Bible Literacy 2026

A SURVEY OF 2,012 AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CHURCHGOERS

Lifeway Research

Methodology

- The online survey of 2,012 Americans was conducted August 12-29, 2026, using a national pre-recruited panel
- Respondents were screened to include those who identified as Protestant/non-denominational, Catholic, or Orthodox Christian and who attend church in a typical month
- Quotas and slight weights were used to balance gender, age, region, ethnicity, education, and religion to more accurately reflect the population
- The completed sample is 2,012 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error from the panel does not exceed ±2.2% This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups

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Acknowledgements

Lifeway Research was assisted by an **Advisory Group** that provided encouragement to pursue this study, influenced its direction, offered ideas and examples, and gave feedback on survey drafts.

Many thanks to each member who contributed to this study:

Jen Wilkin

George Guthrie

John Paul Basham

Andrea Lennon

Ken Braddy

Lyle Larson

Reid Patton

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Definitions

- **Evangelical Beliefs** are defined using the NAE Lifeway Research Evangelical Beliefs Research Definition based on respondent beliefs
- Respondents are asked their level of agreement with four separate statements using a four-point, forced choice scale (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree). Those who strongly agree with all four statements are categorized as having Evangelical Beliefs
  - The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe
  - It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior
  - Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin
  - Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation

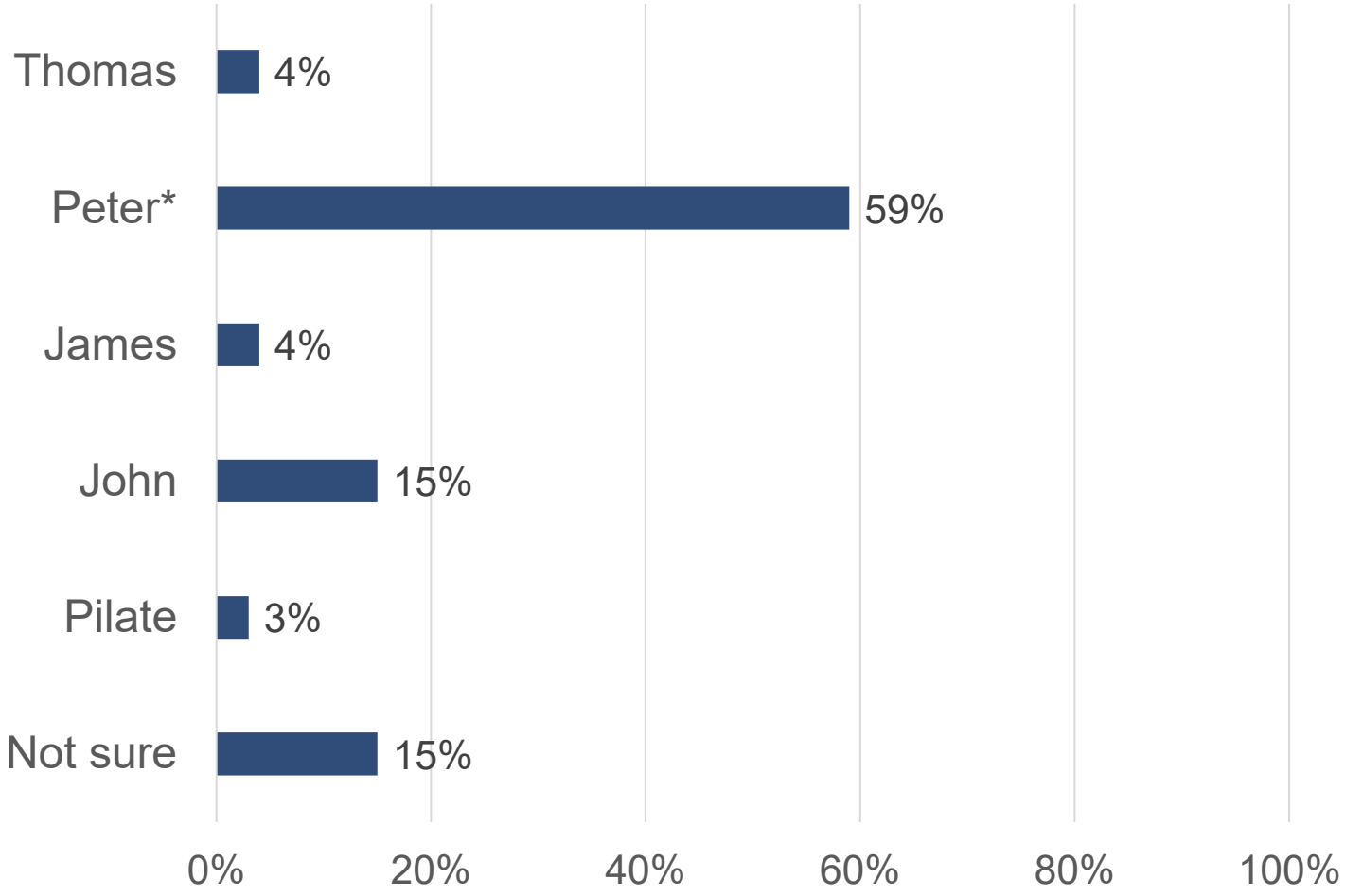
People of the Bible

A few of the questions on the survey quoted text from the Bible. Instructions and a pulldown menu allowed respondents to view these in their choice of one of five translations:

Christian Standard Bible (CSB)
English Standard Version (ESV)
New International Version (NIV)
King James Version (KJV) *default*
Revised Standard Version (RSV)

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“When Jesus asked, ‘But whom say ye that I am?’ who answered, ‘Thou art the Christ.’?”

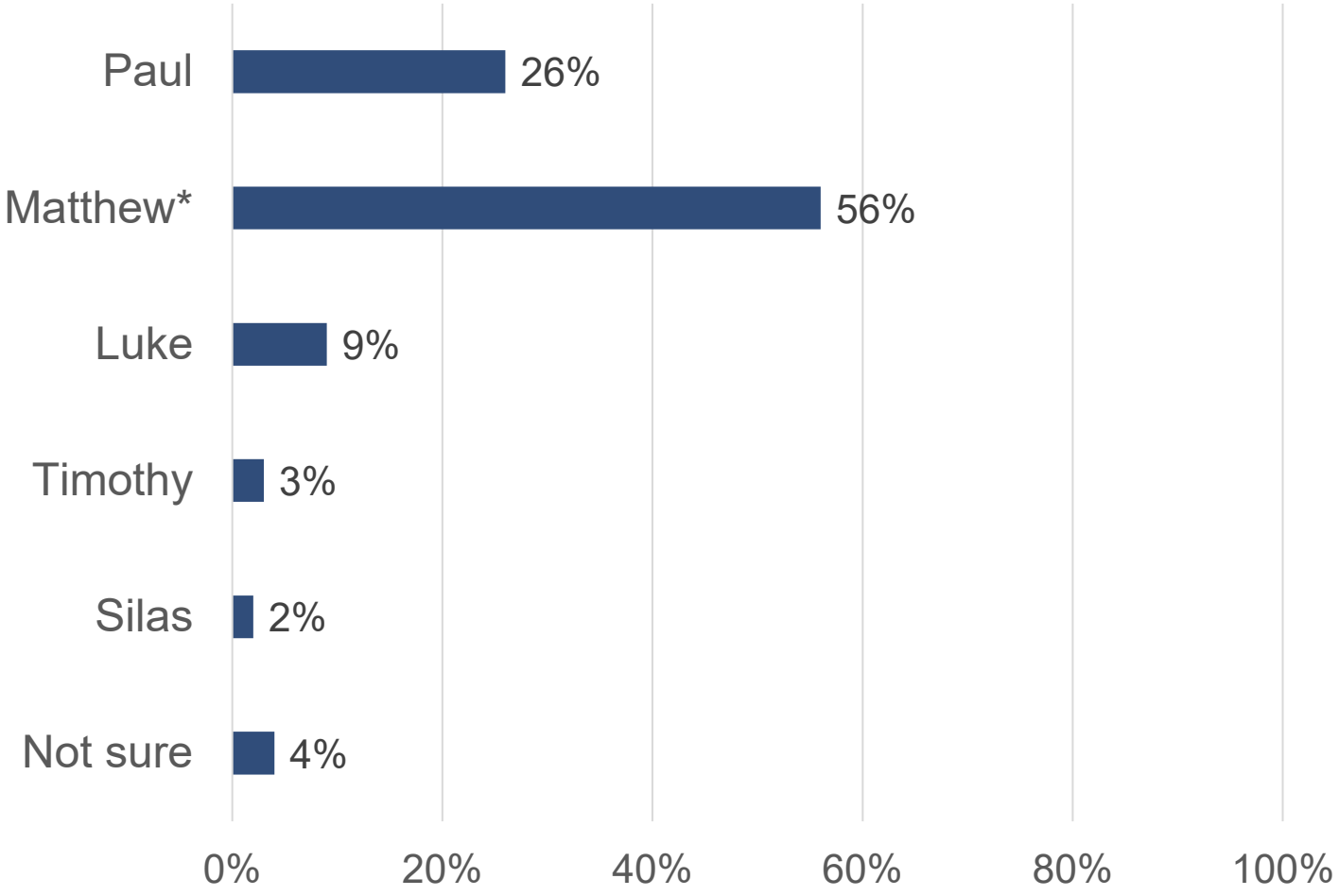


*Correct answer

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Q22: “When Jesus asked, “But whom say ye that I am?” **who** answered, “Thou art the Christ.”?” n=2,012

“Which one of the following were chosen by Jesus as one of his twelve disciples?”

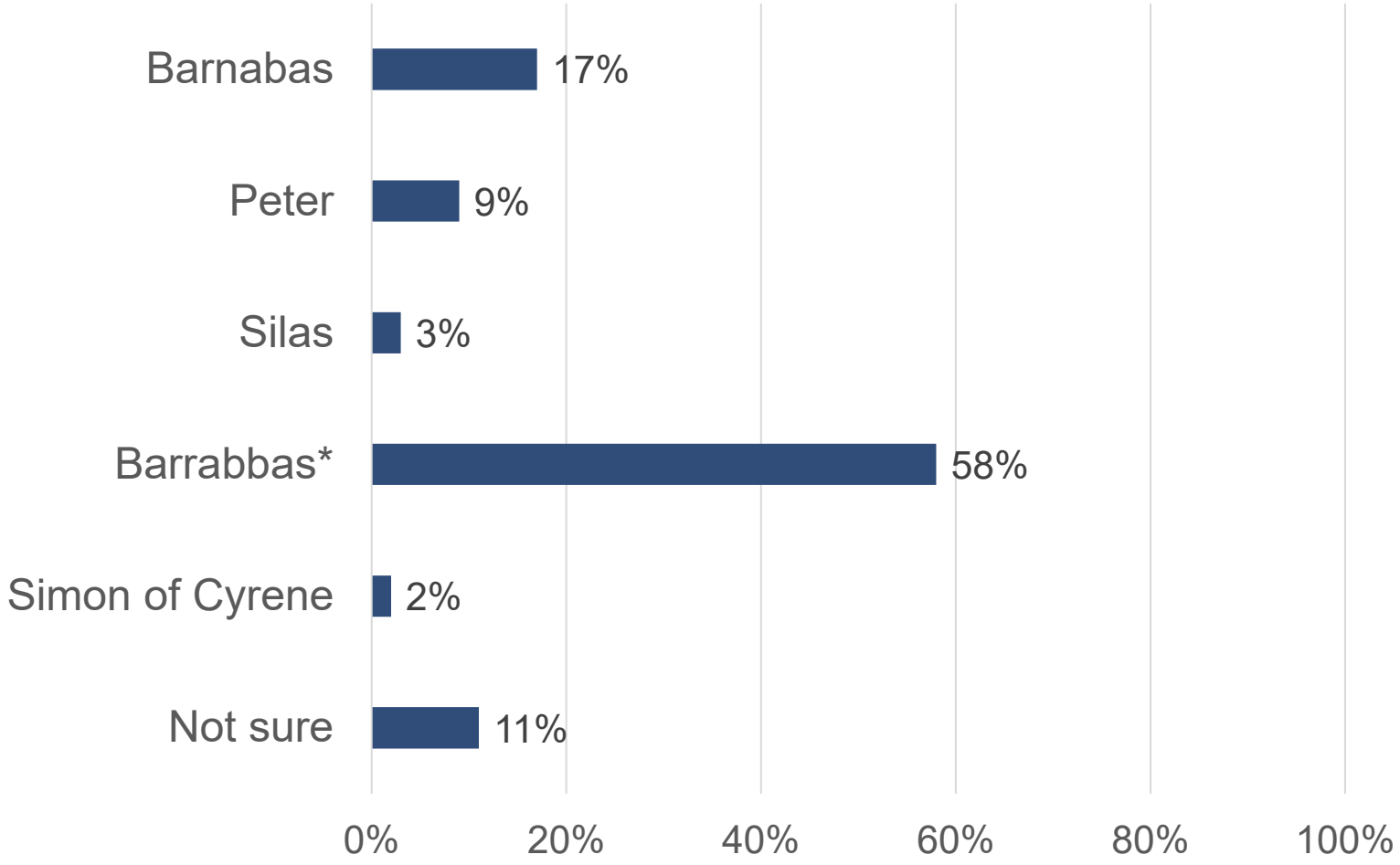


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q23: “Which one of the following were chosen by Jesus as one of his twelve disciples?” n=2,012

“Who was the person whom Pontius Pilate released during Jesus’ trial?”

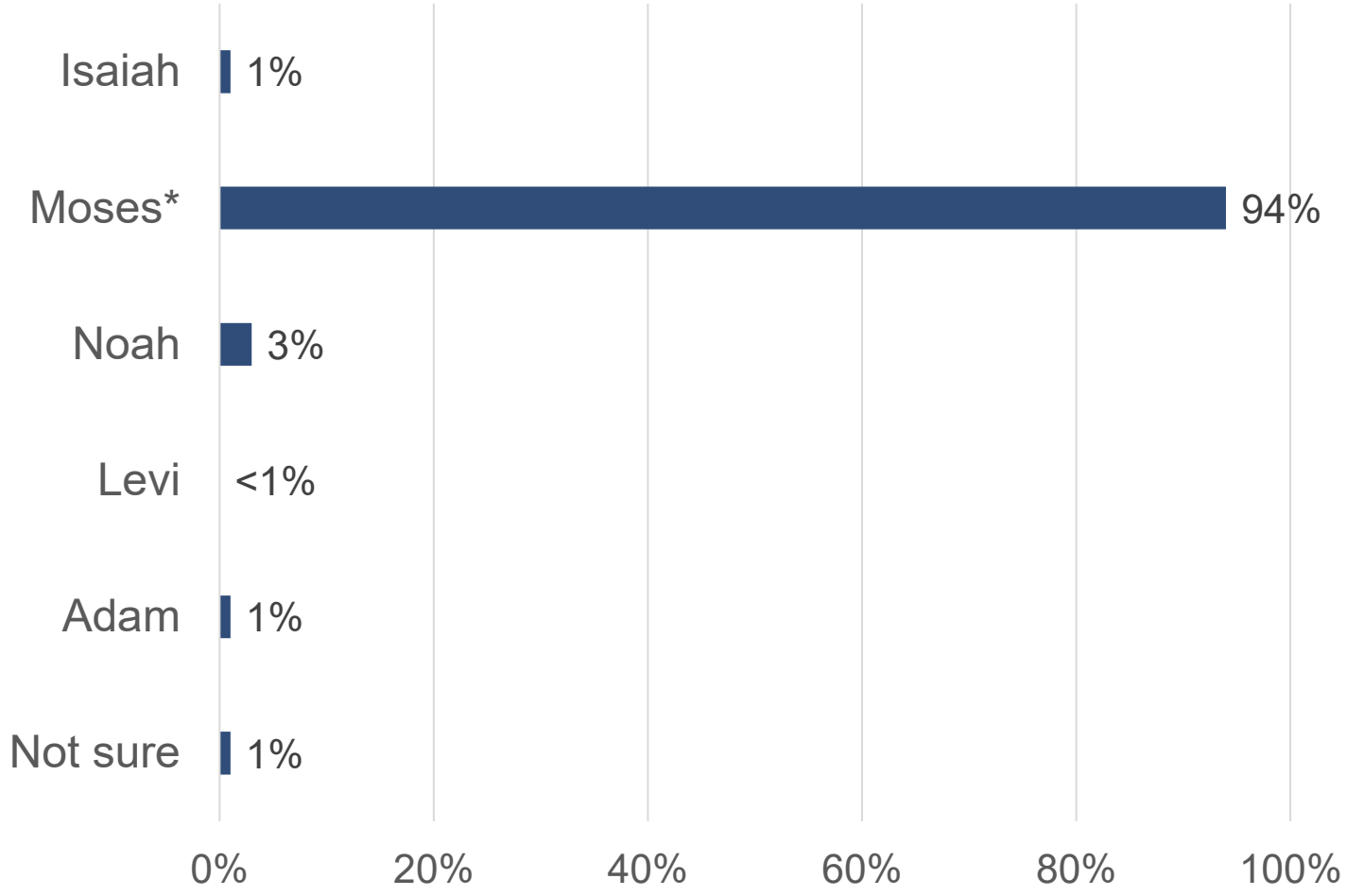


*Correct answer

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Q24: “Who was the person whom Pontius Pilate released during Jesus’ trial?” n=2,012

“Who received the 10 Commandments from God?”

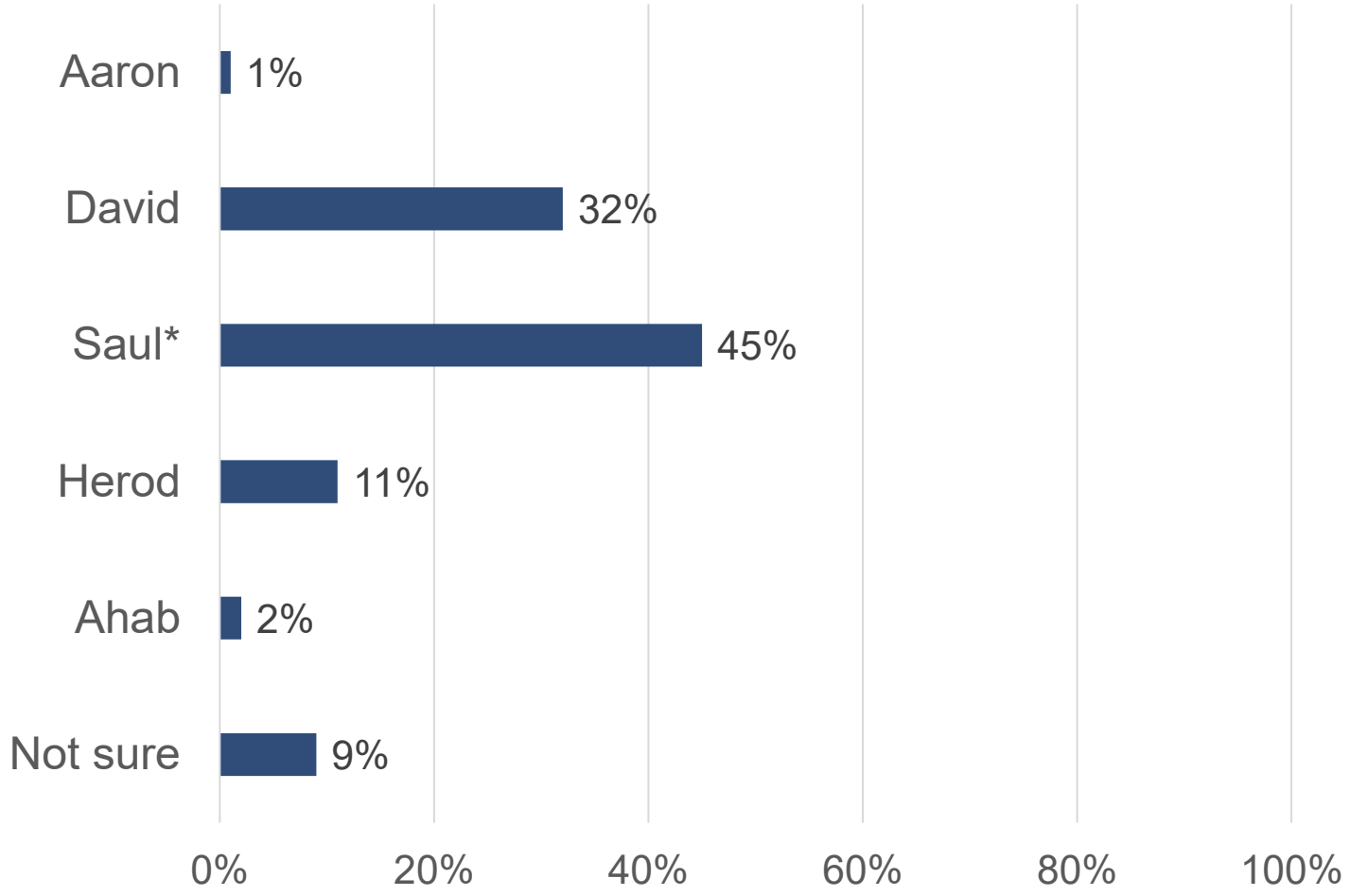


*Correct answer

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Q25: “Who received the 10 Commandments from God?” n=2,012

“Who was the first king of Israel?”

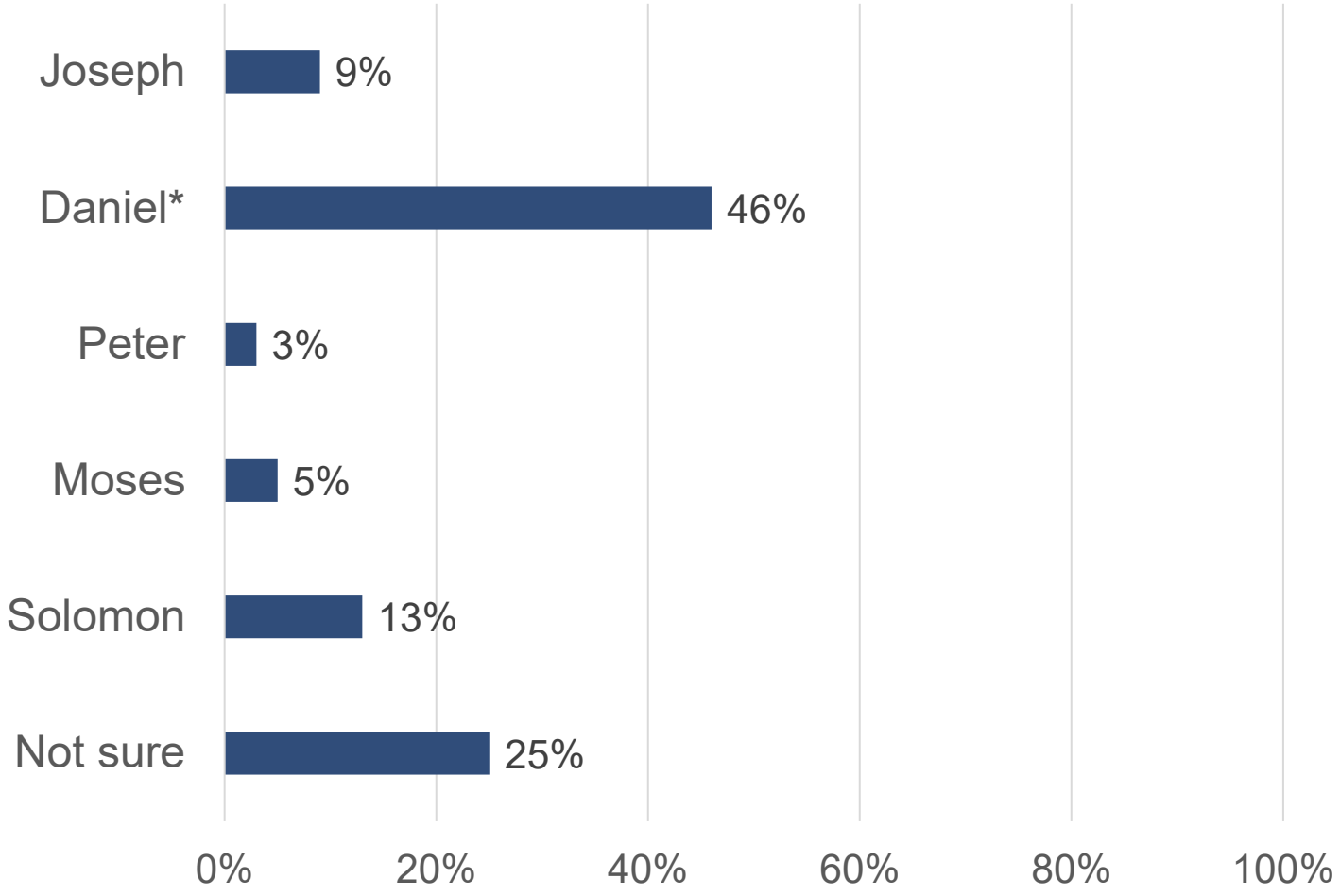


*Correct answer

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Q26: “Who was the first king of Israel?” n=2,012

“Who interpreted for King Belshazzar the writing on the wall?”



