

getting to know
the Top 55 people in the Bible
those who are mentioned most

1

the Lord Jesus

Christ, Son, King, Lamb, Word, etc.

Jesus (677), Lord (N.T. ~458), Christ (302), Son (~260),
(Lord) Jesus Christ (185), Christ Jesus (69), Teacher/Master (52+),
Man (44), King (39), Lord Jesus (32), Lamb (32), I am... (26+), etc.

3

Moses

Moses (847), child (7), prince/ruler (4), son (4)
beautiful child (2), husband (2), an Egyptian (1), etc. (6)

19

Jeremiah

Jeremiah (134), this man (4), prophet (1), youth (1), child (1)

24

Elisha

Elisha (59), man of God (27), prophet (5),
master (5), lord (4), Father (2), baldhead (2), servant (1)

37

Sarah, Sarai

Sarah (42), Sarai (17), wife (10),
sister (5), woman (4), freewoman (3), daughter (1)

Bible
top 55

getting to know
**the top 55
people
in the Bible**

(55 key character studies)

Jon F. Mahar

(Toa Ministries)

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beyond the few

Most Christians know much about the main characters in the Gospels, Acts, and some Old Testament stories, but they are often confused about most of the rest. *This material makes getting to know all of the top 55 people in the Bible fun.*

beyond the names

Personal titles as well as the names of the top 55 have been carefully counted. Sometimes it is impossible to get an exact count, but the data is still highly accurate, and one thing is very clear. *Jesus who is referred to in many different ways is #1.*

beyond the list

This material was originally just a list, which was great for Bible survey studies and quizzing. *The 55 cards and this booklet make the data behind the list much easier to use in various creative ways and settings.*

beyond the elementary

The 55 cards are great for games, but *this material is not just for children.* Youth and adults will enjoy it as much, if not more. Be sure to read the instructions that come with the cards.

beyond trivia & statistics

This booklet takes the data for the top 55 way beyond trivia by asking **why** these particular people are on the list and ranked as they are. *There are important reasons why Jesus is #1 and out-ranks the others by a mile.*

beyond the original

Those who receive this set from the author or from the toamin-istries.com website *may make copies for use in their local area and study group.* This material may not be sold, however.

The Top 55 People in the Bible

rank	person - <i>in frequency order</i>	TOTAL	O.T.	N.T.
1	Jesus , Christ, Son, Lord, Lamb, etc.	5,250+	2,800+	~2,450
2	King David , the king	1,495	1,436	59
3	Moses , man of God	872	787	85
4	King Saul	478	477	1
5	King Solomon , Jedidiah	458	446	12
6	Jacob , Israel	~ 375	~351	24
7	Abraham , Abram	342	263	79
8	Aaron	320	318	2
9	Nebuchadnezzar , king of Babylon	251	251	0
10	Paul , Saul	237	0	237
11	Joseph , Zaphnath-Paaneah	215	207	8
12	Joshua , Hoshea	211	209	2
13	Peter , Simon, Cephas	200	0	200
14	Isaac	185	164	21
15	King Ahab	166	166	0
16	Samuel , man of God, seer	155	152	3
17	King Hezekiah	146	144	2
18	Joab	145	145	0
19	Jeremiah	141	138	3
20	Ahasuerus (<i>Xerxes</i>)	128	128	0
21	Pharaoh (of the Exodus)	123	122	1
22	John (the Baptist)	120	2	118
23	Absalom	117	117	0
24	Elisha , man of God	105	104	1
25	Esau , Edom	101*	98*	3
-	Jonathan (son on Saul)	101*	101*	0
27	Elijah , man of God	100	85	15
28	Ezekiel, son of man , watchman	99	99	0
29	King Jeroboam	98	98	0

The count data shown includes personal titles as well as names.

The details of each individual's count is shown on his or her card.

		TOTAL	O.T.	N.T.
30	King Josiah	97	95	2
31	the chief priests (as a small group)	96	0	96
32	Pharaoh (Joseph's time)	95	93	2
33	Eleazar	92	92	0
34	King Zedekiah, Mattaniah	91	91	0
35	Daniel, Belteshazzar	88	86	2
36	King Jehoshaphat	83	81	2
37	Sarah, Sarai, freewoman	82	75	7
38	Job	76	75	1
39	King Rehoboam	72	70	2
40	Laban	67	67	0
41	Pilate	65	0	65
42	Abner	64	64	0
-	Balaam	64	60	4
-	Esther, Hadassah	64	64	0
45	King Asa	61	59	2
46	Mordecai	60	60	0
47	Noah	59	50	9
48	Gideon, Jerubbaal	58	57	1
-	Rachel	58	57	1
50	Benjamin, Ben-Oni	58*	58*	0
51	Isaiah	57	33	24
52	Mary (Jesus' mother)	57*	2*	55
53	Adam, the (first) man	~56	~40	16
54	Haman	55	55	0
55	the Antichrist, the Beast	~53	~13	~40

#1 The Lord Jesus Christ

~2,450 in the N.T.

Why are there many titles for Jesus in the Bible?

The reason is that no single title is adequate to describe Him fully. Some titles and names such as I AM in John's Gospel point to his deity. (See John 8:24,28,58, 13:19, 18:5,6,8, and Ex. 3:13-14.) Immanuel does so as well (Mat. 1:23, Isa. 8:8,10, John 1:14). Other titles such as the Bread from heaven (John 6:32-33,35,41,48,50-51,58, Rev. 2:17) and the Resurrection (John 11:25) point to Him as the One who meets our greatest needs.

Why did Paul rarely use the simple name 'Jesus'?

In Paul's Letters (not counting Hebrews), Jesus is referred to as Christ 213 times, the Lord Jesus Christ 66 times, Christ Jesus 56 times, Jesus Christ 44 times, the Lord Jesus 18 times, Jesus Christ our Lord seven times, Christ Jesus our Lord seven times, but as simply 'Jesus' only 12 times. (Compare Rom. 3:24,26, 5:1,6,17, 6:11,23, 7:25, and 10:7.) This is because Jesus was and is more than just a man. 'Jesus' by itself is mainly found in the Gospels (603 times) and before the resurrection.

Why is Jesus often called our High Priest?

He is referred to as High Priest 11 times (Heb. 2:17, 3:1, 4:14, 15, 5:5, 10, 6:20, 7:26, 8:1, 9:11, 10:21) and as a Priest forever three times (Heb. 5:6, 7:17, 7:21). These references obviously were primarily aimed at Jewish believers, who were familiar with the ministry of the high priest and the Day of Atonement. These verses also show that in contrast with Aaron (#8) and his son, Eleazer (#33), the Lord Jesus has an everlasting ministry. He continually intercedes for us.

Why is Jesus often called the Lamb?

This title is used 28 times in Revelation. He is the Lamb of God who died to take away our sins (John 1:29), but He is also the Lamb who reigns (Rev. 5:6,8, 15:3, 17:14, 22:3).

Why is the count for Jesus only approximate?

There are many references to Him. So it is easy to miss some. Also it is difficult to count Him precisely in the Old Testament.

Why is the total count for David so high?

David is first mentioned briefly in [Ruth 4:17](#), but he is named most (nearly 600 times) in First and Second Samuel, beginning in [1 Sam. 16:13](#). He is mentioned often in First Chronicles as well, nearly 190 times by name, mainly from chapter 11 onward. There are also 88 references to David by name in the Psalms, often in the titles. Finally, there are 59 references to David in the New Testament, mostly in the Gospels and Acts and often in referring to the Lord as the Son of David.

Why is David mentioned more than Moses?

Moses wrote far more than David, but he is only mentioned about half as often as David in the Old Testament. One reason for this is because there is far more reported about David as a ruler than about Moses as such. Secondly, Moses was more of a prophet and a teacher than David. Finally, the Lord Jesus is referred to more as a descendant of David than as a prophet like Moses ([Deut. 18:15](#)).

Why are there so many rulers in the top 55?

There are twelve kings in the top 55, including Jesus. The answer usually given is because rulers are always the main news makers. Though true, there is more to it.

The Bible as a whole teaches that the world desperately needs its rightful King, the Lord Jesus. Things were bad when there was no king during the time of the Judges, and were just as bad, in a different way, under King Saul. King David was better and brought hope, but he too failed in some ways. The real hope for the world is the Greater Son of David, who is predicted in Second Samuel chapter seven and First Chronicles chapter 17.

Why is David's sin with Bathsheba included in the Bible?

It is included in [2 Sam. 11:1-12:25](#) to show that David sinned and how God dealt with him. David's sin with Bathsheba is not included in First Chronicles, but the sin of trusting in numbers is exposed in both Books ([2 Sam. 24:1-25](#), [1 Chr. 21:1-30](#)).

Why is the total count for Moses well over 800?

He is first mentioned in [Ex. 2:2](#), and is named more in Exodus (290 times) than in any other Book. The next highest count is in Numbers (233 times). He is also named often in Leviticus (87 times), Deuteronomy (38 times), and Joshua (58 times). In the New Testament, Moses is mentioned 85 times, mostly in the Gospels, Acts, and Hebrews.

Why is Moses mentioned often in the New Testament?

Moses' New Testament count is especially high because of the many references to the written Law of Moses ([Lk. 2:22](#), [24:44](#), [John 5:45-46](#), [7:19-23](#), [8:5](#), [Acts 6:14](#), [13:39](#), [15:21](#), [28:23](#), [1 Cor. 9:9](#), [Heb. 7:14](#), etc.). The reason for this is because many Jews struggled reconciling Moses' teaching in the Law with salvation by grace through the gospel of the Lord Jesus. The Law which reveals sin ([Rom. 3:20](#)) was given through Moses, but the grace and forgiveness needed for salvation came through Jesus the Messiah ([John 1:17](#)).

Why is David mentioned far more than Moses in the Psalms?

Apparently David was more musical and poetic than Moses, though Moses was involved in the singing of the victory song at the Red Sea ([Ex. 15:1-18](#)). He may even have helped compose it, since he wrote [Psalm 90](#). Moses is directly mentioned in [Psa. 77:20](#), [99:6](#), [103:7](#), [105:26](#), [106:16,23](#), and [32](#), but the Psalmists often referred to the wonderful work of the Lord at the Red Sea and in the wilderness without directly mentioning Moses. (See [Psalms 68](#), [78](#), [106](#), and [107](#).) The miracles were God's work!

Why isn't Moses mentioned much in the Prophets.

He is only named twice in Isaiah ([Isa. 63:11-12](#)), once by Jeremiah ([Jer. 15:1](#)), twice in Daniel ([Dan. 9:11, 13](#)), twice in the minor prophets ([Mic. 6:4](#), [Mal. 4:4](#)), and never in Ezekiel. This is because the prophets almost always spoke of the Law as the Law of the Lord rather than the Law of Moses. This shows that the people disobeyed God Himself rather than just his servant Moses.

Why is Saul mostly only in First and Second Samuel?

Israel's first king appears initially in [1 Sam. 9:2](#) and is only mentioned a few times outside of Samuel. He dies at the end of First Samuel, but is mentioned in Second Samuel because of Jonathan (#25), Mephibosheth, and a few others. (There are also some parallel accounts in First Chronicles chapters 10-12.) Otherwise, Saul is mostly forgotten because he was a failed king. He is mentioned negatively in the titles of [Psalms 18, 52, 54, 57, and 59](#), and the only reference to him in the New Testament is a brief one by Paul in [Acts 13:21-22](#).

Why is King Saul mentioned in such great detail?

Saul's life story is long, extending from [First Samuel chapter nine through chapter 31](#). One reason for this is because many of these chapters are also about David, but there are many chapters before David first appears in chapter 16. So there must be more to it than just the contrast with David.

The long account shows why Samuel and God were greatly disappointed in Saul ([1 Sam. 15:35, 16:1](#)). Though he showed promise as a king at first, he was for the most part a failure. Later even David failed to some extent. The only One who does not disappoint is the Lord Jesus ([Acts 13:33, Rom. 9:33, 10:11](#)).

Why did Paul include King Saul in his Acts 13:16-41 sermon?

Like Stephen in Acts chapter seven, Paul (#10) reviewed the history of Israel before mentioning the Lord Jesus. Perhaps Paul mentioned King Saul to better show the step-by-step transition from the exodus to King David. It is probably important to note the contrast that Paul drew between Saul and David in [13:22](#). Saul was removed but David pleased God. So the Messiah came through the line of David.

Why did Saul fail?

There are various reasons, but the basic one is that Saul did not live by faith. His heart was often not right with God. Unlike David, he was selfish and fearful.

Why is Soloman mentioned in several Bible books?

The third king of Israel is found in more places than many realize. Since he wrote several books, he is not just in First Kings, First Chronicles, and Second Chronicles. He is also the 'beloved' (29 times) in the Song of Solomon, 'the preacher' (seven times) in Ecclesiastes, and the one who compiled many of the Proverbs. He is even in the titles of [Psalms 72 and 127](#). In the New Testament, he is mentioned 12 times, mostly in the four Gospels.

Why does Saul outrank Solomon?

King Saul is mostly only found in First and Second Samuel while Solomon appears in several Books. Why then is the count higher for Saul? The simple answer is because God stresses the failure of the first king (Saul) more than that of the third one. This is like the stress in Genesis and Romans on the sin of Adam more than that on the sin of Cain.

Why is Solomon mentioned more in the N.T. than King Saul?

