

NIV
Adventure
BIBLE

POLAR EXPLORATION EDITION



#1 Bible for Kids

Welcome!

Welcome to the great adventure of reading, exploring and discovering the Bible for yourself.

Are you ready to discover God's Word and apply it to your life? Then the Adventure Bible is for you!

Each feature of the Adventure Bible is designed to introduce you to the wonderful messages and promises in God's Word. Take a few minutes to read about the features. Then you will know the best way to use the Adventure Bible.

FEATURES YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

Words to Treasure

Key verses throughout the Bible are highlighted as "Words to Treasure." These

Words to Treasure



I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me.
Psalm 136

verses are worth memorizing. The best way to live for Jesus is to have his Word in your heart.

Did You Know?

This feature points out many of the interesting small facts that are found in the Bible. Learn them all and wow your parents, teachers and friends with your Bible knowledge.

Did You Know?

How long did it take to build the ark?

615 It probably took about 120 years. In order to save faithful Noah and his family, God waited until the ark was ready before he sent the flood.



Life in Bible Times

Do you ever wonder what it was like to live in the times of Abraham or Ruth or Jesus? What kind of food did they eat? Where did they sleep? What kind of work did they do? "Life in Bible Times" will tell you—and show you! Each of these exciting features includes a picture.

Life in Bible Times

Treasure!

Archaeologists have found treasures of silver in cheap clay pots. Clay pots were common, and thousands were made. But they were sometimes used to store valuable and precious things.



People In Bible Times

The Bible is full of wonderful people. You are probably very familiar with some of their stories, but you may never have heard of others. "People in Bible Times"



Noah was a good man who loved God even when no one else did. He trusted God and followed God's instructions to build an ark. God saved Noah and his family from a flood that destroyed the world.

helps make these real-life characters and their true stories come alive for you. It might be fun to try to imagine yourself in their situations. What would you do?

Live It!

It is important to read and memorize God's Word. But what really counts is living it, letting the Bible affect how you work, play and live. "Live It!" tells you what the Bible has to say about your life RIGHT NOW!

Thank God

Read Genesis 8:20-22 and 9:12-17. When Noah and his family left the ark, they built an altar and thanked God for keeping them safe in the ark. God was pleased, and he sent a rainbow as a promise never to send such a flood again. Noah and his family had many reasons to be thankful. For fun, make a list of all the reasons you and your family have for being thankful.

Live It!



Genesis 8:20-22, 9:12-17

Book Introductions

If you need the basic facts about a book of the Bible (who wrote it, where it took place, why it was written), you'll find that information at the beginning of each book. The book introduction will also give you a list of favorite Bible stories and teachings you can find in that Bible book.



Who wrote this book?
Luke, the physician who traveled as a missionary with Paul, wrote this book.

Why was this book written?
Acts tells how the Christian faith spread to the whole world.

For whom was this book written?
Acts was written for everyone who wants to know what happened after Jesus returned to heaven.

Who are the key people in this book?
The most important people in this book are Peter and Paul.

When did this happen?
This book is what happened from about A.D. 30 to 61.

Where did this happen?
The events in this book happened in many important cities in the Roman Empire. (See the map index at the back of this Bible to find the Roman Empire.)

What are some of the stories in this book?

Jesus goes to heaven	Acts 1:1-13
The Holy Spirit comes	Acts 2:1-13
Peter heals a beggar	Acts 3:1-10
Peter and John are arrested	Acts 4:1-31
Ananias and Sapphira lie	Acts 5:1-11
Stephen, the first martyr	Acts 6:8-7:60
Saul is converted	Acts 9:1-31
Peter has a vision	Acts 10:1-48
Peter escapes from prison	Acts 12:1-19
Prisoners are freed	Acts 16:16-40
A riot in Ephesus	Acts 19:23-41
Paul goes on trial	Acts 24:1-27
Paul is shipwrecked	Acts 27:1-44
Paul goes to Rome	Acts 28:1-31

Acts

Subject Index

In the back of the Adventure Bible is an index of different subjects and people covered in this Bible. If you need to do a report for school or are wondering about a certain subject or person, look it up in this index and then read about it on the pages listed.

Activities

If you want to not only read the Adventure Bible but also do something with what you've learned, turn to the list of activities at the back of the Bible. You'll find there many ideas for things to discuss, to do, and to make.

Dictionary-Concordance

When you're reading the Adventure Bible, you may come to a word that you don't understand. Take a minute to look it up in the dictionary-concordance found at the back of your Bible. Read the definition so you can better understand God's message.

