

BIBLICAL SWITCH

This card game

- ✓ lets you meet people from the Bible
- ✓ introduces you to biblical characters
- ✓ connects biblical characters with each other
- ✓ links biblical characters to our times
- ✓ helps you get into the skin of biblical characters

and the characters help you get to know yourself and God better!

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- In bigger company, it is a good idea to use more decks and divide the players into smaller groups who can play different games.
- At the end of the different game modes, you can facilitate a group discussion about the experiences: what was a source of joy for the players, what did they feel troubled by, what did they manage especially well, when were they off balance during the game, etc.
- For a game with smaller children, you can pick the characters that the kids are familiar with.

BIBLICAL VERSES FEATURING THE CHARACTERS

Each biblical character appears in one or more biblical passages. The following verses are also listed on the homepage of Biblical Switch.

Card Nro. 1.: THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

John 4:1-42

Card Nro. 2.: AMOS

Am 7:14-15; Am 2:6-8; Am 3:1-2.10-12; Am 5:4; Am 5:10-20; Am 6:4-7; Am 8:11; Am 9:13-15

Card Nro. 3.: HANNAH, Mother of Samuel

1Sam 1; 1Sam 2:1-10; 1Sam 2:18-21

Card Nro. 4.: THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Luke 10:25-37

Card Nro. 5.: DAVID

1Sam 16:1-13; 1Sam 16:14-23; 1Sam 17:26-58; 1Sam 18:1-4; 1Sam 18:28-29; 1Sam 26:8-23; 2Sam 5:1-7; 2Sam 7:1-13; 2Sam 11-12; 23:8,24,39; 2Sam 19:25-29; 2Sam 23:2-5; 1Kings 2:1-4; 1Kings 2:10-11; Mark 11:1-10; Rev 22:16

Card Nro. 6.: EVE

Gen 2:21-25; Gen 3:1-24; 2Cor 11:3

Card Nro. 7.: GIDEON

Judg 6:11-16; Judg 6:17-24; Judg 6:25-32; Judg 6:36-40; Judg 7:1-8; Judg 7:9-14; Judg 7:15-22; Judg 8:22-23; Judg 8:24.27

Card Nro. 8.: ELIJAH

1Kings 16:29-33; 1Kings 17:1; 1Kings 17:2-7; 1Kings 17:8-16; 1Kings 17:17-24; 1Kings 18:36-39; 1Kings 18:41-46; 1Kings 19:1-8; 1Kings 19:9-18; 2Kings 2:1-18

Card Nro. 9.: JACOB

Gen 25:21-26; Gen 26:34; Gen 27; Gen 28:1-5; Gen 28:10-22; Gen 29:21-30; Gen 32:4-9.21b-25; Gen 32:25-33; Gen 37:27-35; Gen 42:29-43:2; Gen 45:25-46:4

Card Nro. 10.: JONAH

The Book of Jonah

Card Nro. 11.: JOSHUA

Ex 33:9-11; Num 11:24-29; Num 13:1-3.8.16b.25-33; Num 14:1-9; Num 14:30; Num 27:15-23; Deut 34:5-9; József 1,1-9; Josh 6:1-17; Josh 8:14-23; Josh 23:1-11

Card Nro. 12.: JOHN THE BAPTIST

Luke 1:5-25; Luke 1:39-45; Luke 1:57-66.80; Luke 3:1-20; Matt 3:13-17; John 3:27-36; Matt 11:1-19; Matt 14:1-12

Card Nro. 13.: MARY, Mother of Jesus

Luke 1:26-38; Luke 1:39-45; Luke 1:46-56; Matt 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-7; Luke 2:15-19; Matt 2:11; Matt 2:13-15; Luke 2:33-35; Luke 2:39; Luke 2:41-42; John 2:1-5; Matt 12:46-50; John 19:25-27; Acts 1:12-14

Card Nro. 14.: MARTHA

Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1-6.18-28; John 12:1-2

Card Nro. 15.: MOSES

Ex 2:1-10; Ex 2:11-15a; Ex 2:15b-22; Ex 2:23-3:22; Ex 4:1-17; Ex 5:1-8; Ex 12:31-36; Ex 14:10-27; Ex 16:2-8; Ex 18:13-26; Ex 32:15-24; Ex 34:1-7.29-35; Num 11,16-17.24-29; Num 20,1-13; Deut 32,44-52; Deut 34:1-8

