

THE BAKER
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BIBLE
DICTIONARY

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Interior Design by Michael J. Williams

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PREFACE

To Christians, the Bible is canon, the standard of faith and practice. According to Calvin, it is a mirror of the soul that helps us understand ourselves better. Further, the Bible is the Word of God and thus like a “seed” (Mark 4:1–20) that serves as an agent of transformation from death to life if planted in the right soil, a receptive heart. Most significantly, it is the self-revelation of God himself. In the pages of the Bible, we come to know God through Jesus Christ, who he is and who we are in relationship with him. Thus, the importance of the Bible for our spiritual formation cannot be overestimated.

If we are honest, though, the Bible is not always easy to understand. The main message is clear enough, but much remains obscure. After all, the books of the Bible come from a variety of time periods, are written in a number of different genres and literary styles, and refer to customs that are quite foreign to us. The places named in the Bible are strange, and the number of people mentioned is virtually countless. We are distanced from both the Old and New Testaments by vast periods of time and culture.

The Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary intends to help people read the Bible with increased understanding. The more than five thousand articles written by well over one hundred contributors draw on centuries of scholarship to help make clear what is enigmatic on first reading. This dictionary contains articles on major

topics (for example, Jesus, God, all of the biblical books) as well as places and people, even if they just appear in a single verse in the Bible. The primary Bible version used for article titles and content is the 2011 revision of the New International Version, although articles also cover some of the more obscure terms used in the King James Version, and readings from a wide range of Bible versions are noted. The dictionary includes visual illustrations, charts, pictures, and maps to supplement the articles. In a word, this dictionary is a helpful resource to support everyday Bible reading as well as to prepare for group Bible studies or to follow up on sermons, and for many other reasons.

The editors wish to thank a number of people for their work in bringing this vast project to a successful conclusion. We thank Baker Publishing Group, and in particular Jack Kuhatschek, for inviting us to serve as editors of this book. Baker, as always, supported us with their excellent staff including Amy Donaldson, Brian Brunsting, Mike Williams, Trinity Graeser, and Brian Vos, the editorial and interior design team. Robert Hand and Robert G. Maccini did an excellent job making sure that the manuscript was ready for press. And, finally, thanks go to Kim E. Walton for organizing the photos and maps and Cheryl Van Anandel for the cover design.

Early in the project Baker hired two of my students at Westmont College to start collecting the many subjects that we cover in

this dictionary. Thank you Shane B. Kelly and Thomas G. Lengyel for your work as editorial assistants as well as writing some articles yourselves.

Indeed, we are very thankful for our writers, all of whom are named in the contributor list. We thank you for sharing your knowledge with our readers as well as for your timely submissions. While our heartfelt thanks go to all our contributors, special thanks go to Jessie Rainbow, Karen Traphagen, Susan Michaelson, John Michael Stanley, and Timothy Senapatiratne for the number of articles they took on and/or for

writing articles at the end of the process when we needed them quickly.

Our heartfelt desire and prayer is that this volume will aid our readers in reading the Bible, not just for intellectual purposes, but so they may know and obey the God revealed in its pages.

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ABBREVIATIONS

GENERAL

//	parallels
Akk.	Akkadian
Arab.	Arabic
Aram.	Aramaic
c.	circa
cf.	confer
chap(s).	chapter(s)
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
e.g.	for example
esp.	especially
fem.	feminine
frg.	fragment
Gk.	Greek
Heb.	Hebrew
i.e.	that is
Lat.	Latin
lit.	literally
LXX	Septuagint
masc.	masculine
mg.	margin
MT	Masoretic Text
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
par(s).	parallel(s)
pl.	plural
r.	reigned
sg.	singular
Vulg.	Vulgate

BIBLE VERSIONS

ASV	American Standard Version
BBE	Bible in Basic English
CEV	Contemporary English Version
ESV	English Standard Version
GNT	Good News Translation
GW	God's Word
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible
JB	Jerusalem Bible
JPS	Jewish Publication Society <i>Tanakh</i>
KJV	King James Version
MSG	The Message
NAB	New American Bible
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NCV	New Century Version
NEB	New English Bible
NET	New English Translation
NIV	New International Version
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NKJV	New King James Version
NLT	New Living Translation
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
REB	Revised English Bible
RSV	Revised Standard Version
TEV	Today's English Version
TNIV	Today's New International Version

APOCRYPHA AND SEPTUAGINT

1–2 Esd.	1–2 Esdras
Jdt.	Judith
1–4 Kgdms.	1–4 Kingdoms
1–4 Macc.	1–4 Maccabees
Sir.	Sirach
Tob.	Tobit
Wis.	Wisdom of Solomon

OLD TESTAMENT
PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

4 Bar.	4 Baruch (<i>Paraleipomena Jeremiou</i>)
1 En.	1 Enoch (<i>Ethiopic Apocalypse</i>)
3 En.	3 Enoch (<i>Hebrew Apocalypse</i>)
Jub.	<i>Jubilees</i>
L.A.B.	<i>Liber antiquitatum biblicarum</i> (<i>Pseudo-Philo</i>)
Let. Aris.	<i>Letter of Aristeas</i>
Mart. Isa.	<i>Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah 1–5</i>
Pss. Sol.	<i>Psalms of Solomon</i>
Sib. Or.	<i>Sibylline Oracles</i>
T. Dan	<i>Testament of Dan</i>
T. Levi	<i>Testament of Levi</i>

DEAD SEA SCROLLS

CD-A	<i>Damascus Document^a</i>
CD-B	<i>Damascus Document^b</i>
1QapGen ar	1QGenesis Apocryphon
1QH ^a	1QHodayota
1QIsaa	1QIsaiaha
1QM	1QWar Scroll
1QMMT	Halakhic Letter
1QpHab	1QPeshet to Habakkuk
1QS	1QRule of the Community
1Q28a	1QRule of the Congregation
4Q51	4QSamuela
4Q76	4QMinor Prophetsa
4Q418	4QInstructiond
11Q13	11QMelchizedek
11Q19	11QTemplea

RABBINIC TRACTATES

<i>b.</i>	<i>Babylonian Talmud</i>
<i>m.</i>	<i>Mishnah</i>

<i>t.</i>	<i>Tosefta</i>
<i>y.</i>	<i>Jerusalem Talmud</i>

<i>'Abot</i>	<i>'Abot</i>
<i>B. Bat.</i>	<i>Baba Batra</i>
<i>Ber.</i>	<i>Berakot</i>
<i>'Eruv.</i>	<i>'Eruvin</i>
<i>Git.</i>	<i>Gittin</i>
<i>Hul.</i>	<i>Hullin</i>
<i>Ketub.</i>	<i>Ketubbot</i>
<i>Mid.</i>	<i>Middot</i>
<i>Nid.</i>	<i>Niddah</i>
<i>Rosh Hash.</i>	<i>Rosh HaShanah</i>
<i>Sanh.</i>	<i>Sanhedrin</i>
<i>Shabb.</i>	<i>Shabbat</i>
<i>Shegal.</i>	<i>Sheqalim</i>

TARGUMIC TEXTS

<i>Frg. Tg.</i>	<i>Fragmentary Targum</i>
<i>Tg. Neof.</i>	<i>Targum Neofiti</i>
<i>Tg. Ps.-J.</i>	<i>Targum Pseudo-Jonathan</i>

APOSTOLIC FATHERS

1–2 Clem.	1–2 Clement
<i>Did.</i>	<i>Didache</i>
<i>Herm.</i>	<i>Shepherd of Hermas</i>
<i>Ign. Smyrn.</i>	<i>Ignatius, To the Smyrnaeans</i>
<i>Mart. Pol.</i>	<i>Martyrdom of Polycarp</i>
<i>Pol. Phil.</i>	<i>Polycarp, To the Philippians</i>

NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA
AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

<i>Gos. Phil.</i>	<i>Gospel of Philip</i>
<i>Gos. Thom.</i>	<i>Gospel of Thomas</i>

PAPYRI

P.Mich.	Michigan Papyri
P.Oxy.	Oxyrhynchus Papyri
P.Zen.	Zenon Papyri

GREEK AND LATIN WORKS

<i>Augustine</i>	
<i>Civ.</i>	<i>De civitate Dei (The City of God)</i>
<i>Cons.</i>	<i>De consensu evangelistarum (Harmony of the Gospels)</i>

<i>Faust.</i>	<i>Contra Faustum Manichaeum</i> (Against Faustus the Manichaean)	Josephus	
<i>Quaest. Hept.</i>	<i>Quaestiones in Heptateuchum</i> (Questions on the Heptateuch)	<i>Ag. Ap.</i>	<i>Against Apion</i>
		<i>Ant.</i>	<i>Jewish Antiquities</i>
		<i>J.W.</i>	<i>Jewish War</i>
		<i>Life</i>	<i>The Life</i>
Cassius Dio		Justin	
<i>Hist.</i>	<i>Historia romana (Roman History)</i>	<i>1 Apol.</i>	<i>Apologia i (First Apology)</i>
		<i>2 Apol.</i>	<i>Apologia ii (Second Apology)</i>
Cicero		Juvenal	
<i>Att.</i>	<i>Epistulae ad Atticum</i>	<i>Sat.</i>	<i>Satirae</i>
<i>Fam.</i>	<i>Epistulae ad familiares</i>	Lucian	
<i>Off.</i>	<i>De officiis</i>	<i>Jupp. trag.</i>	<i>Juppiter tragoedus (Zeus Rants)</i>
Clement of Alexandria		Origen	
<i>Strom.</i>	<i>Stromata (Miscellanies)</i>	<i>Cels.</i>	<i>Contra Celsum (Against Celsus)</i>
Dio Chrysostom		<i>Comm ser. Matt.</i>	<i>Commentarium series in evangelium Matthaei</i>
<i>3 Regn.</i>	<i>De regno iii (Or. 3)</i> (Kingship 3)	Ovid	
<i>2 Serv. lib.</i>	<i>De servitute et libertate ii (Or. 15) (Slavery and Freedom 2)</i>	<i>Metam.</i>	<i>Metamorphoses</i>
Epictetus		Pausanias	
<i>Ench.</i>	<i>Enchiridion</i>	<i>Descr.</i>	<i>Graeciae descriptio</i> (Description of Greece)
Epiphanius		Petronius	
<i>Pan.</i>	<i>Panarion (Refutation of All Heresies)</i>	<i>Sat.</i>	<i>Satyricon</i>
Eusebius		Philo	
<i>Hist. eccl.</i>	<i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> (Ecclesiastical History)	<i>Dreams</i>	<i>On Dreams</i>
Gaius		<i>Embassy</i>	<i>On the Embassy to Gaius</i>
<i>Inst.</i>	<i>Institutiones (Institutes)</i>	<i>QE</i>	<i>Questions and Answers on Exodus</i>
Herodotus		<i>QG</i>	<i>Questions and Answers on Genesis</i>
<i>Hist.</i>	<i>Historiae (Histories)</i>	<i>Spec. Larws</i>	<i>On the Special Larws</i>
Homer		Pliny the Elder	
<i>Il.</i>	<i>Ilias (Iliad)</i>	<i>Nat.</i>	<i>Naturalis historia (Natural History)</i>
<i>Od.</i>	<i>Odyssea (Odyssey)</i>	Pliny the Younger	
Irenaeus		<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistulae (Letters)</i>
<i>Haer.</i>	<i>Adversus haereses</i> (Against Heresies)	Plutarch	
Jerome		<i>Mor.</i>	<i>Moralia</i>
<i>Qu. hebr. Gen.</i>	<i>Quaestionum hebraicarum liber in Genesisim</i>		

Sallust*Hist.* *Historiae***Strabo***Geogr.* *Geographica (Geography)***Suetonius***Claud.* *Divus Claudius***Tacitus***Ann.* *Annales**Hist.* *Historiae***Tertullian***Apol.* *Apology (Apologeticus)**Marc.* *Against Marcion (Adversus
Marcionem)**Praescr.* *De praescriptione haereticorum***Vegetius***Mil.* *Epitoma rei militaris (Epitome
of Military Science)***Vitruvius***De arch.* *De architectura (On
Architecture)***Xenophon***Anab.* *Anabasis***Ancient Collections and Anonymous Works***Cod. theod.* *Codex theodosianus**Corp. herm.* *Corpus hermeticum***SECONDARY SOURCES****ARAB***Ancient Records of Assyria
and Babylonia.* Daniel David
Luckenbill. 2 vols. Chicago,
1926–1927

A

AARON Aaron was Moses' older brother (eighty-three and eighty years old respectively, according to Exod. 7:7) and his close associate during the days when God used both of them to establish his people Israel as a nation. Aaron's particular importance came when God selected him to be the first high priest of Israel.

Aaron first appears in the account of Moses' divine commission at the burning bush. God charged Moses to return to Egypt and lead his people out of bondage (Exod. 3:7–10). In spite of God's assurance of divine support and ultimate success, Moses hesitated to accept the call, finally citing his lack of rhetorical skills ("I am slow of speech and tongue" [Exod. 4:10]). Finally, God revealed that Aaron was on the way to see Moses. Aaron could "speak well" (Exod. 4:14), so he would serve as Moses' mouthpiece.

Aaron plays a supportive role in the Exodus account of the plagues and the departure from Egypt. He was at Moses' side. As previously arranged, Aaron was the spokesperson, acting as a prophet to Moses, who was "like God to Pharaoh" (Exod. 7:1). Indeed, the early plagues often were initiated by Moses commanding Aaron to "stretch out" his staff (Exod. 8:5, 16; cf. 7:9), though later Moses took over this role.

After much struggle, Pharaoh finally allowed the Israelites to leave Egypt. Aaron is not specifically mentioned as playing a role at the climactic moment of the crossing of the Red Sea, but he appears again in Exod. 16 during the first report of the Israelite community's grumbling about lack of food for the journey. Moses and Aaron were the objects of the grumbling (v. 2), with Aaron continuing his role as the one who speaks for Moses (vv. 9–10). Aaron also supported Moses' leading position during the first battle in the wilderness (Exod. 17:8–16). When the Israelites fought the aggressive Amalekites, Israel had the upper hand only when Moses kept his walking staff, representing God's presence, raised above his head. When his arms grew too tired to hold the staff aloft, Aaron and Hur were next to him, hoisting his arms high.