Full-Color Pages

Twenty full-color tip-in pages offer inspiring activities set to a jungle safari theme. They are scattered throughout the Adventure Bible and are special, colorful pages that contain important information. Be sure to check out these pages. You'll be glad you did!

Maps

In the back of this Bible are eight color maps. They will help you better understand where the events in the Bible took place. Check out the Map Index too.

WHERE TO START

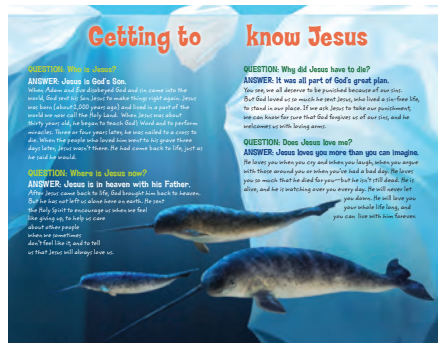
Don't worry about where to start. Start anywhere. Go through the Bible and see what features interest you. Then begin exploring and reading both the features and the Bible text. Use the Adventure Bible every day to begin the great adventure of living for Jesus!

If you have any questions or comments about this Bible, please write and tell us.

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Note to parents and teachers:

The special features of the Adventure Bible can be used as a teaching or devotional tool by parents and teachers but also may be used to encourage children to explore the Bible on their own and to have their own quiet times with God.





Who wrote this book?

A young man named John Mark wrote down stories Peter told about Jesus.

Why was this book written?

Mark shows people who Jesus is by telling what Jesus did.

For whom was this book written?

Mark wrote this book for Gentiles (people who were not Jews).

What happens in this book?

Jesus shows his power by performing miracles that help people, and he teaches his disciples.

Who is the key person in this book?

Jesus is the most important person in this book.

When did this happen?

Jesus worked miracles and taught from A.D. 26 to 30.

Where did this happen?

Most events in Mark 1–9 happened in Galilee. Most events in Mark 10–16 took place in or near Jerusalem.

What are some of the stories in this book?

Jesus heals a paralyzed man Mark 2:1–12

Jesus calms a storm Mark 4:35–41

Jesus raises a dead girl Mark 5:21–43

Jesus walks on water Mark 6:45–56

Jesus feeds 4,000 people Mark 8:1–10

Jesus heals a young boy Mark 9:14–32

Jesus holds the Last Supper Mark 14:12–26

Jesus dies and is buried Mark 15:21–47

Jesus is raised again Mark 16:1–8

mark



John the Baptist Prepares the Way

I The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah,^a the Son of God,^b ²as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”^c —

³“a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”^d

⁴And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷And this was his message: “After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I baptize you with^e water, but he will baptize you with^e the Holy Spirit.”

The Baptism and Testing of Jesus

⁹At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”



People Bible in Times

John the Baptist

God sent John the Baptist to tell people that Jesus the Savior was coming. John faithfully followed God. He baptized many people and told them to ask God to forgive their sins. Jesus came to be baptized, and, even though Jesus had never sinned, John obeyed his request.

¹²At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, ¹³and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted^f by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

Jesus Announces the Good News

¹⁴After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵“The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

^a 1 Or *Jesus Christ. Messiah* (Hebrew) and *Christ* (Greek) both mean *Anointed One*. ^b 1 Some manuscripts do not have *the Son of God*. ^c 2 Mal. 3:1 ^d 3 Isaiah 40:3 ^e 8 Or *in* ^f 13 The Greek for *tempted* can also mean *tested*.

Life in Bible Times

Fishing

In the first century fishermen in boats worked on the Sea of Galilee. The fish they caught in their nets were salted or dried and then sold all through the Holy Land. Jesus called his first disciples to be fishers of people instead of fishers of fish (Mark 1:16–18).



Jesus Calls His First Disciples

¹⁶As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ¹⁸At once they left their nets and followed him.

¹⁹When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. ²⁰Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Jesus Drives Out an Impure Spirit

²¹They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²²The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. ²³Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, ²⁴“What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

²⁵“Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” ²⁶The impure spirit shook the

man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

²⁷The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.” ²⁸News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many

²⁹As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. ³⁰Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. ³¹So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

³²That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. ³³The whole town gathered at the door, ³⁴and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place

³⁵Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Reach Out to Others

Leprosy is a terrible disease. A leper’s skin has open sores. In Bible times a person with leprosy was considered “unclean” and could not worship God with other people or even live in town. Because of the disease, no one would come near a leper.

