

The Invisibles: Bible Characters Christians Never Discuss, But Should

One of the most popular articles in the history of REO is our [“Top Ten Favorite Bible Characters”](#). On that list, you find some of the most amazing humans that ever lived and we are blessed to get to read about them in our Bibles.

But that list was quite predictable, on purpose. The most well known Bible characters are so for a reason. They did incredible things and lived exemplary lives. Today, however, I want to go beyond the obvious and talk about a few Bible characters that deserve accolades but almost never get them. These people also did incredible things but because they weren't as prominent as Moses or Paul, they rarely get taught about in Bible studies or discussed among the great people of the faith.

Today I want to give them their due. Here are a few people in the Bible that rarely get discussed but deserve full sermons dedicated to them.

Bezalel and Oholiab

Listen to what Exodus says about these men:

Then Moses said to the Israelites, “See, the Lord has chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills...

Now let me pause here and wonder if a person doesn't know the rest of the chapter, what kind of call would you think Bezalel

had on his life? I mean, he is filled with the Spirit and wisdom and understanding. Is he a priest? A Levite? A prophet?

None of the above. Here is what he and his chosen assistant Oholiab were filled with the Spirit and with wisdom to do...

–to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood and to engage in all kinds of artistic crafts. And he has given both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, the ability to teach others. He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers—all of them skilled workers and designers.”

They were filled with the Spirit and wisdom to work with their hands! Christians need to understand and teach the biblical significance of men and women laity who do blue collar jobs (and any non-pastoring jobs). In the Old Testament, they were spiritually qualified by God to the highest level, using phrases we'd use for the most significant spiritual offices. And since the New Testament teaches the priesthood of all believers, I'd say all Christian accountants, janitors, teachers, and electricians are today as well.

We need to teach jobs as ministries. These men help us do that.

Onesiphorus

I owe Tim Campbell the credit for teaching about this man to a chapel full of students at Welch College 20 years ago. Other than a greeting in 2nd Timothy, the extent of what Paul writes about Onesiphorus can be found in two verses in 1 Timothy:

“May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my

chains. On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me.”

What a short, but significant tribute! Not everyone gets to be Paul, but to be the person that loves and encourages Paul like this? That’s someone worth teaching Christians about. May we all be the kind of person who refreshes others, who isn’t ashamed of them even when they are rejected by others, and who seeks them out. I long for that kind of testimony.

Asaph and the Sons of Korah

It is important to note that just because a Psalm is “of” someone, it does not mean that the person or group wrote it. It could be dedicated to that person or something similar. Yet I think it is very likely that Asaph and the sons of Korah wrote the psalms that bear their names in our Bibles.

Considering how deeply music speaks to our souls, confirmed by God by inspiring our biggest Bible book to be a hymnbook, we should know who wrote the greatest songs of the faith that Israel praised God with. Between Asaph and the sons of Korah you find many of the Psalms that have inspired some of the great modern Christian worship songs, like Psalm 42 (“As The Deer”) and Psalm 84 (“Better Is One Day In Your Courts”) and even the less well known but profoundly lyrical Psalm 73, which is found by that name in [Indelible Grace Music](#). I give a shout out to Dr. Matthew McAfee for introducing that song to my church years ago. Few Bible passages wrestle with the unfairness of the world and the justice of God as this one does. What a privilege to sing it.

But even more important to me, Asaph and the sons of Korah penned several heart-wrenching lament psalms, like Psalms 44, 80 and 88. Psalm 80 contains the refrain, “O Lord God of hosts, cause your face to shine on us, that we may be saved”

three times, which [Michael W. Smith turned into a modern hymn as well](#). As far as I know, Psalm 88 has not been turned into a popular modern song, but perhaps that is because it is one of the few psalms that doesn't end on an up note but remains in the darkness. For that reason, it may be my favorite psalm of all.

Both Asaph and the sons of Korah played a huge part not only in writing but leading Israel in musical worship (1 Chronicles 15, 2 Chronicles 20). These are men who should be known.

Micaiah

No, not Malachi or Micah. Micaiah, a prophet so unknown that my computer is giving me the red squiggly line under his name right now. He prophesied during the time of King Ahab and what a thankless, demeaning job that must have been. We get a taste of what his life was like in 1 Kings 22 (and its parallel, 2 Chronicles 18) when Ahab calls him in to advise him about going to war with Ramoth Gilead. It is obvious that Micaiah never prophesies anything good for Ahab because the wicked king says so plainly. It appears that this is the case because Micaiah intends only to speak the truth. And this obviously happens over and over and this has to weigh on his psyche.

It's possible we even get a bit of sarcasm here from the noble prophet because at first he tells Ahab to go to war and Ahab knows he's not being serious. But Micaiah then speaks the harsh predictive reality to him and instead of receiving thanks for the warning, he ends up with a smack to the face. A mere four chapters after Elijah calls down fire from Heaven, another similar prophet is taking inglorious shots to the face in a rather mundane existence. For this, he deserves our respect.

Zelophehad's Daughters

Because the cultures of the Bible were so demeaning to women by our modern standards, we very much need to preach stories like these women standing up to Moses on behalf of giving them their father's inheritance. Zelophehad was a righteous man but had no son. So they boldly stood before one of the most significant leaders in the history of the world and asked for justice. And God took their side. There was no doubt about that because he spoke directly in the passage to affirm their position.

Justice gets thrown around so much in American Christian vernacular I hope we don't miss what it really is. It has been and always will be doing right by those who are denied things they deserve. That is the heart of these few verses in Numbers. So here's to Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah and Tirzah—women of great character that we should honor.

So, at least for today, that is my list. What are some under-appreciated Bible characters you wish we talked more about?