The event of greatest significance involving Aaron in the wilderness was his



Carving of Moses and Aaron by Andreas Schultze (1666), part of the pulpit of the Lutheran Church of Saint Nicholas in Luckau, Germany

appointment as high priest. The divine mandate for his installation is recorded in Exod. 28. Aaron and his sons were to be “set apart” or “consecrated” (Heb. root *qdsb*) for service to God. They were given special garments that distinctively related them to the sanctuary (i.e., the similarity between the ephod and the innermost curtain of the tabernacle [“blue, purple and scarlet yarn”; Exod. 26:1; 28:6]). Instructions for the installation service are given in Exod. 29, but the event itself is reported in Lev. 8.

Aaron did not fare well on the one occasion when he acted independently from Moses. While Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the two tablets of the law from the hand of God, Aaron gave in to the people’s request to make a calf idol out of golden earrings that they gave him. Whether this calf idol represented a false god or the Lord (see Exod. 32:5) is irrelevant because in either case the worship was illegitimate and brought great harm on God’s people. When Moses returned, he confronted Aaron, who gave lame excuses by blaming the people. Unexpectedly, the Levites, his own tribe, assisted Moses by killing many of those who worshiped the idol. For this act, the Levites were ordained to work as priestly assistants.

In spite of Aaron’s sin, God did not remove him from his priestly responsibilities (thanks to the prayers of Moses [Deut. 9:20]), the height of which was to preside over the annual Day of Atonement. The incident of the golden calf was not the only occasion when Aaron tried God’s patience. According to Num. 12, Aaron and his sister, Miriam, contested Moses’ leadership. Using his marriage to a Cushite woman as a pretext, Moses’ siblings asserted their equality. God, however, put them in their place, affirming Moses’ primacy.

Other tribal leaders questioned Aaron’s priestly leadership, according to Num. 17. Moses told all the tribal leaders to place their walking staffs along with Aaron’s before God at the tent of testimony. God showed his favor toward Aaron by causing his staff to bud.

Both Moses and Aaron forfeited their right to enter the land of promise when they usurped the Lord’s authority as they brought water from

the rock in the wilderness (Num. 20:1–13). Sick and tired of the people’s complaining, Moses wrongly ascribed the ability to make water come from the rock to himself and Aaron, and rather than speaking to the rock, he struck it twice. For this, God told them that they would die in the wilderness. Aaron’s death is reported soon after this occasion (Num. 20:22–27).

Aaron is cited infrequently in subsequent Scripture, with the exception of priestly genealogies (1 Chron. 6:3, 49–50) or in historical reviews (Pss. 77:20; 99:6; 105:26). Psalm 133:2 presents a striking image of the blessings of communal unity by asking the reader to picture oil running down Aaron’s beard. In the NT, the most significant use of Aaron is in comparison to Jesus Christ, the ultimate high priest. Interestingly, the book of Hebrews argues that Jesus far surpassed the priestly authority of Aaron by connecting his priesthood to Melchizedek, a mysterious non-Israelite priest who blesses God and Abram in Gen. 14 (see Heb. 7:1–14).

AARONITES The descendants of Aaron. The term occurs at 1 Chron. 12:27 (NIV: “family of Aaron”) in reference to Jehoiada, the head of the clan at the time of David, who came to David’s side along with 3,700 fighting men “to turn Saul’s kingdom over to him” (1 Chron. 12:23). But it is equivalent to other expressions such as “sons of Aaron,” used often in the OT.

AARON’S ROD Aaron’s rod (or staff) is his wooden walking stick, which had a significant role in the accounts of the plagues of Egypt. In Moses and Aaron’s first confrontation with Pharaoh, Aaron threw his rod to the ground, and it turned into a snake. Egypt was a land filled with poisonous snakes, so it is not surprising that the snake was a symbol of power and threat. Although the Egyptian magicians could mimic this act, Aaron’s snake swallowed the snakes produced by their rods, thus showing the superiority of Aaron’s God over their false gods (Exod. 7:8–13). Aaron used his rod by either extending it or striking the ground in order to initiate other plagues as well (turning the Nile into blood [Exod. 7:19], frogs [8:5], and gnats [8:16]). Interestingly, Aaron’s rod was featured

in the early plagues, whereas Moses used his rod in some of the later and more powerful plagues as well as in the crossing of the Red Sea, perhaps showing Moses' prominence (9:23 [hail], 10:13 [locusts], 14:16 [Red Sea]).

The rod was not a magical wand but rather a symbol of the presence of God. It is best to understand the rod as related to a tree that stands for God's presence. It is a portable tree. That the rod is a portable tree and signifies God's presence is clearly seen in Num. 17. In the face of dissension from other tribal leaders who disputed Aaron's leadership, God directed Moses to place a rod from every tribe before him in the tent of testimony. Aaron's alone budded into an almond tree, signifying that God was with him. His rod was then placed in front of the testimony, according to Heb. 9:4, in the ark of the covenant. It may also have been used by Moses to strike the rock and produce water (Exod. 17:5; Num. 20:9).

ABADDON A transliteration of the Hebrew word for "destruction," signifying the grave or the underworld. It occurs six times in the OT: three times along with "Sheol," which refers to the grave or the underworld (Job 26:6; Prov. 15:11; 27:20), once with "death" (Job 28:22), once with the word for "bury" (Ps. 88:11), and once in Job 31:12. Most modern translations render this word "Destruction." In the NT, the word is used in Rev. 9:11 as the equivalent to the Greek word "Apollyon," which means "Destroyer," to refer to the angel of the Abyss.

ABAGTHA One of the seven personal attendants of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), whom he commanded to bring Queen Vashti to his banquet (Esther 1:10). Working with the harem, he was a eunuch.

ABANA A river in the region of Damascus mentioned by the Syrian general Naaman as surpassing the Jordan River (2 Kings 5:12). Its exact identity is uncertain, but often it is identified with the Nahr Barada, which flows from the Anti-Lebanon Mountains through Damascus. Some ancient versions (LXX, Targum) and Hebrew manuscripts render it "Amana." *See also* Amana.

ABARIM A mountain range in northwest Moab, separating the Transjordan Plain from the Jordan Valley. In this range stood Mount Nebo, the spot where Moses ascended to view the promised land and later died (Num. 27:12; 33:47–48; Deut. 32:49; 34:1–8). The prophet Jeremiah pictures an announcement of destruction from the peaks of Abarim (Jer. 22:20). *See also* Nebo.

ABBA An Aramaic term for "father," used three times in the NT, always coupled with its Greek equivalent, *patēr*. A term of endearment used to refer to God, it demonstrates that the speaker has an intimate, loving relationship with God. Jesus so addresses God the Father in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36). The believer, filled with the Spirit, becomes God's adopted child and thus can also so speak to God (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). The OT provides a background for this in its teaching that God is the father of his people (Exod. 4:22; Deut. 32:6) and, in a special way, of the king (2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7).

ABDA (1) The father of Adoniram, who was in charge of forced labor at the time of Solomon (1 Kings 4:6). (2) Son of Shammua, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun, he was a Levite who moved to Jerusalem during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:17). In 1 Chron. 9:16 he is listed by the (full?) name "Obadiah" ("servant of Yahweh").

ABDEEL The father of Shelemiah, an individual commissioned by King Jehoiakim to arrest Jeremiah and his scribe, Baruch (Jer. 36:26). He was unsuccessful.

ABDI (1) An ancestor of Ethan, from the Levitical clan of the Merarites. Ethan is listed as a temple musician appointed by David (1 Chron. 6:44). (2) An ancestor of Kish, a Levite from the clan of Merarites, who was commissioned to purify the temple at the time of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29:12). (3) An Israelite man charged with the offense of intermarrying with a foreign woman during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:26).

ABDIEL The father of Ahi, who was head of a family of Gadites (1 Chron. 5:15).

ABDON (1) A town located in Asher (Josh. 19:28 [according to some Heb. manuscripts; others have Ebron (so NRSV)]; 1 Chron. 6:74), given to the Levites (Josh. 21:30). (2) An Ephraimite who functioned as a judge in Israel for eight years and was noted for his forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys (Judg. 12:13–15). (3) Son of Shashak, from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:23). (4) First-born son of Jeiel and Maakah, Benjamites from Gibeon (1 Chron. 8:30; 9:36). (5) Son of Micah (2 Chron. 34:20 [although in the parallel text, 2 Kings 22:12, the same individual is called Akbor son of Micaiah; see NIV mg.]). Along with others, he was commissioned to inquire of God’s will after the rediscovery of the law of God at the time of Josiah.

ABEDNEGO The Babylonian name given to Azariah by Nebuchadnezzar’s chief official, Ashpenaz, as part of an attempt to turn him into a Babylonian official (Dan. 1:7). He is one of three of Daniel’s Judahite companions, along with Meshach and Shadrach. The three are later appointed as administrators over the province of Babylon (2:49). After being accused of failing to worship Nebuchadnezzar’s gods, they are cast into a fiery furnace. They are kept safe by a fourth “man,” who looks like a “son of the gods.” Afterward, all three are promoted (3:8–30). “Abednego” likely means “servant of Nego” (a form of “Nebo,” the Babylonian god of speech, writing, and water).

ABEL “Abel” is the English spelling of two different Hebrew words. (1) The name of Cain’s brother (Heb. *hebel*). As Adam and Eve’s second son, he is mentioned in Gen. 4:2–9 (also v. 25) as the murdered brother of Cain, who slew him out of anger at his being more favored by God for offering a better sacrifice. He is not mentioned again until the Gospels (Matt. 23:35; Luke 11:51), where he is cast as the first representative of the “righteous blood” shed on earth. (The phrase “the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah” [Matt. 23:35] constitutes a chronological “A to Z” of innocent blood shed in the OT.) He is last referred to in the book of Hebrews. In Heb. 11:4 an explanation is given for why Abel’s sacrifice was favored over Cain’s: it was offered in faith. In Heb. 12:24 Abel’s blood is contrasted with Christ’s. The nature of the contrast is not made explicit, but the context suggests that whereas both Christ and Abel were innocent, it is Christ’s shed blood that is efficacious to mediate the new covenant. The word *hebel* is also the same one used throughout Ecclesiastes, often translated “vanity” or “meaningless.” Abel’s name, therefore, may symbolize his short life.

(2) The first part of a number of OT place names (Heb. *’abel*) meaning “brook” or “meadow.” It appears several times, as seen in entries that follow here.

Panel from a fourth-century AD Roman sarcophagus showing Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace



ABEL BETH MAAKAH A city north of Dan. Sheba fled there after his rebellion against David and was besieged by Joab, David's military commander (2 Sam. 20:1–22). Ben-Hadad, king of Syria, conquered the city by defeating Israel's King Baasha, thus answering the call of Judah's King Asa for help (1 Kings 15:20). It was later conquered again, this time by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III from the Israelite king Pekah (2 Kings 15:29). The name means "meadow [or 'brook'] of the house of Maakah," and it is possible that "Maakah" refers to the Aramean king who fought with the Ammonites against David (2 Sam. 10:6). *See also* Abel Maim; Beth Maakah.

ABEL KERAMIM A place name meaning "brook of vineyards." The exact location of this town, east of the Jordan, is unknown. It is mentioned only in Judg. 11:33, among the towns devastated by Jephthah when he was pursuing the Ammonites.

ABEL MAIM A city mentioned only in 2 Chron. 16:4. But this is in a passage parallel to 2 Kings 15:29, where the name is "Abel Beth Maakah," suggesting that "Abel Maim" is an alternate or later name. It means "meadow of water." *See also* Abel Beth Maakah; Beth Maakah.

ABEL MEHOLAH A place name meaning "meadow [or 'brook'] of dancing." The exact location of this town, near the Jordan River, is unknown. It is one of the places to which the Midianites fled when attacked by Gideon (Judg. 7:22) and is mentioned as one of the towns under the governorship of Baana son of Ahilud, one of the twelve governors over Israel put in place by King Solomon to provide the king and the royal household with supplies (1 Kings 4:12). According to 1 Kings 19:16, it is Elisha's hometown.

ABEL MIZRAIM A place name that occurs only in Gen. 50:11 and, according to the explanation given there, means "mourning of the Egyptians." Joseph, along with his household and a large contingent of Egyptians, entered Canaan to bury Jacob. When the Canaanites saw Joseph mourning for his father at "the threshing floor of Atad," they named the place "Abel Mizraim." With other place names the Hebrew word *'abel*

means "brook" or "meadow," but the word for "mourn" is similar, so its meaning in Gen. 50:11 may be a pun.

ABEL SHITTIM A place name meaning "brook of acacias." It is mentioned only in Num. 33:49, as the last stop before crossing the Jordan.

ABEZ *See* Ebez.

ABI Means "my father" or "father of" (often a reference to God) and is found as the first part of a number of personal names. In 2 Kings 18:2 (KJV, RSV, NASB) "Abi" appears as a shortened form of "Abijah" (mother of Hezekiah [see 2 Chron. 29:1]). *See also* Abijah.

ABIAH *See* Abijah.

ABI-ALBON An Arbathite, he was one of David's thirty fighting men (2 Sam. 23:31). He is called "Abiel" in 1 Chron. 11:32.

ABIASAPH One of the three sons of Korah (Exod. 6:24). The Korahites were of the line of Kohath, one of the three sons of Levi (see Exod. 6:16–21), and therefore Levitical priests. Ebiasaph (1 Chron. 6:23, 37; 9:19) seems to be the same person. *See also* Ebiasaph.