Read Mark 1:40–42. Jesus showed that he cared for this leper by touching him and healing him.

Write down the names of a couple of children you know who might feel as lonely as the leper. Then answer these three questions:

1. Why is he or she left alone? (Because he or she is not nice, is dirty, doesn’t wear nice clothes, hits people, looks or acts different?)
2. How do you think he or she feels? (Happy, lonely, afraid, proud, sad, angry, stuck-up, or maybe some other feeling?)
3. How could you show that Jesus cares? (Smile, talk to him, ask her to sit with you at lunch, pick him for your team, tell others to stop being mean?)

What will you do to show that Jesus still cares about the lonely today?

Live It!



Mark 1:40-42

³⁶Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!”

³⁸Jesus replied, “Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.” ³⁹So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

Jesus Heals a Man With Leprosy

⁴⁰A man with leprosy^a came to him and begged him on his knees, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.”

⁴¹Jesus was indignant.^b He reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” ⁴²Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

⁴³Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: ⁴⁴“See that you don’t tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them.” ⁴⁵Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man

2 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. ²They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and

he preached the word to them. ³Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. ⁴Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. ⁵When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

⁶Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷“Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

⁸Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? ⁹Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? ¹⁰But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the man, ¹¹“I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” ¹²He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

Jesus Calls Levi and Eats With Sinners

¹³Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he

^a 40 The Greek word traditionally translated *leprosy* was used for various diseases affecting the skin. ^b 41 Many manuscripts *Jesus was filled with compassion*

Life in Bible Times

House Roofs

House roofs in New Testament times were made by laying branches over roof beams. Mud was packed over the branches. The friends who carried a paralyzed man to Jesus dug through the mud roof of a house and lowered the sick man into the room where Jesus was teaching.



began to teach them. ¹⁴As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

¹⁵While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

¹⁷On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus Questioned About Fasting

¹⁸Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?"

¹⁹Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. ²⁰But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast.

²¹"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. ²²And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins."

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

²³One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. ²⁴The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

²⁵He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? ²⁶In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions."

²⁷Then he said to them, "The Sabbath

was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

Jesus Heals on the Sabbath

3 Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. ²Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. ³Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone."

⁴Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent.

⁵He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. ⁶Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

Crowds Follow Jesus

⁷Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. ⁸When they heard about all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon. ⁹Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. ¹⁰For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him. ¹¹Whenever the impure spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." ¹²But he gave them strict orders not to tell others about him.

Jesus Appoints the Twelve

¹³Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴He appointed twelve^a that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach ¹⁵and to have authority to drive out demons. ¹⁶These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), ¹⁷James son of

^a 14 Some manuscripts *twelve—designating them apostles—*

Ten Commandments for Kids

(Based on Exodus 20:1-17 & Deuteronomy 5:7-21)

- 1** You may not love anyone or anything more than you love God.
- 2** You may not worship, or put more importance on any person or thing, other than God. You must worship only the Lord, not a friend, not a movie star or sports hero, not a car or skateboard. Nothing.
- 3** You may not swear. Use God's holy name in a loving way, never to express anger or frustration.
- 4** One day of your week should be set aside for resting and worshipping God.
- 5** Respect your parents. Love them, and the Lord will reward you in your life.
- 6** You may not hate other people; Don't ever think of hurting someone else in any way.
- 7** Keep your thoughts and actions pure. Husbands and wives should share their special love only with each other.
- 8** Do not take anything that does not belong to you.
- 9** You may not tell lies, especially when that lie will hurt someone else.
- 10** Do not be jealous of what others have. You may not be jealous of your friend's new toy or clothes or the big house your neighbor lives in. Be satisfied with what you have.



Famous Old Testament Prophets

ISAIAH

prophesied in Judah during the reigns of King Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. His book predicts punishment for wickedness, but it also promises God's comfort.

JEREMIAH

prophesied to Judah and was often in danger because his predictions angered the officials. His book gives a good picture of what Judah was like before going into captivity.

EZEKIEL

spoke to the Jews who were in exile in Babylon. His book contains descriptions of several strange visions.

DANIEL

went as a captive to Babylon, where he rose to a position of power because of his God-given wisdom. His book covers the story of his experiences in Babylon as well as the dreams and visions he had.

HOSEA

prophesied to Israel, probably shortly before the fall of Samaria. His book uses the story of Hosea's unfaithful wife to describe Israel's unfaithfulness to God.

