

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

This is a confession of faith for ceremonies surrounding the presentation of first fruits (Leviticus 23:9-11 and Numbers 28:26-31) that occurred during the great pilgrimages to Jerusalem. The confession remembers Israel's origin as a people wandering from the Syrian steppe and celebrates God's deliverance of them from Egypt. Although the confession begins in 26:5 with the first-person singular, it quickly shifts to the first-person plural (26:6) and becomes a statement of Israel's corporate memory of God's salvation.

Psalm 100

This is a short *liturgy of entrance* for pilgrims to Jerusalem's temple that features a dialogue between priest (choir?) and the congregation entering the temple. Despite the psalm's later heading "A Psalm of Thanksgiving" (omitted in *BCP*), the psalm is what modern researchers call a *hymn of praise*, a song in this instance that celebrates God's creation of the pilgrims and God's faithfulness to the divine covenant (*xesed*).

Philippians 4:4-9

Philippians 4:2-9 reads like the conclusion to a letter, and yet Philippians 4:19-20 also reads like such an ending. Difficulties like this have led some researchers to conclude that the short epistle we call Philippians is actually a conflation of several letters. The reference to rejoicing in 4:4 picks up a major theme repeated in Philippians 1:4, 18, 25; 2:2, 17, 18, 19, 28, 29; 3:1; 4:1; 4:10. Joy in suffering stems from the sure knowledge that the afflictions of the righteous signify the end times. This knowledge of the apocalyptic meaning of suffering results in peace and even joy in the midst of the tribulations of the end of this age..

John 6:25-35

Whereas the first three Gospels treat the miraculous feedings (Matthew 14: 13-21; 15:32-39; Mark 6:30-44; 8:1-10; Luke 9:10-17) as demonstrations of God's power in Christ, the Fourth Gospel understands the feeding of the five thousand as a "sign" (Greek: *semeion* [6:14]) or figure of Jesus' entire ministry. Jesus reinterprets the story of the manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16), which fed the wandering Hebrews, to represent God's sending Jesus into the world. Jesus, the new manna, will sustain his followers to the end of the age.