

BIBLE ACTION OVERVIEW

Spoken words are listed on the left. Hand actions are described on the right (100 actions in total - 50 for the OT and 50 for the NT).¹ The capitalized Biblical periods are also used for the Bible Visual Overview.

OLD TESTAMENT (50 ACTIONS)

BEGINNINGS (3)

Creation	- hands bottom to top to form world
Sin - Flood	- hands fall down, hands up
Babel - Nations	- forearms together (tower), hands spread out to the side

FIRST FATHERS (5)

God's Covenant with Abraham²

*"I will bless you
and through you all the
nations of the earth will be blessed."*

Isaac – Jacob, 12 Sons of Israel

Joseph to Egypt

Israelites to Egypt

and become Slaves

- circled fingers linked together (rings), stroke long beard.
- hands cup mouth (God speaking)
- hands going forward palms up
- chop R hand in front (all nations)
- R palm down pat heads in front, hand on head (skull cap)
- hold scruff of coat, form pyramid with fingers
- hand on head (Jewish skull cap), form pyramid with fingers
- cross wrists as in chains

EGYPT AND THE WILDERNESS (12)

Moses "Let My People Go!"

Pharaoh Says "No"

10 Plagues - Passover³

Red Sea

Mount Sinai - 10 Commandments

God's Covenant with Israel⁴

"I will be your God

and you will be My people"

Golden Calf "Oh...no"

Tabernacle "O-kay"

12 Spies to Canaan

People are Complaining

Wander for 40 years and Die

- emphasize "mo", hand forms staff, hands cup mouth (speaking)
- cross arms and turn head
- hand pick gnats off arm, index finger crosses in front
- hands together, split like walls of water
- hands form a mountain peak, 10 fingers up
- circled fingers linked, R hand on back of head (skull cap)
- hands cup mouth (speaking), circled thumb/finger on L hand
- circled thumb/finger on R hand forms link (response)
- index fingers make horns on head (bull), thumbs down (sin)
- hands clasped (tabernacle), both thumbs up (sins are forgiven)
- hand on forehead looking out
- arms crossed, shake head (refuse to enter Canaan)
- finger making wandering path, bend over

PROMISED LAND (8)

Joshua

Crossing the Jordan

Jericho Falls

Canaan Conquered and Settled

- salute (Joshua becomes Israel's leader after Moses dies)
- hands together, split like walls of water (same as Red Sea)
- forearms standing to form walls & falling down
- fist hits palm, open hands float down towards floor

¹ Some Old Testament words and actions are adapted from Walk Thru the Bible Ministries.

² **The Abrahamic covenant.** God promises: 1. To ble**ss** Abraham and make him into a great nation. 2. To ble**ss** all the nations of the world through Israel's righteous influence and Jesus the Messiah. 3. To give Abraham's descendants the strategic land of Canaan.

³ **The Passover** feast. The blood of the lamb protected Israelites from the 10th plague of Egypt - the death of the firstborn son.

⁴ **God's covenant with Israel** is summarized as "I will be your God and you will be My people". God chooses His beloved people to be a nation set apart for Him (a holy nation) and a righteous influence about God and His ways to the nations (a kingdom of priests). Ex 19:4-6

7 Cycles of Sin

(Optional: Rebellion - Oppression -
Repentance - Deliverance - Peace)

3 Main Judges...

Deborah, Gideon and Samson

Everyone Does What is Right
in His Own Eyes

Israel Demands a Human King⁵

Rejecting God's Rule and Warning

- hold up seven fingers and circle them around twice
- hold up a fist, hand pushes down to floor, turn hand over, hand pushes upward, turn hand over & away from body
- three fingers held up
- stroke long hair wavy fingers, wringing wet fleece, flex muscles
- circle hands with index fingers up in front of you, point to eyes (selfishness and violence)
- R fist in front, form crown on head (a king like the other nations) point upward (God) bring wagging finger downward (warning)

KINGDOM OF ISRAEL (10)

United Kingdom

King Saul - No Heart for God

King David - Whole Heart for God

God's Covenant with David⁶

(Optional: "I will establish the
throne of your kingdom forever.")