AMOS

was a shepherd from Judah who prophesied God's coming punishment on Israel. His book calls the people to turn toward God and leave their selfish and often cruel lifestyle.

JONAH

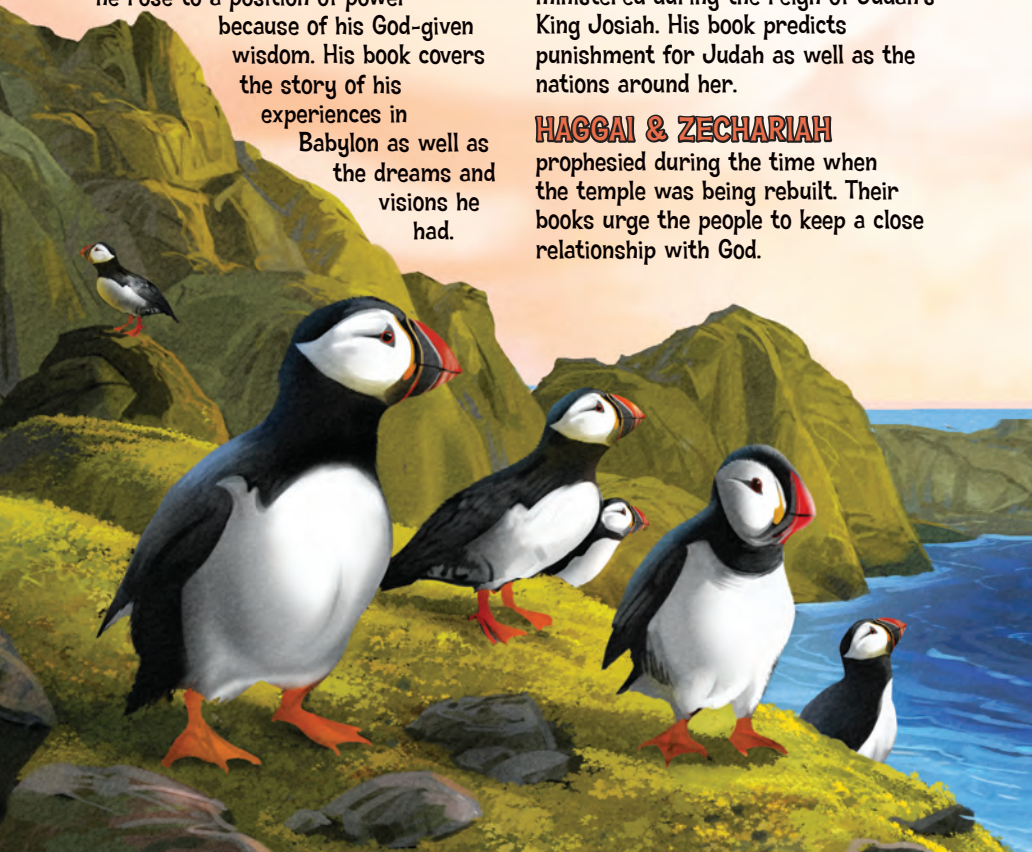
was called to preach to the people of Nineveh, but he ran from God instead. His book tells the story of his flight and what happened when he finally reached Nineveh.

ZEPHANIAH

ministered during the reign of Judah's King Josiah. His book predicts punishment for Judah as well as the nations around her.

HAGGAI & ZECHARIAH

prophesied during the time when the temple was being rebuilt. Their books urge the people to keep a close relationship with God.



Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder”),¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Jesus Accused by His Family and by Teachers of the Law

²⁰Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. ²¹When his family^a heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.”

²²And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, “He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons.”

²³So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables: “How can Satan drive out Satan? ²⁴If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. ²⁷In fact, no one can enter a strong man’s house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man’s house. ²⁸Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, ²⁹but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will

never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin.”

³⁰He said this because they were saying, “He has an impure spirit.”

³¹Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. ³²A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, “Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.”

³³“Who are my mother and my brothers?” he asked.

³⁴Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”

The Parable of the Sower

4 Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water’s edge. ²He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: ³“Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they with-

^a 21 Or his associates

Life in Bible Times

Sowing Seeds

Farmers in the first century didn’t use machines to plant, or sow, their fields with seed. They took handfuls of seed and, with a sweeping motion, threw it on the ground they had plowed. A skillful sower could spread grain seeds very evenly.



ered because they had no root. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. ⁸Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times.”

