

Resource: Key Terms (SRV)

License Information

Key Terms (SRV) is based on: Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia) Terms, [SRV Partners](#), 2023, which is licensed under a [CC BY-SA 4.0 license](#).

This PDF version is provided under the same license.

Key Terms (SRV)

C

Caesar, Caesar, Caesarea Philippi, Caesarea Philippi, camel, camel, Canaan, Canaan, Capernaum, Capernaum, centurion, centurion, cherubim, cherubim, Christ, Christ, circumcision, circumcision, clean/unclean, clean/unclean, cloak, cloak, compassion, compassion, cornerstone, cornerstone, covenant, covenant, cross, cross, crucifixion, crucifixion, cubit, cubit, curse, curse

Caesar

Caesar is the title for the Roman emperor. Rome is a city in the country named Italy. In the time of the New Testament, Rome was the capital of the Roman empire.

An empire is a group of nations or countries that are ruled by one person or one government. The leader of an empire is called an emperor. The emperor of the Romans was called Caesar.

The Roman Empire included many countries and people groups. It was very large. The people in all those countries had to pay taxes to Caesar. The Caesar was so powerful that many people treated him like a god. In some cities, people built temples where they worshiped statues of the Caesar.

Caesar

Audio Content

Caesarea Philippi

Caesarea Philippi was a city about 40 kilometers north from the Sea of Galilee. The people who lived in this area were not Jewish. Inside this city was a temple that the people had built to worship Caesar, the Roman Emperor.

Caesarea Philippi

Audio Content

camel

A **camel** is a large, strong animal that can walk for a very long distance without needing food or water. People sat on camels while traveling, and used camels to carry luggage. A camel has one or two humps on its back. Inside these humps, the camel stores fat which allows the camel to go for a long time without food or water. Once a camel has an opportunity to drink, it will drink an enormous amount of water at one time.

A camel was the largest animal that existed in Israel.

People could make the short, stiff hair of a camel into cloth. This made simple and rough clothing. John the baptizer wore clothes made from camel hair.

You can look in the video dictionary for a picture of a camel.

camel

Audio Content

Canaan

In the Old Testament, **Canaan** is an area that is roughly a strip of land between the Jordan River in the east, and the Mediterranean Sea in the west. This is an area that today includes part of the countries of Israel and Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria.

God had called Abraham and told him to go to the country that he would show him. This country was Canaan. God promised Abraham that the whole land of Canaan would belong to his descendants.

Many other people groups lived in this area at that time: Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, and a few others. Sometimes all of them together are called Canaanites, and sometimes all of them together are called Amorites.

When Abraham's descendants, the Israelites, are freed from slavery in Egypt, God brings them back to Canaan. God gives them the task to drive out the Canaanites and to take over the land. God was going to give the land to the Israelites. God wanted to build a nation out of the Israelites through whom he would bless all the peoples of the earth. In order for the people to remain faithful to God, it was important that they would not be influenced by the Canaanite people. The Canaanite people worshiped many gods and did many things that God had specifically forbidden in his commandments. But the Israelites failed to drive out the Canaanites, and often sinned by following the customs and the gods of the Canaanites.

Canaan

Audio Content

Capernaum

Capernaum was a small town in the region called Galilee, near the Sea of Galilee. Many people in Capernaum made their living from fishing or from buying and selling goods. The town was near an important road. People travelled on this road to other places to buy and sell goods. Therefore, the town was important in the region, even though it was not very large.

Several of Jesus's disciples came from Capernaum. Jesus often stayed in Capernaum.

Capernaum

Audio Content

centurion

A **centurion** is a Roman military officer who commands a group of one hundred soldiers.

centurion

Audio Content

cherubim

A **cherub**, or several **cherubim**, are a type of angel. Cherubim seem to especially guard sacred, or holy, places. Therefore there were pictures and images of cherubim in the temple and in the tabernacle. In these pictures, the cherubim have the body of a lion, the wings of a bird, and the face of a human. The cherubim are a warning for people that God is present. In fact, gold cherubim spread their wings over the top of the ark of the covenant and protected the throne where God met with his people from the top of the ark of the covenant. In the book of Ezekiel, Ezekiel sees a vision in which cherubim are carrying the throne of God. Some of the descriptions of the cherubim in Ezekiel look like people but have four wings and four faces.

cherubim

Audio Content

Christ

The word **Christ** is the same as the word Messiah. Christ is the Greek word, and Messiah is the same word in Hebrew. Greek is the language of the New Testament, while Hebrew is the language of the Old Testament.

The word "Messiah" refers to the special king and Savior that God had promised to send.

A Messiah literally meant someone who was anointed. That meant that another person had poured oil over them. This was a sign that God had given this person a special task. For example, In the Old Testament, God told the prophet Samuel to pour oil over David. This was a sign that God chose David to become the next king of Israel.

