similar phrases in [8:2](#) and [8:3](#), this is likely an idiom that refers to children who could understand what the covenant was about. Alternate translation: “their children who were old enough to understand the covenant” or “all who were old enough to understand what promising to obey God meant”

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 10:29 (#1)

“were clinging to”

Here, **clinging to** is a figurative way of describing people who did not actually sign the scroll, as their leaders did, but who agreed with them and joined in the same purpose. Alternate translation: “agreed with” or “joined in the same purpose with”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:29 (#2)

“their brothers”

Here, **brother** likely means that the leaders who signed the scroll were fellow Jews of the rest of the people. Alternate translation: “their fellow Jews”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:29 (#3)

“their nobles”

See how you translated this term in [2:16](#). Alternate translation: “the leading citizens”

Nehemiah 10:29 (#4)

“and were entering into a curse and into an oath”

Here the story describes the covenant by two things associated with it. As part of the covenant, the people swore an oath to keep its terms, and they also said that anyone who broke its terms should be cursed. (That is, God should punish them.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning behind this figure. Alternate translation: “they made a serious agreement”

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 10:29 (#5)

“and were entering into a curse and into an oath”

Entering is a figurative way of saying that the people became parties to this agreement with God. The expression speaks as if the covenant were something that the people could physically go inside of, in order to become a part of it. Alternate translation: “they became parties to the covenant”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:29 (#6)

“to walk in the law of God”

As in [5:9](#), **walk** is an idiom that describes a person’s conduct in life. Alternate translation: “to live their lives in obedience to the law of God”

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 10:29 (#7)

“which was given by the hand of Moses”

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “which Moses gave to the people”

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 10:29 (#8)**"by the hand of Moses"**

Here, as in [9:14](#), **hand** represents control and action. Alternate translation: "Moses gave to the people"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:29 (#9)**"Moses the servant of God"**

As in [9:14](#), Moses is called the **servant** of God. While Moses was also God's servant in a more literal sense, this title is a figurative expression in the Old Testament that indicates that God used Moses to give his Law to his people the way a master would have a servant deliver a message. Alternate translation: "your special messenger"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:29 (#10)**"and to keep and to do"**

Keep and **do** mean similar things. The repetition emphasizes the people's resolve to keep God's law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these terms. Alternate translation: "carefully follow"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 10:29 (#11)**"all the commandments of Yahweh our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes"**

As in [1:7](#), **commandments**, **judgments**, and **statutes** mean basically the same thing. They refer to provisions in the Law of Moses. Here again the repetition emphasizes the people's resolve to obey everything in God's law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: "everything Yahweh our Lord has commanded," otherwise "the commands, rules, and laws of Yahweh our Lord" (A doublet can involve the use of more than two words.)

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 10:30 (#1)**"and that we would not give our daughters to the peoples of the land, and we would not take their daughters for our sons"**

These two phrases mean similar things. They both indicate that the Jews are promising here not to let their children marry people from the other groups living in the area. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "We promise that we will not allow any one of our children to marry someone from another people group"

See: Parallelism

Nehemiah 10:30 (#2)**"we would" - "give"**

Here and through to the end of this chapter, the pronoun "we" includes Nehemiah and the Jewish people, but not the readers of this book.

See: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Nehemiah 10:30 (#3)**"to the peoples of the land"**

This refers to other people groups who live in the land and who do not worship Yahweh. The implication is that intermarriage with these groups would lead the Israelites to compromise their loyalty to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the people of this land who do not worship Yahweh"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:31 (#1)**"and, on the sabbath" - "we would not take from the peoples of the land, the ones bringing goods and all kinds of grain to sell on the day of the sabbath"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the first phrase. Alternate translation: "If people from other groups bring goods or grain to sell on the Sabbath, we will not buy any from them."

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 10:31 (#2)

"on the sabbath"

The implication is that the Israelites are promising not to buy anything because the Sabbath is a day for rest and worship, not for buying and selling. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "on the Sabbath, we will not buy any from them, because Yahweh has told us not to buy or sell on the Sabbath"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:31 (#3)

"or on a holy day"

Alternate translation: "on a festival day" or "during a festival"

Nehemiah 10:31 (#4)

"and we would leave alone the seventh year"

Here the covenant leaves out one or more words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. **Leave alone** means "leave our fields alone," that is, do not plant or harvest any crops, and **the seventh year** means "in the seventh year." Alternate translation: "we will not grow anything in our fields every seventh year"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 10:31 (#5)

"and we would leave alone the seventh year"

The seventh year refers to the commandment in the Law of Moses to allow fields to rest one year out of every seven. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "We will leave our fields alone and not work them during the seventh year, because the law commands us not to grow any crops then."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:31 (#6)

"the seventh year"

Alternate translation: "year seven"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 10:31 (#7)

"and we would leave alone" - "and interest of every hand"

This could mean one of several things. (1) As in [5:7-12](#), it could be a promise not to charge any interest on loans to fellow Israelites. (2) It could mean that during the seventh year, no loan payments would be collected. (3) It could mean that during the seventh year, all debts would be cancelled. Alternate translation: "we will not charge interest on loans to our fellow Israelites" or "during the seventh year, we will not collect loan payments" or "during the seventh year, we will cancel all the debts of our fellow Israelites."

Nehemiah 10:31 (#8)

"and interest of every hand"

Here, **hand** seems to refer to a debt by reference to something associated with it, the way debts were formalized by the borrower grasping the hand of the lender. Alternate translation: "interest on any debt"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 10:32 (#1)

"Also, we caused to stand for us commandments"

As in [5:13](#), the covenant speaks of the commitments the people are making as if they were living things that could **stand**, that is, stay in place rather than go away. The people are saying that they will make sure this commitment does not "go away." Alternate translation: "we are making a firm commitment"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 10:32 (#2)

"to give over us"

Alternate translation: "each one of us will contribute"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 10:32 (#3)

"a third of a shekel"

In ancient times, a silver shekel weighed about 11 grams or about a third of an ounce. You could try to express this in terms of modern money values, but if you did, that could cause your Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate over time since those values can change from year to year. Instead, you could give the equivalent weight or use the biblical term in the text and give the weight in a note. Alternate translation: "a third of a shekel each year" or "four grams of silver each year"

See: Biblical Money

Nehemiah 10:32 (#4)

"a third of a shekel"

A **third** means one part out of three equal parts.

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 10:32 (#5)

"for the service of the house of our God"

The abstract noun **service** describes all the things needed for worship in the temple, as listed in the next verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "everything that is needed for worship in the temple"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 10:32 (#6)

"the house of our God"

As in [6:10](#) and [8:16](#), here the covenant speaks of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:33 (#1)

"for the bread in rows"

This refers to the 12 unleavened cakes made of fine flour that the law required to be set out freshly every Sabbath day in two rows of six on the table in the Holy Place. This is sometimes called the "showbread." Alternate translation: "the bread that is set out in rows"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:33 (#2)

"and the continual offering, and for the continual burnt offering"

This likely refers to a grain offering and an animal offering that were burned on the temple altar each day. Alternate translation: "the daily grain and animal offerings"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:33 (#3)

"the sabbaths, the new moons, for the appointed times"

This actually refers to the offerings that would be made at these times. The offerings are being described by something associated with them, the occasions on which they are offered. Alternate translation: "offerings made on the Sabbath, on the new moon festival, and during other festivals"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 10:33 (#4)

"and for the holy things"

This likely refers to offerings that would be dedicated and offered to God on behalf of the people on other occasions. Alternate translation: "and offerings needed for any other occasion"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:33 (#5)

"and for the sin offerings to cover over for Israel"

As Nehemiah does in [4:5](#), the covenant speaks here of sins as if they were an object that could be physically hidden. Alternate translation: "offerings made to ask God to forgive the sins of Israel"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:33 (#6)

"and all the work of the house of our God"

This seems to refer to the ongoing work of cleaning, maintaining, and repairing all of the furnishings and equipment used in the temple worship. Alternate translation: "and anything else needed to maintain worship in the temple"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:33 (#7)

"the house of our God"

Here again the covenant speaks of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:34 (#1)

"And we cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people: concerning the offering of pieces of wood, to bring them to the house of our God, for the house of our fathers"

Alternate translation: "We agree to determine by lot what time each year the various extended families among the priests, the Levites, and the people will be responsible for bringing an offering of wood to the temple."

Nehemiah 10:34 (#2)

"And we cast lots among"

A **lot** was a physical object that was used in various ways to make a selection among different possibilities. Use the term in your language that would best describe such an object for your readers.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:34 (#3)

"to the house of our God"

Here again the covenant speaks of the temple as the "house of God," as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:34 (#4)

"for the house of our fathers"

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "our father's houses." The full expression "father's house" or "house of the father" is used in [7:61](#). See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "taking turns by clan"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 10:34 (#5)

"year by year"

This is an idiom that means "each year" or "every year."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 10:34 (#6)

"for burning"

Burning is an abstract noun that describes how the wood these families agreed to bring to the temple would be used for fuel for the sacrifices offered on the altar. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as "burn." You could also say who would do the action. Alternate translation: "for the Levites to burn"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 10:34 (#7)**"as written in the law"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "as the law commands"

See: Active or Passive

firstborn males from their families to the temple for a different reason than the reason for which it required them to bring the firstborn males from among their domesticated animals. Alternate translation: "We promise to bring our firstborn sons to the temple to dedicate them to God, and we promise to bring the first male offspring of all of our animals to the temple so that the priests can offer them to God as sacrifices"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:35 (#1)**"the firstfruits of our soil"**

Here the covenant speaks of the soil of the land as if it were a tree that would bear fruit. Alternate translation: "the first crops that grow in our fields"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 10:36 (#2)**"as written in the law"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "as the law commands"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 10:35 (#2)**"year by year"**

This is an idiom that means **each year** or **every year**.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 10:36 (#3)**"to the house of our God," - "in the house of our God"**

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:35 (#3)**"to the house of Yahweh"**

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Here the expression is modified slightly and it says **Yahweh** instead of **our God**. Alternate translation: "to the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:36 (#4)**"to the priests, the ones who minister in the house of our God"**

These two phrases mean the same thing. The covenant uses the repetition for clarity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "the priests who serve in the temple"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 10:36 (#1)

"and the firstborns of our sons and our livestock," - "even the firstborns of our herds and our flocks, to bring them to the house of our God"

Firstborn means specifically the firstborn male offspring in every case, as the law specifies. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain that the law required the Israelites to bring the

Nehemiah 10:37 (#1)**"And" - "the first of our dough and our offerings, and the fruit of every tree, wine, and oil"**

The words **the first of** at the start of this list apply to every item on the list. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could repeat that idea

throughout the list. Alternate translation: "the first of the flour that we make, a first portion of the food offerings we bring to the temple, the first fruit from each of our fruit trees, and the first of the wine and oil that we produce each year"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 10:37 (#2)

"our dough"

Possible meanings are that this refers to: (1) dough made from coarse flour, (2) coarse flour, or (3) ground grain.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:37 (#3)

"to the chambers of the house of our God"

This phrase explains where the people are agreeing to deliver the items on the preceding list, which are special contributions for the priests. Alternate translation: "to the rooms where things are stored in the temple" or "to the storehouses in the temple"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:37 (#4)

"the house of our God"

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the "house of God," as if it were the place where God lived, since God's presence was in the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:37 (#5)

"and a tithe of our soil"

Here, the covenant speaks of the soil as a way of referring to the crops that grow in the soil. Alternate translation: "one tenth of the crops that grow in our fields"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 10:37 (#6)

"and a tithe of"

This means a tenth (1/10) or one part out of ten equal parts.

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 10:37 (#7)

"And they, the Levites, will be the ones receiving tithes in all the cities of our labor"

This phrase explains where the people are agreeing to deliver this tithe of crops, which is a special contribution for the Levites. Alternate translation: "The Levites can collect this contribution of one tenth of our crops right in the cities where we live and work"

Nehemiah 10:37 (#8)

"in all the cities of our labor"

The abstract noun **labor** refers to how the people would work the land in order to grow crops. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as **work**. Alternate translation: "the cities where we live and work"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 10:38 (#1)

"And a priest who is a son of Aaron will be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes"

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why a priest will be present. Alternate translation: "a priest will be present to supervise when the people give their tithes to the Levites"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:38 (#2)

"a priest who is a son of Aaron"

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who the priests were. Alternate translation: "one of the priests, who are descendants of Aaron"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 10:38 (#3)

"**who is a son of Aaron**"

Son here means "descendant." Alternate translation: "a descendant of Aaron"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:38 (#4)

"**when the Levites receive tithes**"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could state from whom the Levites will receive these tithes. Alternate translation: "when the people give their tithes to the Levites"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:38 (#5)

"**when**" - "**receive tithes.**" - "**a tithe of the tithe**"

A "tithe" means a tenth (1/10) or one part out of ten equal parts.

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 10:38 (#6)

"**And the Levites will bring a tithe of the tithe to the house of our God**"

The implication is that in the way the Levites will help support the priests, in the same way the people will support the priests through the tithes described in verse 37. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Levites will bring one tenth of the tithes they receive to the temple, to help support the priests"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 10:38 (#7)

"**to the house of our God**"

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:38 (#8)

"**to the chambers of the house of the treasury**"

Like the similar phrase in [10:37](#), this phrase explains where the Levites are to deliver the ten percent of the tithes that they will contribute. Alternate translation: "to the rooms where things are stored in the temple" or "the rooms in the temple treasury"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 10:39 (#1)

"**the chambers**"

This is an abbreviated way of saying "the chambers of the house of the treasury" as in [10:38](#). Alternate translation: "the rooms where things are stored in the temple" or "the rooms in the temple treasury"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 10:39 (#2)

"**the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi**"

Sons here means "descendants." The term is referring to the groups that were descended from the men named Israel and Levi. Alternate translation: "the Israelites and the Levites"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 10:39 (#3)

"**And there shall be the vessels for the sanctuary, and the priests, the ones who are ministering, and the gatekeepers, and the ones who sing**"

There means in those same storerooms. The phrase **the vessels for** at the start of this list applies to every item on the list. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could repeat that idea throughout the list. Alternate translation: "In those same rooms we will also store equipment for the

temple, equipment that the priests use when they are on duty, tools that the gatekeepers use, and instruments for the musicians"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 10:39 (#4)

"the vessels for"

Here the covenant uses one type of equipment that the storerooms would hold, **vessels** or "jars" or "containers," to refer to all the different types of equipment on the list in this verse. Alternate translation: "equipment"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 10:39 (#5)

"And we shall not neglect the house of our God"

This is a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. Alternate translation: "we will make sure that we provide for the temple"

See: Litotes

Nehemiah 10:39 (#6)

"the house of our God"

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah - Chapter 11 Introduction

Special concepts in this chapter

The places where the Jews lived

Some people lived in Jerusalem, but most people lived in villages and towns away from Jerusalem. They lived there in order to farm the land and raise their animals. The city with its walls was there to provide all of the people with protection if enemies attacked them.