*Correct answer

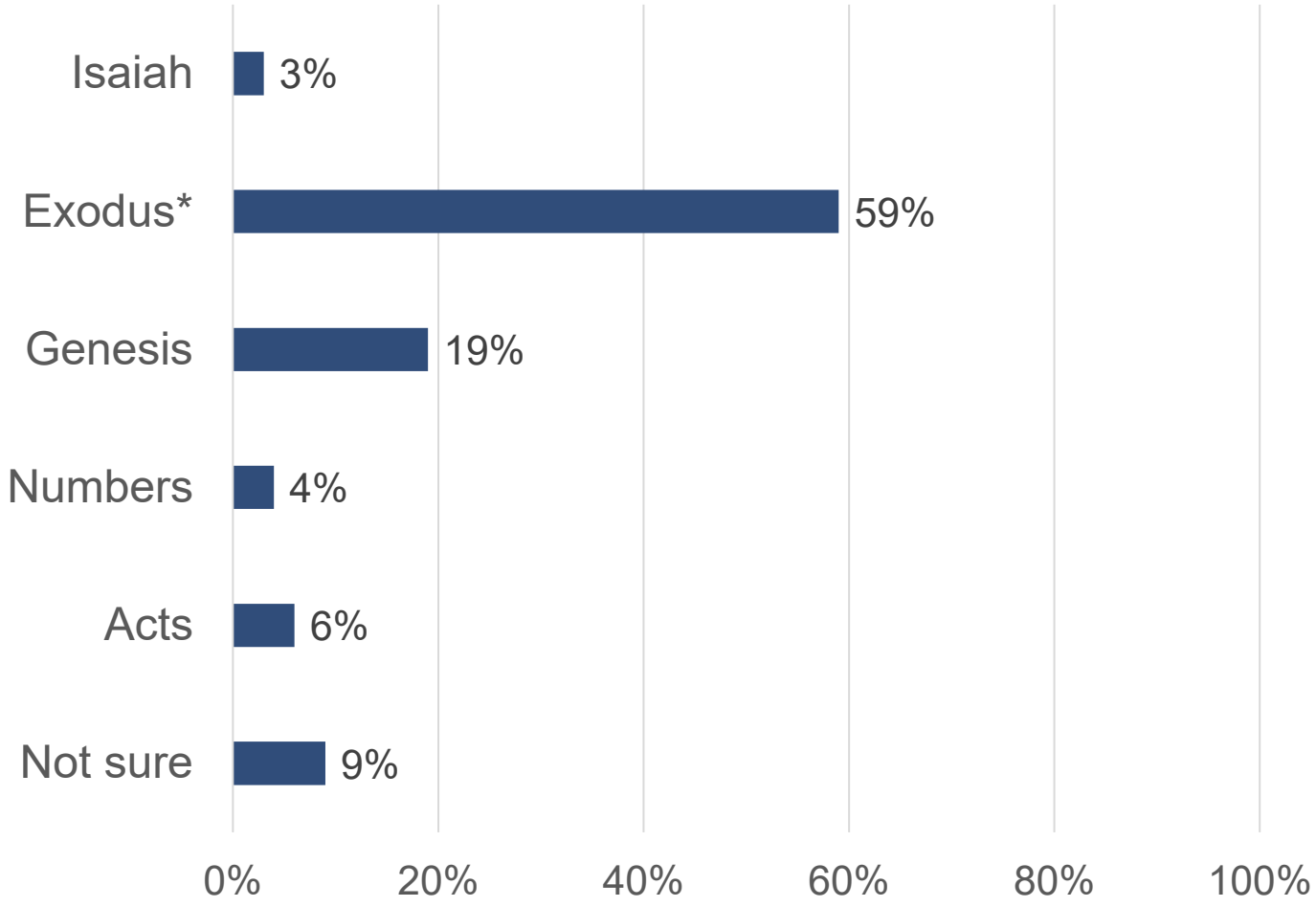
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Q27: “Who interpreted for King Belshazzar the writing on the wall?” n=2,012

Which Book of the Bible

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“Where in the Bible would you find: the Ten Commandments”

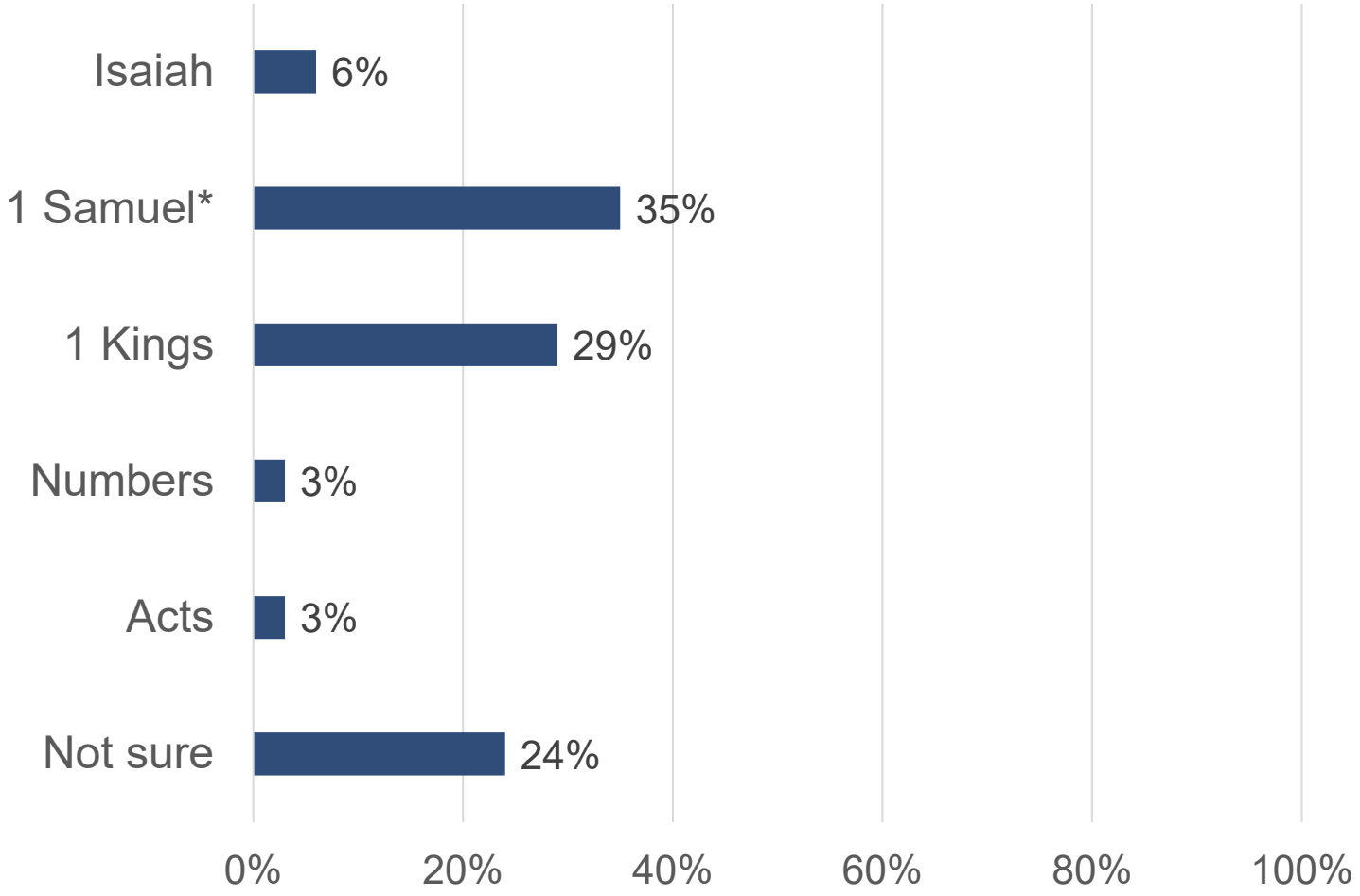


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q28: “Where in the Bible would you find: the Ten Commandments” n=2,012

“Where in the Bible would you find: the anointing of the first king of Israel”

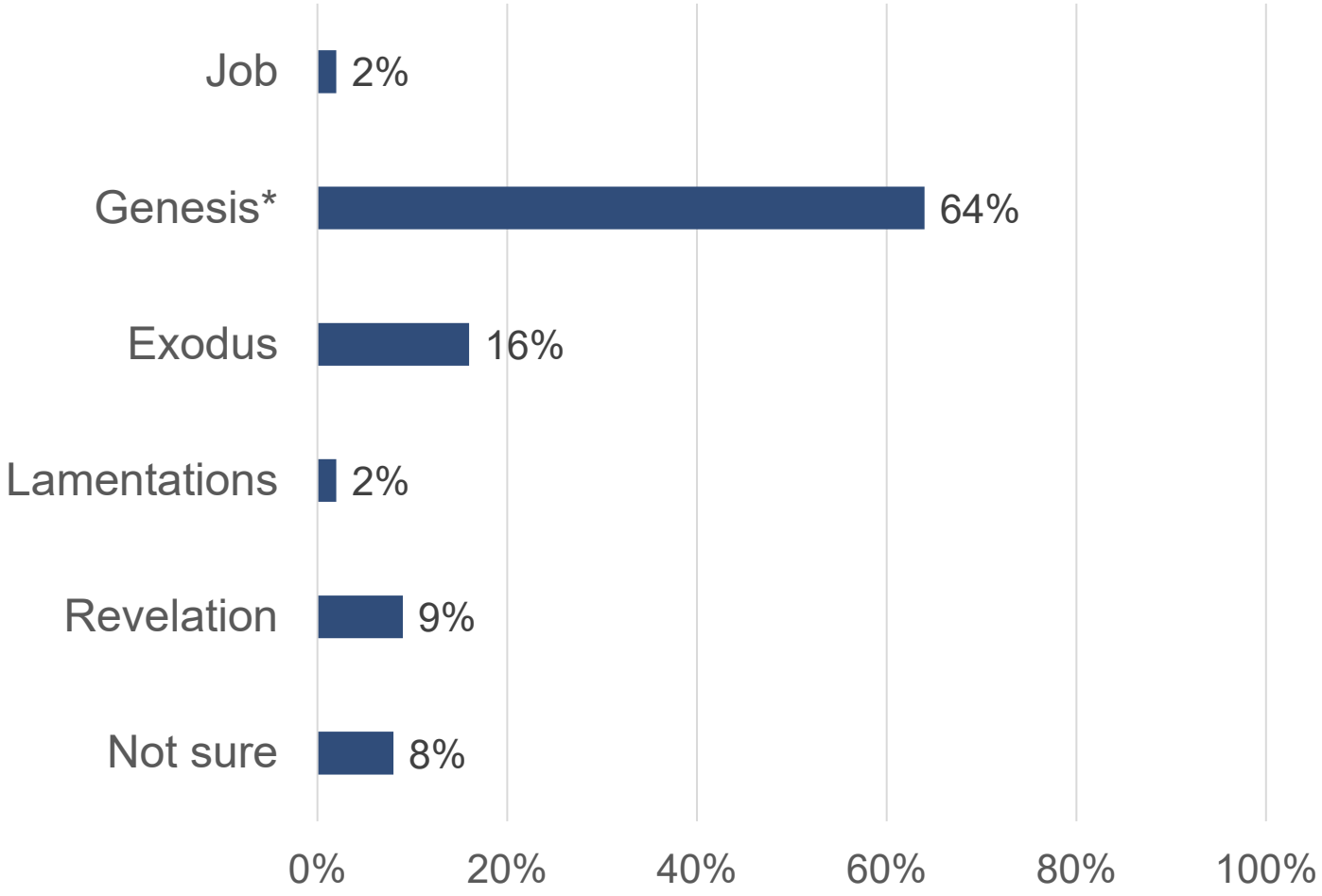


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q29: “Where in the Bible would you find: the anointing of the first king of Israel” n=2,012

“Where in the Bible would you find: The Great Flood”

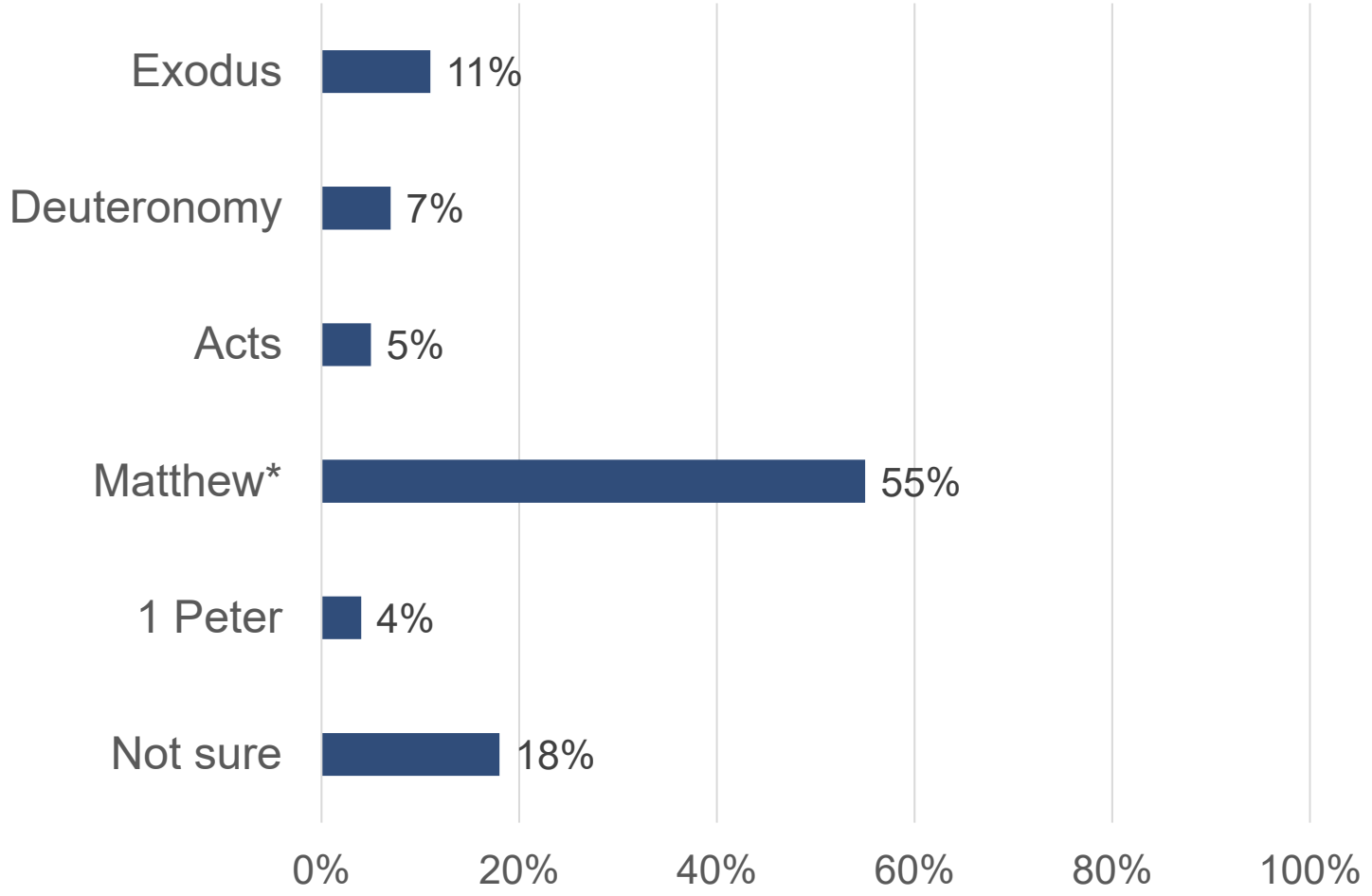


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q30: “Where in the Bible would you find: The Great Flood” n=2,012

“Where in the Bible would you find: The Sermon on the Mount”

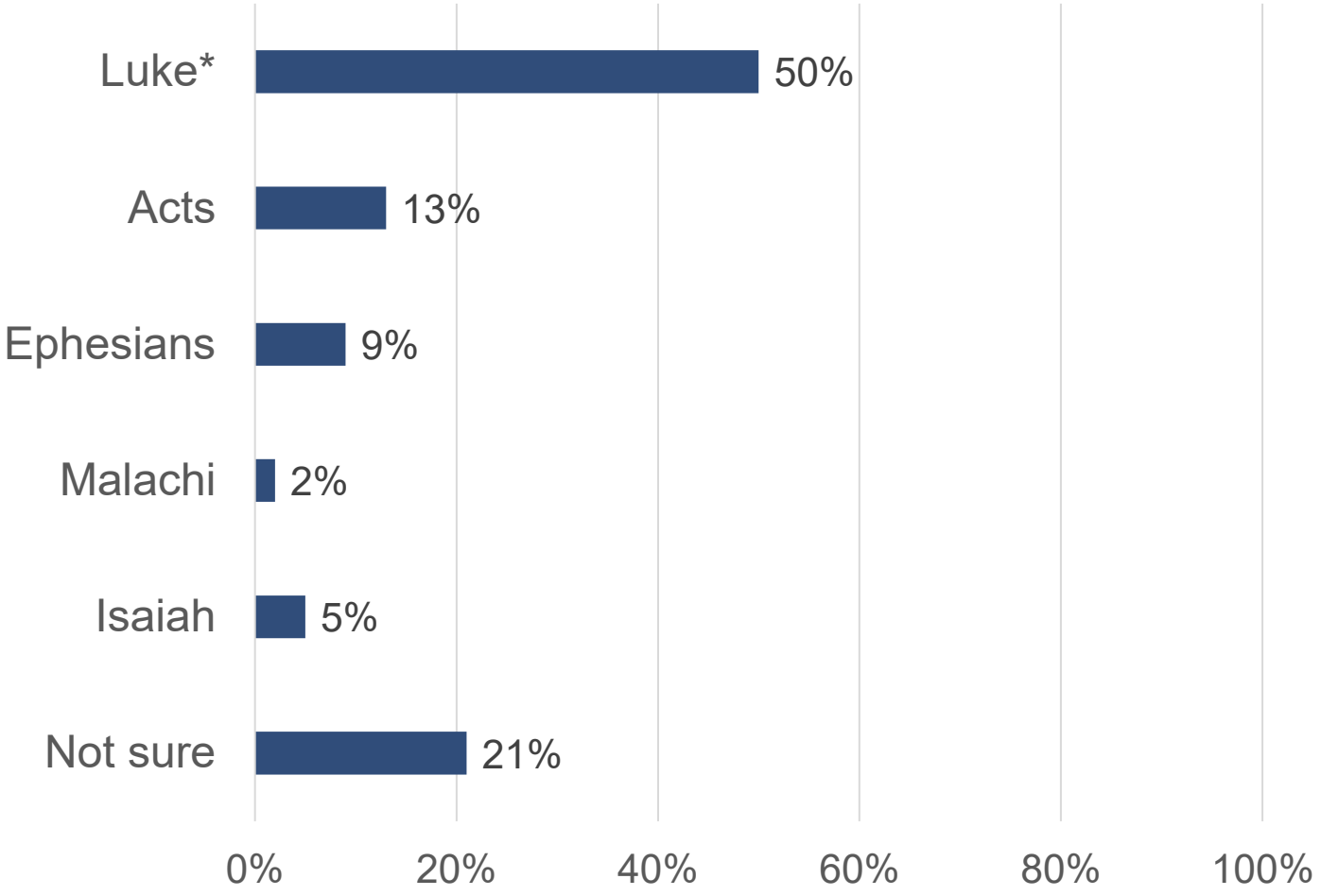


*Correct answer

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Q31: “Where in the Bible would you find: The Sermon on the Mount” n=2,012

“Where in the Bible would you find: The story of the Good Samaritan”

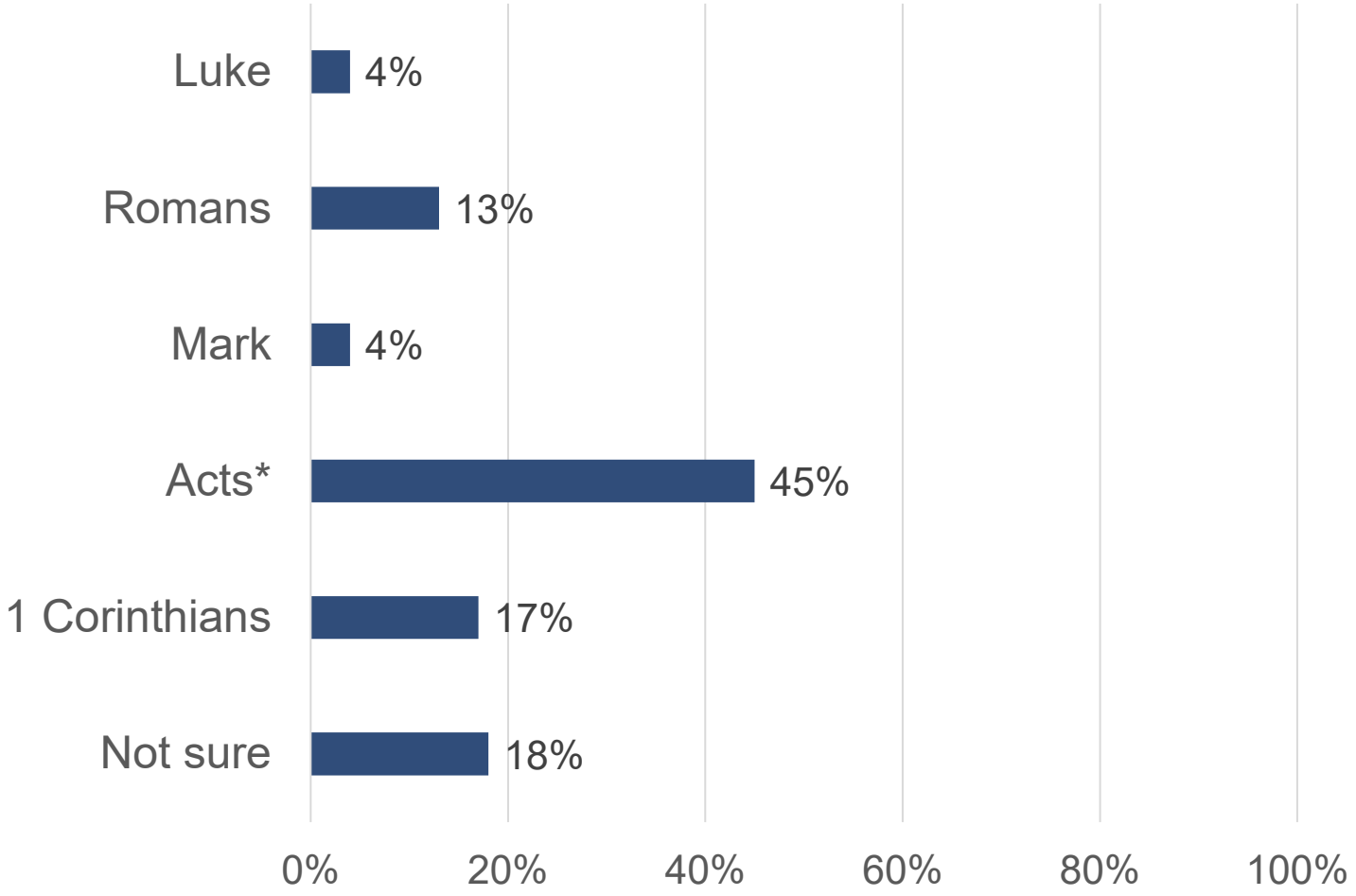


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q32: “Where in the Bible would you find: The story of the Good Samaritan” n=2,012

“Where in the Bible would you find: The story of Paul’s missionary travels”



*Correct answer

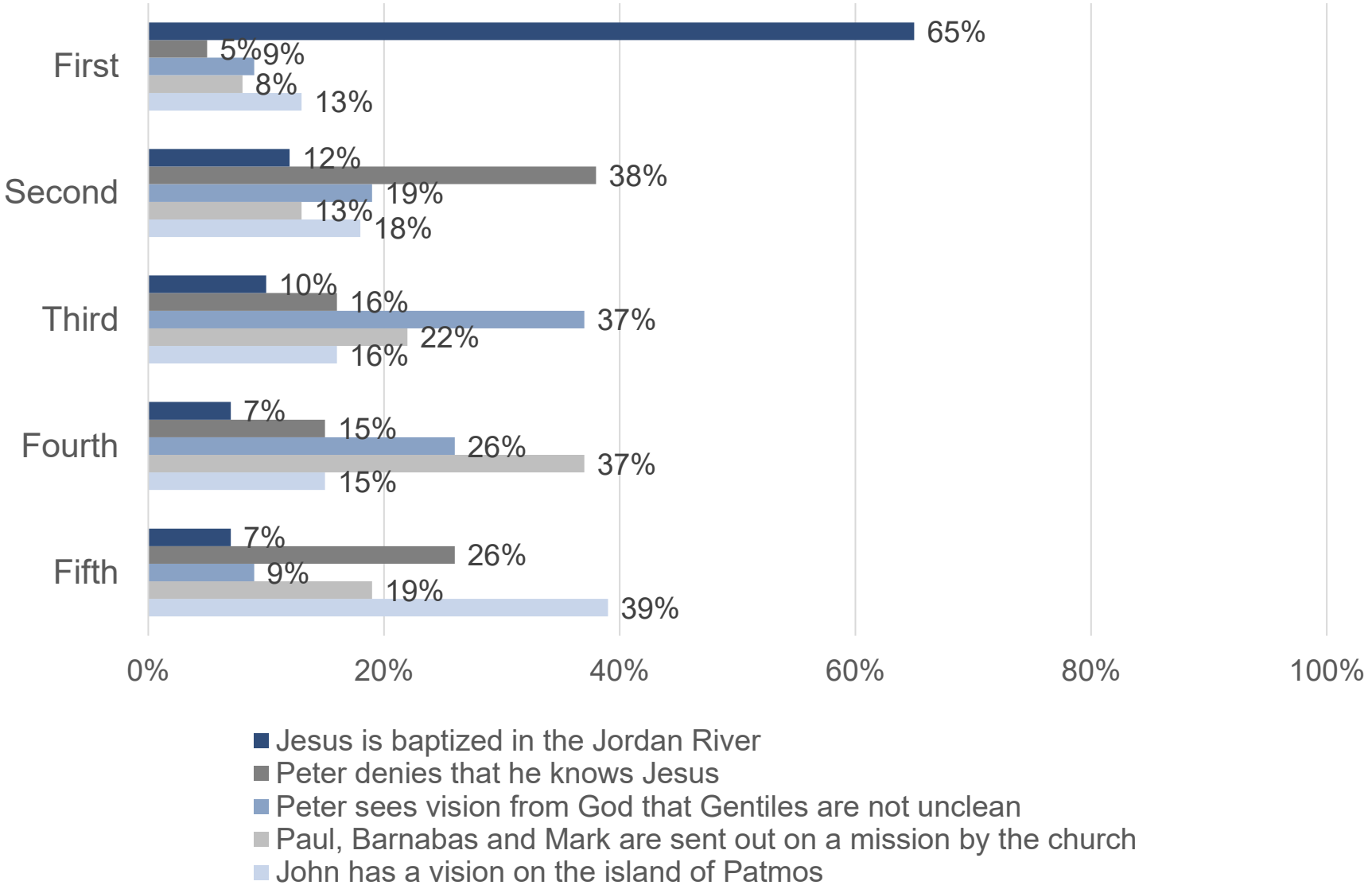
Lifeway Research

Q33: “Where in the Bible would you find: The story of Paul’s missionary travels” n=2,012

Ordering Events of the Bible

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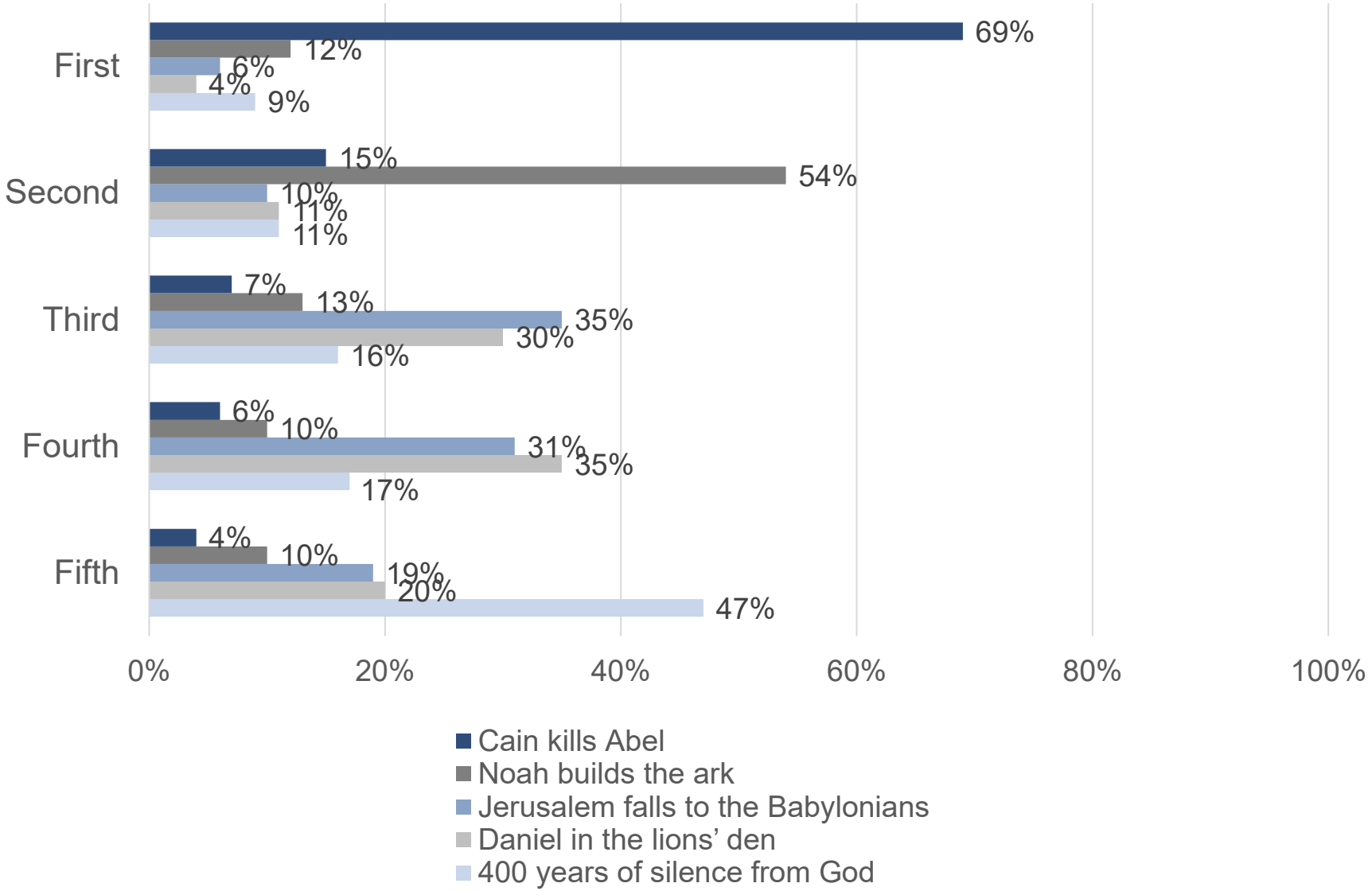
Place 5 biblical events in order (shown here in correct order)