There are several reasons. First, Jesus' legal father, Joseph, was a descendant of King Solomon ([Mat. 1:6-7](#)), but Saul was from a different tribe. Second, there were various things in Solomon's life which were used in illustrations ([Mat. 6:29, 12:42, Lk. 11:31](#)). Such could not be done with Saul. Third, Solomon's porch was an important part of the temple ([John 10:23, Acts 3:11, 5:12](#)), but Saul had nothing to do with the temple.

Why did Solomon become an idolater?

He knew better ([1 Kgs. 11:9](#)), but his many foreign wives turned away his heart when he was old ([11:3-4](#)). He went along with them like Adam went along with Eve (Gen. 3:6). Adam and Solomon were not deceived (1 Tim. 2:14), but neither of them was the leader that he should have been either. In Solomon's case, his fall was associated with the natural weakness that comes with age and the fact that he had many foreign wives. The mother of Solomon's successor, Rehoboam (#39), was Naamah, an Amoriteess ([1 Kgs. 14:21](#)).

Why is Jacob important?

The Lord chose Jacob, the son of Isaac (#14), rather than his older twin brother, Esau (#25) ([Rom. 9:10-13](#)). His name was later changed to Israel, and the majority of the references to Jacob as an individual are in Genesis. The first mention of his long struggle with Esau is found in [Genesis chapter 25](#). There are about two dozen personal references to him in the New Testament, mostly in the Gospels and Acts. The only other personal references in the New Testament are in [Rom. 9:13](#), [Heb. 11:9](#), and [Heb. 11:20-21](#).

Why is the count for Jacob (~375) only approximate?

Aside from in Genesis, it is sometimes difficult to determine if 'Jacob' or 'Israel' refers to the patriarch as an individual or to the nation. After Genesis, these names usually refer to the nation. Only 36 of the approximate 375 personal count are found in Exodus through Malachi. Twenty-one of these are in verses in which Jacob is mentioned *with* Abraham and Isaac ([Ex. 2:24](#), [3:6](#), [32:13](#), [Deut. 34:4](#), [2 Kgs. 13:23](#), [Jer. 33:26](#), etc.).

Why was Jacob's name changed to Israel?

The Lord changed Jacob's name after he returned to the promised land from exile and after he had successfully wrestled with God ([Gen. 32:22-32](#)). The new name was appropriate for one who had struggled and prevailed with God and men like Laban. It was also a fitting name for God's nation, whereas the name Jacob (heel-grabber) was not appropriate for God's people throughout the ages.

Why does Jacob (#6) outrank Abraham (#7)?

The simple answer is because Jacob is mentioned (as an individual) about 33 times more than Abraham, which is not a big difference. In the Old Testament, where the emphasis is more on the nation, Jacob is mentioned nearly 100 times more than Abraham. In the New Testament, however, where the emphasis is more on personal faith and salvation, Abraham is mentioned 55 times more than Jacob, which *is* a big difference.

Why does David outrank Abraham?

The chapters in Genesis about the life of Abraham ([Genesis chapters 12 through 25](#)) are shorter and fewer in number than the many chapters in First and Second Samuel about the life of David. In part, this may simply be because Genesis was compiled by Moses long after Abraham's death.

The relative rankings do NOT necessarily indicate that it is more important to study David than Abraham, since Abraham appears more in the New Testament. Perhaps the count in the New Testament should be given priority over the Old Testament count.

Why do most Christians rank Abraham higher than #7?

It is because Abraham is mentioned 79 times in the New Testament, and because many Christians do not know the Old Testament well, aside from the Book of Genesis. If only people in the New Testament and Genesis are counted, Abraham easily becomes number two or number three.

Why is Abraham mentioned often after Genesis?

In the 44 references to Abraham in Exodus through Malachi, God's graciousness and promise keeping is stressed ([Ex. 2:24](#), [Deut. 9:5](#), [2 Kgs. 13:23](#), [Psa. 105:6](#), [Isa. 41:8](#)). In the New Testament, the Jews mostly mentioned Abraham when speaking about their heritage ([Mat. 3:9](#), [Lk. 3:8](#), [John 8:33,39,53](#), [Rom. 4:13](#), [9:7](#), [2 Cor. 11:22](#), [Gal. 3:29](#)). Abraham's personal faith was stressed by Jesus and Paul, however ([John 8:56](#), [Rom. 4:1-16](#), [Gal. 3:6-9](#), [Heb. 11:8,17-18](#)).

Why is Abraham named often in Luke and John?

He is mentioned 15 times in Luke and 11 times in John, far more than in Matthew (7 times) or Mark (only once). Over half of the occurrences in Luke are in the story of the rich man and Lazarus ([Lk. 16:19-31](#)). And all of the reference to Abraham in John are in chapter eight as part of the great debate with 'the Jews.' At the end of the chapter, the Lord said, "Before Abraham was, I AM." ([John 8:58](#)).

Why is Aaron ranked so high?

Obviously, Aaron is ranking #8 because he is mentioned more than Nebuchadnezzar (#9) but less than Abraham (#7). However, it is important to remember that Aaron was often overshadowed by his younger brother, Moses (#3). There are only a few passages in which Aaron plays the central role by himself. In one such passages ([Ex. 32:1-35](#)), he made the golden calf, and in another one ([Num. 20:22-29](#)) he died. Basically Aaron is highly ranked because he was usually with Moses and served as Moses' spokesman ([Ex. 4:29-30](#), [7:1](#), [10. 16:9-10](#)). They were usually a team, though it is debatable if they should have been.

Is the 320 count for Aaron accurate?

About 26 of 320 count attributed to Aaron are in the phrases 'the sons of Aaron' or 'Aaron's sons' referring to his sons who served as priests. (For example, see [Lev. 1:7](#), [9:12](#), and [Num. 3:2-3](#).) Some may object to counting these 26 references for Aaron himself. Yet, even if these 26 verses were eliminated, Aaron (with a count of 294) would still easily outrank Nebuchadnezzar who is mentioned far less.

Why was Aaron called to be high priest?

Although Aaron did not officially become the high priest until after the tabernacle was completed ([Lev. 8:1-9:24](#)), the Lord spoke about this in detail earlier in [Ex. 28:1-29:46](#). We do not know why God chose the tribe of Levi and Aaron, but we know that He did ([Heb. 5:4](#)). Moses may not have needed a spokesman as much as he thought ([Ex. 4:10-17](#)), but the nation needed a high priest, Aaron being the first.

Why are there so few priests in the top 55?

Aaron (#8), his son Eleazar (#33), and the small group of chief priests who opposed Jesus (#31) are the only high priests on the list, other than our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus ([Heb. 4:14](#)). This is probably because the focus in the Bible, including in Leviticus, is more on the sacrifices than on the priests. This points to the need for the Lamb of God ([John 1:29](#), [36](#)).

Why is Nebuchadnezzar, a pagan king, high on the list?

It is because he is mentioned about 100 times in both Jeremiah (#19) and Daniel (#35). Far less is said about him in Ezekiel (#28). More often than not he is just 'the king' in Daniel and 'the king of Babylon' in Jeremiah. Yet, Jeremiah also called Nebuchadnezzar the Lord's servant three times ([Jer. 25:9, 27:6, 43:10](#)), and the king is clearly seen in a personal way in Daniel.

Why did Jeremiah view Nebuchadnezzar favorably?

It was because the prophet knew that God had chosen the king of Babylon to judge His people. Jeremiah's positive attitude toward Nebuchadnezzar is also seen in his call for surrender ([Jer. 38:17-23](#)). This implies that the king of Babylon was not as evil as Sennacherib ([Isa. 37:6](#)).

Why did Daniel write about the king in personal ways?

Daniel knew Nebuchadnezzar and that the Babylonian captivity was more than just God's way of judging his people. It was also a missions trip. There was persecution, but Daniel and his godly friends had good testimonies, as God confronted the kings that they knew — Nebuchadnezzar in chapters two through four, Belshazzar in chapter five, and Darius in chapter six.

Why is Daniel chapter four special?

It is Nebuchadnezzar's personal testimony, and much of it is written in first person. He is referred to by name and with personal pronouns (*I, my, me, you, your*) many times. He is also compared to a great tree ([4:20-21](#)) which is cut down but later restored. The chapter shows that his main problem was pride.

Why was Nebuchadnezzar proud?

He expressed pride in his work and city in [Dan. 4:30](#). This was position-based pride rather than due to great knowledge (1 Cor. 8:1). The Most High God humbled Nebuchadnezzar and his repentance is declared in [Dan. 4:37](#). Belshazzar ([Dan. 5:20-23](#)) and the Pharaoh of the Exodus (#21), however, refused to acknowledge God. Paul warned against positional pride in 1 Tim. 3:6.

Why is Paul only #10 on the list?

There are two simple reasons. First, the New Testament is not nearly as long as the Old Testament, and second, the New Testament is far more about the Lord Jesus than about those who served Him. Therefore there are about ten times more references to Christ (#1) in the New Testament than to Paul.

Why does Paul outranking Peter surprise some?

The Roman Catholic church claims that Peter was the first pope. Moreover, Peter is in the Gospels as well as in Acts, but Paul does not even appear in the record until [Acts 7:58](#). If the names alone are counted, Peter comes out on top, but there is more involved than just the name counts. Paul is referred to often in other ways in both Acts and his Epistles.

Why does Paul far outrank Peter in Acts?

As the gospel advanced (Acts 1:8), ministry to Gentiles came to the forefront. Though Peter evangelized Cornelius, Paul was God's main minister to the Gentiles ([Rom. 15:16](#), [Eph. 3:7](#), [Col. 1:25](#), [1 Tim. 2:7](#), [2 Tim. 1:11](#)). Therefore references to Paul in Acts outnumber those to Peter by a factor of about three to one.

Why was Paul often just 'this man' or 'a man'?

The Jews who opposed him and the Romans who judged him often referred to Paul as 'this man' ([Acts 21:28](#), [23:27](#), [30](#), [24:5](#), [26:31](#), etc.) rather than honor him by using his name. In addition, Paul referred to himself simply as 'a man in Christ' rather than by using the normal first person pronoun 'I' when he spoke about his experience of being caught up to the third heaven ([2 Cor. 12:2-4](#)). This shows Paul's great humility before God.

Why did Paul sometimes seem to boast about himself?

Paul was forced to defend the ministry God had given him, in a way that sounded like boasting ([2 Cor. 11:16-12:6](#)). Yet, it was not worldly boasting. Likewise, calling himself the Lord's prisoner ([Eph. 3:1](#), [4:1](#), [2 Tim. 1:8](#), [Philem. 1,9](#)) or an ambassador in chains ([Eph. 6:20](#)) would not have impressed worldly people.

Why do many think of the the New Testament Joseph first?

The Christmas story in Matthew chapters one and two is better known than the much longer story of the other Joseph in [Genesis chapters 37-50](#). This is despite the fact that Jesus' legal father is only mentioned directly 19 times and is ranked #145.

Why did Joseph's brothers hate him?

It was because of the favoritism that Jacob (#6) showed toward Joseph ([Gen. 37:4](#)) and because of Joseph dreams ([Gen. 37:8, 19](#)). Beyond these superficial reasons, however, God used it all for good ([Gen. 50:20](#)). (Cf. Mark 15:10 and Acts 2:23.)

Why did Joseph conceal his identity from his brothers?

Aside from beloved Benjamin (#50), Joseph's brothers all needed to repent. So Joseph did not reveal himself to them immediately when they first came down to Egypt ([Gen. 42:7](#)). So they only knew him as 'the man' ([Gen. 42:30, 33, 43:3, etc](#)). Joseph could have forced them to submit to him by revealing his identity, but forced submission is not true repentance.

Why is the story of the Joseph a great blessing?

One of the big reasons is because it has a happy ending. The story is also a great blessing because of the many similarities between the rejection and triumph of Joseph in Genesis and the rejection and triumph of the Lord Jesus in the Gospels.

Why did Stephen speak about Joseph?

Stephen focused on Israel's long history of rebellion against the Lord. The rejection of Moses ([Acts 7:25-28, 35](#)) and Jesus, the Just One ([Acts 7:51-52](#)), are stressed, but the earlier rejection of Joseph was also part of Stephen's message ([Acts 7:9](#)).

Why do some object to comparing Joseph and Jesus?

Some claim that each similarity must be confirmed in a specific New Testament verse, but Stephen's sermon *as a whole* makes the connection. God wants us to read the entire Bible and think like Stephen did, rather than search for a few proof texts.

Why did Moses need Joshua's help?

Joshua's ministry and assistance were for Moses and Israel like Timothy's help was for the Apostle Paul (#10) and the early church. Joshua is first seen leading the fight against Amalek in [Ex. 17:9-14](#) and is soon after called Moses' assistant ([Ex. 24:13](#)). Later he was accepted as Moses' successor ([Josh. 3:7, 4:14](#)).

Why did Joshua and Caleb bring back a good report?

These two men were the only spies in [Numbers chapters 13 and 14](#) who brought back a good report. Their positive report was an indication of their faith and their focus on the Lord rather than on themselves or the strength of the enemy ([Num. 14:6-9](#)). Because of their faith, they were allowed to enter the promised land ([Num. 14:30](#)), unlike the other spies.

Why is Joshua not included in Hebrews chapter 11?

