

**H**ave you ever felt rejected? Did kids bully you in school? Did you fail to make a sports team when you thought the coach would choose you? Were you counting on a friend to always have your back, and instead your friend gossiped about you? Did the person you loved break your heart as well as your engagement to be married? Are you divorced even though you didn't want to be? Were you passed over for a promotion you thought you had earned? There are plenty of ways to be rejected.

## **REJECTION IN THE BIBLE** **People in the Old Testament**

Quite a few people in the Bible were rejected. Here are a few examples from the Old Testament:

- Cain was rejected because he didn't bring an offering that was acceptable to God (Genesis 4:1–5).
- God told Abraham to reject Ishmael and send him away because he was not the son that God had promised to give to Abraham *and Sarah* (Genesis 21:9–13).
- Joseph was rejected by his own half-brothers, first, because their father, Jacob, favored Joseph and gave him a special coat of many colors and, second, because of Joseph's prophetic dreams (Genesis 37:1–27).
- Saul was rejected by God from being king because he disobeyed God's direction for sacrifices and instead acted as a priest, even

though he had no authority from God to do so (1 Samuel 13:5–14).

- For a time, King David's kingdom rejected him while one of his sons led a rebellion against him (2 Samuel 15:10–19:14).
- Many of the prophets in the Bible were rejected because of their messages, and some were killed (Luke 13:34).

## **Jesus Christ**

Jesus was rejected by the Jewish leaders—the scribes, Pharisees, and priests who heard Him preach. They sought to have Him put to death under a false pretense: that His claim to be the Son of God and, therefore, the Jewish Messiah was false. They refused to recognize the many Old Testament prophecies He was fulfilling. (For example, the events of Palm Sunday are predicted in Zechariah 9:9 and His suffering is predicted in Isaiah 52:13—53:11 and Psalm 22:1–18.)

- Jesus was rejected by Judas Iscariot, who delivered Him to the Jews for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14–16, 47–50).
- Jesus was rejected by King Herod, who sent Him back to Pontius Pilate for judgment. Herod was angry because Jesus didn't perform any miracles for him and wouldn't even answer his questions (Luke 23:6–12).
- Jesus was rejected by the soldiers, who taunted and tortured Him (Matthew 27:27–31).
- Jesus was rejected by Pilate, who was persuaded by the shouting

mob to condemn Jesus to death, even though he had pronounced Jesus not guilty! (See Matthew 27:24; Luke 23:14–24.)

- Jesus was rejected by the crowd who demanded His death by yelling, “Crucify him, crucify him” (John 19:6, 13–16).
- Jesus was rejected by the first thief who spoke from the cross, refusing to believe in Jesus (Luke 23:39).
- On the cross, Jesus was rejected by passersby who taunted Him to come down, claiming that only then would they believe in Him (Matthew 27:37–43).
- Jesus was rejected by God Himself, Who had to allow Jesus to suffer in payment for our sins. While suffering alone on the cross, Jesus cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:45–46; Psalm 22:1–3).

## The apostles and disciples

After Jesus arose from the dead and returned to Heaven forty days later, His apostles and disciples spread the good news about His resurrection but found themselves rejected by some people. The book of Acts reports many incidents in which the message, and therefore the messenger, were rejected.

- Some believers were cast into prison (Acts 8:1–3; 16:16–23).
- Stephen and James were executed (Acts 7:52–60; 12:2).
- The apostle Paul was later left

for dead after being stoned (Acts 14:19, 20).

## REJECTION PROPHESED

Jesus had warned His followers that they should “beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake” (Matthew 10:17, 18). Yet He also encouraged them by saying, “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul” (Matthew 10:28). Later, Peter encouraged Christians by telling them, “If ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (1 Peter 3:14, 15).

## REJECTION TODAY

Many people today reject the truth of the Bible. For example, the Bible clearly teaches that God created the world, but instead they substitute their own fables about evolution. Often people reject the Ten Commandments that God set forth for the good of mankind, and they abandon the Bible’s teaching on morality. Some women, feeling they have the right to reject the babies growing in their wombs, choose abortion. More and more people equate same-sex marriage with traditional marriage and reject the God-given plan of one man and one woman. Even gender selection is starting to become popular. Supposedly, a child now has the

“right” to select what gender he or she wants to be, because some adults have rejected the idea that God created “male and female” (Genesis 1:27).

Even the gospel message—the good news that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died on the cross to pay for our sins, *but rose again from the dead on the third day and will give eternal life to all who receive him as their Savior* (1 Corinthians 15:1–4; Romans 10:13)—is rejected today by countless people who refuse to believe it. Christians may be ridiculed or ostracized or lose their jobs for telling someone about Jesus. In some countries, it is illegal to spread the gospel. Christians in those places may be arrested, jailed, tortured, or even killed for sharing the gospel or reading the Bible or attending a church service. Yet Christians continue to tell the Good News!

If you have never believed the gospel message and asked Jesus Christ to be your own Savior from your sin, you need to do that right away. *God will not reject you* if you come in the name of His only Son, Jesus Christ, Who died on the cross for your sins and rose again from the dead (John 3:36).

Or if you are already a born-again believer, if you have felt rejected when you tried to share the gospel with someone, remember that even Jesus, the apostles, and many of the “book-of-Acts Christians” were rejected, but they didn’t quit. Don’t give up! Jesus

promised, “I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

Let me encourage you with a poem I wrote:

## *Don't Quit*

*Don't quit when  
you're tired and weary,  
Don't quit when  
the way seems long,  
Don't quit when  
your work seems dreary,  
Don't quit when  
you've lost your song.  
Keep on though  
your courage falters,  
Keep on when  
your strength is done,  
Keep on by  
the Savior's power,  
Keep on 'till  
Jesus comes.*

—“Don't Quit,” © 2022 by Alice Brill

*Alice Brill has written for Horizons for many years. She says that “as a writer, I’ve had quite a few rejections of my material, and each one hurts. But I’m so thankful that God doesn’t reject Christians when we come to Him in Jesus’ name. Instead, He blesses us and encourages us to “come boldly to the throne of grace” (Hebrews 4:16).*

