

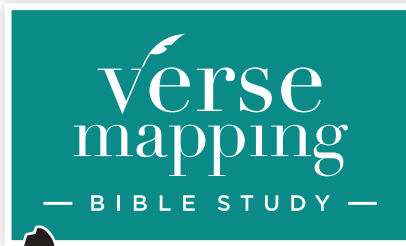
verse
mapping

— BIBLE STUDY —
SIX SESSIONS

Luke

GATHERING THE GOODNESS
OF GOD'S WORD

K R I S T Y C A M B R O N



Luke

GATHERING THE GOODNESS
OF GOD'S WORD

STUDY GUIDE | SIX SESSIONS

K R I S T Y C A M B R O N



THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

Verse Mapping Bible Study
Luke: Gathering the Goodness of God's Word

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Published in association with Books & Such Literary Management, 52 Mission Circle, Suite 122, PMB 170, Santa Rosa, California 95409-5370, www.booksandsuch.com.

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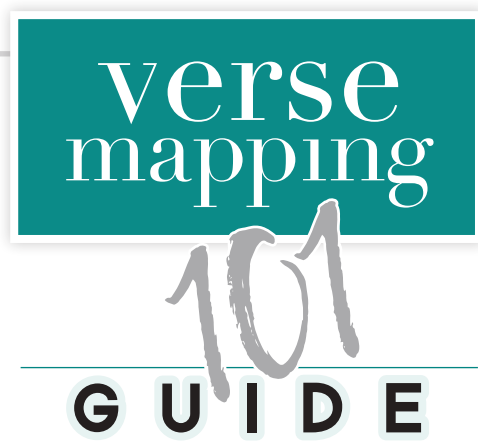
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ISBN 978-0-310-08989-6

First Printing March 2018 / Printed in the United States of America

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Steps to Study the Bible Like Never Before

WHY VERSE MAPPING?

Let's be honest—does anyone else have difficulty understanding Scripture? (*Waving hand over here . . .*)

Do you want to do more than just read—you actually want to research and apply what's in the Bible to your life today? (*Me too! Waving again.*)

Are you looking for a fellowship community where you can read, learn, explore, and map the Word of God together? (*Still here!*)

If this is you too, and you love unpacking the context of the Scriptures you're reading, but you want to do it in a super-simple way—looking at the Hebrew/Greek translations, finding connections in the Word, and learning as much as you can from your time with the Holy Spirit—then get ready. . . . You've just joined the community study that will inspire, encourage, and unlock your understanding of the Word of God!

WHAT IS VERSE MAPPING?

Verse mapping isn't new. It's been a topic of conversation for years. You'll find endless examples with a simple online search. And you guessed it—Bible journaling images and methods are popping up all over social media. But what is verse mapping? Who's doing it? And can it really help you understand the Word more clearly?

First things first . . .

definition: Verse mapping is a method of studying the historical context, transliteration, translation, connotation, and theological framework of a verse (or section of verses) in the Bible.

Plain and simple? Verse mapping is getting real about studying the Bible. All of it. It's not just reading. It's researching everything you can in a verse to learn more about who God is and how He wants to speak to you through His Word. In short? It's serious study.

4 *actions*

What actions develop the story in this verse? What is happening in this verse? To whom?

1 *verse*

What verse am I mapping? What key themes or specific words are speaking to me today?

2 *design*

What different translations make up the design for this verse? Underline key phrases or words repeated.

develop 3

What is the Hebrew or Greek meaning for the underlined phrases or words?

5 *outcome*

What is God saying to me today? How do I apply this to my life?

HOW-TO FOR BEGINNERS

What qualifies me to do this kind of study?

If you're not a seminary-trained theologian by education, don't worry—verse mapping is for anyone with a heart to know the Word of God more.

What matters is not how much knowledge you have before you begin, but where the experience takes you. Verse mapping will inspire you to dig into the Word of God in individual study and in a group setting like never before. The Holy Spirit is your teacher and companion in this study; it's not the *what* you bring to the table that qualifies you—it's *Who*. And He's going to make sure you learn no matter where you begin.

What are the rules?