The walls of Jericho fell because of the people's faith as they encircled the city for seven days ([Heb. 11:30](#)). It was not just the faith of their leader. Rahab is a better example of personal faith at Jericho. So she is included instead of Joshua ([Heb. 11:31](#)). He is mentioned earlier, in [Heb. 4:8](#), however.

Why was Joshua unable to bring true rest?

Joshua led the people to victory in various battles in the book that bears his name, but victory over the Canaanites did not bring true rest ([Heb. 4:8](#)). Physical deliverance from one's enemies has never been enough. Only God in Christ and our great High Priest is able to bring true rest ([Heb. 4:9-16](#)).

Why is almost nothing reported about Joshua's personal life?

Only in [Josh. 24:15](#), near the end of his life, does Moses' successor say anything about his house or family. He simply said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua apparently was married and had children, but we know nothing about them. Because of this, Joshua himself and his leadership in the nation stand out more. He was courageous ([Josh. 1:6](#)).

Why is Peter important?

He is mentioned more than any other man in the New Testament, other than the Lord Jesus (#1) and Paul (#10). Though Peter denied the Lord, he was restored and made the leader of the early church ([John 21:15-17](#), [Acts 1:15](#)). His sermon on the Day of Pentecost ([Acts 2:14-41](#)) and interaction with Cornelius ([Acts 10:1-48](#)) were especially important.

Why is Peter in John's Gospels more than in the others?

The count for Peter in John is between 21% and 33% higher than in the other Gospels. The main reasons for the higher count in John are chapters 13 and 21. Jesus washed Peter's feet ([John 13:1-9](#)) and predicted his denials ([John 13:36-38](#)) and in the final chapter questioned, restored, and recommissioned him ([John 21:15-22](#)). The footwashing account and the restoration passage are not found in the other Gospels, though Peter's denials are prominent in all Four.

Why are Peter's denials stressed?

It is probably because Peter's denials and his attempt to defend the Lord with a sword show that even the best *fleshly* efforts by a believer to live for the Lord are doomed to fail. So Peter failed in order to show us that we will fail as well, if we try to serve the Lord Jesus without relying on Him. Without Him we can do nothing ([John 15:1-5](#)). Through Peter and John, we see that repentance, confession, and cleansing are needed and possible ([John 13:1-9](#), [21:15-17](#), 1 [John 1:9](#)).

Why was the Mount of Transfiguration important to Peter?

It was important to Peter because he saw the power of the Lord Jesus and heard the voice of God the Father from heaven ([2 Pet. 1:16-18](#)). Nevertheless, Peter urged believers to trust in and heed the written Word of God ([2 Pet. 1:19-21](#)). In line with this, he strengthened the brethren ([Lk. 22:32](#)) through his two inspired Letters as well as through his preaching. In his first Letter, he explained Christian suffering, and, in his second Letter, he defended the faith against false teachers.

Why does Isaac outrank Ishmael?

God chose Isaac (#14), the son of Abraham and Sarah, rather than Ishmael (#74), the son of Abram and Hagar. So Ishmael and Hagar were sent away ([Gen. 21:1-13](#)). Moreover, like the new birth, Isaac's birth was miraculous ([Heb. 11:11-12](#)); Ishmael's was not ([Gal. 4:28-31](#)).

Why did God tell Abraham to sacrifice Isaac?

It was a test of Abraham's love ([Gen. 22:1-19](#)) and faith ([Heb. 11:17-19](#)). Moreover, it is a picture of resurrection and God giving His beloved Son for us ([John 3:16](#), [Gen. 22:12, 16](#)).

Why were wells important to Isaac?

Water was scarce. So there was much strife over water rights ([Gen. 26:17-22](#)). To avoid fighting, however, Isaac moved, and the Lord blessed him. He is rightly criticized for lying in [Gen. 26:6-11](#), but as a whole chapter 26 shows that he was blessed of the Lord including with good wells ([Gen. 26:12-14, 32](#)).

Why did Isaac favor Esau over Jacob?

It was because of Isaac's love for open land and wild game ([Gen. 27:4, 27-28](#)). This was natural rather than spiritual. The same can be said about Rebekah's favoritism toward Jacob as well. Neither Isaac or Rebekah seemed very spiritually minded in Genesis chapter 27, in contrast to earlier ([Gen. 24:63, 25:21](#)).

Why did Isaac bless Jacob instead of Esau?

The obvious answer is that Isaac was tricked into doing so by Jacob. Certainly, that is how Isaac and Esau (#25) viewed it ([Gen. 27:35-36](#)). For some reason, neither Isaac or Esau blamed Rebekah, like the written record seems to do ([Gen. 27:5-17](#)).

Why did Rebekah believe she needed to deceive Isaac?

From the beginning, God said that the older, Esau, would serve the younger, Jacob, ([Gen. 25:23](#)), but in chapter 27 nothing is ever said about this. Perhaps Isaac's family had been so full of competition for years that God's plan was largely forgotten.

Why was evil King Ahab important?

Ahab along with his wife, Jezebel (#113), were the greatest internal threat that God's people ever faced. They sought to turn the nation from the Lord through the worship of Baal (1 Kgs. 16:31). They did this first in the northern kingdom where Ahab reigned (1 Kgs. 16:32), but later Ahab and Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah, married the king of Judah (2 Kgs. 8:16-18, 2 Chr. 21:6) and promoted idolatry in the southern kingdom. Because of the greatness of the threat that came through Ahab, he is mentioned more than any post-Solomon king in the north or the south, even outranking good King Hezekiah (#17).

Why does Ahab outrank Elijah who opposed him?

Ahab is first mentioned in 1 Kgs. 16:28, and Elijah (#27) first appears in 1 Kgs. 17:1, but Elijah outlived Ahab and is found in the New Testament while Ahab is not. Why then is Ahab ranked higher on the list?

One reason is because God also used other prophets to confront the sinful king. Elijah confronted him for killing Naboth (1 Kgs. 21:17-29), but an unnamed son of the prophets rebuked him for letting Ben-Hadad escape (1 Kgs. 20:35-43), and Micaiah prophesied Ahab's death (1 Kgs. 22:1-28). Another reason is because Ahab (2 Chr. 18:1-3) and his house (2 Chr. 21:6,13, 22:3, etc.) are spoken against in Second Chronicles several times, but Elijah only appears once (2 Chr. 21:12).

Why did God allow Ahab and Jezebel to do so much evil?

This is like asking why God allowed King Saul (#4) to persecute David (#2) for so many years. In Saul's case, it shows how desperately the nation needed a better king. In Ahab's case, it shows how desperately the northern kingdom needed to return to the Lord. In line with these points, the Bible as a whole and the world throughout the ages show that we desperately need the King of kings and the Lord of lords. The Antichrist (#55) who will be even worse than Ahab will show this as well.

Why is Samuel mentioned far more than Gideon?

Both Samuel and Gideon (#48) were judges, but the count for Samuel is much higher for three reasons. First, Samuel's birth and childhood are covered in [First Samuel chapters one through three](#), but we know nothing about Gideon as a child. Second, Samuel interacted with both Saul (#4) and David (#2) and ministered during a time of great change. Third, Samuel was a prophet and a priest as well as a judge ([1 Sam. 3:19-20](#)).

Why are Samuel's birth and some of his childhood included?

The Lord used Samuel to bring great change, by replacing Eli and his sons. So the interaction between godly Hannah, Samuel's mother, and Eli, the failed priest, are revealed ([1 Sam. 1:12-18](#)). God's message to Eli through young Samuel ([1 Sam. 3:1-18](#)) also points to this change. Samuel was asked of God, given to God, and used by God to lead godly change.

Why did Samuel go along with the people's request for a king?

There is a simple answer; the Lord told Samuel to do so, despite the request being a rejection of God ([1 Sam. 8:5-8, 22, 9:15-16](#)). The people were forewarned of the negative consequences ([1 Sam. 8:10-18](#)), but the big question is why the Lord Himself granted the request. God's long-term plan was to show, through Saul, the line of David, and eventually the future Antichrist (#55) that the nation and the world needs the Lord Jesus (#1) to rule as the true King of kings ([Rev. 17:14, 19:16](#)).

Why is Samuel often overlooked compared to other heroes?

The life of Samuel was less spectacular. First, he did not lead an army like Gideon (#48), though the army depended upon Samuel as God's priest ([1 Sam. 13:8-13](#)). Second, he did not perform many miracles like Elisha (#24), though there is one miracle reported in [1 Sam. 12:16-18](#). Third, he did not kill a giant in combat like David did, though he executed Agag the king of Amalek ([1 Sam. 15:33](#)). Samuel is a genuine hero of faith and is upheld as such in [Heb. 11:32](#), but he is often overlooked because there is too much focus on the spectacular.

Why is the count for Hezekiah amazingly high?

One obvious reason is because there are *three* accounts of key aspects of Hezekiah's reign. These are in [Second Kings chapters 18 through 20](#), [Second Chronicles chapters 29 through 32](#), and [Isaiah chapters 36 through 39](#). Hezekiah would still be high on the list at #24, however, even if he were never mentioned in Isaiah. So there are other reasons why his count is so high.

What aspects of the life of Hezekiah are stressed?

The miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrians is reported in [2 Kgs. 18:13–19:37](#), [2 Chr. 32:1–23](#), and [Isa. 36:1–37:38](#). In this, answered prayer is described at great length in the Second Kings and Isaiah passages, but there are far fewer verses (only 23) about the same in Second Chronicles.

The emphasis in Chronicles is on Hezekiah's reforms and zeal for the Passover, which mostly go unmentioned in Second Kings. (Contrast the length of [2 Chr. 29:2–31:21](#) with the amazing brevity of [2 Kgs. 18:3–6](#).) So another reason why Hezekiah is prominent on the top 55 list is because of his zeal for the Lord. King Josiah's (#30) keeping the Passover is also stressed in Second Chronicles. (See [2 Chr. 35:1–19](#).)

Why is there so much emphasis on the Passover?

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread had not been kept properly for a long time ([2 Chr. 30:5, 21](#)). As a result, biblical teaching ([30:22](#)), offerings ([30:24](#)), sanctification ([29:34, 30:18, 24](#)), rejoicing in the Lord for salvation ([30:21, 25–26](#)), and prayer ([30:27](#)) had all been neglected as well. Moreover, these feasts helped restore true unity to the nation ([30:1](#)).

How and why did Hezekiah fail in the end?

He should not have shown his riches to the envoys from Babylon. This was done in ignorance, because he did not realize that Babylon would become a great power ([Isa. 39:3](#)), but his pride was involved as well ([2 Chr. 32:31](#)). Many kings failed at the end, and each time this shows the need for the Messiah (#1).

Why did David choose Joab as his general?

Joab was strong and able in various ways, but it was probably also important that he was the son of David's sister, Zeruiah (2 Sam. 2:13, 18). The fact that Joab was younger than David may have been a factor as well. None of David's older brothers got the job (1 Chr. 27:18). King Saul also appointed a close relative, Abner, to be the head of his army. It was safer that way.

Why is Joab mentioned far more than Abner?

Both Joab (#18) and Abner (#42) were military commanders, but the count for Joab is much higher because he served under David (#2) rather than under Saul (#4). Abner may have been a better person than Joab, however, and that may be another reason he is not mentioned as much.

Why did Joab kill Abner?

It was a revenge killing, because Abner had killed Asahel, Joab's younger brother. The first killing was in battle and time of war (2 Sam. 2:22-23), but the second one by Joab was not (2 Sam. 3:27-30). David, of course, did not approve Joab's murderous act and later commanded Solomon to execute Joab (1 Kgs. 2:5). David's general also selfishly killed Amasa because he viewed him as a rival (2 Sam. 20:10).

Why did Joab side with Adonijah rather than Solomon?

Probably Joab believed that he could control Adonijah, since Solomon's older brother was not David's choice (2 Sam. 12:24-25, 1 Kgs. 1:17). Undoubtedly Joab feared what David would command Solomon to do to him (1 Kgs. 2:5-6, 28-35).

Why is Joab somewhat difficult to understand?

Sometimes Joab rightly opposed David. For instance, it was wise of Joab to kill Absalom rather than let him live as David had commanded (2 Sam. 18:9-15). More importantly, it was wise and biblical for Joab to oppose David's census of military aged men (2 Sam. 24:1-25). God himself opposed the census!

Why does Jeremiah outrank Isaiah and Daniel?

The Book of Jeremiah is full of personal information, but Isaiah (#51) is not. The first six chapters of Daniel (#35) are quite personal, but Daniel is much shorter than Jeremiah. So Jeremiah is mentioned by name in his Book about 35% more than Daniel is named in the Book that bares his name.

Why is Daniel much more popular than Jeremiah?

There are several reasons, but one of the main one is because there are more positive stories in Daniel. A case in point is Daniel's deliverance from the lions in Daniel chapter six. The somewhat similar deliverance of Jeremiah from the dungeon in [Jer. 38:1-13](#) does not seem quite as miraculous.

Why was Jeremiah so negative and gloomy?

It could have been his personality, since he seems negative from the beginning ([Jer. 1:6](#)). Jeremiah faced powerful opposition and constant rejection ([Jer. 1:17-19](#)), however. Even those who should have been on the prophet's side opposed him ([Jer. 11:18-23](#), [12:6-7](#)). No wonder he wept ([Jer. 9:1-2](#)) and wished that he had never been born ([Jer. 15:10](#), [20:14-18](#)).