Later, people called someone anointed if God had appointed that person for a special task, even if no one really had poured oil on their head.

David became the most beloved king of Israel. But after David, other people ruled over Israel, and many of them were not good kings. These kings led

the people away from God, and therefore God had to punish the people. The country of Israel was destroyed, and came under the control of other nations. But still, God promised the people of Israel that he would send them a new king. This king would save the people from their trouble. This king would be a descendant of David.

The Israelites began to refer to this king that God promised to send as "the Messiah," which meant "the anointed one."

When Jesus came, he showed the people that *he* is the Messiah that God had promised to send. Jesus was a descendant of David. Jesus proved that God had appointed him through the extraordinary power and authority he had.

Jesus almost never directly said to the people "I am the Messiah!" This is because people did not yet really know what it would mean for Jesus to be the Messiah. They wrongly believed that the Messiah would restore the kingdom of Israel and give them back political power. Jesus instead called himself "the Son of Man," which was an indirect way of saying that he was the Messiah.

After Jesus rose up from the dead, his disciples knew with great certainty that he was the Messiah and they began to share this good news with other people. God had sent his Savior! But Jesus was not a Savior who just freed people from an earthly government. Jesus was a Savior who did much more-Jesus freed people from sin and death.

When you are translating the words "Messiah" or "Christ," be careful about the following things:

- You only need one word for both Messiah and Christ.
- You could translate Messiah as "Savior," or "promised Savior," or "special king and Savior."
- Some translation teams like to use a word that sounds like "Messiah" or "Christ." If you do this, be sure that the word does not sound similar to a word in your language that has a very different meaning! Otherwise, people who do not know the Bible may get very confused.
- Maybe your culture has a symbol or ritual that people use to appoint someone for a special task. Maybe you can use this word for your translation of Messiah.

Christ

Audio Content

circumcision

Circumcision is the Jewish custom of cutting off the loose skin at the end of a boy's penis. The father of the baby, or someone who was specially trained, usually did this. Circumcision happened when a baby boy was eight days old.

The custom began when God told Abraham to circumcise himself and every male person in his household. The circumcision was a sign that the person was included in the covenant that God had made with Abraham. From that time onwards, every male Israelite had to be circumcised. If someone who was not a descendant of Abraham wanted to become part of the Israelites and a part of the covenant the Israelites had with God, he had to be circumcised as well. Men had to be circumcised in order to be acceptable for God.

The Bible also talks about "circumcision of the heart." This is picture language for repenting and for dedicating yourself to God. Only when people have repented, or turned away from their sins, are they acceptable before God. The Israelites, or Jews, thought that they were better than all the other

people in the world because they were circumcised. But God told them that being circumcised means nothing if people are not truly dedicated to God. Circumcision of the body is useless if the heart is not circumcised as well.

In the New Testament, the new believers in Jesus had different opinions about circumcision. Some Jewish Christians thought that all believers should be circumcised. They thought that only someone who was circumcised could really belong to God's people. Paul and the other apostles then taught the church that God no longer required circumcision of the body in order to belong to God's people. Instead, people need a spiritual circumcision of the heart: repentance, faith, and obedience to Jesus.

circumcision

Audio Content

clean/unclean

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. Animals and even objects can also be clean or unclean.

Being clean is the normal state of a person, but a person could become unclean if they did not follow the rules of cleanliness. The rules about which things were clean or unclean helped the Israelites remember that they were God's special people. Just as an object that is clean has to be kept away from something that is unclean, the Israelites had to stay away from unclean things. These things might be unclean animals or objects, or unclean actions like sin.

The rules about clean and unclean also helped people remember that God gives life, and that without God there is death. Blood and sickness are associated with death. That is why someone who was sick or bleeding was unclean. A dead body was the most unclean thing of all.

Uncleanliness was also contagious. If an unclean person touched a clean person, then the clean person became unclean. If a clean person touched an unclean object—for instance, a bloodied piece of

cloth—the clean person became unclean. If a clean person touched a dead body, then the clean person became unclean as well.

The distinction between clean and unclean was very important in the worship of God. Nothing that was unclean could enter the temple. God had appointed priests to take care of the temple. The priests had to be very careful to remain clean.

If someone was unclean because they had been menstruating, had had sexual relations, or had touched a dead body, they needed to wait a certain amount of time and then take a bath. After that, they were clean again.

If someone had a skin disease, they were unclean until the priest confirmed that they were healed. The person who was healed then had to offer an animal sacrifice to God. After that, he was considered clean again.

God told the Israelites which animals they could eat and not eat. For instance, they could eat goats, sheep, cows, and certain birds. These animals were clean. Animals they could not eat included pigs, wild animals, and reptiles. If a person ate an unclean animal, the person would become unclean.

