



Bible People

Jesus at the Center

From Adam and Eve to Priscilla and Aquila, Bible people are amazingly diverse. In the Scriptures we find kings, prophets, missionaries, revolutionaries, and everyday people. They sin and repent, seek vengeance and forgive, build and destroy. As unique as each Bible character is, each points to or radiates from Jesus, the epicenter of salvation history. Jesus's life, Death, and Resurrection are the culmination of God's Revelation. Meeting key people of the Bible and discovering their connection to Jesus enriches our understanding and illuminates our vision of the history of salvation.

■ Aaron (1290 BC?)

Brother of Moses and first High Priest of the Law, Aaron supported and spoke for Moses, demanding freedom for the Israelites from Pharaoh. During the journey to the Promised Land, Aaron lost faith in God and led the people in worshiping a golden calf. Later Aaron repented, and he and his sons were ordained for the priesthood. With Aaron came the tradition of limiting the priesthood to members of his tribe, the Levites.

JESUS CONNECTION: When Jesus was crucified, he offered the ultimate and unblemished sacrifice of his own body and blood—perfecting the sacrifices once offered by Aaron, the High Priest of the Israelites (see Lv, chaps. 8–9; Heb 7:11–28).

■ Abraham and Sarah (1850 BC?)

First named Abram and Sarai, they were called by God to leave their nomadic life and travel to Canaan. In return God promised that despite their old age, they would become ancestors of a great nation. Abram and Sarai accepted God's call. As a sign of their covenant relationship, God renamed the couple Abraham and Sarah. God fulfilled his promise and Sarah gave birth to Isaac, who became the patriarch of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Abraham is known as the father of monotheism (belief in one God).

QUICK FACT: Abraham is considered the spiritual father of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

■ Adam and Eve (before recorded history)

Adam and Eve are the names given in the Scriptures to the first man and woman who were created by God in the divine image. The account of their life together in the Garden of Eden is neither science nor history but a mythic account of how the first human beings chose the temptation offered by a serpent over a harmonious relationship with God and the rest of creation. By rejecting God's plan for humankind, Adam and Eve committed

the first human sin. All of humankind has been wounded and its relationship with God damaged by this Original Sin.

JESUS CONNECTION: After celebrating the Last Supper with his Apostles, Jesus agonized over his fate. Despite his suffering Jesus showed himself to be the "new Adam," replacing the Original Sin of Adam with his own total acceptance of God's will. Through the life, teaching, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus, humankind was redeemed (see Rom 5:18, 1 Cor 15:21–22).

■ The Apostles (AD 30–33)

The Apostles are the twelve men, representative of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, called by Jesus to be leaders in spreading the Gospel message. Jesus gave the Apostles authority to teach, heal, and forgive sins, and he left them the Holy Spirit as a guide to the truth. After Jesus's Ascension, Matthias was chosen to replace Judas, who had betrayed Jesus. The Apostles' experience of the risen Lord was the center of their teaching and the foundation of the Church.

QUICK FACT: Today the bishops of the Church serve as modern-day Apostles under the authority of the Pope.

■ David (1000–960 BC)

Known as the greatest king of Israel, David ruled from around 1010 to 961 BC. David entered Saul's court as a harp player and became the king's favorite. He was lauded as a hero when he killed Goliath, a giant warrior of the Philistines. Out of jealousy Saul tried to kill David, but David escaped and became the king of Israel after the death of Saul. David was a skilled musician, military leader, and politician. He had a great love for God but committed serious sins too. Because of his sincere sorrow and repentance, God forgave David and promised that his dynasty would be eternal.

JESUS CONNECTION: David is an ancestor of Jesus's. Three days after Jesus's Crucifixion, Jesus rose from the dead, embodying the promise God had made to King David—that indeed the dynasty of David would last forever (see 2 Sm 7:8–16, Lk 1:31–33).

Biblical Prehistory	1850–1750 BC	1750–1290 BC	1250–1020 BC	1020–922 BC	922–587 BC
• Adam and Eve	• Abraham and Sarah • Jacob	• Aaron • Moses	• Joshua • Ruth • Samson	• David • Solomon	• Samuel • Saul • Elijah and Elisha • Isaiah • Hezekiah

