bible backgrounds

Forsaken

You are an outcast from society. You travel the world less out of a need for adventure, and more because you know that you will never truly be accepted no matter where you go, or what you do. Maybe you will travel with a party of adventurers for a time, but these relationships never seem to last. Your faith has also been a struggle. You feel no sense of connection to your deity, and your prayers go unanswered.

Those who are forsaken can come from any city, religion, or walk of life. Rich or poor, young or old, sometimes people just fall on hard times. Begin by choosing the cause of your misfortune. Choose from the table on the next page, roll to determine it randomly, or invent your own!

d8 Misfortune

1 You have contracted leprosy. This debilitating skin condition will continue to grow worse, and will eventually kill you. You are unwelcome in all cities unless you hide your appearance.

2 Your family is dead, your friends have abandoned you, and your land was seized by Roman soldiers. You were once a highly respected citizen... now you’re just looking for answers.

3 You are a slave from the grand palace of Splendor’s Envy in the central district of Ecbatana. Since you were a witness to many high-profile conversations in the palace chambers, your escape has landed you on a most-wanted list for both the Parthian

and Roman authorities. Nowhere is safe for you.

4 You were born with a physical deformity or disability. Because of the widespread belief in most societies that your appearance is a punishment from God for a serious sin your parents must have committed, there are very few cities that will tolerate your presence.

5 Your father was a tax collector for the Roman empire who allegedly stole a great fortune from the treasury. He was executed, but the Roman authorities now hold you responsible for his debt, believing that you are in possession of this fortune.

6 When you were a child an angel appeared to you and asked if you were ready to have your faith in God tested. Ever since you replied “yes,” you have had a string of unexplainable bad luck. You patiently await the day that it all finally makes sense.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Survival

Tool Proficiencies: A musical instrument of your choice, thieves’ tools

Equipment: Disguise kit, a Bedouin tent, a pouch containing 5 gp.

Feature: Underground Network

Your life of exclusion has caused you make connections with various other communities of outcasts. If you spend at least one day in a major city, you learn the location of the local leper colony, criminal hideout, secret gambling hall, or other local community of outcasts. This underground network can provide you with information that is not known to the common people of the city, including methods of secret travel (tunnels, alleyways, rooftops, etc.) through the city, locations of safe commerce (black markets or thieves guilds that will still do business with you), and allies within the establishment (doctors, politicians, or guards who are sympathetic to your situation).

Gladiator

Nothing feels more like home to you than the roar of

the crowds in the Circus arena. Maybe you are a retired soldier from the Roman legion and you compete to feel the thrill of combat once more. Maybe you were once a slave meant for execution, but you surprised the crowds (and yourself) by besting your opponents and eventually earning your freedom in the eyes of the empire. Or perhaps you just enjoy putting on a good show and love hearing the crowds cheer your name.

Gladiators come in all shapes and sizes, and from all walks of life. The most successful in their field understand that victory in the arena has as much to do with putting on a good show as it does with one's talent as a fighter. The Gladiators who are paid to perform at festivals and other large events often have catchy names, signature weapons, memorable colors, or unique armor.

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Performance

Tool Proficiencies: Chariots, Land Vehicles

Equipment: One exotic weapon of your choice or a shield marked with your emblem, a letter from a talent scout inviting you to perform at a festival in a city you have never been to, and a pouch containing 12 gp.

Signature Look

In order to gain renown in your field, you have developed a signature look that allows fans to easily recognize you in the arena. This may be brightly colored armor or unique weaponry, a distinctive mark or scar you display, or a unique finishing move you use in combat.

New Background Options

Whatever it is, make sure your signature look sets you apart from your competitors.

Feature: Local Champion

Your performance in the arena can sometimes earn you renown among the locals. If you put on a good show at a

public event, local establishments will let you eat and drink for free, and sometimes provide a place to stay at a local inn. Also, it is likely that you will be recognized on the street, and local citizens who watched your performance are more likely to help you. You have advantage on all Charisma checks while interacting with people in a city where you have competed in an arena.

Variant Gladiator: Charioteer

Charioteers often travel in the same circles as gladiators, and perform at the same events. Although a charioteer is not solely focused on combat, chariot racing can be just as dangerous, and races frequently end in death for unlucky charioteers. When using the charioteer variant, replace Athletics with Animal Handling in your skill proficiencies.