Lifeway Research

Q34: "Place the following biblical events in the order in which they occurred (numbering 1-5)." Displayed in random order. n=2,012

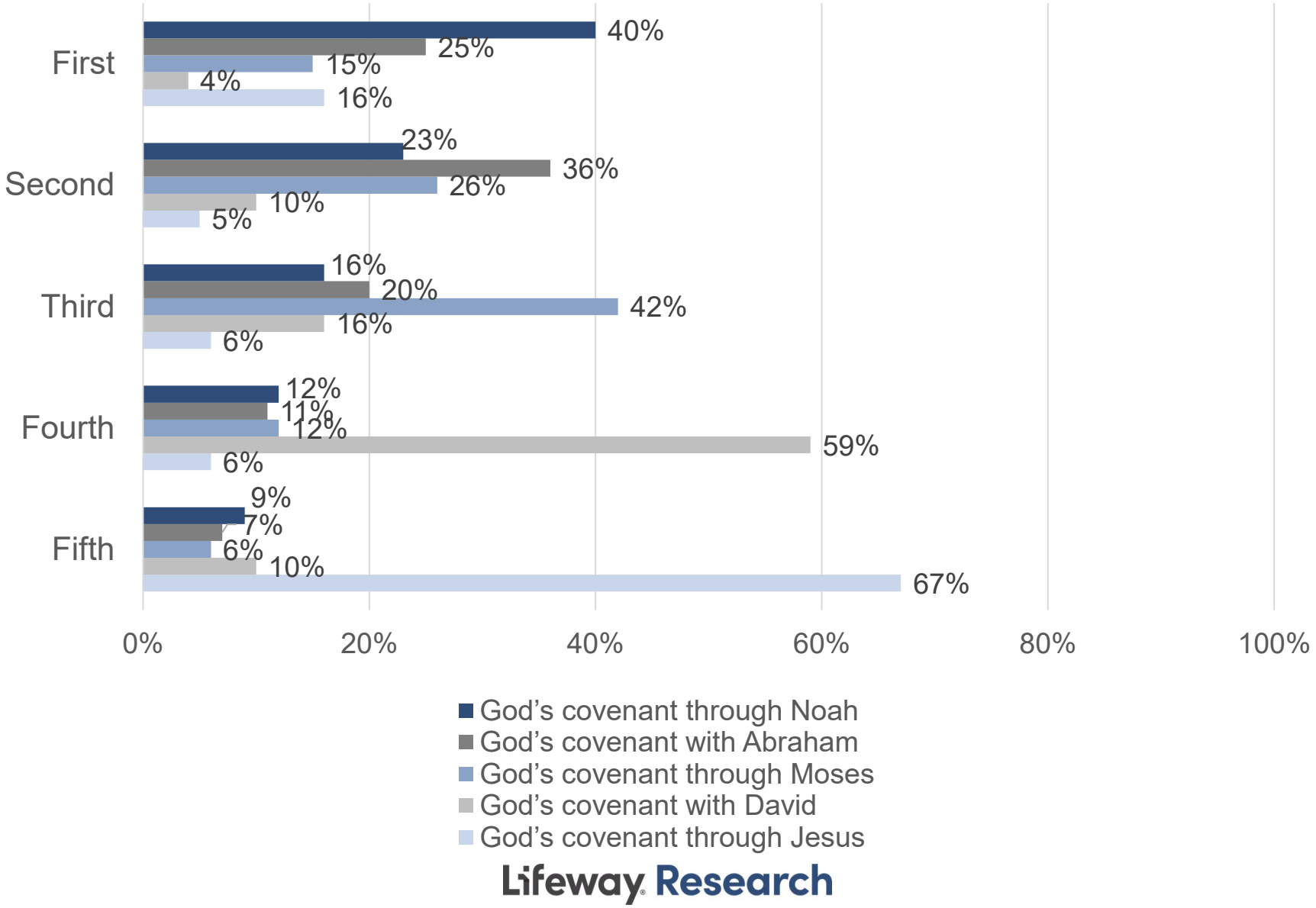
Place 5 biblical events in order (shown here in correct order)



Lifeway Research

Q35: "Place the following biblical events in the order in which they occurred (numbering 1-5)" Displayed in random order. n=2,012

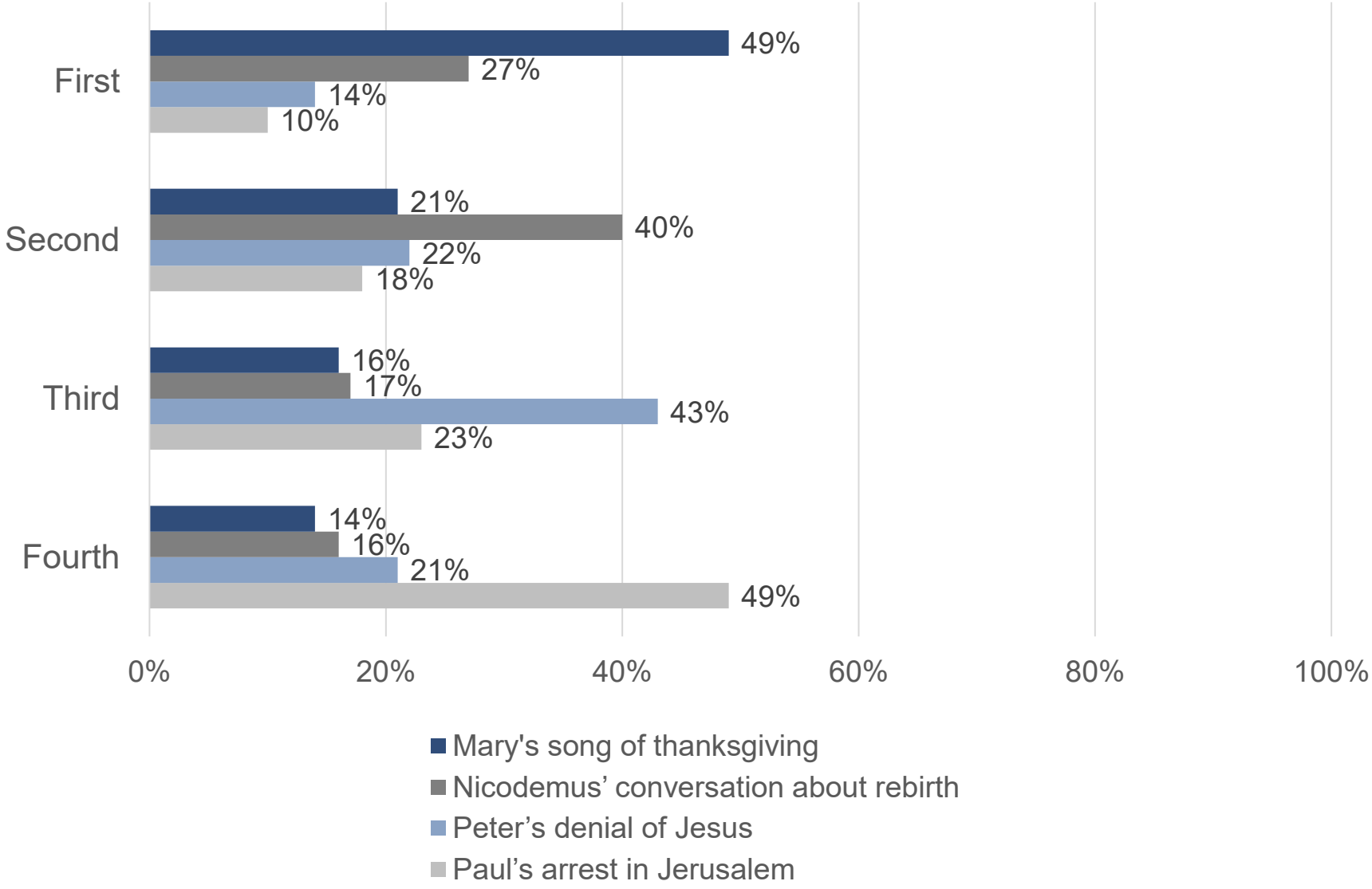
Place 5 biblical events in order (shown here in correct order)



Lifeway Research

Q36: "Place the following biblical events in the order in which they occurred (numbering 1-5)" Displayed in random order. n=2,012

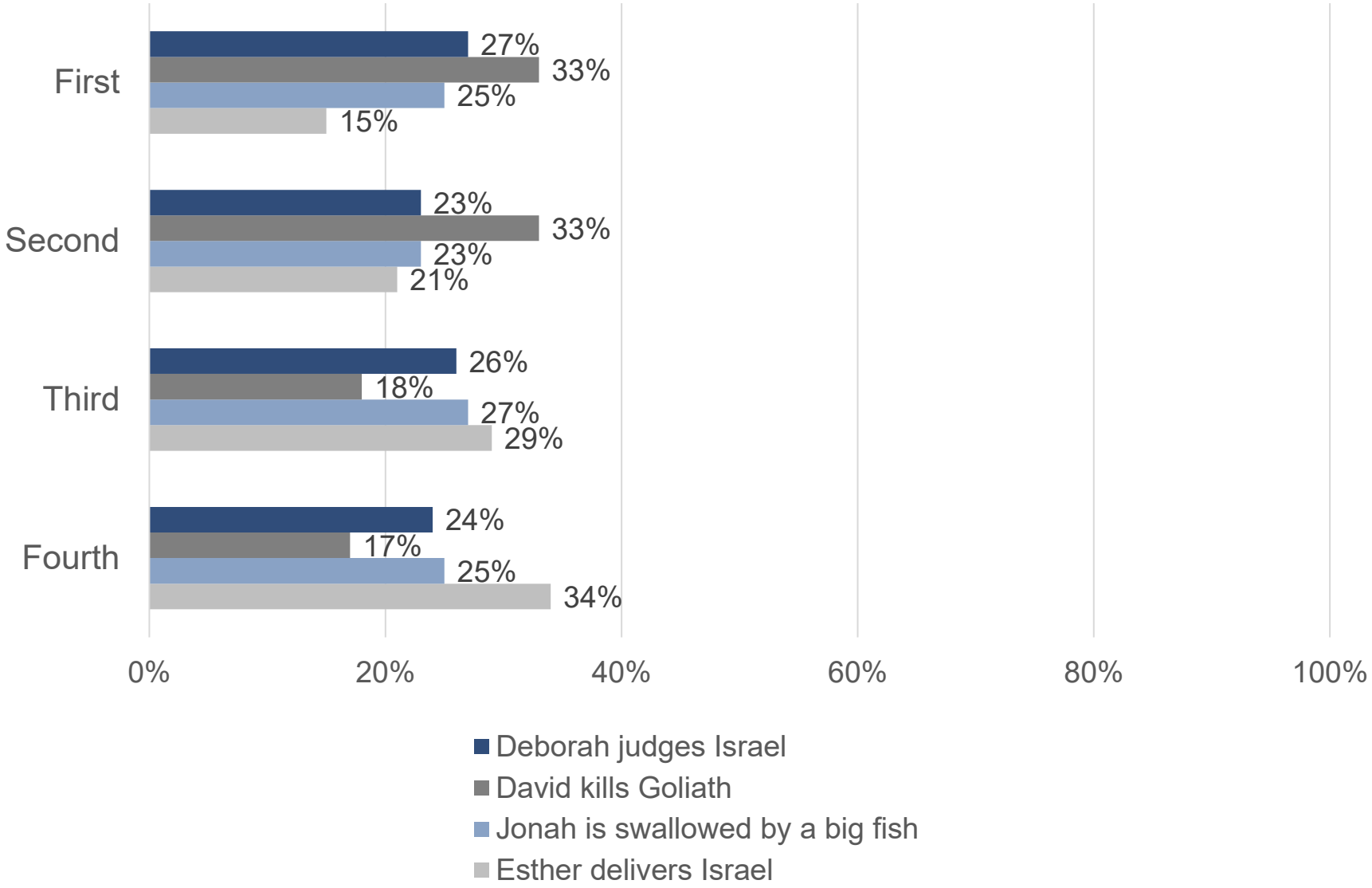
Place 4 biblical events in order (shown here in correct order)



Lifeway Research

Q37: "Place the following biblical events in the order in which they occurred (numbering 1-4)" Displayed in random order. n=2,012

Place 4 biblical events in order (shown here in correct order)



Lifeway Research

Q38: "Place the following biblical events in the order in which they occurred (numbering 1-4)" Displayed in random order. n=2,012

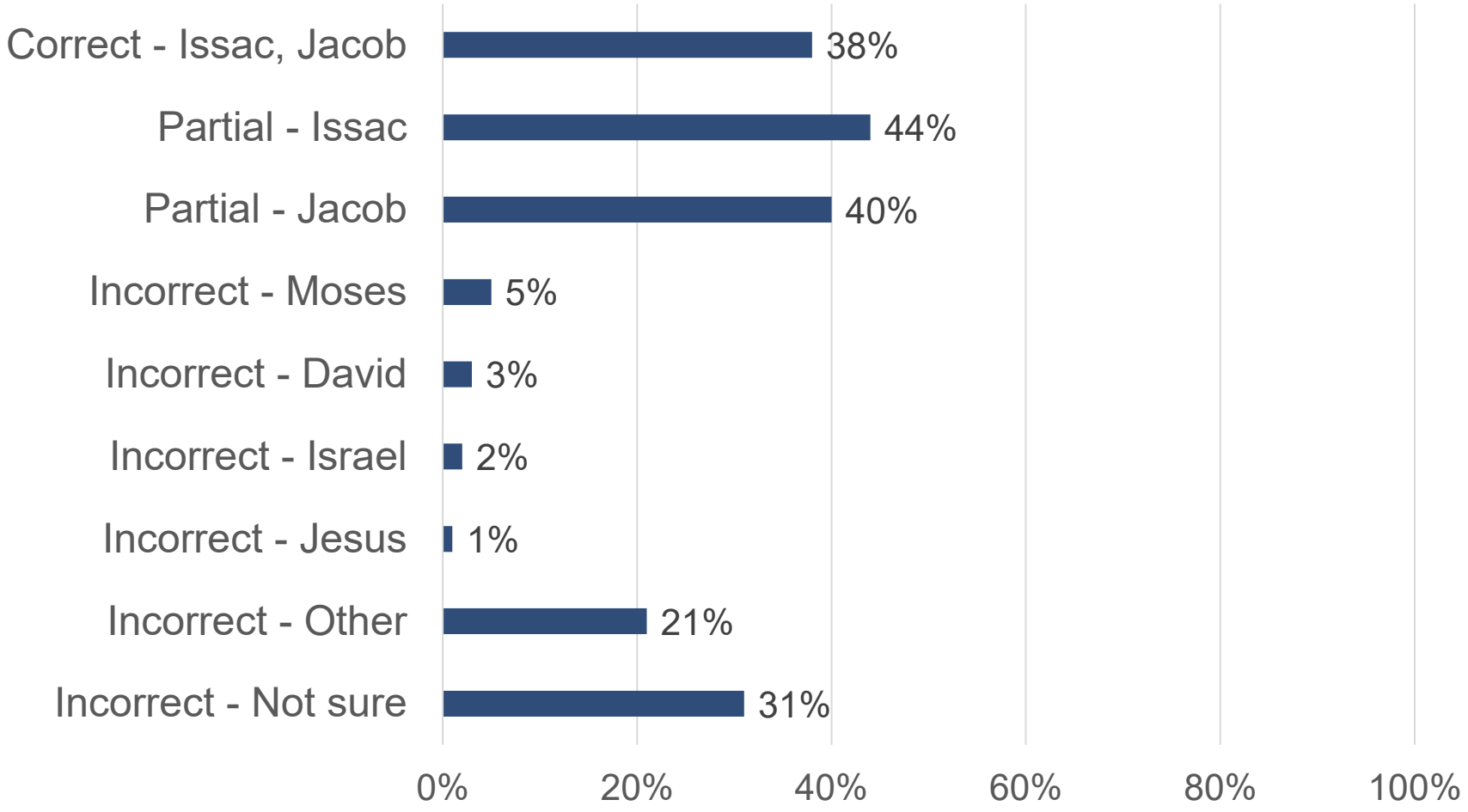
Fill in the Blank Bible Verses

A few of the questions on the survey quoted text from the Bible. Instructions and a pulldown menu allowed respondents to view these in their choice of one of five translations:

Christian Standard Bible (CSB)
English Standard Version (ESV)
New International Version (NIV)
King James Version (KJV) *default*
Revised Standard Version (RSV)

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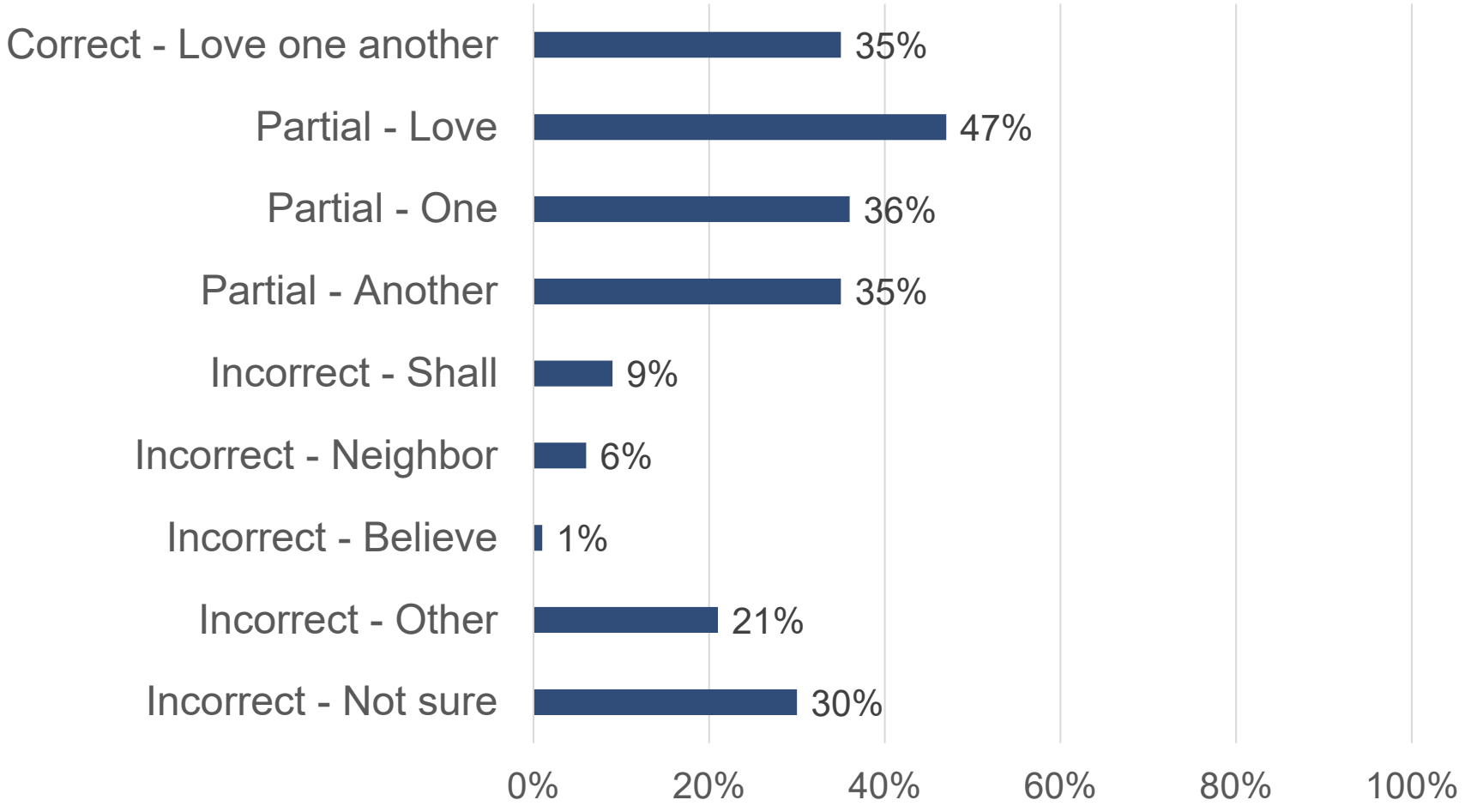
“the God of Abraham, of _____, and of _____”



Lifeway Research

Q39: ““the God of Abraham, of _____, and of _____ (2 words)” *Example reference not shown Exodus 3:16* n=2,012

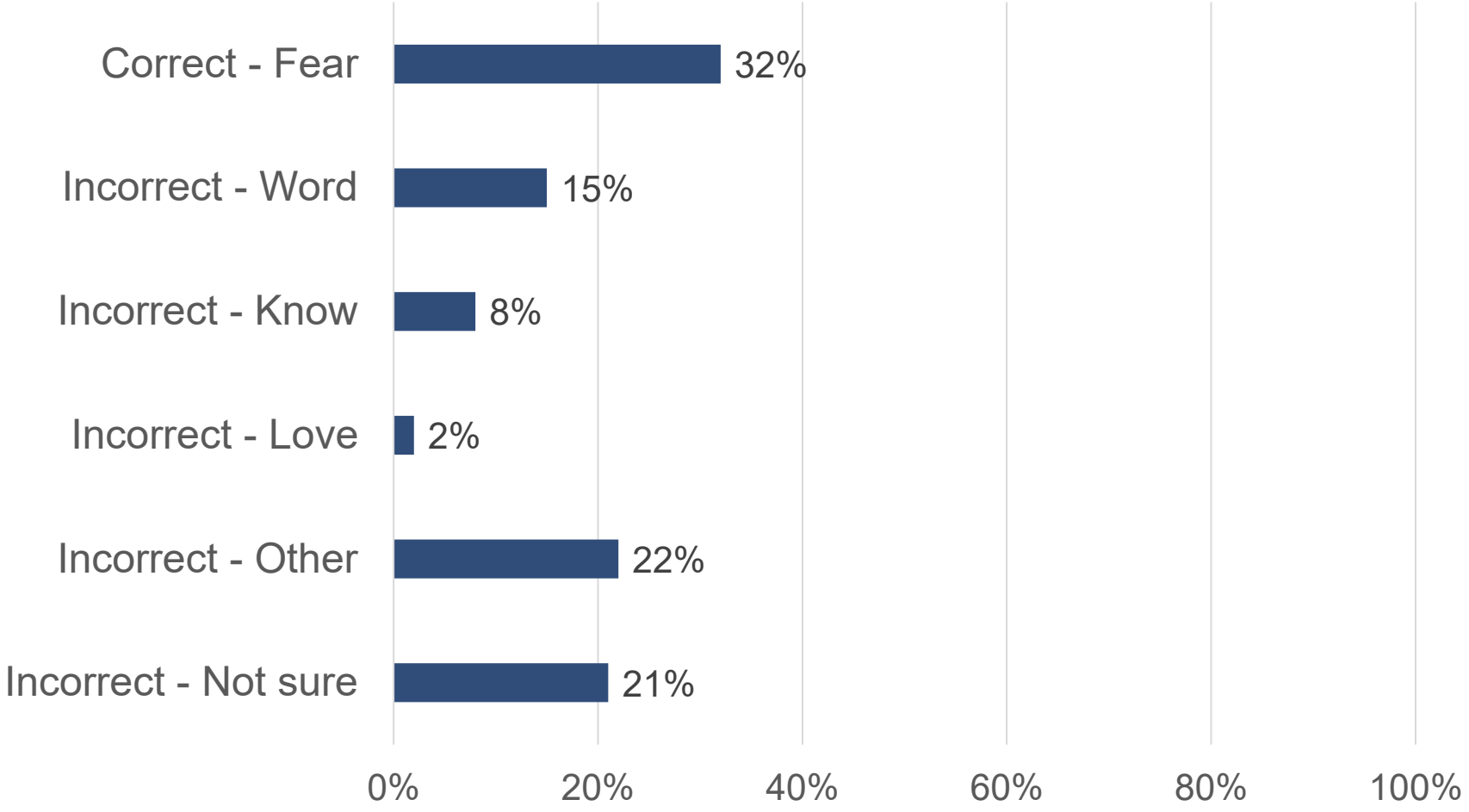
“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye_____ _____ _____”



Lifeway Research

Q40: ““A new commandment I give unto you, That ye_____ _____ _____ (3 words)” *Reference not shown John 13:34* n=2,012

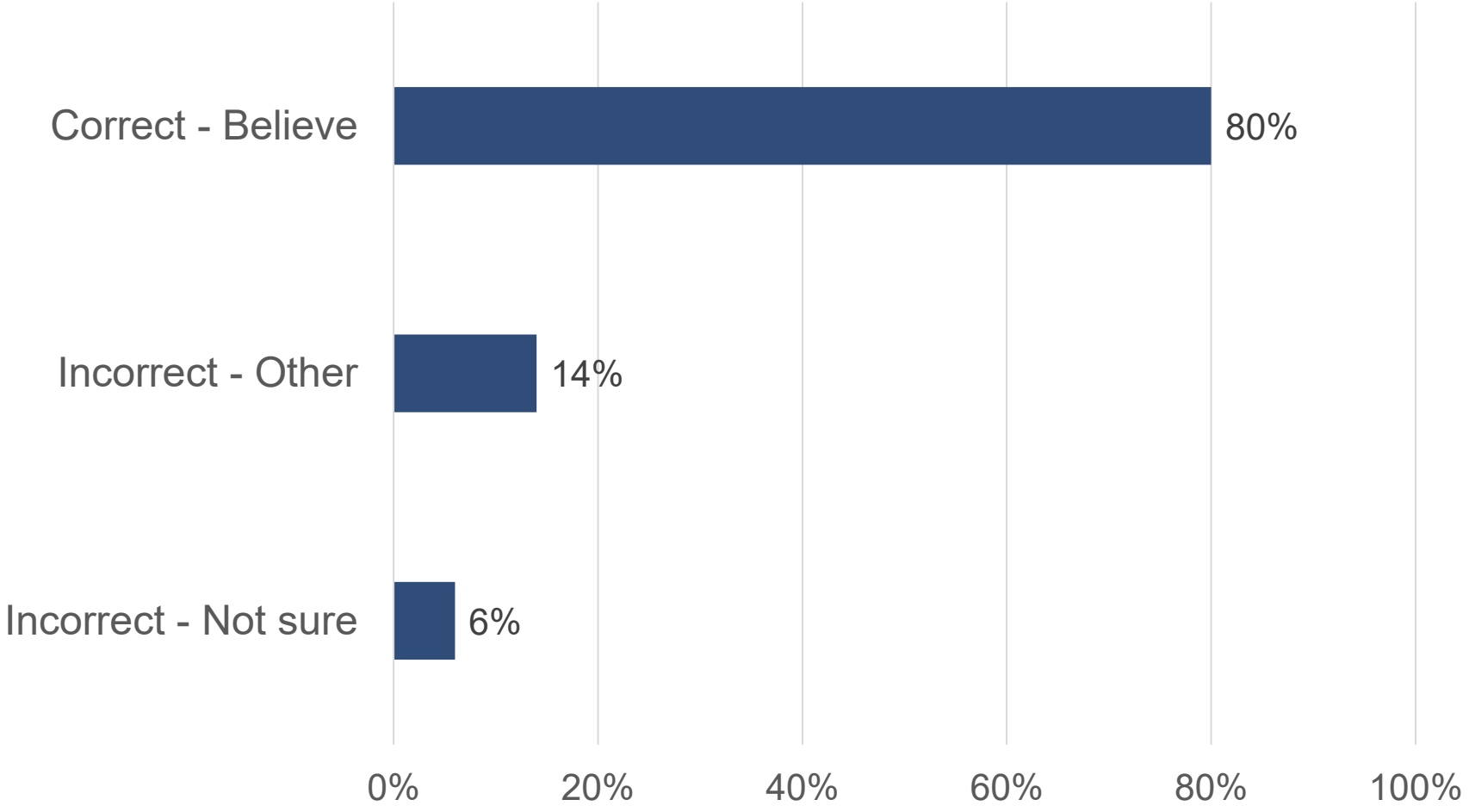
“The _____ of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: And the knowledge of the holy is understanding.”