- **Rule #1:** If you can't back up your conclusions or thoughts with Scripture, then you can't write it down. Everything is fair game in studying *as long as God said it first*. (In other words, don't make anything up and don't assume you know what something means—back it up with Scripture or go back and find the *real* answer.)
- **Rule #2:** Make it personal. This is your journal and your study time with God. More than anything, let God meet you in this unique and intimate space and speak to you.
- **Rule #3:** Keep to your preferences for verse mapping—if you like to highlight . . . if you like to use a specific marker/pen color . . . or if you like to circle or underline key words and phrases. Do what feels intuitive for you.

There's no structurally right or wrong way to verse map. This particular study is structured working from right to left (a documentation page on the right, notes page on the left), and top to bottom. Once you've gathered the tools and mastered the confidence to apply what you've learned, it's up to you how your journal will look. Focus on the process and the way of this study method. Learn how to read and ask at the same time, and then go find the answers.

GATHERING AND GETTING STARTED

This section is quick. It's all about gathering a handful of tools and readying your heart for Him.

What you will need

Whether you're at a desk in your home office, at the local coffee shop, or on the go, verse mapping is a study method that will move with you. In fact, you probably already carry everything you need just about anywhere you go:

- **Journal:** Verse Mapping study guide with blank maps, or a notebook with blank pages.
- **Markers/pens:** Specific colors of markers or pens aren't required. This is personal.
- **Bible:** Or a Bible app on a smart device (to look up various translations).
- **Concordance:** Select a concordance with Hebrew/Greek dictionaries. I recommend *The NIV Exhaustive Bible Concordance, Third Edition* (also known as Strong's) from Zondervan, but you can also find the information online. If you don't have one—or if you're not able to carry one with you—you can also find this information on your smart device.
- **Time (varies):** While it's a requirement, the time you block on your calendar is *up to you*. Study time is on the honor system between you and God. If you have five minutes today and an hour tomorrow, dedicate what time you can, when you can. It's all about communion with Him.

Study Prompt

Time is a big factor. You may have others who depend on you either inside your home, outside it, or both—and that can cut into the time you're able to study. If finding study *time* is a struggle that becomes a burden, then add that into the next step and pray about it. Eventually, you won't have to carve out time in the Word; it will be what your heart craves first, and most. The time to study will follow the passion to learn.

Prayer

This is a Holy Spirit-led study. So pray. Talk to Him. Ask Him to reveal more of who He is through your verse mapping journey.

The Holy Spirit must be the active guide in any time of study. Do whatever works to invite Him into your study space (listen to worship music, close the door, turn off all sound). Pray before every single time you open your Bible and intentionally seek deeper and clearer understanding of what you will read.

MAPPING 101

A comprehensive guide to change-your-life study time with God.

The process is simple. Each of the following words corresponds to a section on your verse map. Here's what you do (after you pray!):

- **Verse:** Select and write your verse(s) to map. Include the translation.
- **Design:** Write your verse(s) in two to four different translations. Identify key words or phrases that stand out among the varying translations.
- **Develop:** Look up key words or phrases in Hebrew/Greek. Write down definitions, synonyms, and root words. Discover any underlying meaning(s) in verse(s) and note it. (See the Reference and Resource Guide at the back of this study guide if you need help with where to look words up.)
- **Actions:** Research and document the people, places, and the context referenced. Ask: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? Note connections to other concepts in Scripture you are familiar with and/or find in your research.
- **Outcome:** Write a one- to two-sentence summary of what you've learned. Anchor the verse you mapped to your life. This is the treasured truth the map brought you to.

That's it—five simple steps to change-your-life study time with God! All set? Let's map.

THE MAP

4 actions

What actions develop the story in this verse? What is happening in this verse? To whom?

5 outcome

What is God saying to me today? How do I apply this to my life?

1 verse

What verse am I mapping? What key themes or specific words are speaking to me today?

WRITE YOUR VERSE(S) –

WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT TEACHING ME?

2 design

What different translations make up the design for this verse? Underline key phrases or words repeated.

develop 3

What is the Hebrew or Greek meaning for the underlined phrases or words?

1 verse

Select your verse(s)

Everything in your map will hinge on what verse(s) you select. Whether you're reading through an entire book of the Bible or moving around through a verse(s) of a specific theme, this is where you choose what your path will be for your study time. A few questions to ask yourself as you read:

- *What grabs me when I read it?*
- *What themes do I see?*
- *What question(s) do I have about what I just read?*

Write your verse(s)

If something stands out, then you can be sure that's your verse(s) for the day. Select it and write it down.