When people brought a sacrifice to God, they could only offer a clean animal. The animal had to be completely healthy as well. Otherwise, it would still be unclean and unsuitable for sacrifice.

In the Old Testament, people could become unclean either by sin or by touching an unclean thing. An animal could be unclean by nature.

However, in the New Testament, Jesus teaches the people that being clean is not just a matter of staying away from certain foods or from taking a ritual bath. Jesus teaches us that we become unclean if we think evil thoughts and do wrong things. These things make us unfit to serve or worship God. We become unclean if we disobey God. That is why evil spirits are often called "unclean spirits," because they are rebelling against God.

After Jesus went back to heaven, more and more people became his followers. Among them were also people who were not Jews. The church at first thought that people who were not Jews were unclean, and could therefore not become part of God's people. But God taught the church that the old rules about who or what was clean no longer counted. People from all nations were welcome with God, and it was no longer important what someone ate or did not eat. Jesus had made people

clean. What was important now was to stay clean by staying away from sin.

clean/unclean

Audio Content

cloak

A **cloak**, which is also called a robe, is a piece of clothing. People wear a cloak on top of other clothes. A cloak helps to keep people warm and dry and can be used as a blanket at night. People made cloaks from animal skin or wool. Wool is the hair of an animal called a sheep. A cloak was often a simple square piece of material with holes for the arms.

You can look in the visual Bible dictionary for a picture of a cloak.

cloak

Audio Content

compassion

When someone has **compassion** for someone, they have a deep affection or love for someone.

compassion

Audio Content

cornerstone

A **cornerstone**, sometimes called a "head stone," is the most important stone in a building.

There are two different stones in a building that can be called a cornerstone.

A cornerstone can be a large stone placed at one of the corners at the bottom of a building. People put this stone down first. Then, when they build the rest of the house, they build it in relation to this stone. They know where to build the other walls because they can look at this first stone and make

the other walls connect with this stone. Because this stone is large, it joins two different walls and carries a large part of the weight of the house. In this case, the cornerstone is the most important stone because it makes the house strong.

A cornerstone can also mean a stone that is placed at the top of a building. This stone joins two arches to form a doorway, or to support the roof. In this case, the cornerstone is the most important stone because it completes the house and joins it together.

You can look in the visual Bible dictionary for pictures of a cornerstone.

cornerstone

Audio Content

covenant

When people make a **covenant**, they make a solemn promise to each other that they cannot break. When people make a covenant, they say that they want to have a good relationship with each other. Therefore, the people who make the covenant sometimes call each other brother, or father, or son. A covenant is for always.

When people make a covenant, they swear an oath. In the oath they say: "I will keep my promise. If I do not, God may punish me." They can perform a ritual that symbolizes the punishment that God will give them if they break their oath. For instance, when people made a covenant with each other, they might each kill an animal. This reminded them that if one of them broke the covenant, God would punish them. Often, eating a meal together was also part of the covenant ritual.

Individual people or whole families could make a covenant with each other. Countries or people groups could also make a covenant with each other. For instance they might promise that they would not fight with each other and that they would help the other group if that group had a problem. By making a covenant with each other, they were saying that they wanted to have a good relationship with each other. In this relationship, both parties were equal. They had a choice whether to make the covenant with each other or not, and they could agree together about what they wanted to promise to each other. In the Old Testament, the people of

Israel sometimes made a covenant with people from another nation.

A king or a ruler could also make a covenant with another ruler or kingdom that was weaker than he was. The king could say to these other people: "I will protect you, but you will have to pay me," or "You have to work for me." These other people had to promise to do what the king wanted. If they broke the promise, the king would punish them. If they kept their promise, the king would do good things for them. In this type of covenant, the king did not make an oath. Only the people who had to do what the king wanted had to make an oath.

But sometimes it was the other way around, and only the king made an oath. This could happen if some people had done something very good for the king, and the king wanted to reward them. This usually meant that the king gave them some land. The king then swore an oath, saying that the people could have this piece of land forever.

God made several covenants with people. These types of covenants were quite like the two different types of covenant that a king could make with people.

God made a covenant with Abraham. God promised to give to Abraham a land and many descendants. God was the only one who made an oath here. God confirmed his oath through a ritual that involved the killing of animals. This symbolized the sincerity of God's oath. From that time onwards, Abraham and his descendants needed to be circumcised. Circumcision is the custom of cutting off the loose skin at the end of a man's penis. In Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament, when people make a covenant they say that they "*cut* a covenant." By making this cut in their body, Abraham's descendants would be reminded about the covenant that God had "*cut*" with them. If Abraham's descendants would stop circumcising their sons, they would break their part of the covenant.

