

Resource: Key Terms (SRV)

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Key Terms (SRV)

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parable, parable, paradise, paradise, Passover, Passover, peace, peace, persecution, persecution, pharaoh, pharaoh, Pharisee, Pharisee, possessed, possessed, praise, praise, pray, pray, priest, priest, prophecy, prophecy, prophet, prophet, proverb, proverb, purification offering or ceremony, purification offering or ceremony, purify, purify

parable

A **parable** is a story that has a deeper meaning. Jesus told many parables. In these stories, Jesus used characters and situations that were very familiar to the people around him. These stories often had an ending that was quite surprising to Jesus's listeners, and sometimes even shocking. Through the stories Jesus told the people things about God, and about how things work in the kingdom of God. By telling these stories, Jesus wanted the people to change their thinking and their behavior. People needed to listen very carefully to the parables to understand them. Only people who trusted in Jesus could really understand these parables. For other people, parables were just stories that did not mean anything. Sometimes Jesus explained the meaning of the parable to his disciples in private.

In the Old Testament, the prophets-the people who gave messages from God to the people-also sometimes told parables to teach the people something about God.

parable

Audio Content

paradise

The word **paradise** first meant a beautiful garden, a place with lovely trees and flowers that people can enjoy. When people thought of a paradise garden, they thought of it as a place of happiness and joy. Therefore, later people began to use this

word to describe the good place where people who are right with God will live with God after death.

In the first book of the Bible, God created the first humans: Adam and Eve. They first lived in a beautiful garden, like a paradise. In this garden was the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and bad. God had forbidden Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and bad. Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and because of that, they had to leave this garden. Because they had to leave this garden, they lost access to the tree of life as well.

In the last book of the Bible, Revelation, Jesus says that there is a tree of life in God's paradise. The people who will be faithful and obedient to Jesus can eat from this tree of life! This means that they can live forever in a good relationship with God.

paradise

Audio Content

Passover

Passover is an important Jewish festival that is also called the Festival, or Feast, of Unleavened Bread.

This feast reminded the people about a very important time in the history of Israel.

A very long time ago, Abraham's descendants, the Israelites, had become slaves in Egypt. The Israelites had lived in Egypt for four hundred years! God then called one of the Israelites, Moses, to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and back to Canaan, the land that God had promised to give to Abraham's descendants. The king of Egypt did not just allow this big group of slaves to walk out of his country.

The king made things very difficult for the Israelites, but God sent nine plagues on the Egyptians in order to force the king to let the people go. During each plague, the king promised that the Israelites could go, but as soon as God stopped the plague, the king changed his mind again. And so, God caused the tenth and most terrible plague of all: God sent an angel to kill the eldest son in each house in Egypt. But God had told the Israelites to kill a lamb, which is an animal, a young sheep, and to smear the blood of this lamb on the doorposts of their houses. When the angel that God had sent saw the blood of the lamb on the door of a house, he would skip that house and not kill the oldest son in that family.

That same night, the Israelites had to eat the meat of this lamb in a special way. They had to eat the meat together with bitter herbs and with bread that they had prepared quickly-different from the normal way that they prepared bread, that took a long time. They had to eat this meal while standing up, all dressed up ready to start traveling! Because during this night, they would be leaving Egypt.

That night the angel from God killed all of the eldest sons in Egypt, except for the sons of the Israelites, because they had blood over their doors. That night, the king of Egypt finally let the Israelites go. The Israelites began their long travel towards the land that God had promised to give them! They were no longer slaves. From that time onwards, the Israelites would remember how God gave them freedom from Egypt by celebrating the Passover festival every year. The name Passover means "to skip over" or "to step over." This name reminded the Israelites of how the angel had skipped over the houses of the Israelites, and had not killed their oldest sons.

Every time that the Israelites celebrated Passover, they again killed a lamb and ate this meat together with bitter herbs and with bread that was prepared very quickly. The lamb reminded them of how God saved their oldest sons. The bitter herbs reminded them of the bitterness, the difficulty, that they had faced while they were slaves. And the bread that was prepared quickly reminded them that God freed them from Egypt and that they suddenly had to leave quickly.

