

ARTWORK BY

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Exploring *The* Bible

*A Bible Reading
Plan for Kids*
By David Murray

Foreword by Donald S. Whitney



EXPLORING THE BIBLE

We were totally lost with no idea which way to turn. A few hours earlier forty of us boys and six adult leaders had set out to climb a mountain near our church's summer camp.

We started out with great excitement as we looked forward to the challenges on the way to the summit: a mysterious forest, swampy fields, fast-flowing streams, sharp rocks, slippery paths, and steep climbs. But it would all be worth it for the view at the top.

But now we were wet, tired, hungry, cold, scared, and very, very lost.

LOST ON A MOUNTAIN

What went wrong?

Our leaders had forgotten to check the weather forecast, which would have warned them about the fog and rain that met us halfway up the mountain. They had also failed to provide us with maps, compasses, and whistles, in case we got separated from the main group.

And now, four of my friends and I were on the side of a cold and dangerous mountain, with no leader, no compass, no map, no food, no raincoats, and no idea where to go. We longed for someone to appear out of the mist to show us where to go next and lead us home. We'd long given up hope of reaching the summit. Obviously, I'm here to tell the tale, so I must have survived! If you hang around, I'll tell you how.

LOST IN THE BIBLE?

Perhaps sometimes you feel lost and confused when reading the Bible. You start to read it as an excited explorer, looking forward to discovering amazing truths about God and the gospel. But after a few chapters you feel lost in a fog, not knowing where you are or where to go. You keep trying to push forward but you lack a leader, a map, and a compass. You wish someone would not only help you take the next step but also lead you to the summit so that you might see the Christian faith in a new and wonderful way.

That's where this book, *Exploring the Bible*, comes to your rescue. It will act as your leader, map, and compass to the Bible. It won't take you to every part of the Bible, but it will take you to the main peaks and give you an all-round view of its beautiful landscape. At times we'll slow down and look at some parts more closely. Other times, we'll speed up in order to get to the next major mountain peak in the Bible's story. By the end of a year, you'll have learned skills to help you explore the Bible on your own with safety and success.

EXPEDITION

We'll go on one expedition a week. Unlike my disastrous camp, we'll begin each expedition with a plan to map out the chapters of the Bible we're about to explore.

PRAYER POINTS

We'll then pray for God's blessing on our travels and write down a couple of extra prayer points for the week. For example, we might pray for help with schoolwork. Or we could pray for our parents, our friends, our church, or for different nations and the missionaries that work there.

SNAPSHOT

I still have a couple of photos from my doomed climbing trip. Every time I look at us, soaked by the rain and surrounded by fog, the bad memories come flooding back.

But I want us to take snapshots of our expeditions that will bring back good memories. That's why I've selected a memory verse from each week's trip. Write it out from your Bible, and then try to memorize a bit of it each day so that you will build up a bank of wonderful memories from your travels.

DAILY LOG

The daily log has a title that sums up that day's trip and a note of what verses to read. It has space to write out a verse or answer a question. That's to help us keep thinking about what we have been reading and to remind us of what we have learned along the way.

EXPLORING WITH OTHERS

Sunday is rest-and-recharge day. Instead of continuing our march through the Bible, we'll pause and think about what we've learned from the past week. We'll look ahead to what God will show us later in the Bible. And we'll think about how to live out the Christian life. This is where it's good to involve Dad or Mom. Perhaps ask them to look at your daily log and chat with them about anything you found difficult.

They can also help you with the discussion questions, which are designed to connect our week's reading with the rest of the Bible and with our lives.

Another fellow-explorer we can learn from is our pastor. He's an experienced traveler in the Bible and can teach us how to explore it better. That's why there's space in the log for you to write down your pastor's sermon text and his main sermon points, and what you will do in response to his message.

I'm looking forward to exploring the Bible with you and enjoying the beautiful views of God and of salvation that we will discover.

Oh, yes, I almost forgot to tell you how my friends and I were rescued. A strong wind blew away the fog so that we saw a road in a distant valley. When we got to the road, we flagged down a driver who then took us all the way back to our camp. I hope this book will blow away the fog from the Bible and lead you along a road that takes you all the way home to Jesus Christ.

Your Fellow Explorer,
David Murray

EXPEDITION 1: A BEAUTIFUL WORLD



OUR MAP

As we set out in Genesis, we'll see a number of important beginnings: the beginning of the world, of animals, of people, of the Sabbath, of marriage, of work, of sin, of salvation, of death, of God's covenant, and of God's special people. We can't stop to read everything, but if you have time, maybe you could read some of the verses we pass by.



PRAYER POINTS

Write down two or three prayer requests and pray for them during the week.



SNAPSHOT VERSE

Write out this verse and try to memorize it throughout the week.

Genesis 1:1

DAILY LOG

MONDAY | The Beginning of the World



Genesis 1:1–5



What are the first words of God in the Bible (v. 3)?

TUESDAY | The Beginning of Animals



Genesis 1:20–25



What did God command the animals (v. 22)?

WEDNESDAY | The Beginning of People



Genesis 1:26–31



In whose image did God create men and women (v. 27)?

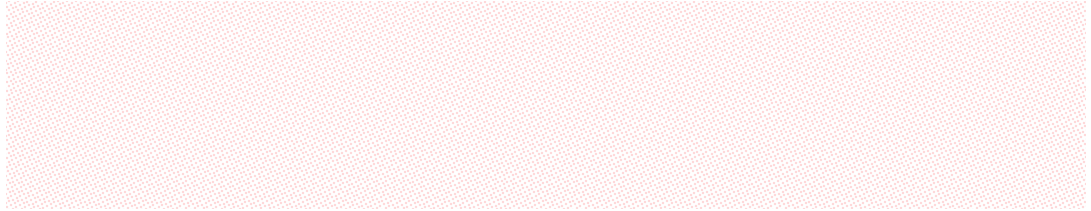
THURSDAY | The Beginning of the Sabbath



Genesis 2:1–4



What did God do on the seventh day (vv. 2–3)?