The chief cause of Jeremiah's gloom, however, was his love for God's people and nation. It pained him to speak against them, and it pained him even more to see Jerusalem destroyed. Therefore he mourned for the city in [Lamentations](#) chapter one before voicing his personal anguish in chapter three.

Why was Jeremiah hopeful?

The false hopes of Hananiah, King Zedekiah (#34), and many others all failed ([Jer. 28:1-29:32](#), [39:4-7](#), [44:1-14](#)), but Jeremiah was protected by the Lord and set free by Nebuchadnezzar ([Jer. 39:11-12](#)). The lives of Baruch and Ebed-Melech, Jeremiah's helpers, were spared as well ([Jer. 39:15-18](#), [45:1-5](#)). Despite his many down times, Jeremiah survived by clinging to the Lord's promise ([Jer. 1:18-19](#), [15:20-21](#), [Psa. 119:43-49](#)). The prophet also spoke of hope for Israel in chapters 30-33 and 50-51.

Why is Ahasuerus called Xerxes in some translations?

We know from history that King Ahasuerus was the great Persian king, Xerxes. So some translations use the name which is common in secular texts.

Why did Ahasuerus put away Queen Vashti?

It was because she refused to appear before the king ([Est. 1:10-12](#)), but we do not know why she refused to come. We do know, however, that this made room for Esther. When events are not explained in Esther, we can see the unseen hand of God.

Why did Esther hide her Jewish heritage from the king?

Because of enemies like Haman (#54), it was wise to do so. It was not deception, however, since she did not lie about her identity. She simply did not talk about it ([Est. 2:10](#)). It was much like the Lord not revealing Himself directly in the Book.

Why is Ahasuerus mentioned more than Esther?

Esther (#42) is the heroine. Yet Ahasuerus (#20), is mentioned many more times. This seems strange until one notices that the name Ahasuerus only appears about half as often as Esther's name. Usually he is referred to impersonally as 'the king.'

Why is 'the king' important in Esther?

The book shows that the king was not really in charge; God was. Though the king was feared by those around him, he often did not seem to know what to do ([Est. 1:13-2:4](#)). At the end, Mordecai the Jew (#46) had great authority ([Est. 10:1-3](#)).

Why was the king unable to sleep?

The story's turning point is in [Est. 6:1-3](#) when the king was unable to sleep. No natural explanation for the insomnia is revealed. So readers are left to conclude that the king's sleep (as well as his heart) was in the Lord's hand ([Pro. 21:1](#)).

Why did the king misunderstand Haman (#54)? ([Est. 7:8](#))

Because of the setting and the king's quick temper, he wrongly assumed that Haman was trying to rape Esther, rather than begging for his life. This error guaranteed Haman's execution.

Why were there so many plagues?

Each of the ten plague was against one or more false god(s), and there were many of them in Egypt. For instance, the ninth plague of darkness ([Ex. 10:21-26](#)) was against the sun god, Ra. The final plague, the death of the firstborn, was against Pharaoh since he also was worshipped as a god.

Why did the Lord harden Pharaoh's heart?

The record shows that Pharaoh hardened his own heart first ([Ex. 8:15, 32](#)), after which the Lord did so ([Ex. 9:12](#)). This is the same order as seen in [Rom. 1:28](#). The hardening was done so that the Lord might display his great power through additional signs and wonders ([Ex. 10:1](#), [Psa. 106:7, 22](#)).

Why is the Pharaoh of the Exodus controversial?

Aside from the dispute about his identity, which is discussed in the next question, Calvinist and non-Calvinists argue about the implications of Paul's reference to Pharaoh in [Rom. 9:16-18](#). He is only mentioned once in the New Testament, but the debate about that one occurrence, which is based on [Ex. 9:16](#), is intense.

Who was the Pharaoh of the Exodus?

We do not know, and it is impossible to determine with certainty. Many liberal scholars believe that he was Ramses, but most conservative scholars believe he was an earlier Pharaoh, perhaps Neferhotep I. Various things known about the life of Neferhotep I and his successor fit well with the account in [Exodus chapters four through 15](#). (See [GotQuestions.org](#). "Who was the Pharaoh of the Exodus?")

Is the Pharaoh of the Exodus the most evil man on the list?

Maybe he is ([Ex. 7:13](#), [Rom. 9:17-18](#)), but there is strong competition from King Ahab (#15), the chief priests who opposed Jesus (#31), Haman (#54), and the Antichrist (#55). Regarding authority, the future Antichrist will have more power than any of the others had. Thus the Beast is the worst evildoer on the list, but the Pharaoh of the Exodus may be a close second.

Why did Luke write so much about John's birth?

Luke chapter one connects Mary (#52) with Elizabeth (#229) and John (#22) with Jesus (#1), because they were all part of God's great plan of salvation. The joy which comes with the salvation of the lost is stressed in Lk. 15:6, 9, 24, 32, and 19:10. So the joy associate with John's part in God's plan was naturally stressed earlier as well (Lk. 1:14, 41-44, 58, 76-77).

Why is John closely associated with Elijah?

Another reason why there is much about John's birth in Luke is because it closely connects the Old and New Testaments. John came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Lk. 1:17) as prophesied in Mal. 4:5-6 and in answer to Zacharias' prayer (Lk. 1:13). (Also see Mat. 11:14, 17:12, and Mk. 9:13.)

Why did John's father question the angel's message?

Zacharias' sceptical question (Lk. 1:18) shows that he doubted that he and Elizabeth, his barren wife, could have a son. Moreover, his question along with the angel's citations from Malachi seem to show that John's father prayed for Malachi's prophecy to be fulfilled, rather than for a son as many assume.

Why did the Lord Jesus approve John's question?

John confidently declared that Jesus was the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36) but later sent two disciples to ask Jesus if he was the Messiah (Mat. 11:2-14, Lk. 7:17-28). Rather than criticizing John for asking, the Lord cited messianic evidence. John's question was allowed because, unlike Zacharias, he was not demanding or focused on himself. As with Gideon (#48), it was better to seek assurance than to continue to doubt.

Why is John the Baptist often mentioned in Acts?

John primarily appears in the early chapters of the Gospels, but he is also mentioned in Acts 1:5, 1:21-22, 10:36-37, 13:23-25, 18:25-26, and 19:3-5 long after his death (Mk. 6:17-29). This is because it is important to understand God's plan as a whole, including the transition from John to Jesus (Lk. 16:16-17, 24:27).

Why was Absalom hungry for power?

The nature of his family was a key factor. Since David had many wives and sons (2 Sam. 5:13), power struggles came naturally. Moreover, Absalom's mother was the daughter of the king of Geshur, a pagan kingdom east of the Sea of Galilee. Absalom probably did not worship idols (2 Sam. 15:7-8), but his real god was apparently himself (2 Sam. 18:18).

Why did Absalom lack or lose respect for his father?

After David's sin with Bathsheba, problems in the royal family became more apparent, and took a painful turn for Absalom when his sister was raped by Amnon, David's eldest son (2 Sam. 13:1-32). David was angry (2 Sam. 13:21) but did not deal with Amnon. So two years later, Absalom killed his half brother and fled to Geshur (2 Sam. 13:23-37).

Why was Absalom's power grab unsuccessful?

After returning from Geshur and being restored as a royal son, Absalom prepared his revolt like a skillful politician (2 Sam. 15:1-12), but his takeover attempt failed. The basic reason things turned out badly for Absalom was because God intervened on David's behalf (2 Sam. 17:1-14, Psalm 3). David's friend, Hushai, played a key role in this (2 Sam. 15:32-37, 16:15-19, 17:5-16).

Why did Absalom follow Hushai's advice?

Ahithophel wisely advised Absalom to strike David quickly (2 Sam. 17:1-4), but the would-be king and those with him chose to follow Hushai's advice to gather a great army before attacking (2 Sam. 17:7-14). The only stated reason for the bad decision was because the Lord worked against Ahithophel (2 Sam. 17:14).

Why did David order his men to deal gently with Absalom?

The king commanded them to spare Absalom so that he himself would be spared the pain of another son's death (2 Sam. 18:5, 33). This was part of the disastrous pattern in David's life of not dealing strictly with his sons (2 Sam. 13:21, 1 Kgs. 1:6). Joab (#18) nevertheless killed the rebel (Deut. 21:18-21).

Why is Elisha mentioned more than Elijah?

The simple reason is because Elisha performed twice as many miracles, having received a double portion of Elijah's spirit (2 Kgs. 2:9-11, 14-15). Elijah (#27) demonstrated that the Lord is God (1 Kgs. 18:39). Elisha did so as well (2 Kgs. 5:15), but he interacted with many more needy people than his predecessor.

Why did Elisha help the wealthy woman of Shunem?

She did not seem needy, since she and her wealthy husband helped Elisha with his needs (2 Kgs. 4:8-10). Yet, they were old and had no children. So the Lord gave them a son (2 Kgs. 4:11-17). Her greatest need came several years later when her son suddenly died, but the Lord used Elisha to raise him from the dead (2 Kgs. 4:25-37). Later there was a great famine, but again the Lord helped her (2 Kgs. 8:1-6). Even the wealthy have needs, and even the wealthy need to be saved (Lk. 16:19-31).

Why do many Christians love the story of Naaman?

It has a happy ending (*except for Gehazi*) and is a great story to use in evangelism. Naaman's healing was much like our salvation. Although he was a great man, he could not heal himself (2 Kgs. 5:1), but in the end he humbled himself, received God's word, and was healed (2 Kgs. 5:13-14).

Why did Elisha help Israel fight against its enemies?

After the worst king in Israel's history, idoltrous King Ahab (#15), was removed at the end of First Kings, the Lord helped Israel several times against various foreign enemies through Elisha. The God of Israel was glorified through these victories (2 Kgs. 3:5-24, 6:8-23, 7:6-7, 13:14-25).

Why was there no successor for Elisha?

Elisha took Elijah's place (1 Kgs. 19:16), but no one succeeded Elisha. Was that because Elisha's servant, Gehazi, sinned (2 Kgs. 5:20-27)? No, it was because the end of the sinful northern kingdom came (2 Kgs. 17:5-6) a few chapters after Elisha's death (2 Kgs. 13:20), because God's had withdrawn his help.

*(tie)***Why is there so much in the Bible about Esau?**

Esau was Jacob's (#6) twin brother, and from the beginning there was competition between them ([Gen. 25:21-28](#)) which continued for years ([Gen. 25:29-34, 27:1-45](#)). In the end, they were reconciled, however ([Gen. 32:1-21, 33:1-20, 35:29](#)). (The descendents of Esau are described in detail in [Gen. 36:1-43](#).)

Why did Esau and Jacob look so different?

It is rare for twins who have the same biological mother and father to look very different. Yet, that was the case with Jacob and Esau ([Gen. 25:25-26](#)). The difference was possible because of Isaac (#14) and Rebekah's (#63) DNA. Yet, it was still surprising that Esau was so red and hairy. The differences between the two brothers are stressed from the beginning ([Gen. 25:27](#)).

Why did Jacob grasp Esau's heel?

Holding Esau's heel at birth seemed as unusual as Esau's hairy appearance. It was also considered prophetic ([Gen. 25:23, 26](#)). Jacob, the heel grabber, continued to grasp for advantage over others most of his life. The Lord did not choose and bless Israel because Jacob was a wonderful person ([Deut. 7:6-8](#)).

Why did Israel avoid conflict with Esau's descendants?

When Jacob's descendants came out of Egypt, they avoided the land of the Edomites ([Num. 20:14-21, 21:4](#)), because God had given it to Esau ([Deut. 2:5](#)). Much later, however, in David's day, Edom were brought into subjection ([2 Sam. 8:14](#)) as predicted by Balaam (#42) in [Num. 24:18](#). (Also see the book of [Obadiah](#).)

Why did God reject Esau?

Esau's rejection was God's decision ([Rom. 9:10-13](#)), but [Heb. 12:16-17](#) may imply that divine foreknowledge was involved. (Cf. [Mal. 1:2-3](#).) Esau was a profane person who sold his birthright for a bowl of red soup ([Gen. 25:29-34](#)). Later he was unable to get his birthright back ([Gen. 27:30-40, Heb. 12:17](#)). Esau was blessed ([Heb. 11:20](#)), but he missed out on much. Likewise, those who hear the gospel are blessed, but apostates are losers.

(tie) **Why is Jonathan (a non-king) ranked so high?**

The main reason is Jonathan's friendship and covenant with David (#2), as seen in [First Samuel chapter 20](#), one of two chapters in which he is mentioned often. The other high frequency chapter is [chapter 14](#) in which Jonathan is introduced as a courageous man of faith, long before David appeared.

Why did Jonathan become David's friend?

There is a close connection between the story of David and Goliath in [First Samuel chapter 17](#) and [1 Sam. 18:1](#) in which Jonathan's love for David is revealed. Jonathan respected David for facing Goliath.

Why did Jonathan himself not fight Goliath?

Chapter 17 is focused on David. So it does not say why. It may have been because Saul did not allow Jonathan to risk his life. Chapter 14 shows that Jonathan was not a coward.

Why was Jonathan angry at his father?

In a fit of anger, Saul threw a javelin at Jonathan because his son had accepted David ([1 Sam. 20:30-33](#)). Jonathan was angry at Saul as well, but he controlled himself and withdrew and grieved over his father's conduct ([1 Sam. 20:34](#)). Thus Jonathan's anger was righteous indignation.