God had told the Israelites that the yearly Passover feast should be combined with seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. During these seven days they should eat the special bread that was prepared quickly. Normally, the Israelites made bread by letting the dough, a mixture of flour and

water, rest for several hours, or overnight, before they baked the bread. The long wait caused some air bubbles to grow inside the dough, and this made the bread bigger and softer. Every time that they baked bread, they would keep some of the dough until next time. This piece of leftover dough was called a leaven, or yeast. The next time they would bake bread, they would take the leaven that they had kept from the previous time and add it to the new dough. This helped the new dough to also become bigger and softer.

When the Israelites were leaving Egypt on the first Passover night, they had no time to bake bread in this way. And God told them to make bread without leaven. Bread that is made without leaven is flat and thin; it is just flour and water that is kneaded and rolled flat, and then baked over a fire. This bread was called unleavened bread. Therefore, this feast is called the feast of unleavened bread. During the seven days of this feast, the Israelites could not keep even the smallest part of leaven in their house. Before the feast started, they had to throw away any leaven that they still had.

Because the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were celebrated together, the names for the feasts are often used interchangeably.

In the New Testament, leaven is sometimes used as a symbol for sin that we should get rid of in our lives.

Passover

Audio Content

peace

When people live in harmony with each other without fighting, they are living in **peace**. But when the Bible talks about peace, this means much more than just the absence of fighting. It means that there is a lot of good!

When people live in peace, they are completely well. They have a complete life, and are living in harmony with each other, with nature, and most importantly, with God! Someone who lives in peace is content.

A community that has peace means that all the people in the community are content, and are living in harmony with each other and with God.

Because people are so disobedient to God, they could not live in peace with God. They became enemies of God. As a result of that, the people faced many difficulties and trouble. But because of Jesus's sacrifice, God made it possible again for people to have peace with God. When Jesus will come back, God's kingdom will be established and there will be peace. There will be complete harmony between God and people, between people and people, and between people and nature. Until that time, God's people are able to endure suffering and difficulties, because they know that they have peace with God.

peace

Audio Content

persecution

When people **persecute** you, they are treating you cruelly and unfairly. People can for example beat you, or exclude you from society, or speak lies about you and take you to court. Jesus told his followers that other people would persecute them because of Jesus. After Jesus went back to heaven, many of his followers indeed faced persecution. The Jewish religious leaders and the Roman government persecuted the believers in Jesus and even killed some believers. But the followers of Jesus did not stop sharing the good news about Jesus. They even thought it was an honor to suffer for Jesus.

The New Testament teaches us that we all have to expect persecution. But we should enjoy this patiently and with joy. We should not want to take revenge on the people who persecute us, but instead we should love them.

persecution

Audio Content

pharaoh

Pharaoh was a title for the king in the country of Egypt. The word Pharaoh means "great house." This word first referred only to the building where

the king lived, but later people began to use this word for the kings themselves. Most pharaohs were male, but there were also a few female pharaohs.

The people in Egypt thought that the Pharaoh was a son of one of their gods. The Pharaoh had an important religious function. He was in between the people and their gods, and made sure that the people did the religious rituals properly. He asked the gods to give prosperity to the people.

pharaoh

Audio Content

Pharisee

Pharisees were a group of religious teachers in Jesus's time who were very concerned about obeying God's law completely. For hundreds of years, people belonging to this group had been discussing the laws of God that God had given to the Israelites through Moses. Because they were afraid that they might somehow disobey God, they had added more and more rules themselves. These rules became part of their tradition, and were just as important for them as the rules that God had given himself. There were by now so many rules, that it was very, very difficult for people to follow them all. The Pharisees were very proud because they thought that only they were able to obey all God's rules. They looked down on people who were not able to follow these rules. The name Pharisee literally means "to be separated." The Pharisees wanted to keep themselves separated from the other people.

At the time of Jesus, the Pharisees were the most influential group of religious teachers in Israel. Many of the religious teachers in Jerusalem belonged to the Pharisee group. Another important group of religious teachers is called the Sadducees. Pharisees and Sadducees were also part of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish religious court.

Pharisee

Audio Content

possessed

Someone who is **possessed** by a demon, which is an evil spirit, is under the control of this demon. The demon can make the person behave in an unusual or violent way, or it can make the person sick and make him suffer.

