

BIBLE ACTION OVERVIEW

**The historical periods of the Bible Action Overview¹ are bolded (used with the BELT visual Bible overview). Spoken words are CAPITALIZED. Other words give explanation of corresponding hand actions.*

Creation (or Origins)

CREATION	- hands bottom to top to form world
SIN	- hands fall down
FLOOD	- hands up
BABEL	- forearms together like a tower
NATIONS	- hands up and then spreading out to the side (i.e., nations spread w/ different languages)

The Patriarchs

GOD'S COVENANT	- circled fingers linked together
(with) ABRAHAM ²	- stroke long beard
ISHMAEL – ISAAC	- left hand up, right hand up
ESAU – JACOB	- left hand hold hair (hairy Esau), right finger stroke cheek (smooth Jacob)
12 SONS	- two fists/hands then one hand two fingers on other side
JOSEPH	- hold scruff of coat
(goes to) EGYPT	- form pyramid with fingers
AS A SLAVE.	- cross wrists as in chains
THE ISRAELITES	- hand on head as skull cap
(go to) EGYPT	- form pyramid with fingers
(for) 400 YEARS,	- hands capped (i.e. representing a period of time)
(become) SLAVES	- cross wrists as in chains

Exodus and the Wilderness

MOSES	- emphasis on “mo” bringing hand up to form a staff
“LET MY PEOPLE GO!”	- hands to mouth
(Pharaoh says) “NO”	- cross arms and turn head
10 PLAGUES	- pick nats off arm
THE PASSOVER	- thumb across front of you
RED SEA	- hands split like walls of water
MOUNT SINAI	- hands come to peak to form a mountain,
COVENANT ³	- circled fingers linked together
• LAW	- hands form a book
• TABERNACLE	- fingers interlinked and closed
• LEVITES & PRIESTS	- fingers turned out (people working inside tabernacle)
• OFFERINGS & FEASTS	- arms up left and then right in act of worship
COUNTING THE FACES (or PEOPLE ⁴)	- finger counting heads
KADESH-OASIS (or BARNEA)	- hands up body and out to form a palm tree and branches
12 SPIES	- hand on forehead looking out
WANDERS - DIES	- fingers making wandering path...bend over with limp arms
MOSES	- emphasis on “mo” bringing hand up to form a staff
FAREWELL SPEECHES	- three fingers coming from mouth (three addresses of Moses in Deuteronomy)
DIES	- bend over with limp arms

¹ Old Testament words/actions adapted from Walk Thru the Bible Ministries

² The covenant included: 1.) God would bless Abraham (“I will bless you...”) and make him into “a great nation.” 2.) The Lord (Yahweh) would be His God and the God of all his descendants, and they would be His people. 3.) God promised to give Abraham and his descendants the land of Canaan. 4.) They would be a blessing to all the nations of the earth – and eventually through Abraham’s lineage the Messiah would come to save the whole world from their sins. (“in you all the nations of the earth will be blessed.”)

³ This covenant included: 1.) The Lord (Yahweh) would be their God and they would be His people. They were to love God with a whole heart and to obey his commandments. (“You will be my treasured possession”; “you are to fear God and obey His commandments.”) 2.) God promised to give them the land of Canaan. 3.) They would be a blessing to all nations. (“...a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”)

⁴ Some words are used because they rhyme in English (easier to remember) but alternate words should be used when translated.

BIBLE ACTION OVERVIEW

The Promised Land

JOSHUA	- salute (as to a military leader)
CROSSING THE JORDAN	- finger arching from left to right as crossing Jordan
JERICHO FALLS	- forearms standing to form walls and fall toward each other
DIVIDE AND CONQUER	- hands form wedge (enemies divided); right hand forms fist and hits left palm
DIVIDE AND SETTLE	- hands form wedge, open hands float down towards the floor
400 YEARS (OF JUDGES)	- cup hands
7 CYCLES OF SIN	- hold up seven fingers and circle them around twice
• REBELLION	- hold up a fist (each cycle of sin included 5 things)
• OPPRESSION	- hand pushes down to floor
• REPENTANCE	- turn hand over
• DELIVERANCE	- hand pushes upward
• PEACE	- turn hand palm down and glide it away from body
THE MAIN JUDGES WERE ...	- three fingers held up
• DEBORAH	- stroke long hair
• GIDEON	- wringing wet fleece
• & SAMSON	- flex muscles
EVERYONE DID WHAT WAS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES	- circle hands in front of you, point to eyes
EXCEPT FOR RUTH AND SAMUEL	- point up with left finger then right finger