How did Jonathan remain loyal to both Saul and David?

Jonathan was caught between his father and David, but he was loyal to his father and the nation by continuing to fight the Philistines, finally dying with Saul in battle ([1 Sam. 31:1-2](#), [2 Sam. 1:17-27](#).) He was loyal to David by making ([1 Sam. 20:35-42](#)), reaffirming ([1 Sam. 23:14-18](#)), and honoring a covenant.

Why is Jonathan often mentioned in Second Samuel?

He died in [1 Sam. 31:2](#) but is mentioned 18 times in Second Samuel. Several references are in David's lament for his friend ([2 Sam. 1:17-25](#)), and a few concern Jonathan's burial ([2 Sam. 21:12-14](#)). Most references, however, are about kindness shown to Jonathan's lame son, Mephibosheth ([2 Sam. 4:4](#), [9:3-7](#), [21:7](#)).

Why is Elijah well known?

The main reason may be because of the contest between the Lord and Baal in [1 Kgs. 18:20-40](#), a fitting setting for Elijah since his name means “my God is the Lord.” God’s prophet is mentioned 22 times in that one chapter, more than in any other. The setting for the contest was established through Elijah’s interaction with King Ahab (#15) in the first part of the chapter.

Why was Elijah discouraged?

Though the Lord revealed himself and gave a great victory over the prophets of Baal, Elijah was discouraged because Jezebel continued to rule and threaten. The story of his discouragement, flight, and recovery are in [First Kings chapter 19](#).

Why was Elijah still needed after Ahab died?

Baal worship continued. So Elijah is prominent again in [Second Kings chapter one](#), a chapter in which he is mentioned 16 times. He opposed Ahab’s idolatrous son and successor, Ahaziah. Elijah is called “man of God” five times in the chapter ([2 Kgs. 1:9-13](#)).

Why did Elijah need a successor?

The Lord gave the discouraged prophet a helper and successor ([1 Kgs. 19:15-21](#)), Elisha (#24), to continue the fight against Jezebel and idolatry. The two prophets are often mentioned together in [Second Kings chapter two](#).

Why was Elijah taken to heaven without dying? ([2 Kgs. 2:11](#))

We do not know why, but perhaps it was for the same reason that Enoch was taken directly to heaven (Gen. 5:23, Heb. 11:5). Enoch pleased God by living by faith. That was true of Elijah as well and may be why he did not die.

Why did Elijah appear on the Mount of Transfiguration?

Moses and Elijah ([Mat. 17:3-5](#)) represented the great men of God in the Old Testament, and their appearance with Jesus demonstrated the unity of the Two Testaments. However, the Voice from heaven declared Jesus’ superiority over both men.

Why does Ezekiel outrank Daniel?

Ezekiel outranks Daniel (#35), despite Daniel being much more popular, because the Lord showed Ezekiel more details about the future millennial kingdom. The millennial temple, for instance, is described in detail in [Ezekiel chapters 40 through 43](#). There is nothing like this in Daniel. So Ezekiel is much longer.

Why does Ezekiel outrank Isaiah?

The main reason is that Isaiah (#51) wrote very little about himself. The Lord usually spoke directly to Isaiah's audience. In Ezekiel, however, God gave 'the son of man' (Ezekiel) visions and the prophet described what he was shown. In addition, the Lord often had Ezekiel act out aspects of the message, such as by remaining silent and not mourning when his wife died ([Eze. 3:23-27, 24:15-27](#)). So readers see Ezekiel more than they do Isaiah.

Why is Ezekiel difficult?

Ezekiel wrote about the glory of the Lord ([1:28, 3:12, 23, 10:4, 18, 11:23, 43:4-5, 44:4](#)) and the future millennial kingdom ([34:1-48:35](#)). These grand topics called for extraordinary expression which is difficult for mere mortals to understand. This is also seen in Revelation. Notice, for instance, that the four living creatures (angels) in [Eze. 1:4-28](#) are also mentioned in [Rev. 4:6-11, 7:11, and 19:4](#).

Why was Ezekiel almost always called 'son of man.'

He is only named twice ([Eze. 1:3, 24:24](#)). Both of these verses were addressed to the people. The Lord Himself always addressed the prophet as 'son of man.' Perhaps this was because Ezekiel was God's watchman ([3:17, 33:7](#)) and different from others ([3:5-7, 11:5](#)).

'Son of man' was not a glorious title, however, for being called 'son of man' was equivalent to being called 'son of Adam,' Adam having been formed from earthly dust. It is always God himself who is glorious in Ezekiel rather than the prophet.

Why did King Solomon choose and promote Jeroboam?

Solomon (#5) was always looking for good workers. So he promoted young and industrious Jeroboam to be over a large portion of his labor force (1 Kgs. 11:28). Jeroboam thereby gained a large circle of influence which he used later against the king's son, Rehoboam. God worked behind the scenes in all this.

Why did Jeroboam rebel against Solomon?

He opposed Solomon because God led him to do so (1 Kgs. 11:29-39), because of Solomon's idolatry (1 Kgs. 11:9-13). Though Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, the Lord did not allow the king to do so (1 Kgs. 11:40) because the king's sin was so great.

Why are Jeroboam and Absalom sometimes compared?

Both men rebelled against a king. Jeroboam opposed Solomon, and Absalom (#23) opposed David. In both cases, God allowed the rebel to arise because the king had sinned. The outcomes were very different, however. Absalom was killed, but Jeroboam became the first king of the northern kingdom. God showed greater grace toward David who repented than toward Solomon who apparently did not.

Why did Jeroboam foolishly set up idols?

He should have trusted the Lord to establish his kingdom, since the prophet Ahijah spoke to him about God doing so (1 Kgs. 11:37-38). But the new king instead erecting idols at Bethel and Dan in a politically motivated attempt to keep the people from going to Jerusalem to worship (1 Kgs. 12:26-31).

Why is Jeroboam mentioned far more than Rehoboam?

Solomon's son Rehoboam (#39) was also foolish, but he did not set up idols like Jeroboam did. The 'sins of Jeroboam' phrase which refers to promoting idol worship appears 14 times (1 Kgs. 14:16, 15:30, 16:31, 2 Kgs. 3:3, 10:29, 31, 13:2, 11, 14:24, 15:9, etc.). Other similar expressions appear in ten additional verses (1 Kgs. 13:34, 15:34, 16:2, 19, 26, 21:22, 22:52, 2 Kgs. 13:6, 17:21, 23:15). This (14+10=24) makes up most of the count difference.

How was Josiah unique?

Josiah's father and grandfather (Manasseh, #104) were wicked kings, but Josiah turned to the Lord with all his heart (2 Kgs. 23:25) including by celebrating the Passover more zealously than any other king of Judah (2 Chr. 35:18). He was Judah's last good king, and was mourned greatly by Jeremiah (#19) when he was killed (2 Chr. 35:20–25).

Why do some believe that Josiah disobeyed God?

Fighting against Necho, king of Egypt, obviously turned out badly for Josiah and for the nation (2 Chr. 35:20–36:4). He was killed and Judah was weakened. In addition, Necho claimed that God had commanded him to pass through Judah (2 Chr. 35:21), and surprisingly the next verse (2 Chr. 35:22) seems to say that the king of Egypt spoke for the Lord. It is not surprising that Josiah did not believe the pagan king of Egypt, however.

Why did Josiah fight against Necho?

Some suggest that he attacked the Egyptian army because he believed Necho would come back later to attack Judah along with the hated Assyrians. The Bible does not confirm or deny this theory. Rather, 2 Kgs. 23:26–27 seems to imply that it was God's plan for the last good king of Judah to be removed from Judah so that judgement might come upon the sinful nation. The sins of Manasseh still needed to be judged.

Why were Josiah's reforms inadequate?

The authors of Kings and Chronicles stress the good that King Josiah did (2 Kgs. 23:24–25, 2 Chr. 34:1–7) and how he and the people kept one particular Passover (2 Kgs. 23:21–23, 2 Chr. 35:18–19). Yet, the record does not show that the nation as a whole returning to God in a lasting way. So the judgment of Judah was not avoided. Likewise, there were high points in the ministries of Elijah (#27) and Elisha (#24), but the judgment of the northern kingdom still came. Something more and truly new was needed (Jer. 31:31–34, John 3:5–7).

Why are Annas and Caiaphas not named on the list?

The two main chief priests who fiercely opposed the Lord Jesus are not on the list individually because they are rarely mentioned as individuals or by name. (*Annas is only named four times, and Caiaphas is only named nine times.*) Yet, they are mentioned together as a small group of “chief priests” (which included a few others, Acts 4:6) about 60 times (Mat. 16:21, 20:18, 21:23, 26:3, 14, 47, 28:11, Mk. 14:1, 10, 43, Lk. 23:10, 13, 23, 24:20, Acts 4:23, etc).

Why are Annas and Caiaphas named more in John's Gospel?

They are mentioned by name by John in five verses (John 11:49, 18:13, 14, 24, 28) in contrast to only once in Luke (Lk. 3:2), and twice in Matthew (Mat. 26:3, 57). One reasons for this may be because the Apostle John knew Annas or Caiaphas personally (John 18:15-16). A second, more important reason is because John points out that Caiaphas, Annas' son-in-law, prophesied that it was expedient for one man (i.e. Jesus) to die for the nation (John 11:49-51, 18:14). This is not mentioned in the other Gospels. Nevertheless, like the other Gospel writers, John usually referred to the chief priests without naming them (John 7:32, 45, 11:47, 57, 12:10, 18:3, 35, 19:6, 15, 21).

Why are the Pharisees not on the list?

The Pharisees were a large religious party among the Jews in the New Testament and are mentioned as a collective about 90 times. So their high count would easily put them on the top 55 list, if the list were focused on groups as well as individuals. The chief priests are included despite being a group, because they were a small, tight-knit group and because not including Annas and Caiaphas in some way would be a great oversight.

It is important to remember that the chief priests were Sadducees rather than Pharisees. The Sadducees were the liberals of their day who did not believe in angels or resurrection (Acts 23:8). Their liberal party is only mentioned 14 times.

Why are there several Gentile rulers in the top 55?

Nebuchadnezzar (#9), Ahasuerus (#20), the Pharaoh of the Exodus (#21), the Pharaoh in Joseph's time (#32), Pilate (#41), and the Antichrist (#55) all interacted with the Jewish people in significant ways in the past, or will do so in the future. Much of the interaction was or will be negative, but Joseph's relationship with the Pharaoh in [Genesis chapters 41 through 50](#) was all positive and the opposite of Moses' negative interaction with the Pharaoh in Exodus chapters four through 15.

Why does the evil Pharaoh outrank the good one?

It is not unusual for evil people in the Bible to get more attention than those who are good. King Ahab (#15), for instance, outranks all of the other kings in the divided kingdom, including good King Hezekiah (#17). Moses and the Lord interacted more with the Pharaoh of the Exodus than Joseph did with the good one in Genesis. God manifested himself through both Pharaohs but in different ways ([Acts 7:10](#), Rom. 9:17).

Why did Pharaoh promote Joseph?

The simple answer is because Joseph (#11) was able to interpret Pharaoh's two dreams ([Gen. 41:1-32](#)), but there was more to it than that. Joseph became prime-minister of Egypt because he went on to tell Pharaoh and his staff what should be done in order to prepare for the seven years of famine ([Gen. 41:33-36](#)). Pharaoh and his advisors were impressed with Joseph's counsel ([Gen. 41:37](#)). Moreover it all happened because the Lord was at work ([Gen. 50:19-20](#), [Acts 7:10](#)).

Why did Pharaoh give Joseph an Egyptian name and wife?

It was undoubtedly primarily in order to protect and help Joseph ([Gen. 41:45](#)), who was a Hebrew rather than an Egyptian. It helped him do his work more effectively. The king of Egypt foresaw the problems which would likely arise, and Joseph himself knew about them as well from his own previous experience. Egypt was not a godly place, but God used Joseph.

Why did Eleazar become Aaron's successor?

Aaron's two oldest sons, Nadab and Abihu, were judged by the Lord because they offered 'strange fire' (Lev. 10:1-2). So Aaron's two remaining sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, became leading priests in their stead (Num. 3:4). Eleazar, the older of the two (Ex. 6:23), is mentioned far more and apparently became the high priest (Num. 4:16) rather than Ithamar, who was in charge of moving the tabernacle (Num. 7:8).

Why were priests important in the Old Testament?

The priests were important because the sacrifices were important. The focus was more often than not on the sacrifices rather than on the priests who made them, but together they pointed to the need for atonement and the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36). Moreover, it is not just a coincidence that in the New Testament John the Baptist (#22) who pointed to Jesus as God's Lamb came from a priestly family.

Why is Eleazar easily overlooked?

He usually does not stand out, because he appears with others (Num. 32:25-31, 34:16-29) rather than by himself. As Moses' successor, Joshua was the center of attention in Num. 27:18-23 rather than Eleazar, the presiding priest. Eleazar does not attract much attention in Num. 16:16-40 either, because he appears in the story *after* God's spectacular judgment of Korah and the other rebels.

Why is Eleazar's son well known?

Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, is mentioned less than 30 times, but he may be better known than his father because he turned back the wrath of God by killing an Israelite man and a Midianite woman (Num. 25:7-9). Though he was a priest, he is remembered for a zealous, one-time act with a javelin. Moreover, he was blessed by the Lord for that act (Num. 25:10-13).

