

Word Study  
Bishop, Overseer, Elder, Presbyter, Pastor

**ἐπισκοπέω (Episkopeo) - Verb meaning "to oversee"**

Hebrews 12:15 - Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled;

1 Peter 5:2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

**ἐπίσκοπος (Episkopos) - Masculine Noun meaning "Bishop, Overseer"**

Acts 20:28 - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Philippians 1:1 - Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

1 Timothy 3:2 - A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

Titus 1:7 - For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

1 Peter 2:25 - For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

**ἐπισκοπή (Episkopa) - Feminine noun meaning "Office, Overseership"**

Acts 1:20 - For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take. (Acts 1:20)

1 Timothy 3:1 - This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. (1 Timothy 3:1)

**πρεσβύτερος (Presbuteros) - Noun meaning Presbyter, Elder (office), Elder (age).**

Acts 11:30 - Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 14:23 - And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

Acts 15:2,4 -6 <sup>2</sup>When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question... <sup>4</sup>And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. <sup>5</sup>But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. <sup>6</sup>And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

πρεσβύτερος (Presbuteros)  
Continued

- Acts 15:22,23 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely* Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: 23 And they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: (Acts 15)
- Acts 16:4 - And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.
- Acts 20:17 - And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. (Acts 20:17)
- Acts 21:18 - And the *day* following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.
- 1 Timothy 4:14 - Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.
- 1 Timothy 5:1,2 - Rebuke not an elder, but entreat *him* as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.
- 1 Timothy 5:17-19 - <sup>17</sup>Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. <sup>18</sup>For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward. <sup>19</sup>Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.
- Titus 1:5 - For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:
- James 5:14 - Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:
- 1 Peter 5:1 - <sup>1</sup>The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: <sup>2</sup>Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof* not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; <sup>3</sup>Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. <sup>4</sup>And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. <sup>5</sup>Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all [of you] be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

**ποιμαίνω (Poimaino) - Verb meaning "to shepherd, feed, rule"**

- Matthew 2:6 - And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.
- Luke 17:7 - But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?
- John 21:16 - He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.
- Acts 20:28 - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (Acts 20:28)
- 1 Corinthians 9:7 - Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?
- 1 Peter 5:2 - Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
- Jude 1:12 - These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;
- Revelation 2:27 - And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.
- Revelation 7:17 - For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.
- Revelation 12:5 - And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and [to] his throne.
- Revelation 19:15 - And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

**ποιμήν (Poiman) - Noun meaning Shepherd, Pastor**

Matthew 9:36 - But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

(See also the following for literal usage as shepherd of sheep: Matthew 25:32; Mark 6:34; Luke 2:8,15,18,20; John 10:2,12)

Jesus as shepherd - see Matt 26:31; Mark 14:27; John 10:12,14,16, Hebrews 13:20 & 1 Peter 2:25.

Ephesians 4:11 - And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

## Appendix G - The Duties of Elders

Six Greek words are used to refer to the men that serve as elders / bishops / pastors.

ἐπισκοπέω (Episkopeo) - Verb meaning "to oversee"

ἐπίσκοπος (Episkopos) - Masculine Noun meaning "Bishop," "Overseer"

ἐπισκοπή (Episkopa) - Feminine noun meaning "Office," "Overseership"

πρεσβύτερος (Presbuteros) - Noun meaning "Presbyter," "Elder" (office), "Elder" (age).

ποιμαίνω (Poimaino) - Verb meaning "to shepherd, feed, rule"

ποιμήν (Poiman) - Noun meaning "Shepherd," "Pastor"

Note: \*In Titus 1:5 Paul directs Titus to appoint "elders" (πρεσβύτερος) and then refers to them as "overseers" (ἐπίσκοπος) in verse 7. \*In 1 Peter 5:1 Peter gives instructions to elders (πρεσβύτερος) and instructs them to shepherd (ποιμαίνω).

Among the responsibilities that belong to Elders are the following:

- \*Give oversight to \ rule \ administrate the flock. (Lead, guide, set the direction, care for). This is to be done willingly, not by constraint and with eagerness, not for gaining wealth at the expense of the sheep - Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:5; 5:17; 1 Peter 5:2;
- \*Manage (rule, lead) the congregation. 1 Timothy 3:5; 5:17; Hebrews 13:7
- \*Feed / Shepherd the flock of God (Teach the Word) - Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1; 1 Timothy 3:2; 5:17 Ephesians 4:11
- \*Settle matters of Doctrine (By teaching & refuting) - Acts 15:2f; Titus 1:8-11
- \*Protect the flock from false teachers - Acts 20:28-30
- \*Determine matters of Church Policy - Acts 15:22f
- \*Train people to use their gifts in ministry in the body - Ephesians 4:11,12f
- \*Set a godly example for all. (Live in accordance with all Scriptural commands, principles & precepts) - 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:2-3
- \*Watch over the souls of the people - Hebrews 13:7
- \*Pray over the sick - James 5:14
- \*Ordain others - 1 Timothy 4:14
- \*Receive financial contributions - Acts 11:30
- \*Devote themselves primarily to the ministry of prayer & the Word Acts 6:2,4 (Though this verse specifically refers to the apostles), including teaching and matters of doctrine - 1 Timothy 5:17
- \*Give direction to others in handling minor matters - Acts 6:1,3,6 (Though this specifically refers to the apostles)