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Q41: ““The _____ of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: And the knowledge of the holy is understanding. (1 word)” *Reference not shown Proverbs 9:10* n=2,012

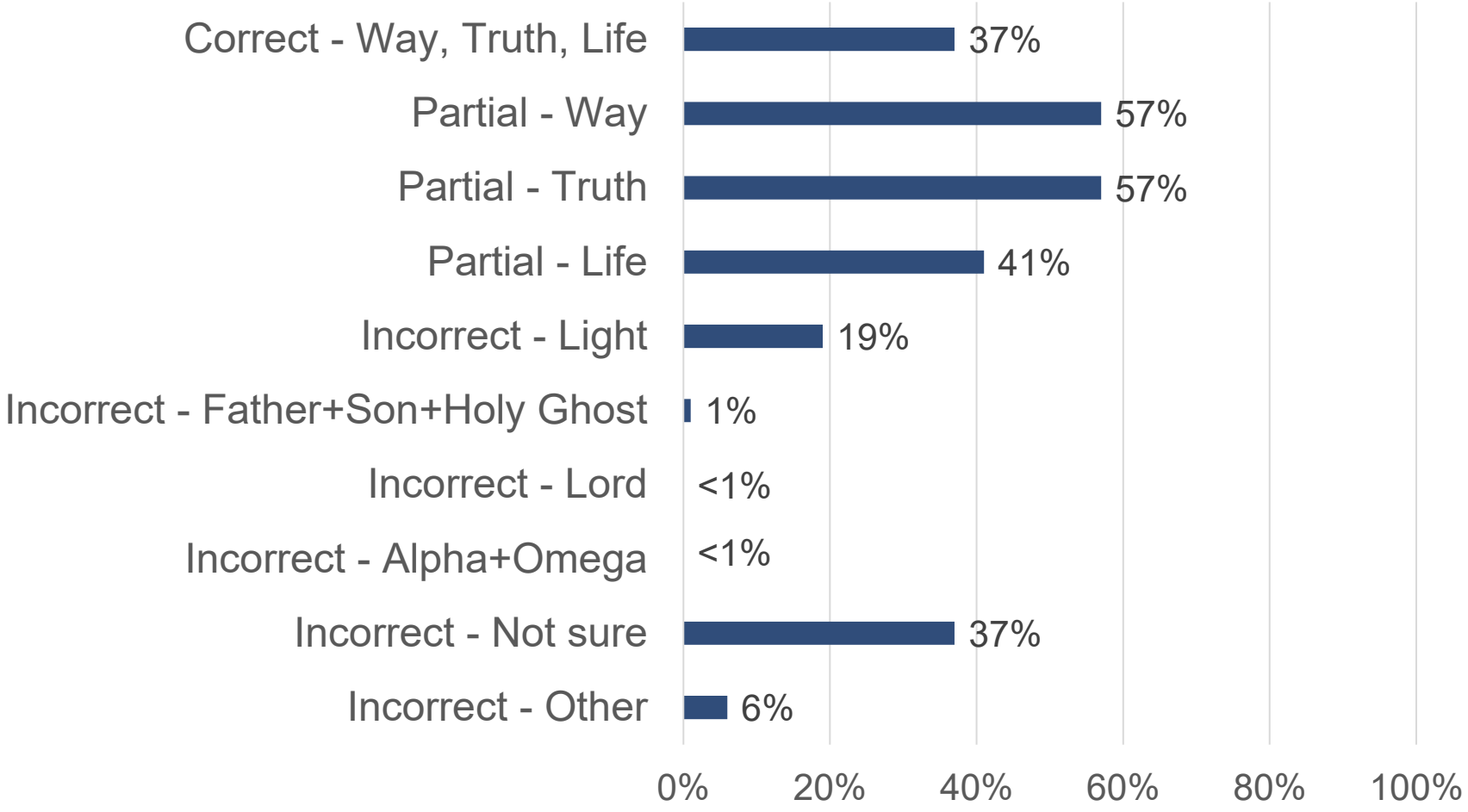
“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever _____ in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”



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Q42: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever _____ in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (1 word)” *Reference not shown John 3:16* n=2,012

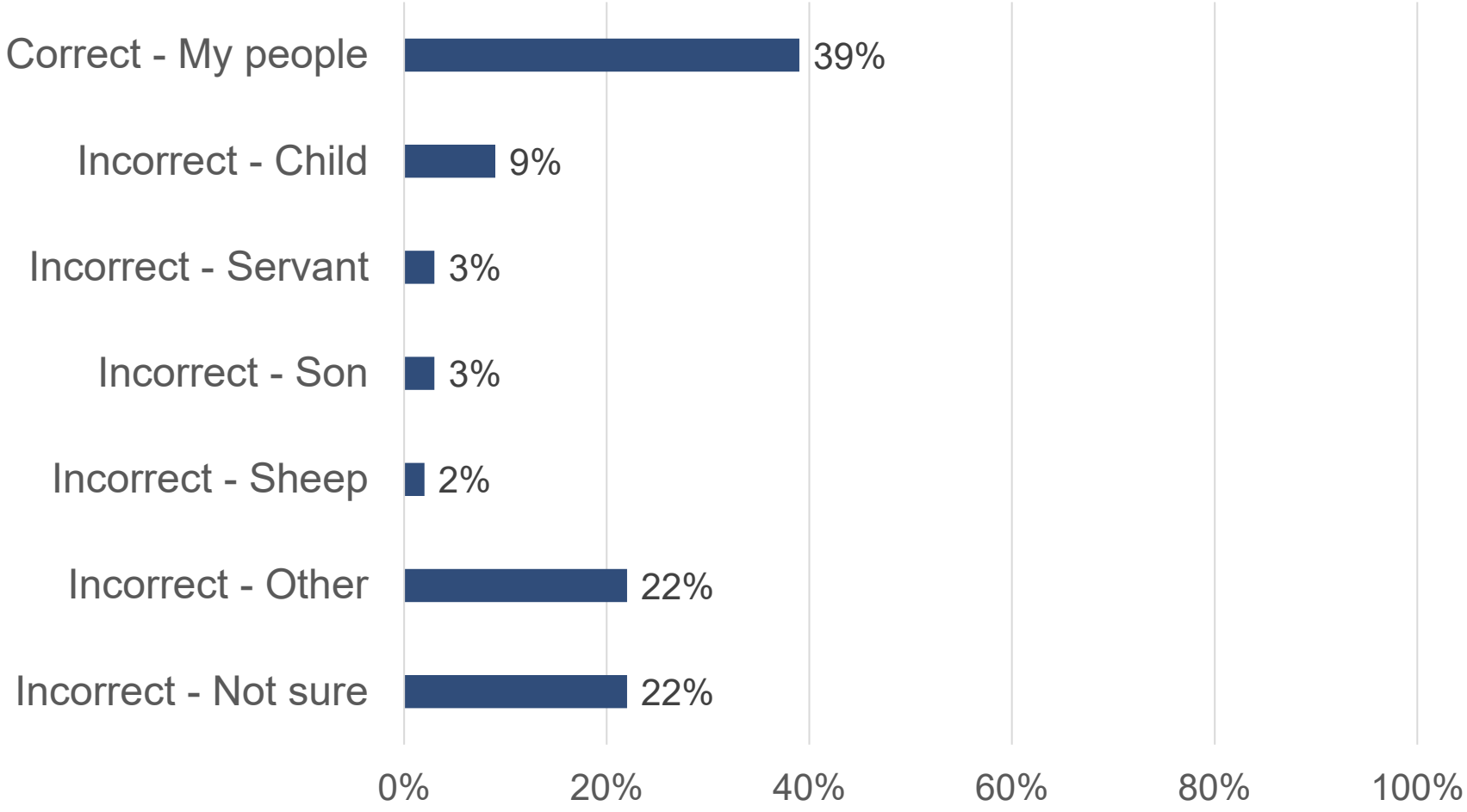
“Jesus saith unto him, “I am the _____, the _____, and the _____: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”



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Q43: “Jesus saith unto him, “I am the _____, the _____, and the _____: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (3 words)”
Reference not shown John 14:6 n=2,012

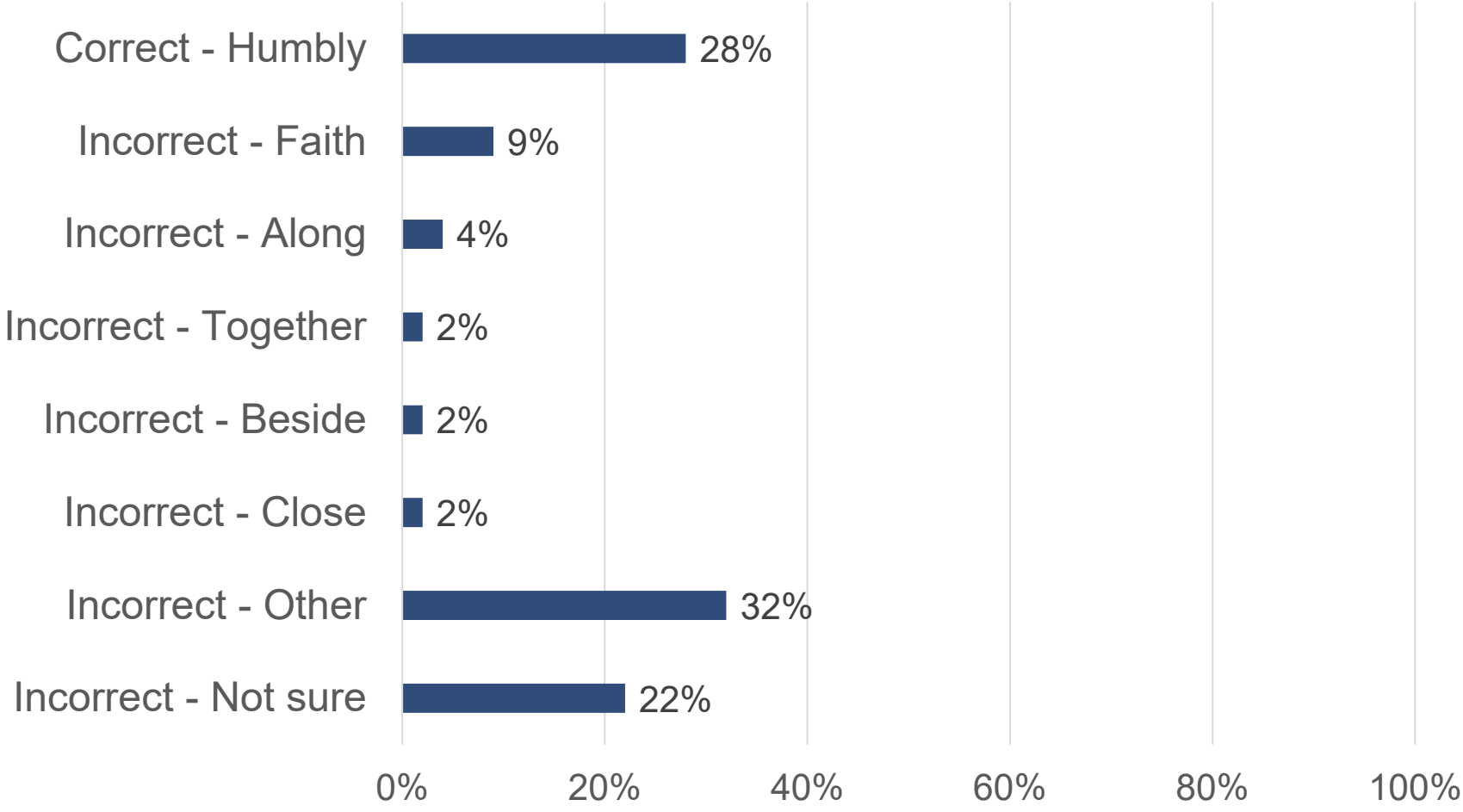
“I will be your God, and ye shall be ____ _____.”



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Q44: “I will be your God, and ye shall be _____ _____ (2 words)” *Example reference not shown Jeremiah 7:23* n=2,012

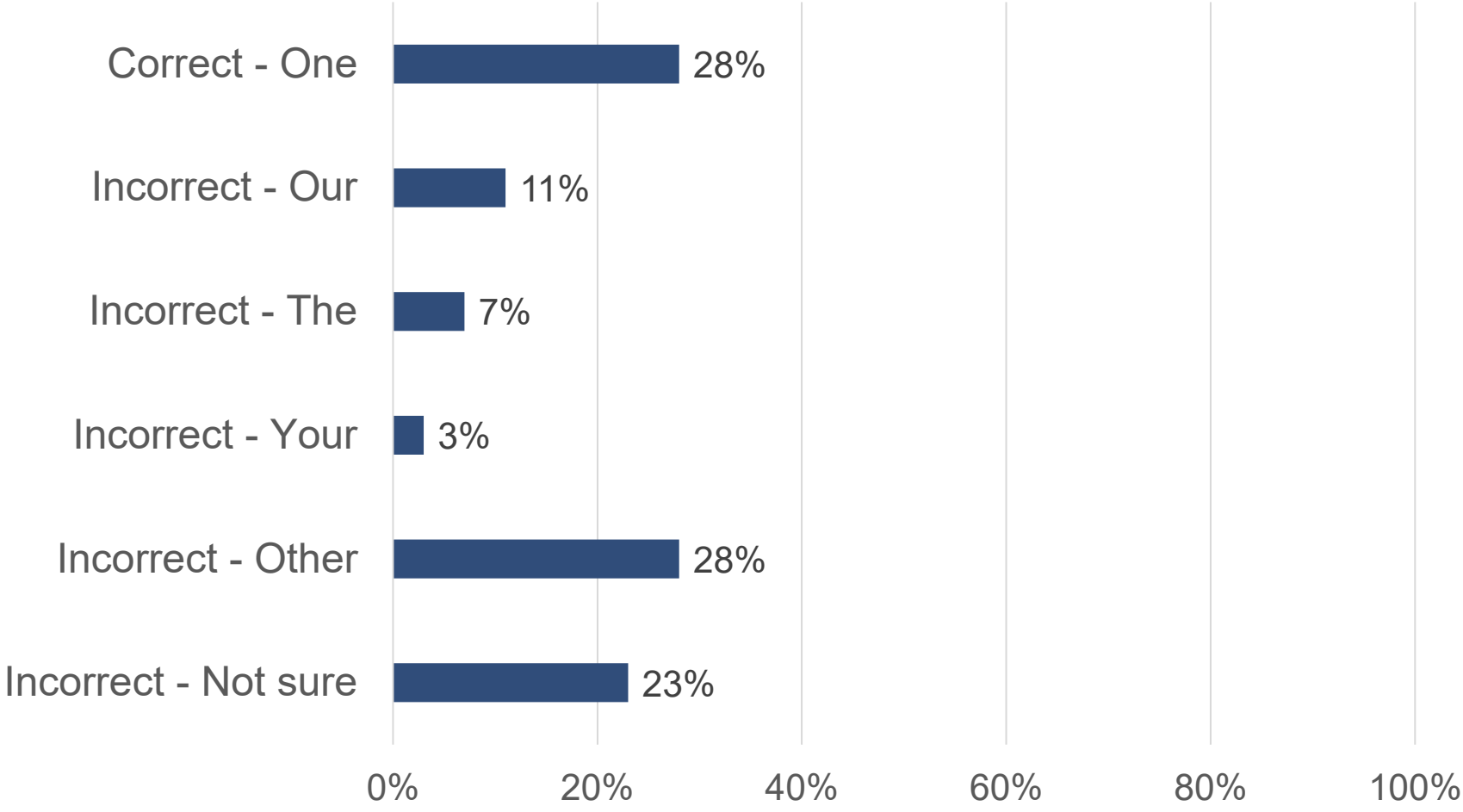
“and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to act justly, and to love mercy, and to walk _____ with thy God?”



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Q45: “and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to act justly, and to love mercy, and to walk _____ with thy God? (1 word)”
Reference not shown Micah 6:8 n=2,012

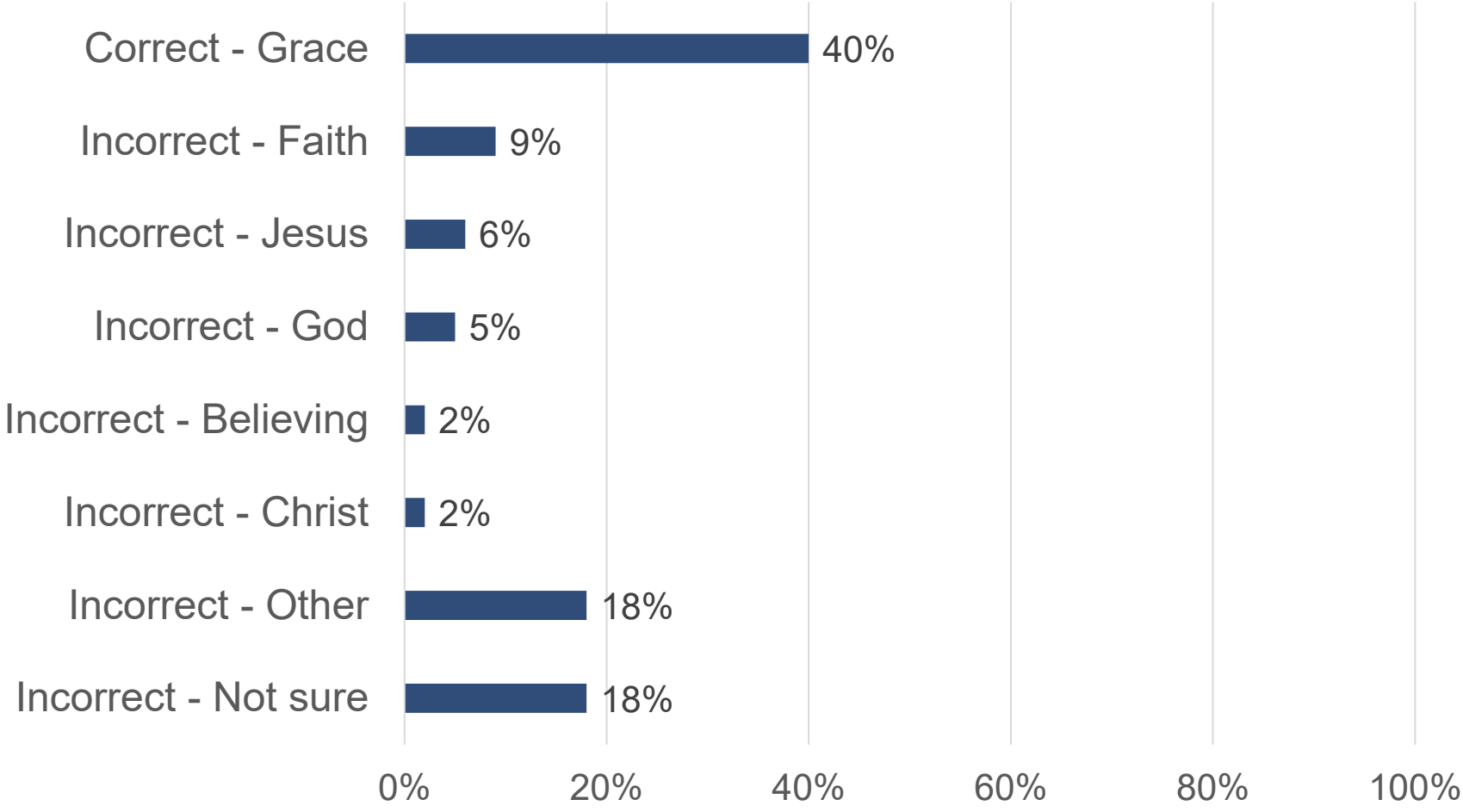
“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is _____ LORD.”



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Q46: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is _____ LORD. (1 word)” *Reference not shown Deuteronomy 6:4* n=2,012

“For by _____ are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves…”



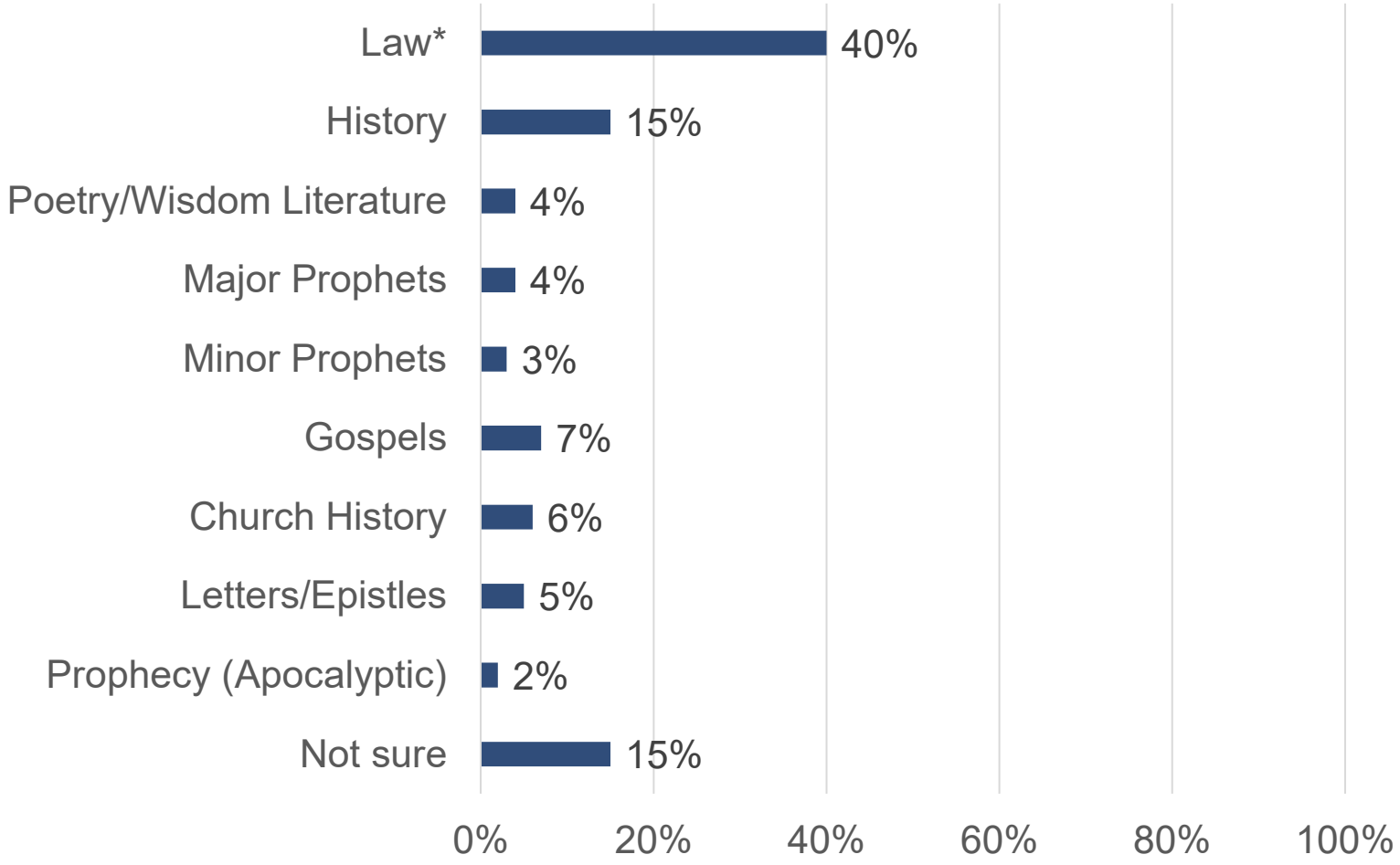
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Q47: “For by _____ are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves… (1 word)” *Reference not shown Ephesians 2:8* n=2,012

