

OLD TESTAMENT PERSONALITIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

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The New Testament took shape in a community that was familiar with the Old Testament. Evidence of that fact can be seen on nearly every page of the New Testament. The Old Testament was “shared information” for the writers and first readers of the New Testament. In most situations today we reverse the process when we translate the New Testament before the Old. In a number of areas it may take many years before the Old Testament becomes available. There are also a considerable number of languages where we cannot hope to translate and publish the whole Old Testament in the foreseeable future.

Among the various handicaps of those who read the New Testament without the Old is the number of Old Testament characters referred to in the New. References to persons about whom sufficient information is not available can be a frustrating experience to a conscientious reader. Notes that would help the reader to see the point of the allusion to the person concerned would be a significant contribution to the intelligent reading of the Scriptures.

There are a number of names, especially in the genealogies in Matthew and Luke, of persons about whom we need not and cannot know anything beyond the fact that they were ancestors of Jesus. It is unnecessary to attempt any notes about them.

There are, however, between forty and fifty names about whom it is necessary to provide some information. Only ten of these are mentioned in the Word List at the end of the TEV/N.T. Nearly three times the number are included in the notes at the end of *Die Gute Nachricht*. It seems essential that brief notes about most of these should be provided when the New Testament is published by itself. The information given must be based on the Old Testament and must be sufficient to make the point of the New Testament allusions clear. The following are the names about which some information is needed. Those with an asterisk are mentioned in the TEV Word List.

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| 1. Aaron* | 14. Elisha |
| 2. Abel | 15. Enoch |
| 3. Abiathar | 16. Esau |
| 4. Abraham | 17. Eve |
| 5. Adam | 18. Gideon |
| 6. Baal* | 19. Isaac |
| 7. Balaam* | 20. Israel |
| 8. Balak* | 21. Jacob |
| 9. Barak | 22. Jephthah |
| 10. Benjamin | 23. Jesse* |
| 11. Cain | 24. Jezebel |
| 12. David | 25. Job |
| 13. Elijah* | 26. Jonah |

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| 27. Joseph | 37. Ruth |
| 28. Levi | 38. Samson |
| 29. Lot* | 39. Samuel |
| 30. Melchizedek | 40. Sarah |
| 31. Moses | 41. Saul* |
| 32. Noah* | 42. Solomon |
| 33. Pharaoh* | 43. Tamar |
| 34. Rachel | 44. Uriah's wife
(Bathseba) |
| 35. Rahab | 45. Zechariah |
| 36. Rebecca | |

The following notes are suggested as examples.

AARON Aaron the brother of Moses helped him when he led the people of Israel to freedom from Egypt. He was their first high priest and the whole priestly family were his descendants. On one occasion there was a rebellion against Moses and Aaron. God showed his approval of them by causing Aaron's rod alone among all the rods representing the major clans to sprout leaves and flowers. This rod was kept with the ark of the Testimony. (Luke 1:5; Acts 7:40; Heb. 5:4; 7:11; 9:4.—The TEV Note does not explain Heb. 7:11.)

ABRAHAM The people of Israel were the descendants of Abraham. God called Abraham to leave the place of his birth and to follow where He led. God made a covenant with him promising him a large number of descendants, and the land of Canaan for his descendants. Abraham trusted God to be able to fulfil his promises. God gave him a son, Isaac, when both he and his wife Sarah were very old. When God asked for the sacrifice of Isaac, Abraham was willing but God prevented him at the last moment from killing his son. Abraham's faith became an example to be followed. (Matt. 1:1; Mark 12:26; Luke 1:73; John 8:33; Acts 3:25; Rom. 4:1; Gal. 3:6; Jas. 2:21).

ADAM According to the Book of Genesis, Adam was the first man created by God and thus the ancestor of the whole human race. His disobedience led to the curse of suffering and death. He represents humanity as fallen and needing redemption. (Luke 3:38; Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 15:22, 45; 1 Tim. 2:13, 14; Jude 14).

ELIJAH One of the great prophets of Israel. He was considered the representative of the whole prophetic tradition. At a time when the royal family was encouraging idolatrous worship of Baal, Elijah resisted it. Because he was supposed to have been moved to heaven without death, there was a notion that he would return to the earth to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah. In John the Baptist this expectation was fulfilled. (Matt. 11:14; 16:14; 17:3, 4, 10-12; 27:47, 49; Mark 6:15; 8:28; 9:4, 5, 11-13; 15:35-36; Luke 1:17; 4:25, 26; 9:8, 19, 30, 33, 54; John 1:21, 25; Rom. 11:2; Jas. 5:17.)

ENOCH A descendant of Adam about whom it is said: "Having walked with God, Enoch was seen no more, because God had taken him away." (Luke 3:37; Heb. 11:5; Jude 14.)

JOB The main character of the Book of Job in the Old Testament. Though he was entirely righteous he had to suffer great physical pain as well as the loss of his children and wealth. But he refused to curse God or give up his

righteousness and in the end was vindicated by God. Job's patience became proverbial (Jas. 5:11).

JONAH A prophet whose story is given in the book bearing his name. God asked him to preach to a foreign nation, Assyria, in the capital, Nineveh. He tried to avoid God's command and tried to go away in a ship. A storm caused his shipmates to throw him into the sea to allay the anger of God. He was swallowed by a big fish and because he repented and prayed he was saved after three days in the belly of the fish. He went and preached in Nineveh and the people there repented. (Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Luke 11:29, 30, 32.)

MELCHIZEDEK Melchizedek was a contemporary of Abraham. He was both king and priest. On one occasion Abraham brought offerings for sacrifice to Melchizedek. Nothing is known about his ancestors or about his death. (Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1, 10, 11, 15, 17.)

NOAH Noah was the tenth in the line of descent from Adam. Because men had become evil God destroyed all mankind in a flood except Noah and his family. Noah and his family survived by making an "ark" according to God's instructions. After the flood God made a covenant with Noah that He would not destroy the world in the same manner again. (Matt. 24: 37-38; Luke 3:36; 17:26-27; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5.)

SOLOMON The son of David and the greatest of the kings of Israel. He built the temple in Jerusalem. When he became king he prayed for wisdom and he was reputed to be the wisest of men. (Matt. 1:6-7; 6:29; 12:42; Luke 11:31; 12:27; John 10:23; Acts 3:11; 5:12; 7:47.)

Training Programmes for Translators

The following training programmes are planned by the UBS in 1973:

Africa

15-27 January: North Cameroun (for Roman Catholics)
Three workshops in Zaire (dates to be arranged)

Asia-Pacific

March: Pyramid, W. Irian
15 April-15 May (or May): Baguio, Philippines
May: India
June: Truk, Pacific

The dates of training programmes for Pakistan, and for indigenous translators in New Guinea, are to be arranged.

Europe

September or October: Poland (for Poland and Czechoslovakia)
July: Yugoslavia