

A JEWISH READING

The Jewish tradition of *pardes* (par-DES) has been used for thousands of years to better understand God's word. Jesus was taught it, and taught it to his disciples. This simple guide will take you through the four stages of *pardes*.

1

01 — Peshat (puh-SHAT): the literal meaning

What is literally happening in this text? What is a simple metaphor?

For example, in the story of Noah, God's forgiveness wipes away sin and his rainbow shows there will always be hope after difficult times.

2

02 — Remez (REM-ezz): the hint

Take something from this story and hunt for it in other parts of the Bible. What do you notice about the differences/similarities between the two stories?

For example, Noah is saved by staying in a boat during a flood, but Jonah saves others by getting out of a boat during a storm.

3

03 — Derash (DRASH): the deeper meaning

Now we've spotted hints or reflections of this story in other parts of the Bible, how do they reveal more about God and his Plan for us?

For example, Noah is given news of God's wrath ending through a dove, and doves are crucial in the temple sacrifice system. There always has to be atonement and sacrifice for sin - only then can God's wrath be satisfied. He is a just God, and He sent Jesus to be the ultimate sacrifice.

4

04 — Sode (SOH-duh): a secret from God

A sode is a new understanding of the Bible or of God that is God-given: we can't earn it or work for it. A sode doesn't always come in a Bible study, but that's okay. Let's take a moment to sit in silence, and search our hearts. Has God revealed something new to you today that you would like to share with the group?

