

NIV
Adventure
BIBLE



#1 Bible for Kids

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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!

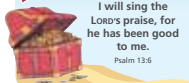
Each feature of the Adventure Bible is designed to introduce you to the wonderful messages and promises in God's Word. Take a few minutes to read about the features. Then you will know the best way to use the Adventure Bible.

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 13:6

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?

616! 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 tells 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 on page 4 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 1:1-11
The Holy Spirit comes	Acts 2:1-13
Peter heals a beggar	Acts 3:1-10
Peter and John are arrested	Acts 4:1-21
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

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

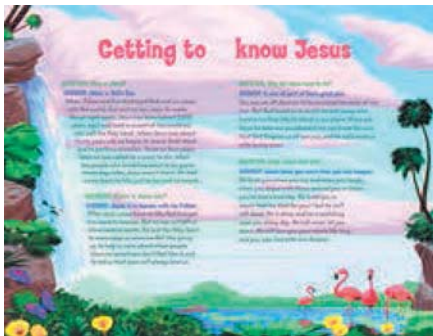
If you want to not only read the Adventure Bible but also do something with what you've learned, turn to the list of activities at the back of the Bible. You'll find there many ideas for things to discuss, to do, and to make.

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?

There is some debate about who wrote Genesis. However, many scholars believe Moses wrote it.

Why was this book written?

Genesis tells how God created the universe and human beings. It also covers the special promises God made to Abraham.

What do we learn about God in this book?

God created all things. He loves people, but he will punish sin. God promises, however, to save people who trust him.

Who are the key people in this book?

The most important people in this book are Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel, and Joseph.

When did this happen?

No one knows when the creation or the flood occurred. Abraham was born about 2150 b.c. His great-grandson Joseph died about 1800 b.c.

Where did this happen?

Genesis 1–11 happened in Mesopotamia. Genesis 12–36 took place in Canaan, which is also called the promised land. The rest of Genesis took place in Egypt. (See the map index at the back of this Bible to find Egypt.)

What are some of the stories in this book?

God creates the universe	Genesis 1
God creates Adam and Eve	Genesis 2
Adam and Eve sin	Genesis 3
Noah builds an ark	Genesis 6
God sends a flood to punish sin	Genesis 7–8
God gives promises to Abraham	Genesis 12
Abraham prays for a city	Genesis 18
Jacob steals Esau's blessing	Genesis 27
Jacob's name is changed	Genesis 32
Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery	Genesis 37
Joseph becomes a ruler	Genesis 39–41



The Beginning

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.” ⁷So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

¹¹Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. ¹²The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the

Did You Know?

What does create mean?

I: The word *create* means “to make something new.” God did just that when he created the universe. Genesis tells us that God created everything. Read this chapter and you will find many things that God created.



vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” ²¹So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” ²³And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and

Words to Treasure

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1



all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,^a and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

²⁷So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

²⁹Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

³¹God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was eve-

ning, and there was morning—the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

²By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.

³Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Adam and Eve

⁴This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

⁵Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth^b and no plant had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground,⁶ but streams^c came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. ⁷Then the LORD God formed a man^d from the dust of the ground and

^a 26 Probable reading of the original Hebrew text (see Syriac); Masoretic Text *the earth* ^b 5 Or *land*; also in verse 6 ^c 6 Or *mist* ^d 7 The Hebrew for *man* (*adam*) sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew for *ground* (*adamah*); it is also the name *Adam* (see verse 20).

You're Special

Read Genesis 1:26–27. God made you in his own image. You are not like the other creatures God made—humans are the only creatures that God created in his own image or likeness. That doesn't mean that you *look* like God or that you're *equal* to God, but it does mean that you are his very special creation.

Look at pictures of your mom or dad when they were your age. How were they like you? How were they different? Your parents love you very much because you are their child, and you are like them in important ways. Ask your mom or dad to tell you why they think you are special.

God loves you very much because you are his child and his one-of-a-kind special creation. You are made in his own image, but you are still your very own person. Write a letter to God, thanking him for adopting you as his son or daughter, for creating you in his image, and for loving you so very much.

Live It!



Genesis 1:26-27



People in Bible Times

Adam

God created Adam, the first human being, in his own image. That means that in many ways Adam was like God. God made Adam from the dust of the ground and breathed life into him. God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to take care of it.

breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

⁸Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. ¹¹The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹²(The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin^a and onyx are also there.) ¹³The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush.^b ¹⁴The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

¹⁸The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

¹⁹Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and

whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam^c no suitable helper was found. ²¹So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs^d and then closed up the place with flesh. ²²Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib^e he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

²³The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called ‘woman,’
for she was taken out of man.”

²⁴That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

²⁵Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

²The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the

^a 12 Or *good*; *pearls* ^b 13 Possibly southeast Mesopotamia ^c 20 Or *the man* ^d 21 Or *took part of the man’s side* ^e 22 Or *part*



People in Bible Times

Eve

God did not want Adam to be alone, so he created a helper for him. Her name was Eve, and God made her from one of Adam’s ribs. Adam and Eve lived together in the Garden of Eden.