A demon can also give a person special powers, so that person knows things that are hidden for other people. In the cultures surrounding Israel, sometimes people tried to become possessed by a demon in order to know what would happen in the future, or to receive some secret knowledge. God forbade the Israelites to do this.

possessed

Audio Content

praise

When you **praise** God, you speak out loud good things about God and to God, because you recognize that God is good and awesome and that God deserves great honor. You thank God for the good things he has done and blessings he will give.

praise

Audio Content

pray

When you **pray**, or offer a **prayer**, you are communicating with God. You might be praising him, thanking him, asking him for help, telling him about the wrong things you have done, asking him to help other people, or you might just be crying to him because you feel so sad. In the Bible, all these things are part of praying.

Sometimes people speak out loud when they pray, and sometimes they only pray with their thoughts. We might call this "praying in your heart." Sometimes people kneel down to pray, and sometimes they stand up, with their arms stretched up to God. There are no rules in the Bible about how you should pray, only that you have to pray sincerely and humbly.

Sometimes people can pray all together at the same time. Many of the Psalms in the Bible are prayers, and the Israelites would recite or sing these prayers when they came together to worship God in the temple.

When God listens to someone's prayer and responds in some way, we say that God has answered this person's prayer.

When you are translating prayer, be careful about the following things:

Some languages use a word for prayer that means the speaking of certain, fixed words. This would not be a good word to use for prayer in the Bible.

Some languages have more than one word for praying, depending on what kind of conversation people are having with God. For example, some languages have one word for thanksgiving prayers and another word for prayer that is asking God for help. Be sure you are using the right word in each context. Maybe you need to use more than one word for prayer in a passage.

pray

Audio Content

priest

Priests were people who worked in the temple of God in Jerusalem. Before people built the temple, priests worked in the tabernacle, which was a portable temple, a tent. The temple, and before that the tabernacle, was the place where the Israelite people worshiped God. Priests were responsible for offering sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. They took care of the temple and taught the people how to worship God.

God is holy, and people cannot just come to him, because people are sinful. Because people are sinful, they are unclean. In the Bible, to be unclean means to be unfit to come before God. People have to become clean first. The work of the priests was to make people clean—to purify them. The priests did this by offering sacrifices on behalf of the people, and by teaching people how to live. They performed rituals that symbolized that people became clean. The priests therefore were in between God and the people. They made it possible for people to come before God and continue to have

a good relationship with God. They purified the people, so that God was able to come down and meet the people. Priests were very important people for the Jews. Because people stayed sinful, the priests had to often make sacrifices and purify the people again and again.

Only certain people could become a priest. The Israelites were divided into 12 tribes. One tribe was called the tribe of Levi, and the people in this tribe were called Levites. Moses, through whom God gave the people his law, was a Levite. And Moses's brother Aaron was also a Levite. Aaron became the first high priest of the Jews. A high priest is the most important priest. God made Aaron's sons the first priests. From that time onwards, all Aaron's male descendants became priests.

There were also Levites who were not descendants of Aaron. These people also became important. They helped the priests in their duty. The Bible often talks about "priests and Levites." The priests are mentioned separately because they were more important, even though priests themselves are also descendants from Levi.

In the time of Jesus, some priests were also leaders of the people. They are called chief priests. These chief or leading priests were often wealthy people who were related to the high priest. They often belonged to the group of religious leaders called Sadducees and were part of the Jewish council, named the Sanhedrin. The chief priests often argued with Jesus.

The people who lived in the countries surrounding Israel also had people who were in between the people and their gods. The Bible also calls these people priests, but they were very different from the Jewish priests.

When you are translating priest, be careful about the following things:

Your language may have a word that means someone who offers sacrifices to God. This might be a good word for the biblical word for priest. Maybe you need to make a small change, like saying "a priest of God." But be careful that people will not get confused. Maybe the things that a "priest" in your community does are too different from what a priest in the Bible does. Maybe you need to make up a new word or phrase, like "someone who offers sacrifices to God," or "a sacrificer," or "a man who works in the temple of God." But remember that you also need to have a word for a Levite. A Levite can be a "helper of a priest," a "helper in the

temple," or a "descendant of Levi who helps in the temple."

Some Christian churches use the word "priest" for a leader in the church. It is not a good idea to use this same word for "priests" in the Bible, because the meaning is quite different. A leader in the church does not offer sacrifices like the priests in the Bible did.