ABIATHAR A high priest, son of Ahimelek, first mentioned in 1 Sam. 22:20, when he escaped Saul's slaughter of the priests of Nob. He took refuge with David in the cave of Adullam and, having escaped with the ephod (1 Sam. 23:6–12), became the high priest after David's reign was established. He was from the line of Eli, son of Aaron, and served with Zadok (line of Eleazar, son of Aaron) during David's reign (2 Sam. 8:17), although note the reference there to "Ahimelek son of Abiathar." This is usually considered a copyist's error, since Ahimelek was Abiathar's father, and Abiathar is often mentioned as a contemporary of Zadok (e.g., 2 Sam. 15:29, 35; 1 Kings 1:7–8). When Absalom rebelled against David, Abiathar remained supportive (2 Sam. 15). Later, however, he supported Adonijah as David's successor rather than Solomon, which led to his banishment to his hometown, Anathoth, by Solomon, thus fulfilling Eli's prophecy (1 Sam. 2:30–35; 1 Kings 2:26–27). He is

mentioned once in the NT, Mark 2:26, where Jesus recounts when David took the showbread to feed his men “in the days of Abiathar the high priest.” According to 1 Sam. 21:1–9, however, it was Ahimelek, Abiathar’s father, who was high priest at the time. This is often considered to be a copyist’s error, and some Greek manuscripts omit or alter the reference to Abiathar.

ABIB *See* Aviv.

ABIDA One of the five sons of Midian, Abraham’s son by Keturah (Gen. 25:4; 1 Chron. 1:33).

ABIDAN A Gideonite and the leader of the tribe of Benjamin during the early wilderness period (Num. 1:11; 2:22; 7:60, 65; 10:24). He assisted Moses and Aaron in the census (Num. 1).

ABIEL The father of Kish and grandfather of Saul (1 Sam. 9:1; 14:51). Also an alternate name for “Abi-Albon” (1 Chron. 11:32). *See also* Abi-Albon.

ABIEZER (1) The name of Gideon’s clan and territory, in the tribe of Manasseh, apparently known for grape production (Judg. 8:2). (2) A descendant of Manasseh, Joseph’s son, a Gileadite (Josh. 17:1–2; 1 Chron. 7:18). (3) One of David’s thirty fighting men (2 Sam. 23:27; 1 Chron. 11:28), also mentioned in 1 Chron. 27:12 as leader of David’s fighting divisions during the ninth month.

ABIEZRITES The descendants of Abiezer (Judg. 6:11, 24, 34; 8:32). *See also* Abiezer.

ABIGAIL (1) The wife of Nabal, a wealthy man from Carmel, she is mentioned prominently in 1 Sam. 25. While David was hiding from Saul in the desert, he sent a word of greeting to Nabal to ask for some food. This would have been a gesture of good faith on Nabal’s part, since his servants had been treated well by David and his men (vv. 7, 15–16). Nabal treated David’s request and his ten messengers with disrespect, so David intended to retaliate, even swearing that not a male would be left alive among Nabal’s people (vv. 21–22). One of Nabal’s servants, however, warned Abigail of Nabal’s behavior and that his life was now in danger. Thinking

quickly, and without telling Nabal, she prepared food and brought it to David. She pleaded with David not to shed any blood, which would be to act like the foolish Nabal (“Nabal” in Hebrew means “fool” [v. 25]). She asked for forgiveness on Nabal’s behalf, spoke of the Lord’s favor on David’s “lasting dynasty” (v. 28), and said that she wished to be remembered when David’s current status was behind him and his rule was established (v. 31). David was persuaded by her words. Abigail then returned home and reported to Nabal what she had done. Upon hearing the news, his heart failed and he became “like a stone” for ten days, and then God struck him dead (vv. 37–38). David rejoiced at hearing the news and then made Abigail his wife, along with Ahinoam of Jezreel, both of whom were captured by the Amalekites at Ziklag (30:5) and later were present at David’s anointing (2 Sam. 2:2). Abigail is the mother of Kileab (2 Sam. 3:3 [Daniel, according to 1 Chron. 3:1]).

(2) David’s sister (1 Chron. 2:16–17), the mother of Amasa, one of David’s army commanders (2 Sam. 17:25). The name is spelled “Abigal” in 2 Sam. 17:25.

ABIGAL *See* Abigail.

ABIHAIL (1) The mother of Zuriel, leader of the Merarite clans (Num. 3:35). (2) The wife of Abishur, a descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 2:29). (3) A Gadite from Gilead (1 Chron. 5:14). (4) The mother of Rehoboam’s wife, Mahalath (2 Chron. 11:18). (5) The father of Queen Esther and uncle of Mordecai (Esther 2:15; 9:29).

ABIHU The second of Aaron’s four sons (Exod. 6:23). He and his older brother, Nadab, were allowed to approach the Lord on Mount Sinai with Moses, Aaron, and the seventy elders (Exod. 24:1, 9). He and his three brothers (the younger two were Eleazar and Ithamar) were made Israel’s first priests (Exod. 28:1). He and Nadab “offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to his command,” so they were consumed by fire (Lev. 10:1–2; cf. Num. 3:4; 26:61; 1 Chron. 24:2).

ABIHUD Grandson of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:3), although it is possible that the text should

be read as “Gera the father of Ehud” because Ehud’s lineage is given in 1 Chron. 8:6.

ABIJAH (1) Samuel’s second son, who, along with his older brother Joel, served as judge in Beersheba, but whose corruption drove Israel’s elders to ask Samuel to appoint a king (1 Sam. 8:2–5). (2) Son of Jeroboam, the first king of the northern kingdom (930–909 BC). He died as a boy, in accordance with Ahijah’s prophecy, because of Jeroboam’s idolatry (1 Kings 14:1–18). (3) Son of Rehoboam, called “Abijam” in 1 Kings 15:1–8. He was the second king of the southern kingdom (913–910 BC). He followed in his father’s sinful footsteps but was allowed to rule for David’s sake. His reign was marked by warfare against Jeroboam, which is recounted in more detail and in a more positive light in 2 Chron. 13:1–22 (Abijah defeated Jeroboam, and the Lord struck Jeroboam down). He is listed in Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus (1:7). (4) The mother of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29:1 [“Abi” in 2 Kings 18:2, the parallel passage]). (5) The wife of Hezron in the genealogy of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:24 [though some emend the name away; cf. NAB]). (6) A son of Becher, a descendant of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:8). (7) The leader of the eighth of the twenty-four divisions of priests serving in the temple (1 Chron. 24:10). (8) One of the priests in Nehemiah’s time who signed a pledge to lead Israel in covenant obedience (Neh. 10:7). *See also* Abi; Abijam.

ABIJAM The firstborn son of King Rehoboam, he was the second king of Judah. “Abijam” is the name used in

1 Kings 15:1–8 (KJV, ESV, NRSV; NIV: “Abijah”). Elsewhere he is called “Abijah,” and the use of “Abijam” by the author of 1 Kings may be meant to cast this king in a more negative light. *See also* Abijah.

ABILENE A region in Syria named after its chief town, Abila, located about eighteen miles northwest of Damascus. Luke reports that at the beginning of John the Baptist’s ministry the region was governed by Lysanias II (Luke 3:1) as one of four rulers in the Judea province (with Pontius Pilate, Herod Antipas, and Philip). Josephus, however, only mentions three rulers and makes no reference to Lysanias.

ABIMAEL A descendant of Shem, one of Noah’s three sons (Gen. 10:28; 1 Chron. 1:22).

ABIMELECH *See* Abimelek.

ABIMELEK (1) The king of Gerar who took Sarah into his house, deceived by Abraham into thinking that she was Abraham’s sister. God warned Abimelek of this in a dream, so he released her and made restitution to Abraham and Sarah. God responded by opening up the wombs of his wife and slave girls (Gen. 20:1–18). He is likely the same person mentioned in Gen. 21:22–24 as one who made a treaty with Abraham at Beersheba.

(2) The king of Gerar during Isaac’s lifetime (Gen. 26:1–35) and likely a son or grandson of the Abimelek mentioned in 20:1–18. As in the

Remains of a Bronze Age temple at Shechem, the hometown of Abimelek’s mother



earlier incident with Abraham and Sarah, Isaac passed his wife, Rebekah, off as his sister, causing Abimelek great concern when he found out the truth. Abimelek ordered his people to cause no harm to the couple. Isaac planted crops, which did very well and provoked jealousy on the part of the Philistines, and this eventually led to Isaac moving on to Beersheba.

(3) Son of Gideon and his concubine (Judg. 8:31). After Gideon's death he murdered his seventy brothers in an effort to consolidate power under himself in Shechem. The youngest of the brothers, Jotham, escaped and spoke a parable against the citizens of Shechem. Three years later they rebelled against Abimelek under Gaal, but Abimelek was successful in capturing Shechem and killing many of its residents. When he attacked Thebez, he was killed by women who dropped a millstone on his head. That incident is mentioned later in 2 Sam. 11:21 by Joab as he is preparing his messenger for possible criticism by David for his strategy in besieging Rabbah.

(4) Son of Abiathar, and a priest under David (2 Sam. 8:17). It is very likely that a copyist's error occurs here in which "Abimelek" and "Abiathar" have been transposed (cf. 1 Sam. 22:20).

(5) The man before whom David pretended to be insane, according to the superscription to Ps. 34. If the incident of 1 Sam. 21:10–15 is in view, where Achish the king of Gath is named, then it is possible that "Ahimelek" is a title for Philistine kings.

ABINADAB (1) The man in whose house the ark of the covenant rested for twenty years after it was returned by the Philistines (1 Sam. 7:1; 1 Chron. 13:7). (2) Son of Jesse and older brother of David who was passed over by Samuel when choosing a king (1 Sam. 16:8; 17:13; see also 1 Chron. 2:13). (3) One of Saul's three sons killed by the Philistines on Mount Gilboa (1 Sam. 31:1–2; see also 1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39; 10:2). (4) Ben-Abinadab, who, according to 1 Kings 4:11, was Solomon's son-in-law and one of Solomon's twelve district officials. If "Ben-Abinadab" means "son of Abinadab" (David's brother), then he is Solomon's cousin as well.

ABINOAM The father of Barak, Deborah's army commander (Judg. 4:6, 12; 5:1, 12).

ABIRAM (1) Son of Eliab who, along with his brother Dathan and Korah and On, was an instigator of a Levite rebellion against Moses and Aaron. The earth opened up and swallowed them and their families (Num. 16:1–50; 26:9; Deut. 11:6; Ps. 106:17). (2) Son of Hiel of Bethel, who rebuilt Jericho, laying its foundations "at the cost of his firstborn son Abiram," which may be a reference to child sacrifice (1 Kings 16:34).

ABISHAG A young Shunammite woman brought to David's bed in his old age to keep him warm (1 Kings 1:3, 15). After David's death, his son Adonijah asked to marry her (1 Kings 2:17), which was a declaration of his continued attempt to secure the throne (see 1 Kings 1), for which Solomon put him to death (1 Kings 2:23–25).

ABISHAI Son of Zeruah, David's sister, and brother of Joab, David's general (1 Sam. 26:6; 1 Chron. 2:16), he was an accomplished soldier in David's army. David intervened when Abishai sought to kill the sleeping Saul (1 Sam. 26:5–11). He accompanied his brother Joab as they pursued Saul's commander, Abner, for killing their brother Asahel (2 Sam. 2:18–24); they later murdered Abner (2 Sam. 3:30). He commanded an army against the Ammonites (2 Sam. 10:10–14; 1 Chron. 19:11–15). David prevented him from killing Shimei for cursing David (2 Sam. 16:9–12; 19:21). He led one-third of David's army against Absalom, David's rebellious son (2 Sam. 18:2), and an army pursuing Sheba in his rebellion against David (2 Sam. 20:6). When the Philistine Ishbi-Benob threatened David's life, Abishai rescued David by killing the Philistine (2 Sam. 21:16–17). He struck down eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt and established garrisons in Edom (1 Chron. 18:12–13).

ABISHALOM A variant spelling of "Absalom" in 1 Kings 15:2, 10. *See also* Absalom.

ABISHUA (1) A Levite, son of Phineas and great-grandson of Aaron (1 Chron. 6:4, 50; Ezra 7:5). (2) A descendant of Saul (1 Chron. 8:4).

ABISHUR Son of Shammai, descendant of Jerahmeel of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:28–29).

ABITAL One of David's wives (2 Sam. 3:4; 1 Chron. 3:3).

ABITUB A Benjamite from Moab (1 Chron. 8:11).

ABIUD A Greek rendering of "Abihud." According to the genealogy in Matthew, Abiud, son of Zerubbabel, is a postexilic ancestor of Jesus (1:13; NASB, NIV: "Abihud"). *See also* Abihud.

ABLUTIONS Ablutions include a variety of practices found primarily in the OT through which persons washed in order to participate in the most important activities of the community, usually worship. Although terms referring to washing cover a variety of purposes, such as cleansing the hands or bathing (Gen. 18:4; Ruth 3:3; Acts 16:33; 2 Pet. 2:22), when one speaks of ablutions, the focus is upon the necessary tasks of cleansing after suffering separation from participation in the worship of the assembly because of some impurity (Deut. 21:1–9).

Sometimes ablutions were performed as a means of preparing a person for an activity

of heightened importance. The priests of the OT underwent such cleansings, though they were not impure in the usual sense of the word (Exod. 30:19–21). The imagery communicated by such practices expressed the extreme holiness necessary to serve God and his people. Indeed, the sense of holiness and purity that pervaded the sacred rites of the OT was a major motivation for all levels of ablutions. For these heightened moments, however, the biblical record goes into extra detail concerning the process by which one could be washed. Special care was taken to avoid recontamination of the priest, the sacred instruments, or the camp itself, which would interfere with or render useless the rite that had been carried out (Lev. 16:4, 24, 26, 28). As with all ceremonial rites, however, the biblical interest is focused more upon the attitude and the heart of the worshiper than the rite itself. The integrity and the holiness of the participant were the true test of standing pure before God, not the ritual of cleansing (Ps. 24:3–6; Isa. 1:11–16).