Card Nro. 16.: NICODEMUS

John 3:1-21; John 7:37-53; John 19:38-42

Card Nro. 17.: NOAH

Gen 5 (Who else were alive at the time of Noah's birth?); Gen 6:1-14.17-22; Gen 7:1.7-16; Gen 8:18-22; Gen 9:1-3; Gen 9:8-17; Gen 9:20-28; Heb 11:7

Card Nro. 18.: THE WIDOW WITH THE TWO MITES

Mark 12:41-44

Card Nro. 19.: APOSTLE PAUL

Phil 3: 5-7; Acts 18:2b-3; Gal 1:13-16; 2Tim 2:8-10; Acts 26:9-18; Gal 2:9; 1Cor 9:26-27; Rom 15:15-21

Card Nro. 20.: RUTH

The Book of Ruth

Card Nro. 21.: SOLOMON

2Sam 12:24-25; 1Kings 3:4-15; 1Kings 3:16-28; 1Kings 8:54-61; 1Kings 11:1-13

Card Nro. 22.: SAMUEL

1Sam 1; 1Sam 3; 1Sam 7:5-10; 1Sam 7:15-17; 1Sam 8; 1Sam 10,1; 1Sam 12,1-5.20-25; 1Sam 16:1-5.11-13; 1Sam 25:1a; (1Sam 28:7-8.11-19)

Card Nro. 23.: SIMON PETER

John 1:40-42; Luke 5:1-11; Matt 16:13-17; Matt 16:18-19; Matt 16:21-23; John 6:66-71; Matt 17:1-9; Matt 18:21-22; Luke 18:18-30; John 13:1-11; Luke 22:31-34; Mark 14:32-42; John 18:1-11; John 18:12-17; John 20:1-10; John 21:1-14; John 21:15-19; Acts 1:15-26; Acts 10:9-28; Gal 2:11-14; 2Pet 1:12-21

Card Nro. 24.: ZACCHAEUS

Luke 19:1-10

GAME MODES

A.) KNOW YOUR BIBLE GAMES

1. Winning numbers

Objective: to collect all the cards.

How to play: Distribute the cards evenly among the players. The players hold the cards in their hands so that they can see the top one only. The first player picks an information category in their card and bets its value against the cards of the other players. The player who has the card with the highest value in the given category can collect the cards with lower values.

E.g.: the first player has the card with Zacchaeus.

Info category: the biblical book in which he first appears. The corresponding value is 42 (42th book in the Bible).

Opponent's card: David

The opponent reveals the value of the info category picked by the first player: in this case it is 8.

The value in the first player's card is higher so the first player wins the other player's card.

The player who has collected the opponents' card can start the next round. In case of a tie (same values), the player picks a new category.

Further suggestions: The players can play against the clock. In this case the winner is the player with the most cards.

You can also use two decks of cards.

The figures corresponding to the number of appearances of the characters in the Bible is based on József Baranyi's concordance.

2. Matching game

Objective: to collect pairs of similar cards and avoid being left with the odd card.

How to play: Pick the same 12 cards from two decks and add an odd card. Shuffle the cards and deal 5 cards to each player. Players take turns drawing from the remaining pile of cards. If they find a pair, they place it in front of them. When they run out of the cards in the pile, they start drawing from each other as long as one of them is left with the odd card.

Further suggestions: With more players, simply remove one card to get a deck with an odd card.

3. Memory

Objective: to collect the largest number of pairs.

How to play: Find the same 12 cards from two decks and shuffle them. Place the 24 cards face down in front of the players. Each player turns two cards to look at them, then they turn the cards back down. If they find a pair, they can keep the cards and turn two more cards.

Further suggestions: The number of the cards can be increased or decreased depending on the age of the players.

You can also play the game with three decks. In this case the players are allowed to turn three cards in a round and they need to find sets of three cards.

4. Visiting another book

What you need: 3 dice or a dice application.

Objective: to get familiar with the Bible, practice using the Bible and find new meanings in the Bible through role play.

For the role play the players roll the dice to randomly pair a character in one of the cards with a passage (book, chapter, verse) in the Bible. The character visits the given passage and engages in a conversation with another character there. The character can talk about their feelings and ideas, opportunities and challenges in that new context.

How to play: The group members cooperate to play. Shuffle the cards and draw a card from the top of the deck. Roll the dice to determine the book in the Bible where the person in the card will (time)travel and meet another character there.

You can decide whether you will use one or two dice to do this. Roll to find the book first. *E.g., the character in the card is Zacchaeus. If you roll 1 and 3 with two dice respectively, he needs to travel to the 13th book in the Bible, that is, 1 Chronicles.*

Next you need to check how many chapters the given book consists of and roll the dice to determine, which chapter the character should arrive in. *E.g., if the next rolls are 1 and 7, Zacchaeus will travel to 1Chron 17.*

Then, roll for the verse.