This study is formatted for use with the New International Version of the Bible. However, you can choose which translation(s) you prefer most. Once you've selected the verse(s) you'll map, write it in your preferred translation. (Remember, you'll document it in at least two to four other translations next.)

Study Prompt

What verse are you mapping? What key themes or specific words are speaking to you today?

- *What's on your heart today?* If you're facing a difficult circumstance, or find yourself in an unexpected path in your own story with God, select a verse(s) that speaks to the theme of your heart for today.
- *What's that word?* If you're reading Scripture and something jumps off the page—a word you don't recognize, a city you've never heard of, or a phrase you don't quite understand—this is a good indication it might be your verse(s) to map for the day.

➤ *Everything in your map will hinge
on what verse(s) you select.* ➤

Study Prompt

What gets lost in translation? How do the different translations present the same ideas or biblical principles?

4 actions

What actions develop the story in this verse? What is happening in this verse? To whom?

5 outcome

What is God saying to me today? How do I apply this to my life?

1 verse

What verse am I mapping? What key themes or specific words are speaking to me today?

2 design

What different translations make up the design for this verse? Underline key phrases or words repeated.

develop 3

What is the Hebrew or Greek meaning for the underlined phrases or words?

WRITE YOUR
VERSE IN
MULTIPLE
TRANSLATIONS

—
WHAT DOES
THIS VERSE
SAY?

2 design

The *design* identifies what the verse is calling attention to by comparing translations. The *design* calls out similar word choice, repetition of words, phrases, and/or aspects of grammar common across multiple translations. It brings to light what the verse is saying that cannot be lost to translation, and what may stand out as translation specific. Anything here could trigger a question or path for further investigation.

Write your verse(s)—or selected phrase(s)—in two to four additional translations. Underline, circle, or highlight key phrases or words that may be repeated across multiple translations.

- **Old Testament verses**—research the Hebrew.

Example: S. 6213. *asah* (aw-saw) a primitive root; to do or make, in the broadest sense and widest application (as follows):—accomplish, advance, appoint

- **New Testament verses**—research the Greek.

Example: S. 4100. *pisteuó* (pist-yoo'-o) from 4102; to have faith (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or thing), i.e. credit; by implication, to entrust (especially one's spiritual well-being to Christ):—believe(-r), commit (to trust), put in trust with

Note: S. is an abbreviation for *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance*, also known as Strong's.

Study Prompt

Look at the verse in context. Think like a storyteller—how would you explain what's happening in your verse? Find the five senses in the story—sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch—as if you stepped into the characters' shoes. Look at what occurred before and after your verse. What's happening that caused the action in your verse?

➔ Verse mapping is getting real about studying the Bible. ➔

4 *actions* What actions develop the story in this verse? What is happening in this verse? To whom?

DOCUMENT YOUR RESEARCH:

- Characters in this/these verse(s)
- Context in surrounding verse(s)
- References to another section of Scripture
- Historical context or research

WHAT HAVE I FOUND THAT SUPPORTS THIS VERSE – OR – PRESENTS NEW IDEAS?

5 *outcome* _____
What is God saying to me today? How do I apply this to my life?

1 *verse* What verse am I mapping? What key themes or specific words are speaking to me today?

2 *design* _____ *develop* **3**
What different translations make up the design for this verse? Underline key phrases or words repeated.

What is the Hebrew or Greek meaning for the underlined phrases or words?

4 *actions*

Actions record:

- What's happening in the verse
- Who the characters are in what you're reading
- How their story relates to other stories/verses/persons in other areas of Scripture
- What are the topics, themes, dates of significant events, and/or theological elements of the verse(s) you're researching

Anything is fair game here, as long as you can back it up with Scripture. Look back a few chapters or verses and read what precedes your verse(s). Identify who, what, where, when. Research the context and customs of what life would have been like for the characters in your verse(s). Look up maps. Open history books. Read about what happened, why it happened, and how it is relevant to your life today.

This is where you'll find how the story connects to *your* story with God. Research it and write it down.

4 actions What actions develop the story in this verse? What is happening in this verse? To whom?

1 verse What verse am I mapping? What key themes or specific words are speaking to me today?

5 outcome _____
What is God saying to me today? How do I apply this to my life?