Did You Know?

What kind of fruit did Adam and Eve eat?

3:6 The Bible does not name the fruit that Adam and Eve ate. It's not really important. The important point of this story is that Adam and Eve disobeyed God. He had told them not to eat the fruit from this particular tree, but they did it anyway. Genesis 3 tells what happened because they disobeyed.



garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.”

4“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. **5**“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

6When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with

her, and he ate it. **7**Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

8Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. **9**But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

10He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

11And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

12The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

13Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

14So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.

Wrong Decisions

Adam and Eve made a wrong decision, and they ate from a tree that God had told them to leave alone. Do you ever wonder why they did it? For some answers, read Genesis 3:1–13. Adam and Eve made the wrong decision because:

- 3:4 Someone told them it was all right to do the wrong thing.
- 3:5 It looked like an exciting thing to do.
- 3:6 A close friend did it first.

After Adam and Eve had made that wrong decision, they felt guilty and afraid. They hid from God when he entered the garden. They knew they had done wrong, but it was too late.

Think about what you should say if someone tells you it's all right to do a wrong thing, if something wrong looks exciting, or if a friend does a wrong thing first and wants you to do it too. If you can't think of a good answer, ask an older friend or your mom or dad for advice.

Live It!



Genesis 3:1–13



Who wrote this book?

Matthew, one of Jesus' 12 disciples, wrote this book.

Why was this book written?

Matthew shows the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament.

For whom was this book written?

Matthew was written for the Jewish people.

What happens in this book?

This book tells about Jesus' birth, his life as an adult, his teaching, death, and resurrection.

Who is the key person in this book?

Jesus is the most important person in this book.

When did this happen?

These events took place between 6 B.C. and A.D. 30.

Where did this happen?

Most events took place in towns in Galilee. (See the map index at the back of this Bible to find Galilee.)

What are some of the stories in this book?

Wise men visit Jesus	Matthew 2:1–23
How to be blessed	Matthew 5:1–12
The Lord's Prayer	Matthew 6:9–13
Jesus feeds 5,000 people	Matthew 14:13–21
Jesus walks on water	Matthew 14:22–33
Lost sheep	Matthew 18:10–14
Jesus enters Jerusalem	Matthew 21:1–11
Jesus is crucified	Matthew 27:32–56
Jesus returns to life	Matthew 28:1–10
Jesus' Great Commission	Matthew 28:16–20

The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah

I This is the genealogy^a of Jesus the Messiah^b the son of David, the son of Abraham:

- ²Abraham was the father of Isaac,
Isaac the father of Jacob,
Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,
- ³Judah the father of Perez and Zerah,
whose mother was Tamar,
Perez the father of Hezron,
Hezron the father of Ram,
- ⁴Ram the father of Amminadab,
Amminadab the father of Nahshon,
Nahshon the father of Salmon,
- ⁵Salmon the father of Boaz, whose
mother was Rahab,
Boaz the father of Obed, whose
mother was Ruth,
Obed the father of Jesse,
- ⁶and Jesse the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon,
whose mother had been Uriah's
wife,

- ⁷Solomon the father of Rehoboam,
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,
Abijah the father of Asa,
- ⁸Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,
Jehoram the father of Uzziah,
- ⁹Uzziah the father of Jotham,
Jotham the father of Ahaz,
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,
- ¹⁰Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,
Manasseh the father of Amon,
Amon the father of Josiah,
- ¹¹and Josiah the father of Jeconiah^c
and his brothers at the time of the
exile to Babylon.

- ¹²After the exile to Babylon:
Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,
- ¹³Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,
Abihud the father of Eliakim,
Eliakim the father of Azor,
- ¹⁴Azor the father of Zadok,
Zadok the father of Akim,
Akim the father of Elihud,
- ¹⁵Elihud the father of Eleazar,
Eleazar the father of Matthan,
Matthan the father of Jacob,
- ¹⁶and Jacob the father of Joseph, the

Did You Know?

Why is this genealogy in Matthew?

1:17 A genealogy is a record of a person's ancestors. Matthew wanted us to know that Jesus was a true human being, as well as the Son of God. Matthew also wanted the Jews to know that Jesus was a descendant of Abraham (the father of the Jewish nation) and of David. Only a descendant of David could be King of the Jews.



husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

¹⁷Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about^d: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet^e did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,^f because he will save his people from their sins."

²²All this took place to fulfill what the

^a 1 Or is an account of the origin ^b 1 Or Jesus Christ. Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek) both mean Anointed One; also in verse 18. ^c 11 That is, Jehoiachin; also in verse 12. ^d 18 Or The origin of Jesus the Messiah was like this. ^e 19 Or was a righteous man and ^f 21 Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua, which means the LORD saves.

Lord had said through the prophet: ²³“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”^a (which means “God with us”).