⁹Then Jesus said, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

¹⁰When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. ¹¹He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables ¹²so that,

“they may be ever seeing but never perceiving,
and ever hearing but never understanding;
otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!”^a”

¹³Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? ¹⁴The farmer sows the word. ¹⁵Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. ¹⁶Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. ¹⁷But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ¹⁸Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; ¹⁹but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²⁰Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

A Lamp on a Stand

²¹He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? ²²For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. ²³If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.”

²⁴“Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it

will be measured to you—and even more. ²⁵Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

The Parable of the Growing Seed

²⁶He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. ²⁹As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

³⁰Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? ³¹It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. ³²Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.”

³³With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. ³⁴He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

Jesus Calms the Storm

³⁵That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” ³⁶Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. ³⁷A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. ³⁸Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

³⁹He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

⁴⁰He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

⁴¹They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

^a 12 Isaiah 6:9,10

Did You Know?

Can demons really possess people?

5:18 Demons are real, and they can control people's lives and make them do evil things. We should have nothing to do with demons—even pretend demons shown in some movies. The movies people make about demons leave out one important fact: Even thousands of demons cannot stand against Jesus. Jesus protects us when we invite him into our lives.



Jesus Restores a Demon-Possessed Man

5 They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes.^a ²When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. ³This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. ⁴For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

⁶When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. ⁷He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!" ⁸For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!"

⁹Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." ¹⁰And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

¹¹A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. ¹²The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." ¹³He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

¹⁴Those tending the pigs ran off and re-

ported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. ¹⁵When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ¹⁶Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. ¹⁷Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

¹⁸As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. ¹⁹Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." ²⁰So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis^b how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

Jesus Raises a Dead Girl and Heals a Sick Woman

²¹When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. ²²Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. ²³He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." ²⁴So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." ²⁹Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

³⁰At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

³¹"You see the people crowding against

^a 1 Some manuscripts *Gadarenes*; other manuscripts *Gergesenes* ^b 20 That is, the Ten Cities

you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’”

³²But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

³⁵While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?”

³⁶Overhearing^a what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

³⁷He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. ³⁸When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹He went in and said to them, “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.” ⁴⁰But they laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child’s father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹He took her by the hand and said to her, “*Talitha koum!*” (which means “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). ⁴²Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

A Prophet Without Honor

6 Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. ²When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.

“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? ³Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph,^b Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

⁴Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” ⁵He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. ⁷Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits.

⁸These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. ⁹Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. ¹⁰Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. ¹¹And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave

^a 36 Or *Ignoring*

^b 3 Greek *Joses*, a variant of *Joseph*

Parents Who Pray

Read Mark 5:21–23, 35–43. What did the father do to help his daughter?

Pretend you are a newspaper reporter. Interview your mother, father, or a grandparent. Ask the questions below. Then write a story about a time someone prayed for you.

Can you remember a time when you prayed hard for me? Why did you pray then? What did you say when you prayed? Why was an answer to this prayer important? How did God answer the prayer? What things do you ask God for when you pray for me now?

Live It!



Mark 5:21–23, 35–43

that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”

¹²They went out and preached that people should repent. ¹³They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

John the Baptist Beheaded

¹⁴King Herod heard about this, for Jesus’ name had become well known. Some were saying,^a “John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him.”

¹⁵Others said, “He is Elijah.”

And still others claimed, “He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago.”

¹⁶But when Herod heard this, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!”

¹⁷For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, whom he had married. ¹⁸For John had been saying to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” ¹⁹So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, ²⁰because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled^b; yet he liked to listen to him.

²¹Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. ²²When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.

The king said to the girl, “Ask me for anything you want, and I’ll give it to you.”

²³And he promised her with an oath, “Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom.”

²⁴She went out and said to her mother, “What shall I ask for?”

“The head of John the Baptist,” she answered.

²⁵At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: “I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”

²⁶The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her. ²⁷So he im-

Did You Know?

Why did Herod kill John the Baptist?

6:26 King Herod made a foolish promise to give a dancing girl anything she wanted. She asked for the head of John the Baptist. The king knew that it was wrong to kill John, but he worried about what his friends would think if he broke his promise. King Herod committed a terrible sin just so he wouldn’t be embarrassed.



mediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John’s head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison, ²⁸and brought back his head on a platter. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother. ²⁹On hearing of this, John’s disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

³⁰The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. ³¹Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

³²So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. ³³But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

³⁵By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late. ³⁶Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”

³⁷But he answered, “You give them something to eat.”