E.g., if you roll 1 and 8, the Bible passage will be 1Chron 17:18.

We recommend reading the passage with the surrounding verses to play the game. Some of the encounters yield themselves to interpretation easier than others. Some of them might be nearly impossible to role play. In these cases, you might decide to roll a new Bible passage. Yet, even challenging combinations are helpful in getting to know the Bible better.

Further suggestions: You can also use other approaches such as meditation, posing into human sculptures, Bibliolog in its basic or extended form, picture interpretation (for the approaches check the homepage of Biblical Switch).

Since some of the Old Testament stories involve violence, this game should be played with older kids only. With smaller kids, an option is to select Bible passages prior to the game, write them on slips of paper and pick from this selection to find the destinations for the characters.

5. Investigation

The game is based on different Bible stories that feature a character as well as an object and a place connected to them.

Objective: to identify the biblical character, the object and the place in one of the cards.

How to play: The players use the attached table to play (it can be photocopied for them). The table contains the 24 characters from the game as well as an object and a place to go with each of the characters.

One of the players draws a card.

The group has the task to identify that card by calling the names of characters, objects and places in the various lines. The player drawing the card cannot talk, they can only indicate with one or two likes if the members of the group call out a correct guess. They can use funny sentences to do this, e.g. *Did Mary have leather clothing in the battle?*

Further suggestions:

The group can play together or in smaller groups of e.g. 5 people.

Another variation is to draw three cards: the character is taken from the first card, the object from the second and the place from the third.

The table can also be downloaded from the homepage of Biblical Switch.

	Biblical character	Object	Place
1.	The Samaritan woman	Pitcher	Jacob's well
2.	Ámos	Shepherd's crook	Tekoa
3.	Hannah, the mother of Samuel	Sewing needle	The hill country of Ephraim
4.	The Good Samaritan	Oil	Dangerous road
5.	David	Lyre	The court of King Saul
6.	Éve	Leather clothing	At the gate of Eden
7.	Gideon	Clay jar	Battle
8.	Elijah	Robe	Mount Horeb
9.	Jacob	Stew	Their home
10.	Jonah	Hut	The outskirts of Nineveh
11.	Joshua	Spear	The outskirts of the city of Ai
12.	John the Baptist	Garment made of camel's hair	River Jordan
13.	Mary, the mother of Jesus	Swaddling clothes	Bethlehem
14.	Martha	Her house	Bethany
15.	Moses	Two empty tablets of stone	Mount Sinai
16.	Nicodemus	Myrrh and aloes	The tomb of Jesus
17.	Noah	Ark	Water
18.	The Widow	Two mites	Temple
19.	Apostle Paul	Shackles	Prison
20.	Ruth	Grain flail	Bethlehem
21.	Solomon	Throne	Palace
22.	Samuel	Sleeping place	Shiloh
23.	Simon Peter	Fisherman's net	Lake Genezareth
24.	Zacchaeus	Wealth	Jericho

6. Say it differently!

Objective: to make other players guess the card and the biblical character in the card while avoiding certain words.

How to play: One of the players draws a card and tries to explain to the others who they are without using the most important expressions in the card.

Further suggestions: Players can also use the cards they have drawn to give a testimony on behalf of the character in the card. They can talk about a difficult situation they ended up in and how God saved them from that situation.

For this game, it is suggested to select cards that have characters familiar to the players.

7. Mime it!

Objective: to mime an important memory of the character in the card in a way that lets other players guess the character.

How to play: One of the players draws a card and mimes a scene from the character's life: e.g., *Simon Peter: walked on water*; or *heard the rooster crow*, etc. As a hint, the player can reveal the first letters of two of the important words in the answer. In the case of the puzzle above it can be **w**(alk) and **s**(ea) or **w**(ater) and **r**(ooster).

Further suggestions: The players can form groups and compete against each other.

8. This is mine. Who am I?

Objective: to help other players guess the biblical character in the card by drawing objects connected to that character.

How to play: One of the players draws a card and draws an image of an object that can be linked to the biblical character in the card. If the team needs more hints, the player can extend the drawing to include other objects or details in the story.

Further suggestions: The players can form groups and compete against each other.

B.) INTERPRET YOUR BIBLE GAMES

9. What would they be like today?

Objective: to engage biblical characters with the present and to discover new textual meanings.