Eleazar's work, however, was not dramatic. It was God Himself who judged Korah and those with him in a special way. Eleazar simply removed the censers from the flames and repurposed them into part of the brazen altar (Num. 16:36-40). Though far from spectacular, what Eleazar did was still important.

Why are Zedekiah and Jeremiah closely connected?

Jeremiah (#19) confronted the rebellious king. Ezekiel and Daniel did not. So there is far more about Zedekiah in Jeremiah than in any other Book.

Why was Zedekiah important?

He was the last king of Judah and the one who was primarily responsible for Nebuchadnezzar (#9) burning Jerusalem ([Eze. 19:14](#)). If Zedekiah had surrendered to the king of Babylon, the city and temple would not have been destroyed ([Jer. 38:17-18](#)).

Why was Zedekiah called a rebel?

According to [Eze. 17:12-16](#), he swore loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar (#9), but he forsook his oath. Because God's name was used in the oath, Zedekiah rebelled against the Lord as well as against the king of Babylon. In addition, The Lord often described Judah as an idolatrous and rebellious nation ([Eze. 2:3-8](#), [3:26-27](#), [20:8,13](#), [24:3](#), [44:6](#), etc.). Thus the nation and their king were both rebellious.

Why did Zedekiah dare to rebel?

Zedekiah hoped that Egypt would come to his aid against the Babylonians ([Eze. 17:7-16](#)). The Egyptians, in fact, did try to help the king of Judah, but they were unable to do so ([Jer. 37:5-7](#)).

Later, after Zedekiah was removed, the proud men who were left in Judah again foolishly looked to Egypt for help, rather than to the Lord ([Jer. 43:1-44:30](#)).

Why is Jeremiah chapter 38 especially important.

Zedekiah is mentioned more in [Jeremiah chapter 38](#) than in any other chapter because the king's fate was determined by how he responded to the prophet's final call for repentance. Even after it was clear that Egypt could not help, Zedekiah still refused to surrender ([Jer. 38:17-18](#)). He said that he was afraid of the Jews who had defected to the Babylonians ([Jer. 38:19](#)). This shows that the king trusted his own feelings and thoughts more than God's message through Jeremiah ([Pro. 3:5-7](#)).

Why is Daniel very well known?

He is well-known compared to Hezekiah (#17), Joab (#18), Absalom (#23), Jeroboam (#29), and several others despite not being mentioned nearly as often. One of the top reason for this is the beloved story of Daniel in the lion's den ([Dan. 6:1-28](#)). This wonderful story is much better known than a somewhat similar story in Jer. 38:1-13.

Why is King Zedekiah (#34) never mentioned in Daniel?

Daniel was in Babylon and served under the king of Babylon (and later the king of Persia) rather than under weak and soon-to-be-removed Jewish leaders like Zedekiah back in Jerusalem. Daniel was forward looking and wrote about rulers who were yet to come, including the still-distant-at-the-time Antichrist (#55). (See [Dan. 7:8, 11, 20-21, 24, 9:26-27, and 11:36](#).)

Why does Nebuchadnezzar (#11) vastly outrank Daniel?

Daniel, God's man in Babylon, is mentioned more than twice as often in the Book of Daniel than the king, but Nebuchadnezzar is ranked much higher overall because he is mentioned nearly 100 additional times in the Book of Jeremiah. Though Ezekiel who also was in Babylon mentioned Daniel three times ([Eze. 14:14, 20, 28:3](#)), Jeremiah never did.

Why is Daniel rarely mentioned in the New Testament?

It is because of the New Testament emphasis on the cross which led to Isaiah (#51) being cited often rather than Daniel, since the Messiah's death is mentioned far less in Daniel. The yet-future abomination of desolation ([Dan. 9:27, 11:31](#)) is mentioned in [Mat. 24:15](#) and [Mk. 13:14](#), however.

Why isn't Daniel included in Hebrews chapter 11?

He is not mentioned by name in the chapter, but he is probably mentioned indirectly as one who stopped the mouths of lions ([Heb. 11:33](#)). Samson (#57, Jud. 14:5-6) and David (#2, 1 Sam. 17:34-37) may be included in this as well. Without a doubt, Daniel was a heroic man of faith.

Why is Jehoshaphat considered a good king?

Jehoshaphat was not perfect (See the other questions below.), but in general he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord (1 Kgs. 22:43). He did not seek the Baals (2 Chr. 17:3), and he sent out Levites to teach the Law to the people (2 Chr. 17:7-9). Moreover, he destroyed many of the high places (2 Chr. 17:6) which had been used for idol worship, though according to 1 Kgs. 22:43 the people continued to use some of them.

Why did Jehoshaphat and Elisha rarely meet?

Though they lived during the same time period, they may have only met once. Elisha (#24) ministered in the northern kingdom (Israel), but Jehoshaphat was the king of Judah in the south.

The record show that they met when Elisha during a military campaign against Moab. Elisha was willing to help because he respected Jehoshaphat, and despite the fact that Ahab's wicked son, Jehoram, was also involved (2 Kgs. 3:11-14).

Why did Jehoshaphat ally himself with Ahab?

Jehoshaphat preferred to fight against Gentile enemies like Syria (1 Kgs. 22:1-4) and Moab (2 Kgs. 3:1-7) rather than against the northern kingdom of Israel. So he allied himself with Ahab (#15) and Ahab's family through marriage (2 Chr. 18:1). He also cooperated with Ahab's son(s) in building merchant ships (1 Kgs. 22:48-49, 2 Chr. 20:35-36).

Why did the Lord destroy Jehoshaphat's fleet?

The final thing that is reported about Jehoshaphat in Second Chronicles, aside from the king's death, is the fact that the Lord destroyed his fleet of merchant ships. Moreover this was done before they could be used to enrich the king (2 Chr. 20:36-37). How this happened is unknown, but the reason for it is crystal clear. The Lord was against Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab family. So rather than Jehoshaphat's works prospering, he suffered loss at the end. (Cf. 1 Cor. 3:12-15.)

Why was Sarah's name changed?

Her name was changed from Sarai to Sarah at the same time her husband's name was changed from Abram to Abraham ([Gen. 17:1-22](#)). These changes showed that the Lord had a far greater plan for them and their descendants than they realized.

Why does Sarah outrank Mary?

Sarah is the top ranked woman in the Old Testament, and Mary (#52) is the top ranked woman in the New Testament. Overall, Sarah comes out on top, because there is far more written about her in Genesis than there is about Mary in the Gospels. There is also much written about Sarah and her son, Isaac, in [Gal. 4:21-31](#).

Why is Sarah highly regarded in First Peter?

She is the model submissive wife in [1 Pet. 3:5-6](#). According to Peter, she submitted and obeyed Abraham by trusting in God, by doing good, and by not being afraid, as well as by calling Abraham lord. This shows that her inner thoughts were as important, or perhaps more important, than her spoken words.

Why did Sarah doubt and laugh?

The reason for Sarah's doubt is obvious; she was 89 or 90 years old when told that she would have a son, and her doubtful question in [Gen. 18:12](#) sounds much like that of John the Baptist's father in [Lk. 1:18](#). Thus Sarah is not always a role model. She should not have laughed when told about having a son ([Gen. 18:10-15](#)), and earlier she should not have given her maidservant to Abram as a second wife ([Gen. 16:1-16](#)).

Why is Sarah upheld as a woman of faith in Heb. 11:11-12?

Like John the Baptist's father (See [Lk. 1:67-79](#)), Sarah doubted at first but later believed. Therefore she is said to be a woman of faith in [Heb. 11:11-12](#). These verses imply that she believed before she conceived. (The same was true of Mary, as seen in [Lk. 1:38](#) and [1:45](#).)

Why did Job's three friends accuse him?

Although they showed sympathy by weeping with him and for him at first, after a week of remaining silent ([Job 2:11-13](#)), they began to speak and misspeak. Since they wrongly believed that God would never allow a just man to suffer so greatly, they repeatedly called upon Job to repent ([Job 4:1-7](#), [8:1-3](#), [11:1-5](#)). In the end, they themselves had to repent ([Job 42:7-8](#)).

Why are there so many questions in the Book of Job?

Questions are indispensable in debate, and Job is full of debate about why Job was suffering. Moreover, suffering itself causes people to ask hard questions as seen often in the Psalms and in Job [chapters seven and nine](#). In addition, near the end, the Lord Himself questioned Job in [chapters 38 through 41](#).

Why are there far more questions than answers?

One of the main purposes of the Book of Job seems to be to show that nobody, aside from God, has sure answers. Job himself affirms this in his great discourse on wisdom in [chapter 28](#) and through his silence at the end.

Why is the Book of Job so long?

One of the main reasons is because Job and his friends lived long before Moses and did not have the Scriptures. So they were unable to come to conclusions quickly. They had to rely on careful observations of society and creation and upon logic and what was known through tradition. This made the debate in the Book long and inconclusive, much like in secular social science discussions today.

Why is Job a model for believers today?

Though Job went too far in questioning God and was rebuked for doing so ([Job 38:2](#), [40:2](#)), he refused to curse God ([Job 2:9-10](#)), believed in the Redeemer ([Job 19:25-26](#)), humbled himself before God ([Job 40:3-5](#), [42:1-6](#)), and was commended for his correctness ([Job 42:7](#)) and perseverance ([Jam. 5:11](#)).

Why did Solomon's son reject the good advice of the elders?

Superficially it was because the arrogant young king preferred the advice of his young friends (1 Kgs. 12:13–14), but the greater reason was because the Lord's plan was for Israel to reject him as king and for the country to be divided (1 Kgs. 12:15).

The division was God's judgment because of Solomon's sin (1 Kgs. 11:1:1–13, 29–35), but there is no reason to think that Rehoboam was unfairly punished because of his father, since the arrogant, young king's personal failure is clearly displayed as well.

Why did Rehoboam make bronze shields?

Solomon (#5) had made hundreds of large decorative shields of gold (1 Kgs. 10:16), but because Rehoboam allowed idolaters and homosexuals to prosper in the land (1 Kgs. 14:22–24, 2 Chr. 12:1–5) the Lord allowed Shishak king of Egypt to take away the golden shields (1 Kgs. 14:25–26, 2 Chr. 12:9). Rehoboam therefore made many bronze shields so that he could pretend to be a powerful and wealthy king like his father had been.

Why did the Lord allow Rehoboam to continue to reign?

According to 2 Chr. 12:12, Rehoboam humbled himself before God when the king of Egypt attacked. So the Lord did not destroy him completely. There was also mercy shown for the sake of Jerusalem which the Lord had chosen (2 Chr. 12:13). In general, Rehoboam did not seek the Lord, however (2 Chr. 12:14). Perhaps this was in part due to the fact that his mother was an Ammonitess (1 Kgs. 14:21, 31, 2 Chr. 12:13).

Why is Rehoboam relatively little known?

The idolatry of Solomon and Jeroboam, the king of Israel, gets much more attention in First Kings chapters 11 through 14 than Rehoboam's failures as the king of Judah. Jeroboam (#29) is therefore ranked higher because of his better known and more influential sin. — Thankfully, the final thing written about Rehoboam is actually positive. He is included in the genealogy and legal line of the Messiah in Mat. 1:7.

Why is Laban on the top 55 list?

Like many others on the list, the reason Laban is included is not because he was a good person. He sounded like a believer when he first appeared as Rebekah's brother ([Gen. 24:50](#)), but he also sounded like a person with a keen eye for material things ([Gen. 24:29-31](#)). He is included on the list because of his family ties to Rebekah (#63), Leah (#68), and Rachel (#48) and his long, mostly negative interaction with Jacob (#6).

Why did Laban deceive Jacob?

Laban agreed to give Jacob his younger daughter, Rachel, in exchange for seven years of service ([Gen. 29:15-20](#)), but at the critical moment on the wedding night he deceptively gave Jacob his older daughter, Leah, instead. He claimed that he did it because of a cultural tradition that an older daughter should be married first ([Gen. 29:26-27](#)). His motive was probably selfish, however, since Jacob had to serve an additional seven years.

Why did God allow Laban to deceive Jacob?

This question is not directly answered in Scripture, but it is not reading between the lines to recall the fact that Jacob deceived his own father two chapters earlier. Perhaps there is a connection between the events in Genesis chapters 27 and 29.

Why did Rachel and Leah dislike their father?

When Jacob and his large family fled from Laban, his two daughters spoke against their father. In essence, they said that Laban loved money more than he loved them ([Gen. 31:14-16](#)). Laban's concern for his idol which Rachel had stolen seems to confirm their negative view of him ([Gen. 31:19, 30-35](#)).

Why does Laban disappear?

He returned to his own place ([Gen. 31:55](#)) which was not with Jacob and his family in the promised land. He is only mentioned three times after [Gen. 31:55](#) and always in past tense ([Gen. 32:4, 46:18, 25](#)). Even so, it is good that his sins are not mentioned repeatedly after his death like those of Jeroboam (#29).

Why are the chief priests (#31) mentioned more than Pilate?

Both Pilate and the chief priests were responsible for the Lord Jesus being crucified (Mk. 15:1, John 19:6), but the chief priests (and Judas) had the greater sin (John 19:11). This may be why the chief priests are mentioned more. It is interesting to note that Pilate is mentioned by name more, however.