Later, God confirmed this covenant with Abraham's descendants, the Israelites, several times. For instance, this happened on Mount Sinai after Moses led the Israelites out of slavery from Egypt. Abraham's descendants had become a large people group, just as God had promised. But they did not yet have their own land. On Mount Sinai, God gave the Israelites his commandments, which were his laws. The Israelites needed to obey these commandments. That was their part of the covenant agreement. God promised the Israelites

that if they obeyed him and kept their part of the covenant, they would be God's special people. God would bless them and give them a land of their own, and many other good things. But if the Israelites disobeyed God, and broke the covenant, God would punish them and take away their land.

The Israelites promised to keep God's covenant and to obey him completely. To confirm this promise, they did a ritual. Moses killed several animals and sprinkled some of the blood of those animals on the altar—the place where people brought sacrifices to God. And he sprinkled some of the blood over the people. He called this the "blood of the covenant." The blood on the altar symbolized God's oath, and the blood on the people symbolized the people's oath. The blood made the covenant a formal agreement that could not be broken.

However, the Israelites did not keep their promise. They kept breaking God's commandments, and God had to punish them.

In the New Testament, this Old Testament covenant with the Israelites is called "the first covenant." Jesus said that he was making a *new* covenant with the people. It was necessary for God to make a new covenant because the people are so sinful. Therefore they could never obey God completely, and could not keep their part of the covenant. Just before Jesus was going to die, Jesus talked about his own death. Jesus said that his blood was the blood of the new covenant. Just as the blood on the altar and on the people in the time of Moses made the first covenant formal, the death of Jesus makes the new covenant between God and people formal. The new covenant is a solemn promise from God to the people that they will be saved if they trust in Jesus.

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

Your culture may have a word or phrase for covenant that is similar to a covenant in the Bible. Some languages use picture language to describe people making a covenant. Do people do a certain activity when they are making a solemn promise to each other? If so, this might help you to decide on a term for covenant.

Some options to translate covenant could be:

- a solemn promise
- an unbreakable promise
- a binding agreement

You can act out the different types of covenant that are mentioned earlier:

- You could act out two people who are each other's equal.
- You could act out a king who makes a covenant with people who have to obey him.
- You could act out a king who makes a covenant with someone he wants to give something to.

How do these dramas help you to find the right words in your language?

covenant

Audio Content

cross

A **cross** is an upright piece of wood with another piece of wood-called "a crossbeam"-attached to it sideways near the top. The Roman people used this as a tool to torture and execute people they thought were the worst criminals. People called this "crucifixion." Crucifixion was the most painful and humiliating way to die. A person who was going to be crucified was first severely flogged, and then had to carry the crossbeam of the cross to the place of execution. The soldiers then laid the victim on top of the wooden cross, with his arms stretched wide. The soldiers then hammered large iron nails through the person's wrists, or hands, and then through the feet of the victim, so that he became fixed to the cross. Then they pulled the cross upright, and left the naked victim hanging until he died, in full view of other people. A cross was a symbol of deep shame and humiliation.

You can look in the visual dictionary for pictures of a cross.

cross

Audio Content

crucifixion

Crucifixion was the Roman way of executing people. It was only used for slaves and the worst criminals. Crucifixion was the most painful and humiliating way to die. Crucifixion means that someone is nailed to a cross and then left to die.

A cross is an upright piece of wood with another piece of wood-a crossbeam-attached to it sideways near the top. A person who would be crucified was first severely flogged, and then had to carry the crossbeam of the cross himself to the place of execution. The soldiers then laid the victim on top of the wooden cross, with his arms stretched wide. The soldiers then hammered large iron nails through the wrists-or hands-and feet of the victim, so that he became fixed to the cross. Sometimes the soldiers would only bind a person with rope and not use nails. Then the soldiers pulled the cross upright, and left the naked victim hanging till he died, in full view of other people. The victim could not move and was in constant pain. He would eventually die because of the pain, hunger, and thirst, or because he could no longer breathe properly. This could take several hours or even days. Sometimes the soldiers would make the victim die quicker by breaking his legs so that he could not hold himself up to breathe.

You can look in the visual Bible dictionary for pictures of a cross.

crucifixion

Audio Content

cubit

A **cubit** is a way to measure how long something is. One cubit is about as long as a man's arm from his elbow to his fingertips, which is about 50 centimeters.

cubit**Audio Content****curse**

To **curse** someone is the opposite of to bless someone. When you bless someone, you wish that something good will happen to the person you bless. When you curse them, you wish that something bad will happen to them. People believed that a curse would come true. If someone cursed them, they became very afraid.

When God curses someone, the bad thing that God says will happen will certainly happen. God curses people to punish them. God told the Israelites that if they obeyed God, God would bless them. If they disobeyed God, God would curse them.

curse**Audio Content**