



The Action Bible: God's Redemptive Story

Sergio Cariello, Illustrator

Crux Studios

(830pp)

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The Action Bible is an excellent graphic adaptation of the Bible.

With illustrations by Sergio Cariello, the graphic novel *The Action Bible* is a thrilling adaptation of the Bible, making its stories and chronology feel accessible with streamlined language and pacing, selective editing, and a clear visual component. This expanded version incorporates additional stories into 120-plus new pages of illustrations, resulting in a road map to fundamental aspects of Judaism and Christianity.

Simplifying the New International Version biblical texts while preserving their meanings, the prose streamlines scenes such as Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane into a few panels: Here, Jesus cries, “Oh, Dad, if it is possible, please don’t make me suffer for people’s sin,” a play on “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.” And in the place of chains of “begats” to explain the lineage of the Bible’s central characters come short segments that capture the key events surrounding those figures. Focusing on the most important and exciting elements of biblical stories, the book reads like a series of individual adventures, linked by their relationship to God and to each other.

Cariello’s outstanding illustrations utilize clear storytelling and distinctive Kubert-style inks and crosshatching to ground their images in reality. In them, people wander through deserts and toil in cities in cinematic style. Elsewhere, moments of angelic intervention are made to shine, thanks in part to the spectrum of colors fleshing out all scenes in their full glory.

Each chapter lists the biblical books, chapters, and verses from which the contents were taken; some are complemented by their humor, with titles including “A Lot is Too Much,” “Elijah’s Flour Power,” and “20,000 Egyptians Under the Sea.” Educational features, including maps and notations covering facts like the distance between cities, result in additional context for the book’s frequent travel references.

Occasional editorial notes provide historical background for scenes and explain confusing elements. For example, among Jesus’s followers are the important figures John, Mark, and John Mark, in addition to Jesus’s cousin John the Baptist; each is introduced as distinctive, and the visual depictions of each man remain consistent throughout, making it easy to track who is who. Further, the table of contents and index make it easy to find specific stories and sections of the Bible.

The Action Bible is an excellent graphic adaptation of the Bible whose features are enjoyable, informative, and inspiring.

PETER DABBENE (November 13, 2024)

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