In the NT, the pattern of emphasis on the inner person begun in the OT received further expression. In the book of Mark, one of the conflict passages recounts an encounter between Jesus and the Pharisees regarding the extent of

Steps down into a ceremonial bath at Qumran



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ritual cleansing necessary in one's life (7:1–16). Jesus proclaimed, in full harmony with the OT, that it has always been the character of the individual that made a person clean or unclean, and that the washings of old were symbolic of that status, not determinative of it. Despite this, it seems that Jewish Christians of the first century chose to continue the practice of ritual washings. The writer of Hebrews argues that the use of such is both an illustration of the pure life (10:22) and a practice that may be considered unnecessary in light of what Christ had accomplished through his perfect work (6:2; 9:10).

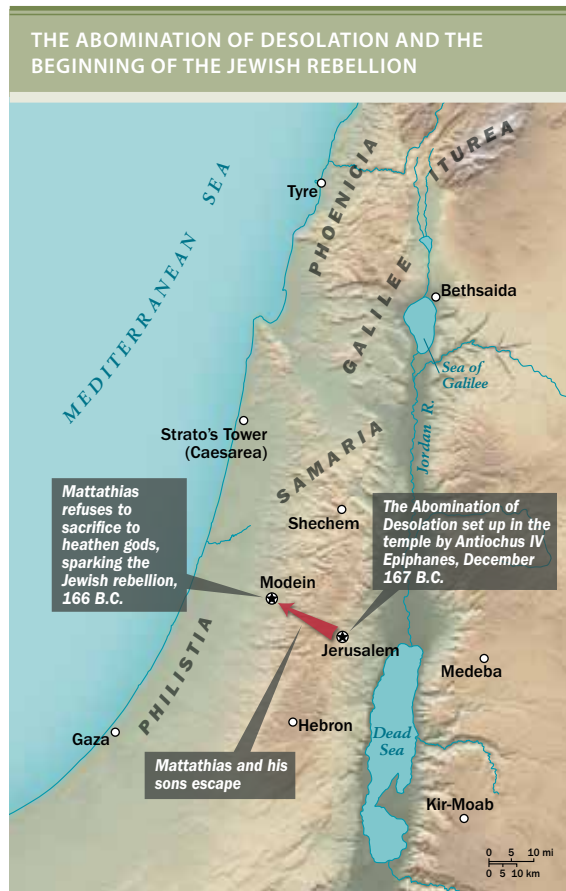
Generally speaking, the source of washing for such ceremonial cleansing had to be “living water”; that is, it had to be moving. This could be obtained by pouring the water, by visiting a dedicated ceremonial bath, or by carrying out the washing in a location that already had moving water, such as a river. There is little question, based upon the similarities of early baptismal practices and the ceremonial baths uncovered at Qumran and elsewhere, that NT baptism draws many of its intentions and expressions from the OT ablutions. As such, the same observations about washings made above can be drawn concerning baptism. It is symbolic of an internal reality (Eph. 5:26); it is intended as a means of expressing community between the participant and the greater body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13); and it is reflective of a higher calling of Christ to live holy lives (Acts 10:47).

ABNER Son of King Saul's uncle, Ner (1 Sam. 14:50–51). Abner was Saul's military commander. He maintained loyalty to the house of Saul during Saul's struggle with David. Upon Saul's death, Abner made Saul's son Ish-Bosheth king over the northern kingdom. In battle with David's forces, Abner killed Asahel, the brother of David's military commander, Joab (2 Sam. 2:17–23). Abner rallied support for David's kingship after Ish-Bosheth accused Abner of

sleeping with Saul's concubine (2 Sam. 3:7–13). Joab later murdered Abner to avenge his brother Asahel's death (3:22–27).

ABODE OF THE DEAD See Death; Grave; Hades; Hell; Pit; Sheol.

ABOMINATION, ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION “Abomination” is a translation of the Hebrew words *shiqquts* and *to'ebah* used primarily in the KJV (NIV uses terms such as “detestable,” “desecrated,” and “unclean”). The term *shiqquts* is used of idols (e.g., 2 Kings 23:13, 24; Jer. 7:30; cf. Ezek. 8:10), forbidden practices (e.g., 2 Kings 23:24), and generally anything contrary to the true worship of Israel's God (e.g., 2 Chron. 15:8; Isa. 66:3; Jer. 4:1; cf. forbidden foods [Lev. 11:10, 13, 42] and ceremonial defilement [Lev. 7:21]). The term *to'ebah* includes the



prohibition of idol worship (Deut. 7:25; 27:15; 32:16) but can more widely apply to immorality (e.g., Lev. 18:22, 26–27), prophecy that leads to paganism (Deut. 13:13–14), blemished animals offered in sacrifice to Yahweh (Deut. 17:1), and heathen divination (Deut. 18:9, 12).

The “abomination of desolation” (NIV: “abomination that causes desolation”), or “desolating sacrifice,” refers to the desecration of the Jerusalem temple. The description occurs or is alluded to in Dan. 8:11; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20; 2 Thess. 2:4; as well as 1 Macc. 1:54–64. These texts seem to attest to two or three stages of fulfillment of the prophecy.

First, Dan. 8:11; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; and 1 Macc. 1:54–64 clearly speak of the actions of the Syrian ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BC) against the Jerusalem temple in 167 BC. He was the younger son of Antiochus III, ruler of the Seleucid Empire. The name “Epiphanes” means “manifest,” implying “manifest as a god.” Antiochus’s ambition was to use the common culture of the Greeks (Hellenism) to unite the diverse Seleucid Empire. In 167 BC, after being repelled from Egypt by the Romans, Antiochus unleashed his fury on Jerusalem. His soldiers attacked the city on the Sabbath, killing much of the male population and enslaving the remaining women and children (1 Macc. 1:29–36; 2 Macc. 5:24–26). There followed the prohibition of all Jewish rites, along with the rededication of the Jewish temple to the Greek god Zeus. Anyone caught reading the Torah, observing the Sabbath and dietary laws, or circumcising their male babies was killed (1 Macc. 1:54–64; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.248–64). In December of 167 BC the first pagan sacrifice was offered on the altar in the holy of holies in the Jerusalem temple (1 Macc. 1:54).

Antiochus at first met pockets of resistance from faithful Jews who opposed his orders and were therefore martyred (2 Macc. 6:10–7:42). With Mattathias and his five sons, however, open defiance against Antiochus’s policies ensued. Mattathias, a priest in the town of Modein, refused to sacrifice to heathen gods and killed the king’s officer sent to enforce the edict. This incident sparked a Jewish rebellion led by

Mattathias’s family (the Maccabees) that culminated in his son Judas’s defeat of Antiochus’s forces in December of 164 BC. At that time Judas reconsecrated the temple to Yahweh, the God of Israel, and Israel resumed the observance of the Jewish law (1 Macc. 4:52–59). Not long thereafter, Antiochus, who had unsuccessfully tried to invade Persia, died of illness in 164 BC (1 Macc. 6:1–17; 2 Macc. 1:13–17; 9:1–29; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.354–59). Thus, the prophecies of Dan. 8:11; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 regarding the rise and fall of Antiochus Epiphanes had come true.

Second, Daniel’s prophecy apparently was not completely fulfilled with Antiochus, for Luke 21:20 labels the Roman assault on Jerusalem in AD 70 as the “desolation.” In fact, the Roman destruction of the Holy City and its temple was an intensification of the OT prediction.

Third, some interpreters would extend the application of the prophecy of the abomination of desolation to the distant future. They contend that the ultimate fulfillment of Daniel’s prediction will occur in connection with the end-time temple to be built by Israel, which the antichrist will desecrate. Supporters of this viewpoint appeal to Mark 13:14; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:4 (cf. Rev. 11).

Those who identify only two stages of fulfillment for Daniel’s prophecy understand Mark 13:14 and Matt. 24:15 to pertain not to a future end-time temple but to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 (cf. Luke 21:20). Furthermore, they see in 2 Thess. 2:4 an allusion to the emperor Caligula’s (Gaius) plan to place a statue of himself in the Jerusalem temple in AD 40 (which, because of his assassination, did not occur).

ABORTION Abortion remains an important and vital issue in contemporary society, but the Bible does not comment directly on the practice. There is no law for or against, nor is there even a description or allusion to it, even though its practice was not unknown in the ancient world. Apparently, it was not an issue in biblical legislation.

Perhaps the most frequently cited passages tied to the contemporary abortion debate are Exod. 21:22–25; Job 10:10–11; Ps. 139:13–16; Jer. 1:5. Although these passages certainly speak

to the unborn state, they have only indirect relevance, at best, to the issue of abortion.

The Hebrew wording of Exod. 21:22 is obscure and could refer to a miscarriage or full-term delivery; and the harm referred to could be that of either the mother or the child. Also, Exod. 21:22 speaks of accidental death, not a willing decision by a mother to abort a child.

Jeremiah 1:5 refers to God knowing Jeremiah before he was in the womb. This speaks to God's intention from time past to use Jeremiah as a prophet, and the text should not be generalized of everyone. Clearly, the focus is not on the personhood of the fetus but on the extent of God's knowledge.

Psalms 139:13–16 is perhaps most relevant to the debate, as the psalmist describes the wonder of God in “creating” and “forming” him in the womb. Since the passage refers to God's planning of the entire believer's life (v. 16), that life seems to begin in some sense in the womb. Similarly, Job 10:10–11 speaks of fetal development. Although these passages do not speak directly to the matter of abortion, they imply that God's care for humans does not begin only at birth.

However, care must be taken not to allow this relative silence to be misunderstood. The Bible is very clear about the sanctity of life, especially that of the innocent. The biblical argument against abortion is one that connects more to larger themes concerning protection of the innocent than to any one verse or to a lack of verses.

ABRAHAM Abram, eventually named “Abraham,” is a well-known biblical character whose life is detailed in Gen. 11:25–25:11. The patriarchal name “Abram” is used exclusively in Genesis, 1 Chron. 1:27, and Neh. 9:7. Abram's name (which means “exalted father”) is changed in Gen. 17:5 to “Abraham,” meaning “father of many nations.” His prominence as a biblical character is evidenced in the 254 references to him documented in both Testaments.

The historical reliability of the account of Abraham is vigorously debated by scholars, although the Middle Bronze Age (2200–1550 BC) is the generally accepted time period of

Abraham's life. The narrative of his life is a selective account of key events that serves the theme and purpose of the larger biblical narrative.

The narrative account in Genesis details one hundred years of Abraham's life and moves quickly through the first seventy-five years of events. In just a few verses (11:26–31) we learn that Abram was the son of Terah, the brother of Haran and Nahor, the husband of the barren Sarai (later Sarah), and the uncle of Lot, the son of Haran, who died in Ur of the Chaldees. The plot line marks significant events in Abraham's life chronologically. He left Harran at the age of 75 (12:4), was 86 when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael (16:16), 99 when the Lord appeared to him (17:17) and when he was circumcised (17:24), 100 when Sarah gave birth to Isaac (21:5), and 175 when he died (25:7). In summary, the biblical narrator paces the reader quickly through the story in such a way as to highlight a twenty-five-year period of Abraham's life between the ages of 75 and 100.

The Abraham narrative in Genesis is a story intentionally structured around the familiar details of life and death, uprooting and resettling, faith and doubt, and dysfunctional relationships. It is distinguished with illustrations of divine activity in family and political relationships. God is speaking (12:1, 7; 15:5, 7, 9), revealing (12:7; 17:1; 18:1), rescuing, judging, and fulfilling words of promise (18:19; 21:1). God's fingerprint is clearly noted with the summary statements of the Lord's blessing (24:1) and wealth (24:35).

The covenant that God made with Abraham is a key element in the overall story and foundational for the theology of both Testaments. This divine arrangement is introduced in Gen. 12:1–3 and progressively unfolded with increased detail in Gen. 15; 17. It is structured so that the obligations are borne by the Lord himself. The covenant promises land, seed, and blessing to Abraham and his descendants. In Gen. 15 the Lord officially cut the covenant with Abraham, thereby guaranteeing his commitment to his word. The halving of animals and the walking between the cut pieces by God symbolized by the torch constituted an ancient

covenantal ritual affirming God's responsibility for the covenant particulars.

The NT features Abraham in several significant ways. The intimate connection between God and Abraham is noted in the identification of God as "the God of Abraham" in Acts 7:32 (cf. Exod. 3:6). The NT also celebrates the character of Abraham as a man of faith who received the promise (Gal. 3:9; Heb. 6:15). Abraham is most importantly an example of how one is justified by faith (Rom. 4:1, 12) and an illustration of what it means to walk by faith (James 2:21, 23).

Those who exercise faith in the living God, as did Abraham, are referred to as "children of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7). Regarding the covenant promises made to Abraham in the OT, the NT writers highlight the promises of seed and blessing. According to Paul, the seed of Abraham is ultimately fulfilled in Christ, and those who believe in Christ are the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16, 29). In a similar way, those who have Abraham-like faith are blessed (3:9). The blessing imparted to Abraham comes to the Gentiles through the redemption of Christ and is associated with the impartation of the Spirit (3:14).

The promise of land made to Abraham is referenced specifically in Acts (7:5, 16) and Hebrews (11:8, 11), where his obedient faith is featured and the land is discussed in connection with the historical context of his life. *See also* Abram.

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM Abraham's bosom (or side) describes God's blessings after death, using the picture of closeness with Abraham at a banquet (perhaps the messianic banquet [see Isa. 25:6–8]). The image appears in Jesus' story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:22–23). The bliss enjoyed by Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham stands in sharp contrast to the rich man's experience of great torment and suffering. This story is helpful for understanding the intensification of blessings for God's people following death and, similarly, of sufferings for the lost, but it does not describe the full extent of the eternal destinies of heaven and hell.

ABRAM Abraham's original name, used in Gen. 11:26–17:4. At Gen. 17:5 Abram is re-

named "Abraham" because he will be a "father of many nations." "Abram" is formed from the common Hebrew word 'ab, meaning "father," plus the root that means "exalted," although note that Scripture does not assign any particular theological significance to this name. *See also* Abraham.

