This article identifies all of the people whose proper names occur in the Bible, excluding the deuterocanonical books.

The names are set out alphabetically as they are spelled in the King James Version, with variant spellings enclosed in brackets [ ]. The meaning of the name is then given in parentheses ( ). Under each entry, various individuals bearing this name are differentiated by boldface brackets, like this: [1]; [2]; and so on. Then follows a description of the character, with several Bible verses listed where the name occurs. (Not all verses could be given; so if the reader is considering a passage that is not cited in the section, he must choose the character that would most likely be identical with the person in his passage.)

We have made no attempt to designate each person as a Palite, Harodite, Gileadite, and so on. Many of these designations refer to the ancestor of an individual; in other cases, they refer to the person's city, district, or distinctive clan. It is often a guess as to which meaning is intended.

The meanings of the names are not infallibly accurate; they are simply interesting possibilities. These names are ancient and their history is obscure and uncertain.

Many people in Scripture bear the same name. In dozens of cases, we cannot determine whether an individual in one book is identical with someone having the same name in another book. In the ancient world, a person was often called by more than one name.

In the transmission of Scripture, copyists occasionally made errors. Surely Reuel was not also called Deuel, nor Jemuel called Nemuel, and so on. Yet which is original? Only in a few cases do we have any clues.

We find variants forms and contractions of names through the Bible. They probably presented little difficulty to an ancient reader. But this further complicates the identification problem for us.

The Hebrew genealogies are abbreviated at many points. At times it is difficult to distinguish a man from his ancestor. Consider also the problem of trying to match an abbreviated list with a fuller list. Either the names in the abbreviated list are independent of the longer list or they are already included in it. In other words, we may find the same person included in two lists or two different people in two lists.

In a few cases, our English versions use the same word to transliterate several similar Hebrew names. In these instances, we have recorded a separate entry for each Hebrew name (e.g., Iddo).

Barabbas ("father's son"), a murderer whom the people demanded that Pontius Pilate should release instead of Christ (Matt. 27:17,20-21,26; Mark 15:7).

Barachel ("blessed of God"), father of Elihu, a figure in Job (Job 32:2, 6).

Barachia [Berechiah] ("blessed of Jehovah"), father of Zechariah the prophet (Zech. 1:1).

Barachias (Greek form of Barachiah), the father of a prophet whom the Jews killed (Matt. 23:35).

Barak ("lightning"), the general of the judge Deborah; he helped to defeat Sisera (Judg. 4:6; 5:15).

Bariah ("fugitive"), a descendant of David (1 Chron. 3:22).

Bar-jesus. See Elymas.

Bar-jonah. See Peter.

Barkos ("partly colored"), an ancestor of captives returning from the Exile (Ezra 2:53; Neh. 7:55).

Barnabas ("son of consolation"), a Jewish Christian who traveled widely with Paul (Acts 4:36; 9:27; 11:22-30; Gal. 2: 1). His original name was Joses, but he was named Barnabas by the apostles (Acts 4:36); obviously they considered him to be their consoler.

Barsabas. See Joseph [11]; Juda [13].

Bartholomew ("son of Tolmai"), one of Jesus' twelve apostles (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3: 18; Acts 1: 13). He is probably the same as Nathanael (q.v.).

Bartimaeus (Aramaic bar, "son" and Greek timaios, "honorable"), a blind beggar healed by Christ (Mark 10:46-52).


Basmath. See Basheshath.

Bath-shan. [Bathshuwa] ("the seventh daughter; daughter of the oath"), the beautiful wife of Uriah the Hittite, and afterward the wife of David (2 Sam. 11:3; 12:24; 1 Kings 1:11-2:19). She was the mother of Solomon and an ancestor of Christ (Matt. 1:6). She is called Bathshuwa in 1 Chronicles 3:5.

Bath-sheba ("daughter of prosperity"). [1] Another name of Bath-sheba (q.v.). [2] The wife of Judah. In Genesis 38:2 and 1 Chronicles 2:3, the KJV incorrectly renders her name as "daughter of Shua"; Bath-shua is really a proper name.

Bavai ("wisher"), one who helped to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3: 18).

Bazlith [Bazluth] ("asking"), one whose descendants returned from the Exile (Ezra 2:52; Neh. 7:54).

Bealiah ("Jehovah is lord"), a man who joined David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:5).


Becher ("youth; firstborn"). [1] A son of Ben-hadad I, the king of Syria who made a son of Ephraim (Num. 26:35); perhaps the same as Bered in 1 Chronicles 7:20.

Bechorath ("first birth"), an ancestor of Saul (1 Sam. 9:1).

