

Resource: Key Terms (SRV)

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Key Terms (SRV)

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law, law, legion, legion, leprosy, leprosy, Levite, Levite, Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord

law

When in the Bible people talk about the **law**, they mean the set of instructions that God has given the people of Israel. In the Old Testament, God gave the people his laws through a man named Moses. God spoke with Moses, and Moses told the people what God said. Therefore, people often say the **law of Moses** when they mean the law that God gave the people through Moses.

A law is a rule, or a set of rules that people have to keep. The original term we translate "law" in the Bible is a term that people can use in legal settings when someone breaks a law of a country. If someone does not keep a rule, we say that he breaks the law. God told the people through Moses that if people would keep God's law, God would bless them. But if people would break God's law, God would punish them. God gave these laws because only by obeying these rules can people live in a right relationship with God, and with each other.

A summary of the law of God are the 10 commandments. From these 10 rules we learn how to behave towards God, and how to behave towards each other. Jesus summarized the law even further: He said, "Love God with your whole heart, and love other people as much as you love yourself." These are the most important commandments.

In the Old Testament, we find the law of God especially in the first five books of the Bible. Therefore, the Jews called these books together "the law," even though not everything that is in these books has to do with law. Sometimes when the Jews talked about "the law," they even meant *all* the books of the Scriptures, which is the part of the Bible that we now call the Old Testament.

So, when a Jewish person was talking about "the law," they might be talking about the law that God has given to the people through Moses, or they

might be talking about the first five books of the Bible, or they might be talking about the whole Old Testament.

law

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legion

A **legion** was a large group of Roman soldiers-more than six thousand soldiers. In the passage where a demon tells Jesus that his name is "Legion," he means to say that he is not just one demon, but a very large group of demons.

legion

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leprosy

Leprosy is a skin disease. In today's time, there is a sickness named leprosy where people get wounds on their skin that become infected, and people may lose fingers, toes, or even bigger body parts. A **leper** is someone who suffers from leprosy.

Even though many Bible translations use the word leprosy or leper, this sickness probably did not exist in Israel in the time of the Bible. Instead, the word that is used in the Bible probably means another type of skin disease, or maybe several skin diseases. We do not know exactly.

Whatever this skin disease was, it was a very bad thing to have this, because a person with this disease was "unclean"-this means that this person was considered not fit to worship God. An unclean person could not participate in activities within the

community. They had to live outside the community, away from other people. They wore the kind of clothes that people in that time wore when they were grieving because of someone's death. If other people would come near them, they had to shout: "Watch out, we are unclean!" so that no one would come close.

The disease itself was probably not contagious, but the sickness was a reminder to people how sin spreads. This sickness began with a small spot, which could then grow and cover the whole body. In the same way, sin can begin very small, but can spread quickly. For this reason, a person with this sickness was unfit to worship God, to remind people that sin makes us unfit to serve God.

The disease called leprosy in the Bible was a terrible disease to have and sometimes God gave people this disease as a punishment.

Whenever someone noticed a strange spot on their body, they had to go to the priest. Priests were people who worked in the temple of God. Priests were in charge of making sure people were ritually clean: The priests did the rituals that made people fit to worship God. And therefore, the priests had to decide if a person with a spot on their body was clean or not. God had given instructions in his law so that the priests would know when a spot was indeed this dreaded disease, or whether it was just an innocent rash. If the priest was not sure, then the person with the spot had to stay all alone outside the community for a week. If the spot had grown, then the priest declared that it was the skin disease. If the spot had improved, then the person had to take a bath, wash his clothes and then he could come back into the community. He was clean again.

leprosy

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Levite

Levites are people who belong to the tribe of Levi, one of the 12 tribes of Israel.

The first ancestor of the Israelites was Abraham. Abraham's grandson, Jacob, had 12 sons. The descendants of these 12 sons became the 12 tribes of Israel. One of Jacob's son's names was Levi, and his descendants became known as the Levites, or the tribe of Levi.

Moses, through whom God gave the people his law, was a Levite. And Moses's brother Aaron was also a Levite. Those Levites who were descendants of Aaron became priests. 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. This was very important work. Other Levites who were not descendants of Aaron were also important, because they helped the priests in their duties. They also helped the priests take care of the tabernacle, and later, the temple.

The Bible often talks about "priests and Levites." The priests are mentioned separately because they were more important, even though priests themselves are also Levites.

Levite

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Lord

In some cases in the New Testament, **Lord** refers to God himself. It is the way the Jewish people referred to God when they did not want to say his name because they respected him so much.

Lord

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Lord

A **Lord** is someone who is a master over other people, who has full authority, and who deserves for people to give him respect. When you address someone as "Lord," you are saying that person has authority over you. In the Bible, we hear people address their king as Lord; slaves call their master Lord; and sometimes a wife calls her husband Lord.

God is called the Lord because he has authority over the whole world. When people talk to God, or

talk about God, they often call him Lord in order to give him respect.

In the New Testament, when the people in Israel talked to Jesus and called him Lord, they meant to give him respect.

When, after the resurrection of Jesus, people talk about Jesus and call him Lord, they are saying that Jesus has authority over them, just like God has. When people call Jesus Lord after his resurrection, they are saying that Jesus is God.

Sometimes it is not clear in the New Testament when the word Lord refers to Jesus, or to God the Father.

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

Before Jesus's resurrection, most people did not yet think that Jesus was God. When they said "Lord" to Jesus, this was meant as a respectful term: They did not mean to say "God" to Jesus. In your translation, you might want to use a general respectful term in these cases, rather than using the same word as you are using for "Lord" when it means God.

Lord

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