2 design ————— **develop** **3**

What different translations make up the design for this verse? Underline key phrases or words repeated.

What is the Hebrew or Greek meaning for the underlined phrases or words?

WRITE YOUR MAP SUMMARY FOR FUTURE USE —

*WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?
(LIFE APPLICATION)*

5 outcome

The *outcome* is a quick-hit summary of what you've learned. One or two sentences should do it. Summarize, jot it down, and come back later to find where the Holy Spirit has confirmed His promises to you. This is your claim on this verse, at this time of your life. The *outcome* should reflect whatever truth has been revealed in your map.

Study Prompt

As you continue verse mapping, you'll find this is the section that you refer back to most often. Summarize what you've learned—how would you take this truth and apply it in your home, office, school, church, or community? Make it short and powerful.

SPECIAL NOTE

Don't be afraid to start small.

If your first maps are one or two pages with lots of white space, that's okay. Other maps (depending on what you need to hear from God that day) could turn into four pages of study that digs deep into your heart.

Look up a word here. Choose a verse there. Just do it honestly, and the Holy Spirit will grow your passion around His Word. You don't have to have it all figured out with the first or even the twentieth map. You just have to come hungry to the table every day. God will handle the preparation for the feast ahead of time.

So, now it's your turn! Want to give it a try? Join the *community* of other Jesus-chasing mappers out there. Be sure to use the hashtag #VerseMapClub to connect and share your verse-map experience on social media. I'll be adding more posts soon, and you can bet I'll want to see how it's going for you. Connect with me on social media—I'm heart-happy to take this journey with you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristy". The script is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end of the word.

session

1

➤ She Believed ➤

“Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her!”

LUKE 1:45

OPENING REFLECTION

These words in Luke 1:45 were spoken about a young girl named Mary, who received a promise of God’s goodness—that she’d been chosen to bear a child who was and is the Savior of the world. But it was still her choice to believe, and her faith that would have to anchor her through all that was to come after. It’s not all that different from what we face today—the choice to believe over the weight of our circumstances, and the faith to carry us as we charge headlong into them.

What if there were no barriers to faith? What if we could study God’s promises, understand, and apply the Word to our daily lives, believing God will fulfill all He’s promised?

What if the things that seem *impossible* on our own suddenly became *possible* with God?

GATHERING AND GETTING STARTED

Welcome to the first session of *Luke: Gathering the Goodness of God’s Word*.

Whether you’re meeting in a coffee shop corner, a church fellowship hall, in your home, or even on your neighbor’s front porch, this is meant to be a *gathering study*. It should be

relatable and relaxed—a place to talk faith, life, and story roads—and invite the Holy Spirit into your day by opening the Word of God in the spaces you naturally gather.

If this is the first time you've gathered together, take a few moments to get to know your group. Introduce yourself with something as simple as your name and why you've come to study God's Word. And if you want to jump in to get things started, discuss one of the following questions:

- *What do you know about verse mapping? What do you hope to learn on this verse mapping journey?*

or

- *What's your biggest barrier to overcome in studying God's Word? Is it a lack of time? Knowledge? Or something else?*

GATHERING: VIDEO STORY

Play the video segment for session one. As you watch, follow the verse mapping guide points starting below and refer to the completed map on pages 22–23. Take brief notes or record questions that might lead you to further research in your independent study time this week.

Notes

1 Verse

What makes the Gospel of Luke unique:

Only Gospel addressed to a specific person—Theophilus, who was likely a Gentile believer like Luke (see Colossians 4)

Most lengthy of the Gospels—presenting a thorough picture of Jesus' ministry (Luke 9–19 chronicle healings and intense teaching, like the Good Samaritan and Mustard Seed parables)

Only Gospel with a sequel—the book of Acts. In both, we find the only detailed accounts of Jesus' ascension.

2 design

Faith (she who has believed) partners with God's *promises* (for there will be a fulfillment)

3 develop

In the Greek, "believed" is *pisteuó*, meaning "to trust," or entrusted, "to affirm," or have confidence in

In the Greek, "blessed" indicates "the favor of God"

Under the favor of God is she who entrusted, having confidence that the action of *fulfillment* will follow that trust

4 actions

Mary's belief—her entrusting an unknown future to God—appears in Luke 1:26–38

Mary's response to the angel's news that she would carry a son—the Savior of the world: "I am the Lord's servant" (Luke 1:38)

Mary's lineage of faith—the *blessed is she who believed* women—came in Matthew 1

5 outcome

When everything we thought we had—that list of "somethings"—is being chipped away, we can remember that *faith* triggers the blessing

4

actions

What if there were no barriers to our faith?