Which Division of the Bible

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Deuteronomy

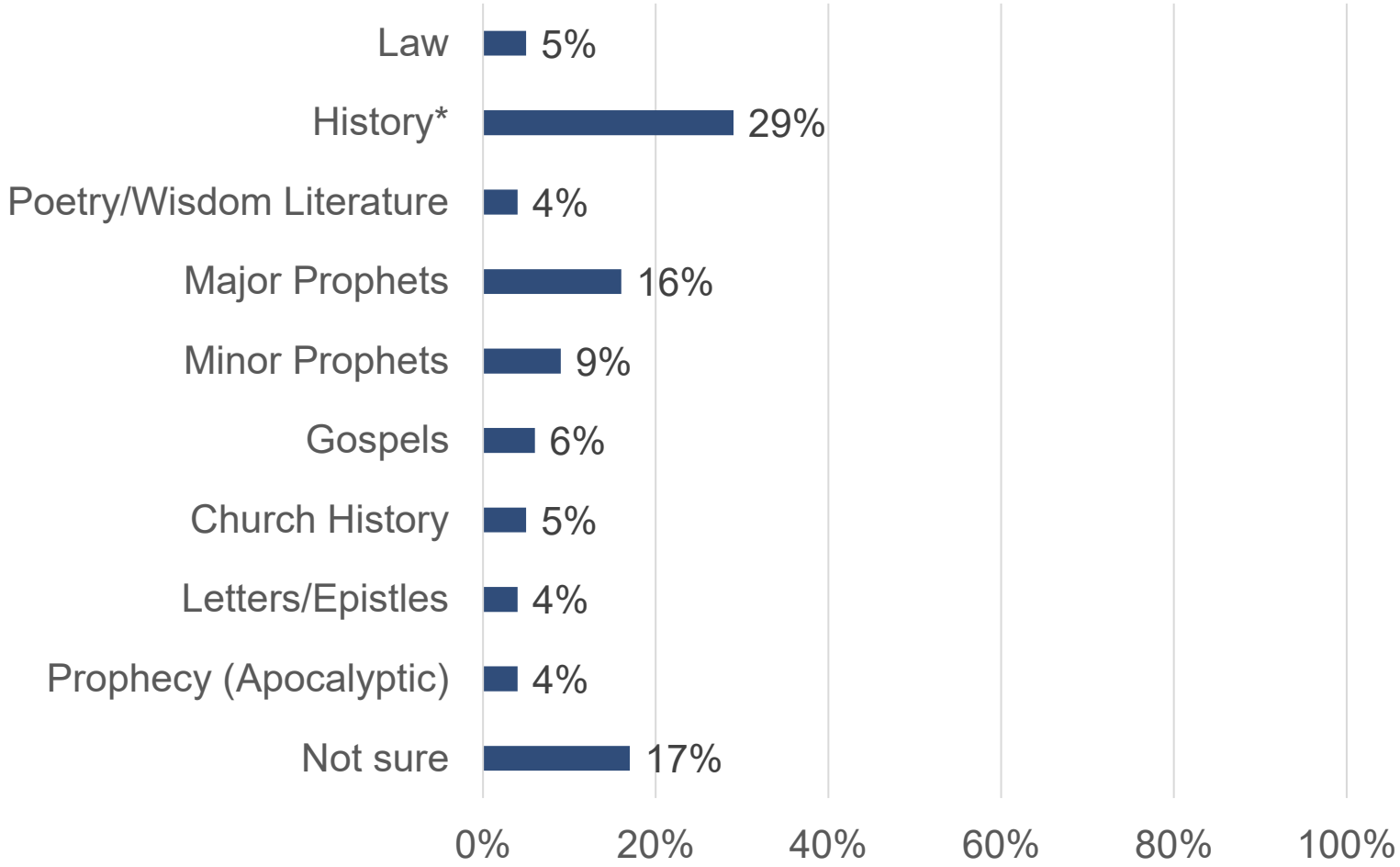


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q48: "For each of the following books of the Bible, select the major division where it fits: **Deuteronomy.**" n=2,012

1 Samuel

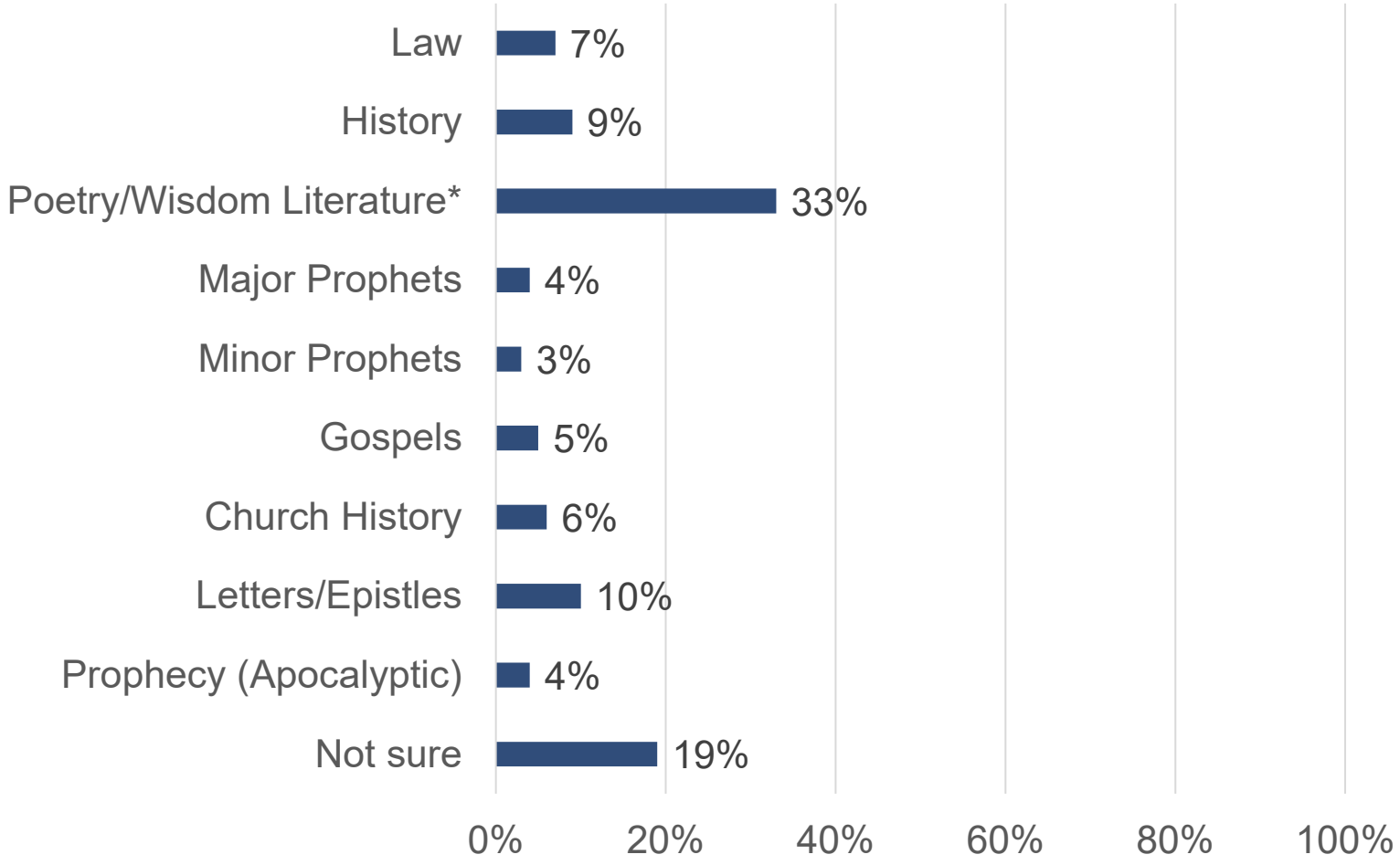


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q49: "For each of the following books of the Bible, select the major division where it fits: **1 Samuel.**" n=2,012

Ecclesiastes

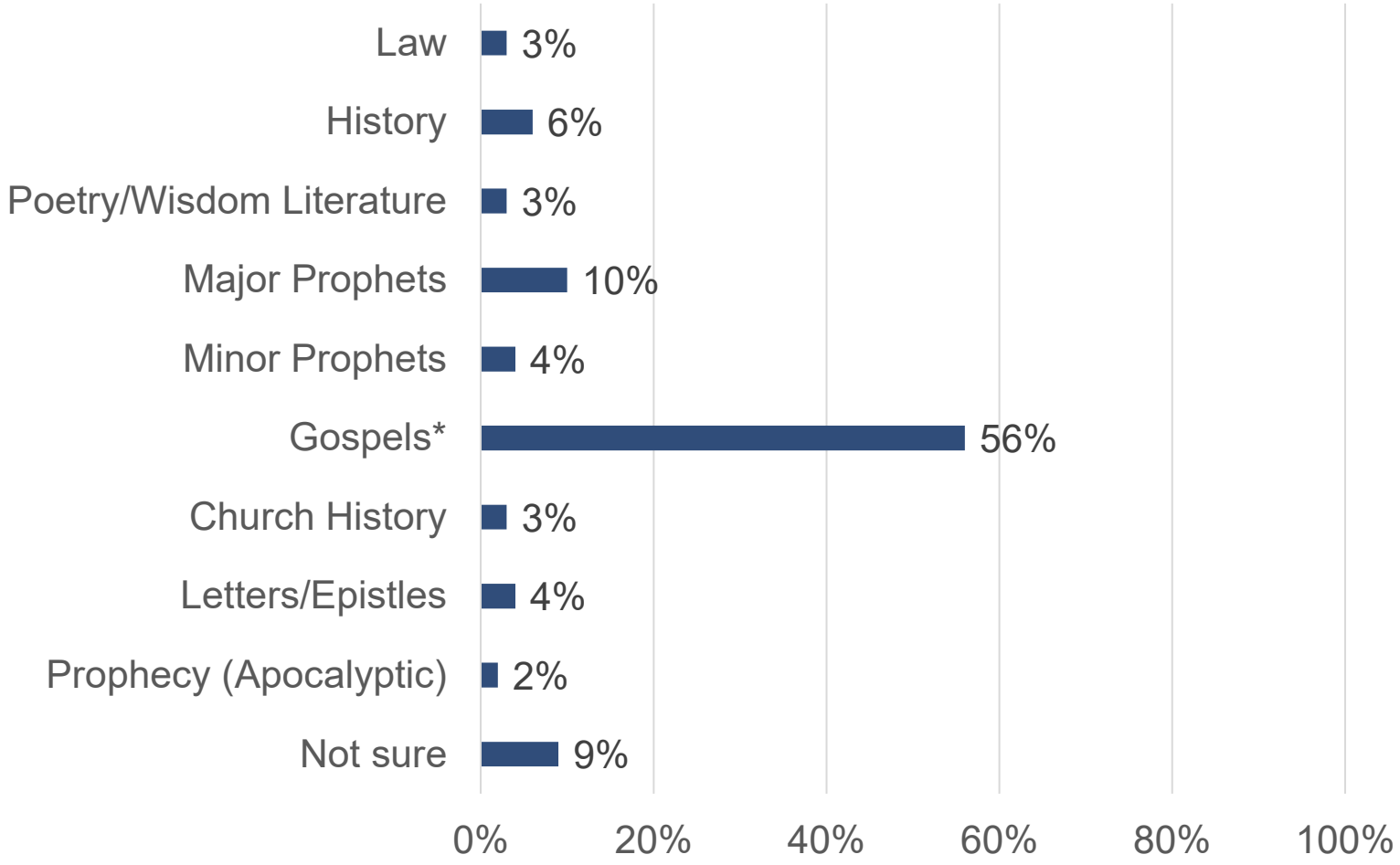


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q50: "For each of the following books of the Bible, select the major division where it fits: **Ecclesiastes.**" n=2,012

Mark

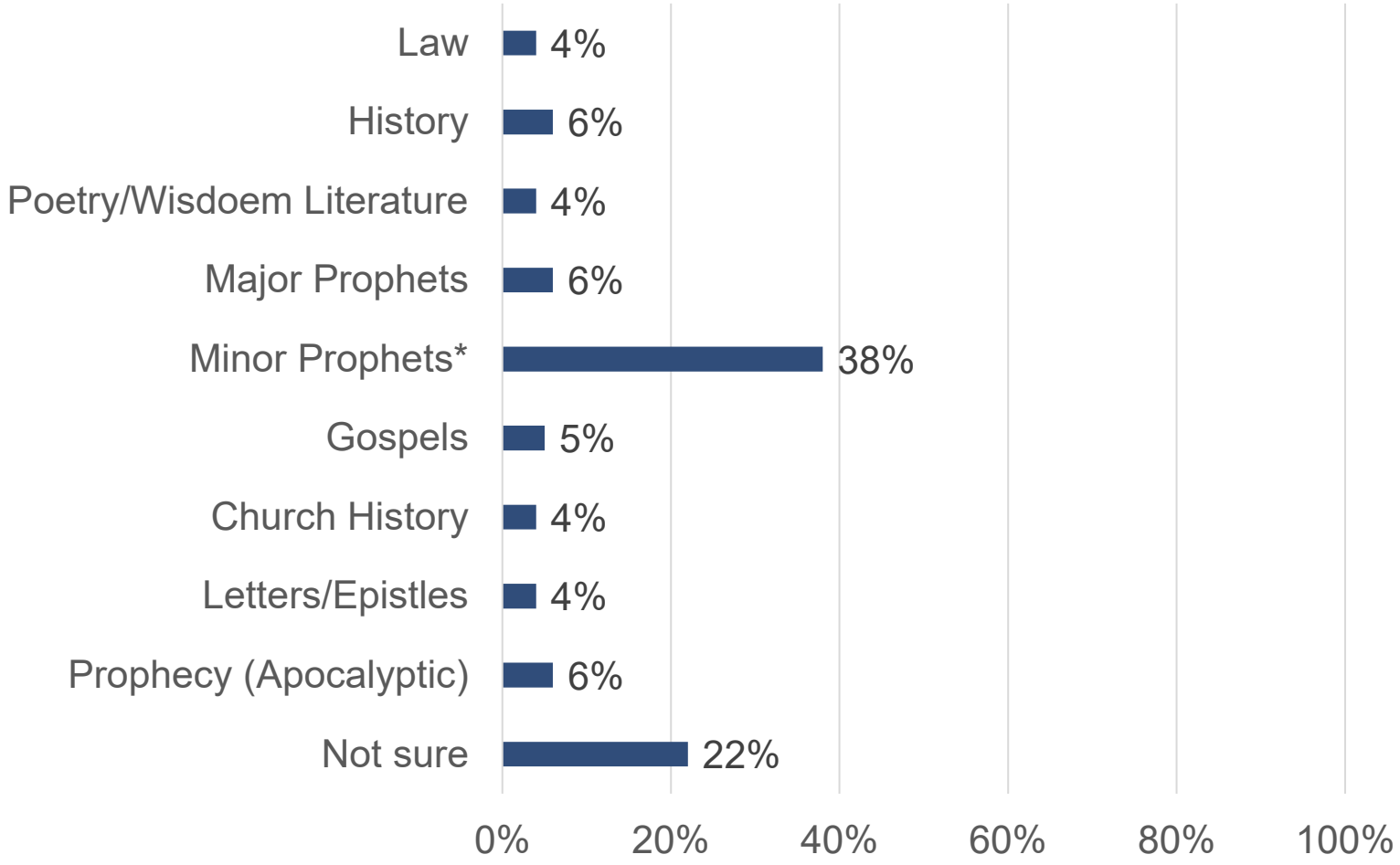


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q51: "For each of the following books of the Bible, select the major division where it fits: **Mark.**" n=2,012

Joel

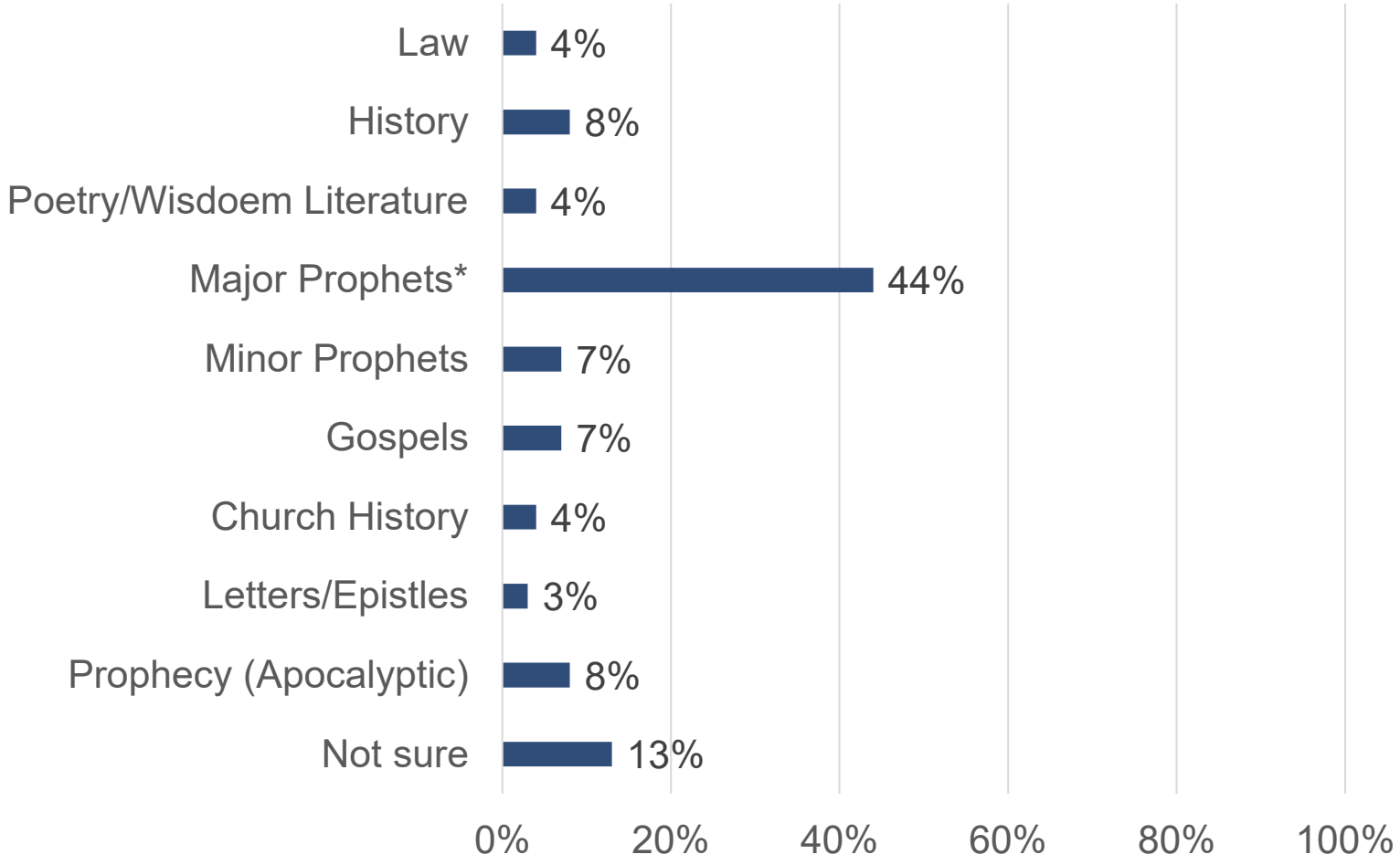


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q52: "For each of the following books of the Bible, select the major division where it fits: **Joel.**" n=2,012

Isaiah



*Correct answer

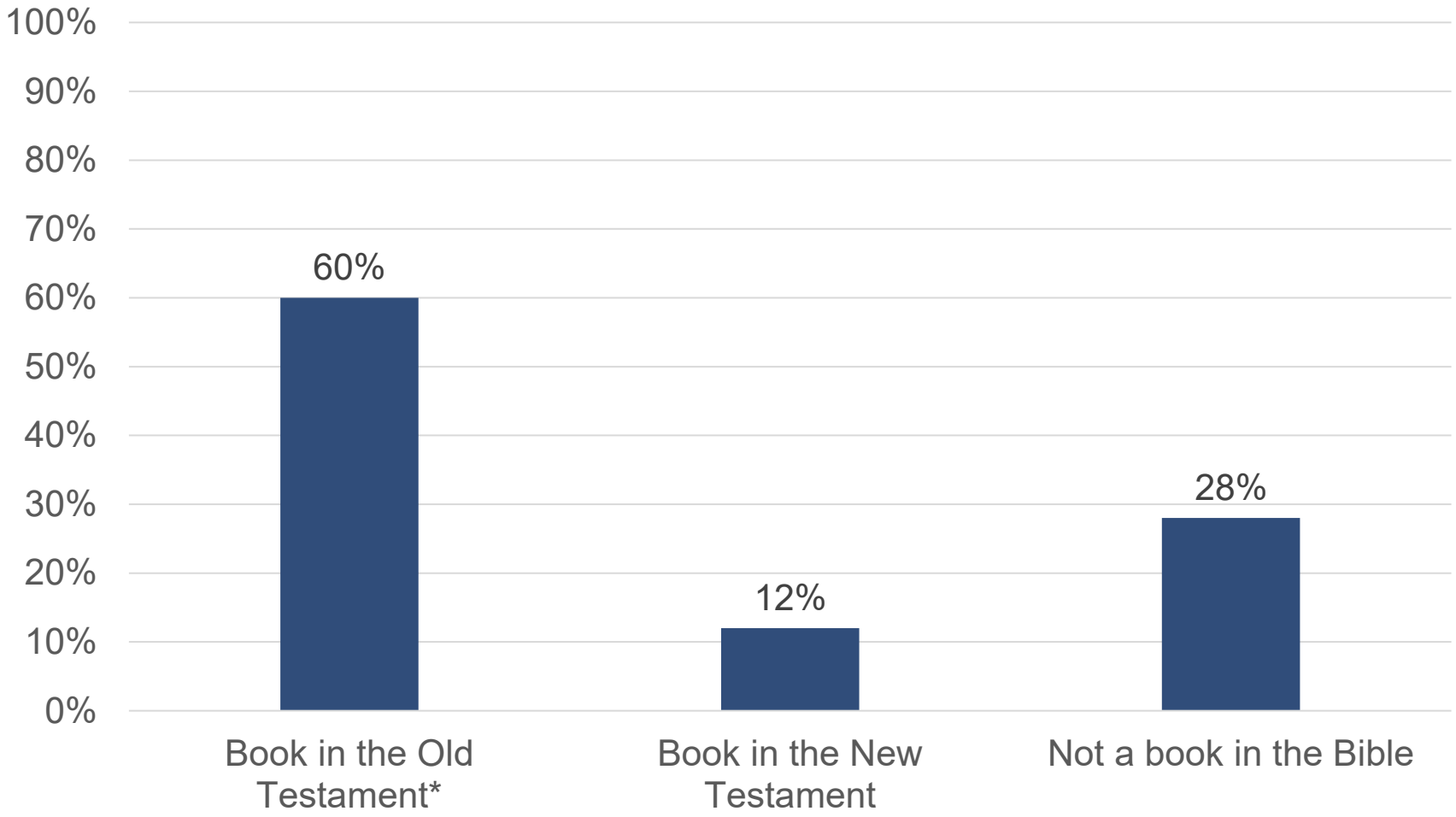
Lifeway Research

Q53: "For each of the following books of the Bible, select the major division where it fits: **Isaiah.**" n=2,012

Old Testament, New Testament, or Not in the Bible

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Obadiah

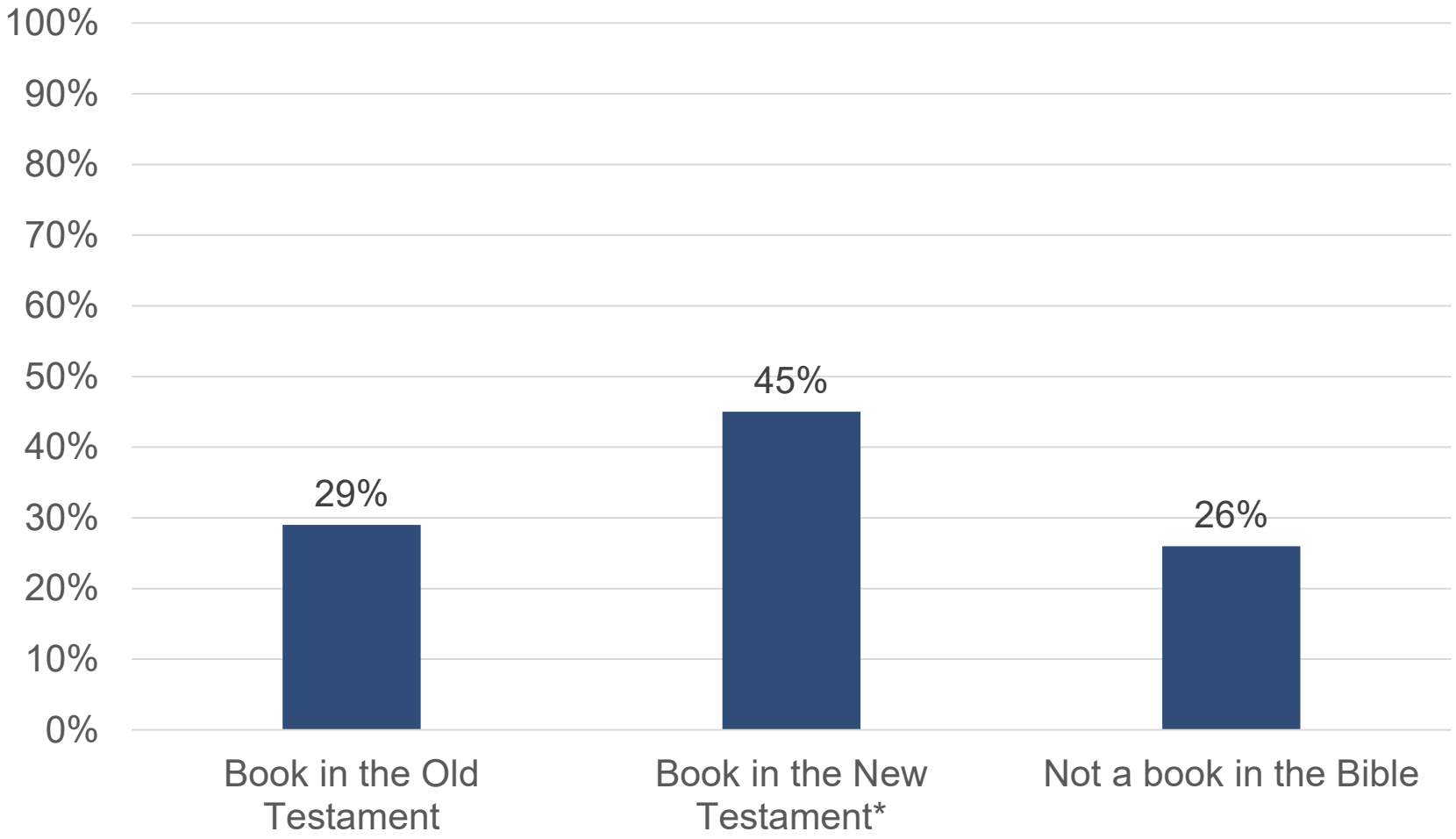


*Correct answer

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Q54_1: "For each of the following books, please indicate where in the Bible it is found: **Obadiah"** .n=2,012