ABRONAH A campsite of the Israelites on their journey from Egypt under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. It was situated between Jobathah and Ezion Geber (Num. 33:34–35), but the exact historical location of Abronah is uncertain.

ABSALOM The third of David's sons, born in Hebron while David was king of Judah alone. His mother was Maakah, daughter of the king of Geshur, a small buffer state northeast of Israel where Absalom fled after murdering his brother Amnon (2 Sam. 13:37). Nothing is known of Absalom's formative years, but he plays a prominent role in the violence that overtook David following his murder of Uriah (2 Sam. 11). Absalom's sister Tamar was raped by his older half brother Amnon (13:1–19), and two years later he ordered his men to murder Amnon (13:23–33) before fleeing to Geshur. Joab convinced David to restore him (14:1–21). David snubbed him on his return, and he later rebelled against David, coming close to toppling him before being killed by Joab in the forest of Ephraim after his hair became caught in a tree (18:9–15).

ABSHAI *See* Abishai.

ABSTINENCE Abstinence refers to intentional restraint from participating in some activity.

One of the primary examples of abstinence throughout the Bible is fasting. People abstained from consuming food in times of seeking God's intervention (Esther 4:16), repenting of some sin (Ezra 10:6), responding to a disaster (2 Sam. 1:12), or preparing for a new venture (Matt. 4:2). One plausible rationale for fasting is that it permits clarity of focus and expresses reliance upon God for sustenance (Ezra 8:23).

Other examples of abstinence in the OT might be expressed in matters of degrees. Food

laws prevented some kinds of food from being consumed at all (Lev. 11), other types could not be consumed if found under certain conditions (Lev. 17:15; Deut. 14:21), and still others could not be consumed if prepared in certain ways (Exod. 34:26; Deut. 14:21). Such abstinence was for the expressed purpose of consecrating the people of Israel (Lev. 11:44). Similarly, abstinence from work on the Sabbath was for all the people of Israel (Exod. 20:8–11), while abstinence from fermented drink and any produce of the grapevine was reserved for those under the Nazirite vow (Num. 6:3–4) and demonstrated holiness. The corporate focus in these practices served as an impetus for reflections upon abstinence in the NT. Jesus insisted that fasting be accompanied by proper motives (Matt. 6:16–18), and Paul suggested that abstinence be practiced when an activity might cause another to stumble (1 Cor. 8). Sexual laws called for abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage. Paul even allowed for temporary periods of sexual abstinence within marriage so that the couple could devote themselves to prayer (1 Cor. 7:5–6).

ABYSS In classical Greek, *abyssos* is an adjective meaning “bottomless,” and it was applied to the primeval deep of ancient cosmogonies, an ocean surrounding and under the earth. The LXX uses *abyssos* to translate the Hebrew *tehom* in Gen. 1:2 (KJV, NIV: “deep”). In the NT, *abyssos* refers to the world of the dead (Rom. 10:7; KJV, NIV: “deep”) and especially the subterranean prison of disobedient spirits (fallen angels?; Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1–2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1–3). Some English versions translate *abyssos* in Revelation as “the bottomless pit” (NRSV, NLT), others as “the Abyss” (NIV). *See also* Bottomless Pit.

ACACIA An English rendering of the Hebrew word *shittim*. When referring to the tree, many modern translations use “acacia” (Isa. 41:19; KJV: “shittah tree”); however, when *shittim* is used in reference to a place name, it often is simply transliterated as “Shittim” (Num. 25:1; Josh. 2:1; Mic. 6:5). More than likely, the place name resulted from an abundant presence of the trees in that location (Josh. 3:1; Joel 3:18).

The acacia tree is readily available in the Sinai and provides a hard wood suitable for crafting objects requiring durability. It was used in the construction of the ark of the covenant (Exod. 25:10), the poles for moving the ark (25:13), portions of the tabernacle (26:15–37), and parts of the altar of burnt offering (38:1, 6). *See also* Shittim.

ACBOR *See* Akbor.

ACCAD *See* Akkad.

ACCEPTANCE This is a metaphor that illuminates the new relational status that Christ’s redemption brings about between the believer and God. When Adam and Eve sinned, they were cast out of the garden and banished from God’s presence. The privileged access that they once enjoyed was lost. As the result of Adam and Eve’s disobedience, all human beings are born into the world in a state of alienation from God. This condition of disfavor with God is the root from which stem all other human problems in life.

Adam and Eve’s decision to cover themselves with garments made of fig leaves was their “shortcut” attempt to cover their guilt and shame before God (Gen. 3:7). It is this same impulse that accounts for the many diverse religions in existence today. The assumption that distinguishes all false religions is that the condition of human spiritual alienation can be overcome

Acacia tree



by the performance of certain prescribed rituals or good works. God's act of making garments of skin to clothe Adam and Eve with (3:21) anticipated the "covering" that he would provide for sin and shame through his own Son's atoning death and resurrection. What distinguishes Christianity from other religions is its insistence that only God can initiate reconciliation with those who have broken his law. He alone can provide the necessary means that make it possible for him to forgive and accept them back into fellowship with him.

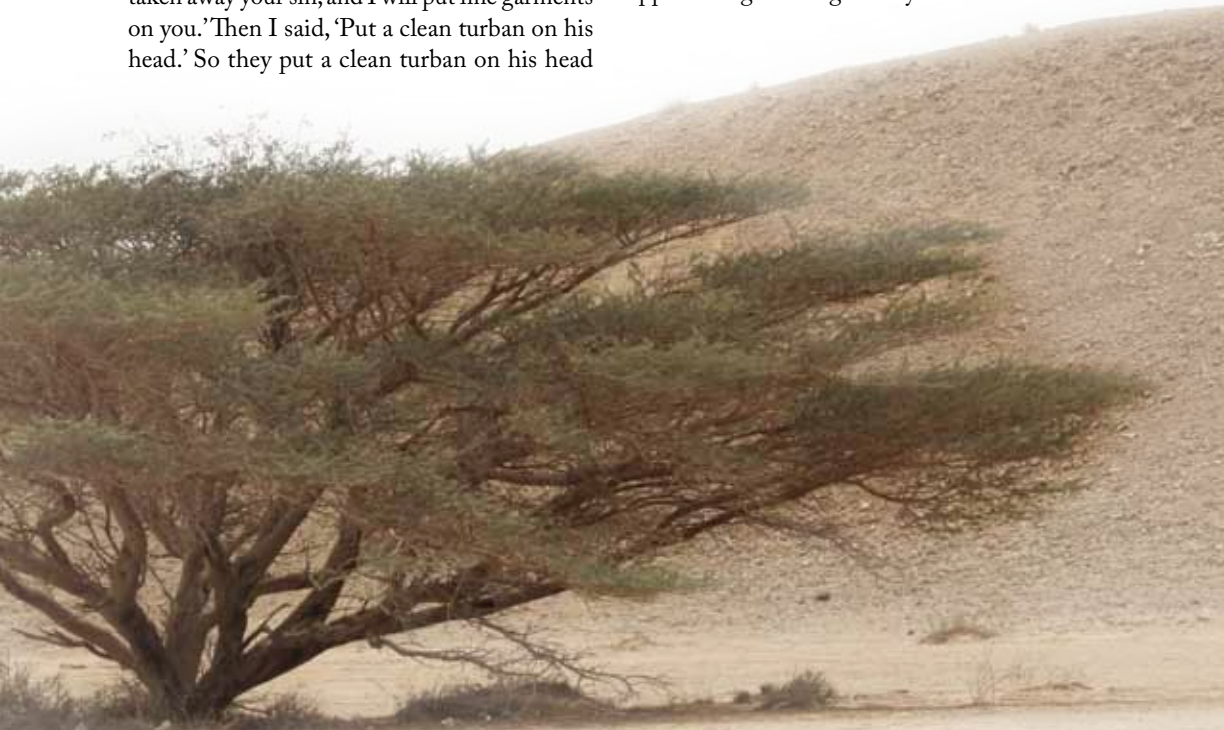
How is forgiveness related to acceptance? Forgiveness addresses one's need for the removal of guilt. Acceptance addresses one's need for a resolution to the problem of shame, the inward sense of unworthiness and inadequacy that one feels before God and others. When the high priest Joshua stood before the angel of the Lord with Satan standing there to accuse him because of his filthy garments, the Lord rebuked Satan; then "the angel said to those who were standing before him, 'Take off his filthy clothes.' Then he said to Joshua, 'See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put fine garments on you.' Then I said, 'Put a clean turban on his head.' So they put a clean turban on his head

and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood by" (Zech. 3:4–5). This anticipates the new identity and status that Jesus would give to all who receive him. When the prodigal who had shamed his father returned, the father, instead of reproaching him, commanded his attendants to put a new robe on him, a ring on his finger, and sandals on his feet. "For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found" (Luke 15:24).

The NT uses very intimate metaphors to describe the new relationship with God that one enters upon believing. Adoption gives the believer a new legal status as a child of God. This is objective, but it is also experiential (Rom. 8:15–16). Hebrews tells us that Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers and sisters (Heb. 2:11).

ACCESS Access usually refers to the right of a person of lesser status to appear in the presence of one of higher status and be heard. The word is appropriate in the context of a kingly court (see Esther 1:14; Zech. 3:7). Anyone not granted such access would risk execution when approaching the king for any reason unless the

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king approved it (Esther 4:11). The word is also appropriate in the context of the Lord's sanctuary, where it is closely related to approaching the Lord. In the OT, the right to approach the Lord in his sanctuary is limited. For instance, the high priest is the only person granted access to approach the Lord in the inner sanctuary, the holy of holies, and only on the Day of Atonement. Those who fail to approach the Lord properly risk death as a punishment (Lev. 10:1–3). In reality, these two contexts overlap significantly.

Access in the NT focuses on the right to approach God. Unlike the access granted in the OT, the death of Christ grants to all believers the right to approach the Father, making no distinction between Jew and Gentile, since the same Spirit indwells both (Eph. 2:18). Furthermore, Christ's work secures access to both the kingly throne and the "true tabernacle" of God, where one finds grace and mercy in time of need (Heb. 4:16; 8:1–2; 10:19–22).

ACCO *See* Akko.

ACCOUNTABILITY *See* Age of Accountability.

ACCURSED Being accursed means being subject to judgment from God. "Curse" is used to translate several Hebrew and Greek words. The Hebrew word *'arur* appears repeatedly in Deut. 27:15–26; 28:16–19, passages that threaten consequences for both the land and its inhabitants if the latter disobey the covenant stipulations. Jeremiah frequently warned of desolation of the land as a result of the people's detestable acts.

A related Hebrew term, *kherem*, indicates giving over to divine wrath and destruction those who are in opposition to God (Josh. 6:17; 7:1; 1 Sam. 15:21). The Hebrew root *qll* carries the same connotations. One hung on a tree was under God's curse (Deut. 21:22–23). This judgment likewise could apply to the land (2 Kings 22:19).

Paul employed the Greek term *anathema*, indicating the object of a curse (Gal. 1:8; cf. Rom. 9:3). This word is used in the LXX to translate both *'arur* and *kherem*. Paul also used the Greek term *epikataratos* in Gal. 3:10–13,

citing Deut. 27:26; 21:23 in his argument to keep the Galatians from returning to observing the law. All humans stand under God's judgment, but Jesus became accursed for us.

Some OT narratives describe death while hanging on a tree for those who were enemies of God's people and whose judgment was assured (Josh. 10:26; 2 Sam. 18:9–10). The ram caught in the thicket that served as Isaac's substitute (Gen. 22:13) is perhaps an adumbration of Jesus' substitutionary act on the cross (see 1 Pet. 2:24).

ACCUSER *See* Adversary.

ACELDAMA *See* Akeldama.

ACHAIA Most narrowly construed, Achaia is a region along the northern coast of the Peloponnese, the southern peninsula of Greece. Paul's letters to the Corinthians were sent to this region (1 Cor. 16:15; 2 Cor. 1:1). In the NT, the term also has a broader meaning, so that the phrase "Macedonia and Achaia" refers inclusively to all of Greece (Acts 19:21; Rom. 15:26; 1 Thess. 1:7–8).

ACHAICUS An acquaintance of Paul mentioned along with Stephanas and Fortunatus (1 Cor. 16:17). These three visited Paul in Ephesus as representatives of the Corinthian church. They may have carried some of Paul's correspondence to the church there. The name "Achaicus" is derived from the geographical name "Achaia," suggesting to some interpreters that Achaicus was a slave or former slave, possibly of the household of Stephanas mentioned in 1 Cor. 16:15.

ACHAN A Judahite who disobeyed Joshua and kept for himself some of the plunder from Jericho (Josh. 7:1, 21). Achan's sin was discovered after the Israelite army was defeated by the men of Ai (7:4–21). He was stoned and burned along with his family and possessions (7:25–26). "Achan" resembles the Hebrew word for "trouble" (*'akar*), and in 1 Chron. 2:7 Achan is known as Achar, the "troubler of Israel" (NRSV). The place where he was killed was known as the Valley of Achor, the valley of "trouble" (Josh. 7:26).

ACHAR *See* Achan.

ACHAZ *See* Ahaz.

ACHBOR *See* Akbor.

ACHIM *See* Akim.

ACHISH A Philistine, king of Gath. When David sought sanctuary at Gath by pretending to be insane, Achish turned him away (1 Sam. 21:10–15). When Saul continued to persecute David, David and his men allied themselves with Achish, who gave David the city of Ziklag (27:1–6). While in Achish’s service, David pretended to carry out raids against his own people, so that Achish came to trust him greatly (27:8–12). Later, Achish’s advisers convinced him that David could not be trusted to fight against Israel (29:1–11). Achish is mentioned in the early reign of Solomon (1 Kings 39–40). Achish is called “Abimelek” in the superscription to Ps. 34.

ACHMETHA *See* Ecbatana.