Mary's belief— *Her entrusting an unknown future to God*
(**Luke 1:26–38**)

- *She received the visit from the angel who said she would give birth to the Messiah—the one who said, “For with God, nothing will be impossible”* (**verse 37 NKJV**)

Mary's response: *Response to the angel's news that she would carry a son—the Savior of the world? She said, “I am the Lord's servant.”*
(**verse 38 NIV**)

- *Represented her choice to overcome the barrier of the unknown, because her FAITH was rooted in God*

Lineage of Christ: *Found in **Matthew 1**—other “BLESSED is she who BELIEVED women” . . . Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, the wife of Uriah . . . and Mary.*

5

outcome

Who Jesus became and what He fulfilled were in part triggered by the blessing—the favor of God on the world—and in “she who BELIEVED.”

1 *verse*

LUKE 1:45 (NIV)

"Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her!"

2 *design*

- **NKJV:** *"Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."*
-
-

develop 3

- **BELIEVED**—*pisteuó* (S. 4100):
"to trust," or entrusted; "to affirm," or have confidence in
- **BLESSED**—*Happy. Fortunate. Those feel-good feelings when something works out to our benefit.*

"Under the favor of God is she who entrusted, having confidence that the action of FULFILLMENT will follow that trust."

Not just happy. More than fortunate. Under the favor of God, because the belief (the affirmation, or confidence in) triggers the action to fulfill it.

▶ From the Video ◀

“Your time at this company is done.”

It was so clear. So strong. And so completely terrifying . . . that for an employee who hadn’t a doubt in nearly a decade and a half, I thought I was about to receive my walking papers right there. And in a way, I did.

The mirror-image of who I was on my own, and the vision of who God could make me if I truly surrendered everything—they were at fierce battle. It was Jesus calling out to this worker. Busy in her boat. Fishing for the accolades of the world. Instead, He summoned the “storyteller-at-heart” part of me to experience a completely different story with Him.

. . . After a slow build and years of prayer—that small, nagging, flicker of a flame on my heart to step out and truly follow Jesus? It caught fire. My husband and I felt the call to leave the world we’d built up on our own and step out on a new story road. Kind of like stepping from a boat into the deep . . . or walking a road you never thought you’d travel . . . or trusting God to lead even though you don’t have all the answers or even the complete roadmap in front of you.

So I resigned from my picture-perfect, modern high-rise professional job.

⇒ *I believed that day in
the office that God would
fulfill His words to me.* ⇐

GATHERING: GROUP DISCUSSION

Take a few moments with your group to discuss the video you just watched and explore these concepts in Scripture.

1. Think about Luke's profession. How would his education, experience as a physician, and his travels with the apostle Paul aid him to research and record Jesus' earthly ministry? How can your own diverse experiences help you to become researchers in the Word?

2. Select a volunteer to read Luke 1:26–38 aloud to the group. What faith barriers did Mary face in order to trust God with the news the angel had brought? How do some of those same barriers affect your own faith walk?

3. "*Jesus + nothing = everything*" is a key statement to describe Mary's faith walk in this session. What makes this statement true for Mary? Describe a time when you were in a place where Jesus was all you had. What makes it true for you?

4. How do the two key words in Luke 1:45—“believed” and “fulfill”—work together to build your faith against seemingly impossible odds?

GATHERING: GROUP ACTIVITY

For this activity, you will need a Bible, pens/markers, and a smart device (such as a phone or tablet).

- Using a Bible or Bible app on a smart device, look up two additional translations of Luke 1:45 and record them on the completed map on pages 22–23.
- To start your verse mapping journey, pray as a group and select one verse you'll map from Luke 1–2 in individual study time this week. Gather in the next session and discuss how your map is similar or different from others' maps.

GATHERING: CLOSING PRAYER

Verse mapping always begins and ends . . . with *prayer*. Gather together with open hearts, expecting the Holy Spirit to remove the barriers to your faith. Ask Him to open the Word of God in your life like never before.