Nehemiah 11:1 (#1)

"cast lots"

As in [10:34](#), a **lot** was a physical object that was used in various ways to make a selection among different possibilities. Use the term in your language that would best describe such an object for your readers.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 11:1 (#2)

"one out of ten"

This means "one out of ten people."

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 11:1 (#3)

"in Jerusalem the holy city"

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers about the special status that Jerusalem had, which was why it was so important for that city to be well populated. As in [1:9](#), the list is acknowledging Jerusalem as the place from which God chose to start making himself famous throughout the world, and as the city where God chose to put his temple. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem, the special city that God chose"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 11:1 (#4)

"and nine hands were in the cities"

Here the list is using the term **hand** to refer to an entire person. Alternate translation: "the other nine out of ten people remained in the cities and towns where they had been living"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 11:2 (#1)

"all the men"

In this context, **a man** means "everyone." Alternate translation: "everyone who"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 11:3 (#1)**"the heads of the province"**

Head here is a figurative way of saying **leader**.
 Alternate translation: "provincial leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:3 (#2)**"And in the cities of Judah"**

This sentence explains a contrasting idea before the story goes on to develop the idea that the previous sentence introduces. This chapter is a list of the provincial leaders, priests, Levites, gatekeepers, temple servants, and singers who lived in Jerusalem. The previous sentence introduces the first part of that list, but before the list gives the names of the provincial leaders, it explains that most of the people who had returned to the province of Judah kept on living on their ancestral lands in other cities and towns. You could begin this sentence with a word like "but" to indicate this contrast.

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 11:3 (#3)**"And in the cities of Judah" - "in their cities"**

These two phrases mean the same thing and you do not need to repeat both of them if that would be confusing for your readers.

Nehemiah 11:3 (#4)**"a man on his property"**

In this context, **a man** means "each person," and the expression may be understood to indicate "each family." Alternate translation: "each family on its own property"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 11:3 (#5)**"Israel"**

Here the list refers to all of the Israelites as if they were a single person, their ancestor, Israel.
 Alternate translation: "the Israelites"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 11:3 (#6)**"and the Nethinim"**

As in [3:26](#), the term **Nethinim** describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple servants"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 11:3 (#7)**"and the sons of the servants of Solomon"**

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: "the descendants of the laborers who had worked for the kingdom"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:3 (#8)**"the servants of Solomon"**

As in [7:57](#), this phrase refers to people whom Solomon first conscripted as laborers. They and their descendants remained conscripted laborers under later kings. Review the note to [7:57](#) if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "laborers who had worked for the kingdom"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 11:4 (#1)**"And" - "in Jerusalem"**

This sentence provides further information about the situation the book is describing here. In addition to the people who were living in various other cities and towns in the province of Judah, there were other people already living in Jerusalem. So the city was not empty, but it did need to be more fully populated. You could use a

word like “moreover” to show that this is further background information.

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 11:4 (#2)

“from the sons of Judah and from the sons of Benjamin”

Sons here means “descendants.” Alternate translation: “some people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:4 (#3)

“Those from the sons of Judah were”

Sons here means “descendants.” Alternate translation: “those from the tribe of Judah”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:4 (#4)

“Athaiah, the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel”

These are the names of six men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:4 (#5)

“Athaiah”

The implication is that Athaiah was one of the leaders of the people from the tribe of Judah who lived in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Their leader, Athaiah”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:4 (#6)

“from the sons of Perez”

Sons here means “descendants.” Alternate translation: “one of the descendants of Perez”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:5 (#1)

“and Maaseiah, the son of Baruch, the son of Kol-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah”

These are the names of seven men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:5 (#2)

“and Maaseiah”

The implication is that Maaseiah was another leader of the people from the tribe of Judah who lived in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “another leader, Maaseiah”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:5 (#3)

“a son of the Shiloni”

Most likely, the Shiloni were the clan descended from Judah’s son Shelah. Here the phrase **son of** indicates that Maaseiah shared in the quality of belonging to this clan. Alternate translation: “one of the descendants of Shelah”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:6 (#1)

“All the sons of Perez, the ones dwelling in Jerusalem, were 468 men of strength”

Alternate translation: “The total number of the descendants of Perez who settled in Jerusalem who were able to fight in the army was 468”

Nehemiah 11:6 (#2)

"the sons of Perez, the ones dwelling in Jerusalem"

Sons here means **descendants**. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Perez who lived in Jerusalem"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:6 (#3)

"were 468 men of strength"

The abstract noun **strength** refers to the way these men were able to use weapons and fight to defend the city if necessary. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as **fight**. Alternate translation: "468 men who were able to fight in the army"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 11:6 (#4)

"were 468"

Alternate translation: "four hundred and sixty-eight"

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 11:7 (#1)

"the sons of Benjamin"

Sons here means **descendants**. Alternate translation: "the people from the tribe of Benjamin"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:7 (#2)

"the sons of Benjamin"

This means specifically the people from the tribe of Benjamin who lived in Jerusalem. The list is speaking in abbreviated form here. Alternate translation: "the people from the tribe of Benjamin who lived in Jerusalem"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 11:7 (#3)

"Sallu, the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah"

These are the names of eight men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:7 (#4)

"Sallu"

The implication is that Sallu was one of the leaders of the people from the tribe of Benjamin who lived in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Their main leader was Sallu"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:8 (#1)

"and after him, Gabbai, Sallai"

After is a figurative way of saying that these two men were also leaders, but they were subordinate to Sallu. Alternate translation: "Two other leaders who assisted him were Gabbai and Sallai"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:8 (#2)

"Gabbai, Sallai"

These are the names of two men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:8 (#3)

"928"

As in [11:6](#), the number given represents the total number of men from this tribe who were able to use weapons and fight to defend the city if necessary. The list is speaking in abbreviated form here. Alternate translation: "The total number of the men from the tribe of Benjamin living in

Jerusalem who were able to fight in the army was 928."

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 11:8 (#4)

"928"

Alternate translation: "nine hundred and twenty-eight men"

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 11:9 (#1)

"And Joel the son of Zichri"

Joel is the name of a man, and Zichri is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:9 (#2)

"was the overseer for them"

This means that when these men from the tribe of Benjamin formed a fighting unit, Joel was their commander. Alternate translation: "the commander of the troops from the tribe of Benjamin"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 11:9 (#3)

"And Judah, the son of Hassenuah"

Judah is the name of a man, and Hassenuah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:9 (#4)

"was the second over the city"

This phrase could mean a number of things. (1) Since this list does not name the person who was first in charge of the city, and it also does not describe other parts of the city and who was responsible for them, this phrase most likely means

that Judah was second in command, after Joel, over the forces that would be formed from men living in the city. If that is the meaning, then the list is describing these troops by reference to something associated with them, the city they would come from. (2) However, it could mean that Judah was something like the deputy mayor of the whole city. (3) It could also mean that Judah was responsible for one part of the city. Alternate translation: "second in command over troops from the city"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 11:10 (#1)

"From the priests"

The implication is that this next section of the list will name the men who were leaders of the priests. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Here are the names of the leaders of the priests who settled in Jerusalem"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:10 (#2)

"Jedaiah the son of Joiarib"

Jedaiah is the name of a man, and Joiarib is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:10 (#3)

"Jakin"

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:11 (#1)

"Seraiah, the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub"

These are the names of six men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:11 (#2)**"the leader of the house of God"**

This is background information that helps identify Seraiah further. Alternate translation: "the priest in charge of the temple"

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 11:11 (#3)**"the house of God"**

Here the list speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:12 (#1)**"and their brothers, who were doing the work for the house, were 822"**

Alternate translation: "The total number of their fellow priests who were serving in the temple was 822"

Nehemiah 11:12 (#2)**"and their brothers"**

Here, **brother**, is a figurative way of saying "fellow priest," although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of Joiarib, Jakin, and Seraiah were included in this group. Alternate translation: "their fellow priests"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:12 (#3)**"who were doing the work for the house"**

Here, **house** is an abbreviated way of saying "house of God," and that is a figurative way of referring to the temple. Alternate translation: "who served in the temple"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 11:12 (#4)**"were 822"**

"eight hundred and twenty-two men"

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 11:12 (#5)**"and Adaiah"**

The implication is that Adaiah was another leader of the priests who settled in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Another leader of the priests who settled in Jerusalem was Adaiah"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:12 (#6)

"and Adaiah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malkijah"

These are the names of seven men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:13 (#1)**"and his brothers, the heads of fathers"**

In this case, **his brothers** seems to be a figurative way of saying "his fellow leaders," since the list specifies that these associates of Adaiah were leaders of clans. Alternate translation: "the family leaders who helped him"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:13 (#2)**"the heads of fathers"**

As in [7:70](#) and [8:13](#), this seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "house of the father" or "father's house" is used in 7:61. See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "clan leaders"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 11:13 (#3)

"the heads"

Here, **head** is a figurative way of saying **leader**.
Alternate translation: "leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:13 (#4)

"were 242"

It seems unlikely that there were 242 family leaders assisting Adaiah. Rather, in context, this seems to be the number of priests that Adaiah and the family leaders who helped him were responsible for. Alternate translation: "they were responsible for 242 priests"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:13 (#5)

"were 242"

"two hundred and forty-two men"

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 11:13 (#6)

"and Amashsai"

The implication is that Amashsai was another leader of the priests who settled in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Another leader of the priests who settled in Jerusalem was Amashsai"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:13 (#7)

"and Amashsai, the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer"

These are the names of five men. In this context, "son" means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:14 (#1)

"and their brothers, mighty men of strength, were 128"

The implication is that this is the total number of priests that Amashsai was responsible for. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Amashsai was responsible for 128 priests who were capable of working in the temple"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:14 (#2)

"and their brothers"

Here, in context, **brothers** is a figurative way of saying "fellow priests" as in [11:12](#), although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of Amashsai were included in this group. **Their** is plural because it is describing this group in reference to all of the other priests, not just to Amashsai. Alternate translation: "their fellow priests"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:14 (#3)

"mighty men of strength"

In this context, the abstract noun **strength** likely refers to the way these men were physically capable of doing the required work in the temple. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with an adjective such as "capable." Alternate translation: "men who were capable of working in the temple"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 11:14 (#4)

"were 128"

Alternate translation: "one hundred and twenty-eight"

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 11:14 (#5)

"And" - "was overseer for them"

This appears to mean that while Amashsai was responsible overall for this group of priests, Zabdiel supervised their day-to-day work. Alternate translation: "Zabdiel was their supervisor"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:14 (#6)

"Zabdiel the son of Hagedolim"

Zabdiel is the name of a man, and Hagedolim is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:15 (#1)

"And from the Levites"

The implication is that this next section of the list will name the men who were leaders of the Levites. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Here are the names of the leaders of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem. One of them was"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:15 (#2)

"Shemaiah, the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni"

These are the names of five men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:16 (#1)

"and Shabbethai and Jozabad"

These are the names of two men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:16 (#2)

"from the heads of the Levites"

Head here is a figurative way of saying **leader**. Alternate translation: "who were also leaders of the Levites"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:16 (#3)

"were over the work outside of the house of God"

Here the list speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. **Outside** refers to all of the duties that Levites had that did not involve working inside the temple itself. (For example, collecting offerings, as described in [10:37-38](#).) Alternate translation: "supervised all the work that the Levites did outside the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:17 (#1)

"and Mattaniah, the son of Mika, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph"

These are the names of four men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:17 (#2)

"and Mattaniah"

The implication is that Mattaniah was another leader of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Another leader of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem was"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:17 (#3)

"the head of the beginning who offered the thanksgiving prayer"

Head here is a figurative way of saying **leader**. Alternate translation: "the director of the Levite choir"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:17 (#4)

"the head of the beginning"

This expression seems to indicate that Mattaniah told the Levite musicians who sang in the temple when to begin singing; that is, he was the director of their choir. As the choir director, he would have done many other things as well. For example, he would keep the tempo, have the choir sing louder or softer, and tell the choir when to stop singing. Here the list is describing the work of directing the choir by reference to one aspect of it, starting the singing. Alternate translation: "the director"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 11:17 (#5)

"who offered the thanksgiving prayer"

Here the book is describing the choir by reference to one kind of thing it was associated with, the prayers of thanksgiving that it sang. Alternate translation: "of the choir"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 11:17 (#6)

"who offered the thanksgiving prayer"

While the list says that Mattaniah offered this prayer really, the whole choir did so with him as its director. The list is referring to the entire choir by the name of one member, Mattaniah. Alternate translation: "of the choir"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 11:17 (#7)

"and Bakbukiah," - "and Abda"

The implication is that Bakbukiah and Abda were further leaders of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Two other leaders of the priests who settled in Jerusalem were"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:17 (#8)

"and Bakbukiah"

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:17 (#9)

"second from his brothers"

Here, **brother** likely refers to the other the Levites in this division. The expression means that Bakbukiah was another leader who assisted Mattaniah with the Levite choir. It could also possibly mean that he directed a second group of singers. Alternate translation: "who assisted Mattaniah with the Levite choir"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:17 (#10)

"second"

Alternate translation: "the next in command"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 11:17 (#11)

"and Abda, the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun"

These are the names of four men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:18 (#1)

"All the Levites in the holy city were 284"

Alternate translation: "The total number of Levites who settled in Jerusalem was 284"

Nehemiah 11:18 (#2)

"in the holy city"

As in [11:1](#), this phrase describes Jerusalem as the place from which God chose to start making himself famous throughout the world, and as the city where God chose to put his temple. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem, the special city that God chose"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 11:18 (#3)

"were 284"

Alternate translation: "two hundred and eighty-four"

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 11:19 (#1)

"And the gatekeepers"

The implication is that this next section of the list will name the men who were leaders of the gatekeepers. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Here are the names of the leaders of the gatekeepers who settled in Jerusalem:" followed by the list of names.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:19 (#2)

"And the gatekeepers"

This means the people who were responsible to open and close the gates that controlled access to the city or perhaps the temple. See how you translated this term in [7:1](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 11:19 (#3)

"Akkub, Talmon"

These are the names of two men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:19 (#4)

"and their brothers, the ones who guarded at the gates, were 172"

The list is speaking in abbreviated form here. Alternate translation: "These leaders and their fellow gatekeepers amounted to a total of 172 gatekeepers who settled in Jerusalem."

