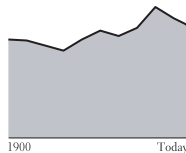


Biblical

Biblical roots are so fundamental to our name culture that this may hardly seem like a style at all. Of the ten most popular names in America today, seven are straight out of the Bible. When you look at the top

names of the century, it's six out of ten. But those are not the *same* top names, and that's where the tale of biblical style turns interesting.



The Bible has two main sections, known to Christians as the Old and New Testaments. (The Christian Old Testament corresponds to the Jewish Hebrew Bible, or *Tanakh*.) A handful of New Testament names were dominant favorites in the English-speaking world for centuries. In England, the popularity of a few core names once reached epidemic proportions. During the 1700s, John and Mary alone accounted for a quarter of English babies. Those two names led America's 100-year hit list as well.

Now take a look at the top biblical names today: Jacob, Michael, and Joshua. Michael appears in both Testaments, while Jacob and Joshua trumpet their Old Testament origins. John and Mary, meanwhile, are out of the top ten altogether. Today, what's Old is new.

The rising popularity of Old Testament names has dramatically changed their image. Just a generation ago, brothers named Josh and Ethan sounded solidly Jewish—and brothers named Josiah and Caleb sounded positively ancient. Today both pairs sound simply contemporary, with no specific religious association.

What's the secret to these names' broadened appeal? The Old Testament names are familiar and traditional but were mostly ignored in our parents' generation. Thus they sound antique (Jonas) or unconventional (Ezra) rather than just plain old. Even among New Testament names, the hottest choices are those that were most neglected early in the twentieth century. Matthew and Luke are rapidly overtaking Mark and John.

If you love biblical names, you can now feel free to dig deep into your concordance. Names that once sounded clunky or even shocking are finding a whole new life. With Ezekiel and Delilah soaring, almost anything goes.

OLD TESTAMENT GIRLS

Abigail	Bethel	Elisheva	Jemima	Mehitabel
Adah	Beulah	Esther	Jerusha	Miriam
Adina	Carmel	Eve	Jezebel	Naomi
Amana	Deborah	Hadassah	Judith	Noemi
Atara	Delilah	Hannah	Keziah	Rachel
Avital	Dinah	Havilah	Leah	Rebecca
Bathsheba	Elisha	Jael	Mara	Rebekah

Rochelle	Sarai	Tamara	Zilla
Ruth	Shifra	Vashti	Zipporah
Sarah	Tamar	Yael	

OLD TESTAMENT BOYS

Aaron	Daniel	Hiram	Jonas	Omar
Abdiel	David	Hosea	Jonathan	Phineas
Abel	Ebenezer	Isaac	Joseph	Raphael
Abner	Ehud	Isaiah	Joshua	Reuben
Abraham	Eli	Ishmael	Josiah	Samson
Abram	Eliezer	Israel	Judah	Samuel
Absalom	Elijah	Jabez	Kenan	Saul
Adam	Elisha	Jacob	Laban	Seth
Adlai	Elon	Jamin	Lemuel	Simeon
Ahijah	Enoch	Japheth	Levi	Simon
Amos	Enos	Jared	Mahlon	Solomon
Asa	Ephraim	Jedidiah	Malachi	Tobias
Asher	Ephron	Jemuel	Micah	Uriah
Azarel	Ethan	Jeremiah	Michael	Uriel
Azriel	Ezekiel	Jeremy	Mordecai	Zachariah
Barak	Ezra	Jeriah	Moses	Zachary
Baruch	Gabriel	Jesse	Naphtali	Zeb
Benjamin	Gershon	Jethro	Nathan	
Boaz	Gideon	Joah	Nathaniel	
Caleb	Hezekiah	Joel	Nehemiah	
Cyrus	Hillel	Jonah	Noah	

NEW TESTAMENT GIRLS

Anna	Dorcas	Junia	Martha	Susana
Aquila	Drusilla	Lois	Mary	Tabitha
Berenice	Elisheva	Lydia	Priscilla	
Bernice	Elizabeth	Magdalena	Rhoda	
Bethany	Eunice	Maria	Salome	
Damaris	Joanna	Marie	Sapphira	

NEW TESTAMENT BOYS

Aeneas	Barnabas	Emmanuel	Jesus	Juan
Andrew	Barnaby	Erastus	John	Jude
Artemas	Bartholomew	Gabriel	José	Justus
Balthazar	Crispus	James	Joseph	Lazarus

Lucas	Matthias	Paul	Thaddeus	Zachary
Lucius	Michael	Peter	Theophilus	Zebedee
Luke	Nathanael	Silas	Thomas	
Mark	Nathaniel	Simon	Timothy	
Matthew	Nicodemus	Stephen	Titus	