The Kingdom of Israel

IN THE TIME OF SAMUEL	- keep right finger pointed up
ISRAEL DEMANDS A KING	- form crown with hands on head
UNITED KINGDOM	- hands and fingers together
(for) 120 YEARS	- hands capped (i.e. representing a period of time)
THE FIRST KING - SAUL HAD NO HEART.	- one finger held up; then form crown on head - hands together over heart and push away
THE SECOND KING - DAVID HAD A WHOLE HEART.	- two fingers held up; then crown on head - fingers forming circle over heart
SO GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH HIM ⁵	- circled fingers linked together
THE THIRD KING - SOLOMON HAD HALF A HEART.	- three fingers held up; then crown on head
HE BUILT THE TEMPLE	- form half circle with hands over heart
BUT FELL AWAY FROM GOD	- hands form temple with steeple - hands separate and fall limp to one side
SO GOD DIVIDED THE KINGDOM	- V hands at wrist (i.e., no longer a united kingdom)
350 YEARS ⁶	- hands capped (i.e. representing a period of time)
(INTO...) NORTH - SOUTH	- left hand up (= north) then right hand up (= south)
ISRAEL - JUDAH	- left hand up (= Israel) then right hand up (= Judah)
19 - 20	- (# of kings) left hand up, then right hand up
0 GOOD - 8 GOOD	- (# of good kings) left hand up, then right hand up

⁵ The Davidic Covenant included: 1. David would always have a descendent on the throne of Israel. 2. Through the lineage of David the Messiah would come. (Jesus was called "Son of David")

⁶ The 350 years extended approximately to the end of the southern kingdom of Judah.

BIBLE ACTION OVERVIEW

Exile and Return

PROPHETS SPEAK:	- hands cup mouth,
“REPENT OR PERISH”	- finger points up in the air, then points down to the ground
BUT THEY REFUSE TO LISTEN	- hands over ears
AND BREAK THE COVENANT	- unlink circled fingers
AND GRIEVE THE HEART OF GOD ⁷	- hands grip chest, face shows grief
SO...	
ASSYRIA TAKES ISRAEL	- reach and grab left side
AND SCATTERED THEM	- throw hands down and outward
BABYLON TAKES JUDAH	- reach and grab right side
INTO EXILE	- cross wrists as in chains
FOR 70 YEARS	- hands capped (i.e. representing a period of time)
THE TEMPLE AND JERUSALEM	- form temple with steeple
ARE DESTROYED	- then throw hands down
UNTIL...	
THE RISE OF THE MEDES & PERSIANS	- two thumbs rising up (it was a good thing because Jews could return)
JUDAH RETURNS IN 3 GROUPS	- take 3 fingers returning from left to right
ZERUBBABEL RETURNS	- hold up one finger returning
TO REBUILD THE TEMPLE	- make temple with steeple
EZRA RETURNS	- hold up two fingers returning
TO REBUILD THE PEOPLE	- hands to chest (representing the internal character of the people)
NEHEMIAH RETURNS	- hold up three fingers returning
TO REBUILD THE WALLS	- hands go up to make walls

Intertestamental Period

AND THERE WERE 400 YEARS	- hands capped (i.e. representing a period of time)
OF SHHH.... SILENCE	- finger to mouth (“Shhh”) (because no prophets were speaking)
UNTIL THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH	- form crown with hands on head (i.e., messiah was the expected king)

[Optional:] AS GOD PREPARED THE WORLD... - fists on top of each other “building”

1. THE JEWS	- hand on head as skull cap
SPREAD LAW	- hands form a book
& SYNAGOGUES	- make steeple bring downward
2. THE GREEKS	- hands make a Greek laurel wreath on head
SPREAD IDEAS	- fist to head in thinker position
& LANGUAGE	- fingers go out from lips
3. AND THE ROMANS	- hold shield with left arm, thrust sword with right
SPREAD PEACE	- hand palm down and glide it away from body
& ROADS	- fingers make a straight road

⁷ God was grieved by: 1. The idolatry of Judah. 2. Judah's external rituals without relationship (no heart for God). 3. Having to bring severe judgment (discipline) on Judah whom he loved.