ACHOR A valley in northern Judea (Josh. 15:7), identified with modern El Bugeah. Achor was the place where judgment was rendered to Achan after he stole plunder from Jericho (Josh. 7:24–26). The prophets envision the transformation of Achor into a verdant area (Isa. 65:10; Hos. 2:15).

ACHSAH *See* Aksah.

ACHSHAPH *See* Akshaph.

ACHZIB *See* Akzib.

ACRE (1) A unit of measurement of land area, originally equivalent to what a pair of oxen could

plow in a day (see 1 Sam. 14:14; cf. Isa. 5:10). (2) Another name for the city Akko (see Judg. 1:31). *See also* Akko.

ACROPOLIS An acropolis (lit., “high city”) is the elevated portion of an ancient city, typically containing temples, palaces, or other public architecture. In Jerusalem, the temples of Solomon and Herod stood on the highest hill within the city. The most famous acropolis in the Greco-Roman world was that of Athens, where the Parthenon stands. Paul preached within sight of the Athenian acropolis, already ancient by his time, on the nearby Areopagus during his visit to the city (Acts 17:19–34). After Athens, Paul went to preach and teach in Corinth (18:1–11), which also had a famous acropolis, the Acrocorinth.

ACROSTIC A literary device, most often used in poetry, in which the first letters of each line form a pattern. Biblical acrostics form an alphabetic pattern whereby successive lines or sections begin with a successive letter of the twenty-two-letter Hebrew alphabet. The lengthiest example is Ps. 119, which consists of twenty-two groups of eight verses. Within each group, the lines in each verse begin with the same Hebrew letter. Lamentations 1–4 also constitutes an impressive acrostic, with the alphabetic pattern repeated once in each of the chapters. Each letter of the alphabet in turn begins a unit of (usually) three lines. In Lam. 3, each of the three lines in each section

The ruins of ancient Corinth with its acropolis, the Acrocorinth, in the background



begins with the same letter (as in Ps. 119). Other (often incomplete) acrostics include Pss. 9–10; 25; 34; 37; 111; 145; Prov. 31:1–31; and probably Nah. 1:2–10.

ACSAH *See* Acsah.

ACSHAPH *See* Akshaph.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES This book, commonly referred to simply as Acts, is the sequel to the Gospel of Luke and records the exciting history of the first three decades of the early church. The book begins with the ascension of Jesus, followed by his sending of the Holy Spirit, and ends with the gospel message being proclaimed by Paul as a prisoner in the capital city of the Roman Empire. In the pages in between, the reader is introduced to the key people, places, and events of this strategic and crucial time of Christian history. The book of Acts provides insightful and inspiring reading. It forms the backdrop for understanding much of the NT (especially Paul's letters), and it provides important models for the contemporary church.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

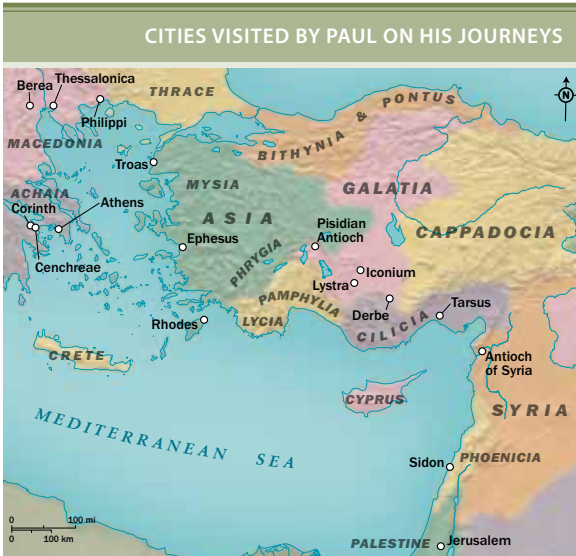
In order to understand the book of Acts, one must become familiar with its historical background. This includes understanding the book's authorship, recipients, and setting. In terms of authorship, the book technically is anonymous; however, there are good reasons for holding to church history's traditional view that its author is Luke. This tradition dates back to the early second century and is supported by internal evidence. This evidence further reveals that Luke was a physician and close companion of the apostle Paul (in fact, Luke was actually with Paul for some of the events that he records in Acts; see the "we" passages, found in 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:8–18; 27:1–28:16). Luke was well educated, well traveled, and familiar with both the Jewish and the Greco-Roman worlds. He was a Hellenistic God-fearer and a Christian. He was also familiar with the Jewish Scriptures, Greco-Roman rhetoric, and ancient histories, thus making him the perfect candidate to write an accurate history of early Christianity.

The specific recipient of Acts is Theophilus (1:1). Theophilus could be characterized as a relatively new believer of high social status, a person educated in Greco-Roman rhetoric and history, and one who possessed the financial means to promote and publish Luke's work (both the Gospel of Luke and Acts). It is probable that in some way Theophilus served as a bridge to a wider readership. It seems likely that Theophilus was Luke's ideal reader (i.e., an influential Greco-Roman of high social standing).

The specific setting of Acts is difficult to determine; however, it seems clear that the book was written during a time of crisis for the church. This crisis involved persecution and slander of Christians by both Jews and Gentiles. Both groups were trying to persuade public opinion against Christianity, including the opinion of Greco-Roman authorities. The persecution and slander were taking their toll on the church, and many Christians were demoralized and struggling to remain faithful as witnesses of Jesus. Christianity needed someone to write a response to this crisis. This response had to do three things: (1) accurately relate the history of the church to influential Greco-Romans of high social status; (2) show that Christianity was an ancient religion (ancient religions were considered to be legitimate by Roman authorities) and an asset to the Roman Empire, not a threat; (3) legitimize Christianity over against Judaism. The author of this response had to be someone who was respected both inside and outside of the Christian faith community, who knew the church's history well, and who was educated in Greco-Roman rhetoric. What better authorial candidate than Luke? Finally, the church also needed a person of high social status and financial means to help publish and promote the work; thus, Theophilus was chosen.

PURPOSE

The book of Acts was written for a variety of purposes. These include apologetics, legitimization, discipleship, and witness to salvation. The apologetic purpose of Acts focuses on how Christianity could be recognized as an ancient, honorable, and officially protected religion in



the Roman Empire. Although Judaism had the status of *religio licita* (legal religion) with Roman authorities for most of the first century, Christianity encountered serious problems in this respect. Acts itself reveals a substantial amount of such evidence in this regard. For example, 16:20–21 shows that at Philippi, Paul and Silas were charged with disturbing the peace by advocating unlawful customs. In Thessalonica, the missionaries were accused of defying Caesar by promoting another king named “Jesus” (17:7). At Corinth, the charge was that of persuading the people toward unlawful worship (18:13). Later in Acts, Paul was charged by the Jewish priestly leaders with being part of an unacceptable sect that was stirring up riots in Jewish communities (24:5–9). In 28:22, when Paul addressed the Roman Jews, they responded by saying that “people everywhere are talking against this sect [Christianity].” Such accusations, accompanied by the fact that Christianity’s founder had been crucified by Roman authorities, made it difficult for the Christians to gain credibility. Christianity’s precarious position with Rome was further exacerbated by a strong Jewish campaign to separate from Christians and to label them as sectarian. This strategy certainly intended for Christianity to be viewed

by Rome as *religio illicita* (illegal or forbidden religion). Thus, Luke writes Acts to defend Christianity by showing that it is not a replacement of Judaism, but rather its legitimate continuation. Therefore, it should be accepted by the Roman authorities as a legal religion just as Judaism was accepted.

Luke’s apologetic message also appears to be directed inwardly, to a struggling church. This inward focus leads to Luke’s next main purpose: legitimization of the Christian faith for its adherents. As part of his defense, Luke intends to equip the church in the midst of an identity crisis due to the constant threats of illegitimacy. This explains Luke’s

strategy of retelling the story of the church’s origins so that followers of Christ would understand their true position from God’s perspective. Thus, Luke verifies four things: (1) the Jewish Scriptures prophesied a coming messiah, and Jesus matched these prophecies; (2) the resurrection was foretold in Scripture and verified by eyewitnesses; (3) it was God’s plan all along for Gentiles to be included in God’s redemptive work; (4) Jews who rejected Jesus were acting in the same way their ancestors did; therefore, believers should not be surprised by their negative reaction to Jesus. Luke uses stories such as the one in Acts 2:41–47 to verify that salvation was genuinely being accomplished in the church and that Christians were experiencing the fulfillment of God’s ancient promises to Israel. Luke’s writing is intended to encourage his contemporary church members to remain faithful in their service and witness for the Lord. He reminds them that they are the true (legitimate) “people of God” and that God’s Spirit will help them prevail and will give them abundant life even in the midst of hardship and persecution.

Another key purpose of the book of Acts is to foster discipleship. The prologues of both Luke’s Gospel and Acts verify that Luke is writing to provide instruction and teaching for Theophilus (see Luke 1:1–4; Acts 1:1–2).

Part of this instruction reveals that the ascension of Jesus was not the end of his relationship with the world, but rather a new beginning. Jesus' departure did not mean abandonment; in fact, it meant just the opposite. Jesus verifies his continuing presence and work in the world after his departure just as he had lived and worked before. In other words, the same Spirit who directed the ministry of Jesus is now going to direct the ministry of Jesus' followers. The rest of the book of Acts provides instruction (with many personal examples) on how Christ can fulfill the ministry of believers through the power and direction of the Holy Spirit. Luke's discipleship teaching includes helping believers learn how to experience and follow God's Spirit (chap. 2), to boldly witness for Christ in the midst of persecution (chaps. 3–4, 8, 14, 16–17, 19–28), to sacrificially share resources with other Christians in need (chaps. 2, 4, 11), to resolve disputes within the church (chaps. 6, 15), and to take the gospel message of salvation to all people (chaps. 2, 11, 13–28).

The book of Acts places great emphasis on the message of salvation and the responsibility given to believers to share this salvific message with all people. This salvation-witness concept is clearly one of Luke's key purposes for the book of Acts. The Pentecost event of Acts 2 initiates the theme of salvation for all people and thus sets the agenda for the rest of the book. In this passage, various Jews from many nations hear the good news in their own tongue, which suggests that this news is for peoples of all tongues and nations yet for Jews first. The rest of Acts continues this theme of the universal scope of salvation. Luke makes it clear that this salvation crosses all geographical, ethnic, and social boundaries. In Acts, Luke is bridging the gap between Jesus' earthly ministry and a later generation of Christ followers who are to take the gospel to a much wider geographical area with even greater ethnic diversity. The message of salvation should be joined with Luke's emphasis on witness. The centrality of the theme of witness in Acts is verified by Jesus' words right before the ascension: "And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and

to the ends of the earth" (1:8). The book of Acts tells the story of how the early church received and obeyed the command of Jesus to bear witness of him to the ends of the earth.

LITERARY FEATURES

These key purposes of Acts are expounded through some distinctive literary features found in the book. One such literary feature is that the book of Acts was written in a literary genre called "apologetic historiography." This genre can be defined as the story of a subgroup of people told by a member of the group who explains the group's traditions and history while using Greco-Roman literary features. A good example of this literary genre is Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*. Josephus tells the story of the Jews to Greco-Roman readers in hopes that they will better understand Jewish history and traditions and will accept the Jews in the larger Greco-Roman world. This appears to be exactly what Luke is doing in the book of Acts for Christians. However, Luke is not giving a defense of a particular ethnic group; rather, he is defending a multicultural people who transcend ethnic and geographical boundaries. In fact, this is a key part of Luke's message. Throughout Acts, Luke is trying to explain why his religion is one that crosses ethnic boundaries and is a universal religion inclusive of all ethnicities. As Luke tells the story of Christianity, he is careful to utilize Hellenistic literary features in order to connect with his primary audience. Evidence of these Hellenistic literary features in the book of Acts includes a narrative style illustrating the history through the personal experiences of key characters (Acts tells the history of the early church through characters such as Peter and Paul), the frequent use of speeches, personal observation of at least part of the narrative while maintaining anonymity of authorship (the "we" passages of Acts), and the frequent use of summaries to guide the narrative (Acts contains three major summaries [2:42–47; 4:32–37; 5:12–16] and a number of minor summaries [6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:31]).

OUTLINE AND SURVEY

Acts can be outlined according to Jesus' final words, recorded in 1:8: "You will receive power

when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

- I. Witnesses in Jerusalem (1:1–8:3)
- II. Witnesses in Judea and Samaria (8:4–12:25)
- III. Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth (13:1–28:31)

I. Witnesses in Jerusalem (Acts 1:1–8:3).

Immediately following his ascension, Jesus tells his followers to return to Jerusalem and wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. They promptly obey, and after ten days of waiting, the disciples are dramatically filled with the Holy Spirit and begin to share the gospel with those around them. This event occurs at the Jewish Pentecost festival, which was attended by Jews and Jewish proselytes from throughout the Roman Empire. After the Spirit comes at Pentecost, Peter boldly preaches to the crowds, and over three thousand people respond with saving faith (2:41).

Luke next provides an exciting summary of the Spirit-led life within the early church. This life is characterized by the early believers' participation together in the sharing of worship activities, material possessions, and spiritual blessings (2:42–47). This summary is followed by several dramatic healing miracles accomplished through Peter and the subsequent arrest of Christian leaders by Jewish religious authorities. Instead of squelching the Christian movement, however, these arrests only enhance the spiritual revival and its accompanying miracles. This revival is characterized by extreme generosity and unity within the early church (4:32–37).

The revival joy, however, is marred by the deceitful actions of Ananias and Sapphira, who lie to the church and to the Holy Spirit and are judged by God with immediate death (5:1–11). This story proves that God will go to extreme lengths to protect the unity of his church. Following more persecution and miracles, the disciples choose seven men to oversee distribution of food to Hellenistic widows who have been neglected in daily food distributions (6:1–7).

One of these leaders, Stephen, is arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin. Stephen testifies boldly before the Jewish leaders and is promptly executed by stoning (chap. 7). This execution is endorsed by Saul, a zealous Pharisee who begins to lead fierce persecution against the church in Jerusalem (8:1–3).