Philemon

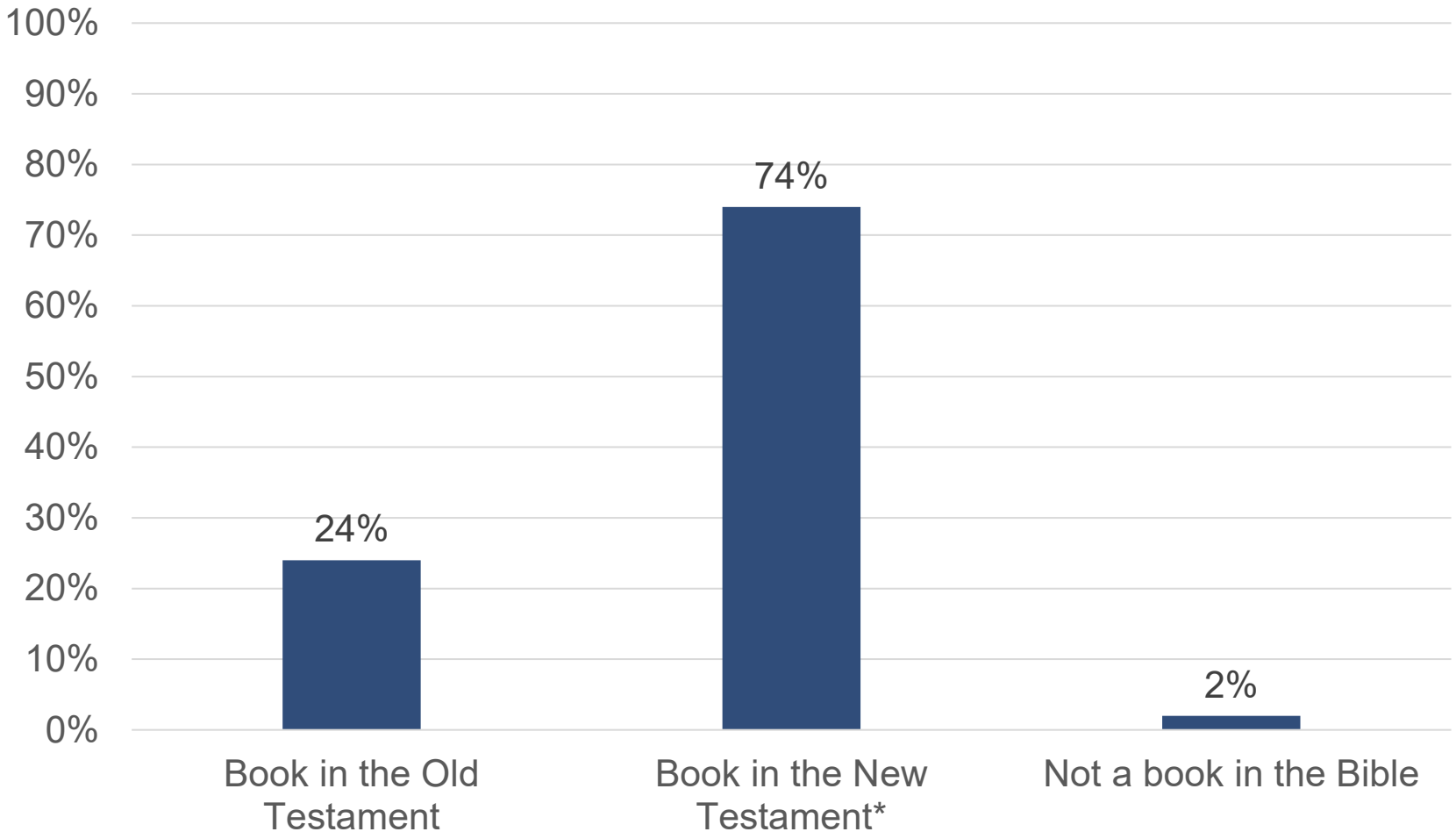


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q54_2: "For each of the following books, please indicate where in the Bible it is found: **Philemon"** .n=2,012

1 Corinthians

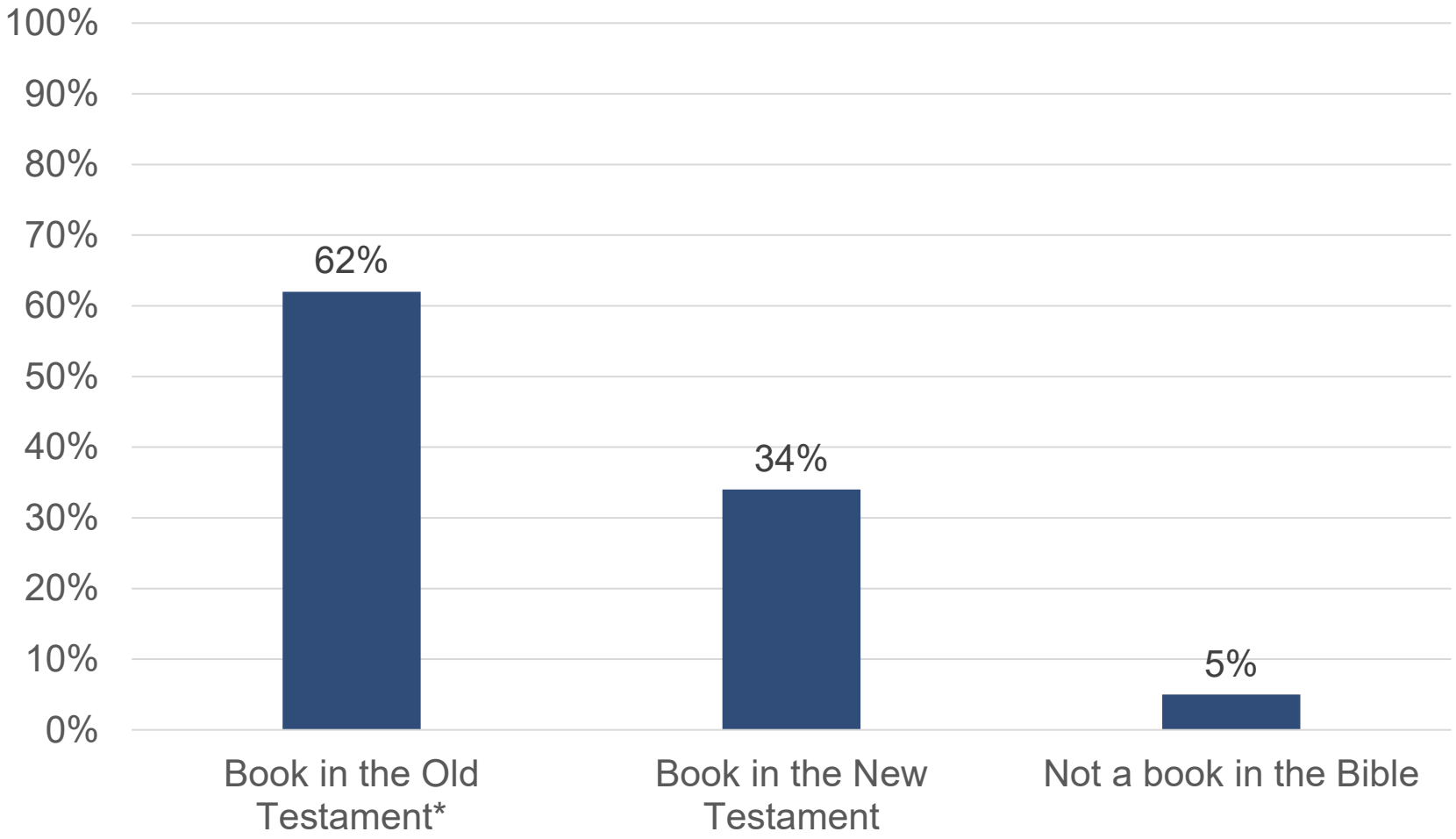


*Correct answer

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Q54_3: "For each of the following books, please indicate where in the Bible it is found: **1** Corinthians" .n=2,012

1 Chronicles

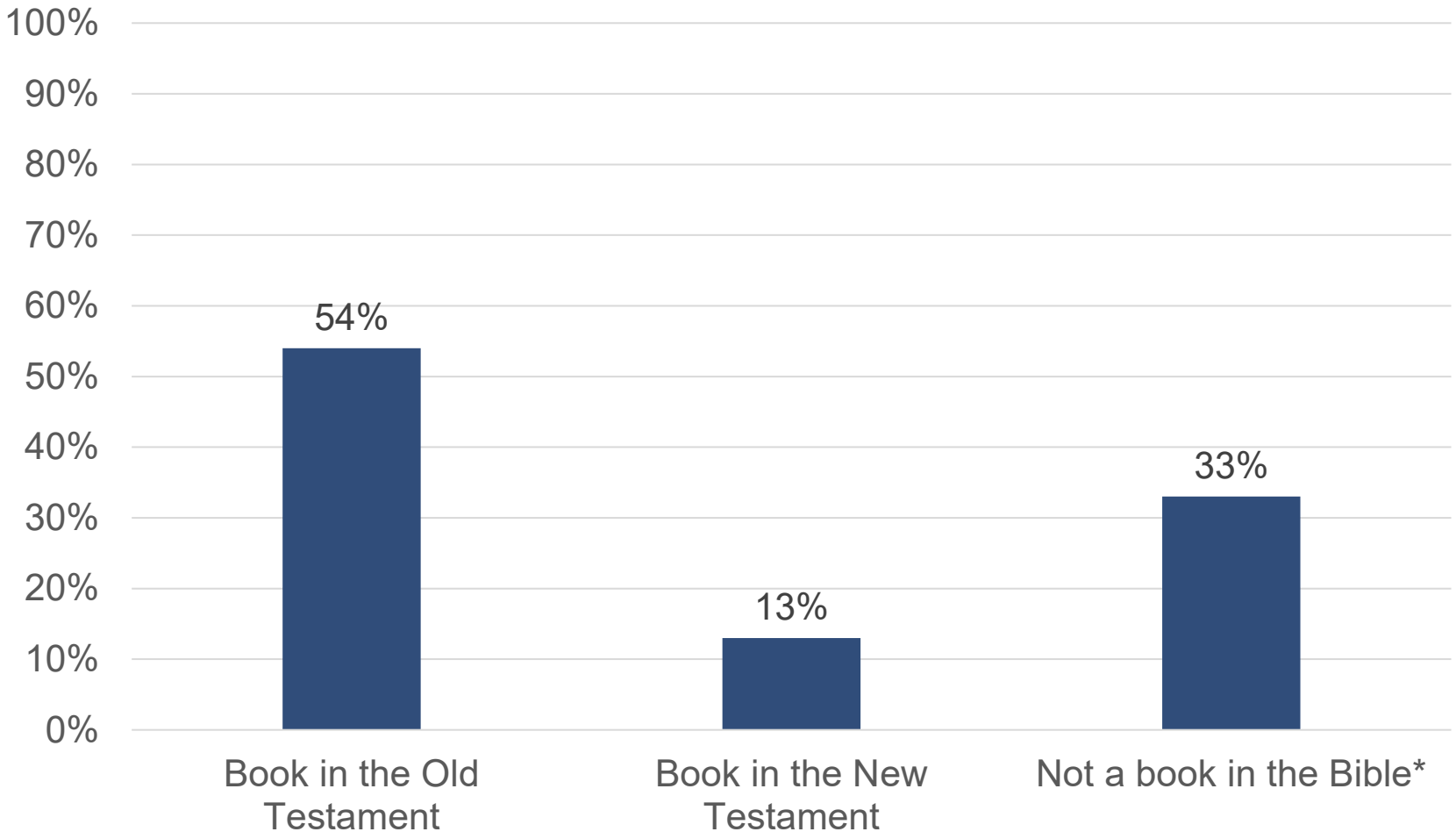


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q54_4: "For each of the following books, please indicate where in the Bible it is found: 1 Chronicles" .n=2,012

Hezekiah

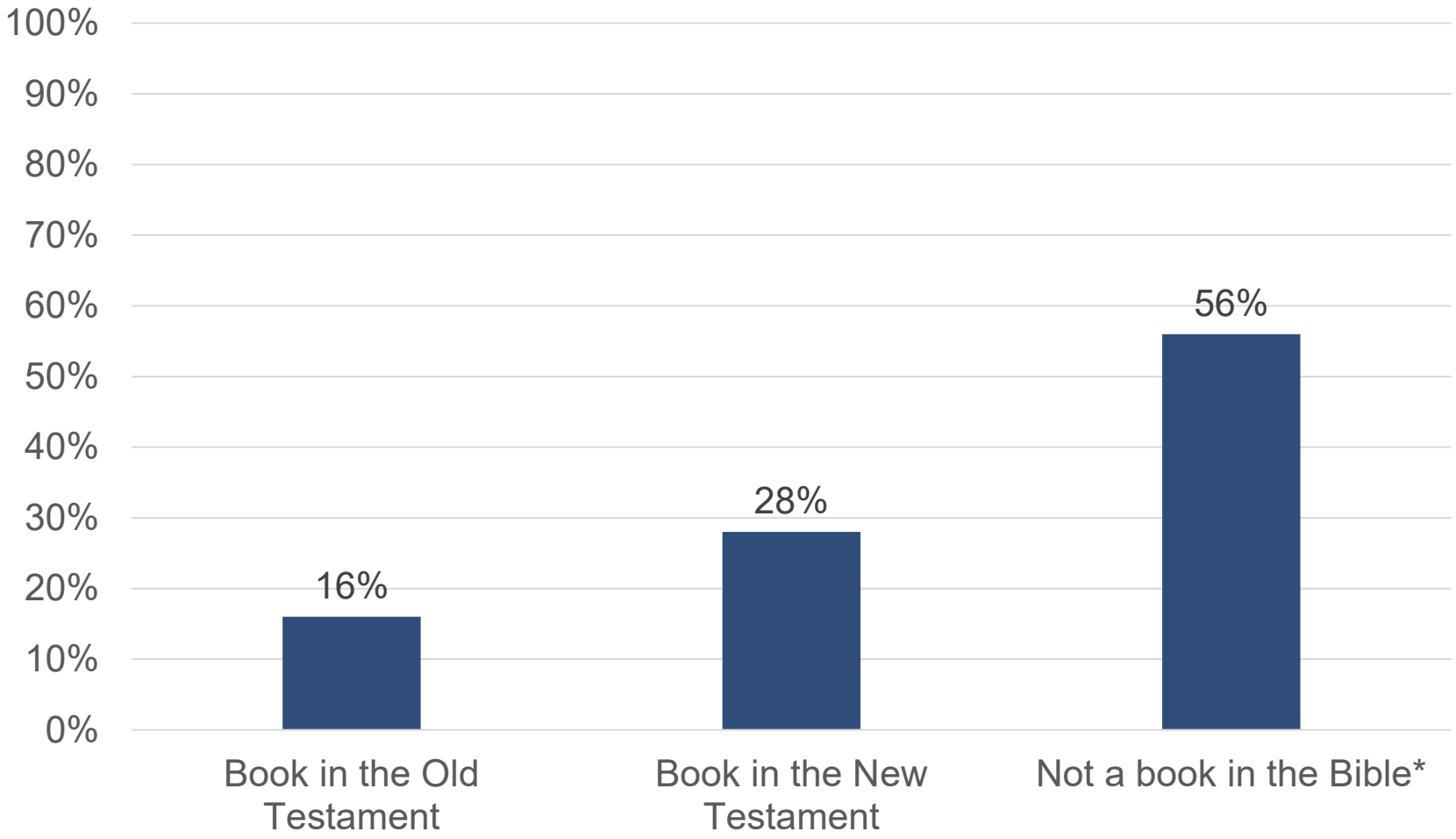


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q54_5: "For each of the following books, please indicate where in the Bible it is found: **Hezekiah"** .n=2,012

Gospel of Thomas

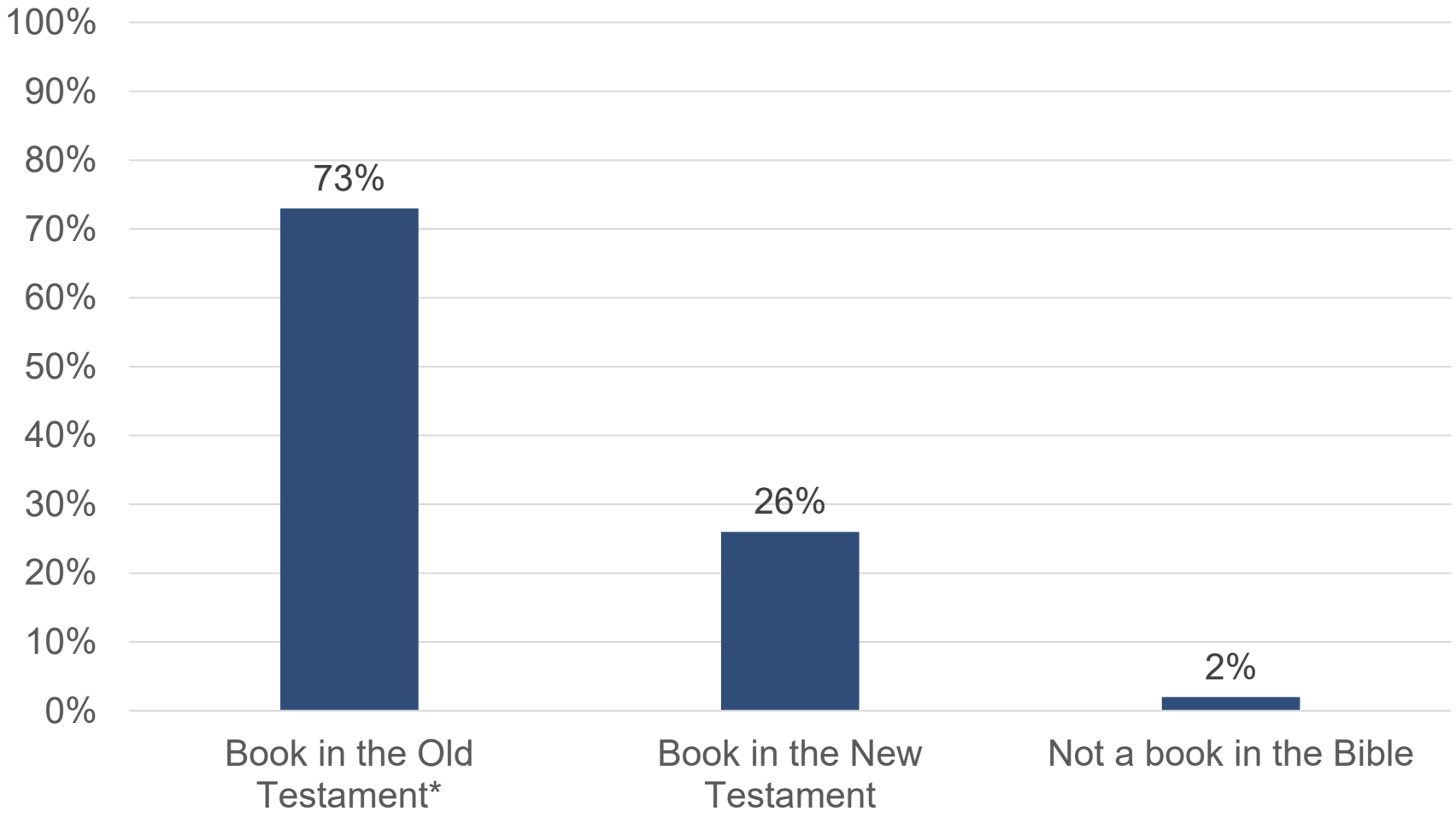


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q54_6: "For each of the following books, please indicate where in the Bible it is found: **Gospel of Thomas"** .n=2,012

Psalms

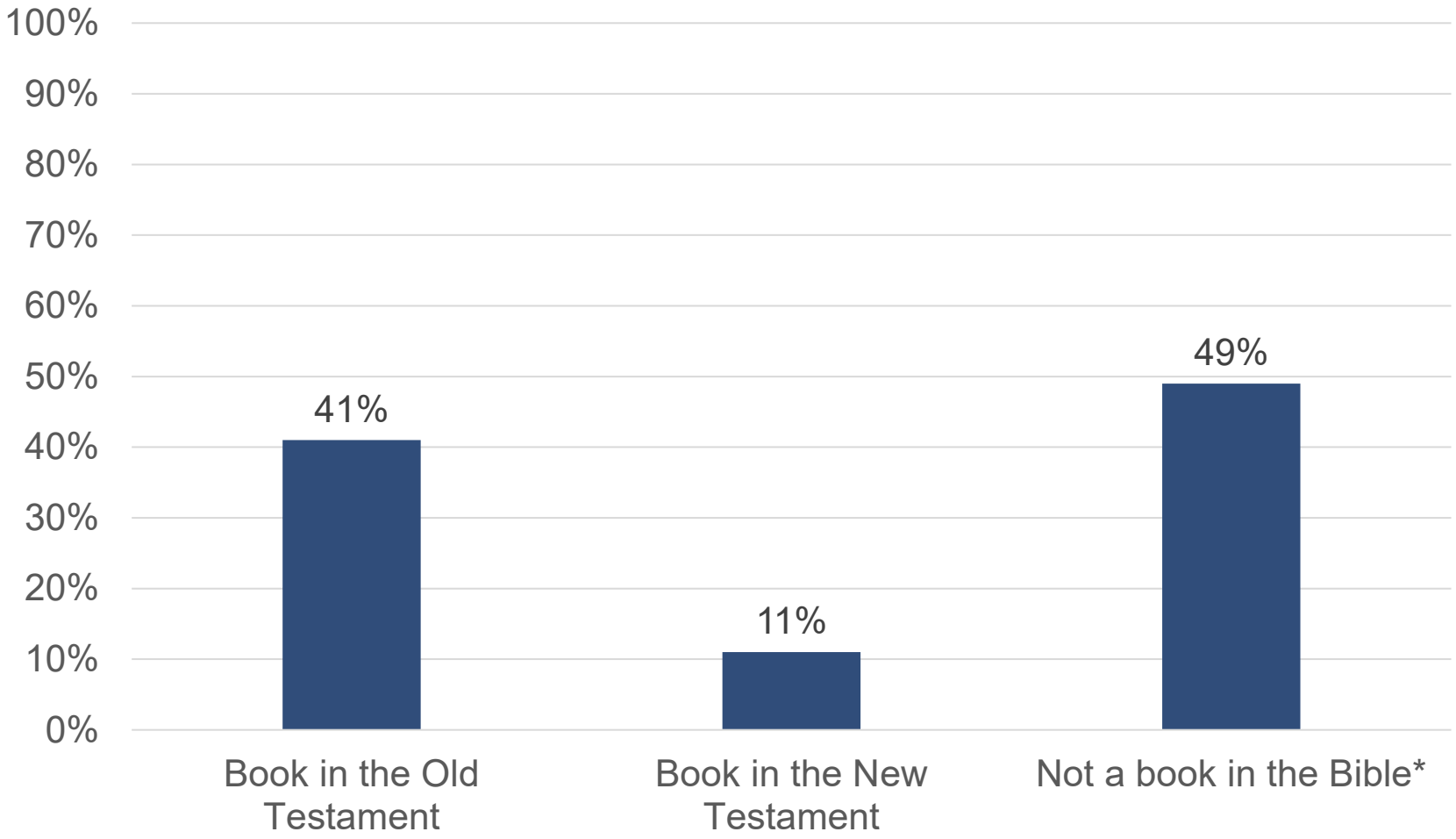


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q54_7: "For each of the following books, please indicate where in the Bible it is found: **Psalms"** .n=2,012

Haggar



*Correct answer

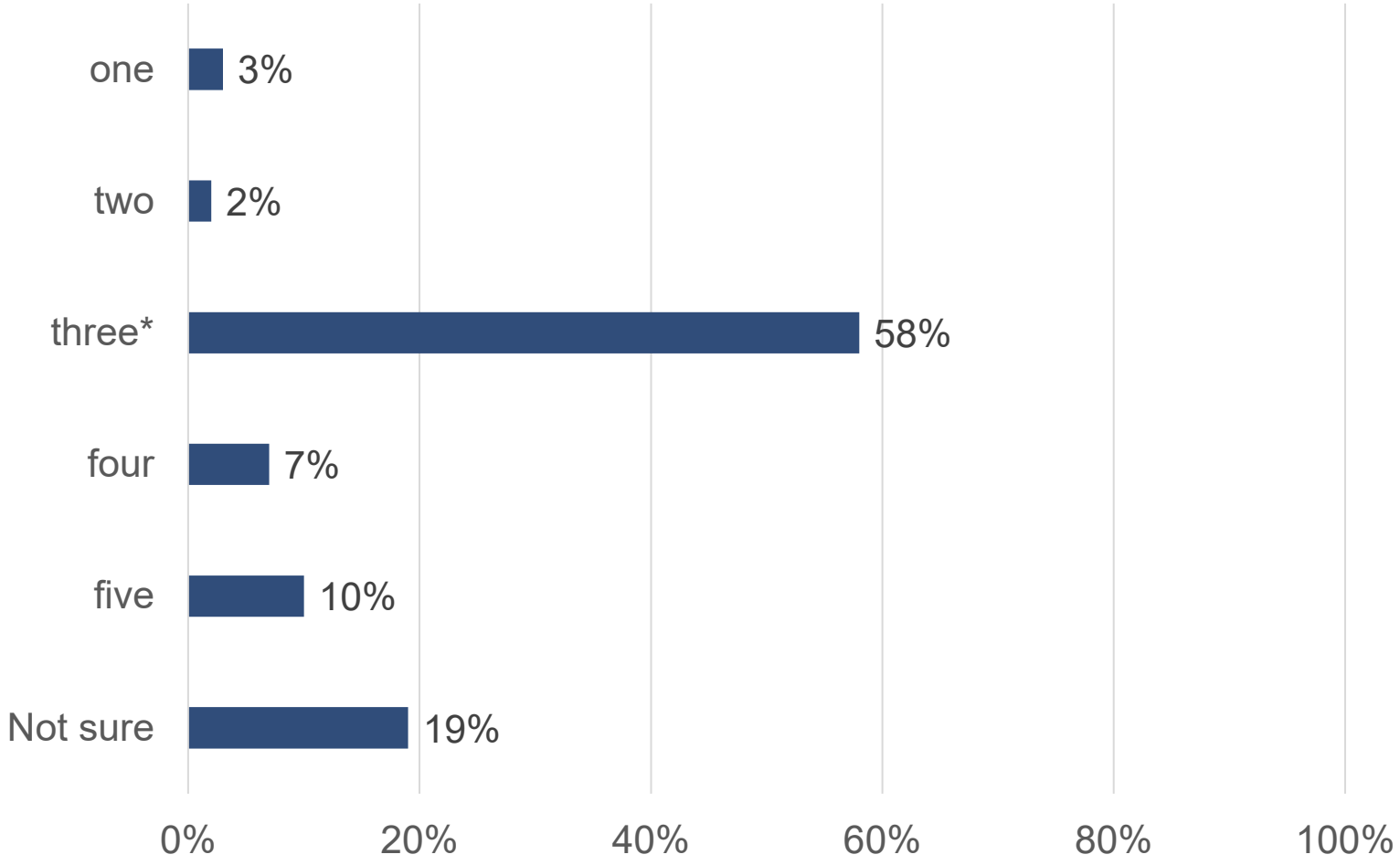
Lifeway Research

Q54_8: "For each of the following books, please indicate where in the Bible it is found: **Haggar"** .n=2,012

General Bible Knowledge

Lifeway Research

“How many ways did the devil tempt Jesus during His 40 days in the wilderness?”