Pilgrim

There has always been a restlessness in you: a yearning in your soul that has not yet been filled. You have visited various holy sites around the world, but you haven't yet found what you are looking for. Whatever it is, you know it is out there; and so you continue searching.

Pilgrims are seekers. Perhaps you seek a distant holy site where you believe your prayers will be heard. Perhaps you seek to perform a specific act of generosity to make up for sins in your past. Perhaps you are on a search for your own identity. Whatever it is that you seek, your journey is a spiritual one, and it is what drives you to keep searching.

Skill Proficiencies: Religion, Survival

Tool Proficiencies: Calligrapher's Supplies or one type of musical instrument

Languages: Two of your choice

Equipment: Calligrapher's Supplies or one type of musical instrument of your choice, a staff, traveler's clothes, a prayer book or diary, and a pouch containing 5 gp.

Pilgrimage Destination

What is the reason for your life of searching? Where are you currently headed? Do you have a destination in mind, or are you simply wandering aimlessly? Work with your GM to determine what you might be looking for. You can also use the following table for ideas of possible pilgrimage destinations, or even determine it randomly.

d6 Pilgrimage Destination

1 You desire to pray on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem

2 You feel called to find and safeguard the Ark of the Covenant

3 You were taken as a slave from your homeland long ago. You seek to return home.

4 You have a recurring dream of a distinctive landmark. You cannot rest until you locate it.

5 Your sister never returned from a long journey. You seek to bring her home, dead or alive.

6 A stranger once paid you a kindness. You cannot rest until that kindness is repaid.

Feature: Expanded Holy Ground

Your faith is rewarded. If you succeed in reaching your pilgrimage destination, that site is considered Holy Ground for you, regardless of how mundane it may be for others. For more information about Holy Ground, see page 262.

Silk Road Merchant

Some view the treacherous seas and deadly deserts as places they would never willingly go; you just call them home. The prolific spice, silk, incense, and glass trade across the continent has exploded in the years following the conquests of Alexander the Great, and there is an impressive amount of gold to be made for those willing to brave the journey. An expansive network of routes through the desert now connect China, India, Sheba, and Rome, but

just because these routes have been charted does not mean they are without danger.

Perhaps your skills as a linguist made you ideally suited to conduct business in foreign lands. Perhaps you have always loved bartering and the thrill of finding a good deal. Or maybe you just love seeing the world and experiencing new cultures. Silk Road Merchants enter the business for a variety of reasons, but all share a common love of travel and commerce.

Skill Proficiencies: Persuasion, Survival

Tool Proficiencies: Cartographer’s Tools

Languages: Choose two from Chinese, Sanskrit, Aramaic, Sabaic

Equipment: Cartographer’s Tools, a staff, traveler’s clothes, and a pouch containing 15 gp.

Feature: Merchant’s Discount

Because of your connections as a merchant, other merchants and vendors are eager to do business with you and are more likely to offer you discounted rates. When shopping in markets and bazaars in major cities, you may make a Persuasion check to lower the price of an item significantly, even if haggling is not normally allowed in your location. If your haggling concerns your Trade Specialty (see below), this check is made with advantage.

GM Tips: Haggling

In general, use the following model when a character rolls a Persuasion check to haggle over price. On a roll of 15 or higher, the price is reduced by 10%. On a roll of 20 or higher, the price is reduced by 25%.

Trade Specialty

Merchants along the Silk Road often specialize in transporting and selling a particular commodity. What item are you most accustomed to transporting? What first drew you to this product? How have you tried to make

connections with vendors in different kingdoms to establish trade relations? Choose your trade specialty, or choose it randomly using the table below. Tip: it is helpful to choose your specialty before choosing your two language proficiencies to ensure that your languages are spoken by those with whom you frequently do business.

d8	Region	Primary Export
1	Judea	Honey, Olive Oil, Perfume
2	China	Ink, Paper, Rice, Silk
3	Egypt	Barley, Papyrus, Parchment, Wheat
4	India	Cinnamon, Hashish, Pearls, Pepper
5	Nomadic Tribes	Beadwork, Pottery, Weaving
6	Parthia	Carpets, Fabric, Dyes, Opium
7	Rome	Glassware, Iron, Leather, Wine
8	Sheba	Cloves, Frankincense, Myrrh

Revision #1
Created 14 November 2025 00:47:50 by Andrej
Updated 14 November 2025 00:49:45 by Andrej