

Vocabulary for Unit 4

Babylonian Exile: In 587 BC, the Babylonians pillaged Judah, destroyed the Temple and the city of Jerusalem, and banished the people in chains to serve as slaves in Babylon. The Exile lasted until 539 BC.

Exodus: A Greek word meaning “to go out.” The Exodus was one of the pivotal events in the Old Testament. God’s power was revealed when the nation of Israel was freed from the bondage of Egypt in awe-inspiring and wondrous ways.

genealogy: A type of family tree. More than a bloodline, a genealogy was a literary form used as a proclamation to make connections with important ancestors.

idolatry: The worship of false gods or the love of anything more than the one, true God.

Israel: At the ancient site of Bethel, God affirmed the promises of the Covenant and gave Jacob a new name: Israel (see Genesis 35:9–15). Jacob, or Israel, became the symbol for the struggles of the Hebrew peoples across the millennia. His Hebrew descendants became known as Israelites.

manna: Little flakes the Israelites collected and boiled or baked into a breadlike substance, symbolizing God as the sole sustainer of life.

monotheism: The belief in and worship of one, true God.

Passover: The night the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites marked by the blood of the lamb, and spared the firstborn sons from death. It also is the feast that celebrates the deliverance of the Chosen People from bondage in Egypt and the Exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land.

patriarch: The father or leader of a tribe, clan, or tradition. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were the patriarchs of the Israelite people.

Pentateuch: A Greek word meaning “five books,” referring to the first five books of the Old Testament.

pharaoh: A ruler of ancient Egypt.

redemption: From the Latin *redemptio*, meaning “a buying back,” referring, in the Old Testament, to Yahweh’s deliverance of Israel and, in the New Testament, to Christ’s deliverance of all Christians from the forces of sin.

repentance: A word from the Latin *poenitere*, meaning “to make sorry,” referring to the recognition and rejection of personal sin.

ritual: A specific ceremony such as the ritual of the Mass, or a book that contains the texts that are to be recited during such ceremonies.

sacrifice: To make holy; a rite offered to God on behalf of the people, presided over by a priest who leads and represents the community in adoration, repentance, gratitude, and honor (see Hebrews 2:17). In the Old



Testament, a sacrifice was needed as an atonement, a healing rite to restore holiness, cleanse people from infractions of the Law, and reconcile their covenant relationship with God (see Psalm 51:1–17).

Sinai Covenant: The Covenant established with the Israelites at Mount Sinai that renewed the Covenant with Abraham’s descendants. It establishes the Israelites as God’s Chosen People.

Ten Commandments: Sometimes called the Decalogue, the list of ten norms, or rules of moral behavior, that God gave Moses and that are the basis of ethical conduct.

theophany: God’s manifestation of himself in a visible form to enrich human understanding of him. An example is God’s appearance to Moses in the form of a burning bush.