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 11:19 (#5)

"and their brothers, the ones who guarded at the gates"

Here, in context, **brother** seems to be a figurative way of saying "fellow gatekeepers," although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of Akkub and Talmon were included in this group. Alternate translation: "their fellow gatekeepers"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:19 (#6)

"were 172"

Alternate translation: "one hundred and seventy-two men"

See: Numbers

Nehemiah 11:20 (#1)

"And the rest of Israel"

Here the list refers to all of the Israelites by something associated with them, the name of their ancestor, Israel. Alternate translation: "all the other the Israelites"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 11:20 (#2)

"were in all the cities of Judah, a man in his inheritance"

In this context, **a man** means "each person," and as in [11:3](#), it may be understood to indicate "each family." Alternate translation: "continued to live in all the other cities of Judah, each family on its own ancestral land"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 11:20 (#3)

"a man in his inheritance"

The abstract noun **inheritance** refers to the land that was passed down through the generations in each Israelite family. The Levites did not have territory of their own, but they had some towns and surrounding pasturelands as their property. Alternate translation: "each family on its own ancestral land"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 11:21 (#1)

"And the Nethinim"

The term **Nethinim** describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple servants"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 11:21 (#2)

"in the Ophel"

This is probably the name of a geographic feature, a fortified extension of the hill that the Jerusalem temple was located on. See how you translated this term in [3:26-27](#). Alternate translation: "Ophel Hill"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 11:21 (#3)

"and Ziha and Gishpa"

These are the names of two men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:21 (#4)

"were over the Nethinim"

This is a figurative way of saying that Ziha and Gishpa were the leaders of this group. Alternate translation: "were the leaders of the temple servants"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:22 (#1)

"And the overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was"

Alternate translation: "the supervisor of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem"

Nehemiah 11:22 (#2)

"Uzzi, the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mika"

These are the names of five men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:22 (#3)

"from the sons of Asaph"

Sons here means "descendants." Alternate translation: "who were descendants of Asaph"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:22 (#4)

"the ones who sang"

Here the list supplies some background information that reminds readers what the Levites in the temple were primarily responsible for. Alternate translation: "and who performed music"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 11:22 (#5)**"who were over the work of the house of God"**

Here the list speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. By contrast with the Levites described in [11:16](#), these Levites were responsible for all the duties that had to be performed inside the temple itself. Alternate translation: "who were responsible for the work that was done inside the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:23 (#1)**"For"**

This word indicates that the information that follows provides further background information about this situation. You could express the same meaning with a word that indicates this in your language.

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 11:23 (#2)**"the commandment of the king was upon them"**

Here the list speaks of the commandment as if it rested upon the Levite singers. Alternate translation: "the king had given orders concerning them"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 11:23 (#3)**"that support for the ones who sang"**

The abstract noun **support** refers to an order that the king had given for his own kingdom to pay for the costs of worship in the temple. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the same idea with a verb such as "subsidize." Alternate translation: "to subsidize the expenses of the Levite singers"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 11:23 (#4)**"was a daily matter in its day"**

This is an idiom that means "as each day required."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 11:24 (#1)**"And Pethahiah, the son of Meshezabel"**

Pethahiah is the name of a man, and Meshezabel is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:24 (#2)**"from the sons of Zerah"**

Sons here means "descendants." Alternate translation: "one of the descendants of Zerah"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:24 (#3)**"Zerah, the son of Judah"**

Zerah is the name of a man, and Judah is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:24 (#4)**"was at the hand of the king"**

Here, **hand** means **side** and describing Zerah as the king's advisor by reference to something associated with that role, the place that he would usually occupy next to the king. Alternate translation: "was an advisor to the king"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 11:24 (#5)**"for every matter of the people"**

People here means the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "for all matters concerning the Jewish people"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:25 (#1)**"And for"**

After describing the various groups that settled in Jerusalem and their leaders, the list said in [11:20](#) that all the other the Israelites continued to live in the other cities of Judah. In [11:21-24](#) the list gave additional details about some other things, but it is now returning to speak about those cities and towns outside of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this with a phrase such as "and as for"

Nehemiah 11:25 (#2)**"the villages in their fields"**

This refers to settlements and the adjacent agricultural land. It is as if the villages are **in** the fields because the fields surround the villages. Alternate translation: "the towns where there was farmland"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:25 (#3)**"the villages in their fields"**

The implication is that these are the places where people lived who did not settle in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the towns outside Jerusalem where there was farmland"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:25 (#4)**"some from the sons of Judah"**

Sons here means "descendants." Alternate translation: "some of the descendants of Judah" or "some of the people of Judah"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:25 (#5)**"in Kiriath Arba" - "and in Dibon" - "and in Jekabzeel"**

These are the names of three towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:25 (#6)**"in Kiriath Arba and its daughters; and in Dibon and its daughters; and in Jekabzeel and its villages"**

In this context, referring to the **daughters** of a town is a figurative way of describing the small communities that have grown up around it. (These communities were likely started by people from the town, and they depended on the town the way a child depends on a parent.) Here and in verses [27](#), [28](#), [30](#), and [31](#) use whatever term would convey this concept most clearly in your language. But be careful to distinguish between this term and the one that is used generally for the places in this part of the list. For example, if you translate "daughters" as "villages," then use a word like "town" for the places named on the list and other places that the list describes with the same word. Alternate translation: "in Kiriath Arba and its villages, in Dibon and its villages, and in Jekabzeel and the surrounding towns."

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:26 (#1)**"and in Jeshua; and in Moladah; and in Beth-Palet"**

These are the names of three towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:27 (#1)**"and in Hazar-Shual; and in Beersheba"**

These are the names of two towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:28 (#1)**"and in Ziklag; and Mekonah"**

These are the names of two towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:29 (#1)

"and in En-Rimmon; and in Zorah; and in Jarmuth"

These are the names of three towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:30 (#1)

"Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages; Lachish and its fields; Azekah and its daughters"

These are the names of cities or towns. Alternate translation: "in Zanoah and Adullam and the nearby towns, in Lachish and the surrounding farmland, and in Azekah and its villages"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:30 (#2)

"And they encamped from Beersheba as far as the valley of Hinnom"

Encamped is a figurative way of saying that the people of Judah lived throughout this area. They were no longer living in tents, but in permanent houses. Alternate translation: "And so the people of Judah were living throughout the area from Beersheba to the valley of Hinnom"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:30 (#3)

"And they encamped"

This phrase indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentences have described. If the people from the tribe of Judah lived in all these towns, then they were spread out over the whole area that the next phrase indicates. Alternate translation: "and so"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 11:30 (#4)

"And they encamped"

They refers to the people of Judah, looking back to the start of this part of the list in [11:25](#).

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 11:31 (#1)

"and the sons of"

This phrase indicates that a different group will now be in focus, the people of the tribe of Benjamin. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this contrast with an expression such as "for their part."

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 11:31 (#2)

"and the sons of Benjamin"

Sons here means "descendants." Alternate translation: "the people of the tribe of Benjamin"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:31 (#3)

"from Geba"

Here the list is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning is that the people of the tribe of Benjamin lived in different towns, beginning with Geba and including the rest of the towns that the list names afterwards. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "lived in other towns, including Geba"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 11:31 (#4)

"from Geba, at Mikmash, and Aija, and Bethel"

These are the names of four towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:31 (#5)

"and Bethel and its daughters"

As in [11:25](#) (and also in verses [27](#), [28](#), [30](#), and [31](#)), **daughters** is a figurative way of speaking of the small communities that grow up around a town. Review the note to [11:25](#) if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "Bethel and its villages"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:32 (#1)

"Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah"

These are the names of three towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:33 (#1)

"Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim"

These are the names of three towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:34 (#1)

"Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat"

These are the names of three towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:35 (#1)

"Lod, and Ono"

These are the names of two towns.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:35 (#2)

"the valley of the craftsmen"

Here the list supplies some background information that reminds readers what the town of Ono was known for. It was a center for craftsmen. Alternate translation: "which was a center for craftsmen"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 11:36 (#1)

"and some from"

This phrase indicates that yet another group will now be in focus. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this contrast with an expression such as "finally" (since this is also the last group on the list). Alternate translation: "Finally, from"

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 11:36 (#2)

"and some from the Levites, who were divisions of Judah, in Benjamin"

Here the list is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning seems to be that certain sections of the Levite community that had previously lived in the territory that had belonged to the tribe of Judah went to live in the territory that had belonged to the tribe of Benjamin rather than returning to their former homeland. Alternate translation: "some of the Levites whose families had lived in the territory of Judah now went to live in the territory of Benjamin"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 11:36 (#3)

"and some from the Levites, who were divisions of Judah, in Benjamin"

The book does not say explicitly why these Levites moved to a different area. However, one reasonable inference in light of the overall themes of the book of Nehemiah is that they did this so that there would be people throughout the entire area where the Israelites were living who could explain the law to them. If that would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "some of the Levites whose families had lived in the territory of Judah now went to live in the territory of Benjamin so that they could teach God's law to the people living there"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah - Chapter 12 Introduction

Special concepts in this chapter

Dedication of the wall

In the ancient Near East, it was common to dedicate an important structure to a god. When it was completed, the wall was dedicated to Yahweh. Long lists of people are present, indicating that "everyone" was present for this and praised Yahweh. (See: False God)

Nehemiah 12:1 (#1)

"And these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua"

The implication of the list in verses 1–25 of this chapter is that the priests and Levites had dependable records of their ancestry. So when Nehemiah called them back into service for the dedication of the wall and the collection of offerings, as described in the rest of this chapter, he was employing the people with exactly the lineage that the law required. Throughout this book, Nehemiah stresses how he made sure that the people of Judah were not only organized and well-protected, but also obedient to the law. This is one more example of that latter concern. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Here is a record that shows that the priests and Levites had dependable records of their ancestry. It begins with the priests who first returned to Judah with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, their governor, and with Joshua the high priest."

Nehemiah 12:1 (#2)

"came up"

As in [7:6](#) and [7:61](#), **went up** means "traveled from Babylon back to Judah," since that involves going from a river valley up into the mountains. Alternate translation: "returned to Judah from Babylon"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:1 (#3)

"with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel"

This was the man who led the first group of Jews who returned to the province of Judah about a hundred years before the time of Nehemiah. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this more explicitly. Alternate translation: "under the leadership of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, their governor"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:1 (#4)

"with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel"

Zerubbabel is the name of a man, and Shealtiel is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:1 (#5)

"and Jeshua"

This was the other leader of the first group of Jews who returned to the province of Judah. While Zerubbabel was the governor and civil authority, Joshua was the high priest and religious authority. Alternate translation: "and under the leadership of Joshua the high priest"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:1 (#6)

"Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra"

The list now names the priests who returned to Judah in this first group. Alternate translation: "The priests were:"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:1 (#7)

"Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra"

These are names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:2 (#1)

"Amariah, Malluk, Hattush"

These are names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:3 (#1)

"Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth"

These are names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:4 (#1)

"Iddo, Ginnethon, Abijah"

These are names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:5 (#1)

"Mijamin, Moadiah, Bilgah"

These are names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:6 (#1)

"Shemaiah and Joiarib, Jedaiah"

These are names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:7 (#1)

"Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah"

These are names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:7 (#2)

"These were the heads of the priests and their brothers in the days of Jeshua"

This is a summary statement about the 22 men who have just been named. Alternate translation: "These men were the leaders of the priests in their own divisions while Joshua was the high priest."

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 12:7 (#3)

"the heads of the priests and their brothers"

Here, **heads** is a figurative way of saying "leaders." Alternate translation: "the leaders of the priests in their own divisions"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:7 (#4)

"the heads of the priests and their brothers"

In this context, **and** means "that is," so the full expression means, "the leaders of the priests, that is, the ones who were their 'brothers.'" **Brothers** itself is a figurative way of saying "fellow priests," and in this context specifically means "the priests in their own divisions." (King David had divided the priests into divisions so that they could rotate their responsibilities, and the Israelites reconstituted these divisions after the exile.) It is possible that some of the people in each division were the biological brothers of the leaders named, since the divisions were created based on close kinship ties, but the word "brother" is essentially figurative. Alternate translation: "their fellow priests"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:7 (#5)

"in the days of Jeshua"

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "in the time of Joshua"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:8 (#1)

"And the Levites were"

Here the list is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: "And these were the leaders of the Levites who first returned to Judah with Zerubbabel the governor and with Joshua the high priest"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:8 (#2)

"Jeshua; Binnui; Kadmiel; Sherebiah; Judah; Mattaniah"

These are the names of six men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:8 (#3)

"he and his brothers were over the thanksgiving songs"

He refers to Mattaniah. **Brothers** means "fellow Levite leaders." Alternate translation: "Mattaniah and his fellow Levite leaders were responsible for directing the choir."

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:8 (#4)

"were over the thanksgiving songs"

As in [11:17](#), here the book is describing the choir by reference to one kind of thing it was associated with, the songs of thanksgiving that it sang. Alternate translation: "directed the choir"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 12:8 (#5)

"were over the thanksgiving songs"

Over is a figurative way of saying that Mattaniah and his colleagues were responsible for this group. Alternate translation: "were responsible for directing the choir"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:8 (#6)

"the thanksgiving songs"

One responsibility of the Levite choir was to sing prayers of thanksgiving. But it sang many other things as well. Here the list is describing everything the choir sang by reference to one kind of thing it

sang, prayers of thanksgiving. Alternate translation: "the choir"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 12:9 (#1)

"and Bakbukiah and Unni"

These are the names of two men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:9 (#2)

"their brothers"

Brothers here means **their fellow Levite leaders**.

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:9 (#3)

"were opposite them in the service watches"

This phrase could mean one of two things. (1) It could mean that Mattaniah and his associates directed one choir, and Bakbukiah and Unni directed a second choir that stood opposite to this first one and sang responses to what it sang. (2) It could mean that Bakbukiah and Unni took turns with Mattaniah and his associates in assuming the responsibilities of directing a single Levite choir. Alternate translation: "led a second choir that sang responses" or "took turns with them directing the Levite choir"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:10 (#1)

"And Jeshua fathered Joiakim; and Joiakim fathered Eliashib; and Eliashib, Joiada"

Here the book is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: "Joshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim was the father of Eliashib, Eliashib was the father of Joiada"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:10 (#2)

"And Jeshua fathered Joiakim; and Joiakim fathered Eliashib; and Eliashib, Joiada"

Since this list actually continues into the next verse, for clarity you may wish to end this verse with the punctuation that your language uses to indicate that a series is continuing, rather than with the punctuation it uses to show that a sentence is ending.

