

Journey Through the Bible

16 Weeks of Bible Overview for Elementary Students (Ages 6-10)

Introduction

This 16-week curriculum takes elementary students on a chronological journey through the Bible, helping them understand God's big story from creation to Jesus. Each week builds on the previous one, creating a cohesive narrative that shows how all of Scripture connects. Through engaging activities, memorable crafts, and age-appropriate discussions, children will discover how God's plan of redemption unfolds throughout history.

Week 1: In the Beginning - Creation

Bible Passage: Genesis 1-2

Big Idea: God created everything with a wonderful plan.

Key Question: Who made the world and everything in it?

Memory Verse: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Create the beginning of a classroom timeline that will grow each week; add day-by-day creation images
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Creation Stations" where children experience each day of creation through different senses
- **Map Connection:** Introduce a large world map that will be used throughout the journey
- **Creative Response:** "Creation Collage" using different materials to represent each day

Family Connection: Take-home creation scavenger hunt to complete as a family

Week 2: The Fall - Sin Enters the World

Bible Passage: Genesis 3

Big Idea: Sin broke God's perfect world, but God had a rescue plan.

Key Question: What happened to God's perfect world?

Memory Verse: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Adam, Eve, and the serpent to the timeline
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Perfect to Broken" demonstrations (e.g., breaking a perfect mirror, bruising an apple)
- **Map Connection:** Locate the possible region of the Garden of Eden on the map
- **Creative Response:** "Broken Heart" craft that can be mended with "God's Promise" bandage

Family Connection: Discussion guide about rules that protect us and why we need them

Week 3: Noah and the Flood

Bible Passage: Genesis 6-9

Big Idea: God judges sin but saves those who trust Him.

Key Question: How does God feel about sin? How does He save people?

Memory Verse: "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise... He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish." 2 Peter 3:9a

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Noah, the ark, and rainbow to the timeline
- **Hands-on Learning:** Build small working arks that float with weights in them
- **Map Connection:** Discuss theories about where the ark landed; locate Mt. Ararat
- **Creative Response:** "Rainbow Promise" craft with God's promises written on each color

Family Connection: Rainbow-spotting challenge and promise discussion

Week 4: Tower of Babel & Abraham's Call

Bible Passage: Genesis 11:1-9; Genesis 12:1-9

Big Idea: Pride separates people, but God calls people back to Himself.

Key Question: How does God respond when people try to be like Him? How does God build His family?

Memory Verse: "I will make you into a great nation...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Genesis 12:2-3

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Tower of Babel and Abraham's journey
- **Hands-on Learning:** Tower-building challenge with communication restrictions
- **Map Connection:** Trace Abraham's journey from Ur to Canaan
- **Creative Response:** Star-counting activity and "God's Big Family" craft

Family Connection: Family language challenge; learning simple phrases in different languages

Week 5: Joseph's Journey

Bible Passage: Genesis 37-50

Big Idea: God can use difficult circumstances to save many people.

Key Question: How can bad things be part of God's good plan?

Memory Verse: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." Genesis 50:20

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Joseph's coat, his time in Egypt, and the family reunion
- **Hands-on Learning:** "From Prison to Palace" obstacle course
- **Map Connection:** Trace Israel's family migration to Egypt; discuss the Nile River's importance
- **Creative Response:** "God's Big Picture" viewfinders showing how a small "bad" scene fits into God's larger "good" picture

Family Connection: Family storytelling of times when something difficult turned out well

Week 6: Moses and the Exodus (Part 1)

Bible Passage: Exodus 1-12

Big Idea: God hears His people's cries and rescues them from slavery.

Key Question: How does God respond when His people are suffering?

Memory Verse: "The Lord said, 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt...So I have come down to rescue them.'" Exodus 3:7-8a

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add baby Moses, burning bush, plagues, and Passover

- **Hands-on Learning:** Interactive Passover demonstration with elements children can touch and taste
- **Map Connection:** Map the plagues across Egypt; trace escape route beginning
- **Creative Response:** "Rescued" craft with moving pieces showing Israelites moving from slavery to freedom

Family Connection: Nighttime "rescue mission" game; parents hide items children must find using only a flashlight

Week 7: Moses and the Exodus (Part 2)

Bible Passage: Exodus 13-20, 32-34

Big Idea: God guides His people and gives them rules to live by.