How to play: This is a cooperative game. Each player gets a card. They talk about the character in their card in pairs or smaller groups and discuss what challenges the character would face today and what opportunities they would have based on their previous experience. The group members can also have the characters meet in the present. In this case, they talk about their impressions about the present time in first person and reflect on how they could help each other. You can draw the players' attention to the differences regarding female and male roles, age groups or social status and what opportunities or challenges these differences entail.

Further suggestions: You can also play with one card only. In this case, players place this character into the present and reflect on questions such as: What kind of friend, classmate, family member, teacher, etc. would that person make?

10. Gone into hiding, call me forth!

Objective: to put the concerns or fears of biblical characters into words and to formulate encouraging reactions to those concerns. This can also help the players develop their personal coping strategies in the safe space provided by the game.

How to play: Each player gets a card. Based on their knowledge about the experience of the given biblical character, they write down some of the concerns or fears that person might have felt on a piece of paper.

The game master collects the slips and reads them out one by one saying: "I have gone into hiding because ... (the concern on the paper). Call me forth!" The task of the other players is to come up with sentences to encourage and comfort the biblical character. When the player whose character is being discussed feels that they have heard something that was particularly comforting or encouraging, they can close the round by saying: "I am here!"

Further suggestions: If the reactions are not comforting or encouraging enough, you can move on and read the concern once again at a later stage. If the group is still unable to formulate the right encouragement, we can ask the player in hiding to come forth and help the group understand, what words they would have needed. In this case the player can formulate the response themselves or point the group in the right direction.

If the group cannot formulate an appropriate response at all, we can also remind them of what those comforting words were for the biblical character.

11. "He put a new song in my mouth"

Objective: to use artistic approaches to interpret and relive stories from the Bible.

How to play: One of the players draws a card. The group is asked to interpret the story (or one of the stories) with the given biblical character on different levels:

Level 1: players act out the rhythm and sounds of the story using only rhythm and tapping;

Level 2: they create a text to go with this – the text is more lyrical than prosaic;

Level 3: they add melody to the text created in the previous phase;

Level 4: the performance is boosted by using movements and dance.

Further aspects to describe the situation of the biblical characters in the cards:

The Samaritan woman: condemned by the others, shame.

Amos: lack of mercy, the feeling of being marginalized, the need to show mercy.

Hannah, the mother of Samuel: longing for a child, roles and opportunities in the family and society; persistence in prayer, a prayer heard, thankfulness.

The Good Samaritan: lifting up a person in need, offering and accepting help.

David: belonging to God in good and bad times, turning back to God is always the best solution, God's mercy.

Eva: not being aware of the trap of nice promises, being unsatisfied with what she was given; wanting divine power for herself and her husband; failure, freedom misused, God offers the way of salvation and the way forward.

Gideon: the risk of trusting God, not seeing but believing; putting God to the test by asking for a sign; occasionally God grants certainty.

Elijah: answering God's call, finding our own way and following it; staying with God in spite of exhaustion and burnout; the certainty of God's presence.

Jacob: there is always another option, new beginning; trusting God in spite of being aware of one's sins.

Jonah: is anything more important than my own well-being?; being open to the interest of others and the common good.

Joshua: being strong, being human in the midst of inhumanity, challenges, accepting responsibility.

John the Baptist: the one who prepares cannot be the main character, the church proclaims Christ, not herself.

Mary: faithfulness, offering myself and my life to God; God's word manifests itself in the word through people; the ministry of pastors, teachers and others in the church of Christ.

Martha: honesty and straightforwardness in prayer; not letting the troubles of everyday life distract our attention from the words of Jesus; resurrection.

Moses: being a good leader under difficult circumstances; helpers; the Spirit of God.

Nicodemus: embracing the relationship or friendship with someone; religious openness; the ability to reconsider our principles.

Noah: the reaction of others to the witness of believers; “your will be done” – accepting God’s will, unconditional trust in God.

The widow with the two mites: considering the reasons to give, giving to the church; courage in faith and its purpose.

Apostle Paul: Jesus calls disciples even after having ascended to heaven; calling and vocation found; life in the congregation, the communion of the Church of Christ.

Ruth: faithfulness, courage; taking initiative despite new circumstances, moving on.

Solomon: God’s gifts to the person and the community; “bad company”, betraying God, failure; new start with God, repentance.

Samuel: the faithful are few; we often restrict God’s rule to certain areas of our life only.

Simon Peter: when Jesus deems us worthy in spite of everything, open communication to God, loving Jesus; helping each other and caring for each other spiritually.

Zacchaeus: Jesus accepts us; not being loved; a life that follows Jesus, own interests, greed, exploitation.

Let us connect with the Bible!

Let us connect with people in the Bible!

Through the Bible, God is connecting with us. ☺