Remember that you also need a word for chief priests-the most important priests-and for the high priest, who is the most important priest of all.

priest

Audio Content

prophecy

A prophet is a person who gives messages from God to the people. The message that a prophet gives is called a **prophecy**.

A prophecy can be an instruction from God about something that needs to be done. It can be a message that tells about something that is going to happen in the future. But most of the time these messages were warnings to the people to stop disobeying God.

The prophecies also gave the people hope and encouragement. One important message that the prophets gave the people was that God would send a special king and Savior to help them. This special king and Savior is called the Messiah. The things that the prophets said about the Messiah, hundreds of years before Jesus was born, all came true in Jesus. For instance, there was a prophecy that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem; and Jesus was born in Bethlehem. There was also a prophecy that "the servant of God" would suffer much, and would be rejected by the people. Jesus suffered and was rejected by the people. There are many more examples. Therefore, we say that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament.

In the New Testament, Paul teaches us that the Holy Spirit gives some people the ability to speak prophecies. Through the Holy Spirit, God can give these believers some special knowledge or insight that is for the good of the church. Paul calls this the gift of prophecy. Not every believer may have this

gift, because the Holy Spirit gives different gifts to different people.

Just as in the time of the Old Testament, people can deceive others and give a false prophecy. Therefore, other believers have to listen carefully to the prophecy and check whether this indeed could be a message from God.

prophecy

Audio Content

prophet

A **prophet** is a person who gives messages from God to the people. This message can be an instruction from God about something that needs to be done. It can be a message that tells about something that is going to happen in the future. But most of the time these messages were warnings to the people to stop disobeying God. Because people often did not like to hear these messages, being a prophet could be lonely and difficult. People sometimes mistreated prophets or even killed them.

Sometimes the messages gave the people hope and encouragement. Even when the prophets were telling the people that they had sinned, and deserved to be punished, they were also telling the people that God would have mercy on them and rescue them again. One important message that the prophets gave the people was that God would send a special king and Savior to help them. This special king and Savior is called the Messiah. A Messiah is someone who is appointed for a special task.

The message that a prophet gives is called a **prophecy**. The things that the prophets said about the Messiah, hundreds of years before Jesus was born, all came true in Jesus. For instance, there was a prophecy that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, and Jesus was born in Bethlehem. There was also a prophecy that "the servant of God" would suffer much, and would be rejected by the people. Jesus suffered and was rejected by the people. There are many more examples. Therefore, we say that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament.

Prophets gave God's messages to the people in different ways. Sometimes a prophet would tell a parable, a story with special meaning, to the

people. Sometimes the prophet performed some kind of drama to help people understand the message. For instance, God told the prophet Jeremiah to walk around for some time with a heavy wooden yoke on his neck-something that was normally used to control animals that worked for people in the fields. Jeremiah used this yoke as a symbol to tell the people that the Babylonian people would soon have control over the Israelites. God told the prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute, and he told the prophet Ezekiel to lay down on his side for weeks on end without moving. These dramatic actions helped people to see how serious God was when he gave them these messages.

God gave his messages to the prophets through the power of the Holy Spirit. We do not know exactly how this worked. Sometimes, a prophet had a dream or a vision. Maybe sometimes God gave the prophet a special revelation-the prophet then knew that something was true. Maybe God sometimes spoke audible words to a prophet. Either way, the prophet then gave this message or revelation from God to the people, probably by using his own words and creativity.

Often prophets wrote down these messages, or other people wrote down the words for them. Many books in the Old Testament are messages that God gave the people through the prophets. That is why the Jews often use the word "the prophets," or "the law and the prophets," to refer to the part of the Bible that we now call the Old Testament. "The law" refers to the part of the Old Testament that has to do with God's commandments: These are the first five books of the Old Testament.

Sometimes in the Old Testament we find other terms for prophet as well, like **man of God**, **servant of God**, or **seer**. A "seer" means someone who can see. A prophet is a seer because he can see, or understand, God more clearly than other people, and he knows things that other people cannot know. This happens because God gives the prophet this understanding.

There were also **false prophets**. A false prophet does not give a message that comes from God. A false prophet makes up his own message, and just says what people like to hear. This way, people will like the prophet and honor him. We can recognize a false prophet because the things that he says will not come true.

