



The Gospel in the Beginning

Tracing God's Plan of Redemption from Genesis to Revelation

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Prepared for Bible Study Groups, Small-Group Leaders, Pastors, Teachers, and Serious Students of Scripture October 2026

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Preface

Purpose of This Guide

The Bible is not a collection of disconnected stories, laws, poems, and letters. It is one unified story—the story of the God who made the world, saw it ruined by human sin, and purposed from the beginning to redeem and restore it through his Son, Jesus Christ. From Genesis to Revelation, one redemptive thread runs through every book, covenant, sacrifice, and promise. This guide will help you trace that thread.

The goal is not to force unity onto the Bible, but to follow the connections Scripture itself makes through the New Testament’s reading of the Old, the shape of the whole Bible, and its unfolding revelation. Explicit fulfillments, reasonable inferences, and widely held typological readings are identified as such, and differences among faithful Christians are honestly acknowledged.

How to Use This Guide

This is a *Scripture look-up study*. That means it is designed to be used with your Bible open. Every major passage is referenced by book, chapter, and verse. Before reading the commentary in each section, turn to the passage and read it for yourself. Let the biblical text do its own work first.

How to Use Each Section

- **Scripture Passage:** Open your Bible and read the cited passage before continuing.
- **Contextual Explanation:** Read the background and theological context.
- **Key Observations:** Note what the text itself actually says.
- **Cross-References:** Look up the additional passages listed for deeper study.
- **Discussion Questions:** Use these for personal reflection or group conversation.
- **Section Summary:** Each major section ends with a summary tying its themes together.

Use the **Thematic Index of Key Passages** at the end to trace themes such as the Covenant Line, the Lamb of God, and the New Creation throughout Scripture.

A Note on Interpretive Honesty

This guide distinguishes among five kinds of biblical-theological claims: (1) direct statements of the biblical text; (2) explicit New Testament interpretation of Old Testament passages; (3) themes developed across multiple canonical passages; (4) typological or prophetic connections that are textually plausible but not explicitly stated in the NT; and (5) interpretive questions on which faithful Christians hold differing views. Each kind is identified in the text so that readers can weigh the evidence for themselves.

Creation and the Original Order: The World God Made

Genesis 1–2

A. God Made Everything from Nothing—and Made It Good

Scripture Passage: Genesis 1:1–2:3

Genesis opens with majestic, unhurried cadence: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (**Genesis 1:1**). The Hebrew word *bārā'* — "created" — is used in the Old Testament exclusively with God as its subject, signaling that what follows is not the ordering of pre-existing material but an act of divine origination. The repeated refrain "and God saw that it was good" (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25) and the climactic "it was very good" (Genesis 1:31) establish a foundational theological truth: the world as God made it was without flaw, without death, without corruption.

The structure of the six days presents creation as God's ordered, spoken word. He speaks, and it is so. This sovereignty over creation by the word of God is picked up throughout Scripture — most powerfully in **John 1:1–3**, where the apostle identifies the divine Word (Logos) who was with God and was God, through whom all things were made. The New Testament's opening of John thus consciously echoes Genesis 1:1 ("In the beginning..."), announcing that the one who made the world has now entered it.

The seventh day (**Genesis 2:1–3**) is the first thing in all of Scripture called "holy." God's rest is not weariness but completion and celebration. This pattern of Sabbath rest carries profound canonical significance, developed in **Hebrews 4:1–11** as a picture of the gospel rest that believers enter through faith in Christ — a rest that remains for the people of God.

Key Observations

- Creation is the product of God's sovereign speech — he commands, and it is so (Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26).
- The word "good" is applied repeatedly; the original creation contains no evil, no death, no disorder.
- The seventh day is the first holy day in Scripture — set apart, blessed, and completed.
- The pattern of creation provides the backdrop against which the Fall is catastrophic and redemption is restorative.
- John 1 deliberately echoes Genesis 1 to present Jesus as the agent and goal of all creation.

Cross-References

John 1:1-3 (the Word as agent of creation); **Colossians 1:15-17** (all things created through and for Christ); **Hebrews 4:1-11** (the Sabbath rest as gospel promise); **Psalms 33:6-9** (creation by the word of God); **Isaiah 40:25-26** (the Creator's incomparability); **Revelation 4:11** (creation as the ground of worship).

Discussion Questions

1. How does understanding creation as originally "very good" shape your understanding of sin, suffering, and the need for redemption?
2. Why is it significant that God creates by speaking? How does this prepare us for the revelation of Jesus as the "Word" in John 1?
3. What does the seventh day's holiness tell us about God's purposes for his creation? How does Hebrews 4 develop this theme?