King Solomon - Half-A-Heart for God

Builds God's Temple

but Approves Idol Worship

- palms of hands with extended fingers together vertically
- form crown on head, hands form fist over heart and push away
- crown on head, fingers form circle over heart
- circled fingers linked together, form circle over heart
- hands cup mouth (speaking)
- hands form throne (L forms back, R forms seat), move down
- crown on head, form half circle with hands over heart
- hands clasped to form temple (same as tabernacle)
- fingers make horns on head (like golden calf)

Divided Kingdom

North - South

Israel - Judah

No Good Kings, Some Good Kings⁷

- vee vertical hands at wrist in front (God divides the nation)
- left hand up from vee; right hand up from vee
- left hand up; right hand up
- L fist; R thumb up

EXILE AND RETURN (12)

Prophets Speak:

"Repent or Perish"

Noone Listens and Break the Covenant

Israel is Scattered to Assyria

Judah is Exiled to Babylon

The Temple and Jerusalem destroyed

- hands cup mouth, right finger points up, then points to ground
- hands over ears, unlink circled fingers
- L hand up (Israel), piano fingers (scattered) on R side
- R hand up (Judah), cross wrists (chains), bring downwards
- form temple, walls fall down (same as Jericho falls)

The Rise of the Medes & Persians

Judah Returns in 3 Groups

Zerubbabel - Rebuilds the Temple

Ezra - Rebuilds the People

Nehemiah - Rebuilds the Walls

Queen Esther in Persia - Saves the Jews

Then... Shhhhhh... Silence for 400 years⁸

- two thumbs rising up (twin kingdoms, good news for Judah)
- 3 fingers returning from L to R
- 1 finger returns, make temple (same as tabernacle)
- 2 fingers return, hands to chest (character of people)
- 3 fingers return, arms form walls (walls of Jerusalem)
- form crown on head, scepter in front (king's favor on Esther)
- finger to mouth (Shh), pause, 4 fingers up (400 years)

⁵ **Israel demands a human king** like all the other surrounding nations. God warns that rejecting the decentralized tribal system of government under God and His laws will result in oppression and misery for the people.

⁶ **The Davidic Covenant.** God promises: 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 the "Son of David" whose kingdom would last forever. 2 Samuel 7:16; Luke 1:32-33

⁷ **Some good kings.** Israel had 19 kings, all were evil. Judah had 20 kings, 8 were good but just prior to the Exile most were evil.

⁸ **Silence.** There were 400 years of silence - an extended pause before the climax of God's plan of redemption for the world. No prophets were speaking, but God was actively preparing the world for what happens next.

NEW TESTAMENT (50 Actions)

SILENT YEARS (4)

God Prepares for the Messiah⁹

The Greeks spread Language

The Romans spread Roads

The Jews spread Synagogues

- fists building on each other, finger points upward
- wreath on head, index finger move outward from mouth
- R fist to chest (Roman salute), vertical hands forward (roads)
- form skull cap, hands form book (read the Law of God)

JESUS THE MESSIAH (28)

At the Right Time

God Sent Jesus, His Beloved Son

A New Covenant for Everyone¹⁰

Born in Bethlehem, Raised in Nazareth¹¹

- point to watch on wrist
- point up to sky, bring downward, hand over heart
- circled fingers linked (covenant), chop hands in front (all nations)
 - make pregnant belly, raise hand upwards

John the Baptist

“Prepare the Way of the Lord”

- step forward, move vertical hands forward (straight road)
- hands cupped to mouth; point up to sky

Jesus’ Baptism

3 Temptations

3 Years of Ministry

12 Disciples

Teaching - Parables

Sermon on the Mount

Healing - Miracles

Feeding the Crowds

Peter’s Testimony¹²

“You are the Messiah

the Son of the Living God”

- form dove - thumbs crossed hands flap - bring down
- hold up 3 fingers on L hand
- hold up 3 fingers on R hand
- 3 fingers on each hand meet together, hit twice (6+6)
- casting seed twice (spreading Word / sower parable)
- hands form a mountain peak (most famous sermon)
- hands covering eyes (blind) open hands
- right and left hands to mouth repeatedly (feeds 5000 people)
- right fist from mouth outwards (Peter means stone)
- hands cupped to mouth
- point up to sky

Jesus enters Jerusalem

People Praise

Pharisees Plot

The Last Passover Meal¹³

Jesus says, “This is My body...

