

Christmas Bible Buddy Reading Pack



Church of Ireland ✙
Board for Ministry with
Children & Families

How to use this pack



Get comfy

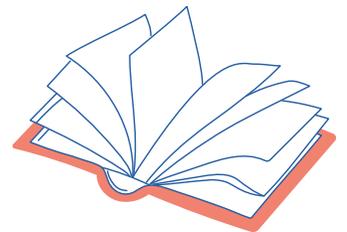


Find a comfy place where you can cuddle with your Buddy and where it's not too noisy.



Chat with Jesus

Before you read or listen to the Bible take a little time to chat with Jesus and ask Him to help you understand what He wants to say to you through the Bible.



Read the Bible Verses

When you are able, read some of the verses. If reading is a bit tricky for you ask someone in your house to read the verses to you. You can read the same verses over & over if you like them - we always see new things.



Draw or write your thoughts

There are many things we can learn from reading God's word - you can chat with someone in your house about it, chat with your Bible Buddy. Then draw a picture or write it down in the My Notes page.



What do the names and numbers mean?

When you look at the Bible verses you will see there are some strange names and lots of numbers.

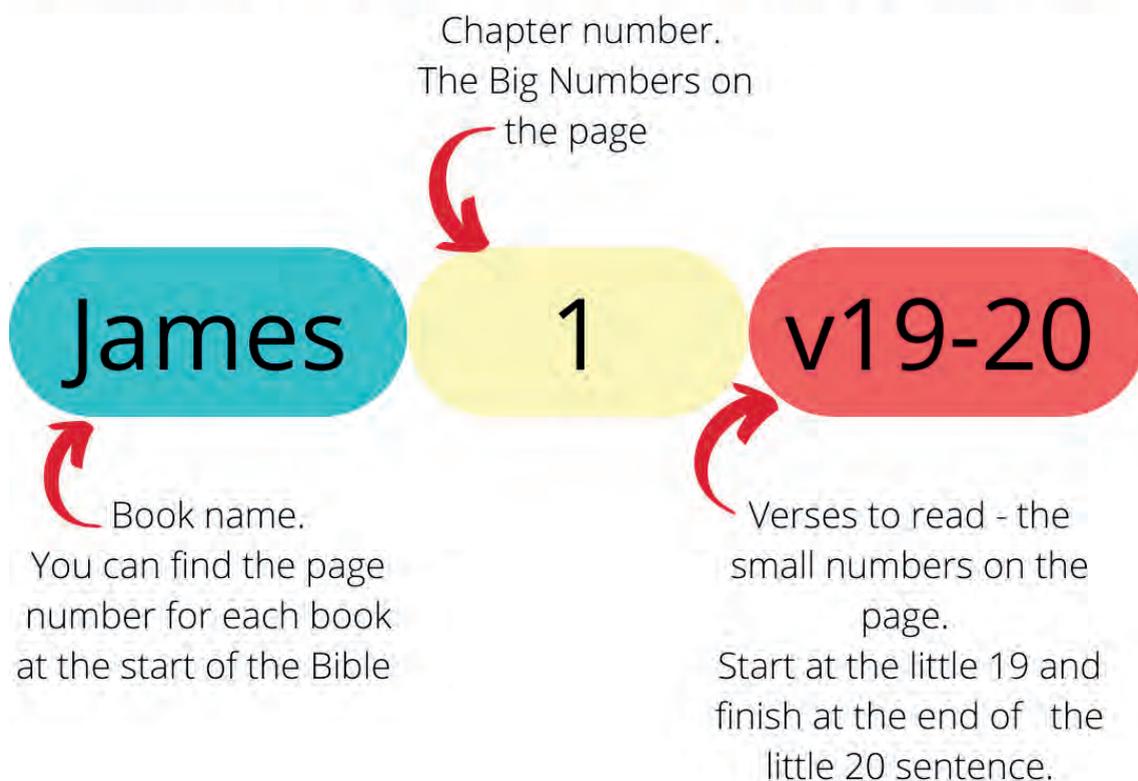
These are the names of books in the Bible and the verse numbers.