Nehemiah 12:10 (#3)

"And Jeshua fathered Joiakim; and Joiakim fathered Eliashib; and Eliashib, Joiada"

This is a record of the succession of the Jewish high priests for several generations beginning with Joshua, the high priest who accompanied the first group that returned to Judah from exile. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "When Joshua died, his son Joiakim succeeded him as high priest. When Joiakim died, his son Eliashib succeeded him as high priest. When Eliashib died, his son Joiada succeeded him as high priest"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:11 (#1)

"and Joiada fathered Jonathan; and Jonathan fathered Jaddua"

Alternate translation, if continuing the sentence from the previous verse: "Joiada was the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan was the father of Jaddua." Alternate translation, if making explicit that this is the succession of high priests: "When Joiada died, his son Jonathan succeeded him as high priest. When Jonathan died, his son Jaddua succeeded him as high priest"

Nehemiah 12:11 (#2)

"and Joiada" - "Jonathan;" - "Jaddua"

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:12 (#1)

"And in the days of Joiakim priests were the heads of the fathers"

Here the book is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. "Priests were" is an abbreviated way of saying "these are the priests who were." Alternate translation: "These are the priests who were clan leaders while Joiakim was the high priest"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:12 (#2)

"And in the days of Joiakim"

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "while Joiakim was the high priest"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:12 (#3)

"the heads of the fathers"

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "house of the father" or "father's house" is used in [7:61](#). See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "clan leaders"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:12 (#4)

"the heads of"

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: "leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:12 (#5)

"of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah"

In this list the book continues to leave out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: "Meraiah was the leader of the clan whose ancestor

was Saraiah. Hananiah was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Jeremiah"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:12 (#6)

"Joiakim" - "of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah"

These are the names of five men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:13 (#1)

"of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan"

Alternate translation: "Meshullam was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Ezra. Jehohanan was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Amariah"

Nehemiah 12:13 (#2)

"of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan"

These are the names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:14 (#1)

"of Malluk, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph"

Alternate translation: "Jonathan was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Malluk. Joseph was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Shebaniah"

Nehemiah 12:14 (#2)

"of Malluk, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph"

These are the names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:15 (#1)

"of Harim, Adna; of Meremoth, Helkai"

Alternate translation: "Adna was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Harim. Helkai was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Meremoth"

Nehemiah 12:15 (#2)

"of Harim, Adna; of Meremoth, Helkai"

These are the names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:16 (#1)

"of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam"

Alternate translation: "Zechariah was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Iddo. Meshullam was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Ginnethon"

Nehemiah 12:16 (#2)

"of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam"

These are the names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:17 (#1)

"of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai"

It appears that the name of the leader of the Miniamin clan has accidentally been lost from the text. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Zichri was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Abijah. Piltai was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Moadiah. It is no longer known who was the leader at this time of the clan whose ancestor was Miniamin"

Nehemiah 12:17 (#2)

"of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai"

These are the names of five men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:18 (#1)

"of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan"

Alternate translation: "Shammua was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Bilgah. Jehonathan was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Shemaiah"

Nehemiah 12:18 (#2)

"of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan"

These are the names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:19 (#1)

"of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi"

Alternate translation: "Mattenai was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Joiarib. Uzzi was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Jedaiah"

Nehemiah 12:19 (#2)

"of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi"

These are the names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:20 (#1)

"of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber"

Alternate translation: "Kallai was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Sallai. Eber was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Amok"

Nehemiah 12:20 (#2)

"of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber"

These are the names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:21 (#1)

"of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel"

Alternate translation: "Hashabiah was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Hilkiah. Nethanel was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Jedaiah"

Nehemiah 12:21 (#2)

"of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel"

These are the names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:22 (#1)

"In the days of Eliashib, the Levites Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were written as heads of fathers"

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning seems to be, "During the times when Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua served as high priest, the Israelites kept records of which Levites were the clan leaders"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:22 (#2)

"In the days of Eliashib," - "Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua"

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "the times when Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua served as high priest"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:22 (#3)

"Eliashib," - "Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua"

These are the names of four men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:22 (#4)**"were written as"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "the Israelites kept records"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 12:22 (#5)**"heads of fathers"**

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "house of the father" or "father's house" is used in [7:61](#). See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "clan leaders"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:22 (#6)**"heads of"**

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: "leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:22 (#7)**"also the priests, during the reign of Darius the Persian"**

Here again the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning seems to be, "The Israelites also made records during the reign of Darius III of which priests were the heads of their clans"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:22 (#8)**"Darius the Persian"**

The Persian king named Darius who reigned at the time of Jaddua, the last high priest mentioned in this verse, was Darius III Codomannus. The

implication is therefore that the phrase "Darius the Persian" refers to him. (Since he reigned about a hundred years after Nehemiah lived, it is probable that scribes added this information to the book later on to bring it up to date.) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could make this likely identification explicit. Alternate translation: "Darius III" or "Darius Codomannus" or "Darius III Codomannus"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:23 (#1)**"The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers, were written"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "Scribes recorded the names of the Levites who were clan leaders"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 12:23 (#2)**"The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers, were written"**

Sons here means "descendants," so this phrase refers to the descendants of Levi or the Levites. Alternate translation: "the Levites who were clan leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:23 (#3)**"the heads of fathers"**

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "house of the father" or "father's house" is used in [7:61](#). See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "clan leaders"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:23 (#4)**"the heads of"**

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader."
Alternate translation: "leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:23 (#5)

"in the book of the events of days"

This is an idiom that describes a regular record of the events. Alternate translation: "in their chronicles"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:23 (#6)

"even until the days of Johanan"

The term **days** is used here to refer to a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "through the time when Johanan was the high priest"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:23 (#7)

"Johanan"

Johanan is the name of a man. The context indicates that he was a Jewish high priest, and so he seems to be the same man who is called "Jonathan" in verse 11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the same name both here and in verse 11, either "Johanan" or "Jonathan"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:23 (#8)

"the son of Eliashib"

Eliashib is the name of a man. Verse [12:10](#) shows that Johanan/Jonathan was not actually his son, but his grandson. So **son** here means "descendant." Alternate translation: "the grandson of Eliashib" or "the descendant of Eliashib"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:24 (#1)

"And the heads of the Levites were" - "to praise and give thanks"

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This sentence seems to mean "The Levite leaders who directed the choir that sang songs of praise and thanksgiving were ... " You could say something like that as an alternate translation if it would be helpful to your readers.

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:24 (#2)

"And the heads of the Levites were"

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: "the leaders of the Levites" or "the Levite leaders"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:24 (#3)

"Hashabiah, Sherebiah"

These are the names of two men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:24 (#4)

"and Jeshua, the son of Kadmiel"

Jeshua is the name of a man, and Kadmiel is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:24 (#5)

"with their brothers opposite them, service watch by service watch"

As in [12:9](#), this could mean one of two things. (1) It could mean that Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua directed one choir, and other Levite leaders directed a second choir that stood opposite to this first one and sang responses to what it sang. (2) It could mean that other Levite leaders took turns with these three men in assuming the

responsibilities of directing a single Levite choir. Alternate translation: “their fellow Levite leaders directed a second choir that sang responses” or “their fellow Levite leaders took turns with them directing the choir”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:24 (#6)

“with their brothers”

Brothers here means **their fellow Levite leaders**.

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:24 (#7)

“to praise and give thanks”

Alternate translation: “the choir that sang songs of praise and thanksgiving”

Nehemiah 12:24 (#8)

“by the commandment of David, the man of God”

Here the book offers some background information to remind readers of the character of David, who had been a great founding king of Israel. Alternate translation: “as King David, that godly man, had commanded”

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 12:25 (#1)

“Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub”

These are the names of six men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:25 (#2)

“were guardians, gatekeepers, a guard at the storehouses of the gates”

Since, in context, these men appear to have been Levites, the **gates** described are likely the gates of the temple. It seems that there were rooms above

the temple gateways that were used as storehouses or treasuries, and these men were responsible for overseeing and protecting them. Alternate translation: “guarded the store rooms above the gateways to the temple”

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 12:26 (#1)

“These were”

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This seems to mean, “These are the names of the men who served in this capacity.” You could say something like that if it would be helpful to your readers.

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:26 (#2)

“in the days of Joiakim”

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: “during the time when Joiakim ... was the high priest”

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:26 (#3)

“Joiakim, the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak”

Joiakim is the name of a man, Joshua is the name of his father, and Jozadak is the name of his grandfather.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:26 (#4)

“and in the days of Nehemiah the governor”

This would have been one generation later, since [3:1](#) says that Eliashib was the high priest during the time of Nehemiah, and [12:10](#) says that Eliashib was the son of Joiakim. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “and also in the next generation, during the time when Nehemiah was the governor”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:26 (#5)**"and in the days of Nehemiah the governor"**

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "and also during the time when Nehemiah was the governor"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:26 (#6)**"and Ezra, the priest, the scribe"**

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Ezra was. Alternate translation: "and he worked with Ezra, who was a priest and a scribe"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 12:27 (#1)**"And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem"**

In this book, Nehemiah tells his personal story from [1:1](#) through [7:5](#). In that story, he explains how he was concerned not just to restore the city of Jerusalem physically by rebuilding its wall, but also to restore its population by bringing in people who were genuine Israelites, and to restore worship by making sure that the priests and Levites who were doing assigned tasks had dependable records of their ancestry. He includes the long series of lists from [7:6](#) through [12:26](#) to document that these priests, Levites, and Israelites had the lineage that the Law of Moses required. Now Nehemiah resumes his personal story, and he tells what he did next. He organized a worship ceremony to dedicate the city wall. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could put some introductory and transitional sentence here to show how the book is progressing. Alternate translation: "once we had brought many more Israelites to live in Jerusalem, and once we had established the priests and Levites in their tasks, we held a ceremony to dedicate the rebuilt wall of Jerusalem"

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 12:27 (#2)**"And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem"**

The abstract noun **dedication** refers to the way the wall would be set apart for a special purpose. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a verb such as "set apart." Alternate translation: "to set apart the wall of Jerusalem for a special purpose"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 12:27 (#3)**"And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem"**

Dedicating the wall was a symbolic way of dedicating, or rather rededicating, the entire city to the special purpose that God had chosen it for. The rebuilt wall now defined Jerusalem once again as a distinct place, the place from which God had chosen to start making himself famous throughout the world. Alternate translation: "to set apart the wall of Jerusalem for a special purpose, to show that God had set apart the city for a special purpose"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 12:27 (#4)**"they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to perform the dedication"**

All their places means all the other places in the province of Judah besides Jerusalem where the Levites were living. As [11:20](#) explained, other than the people who agreed to settle in Jerusalem, all of the other Israelites, including the Levites, lived on their family properties in other cities and towns in the province of Judah. Alternate translation: "we brought the Levites back to Jerusalem from all the places where they were living so that they could take part in the dedication ceremony"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:27 (#5)**"they sought out"**

They refers to the people who organized the dedication ceremony. Since Nehemiah is resuming his own story here, and since he was one of the

organizers, If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this as "we." "We" would not include the addressees, if your language makes that distinction.

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 12:27 (#6)

"to perform the dedication with rejoicing, and with thanksgivings"

Rejoicing and **thanksgivings** mean similar things. Together they describe how the Israelites would celebrate as they dedicated the completed wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: "to lead a celebration to dedicate the wall," otherwise "to celebrate the dedication by praising and thanking God"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 12:27 (#7)

"and with song, cymbals, lyres, and harps"

And with does not mean "in addition to," but "by means of." This next phrase provides further information about how the Levites would conduct the ceremony. Alternate translation: "with songs accompanied by cymbals, harps, and lyres"

Nehemiah 12:27 (#8)

"cymbals"

These are two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 12:27 (#9)

"lyres, and harps"

These are two different types of stringed instruments.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 12:28 (#1)

"And" - "gathered themselves"

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This seems to mean "gathered together in Jerusalem for the dedication ceremony." You could say something like that if it would be helpful to your readers.

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:28 (#2)

"the sons of the ones who sang"

As in [3:8](#) and [3:31](#), **son of** here is a figurative expression that indicates that a person shares the qualities of something. In this case, the book is describing people who share the quality of being singers. (Verse [12:27](#) indicates that these were specifically Levites.) Alternate translation: "the Levite singers"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:28 (#3)

"both from the circle around Jerusalem"

This is a figurative way of referring to the towns that the singers had built for themselves all around Jerusalem, as [12:29](#) describes. These villages seemed to form a circle around the city. Alternate translation: "from the towns they had built around Jerusalem"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:28 (#4)

"and from the villages of the Netophati"

The **Netophati** means the people who lived in the town of Netophath, and so their villages would be all the towns in that area where they lived. Alternate translation: "from the towns around Netophath" or "from the towns of the Netophathites"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:28 (#5)**"and from the villages of the Netophati"**

Netophath was located southeast of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "from the towns around Netophath, southeast of Jerusalem."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:29 (#1)**"and from Beth-Gilgal and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth"**

The places listed in this verse are northeast of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "they also came from three places northeast of Jerusalem, the town of Beth-Gilgal and the rural areas around the towns of Geba and Azmaveth"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:29 (#2)**"and from Beth-Gilgal"**

This is the name of a town. Alternate translation: "from the town of Beth-Gilgal"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:29 (#3)**"and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth"**

Geba and Azmaveth are the names of towns. Alternate translation: "from the rural areas around the towns of Geba and Azmaveth"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:29 (#4)**"for the ones who sang had built villages for themselves around Jerusalem"**

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this sentence at the start of [12:28](#), since it gives the reason for the results that are described in the rest of [12:28](#) and [12:29](#). You could show the connection by using a word like "so" after this

phrase. Alternate translation: "The singers were living in towns they had built all around Jerusalem. So ..."

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 12:30 (#1)**"And the priests and the Levites purified themselves. And they purified the people, and the gates, and the wall"**

This sentence draws a contrast between the joyful celebration that is about to begin in this part of the story and the solemn ceremony that the priests and Levites performed beforehand. You could begin the sentence with a phrase such as "but first" to indicate this contrast. Alternate translation: "But first the priests and Levites performed a ceremony to make themselves clean, and they did the same thing for the people, the gates, and the wall"

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 12:30 (#2)**"And" - "purified themselves"**

Nehemiah expects his readers to know specifically how the priests and Levites did this, but the details are no longer certain. They may have sprinkled themselves, the people, the gates, and the walls with water or with blood, or they may have offered sacrifices. But while the details are uncertain, the purpose of the ceremony is clear. It was to show that the Israelites wanted this place and everyone in it to be acceptable to God. So while it might be best not to suggest how the priests and Levites performed this ceremony, since that is unknown, you could say explicitly what the purpose was if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "And they performed a ceremony to show that they wanted to be clean and acceptable to God"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:31 (#1)**"And I caused" - "to go up"**

In this context, the conjunction **and** indicates that the events the story will now describe came after the event it has just described. If it would be helpful

in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as **then**.