Key Question: How does God show people the right way to live?

Memory Verse: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery."
Exodus 20:2

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Red Sea crossing, Ten Commandments, and golden calf
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Wilderness Survival Challenge" testing children's listening and following skills
- **Map Connection:** Trace journey from Egypt through Red Sea to Mt. Sinai
- **Creative Response:** "Ten Commandments" tablets with simplified child-friendly commandments

Family Connection: Family rules discussion; creating a family covenant of how to treat each other

Week 8: Entering the Promised Land

Bible Passage: Joshua 1-6, 24

Big Idea: God keeps His promises and gives His people a home.

Key Question: Does God always keep His promises, even when they seem impossible?

Memory Verse: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Joshua, spies, Jericho, and settlement in Canaan

- **Hands-on Learning:** Jericho walls activity with shofar trumpets
- **Map Connection:** Divide the Promised Land according to tribes; color in the conquered territory
- **Creative Response:** "Memorial Stones" craft where children create stones representing God's faithfulness in their lives

Family Connection: Family "remembering" jar where family members write down ways God has been faithful

Week 9: Judges and Ruth

Bible Passage: Judges 2:6-23; Ruth 1-4

Big Idea: When God's people turn away from Him, He provides leaders to bring them back.

Key Question: What happens when we forget God? How does God show loyalty to His people?

Memory Verse: "But Ruth replied, 'Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.'" Ruth 1:16

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add the cycle of judges (obedience, disobedience, consequence, cry for help, deliverance); add Ruth and Boaz
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Judges Cycle" game with spinning wheel
- **Map Connection:** Locate Moab and Bethlehem; trace Ruth's journey
- **Creative Response:** "Kinsman-Redeemer" craft showing family connection between Ruth, Boaz, and eventually Jesus

Family Connection: Family tree activity; discussion about being part of God's family

Week 10: Kings of Israel (Part 1)

Bible Passage: 1 Samuel 8-10, 16; 2 Samuel 5-7

Big Idea: God establishes a kingdom and promises an eternal King.

Key Question: What makes a good leader? What did God promise David?

Memory Verse: "Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever." 2 Samuel 7:16

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Heart Check" activities comparing outward appearance with inward character
- **Map Connection:** Map the united kingdom of Israel; locate Jerusalem and the temple
- **Creative Response:** "Kingdom Crown" craft with the lineage of Jesus traced back to David

Family Connection: Family leadership discussion; what makes a good family leader?

Week 11: Kings of Israel (Part 2)

Bible Passage: 1 Kings 11-12, 16-19

Big Idea: When leaders turn from God, the kingdom suffers.

Key Question: What happens when leaders stop following God?

Memory Verse: "But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add divided kingdom (Israel and Judah); add key prophets like Elijah
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Divided Kingdom" tug-of-war game
- **Map Connection:** Color-code the divided kingdom; track prophets' locations
- **Creative Response:** "Choose This Day" craft with spinning wheel showing choices and consequences

Family Connection: Family choices chart; tracking decisions and outcomes for a week

Week 12: Exile and Return

Bible Passage: 2 Kings 17, 25; Ezra 1-6; Nehemiah 1-6

Big Idea: God disciplines His people but always provides a way home.

Key Question: Does God give up on His people when they fail? How does God rebuild what's broken?

Memory Verse: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Babylonian exile, Cyrus's decree, and the return to rebuild
- **Hands-on Learning:** Jerusalem wall-building team challenge

- **Map Connection:** Show expansion of Assyrian and Babylonian empires; trace exile and return routes
- **Creative Response:** "Rebuilt" craft with before/after scenes of Jerusalem

Family Connection: Family restoration project—fixing something broken together

Week 13: Prophets and Promises

Bible Passage: Isaiah 9, 53; Micah 5; Malachi 3-4

Big Idea: God promises to send a Messiah who will save His people.

Key Question: How did God prepare people for Jesus?

Memory Verse: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9:6

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add major prophecies about the Messiah with symbols
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Prophecy Detectives" activity finding clues about the coming Messiah
- **Map Connection:** Locate birthplace predictions and other prophesied locations for Messiah
- **Creative Response:** "Messiah Advent Chain" with prophecies that were fulfilled by Jesus

Family Connection: "Prediction vs. Fulfillment" matching game for families to play together

Week 14: Birth of Jesus

Bible Passage: Luke 1-2; Matthew 1-2

Big Idea: God's Son came to earth as a human baby, just as promised.