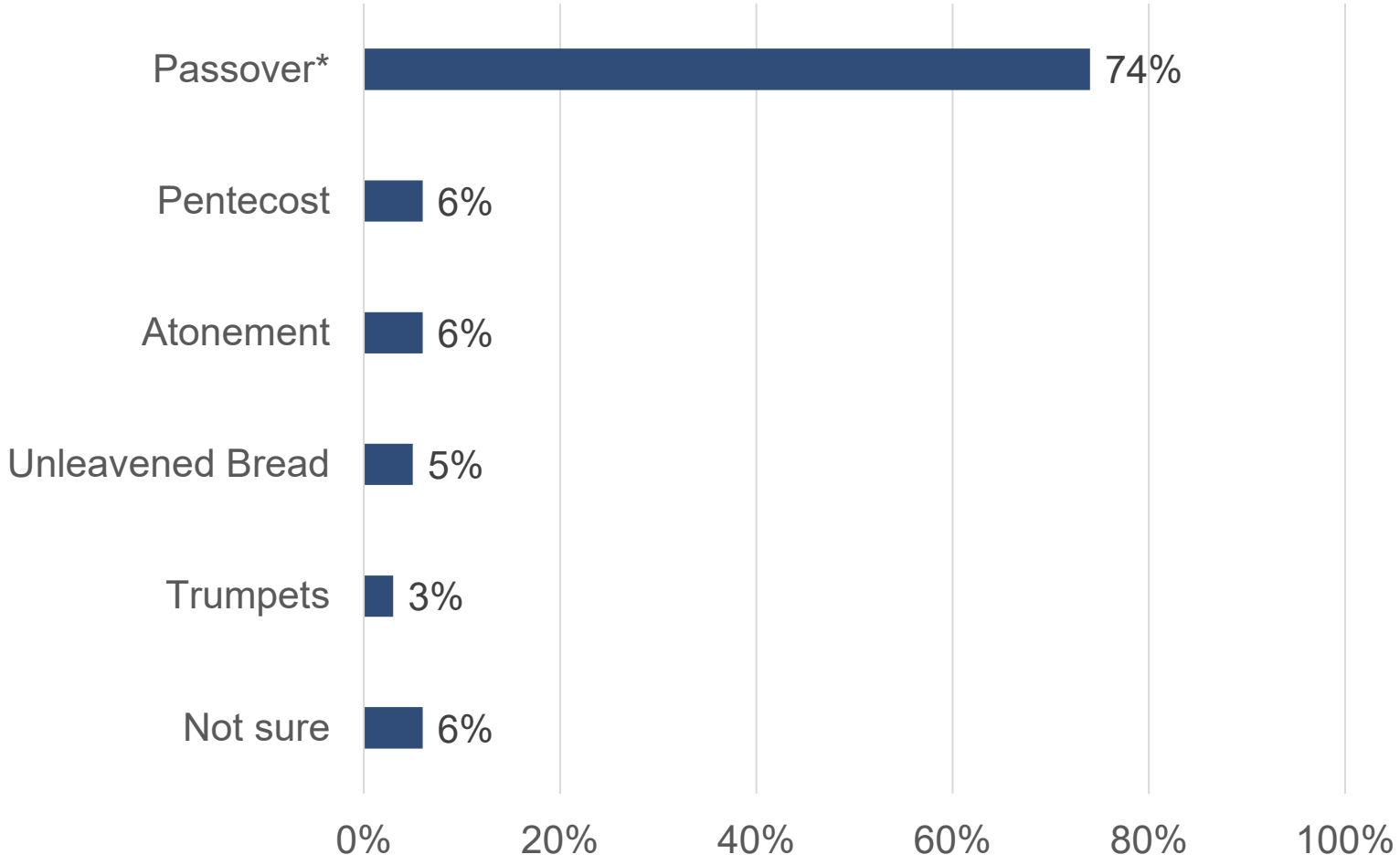


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q55: “How many ways did the devil tempt Jesus during His 40 days in the wilderness?” n=2,012

“Which word is the feast which celebrates God saving the firstborn of Israel from death?”

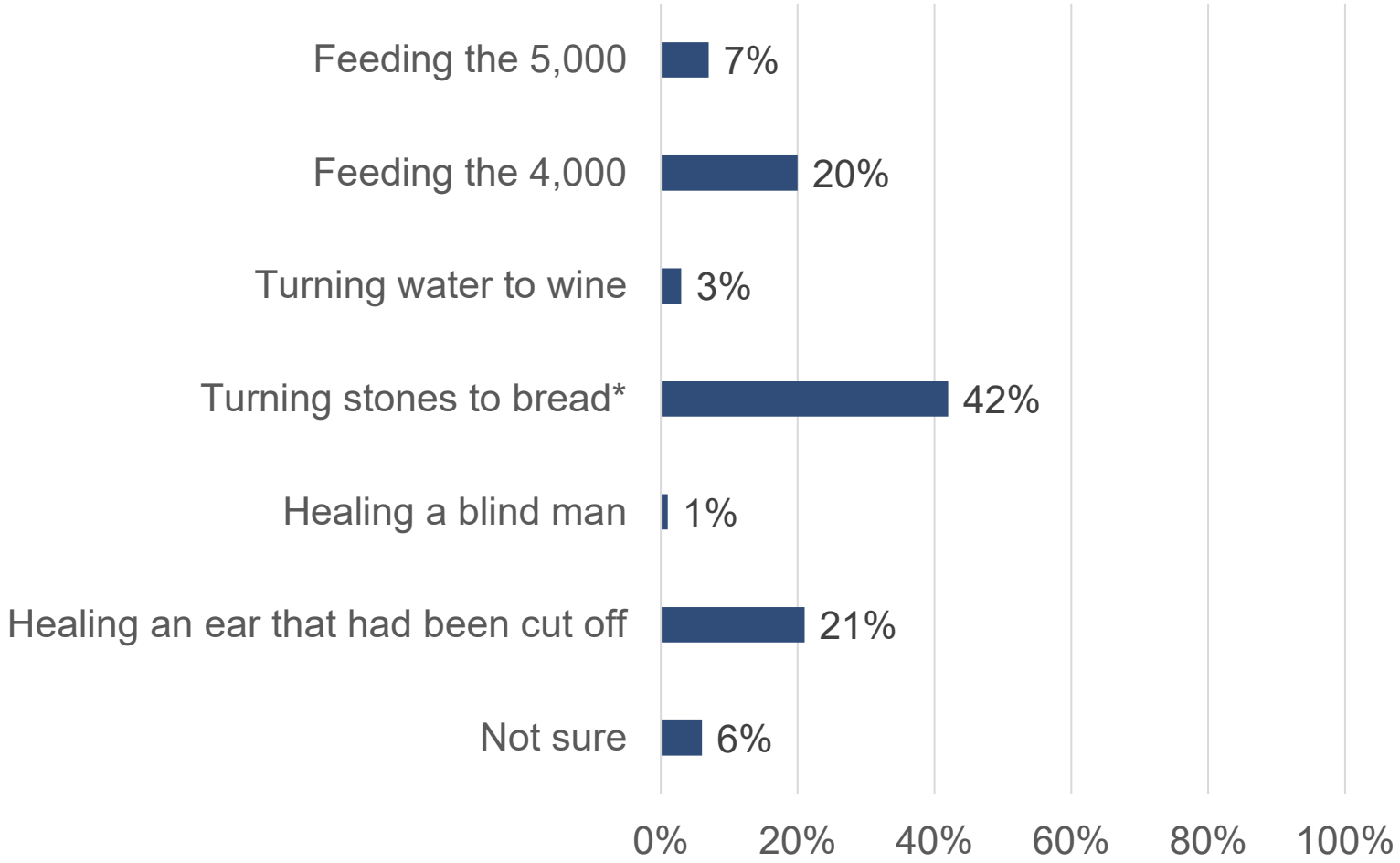


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q56: “Which word is the feast which celebrates God saving the firstborn of Israel from death?” n=2,012

“Which one of the following is not recorded as a miracle of Jesus in the Gospels?”

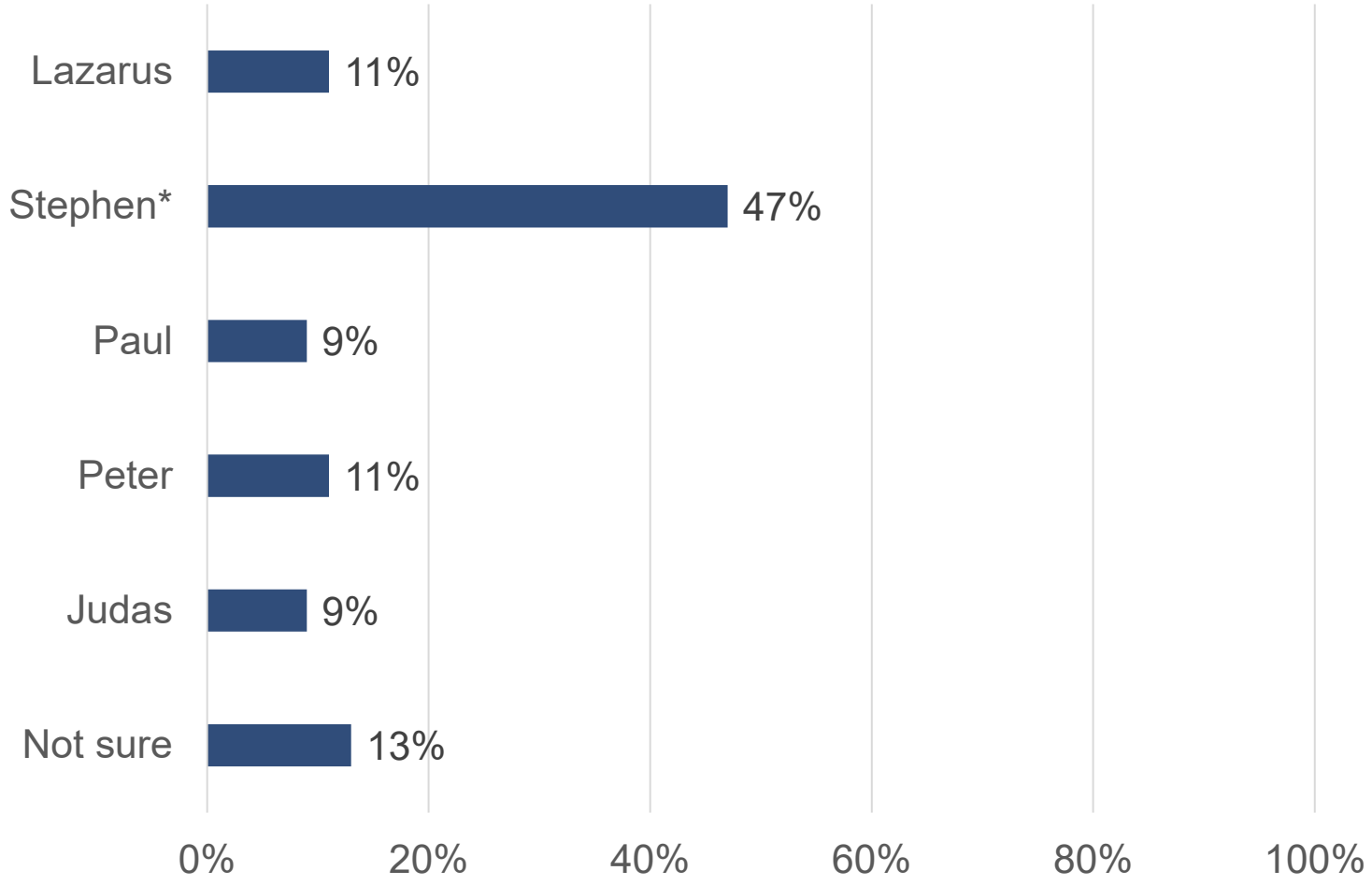


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q57: “Which one of the following is **not** recorded as a miracle of Jesus in the Gospels?” n=2,012

“Who was the first person killed (martyred) for his witness about Jesus?”

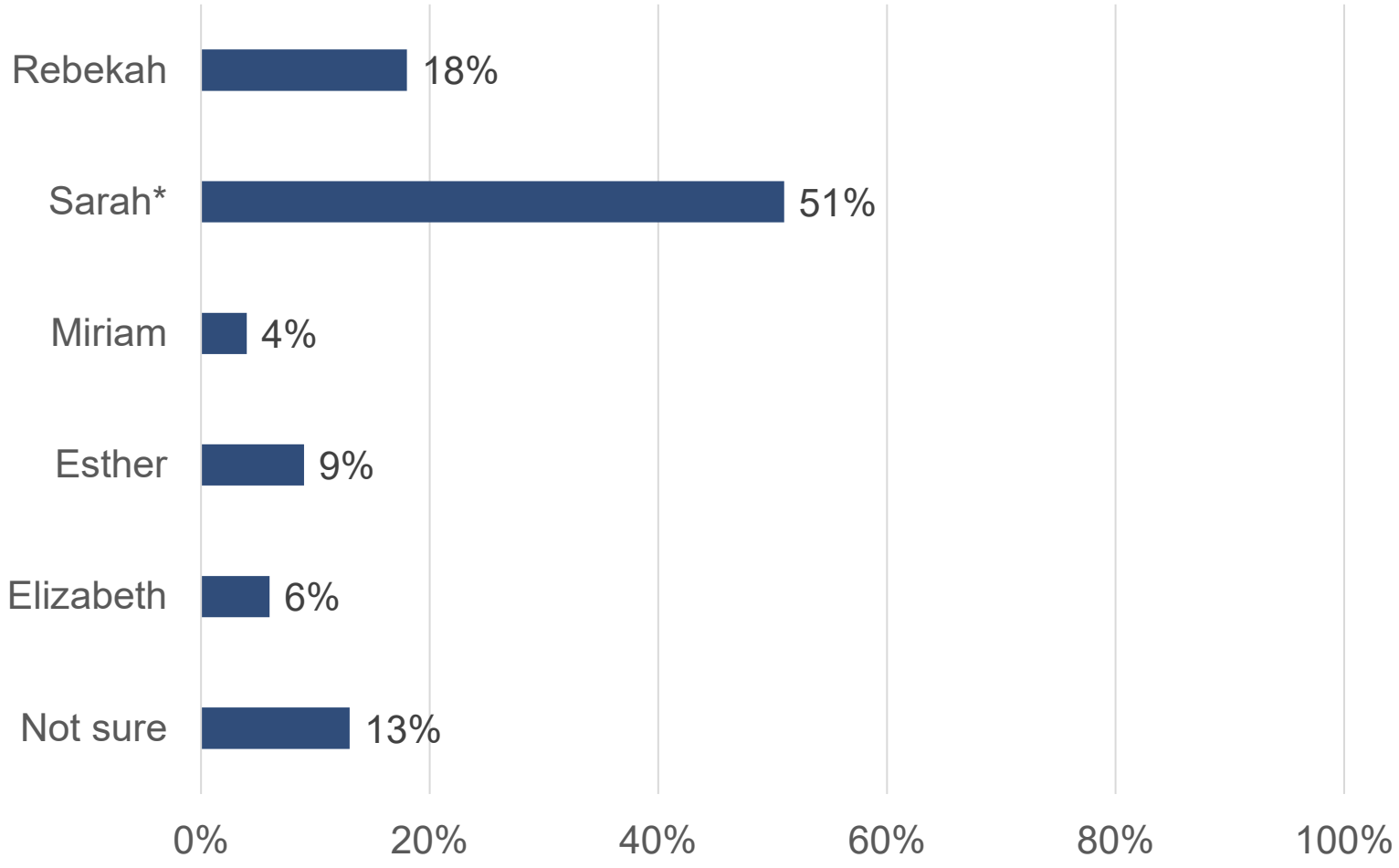


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q58: “Who was the first person killed (martyred) for his witness about Jesus?” n=2,012

“Who was the mother of Isaac?”



*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q59: “Who was the mother of Isaac?” n=2,012

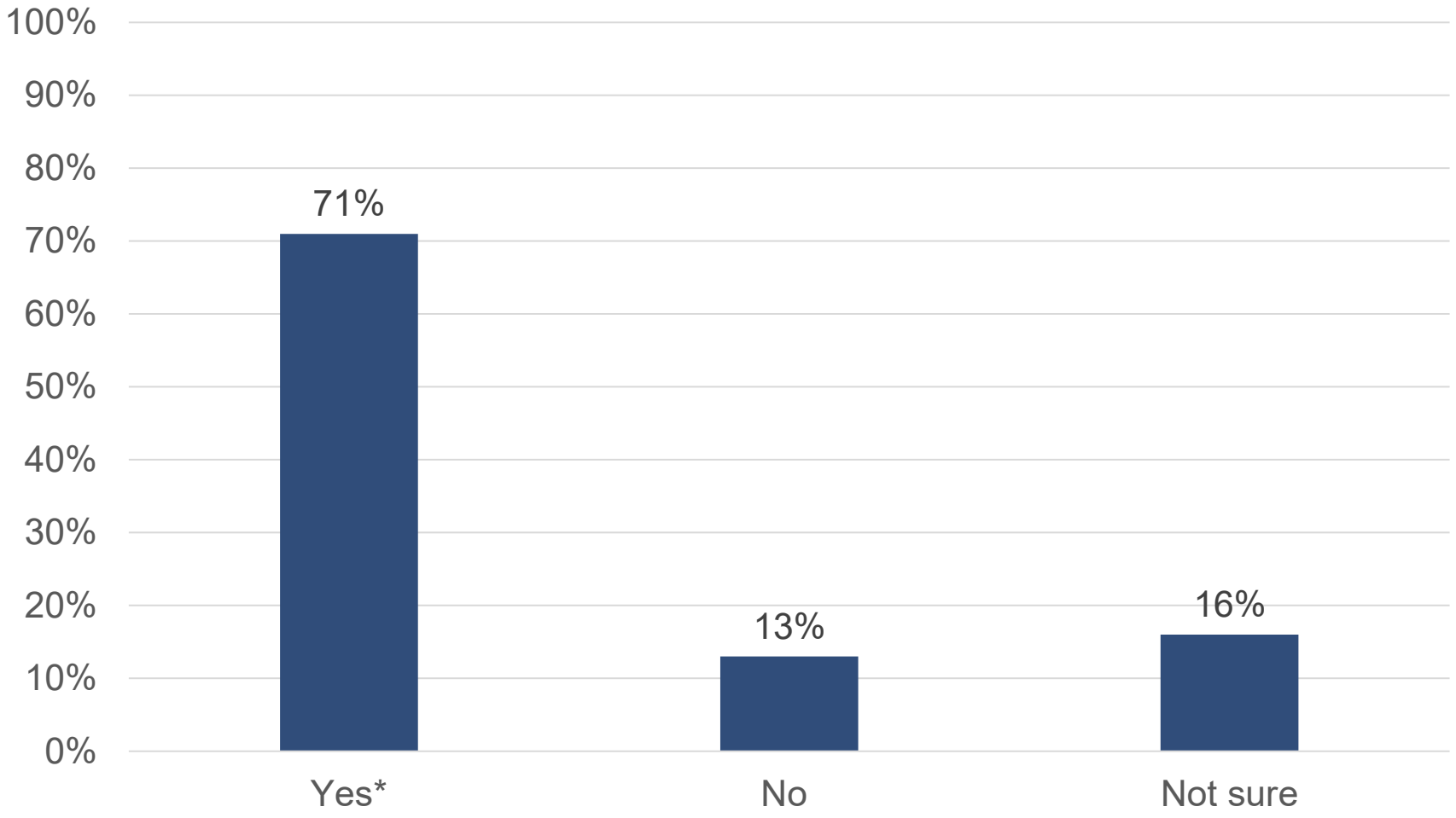
Is This Statement in the Bible

A few of the questions on the survey quoted text from the Bible. Instructions and a pulldown menu allowed respondents to view these in their choice of one of five translations:

Christian Standard Bible (CSB)
English Standard Version (ESV)
New International Version (NIV)
King James Version (KJV) *default*
Revised Standard Version (RSV)

Lifeway Research

“Pride goeth before destruction, And an haughty spirit before a fall.”

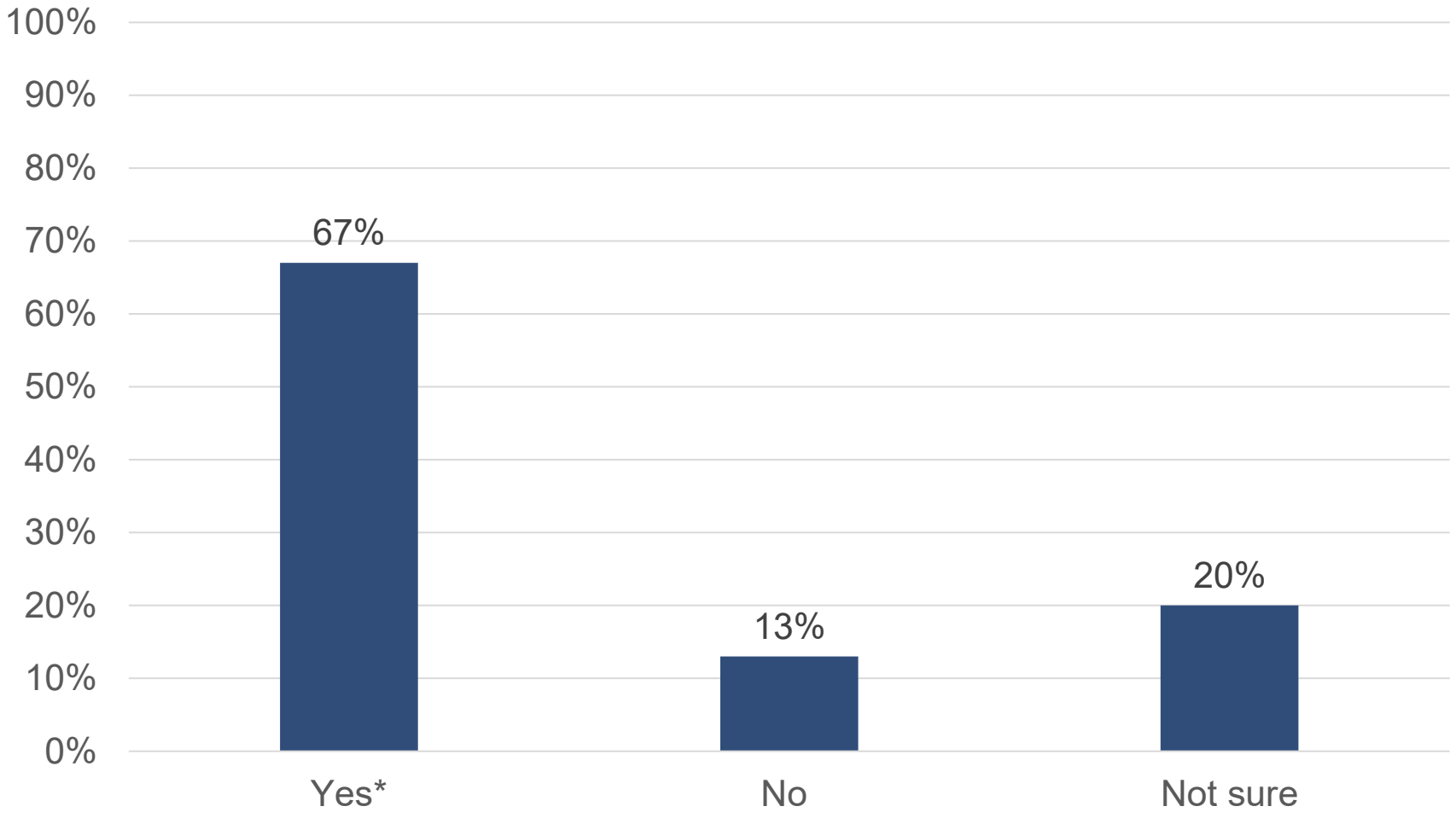


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q61 “Is this statement in the Bible? 'Pride goeth before destruction, And an haughty spirit before a fall.'” *Reference not shown Proverbs 16:18* n=2,012

“Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

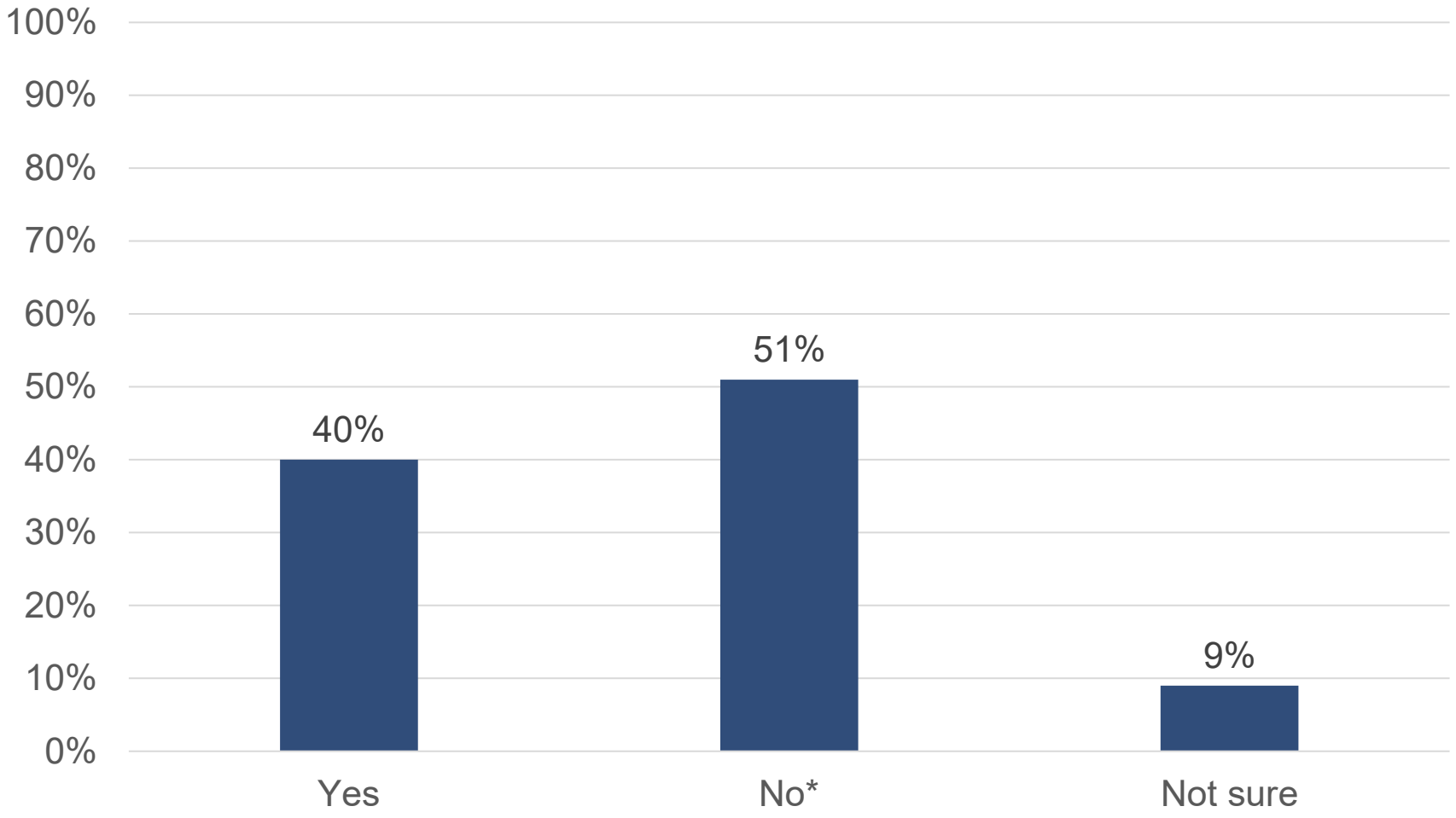


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q62 “Is this statement in the Bible? 'Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'” *Reference not shown Matthew 6:34* n=2,012

“God shall help those who help themselves.”