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 12:31 (#2)

"And I caused the officials of Judah to go up on top of the wall. And I caused to stand two great thanksgiving groups, and processions"

The implication here, which is confirmed in [12:32](#) and [12:40](#), is that Nehemiah had these leaders of Judah go up onto the wall so that they could accompany two large groups that would "process" or march around the city on top of the wall while giving thanks to God. They would march in opposite directions and meet up on the far side of the city. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say something like that explicitly.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:31 (#3)

"two great thanksgiving groups, and processions"

Having two groups walk on top of the wall in opposite directions all around Jerusalem, while sacred musicians played music was a symbolic way of dedicating the rebuilt wall to God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could also say that explicitly.

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 12:31 (#4)

"to the right hand on top of the wall toward the gate of dung"

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This sentence seems to mean "The first group marched to the right on top of the wall in the direction of the Rubbish Gate." You could say something like that if it would be helpful to your readers.

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:31 (#5)

"to the right hand"

Here, **hand** means **side**. Alternate translation: "turned to their right and marched"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:31 (#6)

"to the right hand"

Based on the information the book provides, the perspective is of a person facing in towards the city from the top of the wall. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "turned to their right, as they faced the city, and marched"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:31 (#7)

"toward the gate of dung"

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in [2:13](#) and [3:13-14](#). Alternate translation: "the Rubbish Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:32 (#1)

"And after them went Hoshaiah with half of the officials of Judah"

Alternate translation: "Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah marched behind this group"

Nehemiah 12:32 (#2)

"Hoshaiah"

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:33 (#1)

"and Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam"

Based on what [12:33-36](#) says about the composition of this group, it appears that Ezra

walked in front of it ([12:36](#)), Hoshaiyah and half of the leaders of Judah walked behind it ([12:32](#)), and the group itself was made up of a large number of people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, along with the other leaders who are named, and priests playing musical instruments. In that case, the word **and** would be indicating this sentence, which continues through to most of verse [12:36](#), will provide further information about the situation the book has been describing. You could indicate that with a phrase such as “within the group itself were ...”

Nehemiah 12:33 (#2)

“and Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam”

These are the names of three men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:34 (#1)

“Judah, and Benjamin”

One possibility is that these were individual leaders named Judah and Benjamin. However, in the context of the book, this most likely means “people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.” Their counterparts in the other group would be the other “half of the people” mentioned in [12:38](#). And since [12:31](#) says that these were “great” or large processional groups, you could translate this as “large numbers of people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:34 (#2)

“and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah”

These are the names of two men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:35 (#1)

“And some from the sons of the priests”

Son of here is a figurative expression that indicates that a person shares the qualities of something. In this case, the book is describing people who share

the quality of being priests. Alternate translation: “some from among the priests”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:35 (#2)

“Zechariah, the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph”

These are the names of seven men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:36 (#1)

“and his brothers”

Here, **brother** is a figurative way of saying “fellow priest,” although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of Zechariah were included in this group. Alternate translation: “his fellow priests”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:36 (#2)

“Shemaiah, and Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel and Judah, Hanani”

These are the names of eight men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:36 (#3)

“with the instruments of song of David, the man of God”

This likely means the cymbals, harps, and lyres mentioned in [12:27](#). Those were the instruments that King David had originally instructed the Levite musicians to play. The people honored that religious tradition on this occasion. Alternate translation: “with cymbals, harps, and lyres, the instruments that King David, that godly man, had originally instructed the Levite musicians to play”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:36 (#4)**"David, the man of God"**

Here the book offers some background information to remind readers of the character of David, who had been a great founding king of Israel. Alternate translation: "King David, that godly man"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 12:36 (#5)**"And Ezra the scribe was before their face"**

Here, **face** means the front of a group of people. Alternate translation: "Ezra the scribe walked in front of this group"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 12:36 (#6)**"And Ezra the scribe"**

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Ezra was. Alternate translation: "Ezra, who was a scribe"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 12:37 (#1)**"And by the gate of the spring and opposite them, they went up on the stairs of the city of David, at the ascent of the wall"**

The implication, which the original audience of the book would apparently have understood, is that when this first procession reached the place described, rather than continue walking on the wall, which was about to follow a winding course around a hill, they took these stairs straight up the hill, and they rejoined the wall at the place where it went up to the top of the hill. Alternate translation: "When they reached the Fountain Gate, they left the wall and went up the stairs that were in front of them that led to the City of David. They came back onto the wall at the place where it reached the top of the hill they had just climbed"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:37 (#2)**"the gate of the spring"**

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in [2:14](#) and [3:15](#). Alternate translation: "the Fountain Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:37 (#3)**"the city of David"**

This was one part of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in [3:15](#). Alternate translation: "the City of David"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:37 (#4)**"on top of the house of David"**

This means that as the group walked on the top of the wall once again, at this point they were higher than this palace where David had lived. (In [3:25](#) this same building is called "the upper house of the king," meaning the royal palace that was located in a more elevated part of the city.) Alternate translation: "They walked along the wall, above the palace where David had lived"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:37 (#5)**"of the house of David"**

This building is called a **house** because David had lived in it. Alternate translation: "the palace where David had lived"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:37 (#6)**"and as far as the gate of water, east"**

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This sentence is indicating that once this group reached the Water Gate, it stopped. This left them just to the east of the temple. As [12:39](#)

explains, the other group stopped just to the west of the temple, and the two groups joined together in the temple area. Alternate translation: "until they reached the Water Gate, and there they stopped, on the east side of the temple"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:38 (#1)

"And the" - "thanksgiving group"

The conjunction **And** introduces the description in [12:38](#) and [12:39](#) of what the second group was doing while the first group was following the route described in [12:31–37](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a word such as "meanwhile" to indicate this.

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 12:38 (#2)

"And the second thanksgiving group, the one proceeding to the opposite direction"

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: "Meanwhile, the second group turned to its left and walked on top of the wall in the opposite direction, with musicians playing songs of thanksgiving as they went."

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:38 (#3)

"and I after it"

I refers to Nehemiah here, as in [12:31](#). If you think it would be helpful to your readers, you could state his name explicitly. Alternate translation: "I, Nehemiah, walked behind this second group"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:38 (#4)

"with half of the people on top of the wall"

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This seems to be a reference to the counterparts of the people mentioned in [12:34](#).

Alternate translation: "with the other half of the people from the tribes and Judah and Benjamin who were walking with their leaders on top of the wall to dedicate it to God"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:38 (#5)

"on top of the tower of ovens"

This is the name of one of the towers of the Jerusalem wall. See how you translated it in [3:11](#). Alternate translation: "They went along the wall above the Tower of the Ovens"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:38 (#6)

"even as far as the broad wall"

This is the name of one of the features of the Jerusalem wall. See how you translated it in [3:8](#). Alternate translation: "and continued to the Broad Wall"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:39 (#1)

"and on top of the gate of Ephraim, and above the gate of old, and above the gate of fish"

These are the names of three of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated them in [8:16](#), [3:6](#), and [3:3](#). Alternate translation: "they went over the Ephraim Gate, the Old Gate, and the Fish Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:39 (#2)

"and the tower of Hananel and the tower of the hundred"

These are the names of two of the towers on the Jerusalem wall. See how you translated them in [3:1](#). Alternate translation: "They walked past the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:39 (#3)**"even as far as the gate of sheep"**

This is the name of one of the gates of the Jerusalem wall. See how you translated it in [3:1](#) and [3:32](#). Alternate translation: "and continued to the Sheep Gate"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:39 (#4)**"and they stood in the gate of the guard"**

This is apparently the name of one of the gates of the Jerusalem temple. Verse [3:25](#) describes repairs that were made to the wall near the "court of the guard," which was in the temple precincts, so presumably this was the gate that led into that court. "Stood" means "stood still," that is, "stopped moving." The people were already standing up to walk. Alternate translation: "This second group stopped when it reached the Gate of the Guard"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:40 (#1)**"And the two thanksgiving groups stood at the house of God"**

The implication is that both groups followed routes that led them around the city from their common starting point to places on either side of the temple. They then joined together for a concluding ceremony in or near the temple. Alternate translation: "both groups that had walked around the city to dedicate the wall came down from it and stood in an open area in front of the temple"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:40 (#2)**"And" - "stood"**

This word indicates that the event the story will now describe came after the events it has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as "then."

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 12:40 (#3)**"also I, and half of the prefects with me"**

Nehemiah now provides further details for the second group, which he had accompanied, similar to the details he provided for the first group in verses 32–36. Alternate translation: "My group included the other half of the leaders of Judah"

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 12:41 (#1)**"Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, Hananiah"**

These are the names of seven men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:42 (#1)**"and Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malkijah, and Elam, and Ezer"**

These are the names of eight men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:42 (#2)**"And the ones who sang made themselves heard, with Jezrahiah the overseer"**

Alternate translation: "The singers sang loudly, with Jezrahiah directing their choir"

Nehemiah 12:42 (#3)**"with Jezrahiah"**

This is the name of a man.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:43 (#1)**"on that day"**

This is a flexible expression that can mean either **on that same day or around that time**. But since this verse continues to describe the celebrations

for the dedication of the wall, here it likely means **on that same day**.

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 12:43 (#2)

"for God had made them glad with great rejoicing"

The abstract noun **rejoicing** describes how happy the people were as they held this celebration to dedicate the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with an adjective such as **happy**. Alternate translation: "God had made them all very happy"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 12:43 (#3)

"so the rejoicing of Jerusalem was heard from far away"

In this case the abstract noun **rejoicing** refers to the loud sound that the singers and the people made as they held the ceremony to dedicate the rebuilt wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this abstract noun with a concrete noun such as "sound." Alternate translation: "the sound that the people made as they celebrated in Jerusalem was so loud that even other people who were far away could hear it"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 12:43 (#4)

"so the rejoicing of Jerusalem was heard from far away"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "the sound that the people made as they celebrated in Jerusalem was so loud that even other people who were far away could hear it"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 12:43 (#5)

"the rejoicing of Jerusalem"

Here the story speaks of Jerusalem as if it were a living thing that could celebrate. Alternate translation: "the sound that the people made as they celebrated in Jerusalem"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 12:44 (#1)

"on that day"

As noted for [12:43](#), this is a flexible expression that can mean either **on that same day or around that time**. So here it could mean either that men were appointed to be in charge of the store rooms on the same day as the dedication celebration, or else at around the same time, perhaps shortly afterwards, once all of the activity of the celebration was over. Alternate translation: "on the same day that they held the ceremony to dedicate the rebuilt wall" or "around this same time"

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 12:44 (#2)

"And" - "men were appointed over the chambers for the storehouses"

This is referring implicitly to the six Levites whose names are listed in [12:25](#). The **chambers** are the storerooms above the gateways to the temple. (Review the note to [12:25](#) if that would be helpful.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "we appointed six Levites to be in charge of the store rooms above the gateways to the temple"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:44 (#3)

"And" - "men were appointed"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. In the context of this episode, saying "we" would indicate Nehemiah and his fellow leaders. ("We" would not include the addressee, if your language makes that distinction.) Alternate translation: "we appointed six Levites"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 12:44 (#4)

"**for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities**"

In their covenant, these were the things the people promised to provide in order to support the priests and the Levites. (See [10:36–39](#).) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "so that they could collect the offerings, firstfruits, and tithes that the Israelites would bring in from the fields around their cities, as they had promised to do in their covenant"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:44 (#5)

"**the portions of the law for the priests and for the Levites**"

The abstract noun **portion** refers to the part of each crop that the law commanded the Israelites to give to the temple to support the priests and Levites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a different phrase. Alternate translation: "these were the things that the law commanded the Israelites to give from their harvests to support the priests and Levites"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 12:44 (#6)

"**For Judah rejoiced over the priests and over the Levites, the ones who were standing**"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could place this sentence first in the verse since it gives the reason for the results that are described in the rest of the verse. You could also show the connection by using a word like "so" after this phrase. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah were very happy that the priests and the Levites were once again serving in the roles that the law had assigned to them. So ... "

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 12:44 (#7)

"**rejoiced over the priests and over the Levites**"

In this context, **over** is a spatial metaphor that indicates **for** or **because of**. Alternate translation: "were very happy that"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:44 (#8)

"**the ones who were standing**"

Standing means that the priests and the Levites were serving in the roles that the law had assigned to them. This meaning can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "serving in the roles that the law had assigned to them"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:45 (#1)

"**And they kept**"

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous verse described. Specifically, the temple personnel were able to perform their duties regularly because the people had organized regular support for them. Alternate translation: "and so"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 12:45 (#2)

"**And they kept the service watch of their God and the service watch of purification**"

They means the priests and Levites. The abstract noun **service**, in the phrase **service watch of their God**, refers to the duties that God had commanded the priests and Levites to perform in the law. In the phrase "service of purification," this abstract noun refers to one of those duties in particular, the duty of performing a ceremony for themselves and for others that expressed a desire to be ceremonially clean, that is, acceptable to God. The story describes in [12:30](#) how they performed such a ceremony on this occasion. Alternate translation: "So the priests and Levites were able to perform

the duties that God had commanded, including performing ceremonies of purification"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 12:45 (#3)

"also the ones who sang and the gatekeepers"

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This phrase seems to mean **The singers and the gatekeepers were also able to perform their assigned duties.** You could say that explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation:

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 12:45 (#4)

"according to the commandment of David and Solomon his son"

This phrase provides background information that explains that it was King David and King Solomon, his son, who established the duties of the temple singers and gatekeepers. Alternate translation: "as King David and King Solomon, his son, had commanded them to do"

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 12:46 (#1)

"For"

This word indicates that this sentence will provide further information about the situation that the book is describing here. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a word or expression in your own language that indicates the same thing.

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 12:46 (#2)

"in the days of David and Asaph, from ancient time there was"

The expression **from before** is an idiom that means **ever since a long time ago** Alternate translation: "ever since the time of David and Asaph long ago"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:46 (#3)

"in the days of David and Asaph"

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "in the time of David and Asaph"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:46 (#4)

"David and Asaph"

These are the names of two men.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:46 (#5)

"and Asaph"

The book assumes that the original audience would know that Asaph was the man whom David first appointed to be the director of the Levite singers. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "ever since David first appointed Asaph to lead the singers"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:46 (#6)

"a head of the ones who sang"

Head here is a figurative way of saying **leader**. Alternate translation: "the Levite choir has had an appointed director"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 12:46 (#7)

"and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God"

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: "and they have sung songs of praise and thanksgiving to God"

See: Ellipsis

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:47 (#1)

"And" - "all"

This word indicates that this sentence will provide further information about the situation that the book is describing here. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a word or expression in your own language that indicates the same thing.