Bedad ("alone"), father of Hadad, fourth king of Edom (Gen. 36:35; 1 Chron. 1:46).

Bedan ("son of judgment"). [1] A leader of Israel mentioned as a deliverer of the nation (1 Sam. 12:11). The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic read Barak instead; however, many think this is a reference to Abdon. [2] A descendant of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7: 17).

Beediah ("servant of Jehovah"), one who had married a foreign wife during the Exile (Ezra 10:35).

Beeliiada [Eliada] ("the lord knows"), a son of David (1 Chron. 14:7) also known as Eliada (2 Sam. 5:16; 1 Chron. 3: 8). The meanings of these two names are thought to be identical.


Ben-hadad's capital. When Ben-hadad II united the Arameans (who lived in the territory northwest of Israel) he strengthened Damascus as the capital of his domain. Ben-hadad's armies defeated the combined forces of Israel and Judah in a battle at Ramoth-gilead, in which King Ahab was killed (1 Kings 22:1-35). Modern Damascus shows the strong influence of Muslim culture.


Berechiah ("victorious"), the immoral daughter of Herod Agrippa I. She and her brother Agrippa (with whom she was living in incest) sat in judgment on Paul (Acts 25:13, 23; 26:30).

Berodach-baladan, a copyist's mistake or another form of Merodach-baladan (q.v.).

Besai ("treading down"), one who returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:49; Neh.7:52).

Besodeiah ("given to trust in Jehovah"), one of the repairers of the old gate of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:6).

Beth-rapha ("place of fear"), a descendant of Judah through Caleb (1 Chron. 4:12).

Bethuel ("dweller in God"), a son of Nahor, Abraham's brother (Gen. 22:22-23; 28:5).


Bezer ("strong"), one of the heads of Asher (1 Chron. 7:37).

Bichri ("youth; firstborn"), an ancestor of Sheba, who rebelled against David (2 Sam. 20: 1).

Bidakar ("servant of Ker [Kar]"), a captain in the service of Jehu who executed the sentence on Ahab's son (2 Kings 9:25).

Bigtha ("given by fortune"), a chamberlain of Ahasuerus (Esther 1:10).

Bigthan (Bigthana) ("given by fortune"), a chamberlain who conspired against Ahasuerus (Esther 2:21; 6:2).


Bildad ("lord Adad; son of contention"), one of Job's three "friends" (Job 2:11; 8:1; 18:1; 25:1; 42:9).


Bilgai ("bursting forth"), one who sealed the new covenant with God after the Exile (Neh. 10:8); perhaps the same as Bilgah [2].

Bilhah ("tender"), the handmaid of Rachel and mother of Dan and Naphtali (Gen. 29:29; 30:3-5, 7).


Bilshah ("searcher"), a prince who returned from the Exile (Ezra 2:2; Neh. 7:7).

Bimha ("circumcised"), a descendant of Asher (1 Chron. 7:33).

Binea ("wanderer"), a descendant of Saul (1 Chron. 8:37; 9:43).


Birsha ("thick; strong"), a king of Gomorrah in the days of Abraham (Gen. 14:2).

Birzavith ("olive well"), descendant of Asher (1 Chron. 7:31).

Bithiah ("daughter of Jehovah"), a daughter of the pharaoh and wife of Mered (1 Chron. 4:18); her name implies her conversion.

Biztha ("eunuch"), one of Ahasuerus' eunuchs (Esther 1:10).

Blastus ("a bud"), the chamberlain of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:20).

Boanerges, the surname bestowed upon James and John, the sons of Zebedee. It means "sons of thunder" (Mark 3: 17).

Boaz [Booz] ("fleetness; strength"), a Bethlehemite of Judah who became the husband of Ruth and an ancestor of Christ (Ruth 2-4; Matt. 1:5; Luke 3:32).

Bocheru ("youth"), a descendant of King Saul (1 Chron. 8:38; 9:44).

Bohan ("stumpy"), a descendant of Reuben for whom a boundary stone between Judah and Benjamin was named (Josh. 15:6; 18:17).

Booz, Greek form of Boaz (q.v.).

Bosor, Greek form of Beor (q.v.).

Bukki ("proved of Jehovah; mouth of Jehovah"). [1] An ancestor of Ezra and descendant of Aaron

**Bukkiah** ("proved of Jehovah; mouth of Jehovah"), a son of Heman and musician in the temple (1 Chron. 25:4, 13).

**Bunah** ("understanding"), a son of Jerahmeel (1 Chron. 2:25).


**Buzi** ("despised by Jehovah"), a descendant of Aaron and father of Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:3).