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

The Magi Visit the Messiah

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi^b from the east came to Jerusalem² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”^c

⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search care-

fully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The Escape to Egypt

¹³When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”^d

¹⁶When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷Then what

^a 23 Isaiah 7:14

^b 1 Traditionally *wise men*

^c 6 Micah 5:2,4

^d 15 Hosea 11:1

A Jesus Baby Book

Parents often keep a baby book for their children. The book has a place for pictures and stories about their child. Ask your mom or dad whether you have a baby book that you can look at. You can make a baby book for Jesus. Read Matthew 2:1–12 and the first two chapters of Luke to find out about Jesus’ birth. Draw pictures of these things on some pieces of paper. Write Bible verses that tell about each picture. Now stack the papers and punch two holes on one end. Thread a long piece of yarn through the holes, and tie the yarn to hold the papers together.

Live It!



Matthew 2:1-12

was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸“A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more.”^a

The Return to Nazareth

¹⁹After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

²¹So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, ²³and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ²and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

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

Did You Know?

What does “repent” mean?

3:2 The word *repent* means to change your heart and mind, to move in a new direction. John the Baptist told people to repent of and turn away from their sins. John preached this message to prepare the people of Israel for what Jesus would say.



⁴John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹“I baptize you with^c water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with^c the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

The Baptism of Jesus

¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. ¹⁴But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”

¹⁵Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.

¹⁶As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted^d by the devil. ²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

^a 18 Jer. 31:15 ^b 3 Isaiah 40:3 ^c 11 Or in

^d 1 The Greek for *tempted* can also mean *tested*.

⁴Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’^a”

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶“If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:

“He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”^b”

⁷Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’^c”

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹“All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

¹⁰Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’^d”

¹¹Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Jesus Begins to Preach

¹²When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee.

¹³Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— ¹⁴to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵“Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

¹⁶the people living in darkness have seen a great light;

on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.”^e

¹⁷From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

¹⁸As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ²²and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Jesus Heals the Sick

²³Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them. ²⁵Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis,^f Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

^a 4 Deut. 8:3

^b 6 Psalm 91:11,12

^c 7 Deut. 6:16

^d 10 Deut. 6:13

^e 16 Isaiah 9:1,2

^f 25 That is,

the Ten Cities

Fighting Temptation

Read Matthew 4:1–11. Can you find three words that Jesus said each time Satan tempted him?

The words are, “It is written.” Jesus fought each temptation by deciding to obey God and do what God says in the Bible. When you are tempted to do something wrong, you can defeat temptation too. Decide to obey God and do what the Bible says.

Live It!



Matthew 4:1–11

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ²and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶Blessed are those who hunger and
thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

⁷Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted
because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and Light

¹³“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made

salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

The Fulfillment of the Law

¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Murder

²¹“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder,^a and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ ²²But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister^{b,c} will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’^d is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

²³“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

²⁵“Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or

^a 21 Exodus 20:13 ^b 22 The Greek word for *brother or sister* (*adelphos*) refers here to a fellow disciple, whether man or woman; also in verse 23.

^c 22 Some manuscripts *brother or sister without cause*

^d 22 An Aramaic term of contempt

Did You Know?

What are the Beatitudes?

5:3-10 The Beatitudes are special sayings of Jesus. They explain how to be blessed. *Blessed* means “truly happy.” Some people think that money or power will bring them happiness, but Jesus wants his listeners to know how they can be truly happy.



Did You Know?

What does it mean to be holy?

3:12 Being holy means living right and doing good things because we love Jesus. Colossians 3 gives us some very specific rules to help us to live holy lives.



Words to Treasure

Forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Colossians 3:13



their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Living as Those Made Alive in Christ

3 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your^a life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.^b ⁷You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your

hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Instructions for Christian Households

¹⁸Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

¹⁹Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

²¹Fathers,^c do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

²²Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. ²³Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the

^a 4 Some manuscripts *our* ^b 6 Some early manuscripts *coming on those who are disobedient*

^c 21 Or *Parents*

Words to Treasure

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

Colossians 3:20



Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. ²⁵Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism.

4 Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

Further Instructions

²Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Final Greetings

⁷Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant^a in the Lord. ⁸I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our^b circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. ⁹He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

¹⁰My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.) ¹¹Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews^c among my co-workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me. ¹²Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. ¹³I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis. ¹⁴Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. ¹⁵Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

¹⁶After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

¹⁷Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the ministry you have received in the Lord."

¹⁸I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

^a 7 Or *slave*; also in verse 12 ^b 8 Some manuscripts *that he may know about your*
^c 11 Greek *only ones of the circumcision group*

Your Part in a Happy Family

Everyone has a part in making a happy family. Read Colossians 3:18–21. What is your dad's part? Your mom's part? What is your part?

How could you show obedience if your mom or dad said these things:

1. "It's time for bed."
2. "Be sure to behave on the school bus."
3. "I wish you wouldn't complain about the food I cook."
4. "Don't talk back."
5. "Homework comes first."

Talk to your mom or dad. Ask them why the whole family is happier when everybody does their part.

Live It!



Colossians 3:18-21