

Who was Eliezer in the Bible?

Eleven people in the Bible bear the Hebrew name Eliezer, which means “God is my help.” The first and most notable is Abraham’s trusted servant, Eliezer of Damascus, who would have inherited Abraham’s fortune if Ishmael and Isaac had not been born: “But Abram said, ‘Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?’” (Genesis 15:2). A common custom in those days was for couples with no children to adopt a servant as an heir to take the place of a firstborn son.

Eliezer of Damascus was likely the same “senior servant” in charge of all Abraham’s possessions who, many years later, was commissioned by Abraham to go and find a wife for his son, Isaac, from among Abraham’s own relatives in his native land (Genesis 24:1-9). Eliezer traveled some 450 miles, where he found Rebekah in the town of Nahor in Mesopotamia. By offering water to Abraham’s servant, Rebekah revealed that she was God’s chosen wife for Isaac. Eliezer gained permission and blessing from Rebekah’s brother Laban to present her to Isaac (verses 10-59). Then Rebekah returned with Eliezer and married Isaac (verses 60-67).

The next Eliezer named in the Bible is the younger son of Moses and Zipporah: “After Moses had sent away his wife Zipporah, his father-in-law Jethro received her and her two sons. One son was named Gershom, for Moses said, ‘I have become a foreigner in a foreign land’; and the other was named Eliezer, for he said, ‘My father’s God was my helper; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh’” Exodus 18:2-4). Moses chose Eliezer’s name in remembrance of the Lord’s protection when he fled from Egypt after being charged with murder (Exodus 2:11-15).

A grandson of Jacob's youngest son, Benjamin, was also named Eliezer. He is listed with the sons of Becher in the genealogy of the tribe of Benjamin in 1 Chronicles 7:8: "The sons of Beker: Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth and Alemeth. All these were the sons of Beker."

In 1 Chronicles 15:24, a priest and musician named Eliezer was among seven chosen to blow the trumpets before the ark of God when David brought it to Jerusalem. Another Eliezer mentioned during King David's reign was the son of Zichri, a tribal ruler of the Reubenites (1 Chronicles 27:16).

A prophet named Eliezer, the son of Dodavahu of Mareshah, prophesied these words against King Jehoshaphat of Judah: "Because you have made an alliance with Ahaziah, the LORD will destroy what you have made" (2 Chronicles 20:37). As punishment for joining forces with the wicked King Ahaziah of Israel, Jehoshaphat's fleet of trade ships was wrecked and unable to set sail for Tarshish, just as the prophet Eliezer had said.

In Ezra 8:16-17, Eliezer is one of eleven priests commissioned by Ezra to find ministers for the house of God in Jerusalem from among the inhabitants of Casiphia. Three other men named Eliezer—a priest, a Levite, and a lay person—were among the sons of priests who had married foreign women (Ezra 10:18-19, 23, 31). Each was required to divorce his foreign wife.

Lastly, in Luke 3:29, a man named Eliezer is listed in the genealogy of Christ.