^a 14 Some early manuscripts *He was saying*

^b 20 Some early manuscripts *he did many things*

^c 22 Some early manuscripts *When his daughter*

They said to him, “That would take more than half a year’s wages^a! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?”

³⁸“How many loaves do you have?” he asked. “Go and see.”

When they found out, they said, “Five—and two fish.”

³⁹Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴²They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

Jesus Walks on the Water

⁴⁵Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.

⁴⁷Later that night, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. ⁴⁸He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, ⁴⁹but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, ⁵⁰because they all saw him and were terrified.

Immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” ⁵¹Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, ⁵²for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

⁵³When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. ⁵⁴As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. ⁵⁵They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶And wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

That Which Defiles

7 The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus ²and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. ³(The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. ⁴When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.^b)

⁵So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples

^a 37 Greek *take two hundred denarii* ^b 4 Some early manuscripts *pitchers, kettles and dining couches*

Life in Bible Times

Baking Bread

Women used clay ovens to bake bread. They built a fire inside, and when the oven was hot they put pancake-shaped bread on the outside to cook. Or they scraped the ashes out of the oven and put small loaves of bread inside.



Did You Know?

What is the “tradition of the elders”?

7:5 The “tradition of the elders” was the list of many rules that the Pharisees had made up. The Pharisees thought that all of their rules were very important—more important even than God’s law and his Word. Jesus said that the Pharisees were wrong. Rules made up by people are never as important as God’s Word.



live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?”

⁶He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

⁷They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.”^a

⁸You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”

⁹And he continued, “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe^b your own traditions!

¹⁰For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother,’^c and, ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’^d ¹¹But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God) — ¹²then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. ¹³Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”

¹⁴Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. ¹⁵Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.” [16]^e

¹⁷After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about

this parable. ¹⁸“Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? ¹⁹For it doesn’t go into their heart but into their stomach, and then out of the body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.)

²⁰He went on: “What comes out of a person is what defiles them. ²¹For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²²adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. ²³All these evils come from inside and defile a person.”

Jesus Honors a Syrophenician Woman’s Faith

²⁴Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre.^f He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. ²⁵In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet. ²⁶The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.

²⁷“First let the children eat all they want,” he told her, “for it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

²⁸“Lord,” she replied, “even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.”

²⁹Then he told her, “For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter.”

³⁰She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Jesus Heals a Deaf and Mute Man

³¹Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis.^g

³²There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him.

³³After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man’s ears. Then he spit and touched the man’s tongue. ³⁴He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, “*Ephphatha!*”

^a 6, 7 Isaiah 29:13 ^b 9 Some manuscripts *set up*

^c 10 Exodus 20:12; Deut. 5:16 ^d 10 Exodus 21:17;

Lev. 20:9 ^e 16 Some manuscripts include here the words of 4:23. ^f 24 Many early manuscripts *Tyre*

and Sidon ^g 31 That is, the Ten Cities

(which means “Be opened!”).³⁵ At this, the man’s ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.

³⁶ Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. ³⁷ People were overwhelmed with amazement. “He has done everything well,” they said. “He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

8 During those days another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, ² “I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. ³ If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance.”

⁴ His disciples answered, “But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?”

⁵ “How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked.

“Seven,” they replied.

⁶ He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. When he had taken the seven loaves and given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people, and they did so. ⁷ They had a few small fish as well; he gave thanks for them also and told the disciples to distribute them. ⁸ The people ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. ⁹ About four thousand were present. After he had sent them away, ¹⁰ he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha.

¹¹ The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven. ¹² He sighed deeply and said, “Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to it.” ¹³ Then he left them, got back into the boat and crossed to the other side.

The Yeast of the Pharisees and Herod

¹⁴ The disciples had forgotten to bring bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat. ¹⁵ “Be careful,” Jesus warned them. “Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod.”

¹⁶ They discussed this with one another and said, “It is because we have no bread.”

¹⁷ Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? ¹⁸ Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don’t you remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?”

“Twelve,” they replied.

²⁰ “And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?”

They answered, “Seven.”

²¹ He said to them, “Do you still not understand?”

Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida

²² They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. ²³ He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man’s eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, “Do you see anything?”

²⁴ He looked up and said, “I see people; they look like trees walking around.”

²⁵ Once more Jesus put his hands on the man’s eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. ²⁶ Jesus sent him home, saying, “Don’t even go into^a the village.”

Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, “Who do people say I am?”

²⁸ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.”

²⁹ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.”

³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

Jesus Predicts His Death

³¹ He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be

^a 26 Some manuscripts *go and tell anyone in*

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