B. The Image of God and Human Dignity

Scripture Passage: Genesis 1:26-28

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness'" (**Genesis 1:26**). This declaration is unparalleled in the creation account. No other creature is made in God's image (*imago Dei*). The Hebrew words *tselem* (image) and *demuth* (likeness) together convey a royal and representative function: human beings are God's image-bearers in his world, appointed to exercise dominion under his authority (Genesis 1:28). In the ancient Near East, a king would place his image — a statue — in provinces he ruled, to represent his sovereignty. Humanity is the living image of the living God, placed in his creation to represent him.

This foundational dignity is the basis for both the horror of the Fall — we have corrupted the image — and the glory of redemption. Paul speaks of believers being "renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (**Colossians 3:10**) and being conformed to the image of God's Son (**Romans 8:29**). Jesus Christ himself is called "the image of the invisible God" (**Colossians 1:15**) and "the exact imprint of his nature" (**Hebrews 1:3**). He is the perfect image-bearer, and redemption is the restoration of the image in those who are united to him.

Key Observations

- When God says, "Let us make man in our image" in Genesis 1:26, many theologians see it as an early hint of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Still, the verse does not say this directly. Others believe God is speaking to his heavenly council or using a royal way of speaking. Faithful Christians disagree on this, so the passage should be handled with care.
- Both male and female are created in God's image (Genesis 1:27) — the image is not limited by sex or social role.
- The mandate to "have dominion" (Genesis 1:28) is a royal commission — humans as God's vice-regents.
- The image is not destroyed by the Fall but is deeply marred (Genesis 9:6 still assumes the image; James 3:9 confirms it).
- Christ is the perfect image of God; believers are being remade into his image through the Spirit.

Cross-References

Genesis 9:6; Psalm 8:3-8; Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:15; Colossians 3:9-10; Hebrews 1:3; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 15:49.

Discussion Questions

1. What practical difference does it make to know that every human being is made in God's image?
2. How does Jesus as the "image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15) complete and clarify what it means to bear God's image?
3. In what ways do you see the image of God being restored in believers by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18; Romans 8:29)?

C. The Garden, the Trees, and the Priestly Gardener

Scripture Passage: Genesis 2:4-25

Genesis 2 zooms in on the creation of humanity and the particular setting of the Garden of Eden. The garden is not merely a pleasant landscape — it functions as a sacred sanctuary, the dwelling place of God with his creature. In **Genesis 2:15**, Adam is placed in the garden "to work it and keep it." The Hebrew verbs used here — *ʾāvad* (to work/serve) and *shāmar* (to keep/guard) — are the very same verbs used later in the Pentateuch to describe the duties of the Levitical priests who serve and guard the tabernacle (**Numbers 3:7-8; 18:5-6**). This is a significant canonical parallel: the garden is structured like a sanctuary, and Adam functions as its priest-guardian. This connection has been noted by many Old Testament scholars and carries important typological weight.

Two trees stand at the center of the garden: the Tree of Life (**Genesis 2:9**) and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Tree of Life represents communion with God and the gift of sustained life in his presence. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil represents the boundary God has set — the one prohibition that defines the limits of creaturely existence. The command of **Genesis 2:16-17** is clear: "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Marriage is instituted by God himself in **Genesis 2:18-25** as a covenant relationship — a profound union of one man and one woman. Paul quotes **Genesis 2:24** in **Ephesians 5:31-32**, explicitly identifying the marriage covenant as a "mystery" that points to the relationship between Christ and the Church. This is a canonical connection explicitly made by the New Testament.

Key Observations

- Eden functions as a sacred space — a prototype of the tabernacle and temple, where God dwells with his people.
- Adam's vocation ("work and keep") uses language later applied to priestly ministry, suggesting a priestly role from the beginning.
- The Tree of Life appears again in Revelation 22:2, 14 — its restoration signals the complete undoing of the Fall.
- The one prohibition (Genesis 2:16-17) is not arbitrary — it defines the creatureliness of humanity and the lordship of God.
- Marriage as "one flesh" is called by Paul a mystery pointing to Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:31-32).

Cross-References

Numbers 3:7-8; Numbers 18:5-6; Ezekiel 28:13-14 (Eden described with temple imagery); **Ephesians 5:31-32; Revelation 2:7; Revelation 22:1-5.**

Discussion Questions

1. What does it tell us about God's intentions that he placed humanity in a garden-sanctuary in his presence? What was lost in the Fall, and what does redemption restore?
2. Why do you think the Tree of Life reappears at the very end of Scripture (Revelation 22)? What does this suggest about the structure of the whole Bible?
3. How does understanding marriage as a picture of Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:31-32) change the way you think about the institution of marriage?