In the Old Testament we sometimes hear about groups of prophets. These prophets were a little bit

different than the prophets we mentioned so far. These other types of prophets would follow a certain ritual, for instance listen to someone playing a musical instrument, and then they would get into a trance. This means that they were not quite awake, and also not quite asleep. In this state, God would sometimes give them some special revelation. When people wanted to know what to do, they would sometimes go to such a prophet, and then the prophet would try to get into this trance and hopefully get a message from God about what this person had to do. People who got into this kind of trance could also start praising and worshiping God.

In the New Testament, Paul teaches us that the Holy Spirit gives some people the ability to speak prophecies. Through the Holy Spirit, God can give these believers some special knowledge or insight that is for the good of the church. Paul calls this the gift of prophecy. Not every believer may have this gift, because the Holy Spirit gives different gifts to different people.

Just as in the time of the Old Testament, people can deceive others and give a false prophecy. Therefore, other believers have to listen carefully to the prophecy and check whether this indeed could be a message from God.

When you are translating prophet, be careful about the following things:

Be careful that people will not get confused with the word you have chosen for angel. An angel also gives messages from God to people, but an angel is a supernatural being while a prophet is a human person.

Make sure you do not use a word that in your language only means that someone is telling about what is going to happen in the future. Talking about the future is only a small part of what it means to be a prophet in the Bible.

Be careful not to use the same word that you have used for the word "preacher." A preacher teaches people something about God, but a preacher does not always speak the words of God directly in the way that a prophet does.

In some languages, a good translation for the word "prophet" can be: "A spokesman from God," "someone who gives messages from God to the people," or "someone who speaks on behalf of God."

proverb

A **proverb** is a short saying that is easy to remember, and that people pass on to other people. A proverb teaches people something important about people or about God. A proverb often gives advice about what is the right behavior in a particular situation, or tells people what usually happens in a certain situation. The people who made proverbs often looked at nature and marveled at how good God had made everything. Through these proverbs, they taught people that there is much that we can learn from nature. Some examples of Proverbs are:

"If you are proud, you will get in trouble. But if you ask for advice, you are wise."

"Look at the ant and follow his example, you lazy person!"

"We can make plans, but God makes the decision."

Many different people made these proverbs and told them to other people, and over time many of these proverbs were collected in a book. We can find these in the book of the Bible that is called Proverbs.

The Proverbs are teaching people what it means to be wise. A person who is wise understands many things and is able to make good decisions that lead to good results. The book of Proverbs teaches us that it is God who gives wisdom to people. If a person pretends to be wise but does not accept God, then his wisdom is useless, and eventually his plans will fail. Only a person who accepts and obeys God can be truly wise.

proverb**purification offering or ceremony**

A purification ceremony is a ritual that makes a person clean, which means fit for service to God. The words **clean** and **unclean** in the Bible are not talking about whether something is clean or dirty

from the outside. In the Bible, a *clean* person means a person who is fit for service to God, who is acceptable to participate in worship to God. A person who is *unclean* is unfit for service to God, and cannot participate in public worship. Animals and even objects can also be clean or unclean.

If a woman was unclean because she had been bleeding during her monthly cycle or had given birth to a child, or if anyone had had sexual relations, had touched a dead body, or had recovered from a skin disease, they were unclean. They needed to wait a certain amount of time and then take a special bath. In some cases they also had to offer an animal sacrifice to God. These activities together were called the purification ceremony. After this, these people were clean again and could participate in all worship activities.

purification offering or ceremony

Audio Content

purify

To **purify** someone means to make someone clean or pure. The words "clean" and "unclean" in the Bible are not talking about whether something is clean or dirty from the outside. In the Bible, a clean person means a person who is fit for service to God—someone who is acceptable to participate in worship to God. A person who is unclean is unfit for service to God. Someone can become unclean or impure when they sin against God, when they sexually sin, or when they unintentionally touch or eat unclean or impure things. Animals and even objects can also be clean or unclean.

Whenever a person had become unclean, they had to perform certain rituals to become clean again. God gave his people specific laws and rituals to make them clean again. These rituals often included taking a special bath. Sometimes people would just wash one part of their body, and sometimes they needed to go completely under the water. Then they would change their clothes. Sometimes people needed to offer a sacrifice as well. This process was a symbol that showed that people were removing anything that was dirty or unclean and that separated them from God. It was the task of a priest, a servant of God in the temple, to help people do the rituals that made them clean.

purify

Audio Content