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 12:47 (#2)

"in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah"

Alternate translation: "just as they had done in the time of Zerubbabel, so now in the time of Nehemiah"

Nehemiah 12:47 (#3)

"in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah"

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "the time of Zerubbabel ... the time of Nehemiah"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:47 (#4)

"in the days of Zerubbabel"

As [12:1](#) explains, this was the man who led the first group of Jews who returned to the province of Judah, about a hundred years before the time of Nehemiah. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this more explicitly. Alternate translation: "in the time of Zerubbabel, who led the first group back to the province of Judah from exile"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:47 (#5)

"Zerubbabel" - "Nehemiah"

These are the names of two men.

Nehemiah 12:47 (#6)

"And in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah, all Israel was giving the portions of the ones who sang"

As in [12:44](#), the abstract noun **portion** refers to the part of each crop that the Israelites contributed to support the temple personnel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a different phrase. Alternate translation: "all the Israelites contributed from their harvests to support the singers and the gatekeepers"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 12:47 (#7)

"as a daily matter in its day"

As in [11:23](#), this is an idiom that means **as each day required**

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 12:47 (#8)

"And they were consecrating for the Levites, and the Levites were consecrating for the sons of Aaron"

They means the Israelites, as in the previous sentence. **Consecrating** means **setting apart**. This is likely a reference to the tithe or 1/10 of crops that the Israelites promised in their covenant to give to support the Levites, and to the tithe of this tithe that the Levites then contributed to support the priests, as described in [10:37-38](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "The Israelites also gave a tenth of their crops to support the Levites, just as they had promised, and the Levites gave a tenth of this tenth to support the priests"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah - Chapter 13 Introduction

Special concepts in this chapter

Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem

Nehemiah was eager to make sure that the Jews kept their promise to obey the law. When he returned from Persia, he found many things wrong: one of the store rooms in the temple had been converted into a guest room for Tobiah, the Levites had not received their portions for working in the temple, people were working on the Sabbath, and many had married heathen wives. (See: Promise, Law of Moses and Temple and Sabbath)

Nehemiah 13:1 (#1)

"On that day"

As noted for [12:43](#) and [12:44](#), this is a flexible expression that can mean either "on that same day" or "around that time." Either meaning might fit the context here, so you could choose to say either one in your translation.

Nehemiah 13:1 (#2)

"it was read in the book of Moses"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "we read from the scroll that contained the Law of Moses"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 13:1 (#3)

"in the ears of the people"

Here, **ears** stand for hearing. Alternate translation: "out loud so that all the people could hear"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 13:1 (#4)

"and it was found written in it"

Found is an idiom that means "could be found there" or "was there." The expression means that this was something that was in the law. And since

Nehemiah and the other leaders were reading this out loud to the people, their purpose was to show them that this was in the law. Alternate translation: "and we showed them that it said"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:1 (#5)

"and it was found written in it"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "we showed them that it said"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 13:1 (#6)

"Ammonite or Moabite"

These are the names of the members of two people groups.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:1 (#7)

"shall enter into the assembly of God"

The expression **assembly of God** can refer either to the entire Israelite community, as in [7:66](#) and [8:17](#), or to the community gathered for a legal proceeding, as in [5:7](#) and [5:13](#), or gathered for a religious ceremony, as in [8:2](#) and [8:18](#). The last meaning is probably in view here. This statement likely means that Ammonites and Moabites were not allowed to join the Israelites in their worship of Yahweh in the temple or on public occasions. For example, [9:2](#) describes how the Israelites did not allow any foreigners to take part in their ceremony of national repentance. (Later in this chapter, in [13:23-27](#), Nehemiah will describe how he took the further measure of expelling foreigners from the Israelite community itself.) Alternate translation: "could join with the Israelites when they worshiped Yahweh"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:1 (#8)**"until eternity"**

This expression means that this was a permanent regulation in the Law of Moses. It was not a regulation that applied just to a specific period and that might change afterwards. Alternate translation: "This was a permanent rule."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:2 (#1)**"For"**

This word indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the reasons for what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: "they could not come into the assembly because"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 13:2 (#2)**"they did not meet the sons of Israel with bread and with water"**

The assumption is that readers will know what historical incident this statement is referring to. It is a reference to the time when the Israelites were traveling from Egypt to Canaan through the desert. They were basically refugees. It could have been expected, as a basic act of compassion, that the Ammonites and Moabites would help provide for their needs as they passed through their territories but they refused to do this. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "they did not help meet the needs of the Israelites when they were refugees traveling through their territories"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:2 (#3)**"the sons of Israel"**

Sons here means "descendants." The descendants of Israel were the Israelites. Alternate translation: "the Israelites"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:2 (#4)**"they did" - "meet" - "with bread and with water"**

Bread stands for food, and water stands for drink, and together both terms probably represent assistance in general. Alternate translation: "provide food and drink" or "provide the help they needed"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 13:2 (#5)**"And he hired Balaam against them to curse them, but our God overturned the curse to a blessing"**

The assumption once again is that readers will know what historical incident this is referring to. This is a reference to the way the king of Moab hired a prophet named Balaam to curse the Israelites, but instead God made Balaam speak words of blessing about them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "The Moabites also hired a prophet named Balaam to curse the Israelites, but God made him speak words of blessing instead"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:2 (#6)**"Balaam"**

This is a man's name.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:3 (#1)**"And it happened"**

This phrase indicates that the events the story will now describe came after the things it has just described. You can use an expression in your own language that will indicate this clearly.

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:3 (#2)**"as soon as they heard the law"**

As in [9:29](#), **hear** in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear something audibly, but to understand a command and recognize the need to obey it. Alternate translation: "when they realized that this was what the law commanded"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:3 (#3)

"that," - "they separated all the mixed company from Israel"

Mixed company is an expression that describes people who were not Israelites. It indicates that if they were present, then the group would be mixed, part Israelite and part non-Israelite. Alternate translation: "They no longer allowed foreigners to worship with the Israelites"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:4 (#1)

"Now, before the face of this"

This phrase indicates that the events the story will now relate came before the events it has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as "but before all this happened."

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 13:4 (#2)

"Now, before the face of this"

In this book, the expression **face** often refers to the front of a person, place, or object. Here the expression has the further figurative significance of "in front of" or "before" a certain time. Alternate translation: "before this time"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:4 (#3)

"Eliashib"

This is a man's name. See how you translated it in [3:1](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:4 (#4)

"Eliashib the priest"

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Eliashib was. As we learn in [3:1](#), [3:20](#), and [12:10](#), he was actually the Jewish high priest during the time of Nehemiah. Alternate translation: "the high priest"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 13:4 (#5)

"Eliashib the priest," - "was being put"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "they appointed Eliashib the priest" or "the leaders appointed Eliashib the priest"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 13:4 (#6)

"was being put in the chamber of the house of our God"

This is most likely a figurative way of saying that as high priest, Eliashib had responsibility for and control over all the rooms in the temple. Alternate translation: "since he had control over"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:4 (#7)

"nearly-related to Tobiah"

Since Tobiah was an Ammonite, Eliashib could not have been his close blood relative. So this expression must refer to a connection by marriage. We learn in [6:18](#) that both Tobiah and his son had married Jewish women, and one or both of these women may have been relatives of Eliashib. Alternate translation: "who was related to Tobiah by marriage"

Nehemiah 13:4 (#8)

"in the chamber of the house of our God"

Here one **chamber** or room is used to mean “every chamber” or room in the temple. Alternate translation: “every room in the temple”

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 13:4 (#9)

“the house of our God”

As often in this book, Nehemiah speaks of the temple here as the **house of God**, as if it were God’s dwelling place. Alternate translation: “the temple”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:5 (#1)

“And he made”

In this context, the conjunction **and** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the reason for what the previous sentence described, or what made it possible. Alternate translation: “and so” unless you used the word “since” to introduce the last phrase in [13:4](#), in which case the connection would already be clear and you would not need to use any connecting phrase here.

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 13:5 (#2)

“for him”

Verse [13:7](#) indicates that **him** refers to Tobiah. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly here. Alternate translation: “he allowed Tobiah to move into a large room in the temple”

Nehemiah 13:5 (#3)

“and there previously they were putting offerings”

They means the Israelites, and **offerings**, if it is a general term (See: next note), means the contributions that they gave to support the priests and Levites, as described in [12:44](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “This was the room that the Israelites had previously been using

to store the offerings they brought to the temple to support the priests and Levites”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:5 (#4)

“offerings”

The word **offerings** could be referring generally to all of the contributions that the Israelites brought, which would then be listed in the rest of this verse, or it could be the first specific item on the list, the daily grain offering, as described in [10:33](#). Alternate translation: “the offerings they brought” or “the daily grain offering”

Nehemiah 13:5 (#5)

“the frankincense”

This term refers to a mixture of fragrant spices that was burned to produce smoke that had a pleasant smell. The law specified a special blend of spices that it said could only be used in the temple by the priests. Alternate translation: “the sacred incense”

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 13:5 (#6)

“and the vessels”

As in [10:39](#), here Nehemiah uses one type of equipment that the storerooms would hold, **vessels** or “jars” or “containers,” to refer to all the different types of equipment that the priests and Levites would have used in the temple. Alternate translation: “the temple equipment”

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 13:5 (#7)

“and the tithes of the grain, the wine, and the oil”

This means the portion, one tenth, of their crops and produce that the Israelites had promised to contribute to support the temple personnel, as described in [10:37-38](#). Alternate translation: “the tenth of their crops and produce”

Nehemiah 13:5 (#8)**"and the tithes of"**

A **tithe** means a tenth (1/10) or one part out of ten equal parts.

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 13:5 (#9)**"the commandment for the Levites, and the ones who sang, and the gatekeepers"**

Here Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This phrase means "which the law had commanded them to contribute to support the Levites, the singers, and the temple gatekeepers." You could say that explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers.

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 13:5 (#10)**"and the offerings of the priests"**

Here, **offerings of the priests** refers to offerings that people brought for the priests, not offerings made by the priests. This may have included the tithe, or one tenth of what they received, that the Levites contributed to the priests, as described in [10:38](#). Alternate translation: "and the contributions to support the priests"

See: Possession

Nehemiah 13:6 (#1)**"And during all this"**

This expression indicates that the sentence it introduces describes something that was happening at the same time as the events the book has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a phrase such as "while all of this was happening" to indicate this.

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:6 (#2)**"For"**

This word indicates that the clause it introduces explains the reason for what the previous clause described. That is, Nehemiah is about to give the reason why he was not in Jerusalem while Eliashib was allowing Tobiah to move into the temple. Alternate translation: "because"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 13:6 (#3)**"I had gone to the king in year 32 of Artaxerxes, the king of Babylon"**

Here Nehemiah is providing background information to explain why he was not in Jerusalem. As he indicates in [5:14](#), he was governor of Judah for twelve years, from the twentieth to the thirty-second year of the reign of King Artaxerxes. As this verse indicates, he then returned to the royal court. Alternate translation: "I had returned to serve King Artaxerxes in his court in the thirty-second year of his reign"

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 13:6 (#4)**"in year 32 of Artaxerxes"**

This expression refers to the number of years that Artaxerxes had been reigning as king. Alternate translation: "in year 32 of the reign of Artaxerxes as king"

See: Ordinal Numbers

Nehemiah 13:6 (#5)**"the king of Babylon"**

Artaxerxes was the king of the Persian Empire, but since the Persians had conquered the Babylonians, he also had the right to use the title "king of Babylon." The fact that Nehemiah describes him by this title may actually indicate that the royal court was located in the city of Babylon at this time and that he returned to that city to resume his duties in the court. Alternate translation: "the king of Persia, whose court was then in Babylon"

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 13:6 (#6)**"And at an end of days"**

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "after some time"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:6 (#7)**"I requested leave from the king"**

The implication, as shown explicitly in the next verse, is that Nehemiah requested time off from his responsibilities in the court so that he could travel back to Judah and see how the people there were doing, and that the king gave him permission to do this. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "I asked the king if I could take some time off and travel back to Judah to help the people there, and he gave me permission to do that"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:7 (#1)**"And I came to Jerusalem"**

In this context, the conjunction **And** at the beginning of this phrase indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as "and so."

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:7 (#2)**"And I understood"**

In this context, the conjunction **And** at the beginning of this phrase indicates that this event took place after the event in the previous sentence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as "when I got there, I discovered"

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:7 (#3)**"And I understood about the evil"**

In this context, this phrase means "came to understand the evil" or "discovered the evil" or "realized the evil." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use any of those phrases or a similar one as an alternate translation.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:7 (#4)**"about the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by making for him a chamber in the courts of the house of God"**

While in the book of Nehemiah the word **evil** often means things like "sad" or "harmful," in this context, the word does describe something that is morally bad and destructive. Eliashib had not done this wrong thing to Tobiah, but on his behalf. Alternate translation: "about the wrong thing that Eliashib had done by allowing Tobiah to move into a storeroom within the temple courts"

Nehemiah 13:7 (#5)**"the house of God"**

Nehemiah speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:8 (#1)**"And it was extremely evil to me"**

This expression describes Nehemiah's perspective on the action. It does not mean that Eliashib did a wrong thing to Nehemiah directly. Alternate translation: "I recognized how very wrong this was"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:8 (#2)**"and I cast out all the things of the house of Tobiah from the storeroom to the outside"**

Here, the term **house** represents all the possessions of Tobiah. It does not mean a literal house that Tobiah owned, because the context shows that he was staying in a room within the temple. Rather, **house** is a metaphor for "property," that is, the things a person owns and would keep in a house. Alternate translation: "I threw everything that Tobiah was keeping in that storeroom right out of the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:9 (#1)

"And I spoke"

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as "then."