Why did Pilate go along with the chief priests?

He did not want to do so, because he found no fault in Jesus (Lk. 23:4, 14, John 18:38, 19:4, 6). Therefore he tried to avoid personal responsibility (Mat. 27:19, 24–25, Acts 3:13), but he was unable to pacify the crowd (Mat. 27:24). In the end, Pilate was willing to give the crowd what they wanted (Mk. 15:15). The Jew's appeal to Pilate as a friend of Caesar may have played a key role (John 19:12).

Why is Pilate the only Roman on the list?

The basic reason is because the Old Testament is much longer than the New Testament. So there are relatively few New Testament people, Jews or Gentiles, on the list. Moreover Pilate is in all four Gospels as well as in Acts (Acts 3:13, 4:27, 13:28), but most other Romans are only found in Acts.

That said, in a way, there actually are two other Romans on the top 55 list. Though Paul (#10) was a Jew, he also had Roman citizenship, and the future Antichrist (#55) will rule over a revived Roman Empire (Dan. 2:43–45, 7:19–22).

Why is Pilate mentioned in 1 Tim. 6:13?

The testimony that the Lord Jesus gave before Pilate decades earlier, continued to bear fruit. So Paul reminded Timothy that Jesus did not hesitate to declare before Pilate that He was the King of the Jews, even though the Lord knew that his truthful confession would cost him his life. Moreover, Paul went on to add that the Lord Jesus is alive and will come again as King of kings and the Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:14–16). All this was to encourage Timothy (and us) to fight the good fight of faith.

*(tie)***Why did Saul choose Abner as his general?**

Abner was a strong leader (2 Sam. 2:23, 3:6), but another key factor was being Saul's cousin (1 Sam. 14:50). David also chose a close relative, Joab (#18), to be his general.

Why did Abner make Saul's son Ishbosheth king?

Abner somehow survived the battle with the Philistines in which Saul and three of Saul's sons, including Jonathan, died (1 Sam. 31:1-6). It does not say why Ishbosheth was chosen as Saul's successor, but as the leader of what was left of Saul's army it was only natural for Abner to choose one of Saul's surviving sons as the next king (2 Sam. 2:8-9). The spirit of rivalry against David and Judah that had infected Saul (#4) and other members of his house and tribe for years, was still at work to some extent, even though Saul was dead.

Why did Abner kill Joab's brother, Asahel?

For over two years there was war between the house of David and the house of Saul. After one of the many battles in that war, the fleet-footed younger brother of Joab, Asahel, chased after Abner and foolishly refused to turn aside from him despite Abner's warning (2 Sam. 2:19-23). Thus, Abner seemed to be unable to avoid killing Asahel.

Why did Abner turn against Ishbosheth?

Ishbosheth accused Abner of having an affair with one of Saul's concubines. The facts in the case are unclear, but the accusation angered Abner and led him to turn against the weak king that he has set up (2 Sam. 3:6-21). Another factor was the fact that the military power of the house of Saul had grown weaker and weaker over the previous two years (2 Sam. 3:1).

Why are there many quick glimpses of Abner?

Though never the main character, Abner appears fairly often. In many cases, the purpose seems to be to help show the kind of person David was. For instance, when Abner was murdered by Joab, David mourned (2 Sam. 3:28-39).

*(tie)***Why are Balaam and his donkey famous?**

Balaam's donkey is the only literal, talking animal in the Bible, other than the serpent in Genesis chapter three. Through a unique miracle, God enabled the donkey to speak. Balaam, however, was not allowed to speak against (i.e. curse) God's people ([Num. 22:21-35](#), [Duet. 23:5](#), [Josh. 24:10](#)).

Why did God allow Balaam's donkey to speak?

We do not know how it was done, but thanks to [2 Pet. 2:16](#), we know why the Lord chose to use the donkey. It was to rebuke the madness of the prophet. Contrast plays a key role in this, since Balaam's ass was made wise, useful, and able to speak freely, but Balaam himself was just the opposite.

Why is Balaam on the list, but Jonah is not?

Balaam is mentioned 64 times in the Bible, but Jonah (#90) is only mentioned 30 times. So it is simply because of the count difference. Nevertheless it is good to contrast these two less-than-ideal prophets. The big difference between them is that Jonah was disobedient at first because he wished to see the enemy of Israel (Nineveh) judged, while Balaam aided Israel's enemies and caused Israel to be judged.

Why is Jonah better known to many than Balaam?

The great fish (*whale*) is better known than Balaam's donkey, and Jonah has a Book named after him. A more important reason is because Jonah is named twice as many times in the New Testament than Balaam, nine times compared to four.

Why is Balaam still dangerous?

Although the greedy prophet was unable to curse Israel, he taught Balak and his people to seduce God's people using the women and idols of Moab and Midian ([Num. 25:1-18](#), [31:16](#)). Much later in [2 Pet. 2:15](#), [Jude 11](#), and [Rev. 2:14](#), Balaam's method is compared to seductive, materialistically-motivated false teaching. So the way and error of Balaam are still with us today.

*(tie)***Why is Esther important?**

Esther was in the right place, the Persian capital, at the right time, during the reign of Ahasuerus (#20), to be used of the Lord to help prevent wicked Haman (#54) from killing most of the Jews in the vast kingdom ([Est. 4:14](#)).

Why did the Lord use a crude 'beauty contest'?

God does not act in immoral ways, but He is totally free to work however He chooses in line with his character. The responsibility for the crudeness in all that was done in the selection of a new queen rests squarely with the Persian king and his advisors.

Why is God never mentioned in the Book of Esther?

The Lord chose to act behind the scenes ([Est. 6:1-3](#)). As a result, those who read Esther are challenged to look for God for themselves in the action-packed chapters. This is like a skillful teacher requiring his or her students read a book thoughtfully in order to discover the main point for themselves.

Why is prayer never mentioned in the Book of Esther?

It is omitted for the same reason that God is never mentioned, in order to force readers to search through Esther to find evidence of God at work. Nevertheless, fasting plays a key role in Esther and is an indirect way of referring to God and prayer. Esther herself called for fasting in [Est. 4:16](#) (Cf. [Est. 4:3](#), [9:31](#).)

Why was Queen Esther afraid to approach the throne?

Persian law was rigid and dehumanizing in order to uphold the authority of the king ([Est. 1:19](#), [8:5](#), [8](#), [Dan. 6:8](#)). So even the queen was afraid to approach the throne ([Est. 4:11](#)). Yet she did approach the king in order to save her people from Haman's murderous plot ([Est. 4:16](#)).

Why was the Persian king's authority not as great as it seemed?

Even though He is never directly seen, God repeatedly overruled the Persian king's authority, by advancing, protecting, and using a young Jewish woman and her older cousin, Mordecai.

Who was King Asa?

He was the third king of the southern kingdom (Judah), the son of Abijah (Abijam), the grandson of Rehoboam (#39), and the great grandson of Solomon (#5). He was also the father of Jehoshaphat (#36). (See [1 Kgs. 15:8-16:29](#), [22:41-46](#), [1 Chr. 3:10](#), [2 Chr. 14:1-17:4](#), [20:23](#), [21:12](#), [Jer. 41:9](#), and [Mat. 1:7-8](#).)

Why is Asa considered a good king?

He destroyed idols ([2 Chr. 14:2-3](#)), sought the Lord ([14:4,7,11](#)), and God gave him a great victory over a mighty North African army ([14:9-15](#)). In general, his heart was right with God ([2 Chr. 15:17](#)), but that is not the whole story.

How was Asa not a good king?

Later in life, Asa relied on military help from Syria rather than God for victory over Judah's enemies ([2 Chr. 16:1-10](#)). Then at the end of his life he relied on physicians rather than on God's help ([2 Chr. 16:12](#)). Pride rather than faith was involved in his misplaced trust in men.

Why was it bad to rely on physicians?

Luke, the author of the Third Gospel was Paul's coworker and "the beloved physician" ([Col. 4:14](#)). So it is not unbiblical to seek medical help. The problem apparently was that at the end King Asa did not seek the Lord's help at all.

Why is Asa's son, Jehoshaphat mentioned more?

Asa reigned longer (41 years) than Jehoshaphat (25 years), but is mentioned far less. Perhaps this is because Asa's reign was less eventful. Jehoshaphat's reign coincided with Ahab's (#15), and evil King Ahab is mentioned more than most other kings.

Why is King Asa important?

The overall message of the top 55 list is that the world needs the King of kings (#1). Each of the lesser characters on the list, including Asa (#45), helps make this point. Moreover, there is much to learn from Asa about living by faith and failing to do so ([Rom. 15:4](#)).

Why is the Book called Esther instead of Mordecai?

The basic reason is because her name, Esther, and the young heroin herself are easier to remember. That said, Mordecai was just as important as his younger cousin. God used them both to save his people, and the title of the book is not inspired.

Why did Mordecai refuse to bow before Haman?

Mordecai refused to honor the high-ranking descendent of an Amalekite king (1 Sam. 15:1-33, [Est. 3:1-6](#)), because of the long history of Jewish conflict with the Amalekites. It was not simply because of national pride, however. The Lord Himself opposed the Amalekites because of what they did earlier (Ex. 17:8-16).

Why did Mordecai help a pagan Persian king?

Ahasuerus (#20) or Xerxes as he is known is secular history was not particularly good or successful. (He was defeated by the Greeks.) Yet, Mordecai helped the king from the beginning ([Est. 2:21-23](#)) to the end ([Est. 10:1-3](#)). The reason for this is found in the instructions given decades earlier through the prophet Jeremiah (#19). The captives were to seek the good of the foreign city to which they were taken (Jer. 29:7). Daniel (#35) faithfully served pagan kings for the same reason.

Why is Mordecai in the final chapter but Esther is not?

The greatness of Mordecai is seen clearly in the final chapter of the Book. He, rather than Queen Esther (9:29, 31), is shown to be second in command after King Ahasuerus (#20). [Chapter ten](#) is only three verses, however. Esther and Mordecai were a godly team and sometimes wrote letters and decrees together ([Est. 9:20, 26](#)) in matters regarding the Jews. Mordecai was second in command regarding all things.

Why was Mordecai promoted and Haman executed?

Ahasuerus had good reasons ([Est. 6:2-3, 7:8, 9:4 10:3](#)), but it was really because God protected His people, the Jews. Even Haman's wife came close to admitting this ([Est. 6:13](#)).

Why is Noah well known?

Perhaps the top reason is because children love stories about animals. This does not lead to the account of Noah and the flood in [Genesis chapters six through nine](#) being correctly understood and applied, however. In the New Testament, a close connection with future judgement is drawn ([Mat. 24:37-44](#), [2 Pet. 3:3-7](#)), but this is rarely done in children's books.

Why is Noah controversial?

There is debate about what finding grace in the eyes of the Lord meant ([Gen. 6:8](#)). Does it mean that God choosing Noah had nothing to do with Noah himself? The next verse ([Gen. 6:9](#)) says that Noah was a just man who walked with God. Perhaps it is best to simply read and meditate on the story as a whole.

Why is the flood controversial?

Some claim that it was just a special local flood. If so, one wonders why God didn't simply have Noah (and the animals) move to a different area rather than spend many years building a gigantic ark. There is also much debate about how the flood affected geology. Did most oil, coal, and fossils come from Noah's flood? Most conservative scholars think so.

Why is Noah ranked so low?

Noah is well known, and many who are ranked higher are relatively little known. Moreover, Noah's importance is upheld by Isaiah ([Isa. 54:9](#)), Ezekiel ([Eze. 14:14, 20](#)), Peter ([1 Pet. 3:20](#), [2 Pet. 2:5](#)), the author of Hebrews ([Heb. 11:7](#)), and the Lord Jesus ([Lk. 17:26-30](#)). The main reason he is ranked so low is because he is rarely mentioned in most of the Old Testament or by Paul.

Why is there little about Noah in much of the Bible?

There is more stress in Genesis and most of the Bible on Abraham (#7), Isaac (#14), and Jacob (#6) than on Noah because salvation is through the Jewish Messiah, the Lord Jesus (John 4:22). Therefore Moses (#3) and Paul (#10) wrote far more about Abraham (Rom. 4:1-3) and Jacob's line than about Noah.

(tie)

Why is Gideon in the great faith chapter (Heb. 11:32)?

Despite his various flaws, Gideon is one of the Old Testament heroes of faith. [Hebrews 11:32](#) is not a denial of the fact that he was hesitant to obey at first ([Jud. 6:12-18, 36-40](#)). Rather it affirms that faith was involved with what he did later.

Why did the Lord say that Gideon's army was too large?

God reduced Gideon's army of 22,000 down to a mere 300 men lest the people say that they themselves had defeated the Midianites instead of the Lord ([Jud. 7:2](#)).

Why is Gideon the only person in Judges who is on the list?

Samson (#57) came very close to making it into the top 55 and is found along with Gideon in Heb. 11:32. He was important too. Sadly, however, neither Samson or Gideon had happy homes. Samson loved two Philistine women who betrayed him, and Gideon had far too many wives and concubines ([Jud. 8:30-31](#)).

Why did Gideon marry so many women?

The judges who preceded Gideon did not have many wives, and Deborah was, of course, a woman. Power became more concentrated with Gideon, so much so that the people wanted him to become their king ([Jud. 8:22](#)). He refused ([Jud. 8:23](#)), but he still acted like a king by having many wives and concubines.