Key Question: Why did Jesus come to earth as a baby?

Memory Verse: "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."
Luke 2:11

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, shepherds, and wise men
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Journey to Bethlehem" interactive stations
- **Map Connection:** Trace Mary and Joseph's journey; the shepherds' visit; the wise men's journey

- **Creative Response:** "God With Us" ornaments featuring names of Jesus

Family Connection: Family nativity reading and simple role play

Week 15: Life and Ministry of Jesus

Bible Passage: Selections from the Gospels

Big Idea: Jesus showed us who God is and what God's kingdom is like.

Key Question: What is God like? What does Jesus teach us about God's kingdom?

Memory Verse: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Jesus's baptism, disciples, miracles, and parables
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Kingdom Principles" stations with hands-on demonstrations of Jesus's teachings
- **Map Connection:** Plot Jesus's ministry journey around Galilee and Judea
- **Creative Response:** "Miracle Maker" flip book showing Jesus's power over creation, sickness, and death

Family Connection: "Be Like Jesus" challenge—family members practice one teaching of Jesus each day

Week 16: Death and Resurrection of Jesus

Bible Passage: Matthew 26-28; Luke 22-24; John 19-21

Big Idea: Jesus died to pay for sin and rose again to give us new life.

Key Question: Why did Jesus have to die? What does His resurrection mean for us?

Memory Verse: "He is not here; he has risen, just as he said." Matthew 28:6

Journey Activities:

- **Timeline Addition:** Add Last Supper, cross, empty tomb, and Great Commission
- **Hands-on Learning:** "Resurrection Garden" creation with tomb that opens
- **Map Connection:** Follow Jesus's final week in Jerusalem on a detailed city map
- **Creative Response:** "New Life" butterfly craft symbolizing transformation

- **Final Timeline Overview:** Walk through the entire timeline, connecting God's plan from creation to Jesus

Family Connection: Resurrection celebration ideas; discussion about being part of God's ongoing story

Program Resources and Implementation

Classroom Environment:

- Large wall timeline that grows each week
- World map for geographical connections
- Reading corner with children's Bibles and related books
- "Journey Station" for hands-on activities
- Prayer tent for reflection time

Weekly Format (60-90 minutes):

1. **Welcome Journey (5-10 min):** Themed activity connecting to the day's story
2. **Worship Time (10 min):** Songs related to the story or theme
3. **Timeline Review (5 min):** Review previous weeks' stories on the timeline
4. **Bible Story (15 min):** Engaging, interactive storytelling
5. **Discussion Time (10 min):** Age-appropriate questions exploring the story
6. **Journey Activities (15-20 min):** Rotation through hands-on stations
7. **Creative Response (15 min):** Craft or activity reinforcing the main idea
8. **Timeline Addition (5 min):** Add the day's story to the class timeline
9. **Family Connection (5 min):** Introduce take-home activities

Age Adaptations:

- **For Younger Elementary (Ages 6-7):**
 - More concrete explanations with physical movement
 - Pre-cut crafts with simpler assembly
 - Partner reading for Bible passages
 - Focus on the narrative without complex theological concepts
- **For Older Elementary (Ages 8-10):**
 - Deeper questions about motivations and connections
 - More independent creative work

- Scripture look-up challenges
- Introduction to simple theological concepts
- Leadership opportunities in group activities

Materials Needed:

- Large paper or fabric for classroom timeline
- World map and Israel/Jerusalem maps
- Children's Bibles (appropriate for reading level)
- Basic craft supplies
- Journey Cards (weekly summary cards for review)
- Family Connection handouts

Assessment Opportunities:

- "Big Story" reviews where children place events in order
- "Connection Detectives" activity finding links between stories
- Journey Journals where children record what they're learning
- Story retelling using timeline pictures

Special Celebrations:

- Mid-point "Journey So Far" family event (Week 8)
- End of Journey Celebration with timeline walk-through (Week 16)
- "God's Big Story" presentation by children for parents

Additional Resources:

- Journey Through the Bible Passports (stamped each week)
- Big Story Cards (take-home summary cards)
- Family Devotional Guide coordinating with weekly lessons
- Digital timeline available online for families to review
- Journey Through the Bible song that adds verses each week