We have these to help us to know where to find things in the Bible.

Here is a picture to help you understand.

If you have a Bible at home you can practice finding the verses together with your Buddy and whoever is helping you to read.

How to find verses in the Bible



The Christmas Story.

Elizabeth and Zechariah

Luke 1 v 5 - 25



During the time when Herod was king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife's name was Elizabeth; she also belonged to a priestly family. They both lived good lives in God's sight and obeyed fully all the Lord's laws and commands. They had no children because Elizabeth could not have any, and she and Zechariah were both very old.

One day Zechariah was doing his work as a priest in the Temple, taking his turn in the daily service. According to the custom followed by the priests, he was chosen by lot to burn incense on the altar. So he went into the Temple of the Lord, while the crowd of people outside prayed during the hour when the incense was burned. An angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar where the incense was burned. When Zechariah saw him, he was alarmed and felt afraid. But the angel said to him, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son. You are to name him John. How glad and happy you will be, and how happy many others will be when he is born! John will be great in the Lord's sight. He must not drink any wine or strong drink. From his very birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, and he will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. He will go ahead of the Lord, strong and mighty like the prophet Elijah. He will bring fathers and children together again; he will turn disobedient people back to the way of thinking of the righteous; he will get the Lord's people ready for him."

Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know if this is so? I am an old man, and my wife is old also."

"I am Gabriel," the angel answered. "I stand in the presence of God, who sent me to speak to you and tell you this good news. But you have not believed my message, which will come true at the right time. Because you have not believed, you will be unable to speak; you will remain silent until the day my promise to you comes true."

In the meantime the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he was spending such a long time in the Temple. When he came out, he could not speak to them, and so they knew that he had seen a vision in the Temple. Unable to say a word, he made signs to them with his hands.

When his period of service in the Temple was over, Zechariah went back home. Some time later his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and did not leave the house for five months. "Now at last the Lord has helped me," she said. "He has taken away my public disgrace!"

The Christmas Story.

Mary

Luke 1 v 26 - 56



In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!"

Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!" Mary said to the angel, "I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do."

"I am the Lord's servant," said Mary; "may it happen to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Soon afterward Mary got ready and hurried off to a town in the hill country of Judea. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby moved within her. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and said in a loud voice, "You are the most blessed of all women, and blessed is the child you will bear! Why should this great thing happen to me, that my Lord's mother comes to visit me? For as soon as I heard your greeting, the baby within me jumped with gladness. How happy you are to believe that the Lord's message to you will come true!"

Mary's Song of Praise

Mary said, "My heart praises the Lord; my soul is glad because of God my Saviour, for he has remembered me, his lowly servant!

From now on all people will call me happy, because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me.

His name is holy; from one generation to another he shows mercy to those who honour him. He has stretched out his mighty arm and scattered the proud with all their plans.

He has brought down mighty kings from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away with empty hands.

He has kept the promise he made to our ancestors, and has come to the help of his servant Israel. He has remembered to show mercy to Abraham and to all his descendants forever!"

Mary stayed about three months with Elizabeth and then went back home.

The Christmas Story.

John



Luke 1 v 57 - 80

The time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, and she gave birth to a son. Her neighbours and relatives heard how wonderfully good the Lord had been to her, and they all rejoiced with her.

When the baby was a week old, they came to dedicate him, and they were going to name him Zechariah, after his father. But his mother said, “No! His name is to be John.”

They said to her, “But you don't have any relative with that name!” Then they made signs to his father, asking him what name he would like the boy to have.

Zechariah asked for a writing pad and wrote, “His name is John.” How surprised they all were! 64 At that moment Zechariah was able to speak again, and he started praising God. The neighbours were all filled with fear, and the news about these things spread through all the hill country of Judea. Everyone who heard of it thought about it and asked, “What is this child going to be?” For it was plain that the Lord's power was upon him.