Why did Abimelech kill most of Gideon's 70 sons?

Polygamy leads to power struggles. So Abimelech, a son of Gideon by one of his concubines, killed most of his 70 half-brothers in order to rule over the nation ([Jud. 9:1-6](#)). He was their king for three years but was killed by a woman who threw a heavy stone down from a city wall ([Jud. 9:52-54](#)).

Why did God judge the house of Gideon?

Polygamy and idolatry were the key factors. The gold earrings taken from the Midianites were made into an ephod which became a proud symbol, much like an idol ([Jud. 8:24-27](#)). The victories and peace that Israel enjoyed under Gideon were from God, rather than primarily because of Gideon himself.

(tie) **Why was Rachel important?**

Everyone on the list is important in their own right, but Rachel was especially important because of her husband, Jacob, who became Israel. The list includes Jacob's father (#14), his father-in-law (#40), his brother (#25), two of his sons (#11 and #50), and, of course, one of his wives, Rachel (#48). It is also significant that Rachel's two sons are both on the list, but Jacob's other sons are not. So Rachel was also important because of her sons.

Why does Rachel far outrank her sister, Leah (#69)?

Both of them were married to Jacob (#6), but Rachel is mentioned much more. In part, this was because Rachel, the better looking of the two, was Jacob's favorite ([Gen. 29:17-18](#)), Jacob having met her first as well ([Gen. 29:6-12](#)). Sadly, Rachel is also mentioned more because she stole her father's idols ([Gen. 31:30-35](#)) and died in childbirth ([Gen. 35:16-20](#)). Rachel is ranked higher, but Leah may have been the better person.

Why did Rachel steal Laban's idols?

Both Rachel and Leah seemed to resent their father's wealth ([Gen. 31:14-16](#)), but it does not directly say why Rachel stole his idols. She may have worshiped them, but it may have been because they were made of precious metal, gold or silver, rather than just wood. (See Col. 3:5.) They probably would have been expensive to make or replace.

Why did Rachel die at a young age?

She died when her second son, Benjamin, was born, but the only explanation given is that she had hard labor ([Gen. 35:17](#)). It does not say that God judged her for covetousness or idolatry, though that might have been the case.

It is probably not good to speculate about why Rachel died. The text seems to stress the greatness of Jacob's mourning for her as seen through the pillar that he set up on her grave which was located near Bethlehem ([Gen. 35:20](#), [Mat. 2:18](#)).

Why did Jacob love Benjamin so much?

He was Jacob's youngest son and the son of his favorite wife, Rachael (#48), who died in childbirth when Benjamin was born ([Gen. 35:18](#)). Moreover Jacob believed that Rachael's other child, Joseph (#11) had been killed by a wild animal, leaving Benjamin as his only direct connection to his beloved wife.

Why did Benjamin's brothers care about him as well?

Despite their father's favoritism, Jacob's other sons were also very protective. A keenly felt sense of guilt because of having sold Joseph into slavery was undoubtedly involved ([Gen. 42:18-22](#), [44:18-34](#)).

Why does Benjamin outrank Judah?

Since David (#2) came from the line of Judah rather than from the line of Benjamin, we might expect Judah to be mentioned far more. Indeed, Judah is mentioned many more times as a tribe, but Benjamin, the man, is mentioned far more than Judah (#69) as an individual. This is because Benjamin played a greater role in the final chapters of Genesis, as the beloved son of Jacob (#6).

What did Benjamin do?

Frankly, he did not do much that we know about. Mostly [Gen. 35:16-18](#) and [42:4-45:22](#) show what others did to or for him. As the only full brother of Joseph (#11) and the only one who did not betray him, Benjamin was special. The only time Benjamin is the subject of an action verb is in [Gen. 45:14](#) where he wept with Joseph. Thus Benjamin was a bit like John (#59), 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' ([John 13:23](#)).

Why does Benjamin seem younger than he really was?

He is referred to as a child or lad many times ([Gen. 43:8](#), [44:22](#), [30](#), [31](#), [32](#), [33](#), [34](#)) because he was the youngest of the 12 sons of Jacob. By the time Jacob's family moved to Egypt, however, Benjamin was already married and had ten sons of his own ([Gen. 46:21](#)). He was not just a little boy!

Why is Isaiah closely associated with King Hezekiah?

Isaiah knew several kings ([Isa. 1:1](#)) and interacted with King Ahaz quite a bit ([Isa. 7:1-17](#)), but he mentioned King Hezekiah (#17) far more than any of the others, including by name 32 times in chapters 36 through 39. These chapters are often referred to as the historical section of the Book. Isaiah encouraged King Hezekiah during the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem. This is also reported in Second Kings chapter 19 and Second Chronicles chapter 32.

Why is Isaiah one of the most balanced people on the list?

Aside from the Lord Jesus (#1), the people on the list are either an Old Testament person or a New Testament one, but not both. Though some Old Testament people like David (#2), Moses (#3), and Abraham (#7) are mentioned quite often in the New Testament, they still are primarily in the Hebrew Bible.

Isaiah is an interesting exception. He was an Old Testament prophet, of course. Yet he is mentioned 42% of the time in the New Testament, including six times in Matthew ([Mat. 3:3](#), [4:14](#), [8:17](#), [12:17](#), [13:14](#), [15:7](#)), four times in John ([John 1:23](#), [12:38](#), [39](#), [41](#)), and five times in Romans ([Rom. 9:27](#), [29](#), [10:16](#), [20](#), [15:12](#)). This contrasts sharply with Daniel (#35) and Jeremiah (#19) who are only cited in the New Testament two and three times.

Why did Philip speak to an Ethiopian about Isaiah chapter 53?

The Ethiopian eunuch was already reading from the chapter when Philip met him ([Acts 8:26-29](#)). This shows that people at the time were already reading and wondering about the meaning of the chapter. So interest in Isaiah 52:13-53:12 was not limited to the church.

Why does the list continue on beyond Isaiah (#51)?

The list could easily have ended with Isaiah resulting in a top 50 list instead of one with 55 names. Many people are interested in Adam (#53) and Mary (#52), however, and these two would have been ignored if the list ended with Isaiah.

Why is Mary the top ranking woman in the New Testament?

Obviously, it is because she was the mother of the Lord Jesus. Though the Lord is mentioned much more than she is (over 5,000 times compared to about 57 times), Mary is still the top ranking woman in the New Testament by a wide margin. Mary Magdalene who is the second most mentioned woman in the New Testament is only mentioned 16 times and is one of several people who are ranked much lower, at #173.

Why is Mary only referred to by name 19 times?

She is more often referred to in the Bible as the mother of Jesus (24 times) than by her personal name. She is first mentioned by name in [Mat. 1:16-20](#) and as Jesus' mother in [Mat. 2:13-14](#). This usage shows that the greater importance of the Lord Jesus is stressed, rather than Mary herself, though she was important as well.

Mary is also referred to simply as a woman in [John 2:4, 19:26](#), and [Gal. 4:4](#) (Cf. [Gen. 3:15](#).) and as a virgin in [Mat. 1:23](#) and [Lk. 1:27](#) (Cf. [Isa. 7:14](#).)

Why did Jesus seem to answer Mary roughly in John 2:4?

Jesus was not impolite, but his reply shows that He had divine authority, but she did not. Moreover, she acknowledged His authority by telling the servants to do whatever He said ([John 2:5](#)). He subsequently turned water into wine to meet the need, but it was not because Mary asked Him to do so.

Why are many surprised that Mary is only #52?

First, it is because of the Christmas story in [Luke chapters one and two](#) and [Matthew chapters one and two](#), and the fact that some professing Christians only go to church at Christmas time. Second, it is because the Roman Catholic Church puts far more emphasis on Mary than the Bible does. Third, it is because many genuine believers do not read the Old Testament enough. Though Mary (#52) is the most mentioned woman in the New Testament, overall Sarah (#37) is mentioned far more often.

Why is Adam ranked so low?

There are three big reasons. First, the Genesis chapters in which Adam appears are few in number. The first man is in the first five chapters of Genesis but is rarely mentioned by Moses after [Gen. 5:5 \(Deut. 4:32, 32:8\)](#). Second, Adam is only mentioned directly a few times in the rest of the Old Testament ([1 Chr. 1:1, Job 20:4, 31:33](#)). Third, the 43 references to the sons or children of men (i.e. Adam) are not counted ([Gen. 11:5, Psalms 90:3, Proverbs 8:31, Ecclesiastes 3:18, etc.](#)). Without the 16 references to Adam in the New Testament, he would not be in the top 55 at all.

Why is Eve not on the top 55 list?

Women are often mentioned less than men in the Bible. For instance, Sarah (#37) is found in the Bible much less often than Abraham (#7). This is not because of a bias against women, however. It is because men bear more responsibility.

Adam is more responsible for the fallen state of mankind than Eve. She was deceived ([Gen. 3:13](#)), but he was not ([1 Tim. 2:14](#)). Adam sinned by knowingly going along with his wife ([Gen. 3:6, 17](#)). Therefore Paul wrote far more about Adam.

Why is Adam mentioned so often in the New Testament?

There are three New Testament chapters in which Adam appears more than once. These are Romans chapter five ([Rom. 5:12, 14, 15, 17](#)), First Corinthians chapter 15 ([1 Cor. 15:22, 45, 47](#)), and First Timothy chapter two ([1 Tim. 2:13, 14](#)). Death came through Adam, but life comes through Jesus ([Rom. 5:12-17, 1 Cor. 15:45](#)).

Going beyond the direct references to Adam, the Lord Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born again, from above by the Spirit of God ([John 3:3-8](#)). Regeneration is necessary because Adam died spiritually when he sinned, and all his descendents have been born in his image ([Gen. 5:3](#)). So everyone enters the world spiritually stillborn and is unable to function spiritually. There is a key element missing in life until one is born again through the Spirit and faith in Christ.

Why did Haman want to kill Mordecai and all the Jews?

There was a long history of hatred between Haman's people, the Amalekites, and Israel (Ex. 17:8-16). Because of this, Mordecai refused to honor Haman who was an Agagite, a descendent of an Amalekite king (1 Sam. 15:1-33, [Est. 3:1-6](#)). Haman reacted to this and tried to execute Mordecai ([Est. 5:9-14](#)).

How was Haman able to build the high gallows in one night?

The gallows was 50 cubits (about 75 feet) high. Yet, somehow it was built in one night ([Est. 5:14](#)). The simplest explanation is that it was more like a great post supported by ropes rather than a self-supporting platform. Regardless of the design, however, Haman, as a wealthy and powerful man, had all the necessary workers and materials. The important thing to appreciate in this part of the story is that it was used to execute Haman rather than Mordecai ([Est. 7:9-10](#)).

Why did Haman's plan fail?

Superficially speaking, it was because King Ahasuerus (#19) could not sleep. So he read in the official records a report about Mordecai ([Est. 6:1-11](#)). At a deeper level, however, God was working behind the scenes to overthrow Haman and the others who hated the Jews ([Est. 9:1, 5](#)).

Why is it easy to remember how to spell Haman's name?

It is easy to remember Haman's name using the following simple story and process. *Haman had a hangman who was ready to execute Mordecai, but Haman's plan was no good (ng), because God was against it. If ng is removed from the word, hangman, h-a-m-a-n is what is left over.*

How are Haman and the future Antichrist alike?

The main common elements are or will be hatred for the Jews and attempts to kill them. The hatred and future murderous attempt of the Antichrist (#55) are foretold in Dan. 9:26-27 and Rev. 12:1-17. (See the next page.)

Why is this future, unnamed ruler on the list?

The reason is simple. Though we do not yet know the man's name, we know much about him because he is foretold in biblical prophecy about 53 times, primarily in Revelation and Daniel. The first references to him are in Daniel chapter seven as a horn (Dan. 7:8, 11, 20, 21, 24), and the final ones are in Revelation chapters 19 and 20 as the beast (Rev. 19:19, 20, 20:4, 10).

Why is the exact count for the Antichrist uncertain?

Daniel predicted various future rulers, including Alexander the Great (Dan. 11:3) and the Syrian ruler Antiochus IV (Dan. 11:21). So it is sometimes difficult to determine if the prophet was speaking about the Antichrist or someone else.

In Revelation, the 33 references to 'the beast' are more clear, though some falsely claim that 'the beast' was a symbol for Roman rulers who persecuted the early church. Denying the reality of a literal, future Antichrist, which some do, is dangerous and much like denying the existence of Satan. The devil and the Antichrist are real and will work together (Rev. 13:2-4).

Why does the Antichrist have a number?

Though he will be proud (Dan. 7:20, 11:36), able to perform miracles (2 Thes. 2:9), and worshiped by many as god (Rev. 13:4, 14:11, 16:2), the Antichrist's number shows that he will only be a man (Rev. 13:18).

Unlike God, men can be numbered, and the Antichrist's number, 666, probably shows that he will lack divine perfection three times over. Moreover his being numbered lends support to the theory that the Antichrist will use a man-made numerical (or digital) system to identify and control nearly everyone.

Why will many believe and worship the Antichrist?

His false peace (Eze. 38:10-13, Rev. 6:1-3) and deceptive miracles will persuade many (2 Thes. 2:8-9), but mainly it will be because many previously rejected the true Messiah (2 Thes. 2:10-12).

Notice

This booklet is also now available in Japanese.

getting to know
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