FRIDAY | The Beginning of Work



Genesis 2:8–9, 15–17



From what tree did God command Adam not to eat (v. 17)?



SATURDAY | The Beginning of Marriage



Genesis 2:18–25



Genesis 2:24





EXPLORING WITH OTHERS

Sunday is rest-and-recharge day. It's a day when we pause our travels, review where we've been, and look ahead to future expeditions. We can also listen to and learn from other Bible explorers, like our parents and our pastor. Why not talk to them about what you've learned each week?

SUNDAY | Enjoying the View

We've been exploring God's beautiful creation. From this peak, we can look ahead and see that God will later compare the Christian to a "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17). How is the Christian like a new creation? If you're stuck, ask your parents to help you.

Sermon Title

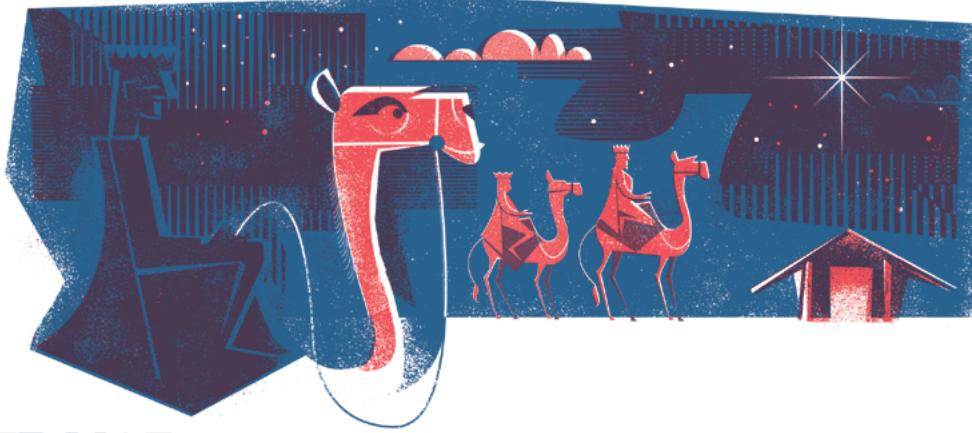
Take your daily log to church and write down the sermon title, the text your pastor preaches from, and a few notes about his sermon—maybe his sermon points. Then write what you will do in response to the sermon to make you a better explorer.

Sermon Text

Sermon Notes

My Response

EXPEDITION 25: A STRANGE PALACE



OUR MAP

We've traveled many miles and many years in our journey through the Old Testament. We've explored many thick forests of biblical history. But we've also enjoyed many bright and beautiful views of a coming King. Now, after such a long wait, we're about to meet the King. God has given us four books about his life—the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Try to think of these four books as four different cameras that look at Jesus's life from four different angles. Over the next weeks we will be viewing the most important points in Jesus's life using each of these four cameras. We start with the birth of this King and the unusual palace he was born in.



PRAYER POINTS



SNAPSHOT VERSE

Matthew 1:21

DAILY LOG

MONDAY | The Baby's Parents



Matthew 1:1-2 and 15-17



Jesus is described as the son of _____ (v. 1).

TUESDAY | The Baby's First Name



Matthew 1:18-21



Why was Mary's child called Jesus (v. 21)?

WEDNESDAY | The Baby's Second Name



Matthew 1:22-25



What did Joseph call his son (v. 25)?

THURSDAY | The Baby's Crib



Luke 2:1-7



Where was Jesus born (Luke 2:7)?

Blank space for reflection or writing.

FRIDAY | The Baby's Choir



Luke 2:8-14



What did the angels sing (v. 14)?

Blank space for reflection or writing.

SATURDAY | The Baby's Impact



Luke 2:15-20



How did the shepherds react to the baby (v. 20)?

Blank space for reflection or writing.



EXPLORING WITH OTHERS

SUNDAY | Living in the Kingdom

The angels sang that this King would be a source of great joy to all people (Luke 2:10). What makes you joyful when you think about this King?

Sermon Title

Sermon Text

Sermon Notes

My Response



A JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE FOR KIDS

Reading the Bible is like taking a trip through God's story, setting out to explore and experience the beautiful views found within. But without a map, it's easy to get lost.

Exploring the Bible leads kids ages 6–12 through the Bible one day at a time over the course of a year, helping them see the overarching story of God's Word and laying the foundation for a lifetime of discovering truths about God, humanity, and the gospel.

..... EACH WEEKLY ENTRY INCLUDES:

- Daily Bible readings
- Memory verse
- Space for sermon notes and reflections
- Prayer points
- Discussion questions

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"I gave all three of my children *Exploring the Bible* as their very first experience of personal devotions. I wholeheartedly recommend it for your children, too."

Tim Challies, blogger, Challies.com

"What an exciting endeavor—to help children read (for themselves!) an overview of the Bible in a year! I can't wait to give away copies of *Exploring the Bible* to the kids in my life."

Gloria Furman, author, *Missional Motherhood*

"Blessed beyond their knowing is the boy or girl who receives this workbook and the loving help to complete it."

Donald S. Whitney, professor of biblical spirituality and associate dean, School of Theology, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; author, *Praying the Bible*

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DAVID MURRAY is professor of Old Testament and practical theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and pastor of Grand Rapids Free Reformed Church. He is also a counselor, a regular speaker at conferences, and the author of a number of books.