II. Witnesses in Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:4–12:25). Saul's persecution forces many of the early church believers to leave Jerusalem. These believers scatter throughout the surrounding areas of Judea and Samaria. As they scatter, however, they continue to preach the gospel (8:4). Philip preaches in Samaria and performs many miraculous signs, producing a spiritual revival in the region. Hearing about this, the apostles send Peter and John to Samaria to minister to the Samaritans (8:18–25), thus confirming the cross-cultural nature of the gospel (Samaritans traditionally were hated by the Jews). Next Luke tells of Philip's evangelizing of an Ethiopian eunuch (8:26–40).

Following the Ethiopian's belief in Jesus, the narrative tells of Saul's dramatic conversion while traveling to Damascus to persecute Christians there (9:1–19). Saul's dramatic turnaround is met with suspicion by the other disciples, but eventually he is accepted by the believers with the help of Barnabas (9:27–30). Next Peter travels to the Judean countryside and heals the paralytic Aeneas and raises Dorcas from the dead (9:32–42). These miracles produce an exciting spiritual revival in the region. Following this, God gives Peter a vision to go to the coastal city of Caesarea in order to minister to Cornelius, a Roman army officer. Cornelius is a God-fearer, and through Peter's witness he responds to the gospel message and receives the Holy Spirit (chap. 10). Peter explains his actions with Cornelius to his concerned Jewish companions and verifies that God has indeed included the Gentiles in his plan of salvation (11:1–18).

This verification is followed by the report of what is happening in the church at Antioch, where Jews begin to share the gospel with larger groups of Gentiles (11:19–21). This cross-cultural evangelism produces a spiritual revival in

Antioch, causing the Jerusalem church to send Barnabas to the large Syrian city to investigate (11:22–30). Barnabas confirms that God is indeed at work in Antioch and invites Saul to come and help him disciple the new Gentile believers (11:25–26). Next Luke reports more persecution breaking out against Christians in Jerusalem, resulting in the arrest of James and Peter by King Herod. James is executed, but Peter miraculously escapes from prison with the help of an angel (12:1–19), and the church continues to increase, spreading throughout the Roman Empire.

III. *Witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 13:1–28:31)*. Starting with chapter 13, the narrative shifts its focus from the ministry of Peter to that of Paul (formerly Saul). The church at Antioch begins to take center stage over the church at Jerusalem. This church commissions Paul and Barnabas and sends them off on their first missionary journey, accompanied by Barnabas's cousin John Mark. The missionaries first sail to Cyprus, where they preach in synagogues and encounter a Jewish sorcerer, Bar-Jesus. Next they sail to Pamphylia, thus crossing into Asia Minor, and preach the gospel in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (this area was known as part of the region of Galatia). In these cities, God provides numerous miracles, and the missionaries experience a great response to the gospel as well as much persecution because of the gospel. On one occasion, Paul is actually stoned and left for dead (14:19–20).

Unfazed, Paul and his team boldly continue their mission. Eventually, they retrace their steps, strengthen the churches that they have started, and sail back to Syrian Antioch, where they give an exciting report to the church (14:26–28). Following this report, Luke tells of an important meeting of church leaders in Jerusalem. The subject of the meeting involves whether or not the new Gentile Christians should be required to follow the Jewish laws and customs. After debating the issue, the leaders side with Paul, determining that the Gentiles should not be burdened with Jewish laws and traditions, but simply must live moral lives and not eat food that has been sacrificed to idols (chap. 15).

Following this meeting, Paul and Barnabas decide to make a second missionary journey. Unfortunately, the two missionaries get into a dispute over whether to take John Mark with them again. The argument is such that the missionaries decide to separate, and Paul chooses a new partner, Silas. They travel by land back to Galatia. Barnabas takes John Mark and sails to Cyprus. Paul and Silas return to Derbe and Lystra and then make their way to Macedonia and Greece. They spend significant time in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth before returning to Caesarea and Antioch (chaps. 16–18). Following his return, Paul makes a third missionary journey, revisiting churches in Galatia and Phrygia and staying in Ephesus for three years before visiting Macedonia and Greece for a second time.

Paul concludes his third missionary journey with a trip to Jerusalem, where he is falsely accused of bringing a Gentile into the temple. This accusation creates a riot, and Paul is rescued by Roman soldiers, who arrest him and transfer him to a prison in Caesarea, where he spends two years awaiting trial under the rule of Felix and Festus (23:34–25:22). Paul eventually exercises his right as a Roman citizen to have his case heard by the emperor. He is sent to Rome by boat and is shipwrecked on the island of Malta. Eventually he makes his way to the capital city, where he is placed under house arrest. While in Rome, Paul maintains a rented house and is free to receive visitors and write letters. In fact, it is thought that Paul penned his “prison letters” during this time of house arrest (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon). The narrative of Acts ends with Paul ministering boldly in Rome while awaiting his trial.

ACTS AND THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH

The book of Acts provides a model for today's church on numerous topics. These include understanding the role of the Holy Spirit, practicing community life within the church, dealing with hardship and persecution, overcoming social injustices, and carrying out missions.

Acts reveals that the key issue for Christians is learning to experience and follow God's Holy

Spirit, who enables believers to be bold in their witness for Christ, generous in their physical and spiritual support of each other, and effective in their ministries. Acts consistently reveals that one's joy, power, and purpose come from the Holy Spirit. According to Acts, learning to follow and depend upon God's Holy Spirit is the key to having a healthy church.

Acts also shows that the Holy Spirit produces a unique community life characterized by worship, generosity, blessing, and unity. Luke calls this Spirit-led common life *koinōnia*, which is explained and illustrated in the first five chapters of Acts (see esp. 2:42–47). It should be the desire and goal of every church to re-create this *koinōnia* community first experienced by the primitive church in Acts.

In addition to its *koinōnia*, the book of Acts serves as a model for the church in overcoming persecution and hardship. The narrative of Acts consistently reveals the sovereign power of God in overcoming opposition. The early church found great joy and growth in the midst of hardship and persecution, and today's church can do the same.

Another important example for the church provided by Acts is in the area of social justice. Luke's primitive church consistently removed ethnic prejudices, eliminated social hierarchy and status within the church, and elevated the role of women. Acts provides inspiration and guidance for today's church in facing these same social issues.

In addition to overcoming social injustices, the church in Acts provides an excellent example of mission ministry. These believers consistently revealed God's heart for the nations and made it a priority to share the gospel with all people everywhere. Acts' emphasis on the universal nature of the gospel, the responsibility of individual Christians to witness for Christ, and the importance of planting new churches and discipling new believers sets a pattern for today's church in the area of missions.

These examples should serve to inspire and guide the contemporary church as it seeks to follow and experience the Holy Spirit, who is so powerfully revealed in the book of Acts.

ACZIB *See* Akzib.

ADADAH One of the southernmost towns allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:22).

ADAH Two women who married men excluded from the Israelite ancestry. (1) Lamech's wife, in Cain's genealogy (Gen. 4:19). (2) Esau's Hittite wife, mother of the Amalekites (Gen. 36:2). As daughter of Elon the Hittite, Adah may (Gen. 26:34) or may not (Gen. 36:2–3) be identical with Basemath.

ADAIHAH (1) The father of Jedidah and grandfather of King Josiah (2 Kings 22:1). (2) A descendant of Levi through Ethan (1 Chron. 6:41–42). (3) A descendant of Benjamin through Shimei (1 Chron. 8:21). (4) Son of Jeroham, and a priest who resettled in Judah (1 Chron. 9:12). (5) The father of Maaseiah, a commander under covenant with the priest Jehoiada (2 Chron. 23:1). (6) A descendant of Bani who was guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:29). (7) A descendant of Binnui also guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:38–39). (8) A descendant of Judah through Joiarib (Neh. 11:5). (9) Son of Jeroham, and a priest who resettled in Jerusalem (Neh. 11:12; could be the same as #4).

ADALIA One of Haman's ten sons, all of whom were killed by the Jews in the citadel of Susa, along with five hundred others. At the request of Esther to King Xerxes, their corpses were then displayed by public hanging (Esther 9:7–14). Xerxes had permitted the Jews the right "to destroy, kill and annihilate" their attackers (8:11).

ADAM The name of a person and a word for "humankind." That the Hebrew word *'adam* can be both a personal name and a reference to humankind provides the biblical writers with a valuable means of drawing theological conclusions important to the nature of humankind's status before God. Unfortunately, in various places it is unclear whether it is a proper name or a more general noun. The origin of the word is usually understood to be related to "red" or "red soil," and the writer of Genesis makes the link between

“the man” and “the soil” more apparent in Gen. 2:7, where man is said to have been created from *‘adamah* (ground, earth).

The first man was named “Adam.” Because of the difficulties of the word *‘adam* serving as both a proper name and meaning simply “human,” there is disagreement concerning when the text of Gen. 1–3 is referring to humankind and when it is utilizing “Adam” as a reference to the first man’s name. This discussion often is driven by one’s explanation of origins; however, the general rule applied by many Bible translations is that the presence of the definite article (“the”) indicates that the author has humankind in mind, whereas its absence indicates the use of the proper name.

Humankind was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27), who also uniquely breathed into human beings his own breath (2:7), indicating a distinct capacity for relationship between them and God. This emphasis is furthered in the text by God’s granting to humankind stewardship of the rest of his creation (1:28–30). The fall (Gen. 3) apparently arose out of the desire of human beings to usurp God’s position and determine for themselves what is beneficial and what is harmful (knowledge of good and evil). The step of disobedience taken in consuming fruit from the forbidden tree had dire consequences for the relationships between men and women, humankind and creation, and humankind and God. The fall, however, did not eliminate the reality that humankind is still in the image of God and capable of continued relationship with him (5:1–3).

Other OT passages rely on Adam for purposes of genealogy (Gen. 5:4; 1 Chron. 1:1) but also begin to highlight some theological conceptions of him that would become significant in his description elsewhere in Scripture. Job 31:33 may suggest a link between Adam’s attempt to cover his sin (Gen. 3:7, 10) and the propensity that human beings have to do the same (cf. Isa. 43:27). Psalm 8 expresses reflections concerning the creation of humankind, and the wonder of God’s interest and investment of himself in it. The writer of Ecclesiastes seemingly toils over the status of human beings in

relation to the earth, since the former die but the latter continues (Eccles. 1:3–4). Such passages demonstrate the corporate responsibility that humankind bears for sin following Adam’s first sin and establish a framework through which the NT writers may be able to address the most significant human problems.

Adam is the center of several significant references in the NT. In particular, passages such as Rom. 5:12–21 and 1 Cor. 15:21–49 establish an Adam/Christ, or First Adam/Second Adam typology. In the Romans passage, Paul draws on the Jewish concept of corporate identity in order to identify the status of death as common throughout all humanity because of the first Adam, and the hope of salvation and grace as available to all humanity because of the second Adam. The 1 Corinthians passage makes its argument along similar lines; however, its interest is in the granting of the possibility of resurrection to humanity in the second Adam, who provides a permanent body, while the first Adam only granted a limited body of dust.

In other places in the NT the priority of Adam and his impact on humanity are the source of theological reflection as well. Luke seems to argue for the solidarity of Jesus with all of humanity by taking his genealogy back to Adam (Luke 3). Paul draws on the priority of Adam being created before Eve, as well as her deception by the serpent, as a rationale for not permitting women certain roles in the church (1 Tim. 2:13–14). The writer of Hebrews draws the connection between humankind and Christ in order to highlight Jesus’ unique capacity for dealing with the sinful human condition (Heb. 2). *See also* Adam, Town of; Adam and Eve.

ADAM, TOWN OF A town on the western bank of the Jordan River near Zarethan, just below where the Jabbok River empties into the Jordan. It was here that the waters of the Jordan stopped so that the Israelites under the leadership of Joshua could cross into Canaan further to the south, opposite Jericho (Josh. 3:14–17). One interpretation of Hos. 6:7 takes Adam as the place where Israel broke the covenant (“at Adam”), which makes sense of the adverb *sham* (“there”) in this verse but lacks corroboration

elsewhere; another interpretation understands Adam here as referring to the first human or to humankind (“like Adam”), which the LXX endorses by rendering *’adam* as “man” (*anthrōpos*).

ADAMAH (1) A fortified city in the tribal allotment to Naphtali, in northern Palestine (Josh. 19:36). (2) A Hebrew word meaning “earth” or “ground.” Since the Hebrew word *’adam* means either “human” or the proper name “Adam,” wordplays appear early in Genesis: “there was no one [*’adam*] to work the ground [*’adamah*]” (2:5); “the LORD God formed a man [*’adam*] from the dust of the ground [*’adamah*]” (2:7); “to Adam [*’adam*] he said, . . . ‘Cursed is the ground [*’adamah*] because of you’” (3:17). The similarity of the words *’adam* and *’adamah* thus reminds Hebrew readers of the origin of humankind.

ADAM AND EVE The first human beings. According to Gen. 2, God created Adam (whose name means “humanity” and is related to the word for “ground”) from the dust of the ground and his own breath, showing that humankind is a part of creation but has a special relationship with God. This description contrasts with the Babylonian account of the creation of the first humans from the clay of the ground and the blood of a demon god (Qingu in the *Enuma Elish*). The Bible thus presents a more dignified understanding of the place of humankind in the world. God placed Adam in a garden in Eden (a name that means “delight” or “abundance”). Even so, God, noting that it was not good for Adam to be alone, created Eve (whose name means “living”), his female counterpart. She was created from Adam’s side (or rib), signifying their equality. She was to be his “helper,” a word that does not denote subordination, since elsewhere in the Bible God is said to be the psalmist’s helper (Pss. 30:10; 54:4). Eve was Adam’s wife, and God pronounced that future marriage will be characterized by leaving one’s parents, being joined as a couple,

and consummating the relationship with sexual intercourse (Gen. 2:24).