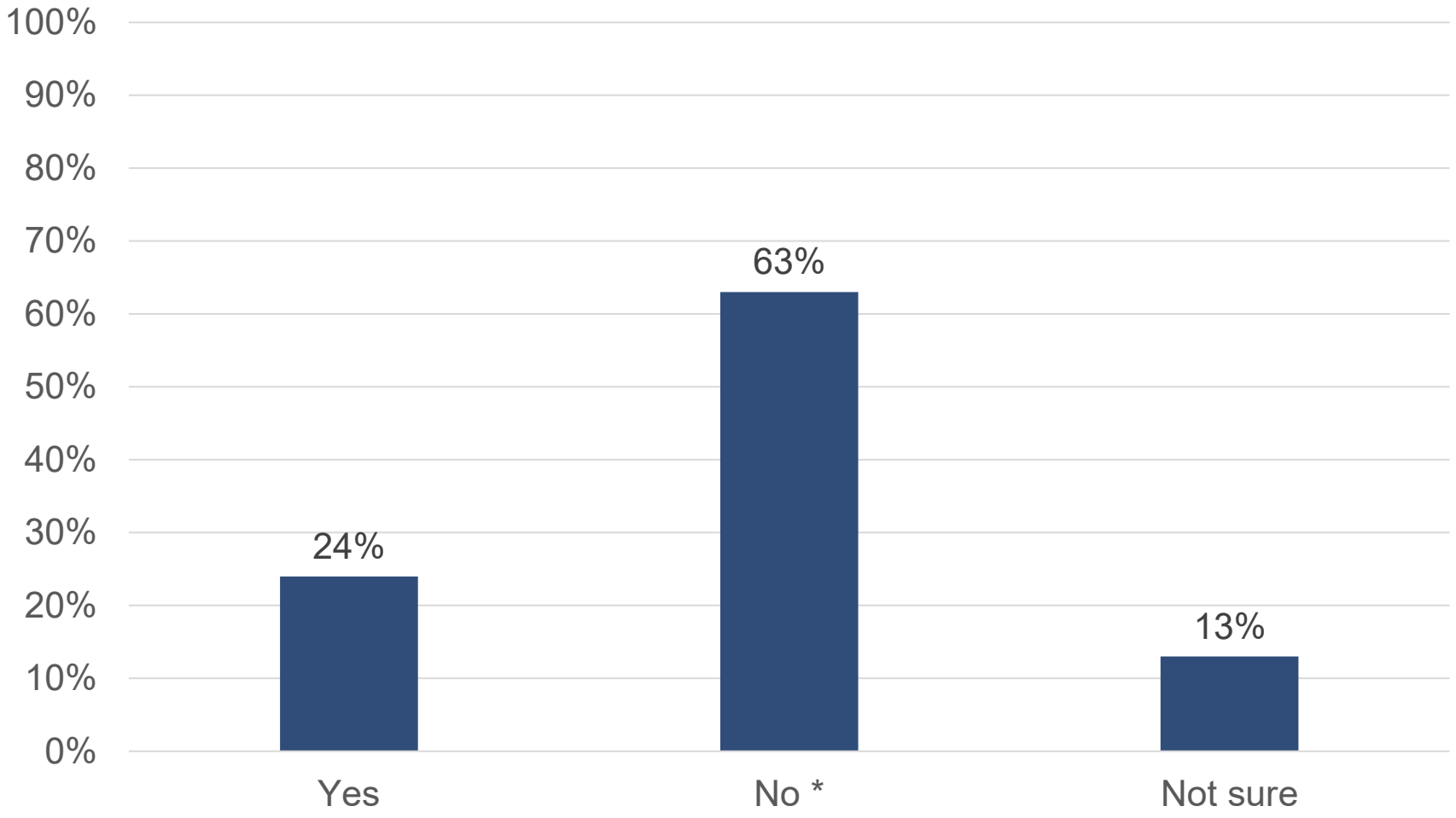


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q63 “Is this statement in the Bible? 'God shall help those who help themselves.’” n=2,012

“Charity begins at home.”

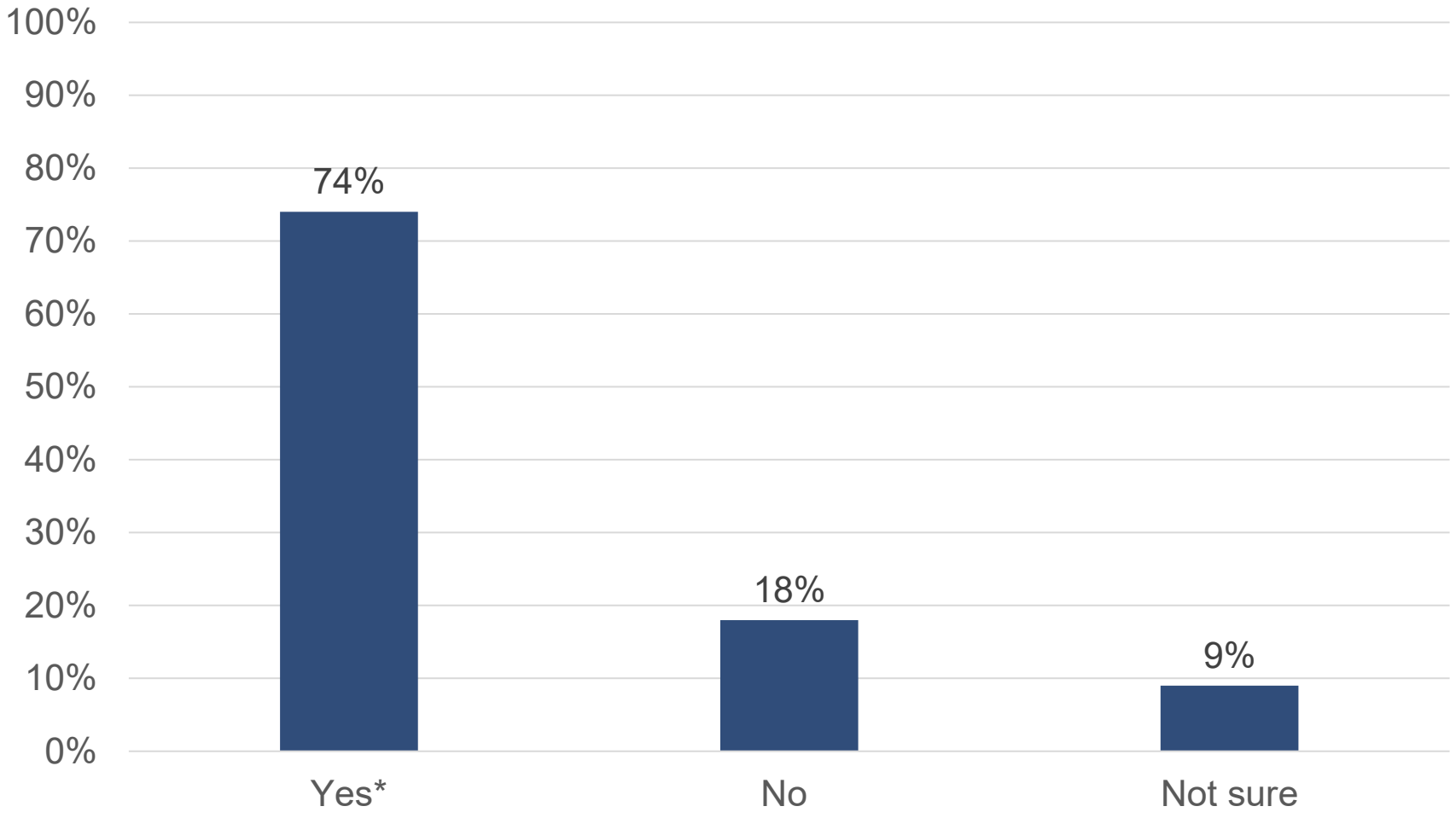


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q64 “Is this statement in the Bible? ‘Charity begins at home.’” n=2,012

“Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”

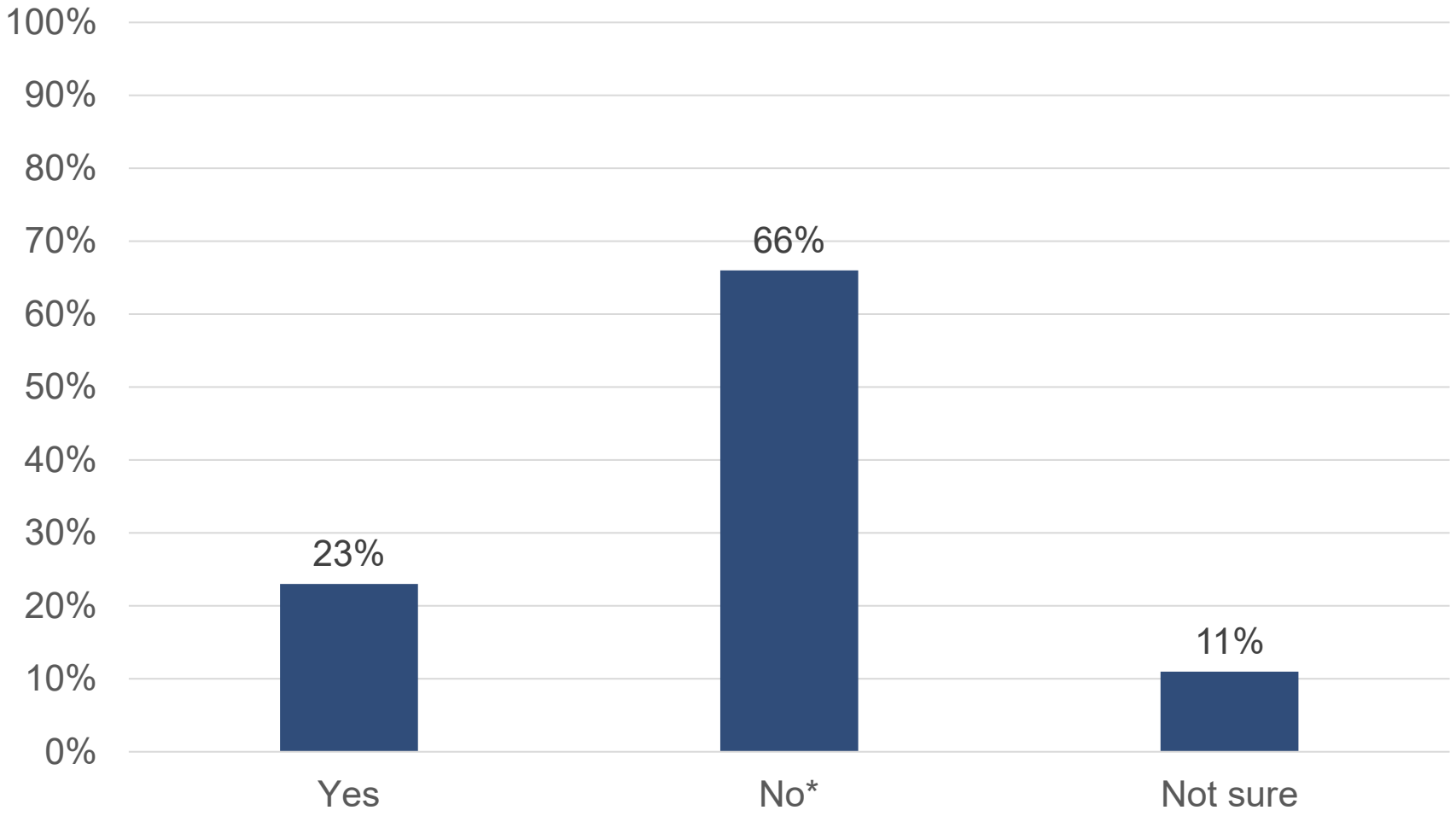


*Correct answer

Lifeway Research

Q65 “Is this statement in the Bible? ‘Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.’” *Reference not shown Romans 12:19* n=2,012

“Money is evil.”



*Correct answer

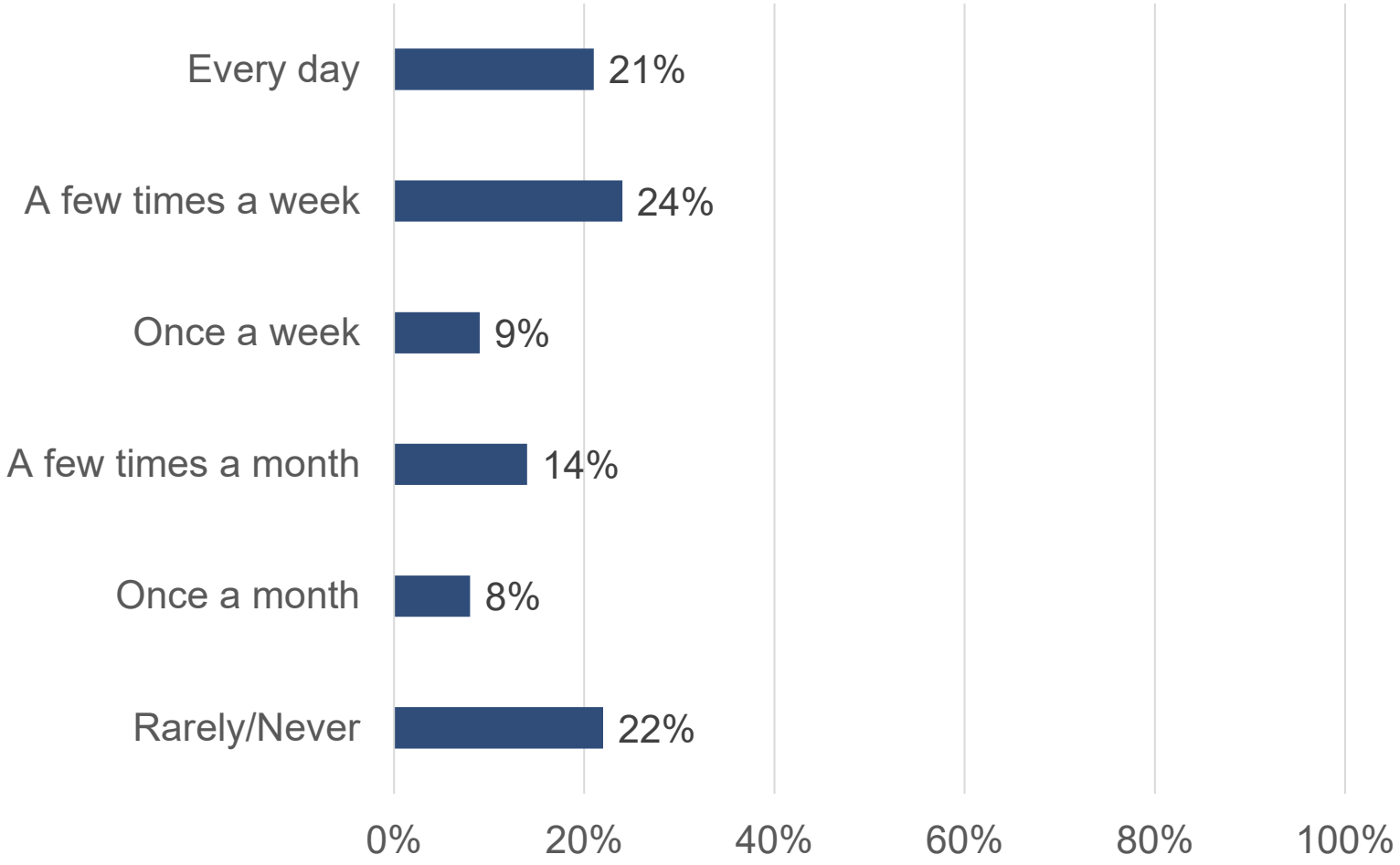
Lifeway Research

Q66 “Is this statement in the Bible? ‘Money is evil.’” .n=2,012

Personal Practices

Lifeway Research

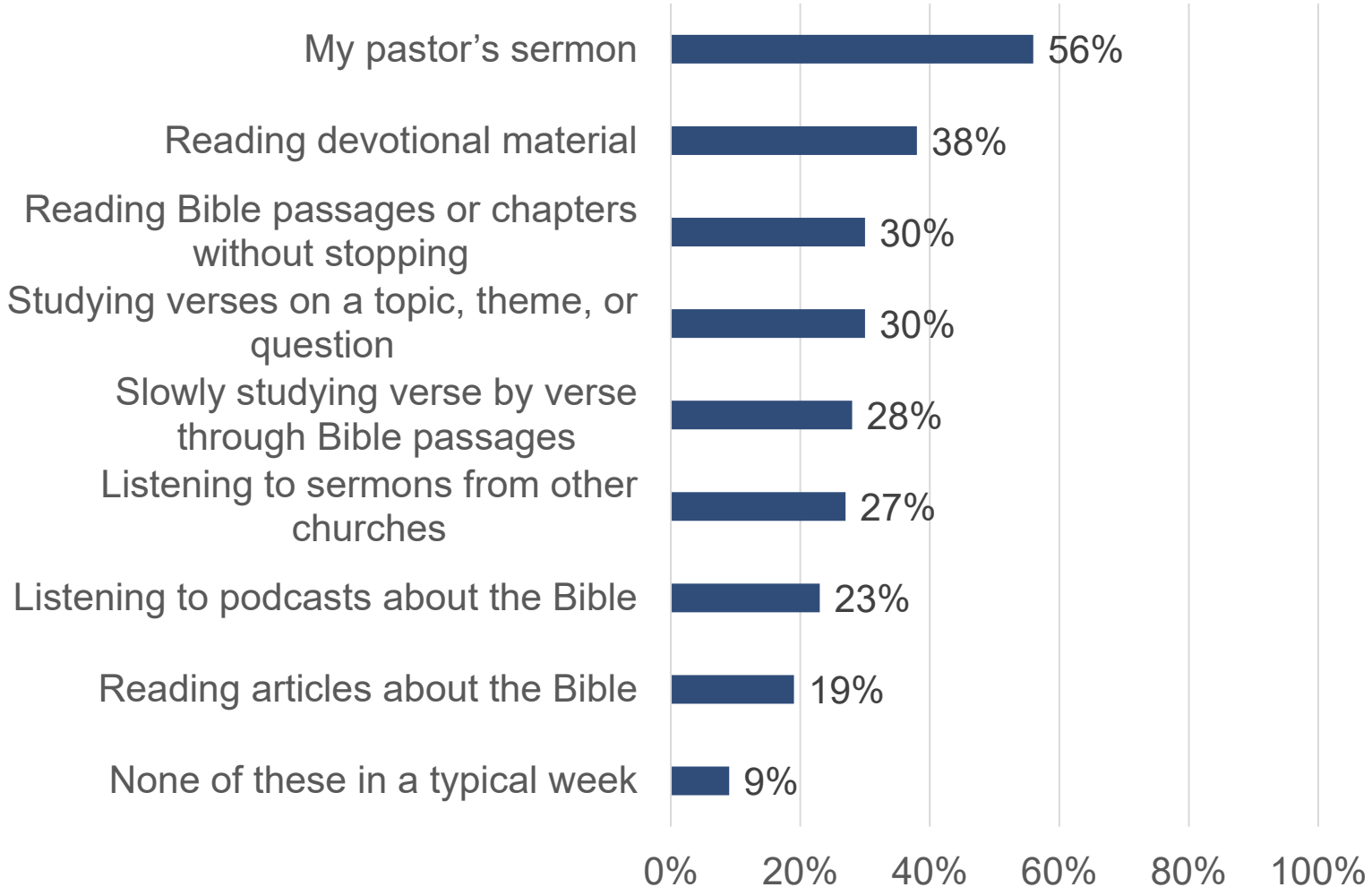
“About how often, if at all, do you personally read the Bible? Do not include any times you do this as part of a church worship service.”



Lifeway Research

Q67: “About how often, if at all, do you personally read the Bible? Do not include any times you do this as part of a church worship service.” n=2,012

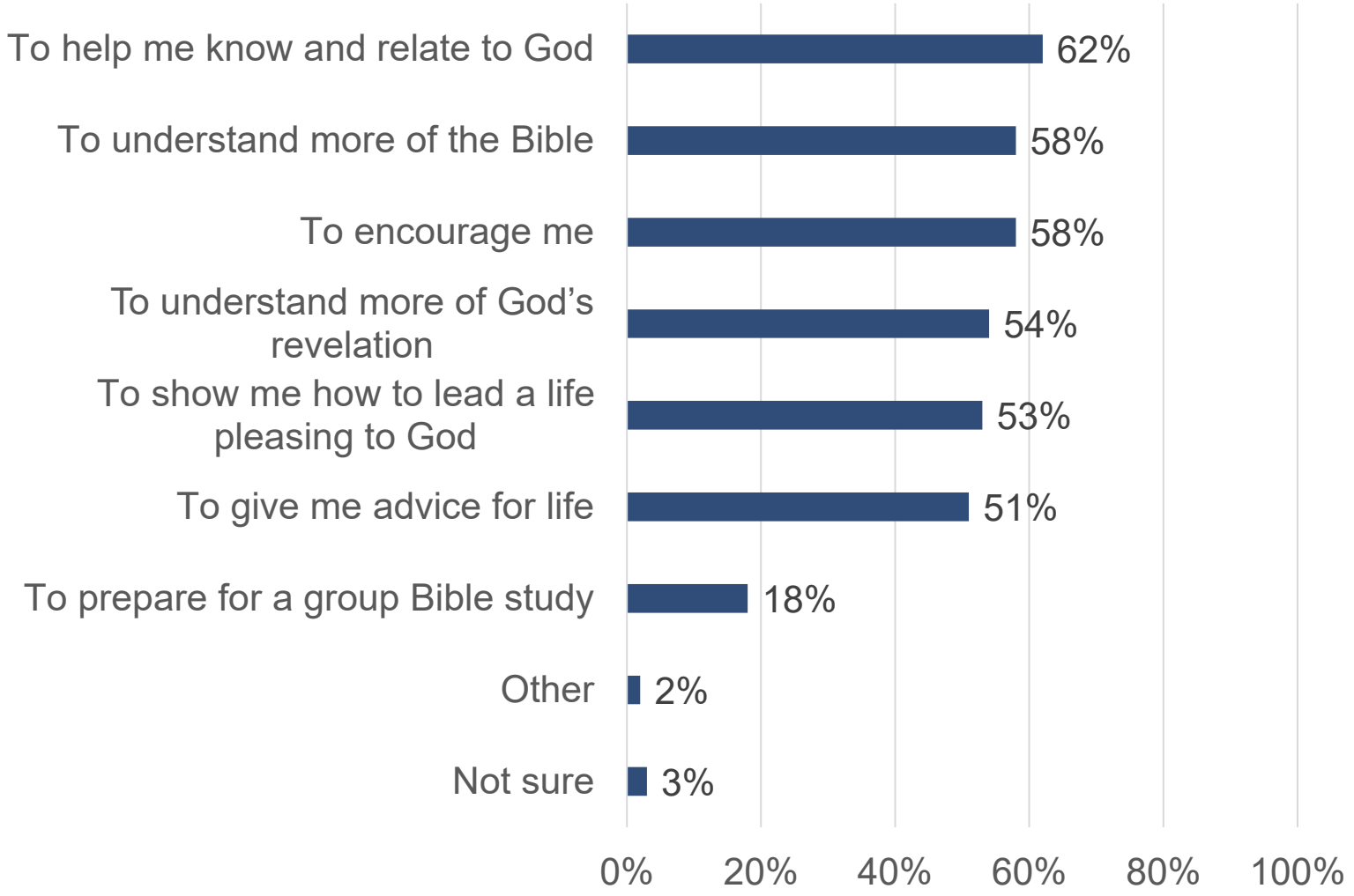
“In a typical week, what approaches, if any, do you use to learn the Bible?”



Lifeway Research

Q68: “In a typical week, what approaches, if any, do you use to learn the Bible? (Select all that apply)” n=2,012

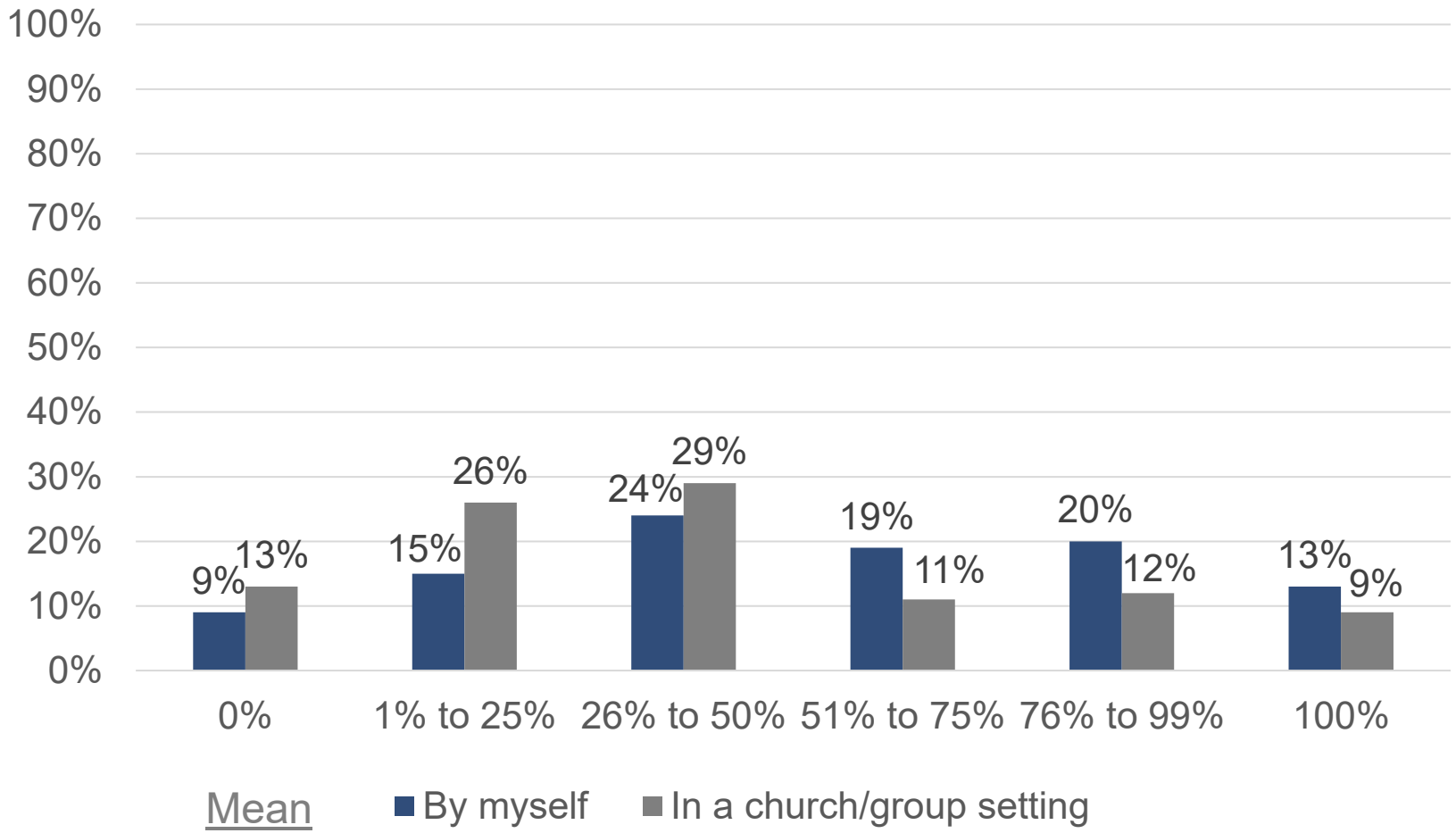
“Which of the following reasons describe why you engage with the Bible?”



Lifeway Research

Q69: “Which of the following reasons describe why you engage with the Bible? (Select all that apply)” n=2,012

“In a typical week, what percentage of your interaction with the Bible is by yourself or in a group or church setting?”



	Mean
By Myself	56%
In a group/ church setting	44%

Lifeway Research

Q70 “In a typical week, what percentage of your interaction with the Bible is by yourself or in a group or church setting?” .n=2,012