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:9 (#2)

"And I spoke, and they purified the chambers"

The implication is that Nehemiah spoke to the priests since they would have been the ones to conduct a ceremony like the one the story describes in [12:30](#) to show that the people wanted the rooms in the temple to be ceremonially clean in the hopes that they would once more be acceptable to God. Alternate translation: "I told the priests to conduct a ceremony to purify the rooms in the temple"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:9 (#3)

"the vessels of the house of God, with the offering and the incense"

See how you translated these expressions in [13:5](#). Alternate translation: "the equipment for the temple, the offerings that the people brought, and the sacred incense"

Nehemiah 13:9 (#4)

"the house of God"

Nehemiah speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "the temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:10 (#1)

"And I knew"

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as **then**. As with "understood" in [13:7](#), **knew** here means **came to know** or **discovered** or **realized**. Alternate translation: "Then I discovered that"

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:10 (#2)

"the portions of the Levites had not been given"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "no one had been giving the Levites the support that the law commanded the Israelites to provide for them"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 13:10 (#3)

"the portions of the Levites had not been given"

The implication is that no one was giving the Levites their support because there was no longer any place to store the grain, oil, and other supplies in the temple, from where they could be distributed to them. This was because Tobiah had taken over the large storeroom. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "no one had been giving the Levites the support that the law commanded the Israelites to provide for them because there was no place to store the contributions now that Tobiah had taken over the storeroom"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:10 (#4)**"the portions of the Levites"**

As in [12:44](#) and [12:47](#), the abstract noun **portion** refers to the part of each crop that the law commanded the Israelites to give towards the work of the temple to support the Levites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a different phrase. Alternate translation: "the support that the law commanded the Israelites to provide for the Levites"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 13:10 (#5)**"and" - "had fled, a man to his field"**

The implication is that the Levites had had to return to farming their own land because they no longer received from the people the support they needed to be able to serve in the temple. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "all of the Levites had left the temple and returned to farming their own land because they had all stopped receiving the support that enabled them to serve in the temple"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:10 (#6)**"and" - "had fled"**

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: "as a result"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 13:10 (#7)**"a man to his field"**

In this context, **a man** means **each one of them** or **every one of them** Alternate translation: "all of the Levites had returned to farming their own land" or "each of the Levites had returned to farming his own land"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:10 (#8)**"the Levites and the ones who sang, who did the work"**

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who the Levites and the singers were. Alternate translation: "the Levites and the singers, who were responsible for the worship in the temple"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 13:10 (#9)**"who did the work"**

The work is an abbreviated way of saying "the work of the house of our God" as in [10:33](#) or "the work of the house of God" as in [11:12](#), that is, the work of the temple, meaning specifically everything required to maintain the worship there. Alternate translation: "who were responsible for the worship in the temple"

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 13:11 (#1)**"And I contended"**

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as "and after that"

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:11 (#2)**"And I contended with the prefects"**

As in [5:7](#), **contended** is a technical term that describes a public accusation that requires the defendants to answer for themselves in the presence of their fellow citizens. Alternate translation: "Then I called the city officials to account publicly for what they had allowed"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:11 (#3)**"the prefects"**

See how you translated this term in [2:16](#). Alternate translation: "the city officials"

Nehemiah 13:11 (#4)**"and I said"**

The implication in context is that what Nehemiah said was an accusation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a phrase that indicates this. Alternate translation: "I demanded to know"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:11 (#5)**"Why is the house of God forsaken"**

Nehemiah uses the question form to challenge or even ridicule the officials who have failed in the basic responsibility of making sure that worship continues in the temple. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "Because of you, the temple has been abandoned"

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 13:11 (#6)**"And I gathered them and caused them to stand at their stations"**

Here, **them** refers not to the city officials but to the Levites and singers who had gone back to their farms. Alternate translation: "I brought the Levites and the singers back to the temple and I had them start doing their work again"

Nehemiah 13:11 (#7)**"And I gathered them"**

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as "then"

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:12 (#1)**"And all"**

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as "then"

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:12 (#2)**"And all Judah"**

All is a figurative exaggeration that means that people from throughout the province of Judah did this generally. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

See: Hyperbole

Nehemiah 13:12 (#3)**"And all Judah"**

Here Nehemiah refers to all of the Israelites living in the province of Judah as if they were a single person, Judah, the ancestor of the tribe by that name that lived in the territory that was now this province. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 13:12 (#4)**"to the treasuries"**

This means the storerooms in the temple.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 13:13 (#1)**"And I appointed treasurers"**

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your

language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as "then."

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:13 (#2)

"And I appointed treasurers over the treasuries"

Treasurers means officials who would be responsible for the storerooms in the temple. Alternate translation: "I appointed these men to be responsible for the temple storerooms"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 13:13 (#3)

"Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah from the Levites"

Shelemiah, Zadok, and Pedaiah are the names of men. As in [8:1](#), where the word refers to Ezra, **scribe** means a teacher who has carefully studied the Law of Moses. **From the Levites** means that Pedaiah was one of the Levites. Alternate translation: "Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah the Levite"

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:13 (#4)

"and at their hand was"

At their hand is a figurative way of saying **assisting them**. Alternate translation: "I appointed to be their assistant"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:13 (#5)

"Hanan, the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah"

Hanan is the name of a man, Zaccur is the name of his father, and Mattaniah is the name of his grandfather.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:13 (#6)

"For"

In this context, the conjunction **For** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the reason for what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: "I appointed them because"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 13:13 (#7)

"they were considered faithful"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: "Everyone recognized that they were honest men"

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 13:13 (#8)

"and it was for them to apportion to their brothers"

In this context, **brother** seems to be a figurative way of saying **fellow priests and Levites**, although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of the men listed were included in this group. **Apportion** means **give the portions**, meaning the support as described in [13:10](#). Alternate translation: "their responsibility was to make sure that their fellow priests and Levites received the support that the law commanded the Israelites to provide"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:14 (#1)

"Remember me, my God, concerning this"

In this context, **remember** means to think about someone and consider what action you can take on their behalf. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten about him. Alternate translation: "please bless me, my God, for doing this"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:14 (#2)**"Remember me, my God, concerning this"**

As in [4:4](#), here Nehemiah stops addressing the audience of his story and speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at [4:4](#) about asides like this if that would be helpful.

See: Aside

Nehemiah 13:14 (#3)**"and do not wipe out"**

Nehemiah speaks of his good deeds as if they were something written that could be erased. Alternate translation: "do not overlook"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:14 (#4)**"my faithful kindness"**

The abstract noun **faithful kindness** here is the same as the term "covenant faithfulness" that Nehemiah applies to God in [1:5](#), [9:17](#), [9:32](#), and [13:22](#). It refers to a person consistently and dependably fulfilling the obligations they have accepted. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a phrase that would bring out this meaning. Alternate translation: "the way that I have consistently provided for"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 13:14 (#5)**"for the house of my God"**

Nehemiah speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: "your temple"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:14 (#6)**"and for its service watches"**

As in [12:9](#) and [12:24](#), the phrase **service watch** refers to the Levite singers. It means either an individual choir or a time on duty for the singers. Alternate translation: "and for the Levite singers"

Nehemiah 13:15 (#1)**"In those days"**

This phrase indicates that this event took place at the same time as the event the story has just related. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as "around that same time."

Nehemiah 13:15 (#2)**"I saw in Judah ones treading winepresses"**

Alternate translation: "I saw that some of the people of Judah were treading winepresses"

Nehemiah 13:15 (#3)**"ones treading winepresses"**

The word **winepresses** represents the grapes that were in the winepresses. The people were treading on the grapes to press the juice out of them so that they could make wine. Alternate translation: "treading on grapes in winepresses"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 13:15 (#4)**"on the sabbath"**

The implication is that the people of Judah should not have been doing such work on the Sabbath because God had commanded them to set apart that day, the seventh day of the week, as a special day for rest and worship. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "on the Sabbath, when they should not have been doing any work"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:15 (#5)**"on the sabbath"**

This is the name of a religious observance. It occurs repeatedly in this part of the story, through [13:22](#). It will be helpful to your readers if you translate it consistently.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:15 (#6)

"and ones bringing in grain-heaps, and ones loading onto donkeys, yes, even wine, grapes, and figs, and all kinds of loads, and ones bringing to Jerusalem on the day of the sabbath"

These **ones** are not three different groups, but various people of Judah who were collectively doing all these things. The implication is that they were bringing these goods to Jerusalem to sell them even on the Sabbath. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. "Others had loaded their wares, such as sheaves of grain, wine, grapes, figs, and other goods, onto donkeys, and they were bringing these goods into Jerusalem to sell on the Sabbath day"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:15 (#7)

"And I protested on the day of their selling provisions"

The word **day** could be intended literally here and it could mean that Nehemiah protested that the Sabbath itself was not a day for selling goods since that was work. Another possibility is that the word **day** does not refer to a specific day, but rather to a more general time when Nehemiah said this. Alternate translation: "I protested that they should not be doing the work of selling on the Sabbath" or "at the time when they were selling these provisions, I protested against that"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:16 (#1)

"And the Tyrians who dwelt in it"

Tyrians were people from the city of Tyre. **It** here refers to the city of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Also, some people from the city of Tyre who were living in Jerusalem"

Nehemiah 13:16 (#2)**"And the Tyrians"**

Tyrians were people who came from the city of Tyre.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:16 (#3)**"to the sons of Judah"**

Son of is a figurative expression that indicates that a person shares the qualities of something. In this case, Nehemiah is describing people who share the quality of being residents of the province of Judah. (In context, this does not seem to be limited to actual descendants of Judah, that is, Israelites from that tribe, since the Tyrians seem to have been eager to sell to anyone living in the area.) Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:16 (#4)**"even in Jerusalem"**

The implication is that Jerusalem was the last place where anyone should have broken the Sabbath by doing work and engaging in commerce because it was the place from which God had chosen to start making himself famous throughout the world and the city where God had chosen to put his temple. (The concept is the same here as in [11:1](#) and [11:18](#), where Nehemiah calls Jerusalem "the holy city.") If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "even in Jerusalem, the special city that God chose"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:17 (#1)

"And I contended"

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains something that happened as a result of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: "So"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 13:17 (#2)

"And I contended with the nobles of Judah"

As in [5:7](#) and [13:11](#), **contended** is a technical term that describes a public accusation that requires the defendants to answer for themselves in the presence of their fellow citizens. Alternate translation: "Then I called the leading citizens of Judah to account publicly for what they had allowed"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:17 (#3)

"the nobles of Judah"

See how you translated this term in [2:16](#). Alternate translation: "the leading citizens of Judah"

Nehemiah 13:17 (#4)

"And I said to them"

The implication in context is that what Nehemiah said was an accusation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a phrase that indicates this. Alternate translation: "I demanded to know"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:17 (#5)

"What is this evil thing that you are doing, and profaning the day of the sabbath"

Nehemiah is using the question form for emphasis in order to scold the leaders of Judah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You are doing an evil thing by treating the Sabbath day like any other day"

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 13:17 (#6)

"and profaning the day of the sabbath"

To **profane** something means to treat something that should be holy, set apart for a special purpose, as if it were something ordinary or common, just like anything else. Alternate translation: "treating the Sabbath day like any other day"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 13:18 (#1)

"Did not your fathers do thus, and our God brought all this evil on us and on this city"

Nehemiah once again uses a question form for emphasis as he continues to scold the leaders of Judah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You know that your ancestors did the same thing, and that is why our God brought all this trouble on us and on this city"

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 13:18 (#2)

"your fathers"

Fathers here means "ancestors." Alternate translation: "your ancestors"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:18 (#3)

"and our God brought all this evil on us and on this city"

As Nehemiah speaks to the leading citizens, he assumes that they will know that he is referring to the way God allowed the Babylonians to conquer Jerusalem, destroy much of the city including the temple, break down the city wall, and take most of the people into exile. As he reports this conversation in the book, he assumes that its audience will know this as well. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "our God allowed

the Babylonians to take our people into exile and destroy this city"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:18 (#4)

"all this evil"

Evil here does not refer to something morally wrong, but to trouble or harm. Alternate translation: "all this trouble"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:18 (#5)

"And you"

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates a contrast between how the leading citizens should be acting and how they actually are acting. You could make this contrast explicit by using an expression such as, "You should know better"

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 13:18 (#6)

"And you are increasing wrath upon Israel"

Nehemiah assumes that the leading citizens will know that he is speaking of God's wrath, that is, God's anger at the people's sin, and the punishment that God may use to penalize and correct the people for what they are doing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "you are making God even more angry with the people of Israel, and God may punish us even more"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:18 (#7)

"Israel"

Here Nehemiah refers to all of the Israelites as if they were a single person, their ancestor, Israel. Alternate translation: "the Israelites" or "the people of Israel"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 13:18 (#8)

"by profaning the sabbath"

As in [13:17](#), to **profane** something means to treat something that should be considered holy, that is, set apart for a special purpose, as if it were ordinary or common. Alternate translation: "by treating the Sabbath day like any other day"

See: Translate Unknowns

Nehemiah 13:19 (#1)

"And it happened" - "when the gates of Jerusalem grew dark before the face of the sabbath"

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

See: Introduction of a New Event

Nehemiah 13:19 (#2)

"when the gates of Jerusalem grew dark before the face of the sabbath"

Nehemiah speaks of the gates as if they were changing in hue, but this is a figurative way of saying that the sun was setting and evening was beginning. Alternate translation: "when evening came"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:19 (#3)

"before the face of the sabbath"

As in [13:4](#), the expression **face**, which often refers to the front of something, has the further figurative significance of "in front of" or "before" a certain time. Alternate translation: "as the Sabbath was beginning"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:19 (#4)

"that," - "I spoke, and the doors were shut"

Here the conjunction **and** indicates that the action described in the second phrase was the result of the action described in the first phrase. Alternate translation: "I gave orders for the doors to be closed and barred"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 13:19 (#5)

"and I said that they should not open them until after the sabbath"

They likely refers to the gatekeepers. Alternate translation: "I ordered the gatekeepers not to open them again until after the Sabbath"

Nehemiah 13:19 (#6)

"And I caused some from my young men to stand at the gates"

As in [4:16](#) and many other places in the book, "young men" refers to the servants who worked for Nehemiah. While they probably were young adult males, the expression is specifically envisioning their role and status. Alternate translation: "I had some of my servants stand at the gates"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:19 (#7)

"a load could not enter on the day of the sabbath"

Here Nehemiah speaks of a load of goods as if it were a living thing that could go through the gates and into Jerusalem on its own. Alternate translation: "so that no one would bring in a load on the Sabbath day"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 13:19 (#8)

"a load could not enter on the day of the sabbath"

The ultimate purpose was to keep merchants from offering goods for sale on the Sabbath and to keep the people from buying them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly.

Alternate translation: "so that on the Sabbath day no one would bring a load of goods into the city for sale"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:20 (#1)

"the ones who traded and the ones who sold all kinds of goods to sell"

These two phrases mean similar things. You do not need to repeat both of them in your translation if that might be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: "merchants who had goods for sale," or "some traders and some merchants"

See: Doublet

Nehemiah 13:20 (#2)

"And" - "lodged outside of Jerusalem"

Lodged means "spent the night." The implication is that they wanted to start selling their goods first thing the next morning. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "spent the night outside Jerusalem so they could start selling their goods first thing the next morning"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:20 (#3)

"a time or two"

Alternate translation: "once or twice"

Nehemiah 13:21 (#1)

"And I testified against them"

As in [9:26](#), this phrase means, "I warned them that what they were doing was wrong."