Adam and Eve were to tend the garden of Eden. They were permitted to eat the fruit of all the trees of the garden except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eating the fruit of this tree, against God’s express prohibition,

A section of a sarcophagus showing God handing the symbols of work to Adam and Eve (AD 330–40)



would be an assertion of moral independence that would meet with God’s punishment.

In Gen. 3 the serpent convinced Eve that it would be good to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree. Adam was present with her as the serpent spoke, but he remained silent. After eating the fruit, Eve gave some to Adam, and he ate without protest. Both Adam and Eve were therefore guilty of the first sin. The results were

immediate, including the alienation of Adam and Eve, signaled by the fact that they could no longer stand naked before each other without shame.

Adam and Eve were punished for their rebellion. Eve was punished in her most intimate relationships. She would now experience increased pain when giving birth, and her relationship with her husband would become a power struggle as her desire to control him would be met with his attempt to dominate her (Gen. 3:16). Adam felt the consequences of his action in his work, which now would be tinged with frustration (3:17–19). In addition, although they did not die immediately, they were removed from the garden and access to the tree of life, so death would be their ultimate end.

After Adam and Eve departed from the garden, they had children. We know of Cain and Abel, whose conflict is well known from Gen. 4. After the death of Abel, Eve gave birth to Seth. The genealogies of Cain (Gen. 4:17–24) and Seth suggest that humanity is divided into those who resist and those who follow God (5:1–32). Surprisingly, in the rest of the OT Adam is mentioned only in the first verse of the genealogy in 1 Chron. 1, and Eve not at all (cf. Hos. 6:7).

In the NT, Adam is mentioned in the Lukan genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:38) and in Rom. 5:12–21; 1 Cor. 15; 1 Tim. 2:13–14; Jude 14. In Romans, Paul associates Adam with the entry of sin and death into the world. Paul contrasts Adam with Christ. Whereas Adam's act introduced sin and death, Christ's act brought reconciliation with God and life. Paul makes essentially the same point in 1 Cor. 15 (see esp. vv. 22, 45). Christians thus read Gen. 3 through the commentary supplied by Paul and believe that it supports the notion of original sin, that all humans are sinners from birth.

Eve is mentioned twice in the NT. In 1 Tim. 2:11–15 Paul argues that women should learn quietly and not teach or have authority over men because Eve was created after Adam and was the one deceived by the serpent. Debate surrounds the issue whether Paul here addresses a local situation or is citing a universal principle. Paul again

mentions the deception of Eve in 2 Cor. 11:3, but here he applies it to men and women who are in danger of being deceived by false teachers.

ADAMANT A stone known for its hardness. Twice the KJV uses “adamant,” as a metaphor for stubbornness (Ezek. 3:9; NIV: “hardest stone”) and hardness of heart (Zech. 7:12; NIV: “flint”). *See also* Flint.

ADAMINEKEB The NIV and other translations list Adami Nekeb as a single city on the border of the tribal allotment to Naphtali. The KJV lists Adami and Nekeb as two separate cities on Naphtali's border (Josh. 19:33).

ADAR The sixth month of the Hebrew civil calendar and the twelfth of the religious calendar, beginning during February. An extra Adar was sometimes added to synchronize the Hebrew lunar calendar with the solar year (Esther 3:7).

ADBEEL The third of twelve sons of Ishmael, Abraham's firstborn son by his Egyptian maid-servant, Hagar (Gen. 25:13; 1 Chron. 1:29).

ADDAN *See* Addon.

ADDAR (1) Grandson of Benjamin through Bela (1 Chron. 8:3), probably the same person as Ard (Gen. 46:21; Num. 26:40). (2) A city on the southern border of Israel's promised inheritance, also on the southern border of Judah's tribal allotment (Josh. 15:3). Known also as Hazar Addar (Num. 34:4).

ADDI An ancestor twenty-four generations before Jesus in Luke's genealogy. Addi was the son of Cosam and father of Melki (Luke 3:28).

ADDON A town of unknown location from which some Israelites returned from the Babylonian exile to Judah with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after. These returning exiles were among those who could not establish their genealogical connections to Israel. The NRSV and others read “Addan” in Ezra 2:59 but “Addon” in Neh. 7:61, while the NIV reads “Addon” both places.

ADER *See* Eder.

ADIN (1) The ancestor of two groups that returned to Judah from captivity in Babylon, one with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:15 [cf. Neh. 7:20]), the other, led by Ebed, with Ezra around 458 BC (Ezra 8:6). (2) A member of the postexilic community who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:16). However, the names listed in Neh. 10:14–27 may indicate families rather than individuals.

ADINA A descendant of Reuben through Shiza. Adina was one of “the Thirty,” mighty men who strengthened David’s kingship. Adina also led a band of thirty soldiers (1 Chron. 11:42).

ADINO A word in the Hebrew text of 2 Sam. 23:8 that some translations (e.g., KJV, NASB) render as the name of a person. Since *’adino* and the following word, *ha’etsno* (“the Eznite”), are awkward in the sentence and absent elsewhere in the Bible, the NIV follows some LXX manuscripts and 1 Chron. 11:11, substituting “raised his spear” for “Adino the Eznite” (cf. ESV, RSV). See the NIV footnotes on 2 Sam. 23:8.

ADITHAIM One of the fourteen towns and villages allotted to the tribe of Judah in the western foothills of southern Canaan (Josh. 15:36).

ADLAI The father of Shaphat, King David’s keeper of herds in the valleys (1 Chron. 27:29).

ADMAH One of the cities of the plain, associated with Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 10:19; 14:2, 8; Deut. 29:23). Admah is not specifically mentioned as being destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah, but Deut. 29:23 and Hos. 11:8 mention the city’s destruction in passages about divine judgment. Admah traditionally has been located at the southeastern end of the Dead Sea, although current scholarship places it on the northeast side of the Dead Sea.

ADMATHA One of seven top-level officials under King Xerxes (Ahasuerus), who advised him to put away Queen Vashti because of her refusal to obey the king’s command to appear before the banquet (Esther 1:14).

ADNA (1) A descendant of Pahath-Moab guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:30). (2) The head of Harim’s priestly family in the days of Joiakim (Neh. 12:15).

ADNAH (1) A man of the tribe of Manasseh who commanded one thousand men and defected to David during Saul’s reign (1 Chron. 12:20). (2) A man from the tribe of Judah who commanded three hundred thousand of the experienced fighters whom Jehoshaphat stationed in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 17:14).

ADONI-BEZEK The leader of Bezek who was defeated by men of the tribes of Judah and Simeon early in the conquest of Canaan. The Judahites and Simeonites cut off Adoni-Bezek’s thumbs and big toes; he viewed the amputations as divine retribution for his taking the same action against seventy kings (Judg. 1:4–7).

ADONIJAH (1) David’s fourth son, a rival to Solomon for the succession to David’s throne. When David became old, Adonijah, whom David apparently did not discipline properly (1 Kings 1:6), strengthened his claim on the throne greatly by garnering the support of Joab and Abiathar (1:7), whose support Absalom had failed to win in his earlier rebellion. When David heard of Adonijah’s actions, he instructed his leaders to install Solomon as king in Gihon, which they did so loudly that Adonijah and his supporters were able to hear the commotion at their own feast (1:33–41). Solomon mercifully chose not to kill Adonijah for his treason (1:50–53). The peace between Solomon and Adonijah quickly came to an end when Adonijah requested that Abishag the Shunammite, a virgin attendant of David, be given to him as a wife. Seeing this as another act of treason (2:22), Solomon ordered Benaiah son of Jehoiada to kill Adonijah, which he did prior to killing Joab also.

(2) A man listed as one of those who sealed the postexilic covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:16).

ADONIKAM The ancestor of two groups that returned to Judah from captivity in Babylon, one with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after, and one with Ezra around 458 BC. Ezra and

Nehemiah list returning descendants of Adonikam with Zerubbabel at 666 and 667 men, respectively (Ezra 2:13; Neh. 7:18). Three “last ones,” Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah, family heads of Adonikam, returned to Palestine with Ezra, accompanied by sixty men (Ezra 8:13).

ADONIRAM Son of Abda, Adoniram was overseer of forced labor for David and Solomon (2 Sam. 20:24; 1 Kings 4:6). In order to finance and support his huge building campaigns, Solomon “put a heavy yoke” (1 Kings 12:4) on the people of Israel, including the conscription of thirty thousand Israelite men whom Adoniram oversaw (5:13–14). When Rehoboam unwisely threatened to increase the burden on the Israelites (12:13–15), the northern tribes rebelled. Rehoboam sent Adoniram to assert his control over the northern tribes, but they stoned to death the unpopular Adoniram (12:18).

ADONI-ZEDEK The Amorite king of Jerusalem who organized a five-city coalition to attack the city of Gibeon after its capitulation to Joshua (Josh. 10:1–3). After their armies were routed by the Israelites, Adoni-Zedek and his four allies hid in a cave. Joshua captured and executed them (Josh. 10:22–27).

ADOPTION The voluntary process of granting the rights, privileges, responsibilities, and status of child or heir to an individual or group that was not originally born to the adopter. While birth occurs naturally, adoption occurs only through the exertion of will.

At least two significant figures in the OT were adopted. After Moses’ birth mother kept him alive despite Pharaoh’s command to drown every newborn Hebrew boy in the Nile (Exod. 1:22), Moses was, ironically, adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter (2:10). Esther, or Hadassah, was adopted by her uncle (or cousin) Mordecai upon the death of her parents (Esther 2:7)—this adoption plays an important part in Esther’s ability to prevent the Jewish extermination intended by Haman.

Although adoption is fairly uncommon in the OT, God’s adoption of Israel is of the utmost importance. It demonstrates God’s willingness to

initiate relationship with humankind, a truth that later culminated in Jesus Christ. God chooses to adopt the nation of Israel as his child (Deut. 7:6; Isa. 1:2; Hos. 11:1) and more significantly as his firstborn son (Exod. 4:22; Jer. 31:9). Thus God singles out Israel among the nations of the earth, bestowing the highest possible honor.

The concept of adoption is more prevalent in the NT, primarily in the apostle Paul’s writings. Based on the belief that Israel’s exclusive position as the adopted firstborn son of God the Father is no longer deserved, the NT includes those who believe in Jesus Christ as adopted children of God’s eternal family (John 1:12; 11:52; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5; Phil. 2:15; 1 John 3:1). The adopted children of God enjoy all the rights of a natural-born child, including the opportunity to call God “Father,” as Jesus did (e.g., Matt. 5:16; Luke 12:32). Paul in particular uses adoption to describe the Christian’s new relationship with God through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:15–16, 21–23; 9:25–26).

ADORAIM One of fifteen cities in Judah and Benjamin that Rehoboam fortified in the wake of the division of his kingdom (2 Chron. 11:9). Adoraim was situated in Judah, approximately twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem. The city was apparently ineffective in halting Pharaoh Shishak’s attack on Jerusalem (2 Chron. 12:2–4; 1 Kings 14:25–26).

ADORAM *See* Adoniram.

ADRAMMELECH *See* Adrammelek.

ADRAMMELEK (1) A god of the people of Sepharvaim. After the exile of the northern kingdom, the king of Assyria transplanted people from all over his empire into the territory that he had taken from the Israelites. Each of these people groups “made its own gods in the several towns where they settled” (2 Kings 17:29). Those people who had been transplanted from Sepharvaim established worship of Adrammelek and Anammelek in former Israelite territory by sacrificing their own children in fire (2 Kings 17:31). Adrammelek (“Adar is king”) and Anammelek (“Anu is king”) were related to the Babylonian gods Adar, the sun god, and Anu, the moon goddess.

(2) One of the sons of the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib who, along with his brother Sharezer, assassinated his father in the temple of Nisrok and escaped to the land of Ararat. Esarhaddon, another son of Sennacherib, was next on the throne (2 Kings 19:37; Isa. 37:38). *See also* Anammelek.

ADRAMYTTIUM A port city on the northwest coast of modern Turkey. Today the city is known as Karatash. The city was of commercial importance, though its power peaked before the NT period. It was the center for worship of Castor and Pollux, Zeus's twin sons. Paul, Luke, Aristarchus, and Julius the centurion sailed on a ship from this city on their way to Rome (Acts 27:1–2).

ADRIATIC SEA The Adriatic Sea is a portion of the Mediterranean Sea that separates Italy from Greece. According to second-century documents, the extent of this sea may have included waters from Malta to the western coast of Crete. It was in these waters that Paul found himself adrift for fourteen days during his trip to Rome to plead his case before Caesar (Acts 27:27).

ADRIEL Son of Barzillai the Meholathite, who likely resided in Abel Meholah. Adriel married Merab, Saul's oldest daughter, who had previously been promised to David (1 Sam. 18:19), although several manuscripts report

that he married Michal (2 Sam. 21:8). The marriage may have sealed a treaty between Adriel's city-state and Saul's kingdom. Five sons from this marriage were among those whom David surrendered to the Gibeonites to be executed for Saul's misdeeds.

ADULLAM A city in the western foothills of Judah, located about fifteen miles southwest of Jerusalem (Josh. 15:35). Prior to the conquest of Canaan, the patriarch Judah lived for some time in Adullam (Gen. 38:1–5). The Israelites conquered the city several hundred years later under Joshua (Josh. 12:15), and Rehoboam fortified the city after the division of Israel (2 Chron. 11:7).

Adullam became a refuge for David both before and after his enthronement. After fleeing from Saul to the Philistine city of Gath, David stayed at a cave in Adullam, and about four hundred men gathered to him, many of whom were discontented and troubled (1 Sam. 22:1–2). King David's battles with the Philistines led him back to the stronghold at the cave of Adullam. In one memorable instance, Philistine forces were stationed near Jerusalem in the Valley of Rephaim and in Bethlehem, and three of David's mighty men broke through Philistine lines and brought water back to David in the stronghold (2 Sam. 23:13–17; 1 Chron. 11:15).

LOCATION OF ADULLAM