BIBLE ACTION OVERVIEW

Jesus the Messiah

AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME	- right index finger point to left wrist (watch)
GOD SENT HIS SON	- point right index finger to the sky
BRINGING THE NEW COVENANT	- circled fingers linked together
FOR ALL PEOPLE ⁸	- fingers point outwards (to the world)
BORN OF A VIRGIN (IN BETHLEHEM)	- hands make a pregnant belly
GREW UP IN NAZARETH	- hand from lower to higher
30 YEARS OLD	- hands capped (i.e. representing a period of time)
JOHN THE BAPTIST	- step forward, move hands forward in front like a street (preparing way)
“PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD!”	- hands cupped to mouth
JESUS BAPTIZED	- hands crossed over to make a dove coming down from above
3 TEMPTATIONS	- hold up three fingers
3 YEARS OF MINISTRY	- hands capped (i.e. representing a period of time)
12 DISCIPLES	- two fists/hands then one hand two fingers on other side
SERMON ON THE MT.	- hands form peak like a mountain
EXPLAINING THE LAW	- hands form open book
FEEDING THE HUNGRY	- right hand to mouth eating food out of left hand dish
HEALING THE SICK	- hand turned down (as if on someone’s head)
RAISING THE DEAD	- hands helping someone rise
PETER’S CONFESSION ⁹	- right fist from mouth outwards (fist = rock)
“YOU ARE THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD”	- hands to head make crown - point right index finger to the sky
TRIUMPHAL ENTRY	- hands hold reigns, riding donkey (or wave arms like palm branches)
WASHING DISCIPLES’ FEET	- get almost down on one knee (quickly) and hands like washing feet
LAST SUPPER	- hold up bread with fingers and make cup with other hand
JUDAS’ BETRAYAL	- kiss left hand
JESUS’ TRIAL	- both hands up and down with palms up (as if weighing)
MESSIAH MOCKED & BEATEN	- make crown, then hands to mouth, then right hand beating down
CRUCIFIXION – DEATH	- arms out making a cross, then head down
RESURRECTION	- arms cross up and out into the air and around
GREAT COMMISSION	- point out
AND ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN	- hands together palms up reaching up to the sky

⁸ The new covenant: 1. Through faith in Jesus, the atoning sacrifice for sin once and for all, people from all nations could have their sins forgiven and be restored into a loving relationship with God. The Holy Spirit, available for all people, would empower them to live according to God’s law of love with “the law written on their hearts”. 2. However, the purpose of the new covenant was the same as the old: God would be their God and they would be His people – they were to love God with a whole heart and obey his commandments (love others).

⁹ Peter’s confession that Jesus was the Messiah was a pivotal point in the ministry of Jesus. Following this, Jesus began to make plans to go to Jerusalem and to the cross.

BIBLE ACTION OVERVIEW

The Early Church

Acts:

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|---------------------------------|--|
| HOLY SPIRIT - PENTECOST | - one hand comes down on top of head, wave fingers like fire |
| EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH | - hands together go out to the side |
| UNITY OF BELIEVER | - hands and fingers together |
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| JEWISH PERSECUTION | - hand as skullcap, then both hands in front pushing down to floor |
| CHURCH SCATTERS | - piano fingers moving outwards |
|
 | |
| GOSPEL PREACHED | - hands cupped around mouth |
| IN JERUSALEM, JUDEA, SAMARIA | - hands together in front, go wider and wider |
| AND TO ALL THE EARTH | - hands go all the way out |
|
 | |
| PETER TO THE JEWS, | - point index finger to right side |
| PAUL TO THE GENTILES | - point index finger to left side |
| CHURCHES PLANTED | - make steeple bring downward, do this twice |
| IN 3 MISSIONARY JOURNEYS | - three fingers go around in a circle in front |
| & ONE TRIP TO ROME AS A CAPTIVE | - cross wrists as in chains |

Epistles:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| LETTERS WRITTEN, | - write on palm with finger |
| BELIEVERS ENCOURAGED | - two thumbs rising up |
| & CORRECTED | - hands come back down to gather and lift up people (<i>from error</i>) |
| AMIDST ROMAN PERSECUTION. | - flat hand wiped across neck (many apostles killed, Paul beheaded) |
| THE TEMPLE IS DESTROYED. | - form temple with steeple and then throw hands down |
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| & JOHN HAS A REVELATION | - hands cupped to either sides of eyes, as if seeing a vision |
| WHERE JESUS RETURNS | - hands palms up coming down |
| AS KING OF KINGS & LORD OF LORDS | - crown on head... then fingers go out, pointing up |
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| [Optional:] TO THROW DOWN SATAN, | - right index finger comes pointing down to the ground |
| JUDGE THE EARTH, | - both hands up and down with palms up (as if weighing) |
| AND HEAL THE NATIONS! | - both hands palm down and glide them away from body to each side |

HALLELUJAH! - hands up in worship

AMEN. - hands together