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:21 (#2)

"And I testified"

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place at the same time as the event the story has just related. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as “each time they did this”

See: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:21 (#3)

"Why are you lodging in front of the wall"

As in [13:17](#), Nehemiah is using a question form for emphasis as he scolds these merchants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: “I do not allow you to spend the night just outside the city wall”

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 13:21 (#4)

"Why are you lodging in front of the wall"

The implication, as in [13:20](#), is that the traders want to begin selling first thing the next morning. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “I do not allow you to spend the night just outside the city wall so you could start selling your goods as soon as the Sabbath day begins”

Nehemiah 13:21 (#5)

"If you repeat"

This is an idiom that means “if you do this again.”

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:21 (#6)

"I will stretch out a hand on you"

This is an idiom that means “I will use force against you.” Alternate translation: “I will forcibly drive you away from the city”

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:21 (#7)

"I will stretch out a hand"

Here, **hand** represents power and action. Alternate translation: “forcibly drive away”

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:21 (#8)

"From that time, they did not come on the sabbath"

The expression in the first phrase indicates that the event it introduces took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as “after that.” Alternate translation: “After that, the merchants no longer came to the city on the Sabbath”

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:22 (#1)

"And I said to the Levites that they should purify themselves"

As in [12:30](#) and [13:9](#), **purify** means to perform a ceremony to make a person or a place ceremonially clean, to express the hope that it will be acceptable to God and useful for his purposes. Alternate translation: “I told the Levites to hold a ceremony to make themselves clean and acceptable to God”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:22 (#2)

"and come keep the gates to consecrate the day of the sabbath"

As in [3:1](#) and [12:47](#), **consecrate** means to set something apart for a special purpose. Nehemiah was telling the Levites that they should guard the gates in order to prevent people from bringing goods for sale into the city on the Sabbath day. That way, they would ensure that the Sabbath continued to be a day that was set apart for the special purpose of rest and worship, and it would not be treated like an ordinary day. Alternate translation: “and I told them that they should then guard the gates of the city so that no one would bring in goods to sell on the Sabbath as if it were an ordinary day”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:22 (#3)

"Remember me concerning this also, my God"

In this context, **remember** means to think about someone and consider what action you can take on their behalf. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten about him. Alternate translation: "Please bless me, O God, for doing this as well"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:22 (#4)

"Remember me concerning this also, my God"

As in 4:4, Nehemiah stops addressing the audience of his story and speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at 4:4 about asides like this if that would be helpful.

See: Aside

Nehemiah 13:22 (#5)

"and have pity on me according to the greatness of your covenant faithfulness"

The abstract noun **greatness** expresses the vast extent to which God possesses the quality of **covenant faithfulness**. As in 1:5, God having this quality means that he is inwardly disposed to keep all of his promises, and so he always does that faithfully. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this abstract noun with an adjective such as "great." Alternate translation: "and have mercy on me, because your faithfulness to those who belong to you is so great"

See: Abstract Nouns

Nehemiah 13:23 (#1)

"In those days"

This phrase indicates that this event took place at the same time as the event the story has just related. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship in this case by using a phrase such as "around that same time"

Nehemiah 13:23 (#2)

"In those days"

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: "around that same time"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:23 (#3)

"who had given a dwelling to"

This is an expression that refers to marriage. Alternate translation: "who had married"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:23 (#4)

"Ashdodite, Ammonite, and Moabite"

These are the names of three people groups.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:24 (#1)

"And their sons"

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this sentence will provide further information about the situation the book is describing here. You could use a phrase such as **and as for** to show that this is further background information.

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 13:24 (#2)

"And their sons, half were speaking Ashdodite, and none of them were knowing to speak Hebrew"

This could mean one of two things. It seems most likely that the expression means that: (1) these children spoke a mixed language, using Ashdodite expressions half the time and Hebrew expressions the other half of the time, so that none of them knew how to speak Hebrew fluently. The expression could also mean that (2) half of the

children who were born to Hebrew fathers and foreign mothers spoke a foreign language. However, if half spoke Ashdodite, and none spoke Hebrew, this leaves open the question of what language the other half of the children spoke. Alternate translation: (1) "their children spoke a mixed dialect, using Philistine expressions half the time, so that none of them could speak Hebrew fluently" or (2) "half of their children spoke the language of the Philistines, and none of their children knew how to speak Hebrew"

Nehemiah 13:24 (#3)

"half"

Half means one part out of two equal parts.

See: Fractions

Nehemiah 13:24 (#4)

"and none of them were knowing to speak Hebrew, but according to the tongue of people group by people group"

Here Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This sentence seems to mean "none of them could speak Hebrew fluently, but instead they mixed it with the language of whatever people group their mothers belonged to." You could say that explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers.

See: Ellipsis

Nehemiah 13:24 (#5)

"but according to the tongue of"

Here, **tongue** means the language spoken by a person or a group of people. Alternate translation: "language"

See: Metonymy

Nehemiah 13:24 (#6)

"people group by people group"

This is an idiom that means "of each people group"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:25 (#1)

"And I contended with them"

As in [5:7](#), [13:11](#), and [13:17](#), **contended** is a technical term that describes a public accusation that requires the defendants to answer for themselves in the presence of their fellow citizens. Alternate translation: "then I called these men to account publicly for what they had done"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:25 (#2)

"and cursed them"

As in [10:29](#), **curse** means to express the wish that God would punish someone. Alternate translation: "I said I wished that God would punish them"

Nehemiah 13:25 (#3)

"and struck some of their men, and pulled out their hair"

By performing these actions, Nehemiah demonstrated to these men symbolically how serious a wrong they had committed. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "I struck some of them and pulled out their hair to show how wrong they were to have married foreign women"

See: Symbolic Action

Nehemiah 13:25 (#4)

"And I caused them to swear an oath by God: "If you give your daughters to their sons, or if you lift from their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves"

Here Nehemiah is reporting the words of the oath in the second person, because this is his account of how he spoke to the men who had married foreign women. When these men said the actual oath, they would have used the first person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the first person in your translation as well. Alternate translation: "I made them take this oath: 'If we allow our daughters to marry their sons, or if we or

our sons marry their daughters, may God punish us severely”

See: First, Second or Third Person

Nehemiah 13:25 (#5)

"And I caused them to swear an oath by God: "If you give your daughters to their sons, or if you lift from their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves"

Nehemiah has the men take an oath using a common Hebrew formula that leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Whenever a person takes an oath using this formula, the implication is, “May God punish me severely if I do this thing.” Alternate translation: “If we allow our daughters to marry their sons, or if we or our sons marry their daughters, may God punish us severely!”

See: Oath Formulas

Nehemiah 13:25 (#6)

"you give your daughters to their sons"

This is an idiom that means **allow your daughters to marry their sons or give your daughters in marriage to their sons**

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:25 (#7)

"you lift from their daughters"

This is an idiom that means “if you take any of their daughters as wives”

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:26 (#1)

"Did not Solomon, the king of Israel, sin concerning these things"

Here Nehemiah supports his argument by appealing to facts that he assumes these men will know. Alternate translation: “you know that Solomon king of Israel sinned because he married foreign women”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:26 (#2)

"Did not Solomon, the king of Israel, sin concerning these things"

Nehemiah is using a question form for emphasis as he scolds these men. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as a statement. Alternate translation: “you know that Solomon king of Israel sinned because he married foreign women”

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 13:26 (#3)

"Yet among" - "nations"

In this context, the conjunction **Yet** introduces a contrast between what Solomon would have been expected to do and what he actually did. You could begin the sentence with a phrase like “even though” to indicate this contrast.

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 13:26 (#4)

"Yet among many nations there was no king like him"

The expression **many nations** in this phrase indicates, “You could look among as many nations as you wanted, but you would still find no king like him.” In other words, “There was no other king like him anywhere in the world.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that as an alternate translation.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:26 (#5)

"and he was beloved by his God"

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “God loved him very much”

See: Active or Passive

Nehemiah 13:26 (#6)

"and God gave him as king over all Israel"

This is an idiom that means, "God made him king over all of Israel"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:26 (#7)

"The foreign women caused even him to sin"

The implication is that these were foreign women whom Solomon married. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "The foreign women he married caused even him to sin"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:27 (#1)

"Should we then listen to you, to do all this great evil, to act unfaithfully toward our God and give a dwelling to foreign women"

Nehemiah uses a question form for emphasis once again as he continues to scold these men. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "We will not accept your excuses and allow you to keep doing this thing that is so wrong"

See: Rhetorical Question

Nehemiah 13:27 (#2)

"Should we then listen to you"

As in [9:16](#) and [9:29](#), **listen** in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear a statement about a course of action, but to agree to follow it. If your language has a word for "listen" that also means "agree," you could use it here. Alternate translation: "we will not heed your words"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:27 (#3)

"all this great evil"

Here, the word **all** does not indicate the entirety of something. Instead, it expresses emphasis. Alternate translation: "this thing that is so wrong"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:27 (#4)

"to act unfaithfully toward our God and give a dwelling to foreign women"

Here acting unfaithfully means violating the Law of Moses. Nehemiah assumes that these men will know that the law forbade the Israelites to marry outside their people group. (In fact, the law does so using language very much like the oath that Nehemiah made these men swear, for example, "Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons," Deuteronomy 7:3.) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "By marrying foreign women, you are breaking the law that God gave us"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:27 (#5)

"and give a dwelling to"

As in [13:23](#), this is an expression that refers to marriage. Alternate translation: "marrying"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:28 (#1)

"And one from the sons of"

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this sentence will provide background information that is necessary for understanding the next event the book will describe. You could express the same meaning with a word that indicates this in your language.

See: Background Information

Nehemiah 13:28 (#2)

"And one from the sons of"

This means **one of the sons of**.

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:28 (#3)

"Joiada, the son of Eliashib"

Joiada is the name of a man, and Eliashib is the name of his father.

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:28 (#4)

"Eliashib the high priest"

Here Nehemiah repeats some background information to remind readers who Eliashib was. Alternate translation: "Eliashib, who was the high priest"

See: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 13:28 (#5)

"was son-in-law"

Alternate translation: "had married the daughter of"

Nehemiah 13:28 (#6)

"to Sanballat the Horonite"

Sanballat is the name of a man, and Horonite is the name of his people group. See how you translated these words in [2:10](#).

See: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 13:28 (#7)

"And I caused him to flee"

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: "as a result" or "because he had done this"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Nehemiah 13:28 (#8)

"And I caused him to flee from beside me"

Him means this son of Joiada. Nehemiah means not just that he made this man leave his personal presence, but that he forced him to at least leave Jerusalem, and perhaps to stay out of the entire province of Judah. Nehemiah is using the space around himself to represent all Jerusalem and Judah. Alternate translation: "I forced him to leave Jerusalem" or "I forced him to leave the province of Judah"

See: Synecdoche

Nehemiah 13:28 (#9)

"And I caused him to flee from beside me"

The implication is that this son of Joiada was serving as a priest himself (as his lineage entitled him to do), and so he was a high-profile case of flaunting the command in the law against marrying foreign women. Nehemiah needed to make an example of him. A further consideration may have been that Sanballat was an enemy to Nehemiah and the Jews, and this man was one of the people who was sending letters to Sanballat with information about Nehemiah, as 6:17 indicates. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express one of these possibilites explicitly. Alternate translation: "I forced him to leave Jerusalem because as a priest, he was setting a bad public example by being married to a foreign woman" or "I forced him to leave Jerusalem because he was helping our enemy Sanballat"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:29 (#1)

"Remember them, my God, on account of the defiling of the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites"

As in [13:22](#), Nehemiah stops addressing the audience of his story and speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at [4:4](#) about asides like this if that would be helpful.

See: Aside

Nehemiah 13:29 (#2)**"Remember them"**

Them likely means this son of Joiada, who had married a foreign woman, and Joiada himself, who had arranged with Sanballat for his son to marry Sanballat's daughter. As often in this book, **remember** means to think about someone and consider what action you should take in their regard. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten about Joiada and his son. Alternate translation: "treat Joiada and his son the way they deserve for what they have done"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:29 (#3)**"on account of the defiling of the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites"**

Nehemiah speaks here of Joiada and his son causing the priesthood to be dishonored and breaking the covenant as if these actions had made the priesthood and God's covenant with the Israelites ceremonially unclean. Alternate translation: "they have dishonored the priesthood and broken the covenant you made with the priests and Levites"

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:29 (#4)**"and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites"**

This means the covenant that established the descendants of Aaron as priests and the Levites as their helpers, in other words, the covenant that God made with Israel through Moses. Alternate translation: "the covenant you made with the Israelites"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 13:30 (#1)**"And I purified them"**

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event it introduces took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful

in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as **then**

See: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Nehemiah 13:30 (#2)**"And I purified them from everything foreign"**

Them means the priests and Levites whom Nehemiah has just mentioned. He probably says **purified** in a figurative sense. He did not hold a ceremony of purification, since the priests and Levites themselves would have done that. Rather, he means that he made sure that none of the other priests or Levites were married to foreign women, and that in this way he ensured that the priesthood was no longer unclean, as described in [13:29](#). Alternate translation: "I made sure that none of the priests or Levites were married to foreign women."

See: Metaphor

Nehemiah 13:30 (#3)**"And I caused the service watches to stand: for the priests and for the Levites"**

Generally in this book, the phrase **service watch** refers to the Levite singers. It means either an individual choir or a time on duty for the singers. But since Nehemiah also speaks of the priests here, in this context the phrase seems to mean more generally the time on duty for both the priests and the Levites. Alternate translation: "I made sure that the priests and Levites all came on duty in the temple when they were supposed to"

Nehemiah 13:30 (#4)**"And I caused" - "to stand"**

Nehemiah is speaking of these temple arrangements figuratively, as in [5:13](#), as if they were a living thing that could stand, that is, stay in place or be established rather than go away. Alternate translation: "I made sure that"

See: Personification

Nehemiah 13:30 (#5)**"a man in his work"**

In this context, **a man** means **each one of them**
Alternate translation: "and that each one fulfilled
his assigned responsibilities"

See: Idiom

Nehemiah 13:31 (#1)

"and for the offering of pieces of wood at the appointed times; and for the firstfruits"

This verse continues the sentence that begins in the previous verse, so here Nehemiah is describing two further things that he **caused to stand** or made sure happened. He is referring to the promises that the people made in their covenant to bring these contributions to the temple to support the priests and Levites. See how you translated these terms in [10:34](#) and [10:35](#). Alternate translation: "I also made sure that the people brought their offerings of wood and of the first crops that grow in their fields at the times when they had promised to bring them"

Nehemiah 13:31 (#2)

"Remember me, my God, for good"

As in [4:4](#), here Nehemiah stops addressing the readers of his story and speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at [4:4](#) about asides like this if that would be helpful.

See: Aside

Nehemiah 13:31 (#3)

"Remember me, my God, for good"

To remember someone **for good** is an idiom that means to reward someone with good things for the good that they have done.

See: Idiom