My blood of the new covenant,

poured out for the forgiveness of sins”

- holding reins, move up and down (riding on a donkey)
- extended fingers, arms waving (palm branches)
- cross arms, R hand stroking chin
- hands form a long table in front
- hands cupped to mouth; both hands lifted breaking bread
- both hands lifted holding cup, circled fingers linked
- hands turn move down as pouring cup, thumbs turn up

⁹ **God prepares the world for the spread of the Gospel.** With the Greek empire, the Greek language became the main trade language (so all could hear the Gospel). The Romans built roads and established peace (so the Gospel could travel quickly). The Jews built Synagogues throughout the Roman empire where the Law of God was read regularly (building understanding of truth and hope for the Messiah).

¹⁰ **The new covenant.** Jesus, God’s promised Messiah, is the climax of God’s plan of redemption for the world (Matthew 1:20-21, Luke 1:30-33). The new covenant is established through Jesus’ death and resurrection, so that through faith in Jesus everyone can have their sins forgiven and friendship with God. The purpose of the new covenant is the same as the old - “I will be your God and you will be My people”.

¹¹ **Bethlehem** was the birthplace of King David. A Roman census brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem (from Nazareth) because they were of the lineage of David. Jesus is a descendant of David and the everlasting King, the fulfillment of the covenant God made with David.

¹² **Peter’s testimony** (his revelation and confession) that Jesus is God and the promised Messiah, is a pivotal point in the ministry of Jesus. After this Jesus goes to Jerusalem to die and rise again.

¹³ **The Passover** feast remembers the deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. They are saved from the angel of death by the blood of a lamb painted on doorposts. At the last Passover meal, Jesus reveals that this feast is a prophetic picture of the new covenant - God’s salvation from slavery and death (forgiveness of sin) through Him, the sacrificial Lamb of God. (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25)

Judas' Betrayal

Jesus' Trial

Crucifixion and death

Resurrection

Great Commission

Ascension into Heaven

- kiss back of hand
- both hands up and down (as if weighing)
- arms out to side making a cross, head down
- arms cross up and out
- both index fingers points outwards
- both hands (palms up) reaching up to the sky

EARLY CHURCH (13)

Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

Peter Explains

God promised:¹⁴

"I will pour out My Spirit on All people."

Church Expands

Stephen Stoned

Church Scatters

- hand waving on head
- fist from mouth outward
- point upwards,
- hands cupped to mouth, hand waving on head, chop in front
- clasp hands to form church, quickly go out (rapid growth)
- hand picks up stone
- clasp hands (church) piano fingers moving outwards

But... the Gospel Spreads¹⁵

From Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria and
to Ends of the Earth

Phillip to the Ethiopian

Peter to Roman Cornelius

Paul to the Greeks

in 3 Missionary Journeys

Planting of Churches

Writing of Letters¹⁶

- index fingers up (but) form cross (gospel),
- index fingers close together, move apart with each location
- R index finger on L 1st finger, move reins up & down (chariot)
- R index finger on L 2nd finger, R hand to chest (Roman salute)
- R index finger on L 3rd finger, hands make a Greek wreath
- 3 fingers go around in a circle in front
- hands clasped (church), bring downward
- write on palm of hand

SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL (5)

Last Letter - John's Revelation

Of Every Tribe and Every Nation

The Soon Return of the King Of Kings
head

The Restoration of Everything

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Amen!

- point to palm (last letter), finger point up, bring to head
- R hand chops in front (all nations worship before God's throne)
- two fingers coming downward (2nd coming), form crown on
- hands form world from top downward (Acts 3:21)
- R fist goes up, Both fists go up
- Hands together (or say "And everyone says - Amen")

¹⁴ **God's promise of the Holy Spirit.** These miraculous events were part of God's plan of redemption for the world (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16-17, 21). Just as Pentecost is connected to the Passover (always 50 days later), so the Holy Spirit's outpouring is connected to the new covenant now available for not only the Jews, but for people of all nations.

¹⁵ **The Gospel spreads** from the Jews (Jerusalem/Judea) to the Gentiles by Jesus' disciples directed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). To the south (Ethiopia - Africa) and to the west (Romans and Greeks - Europe). According to history the disciples also went to the north (Russia) and to the east (Syria, Persia and India - Asia). This was God's plan of restoration for the world and the fulfillment of His covenant with Abraham.

¹⁶ **Paul and Peter write letters** to the growing Church, which includes both Jews and Gentiles. Peter writes that the Church is the new Israel or the new people of God (part of the new covenant), "You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." 1 Peter 2:8