Zechariah's Prophecy

John's father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he spoke God's message:

“Let us praise the Lord, the God of Israel!

He has come to the help of his people and has set them free.

He has provided for us a mighty Saviour, a descendant of his servant David.

He promised through his holy prophets long ago that he would save us from our enemies, from the power of all those who hate us.

He said he would show mercy to our ancestors and remember his sacred covenant.

With a solemn oath to our ancestor Abraham he promised to rescue us from our enemies and allow us to serve him without fear, so that we might be holy and righteous before him all the days of our life.

“You, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High God.

You will go ahead of the Lord to prepare his road for him, to tell his people that they will be saved by having their sins forgiven.

Our God is merciful and tender. He will cause the bright dawn of salvation to rise on us and to shine from heaven on all those who live in the dark shadow of death, to guide our steps into the path of peace.”

The child grew and developed in body and spirit. He lived in the desert until the day when he appeared publicly to the people of Israel.

The Christmas Story.

Joseph



Matthew 1 v 18 - 25

This was how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they were married, she found out that she was going to have a baby by the Holy Spirit.

Joseph was a man who always did what was right, but he did not want to disgrace Mary publicly; so he made plans to break the engagement privately.

While he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived. She will have a son, and you will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins.”

Now all this happened in order to make come true what the Lord had said through the prophet, “A virgin will become pregnant and have a son, and he will be called Immanuel” (which means, “God is with us”).

So when Joseph woke up, he married Mary, as the angel of the Lord had told him to. But he had no intimate relations with her before she gave birth to her son. And Joseph named him Jesus.



The Christmas Story.

The Shepherds

Luke 2 v 8 - 20



There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the fields, taking care of their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them.

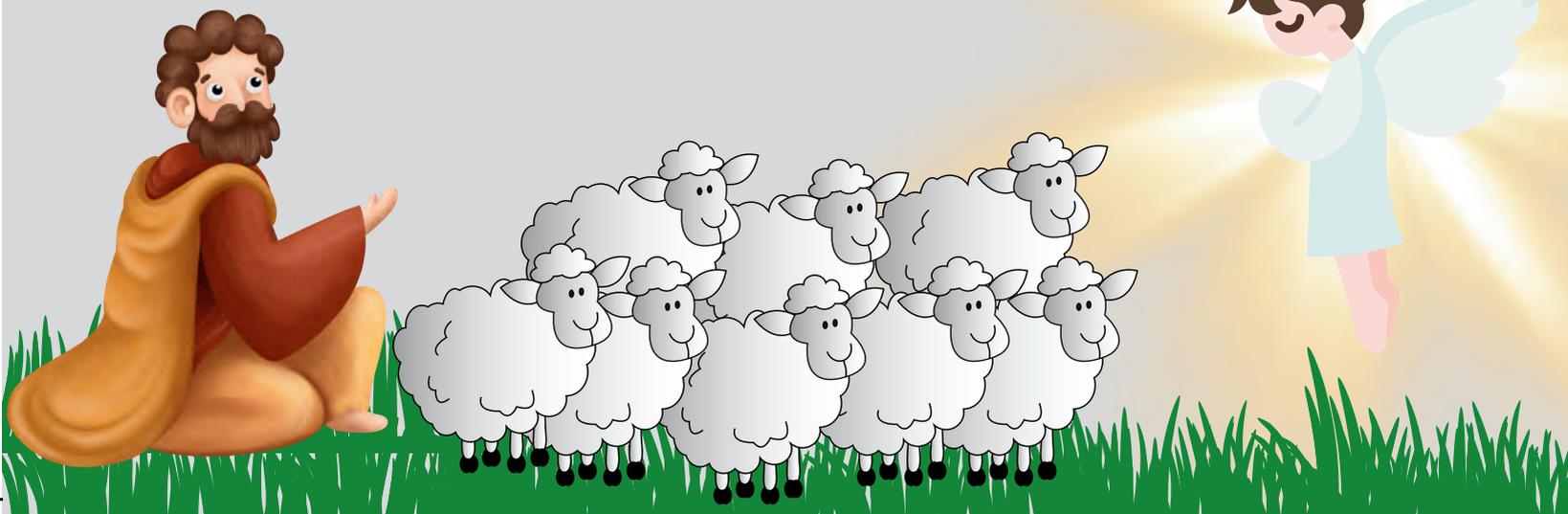
They were terribly afraid, but the angel said to them, “Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people. This very day in David's town your Saviour was born—Christ the Lord! And this is what will prove it to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God:

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!”

When the angels went away from them back into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us.”

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and saw the baby lying in the manger. When the shepherds saw him, they told them what the angel had said about the child. All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said. Mary remembered all these things and thought deeply about them. The shepherds went back, singing praises to God for all they had heard and seen; it had been just as the angel had told them.



The Christmas Story.

The Wise Men

Matthew 2 v 1 - 12



Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea during the time when Herod was king. After Jesus was born, some wise men from the east came to Jerusalem. They asked, “Where is the baby who was born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east. We came to worship him.”

When King Herod heard about this new king of the Jews, he was troubled. And all the people in Jerusalem were worried too. Herod called a meeting of all the leading priests and teachers of the law. He asked them where the Christ would be born. They answered, “In the town of Bethlehem in Judea. The prophet wrote about this in the Scriptures:

‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are important among the rulers of Judah.

A ruler will come from you.

He will be like a shepherd for my people, the Israelites.’” Micah 5:2

Then Herod had a secret meeting with the wise men from the east. He learned from them the exact time they first saw the star. Then Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem. He said to them, “Go and look carefully to find the child. When you find him, come tell me. Then I can go worship him too.”

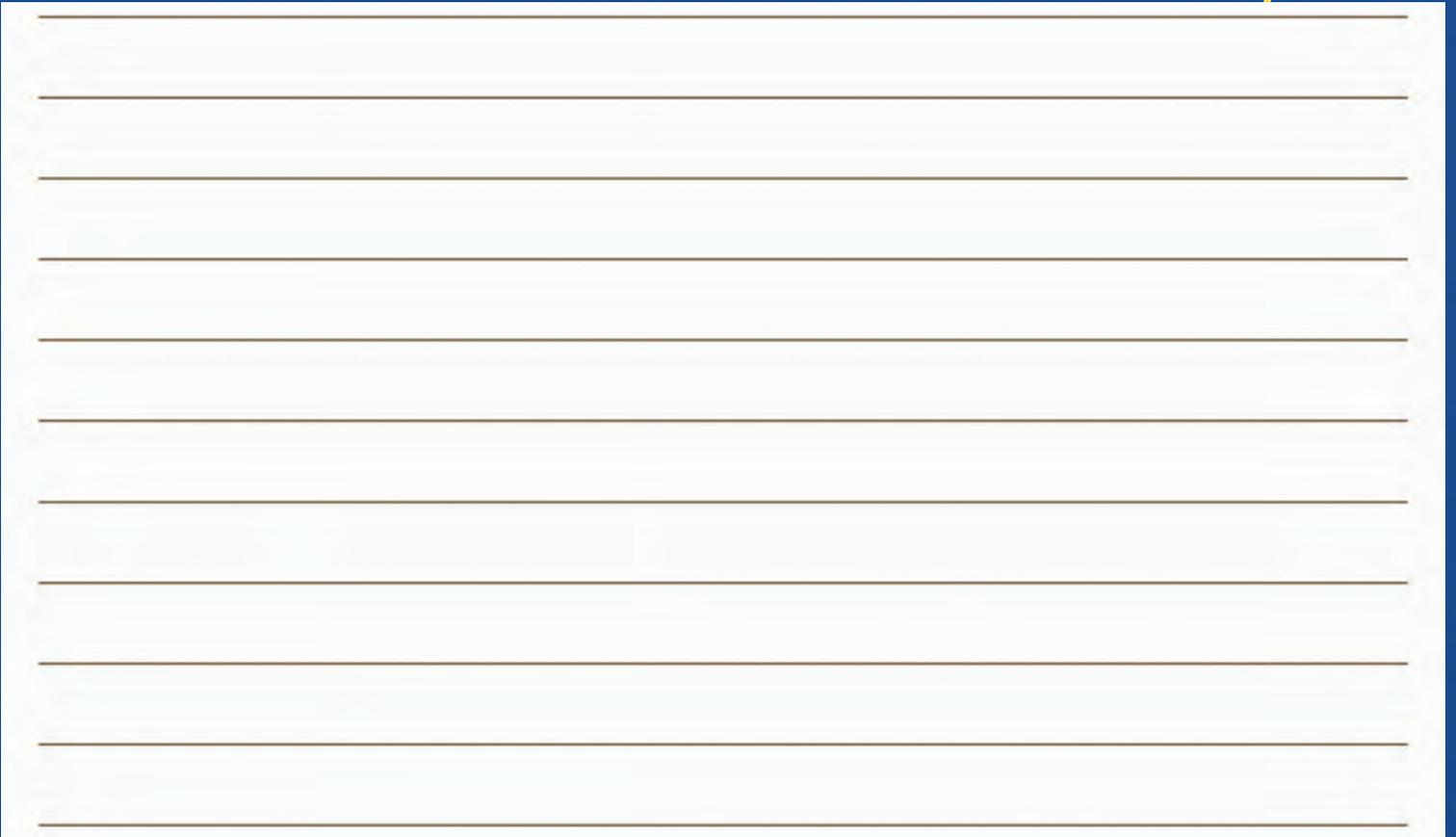
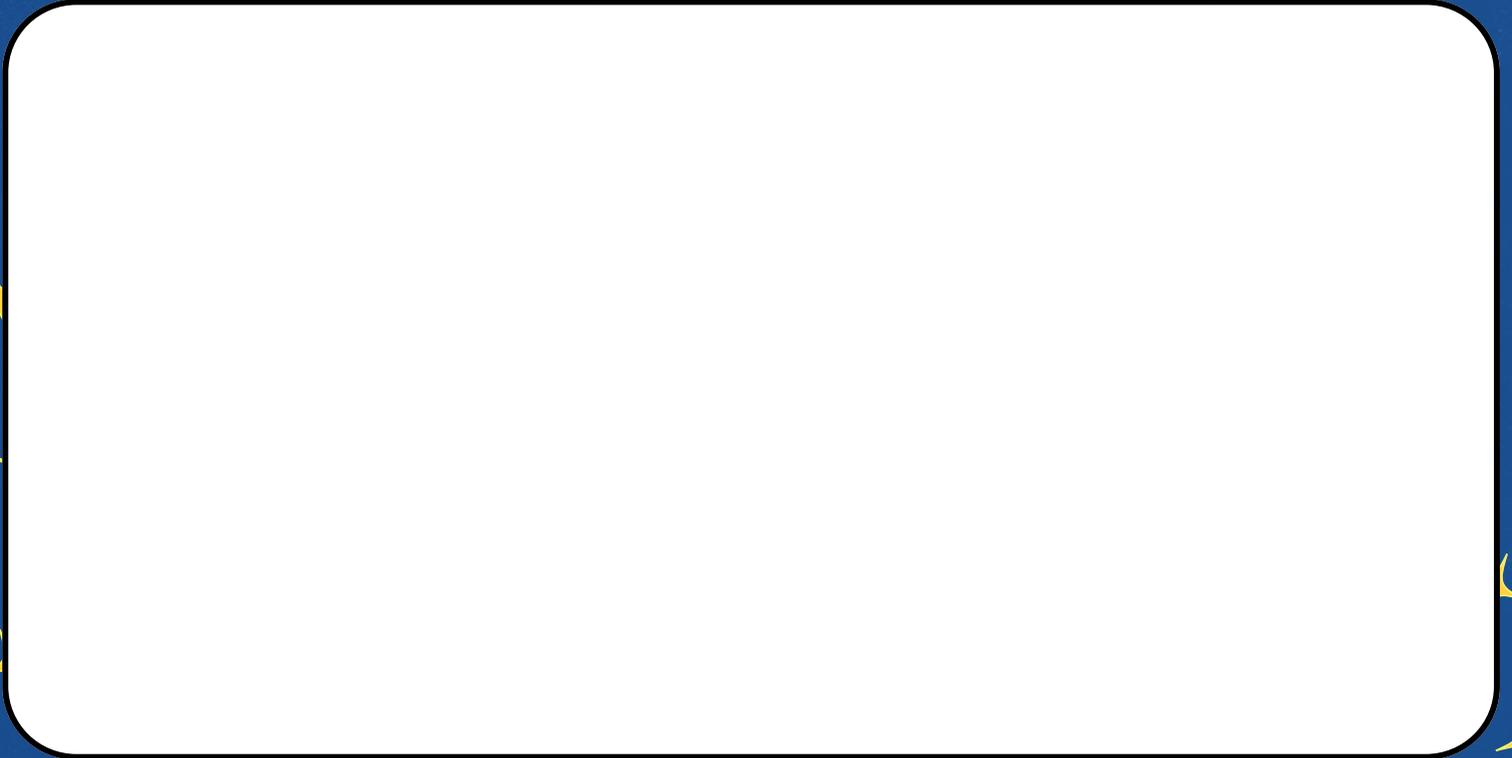
The wise men heard the king and then left. They saw the same star they had seen in the east. It went before them until it stopped above the place where the child was. When the wise men saw the star, they were filled with joy. They went to the house where the child was and saw him with his mother, Mary. They bowed down and worshiped the child. They opened the gifts they brought for him. They gave him treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But God warned the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they went home to their own country by a different way.