*Verse mapping
always begins
and ends . . .
with prayer*




 session

I N D I V I D U A L S T U D Y


 She Believed
 

*“Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord
would fulfill His promises to her!”*

LUKE 1:45

The ultimate promise from Luke 1:45 is that the favor—the *blessed* portion of your own story—has already been fulfilled. It was and is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. So here’s your invitation until you gather with your group again.

GATHER: INDIVIDUAL STUDY INVITATION

Before you stop to pray . . . before you pick up the pen . . . before you take that first breath and first step on this mapping journey . . . pause.

This will be a marked moment for you—when your heart went from “I wonder if I could?” in understanding God’s Word, to “She who believed!” by embarking on your first maps in Luke 1–2.

This is the chain-busting, freedom-seeking, step-out day that you’ll look back on as the one in which you chose to explore the announcement of a prophetic birth (1:26–38). To engage your heart in the journey of a young couple on the road to Nazareth (2:4–5). To ask and seek answers of a baby born, who grows in wisdom and favor (2:51–52). To hunger for more of Jesus. Let this be the memory of the very first time you gathered the goodness of His Word in this way.

Pause to savor it . . . then GO.

Gather

INDIVIDUAL STUDY SUPPORT

If this is your first time verse mapping, you may need a couple of prompts to get started. Or refer back to the Verse Mapping 101 Guide at the beginning of your study guide.

- 1** *verse* What verse am I mapping? What key themes or specific words are speaking to me today?
- 2** *design* What different translations make up the design for this verse? Underline key phrases or words that are repeated across different translations.
- 3** *develop* What is the Hebrew or Greek meaning for the underlined phrases or words?
- 4** *actions* What actions develop the story in this verse? What is happening in this verse? To whom?
- 5** *outcome* Review your map from beginning to end. Notice what God is saying to you through the verse map. How does this truth apply to your life?



Read
LUKE 1-2

Take time this week—whether five minutes today or an hour tomorrow—to dive into the Word.

Pray and invite the Holy Spirit into your time in the Word. When you are ready, turn to one of the blank verse maps in this section.

Read Luke 1-2. Select and map verses that speak to your heart. If your group selected a verse to map and discuss together, map that verse this week as well. Prepare to discuss what you've learned when your group gathers again.

Study Prompt

Look at the verse in context. Think like a storyteller—how would you explain what's happening in your verse? Find the five senses in the story—sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch—as if you stepped into the characters' shoes. Look at what occurred before and after your verse. What's happening that caused the action in your verse?

Study Support Examples

Information you might find in your research . . .

Occasion and Purpose: “1. Luke’s primary purpose is to strengthen and confirm the faith of the early Christians. He writes so that Theophilus (and other readers) “may know the certainty of the things” they have been taught (1:4). As for the exact “things” that require affirmation, one must look further into Luke’s writing to find them.”

“1:42 Blessed are you among women. This is a superlative, i.e., “Among all women, you are the most blessed” (cf. Judg 5:24).

1:43 my Lord. May allude to an important Messianic psalm: “The Lord says to my lord” (Ps 110:1; cf. Luke 20:41-44; Acts 2:34). **Lord.** An exalted Christological title in this context (cf. v. 76; 2:11; 4:12; 13:15, 35).

1:44 leaped for joy. This baby is able to experience joy even before his birth.

1:45 has believed. Mary’s belief contrasts with Zechariah’s disbelief (v. 20).

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See how God takes the believed
parts of every story and turns
them into the fulfillment.



4

actions

What actions develop the story in this verse? What is happening in this verse? To whom?

5

outcome

What is God saying to me today? How do I apply this to my life?

1

verse

What verse am I mapping? What key themes or specific words are speaking to me today?

2

design

What different translations make up the design for this verse? Underline key phrases or words repeated.

3

develop

What is the Hebrew or Greek meaning for the underlined phrases or words?

4

actions

What actions develop the story in this verse? What is happening in this verse? To whom?

5

outcome

What is God saying to me today? How do I apply this to my life?

1 *verse*

What verse am I mapping? What key themes or specific words are speaking to me today?

2 *design*

What different translations make up the design for this verse? Underline key phrases or words repeated.

develop **3**

What is the Hebrew or Greek meaning for the underlined phrases or words?