MY NOTES

The wise men had been looking for the star to guide them to the new King - Jesus.

I wonder how the wise men felt about King Herod

Draw a picture or write down what this part of Jesus' story made you think or feel.



Keep on reading

Your buddy is for life not just for Christmas!

They need to keep getting stronger and that happens when you keep reading the Bible together.

Here are some more passages for you to read, think, chat, draw and write about over the coming weeks.

Week 3

Matthew 3 John the Baptist

Matthew 4:1-11 Temptation of Jesus

John 1:35-51 Jesus calls the first disciples

Luke 5:12-32 Jesus heals the needy

John 3:1-21 Jesus teaches Nicodemus



Week 4

Mark 12:28-34 The great commandment

Matthew 24:1-44 The end times

Matthew 25:31-46 Parable of the sheep and the goats

Luke 22:1-38 The Lord's supper

John 14 Jesus comforts the disciples



Week 5

Luke 23:26-49 Jesus is crucified

John 19:16-42 Death and burial of Jesus

John 20 Resurrection of Jesus

John 21 Jesus forgives Peter

Luke 24:13-49 Jesus appears to the disciples



Week 6

Romans 8:26-39 Victory in Christ

Romans 10 Preaching the Gospel

Romans 12:1-8 Service to God

Romans 12:9-21 Overcoming evil

Colossians 1:1-12 Thanks to God

MY NOTES



Read the Bible verse and draw a picture or write down how it made you feel or what you thought about

A large, empty white rounded rectangle with a black border, intended for drawing a picture or writing a response.A white rectangular area with horizontal brown lines, intended for writing a response.