Section I Summary

God made the world good — very good. He made human beings in his own image, male and female, to represent him and rule his creation as his royal priests. He placed them in a garden-sanctuary, in his presence, given life and communion. The entire structure of creation is designed for relationship — God with humanity, humanity with one another, and humanity with the created world. Understanding this original goodness is essential to understanding both the catastrophic nature of the Fall and the astonishing ambition of redemption: not merely the rescue of souls, but the restoration of all things. Every theme of redemption in Scripture is intelligible only against this backdrop.

The Fall: Sin, Death, and the Broken Covenant

Genesis 3

A. The Temptation and the Nature of Sin

Scripture Passage: Genesis 3:1-6

The serpent's opening question to the woman — "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" (**Genesis 3:1**) — is a masterpiece of distortion. God had given permission to eat from every tree but one; the serpent reframes the prohibition as a general denial. The approach is not direct contradiction but subtle questioning: first doubt, then denial ("You will not surely die," Genesis 3:4), then a counter-promise ("you will be like God, knowing good and evil," Genesis 3:5). The essence of the temptation is not simply disobedience to a command — it is the invitation to autonomy, to be one's own moral authority, to define good and evil apart from God.

The New Testament is explicit about the identity and role of the serpent. **Revelation 12:9** identifies "that ancient serpent" as "the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world." **John 8:44** records Jesus calling Satan "a murderer from the beginning" and "a liar and the father of lies." **2 Corinthians 11:3** warns that the serpent "deceived Eve by his cunning." The New Testament does not leave the serpent as a mysterious figure; it unambiguously identifies him as the personal adversary of God and humanity.

Eve's response reveals the progression of temptation: she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise" (Genesis 3:6). This threefold pattern — appetite, aesthetics, and aspiration — reappears in **1 John 2:16** as "the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life." Adam, who was "with her" (Genesis 3:6), participates without apparent protest. The act is at once personal rebellion, covenantal breach, and catastrophic moral rupture.

Key Observations

- The serpent's strategy begins with distortion of God's word, not outright denial — a pattern of temptation that recurs throughout Scripture.
- The core of the sin is not merely eating forbidden fruit; it is the desire to be autonomous from God, to be "like God" by one's own definition.
- The New Testament explicitly identifies the serpent as Satan (Revelation 12:9; John 8:44).
- Adam's presence with Eve ("with her," Genesis 3:6) makes his silence and compliance a failure of his priestly-guardian role (Genesis 2:15).
- Paul places the primary covenantal responsibility on Adam, not Eve (Romans 5:12-14; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22), while also noting Eve's deception (1 Timothy 2:14).

Cross-References

Romans 5:12-14; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; 2 Corinthians 11:3; John 8:44; Revelation 12:9; 1 John 2:16; 1 Timothy 2:13-14.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the serpent begins by questioning God's word rather than directly contradicting it? What does this reveal about the nature of temptation?
2. How does the desire for autonomy — to define good and evil for oneself — manifest in contemporary life and culture?
3. Why does Paul hold Adam primarily responsible for the fall of humanity (Romans 5:12-14), even though Eve was the first to eat?

B. The Consequences: Shame, Hiding, and Broken Relationships

Scripture Passage: Genesis 3:7-24

The immediate results of the Fall are devastating and irreversible. "Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked" (**Genesis 3:7**). The "knowledge of good and evil" they gained was not the glorious enlightenment the serpent promised — it was the terrible knowledge of guilt and exposure. They sew fig leaves together, and when they hear God walking in the garden, they hide from him (**Genesis 3:8**). Sin has shattered the open, unashamed communion that defined the original relationship between God and humanity.

God's confrontation of Adam and Eve is judicial but restrained. He asks questions not because he lacks knowledge but because he is calling the guilty parties to confession and accountability. The excuses — "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit" (Genesis 3:12); "The serpent deceived me" (Genesis 3:13) — reveal the further effects of sin: the fracturing of human relationships, the deflection of responsibility, and the blame-shifting that characterizes fallen human community.

The curses that follow in **Genesis 3:14-19** address each party in turn. The ground is cursed for Adam's sake; his work becomes toilsome. The woman will experience pain in childbearing and relational conflict in marriage. The serpent receives the most severe curse, and it is within this curse that the first gospel promise is embedded (see Section III). Finally, Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden — excluded from the Tree of Life, and from the immediate presence of God (Genesis 3:22-24). Cherubim and a flaming sword guard the way back to the Tree of Life. The entire history of redemption is, in one sense, the story of how the way back to the Tree of Life is opened again — through the cross of Christ.

Key Observations

- Shame, hiding, and fear of God are the first recorded effects of sin — a broken relationship with God expressed immediately in broken relationship with self and each other.
- God makes garments of skin for Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21) — an act of gracious covering that requires the death of an animal, foreshadowing the sacrificial system.
- Death entered creation through Adam's sin — a truth Paul develops at length in Romans 5:12-14 and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22.
- The expulsion from the garden is also an act of mercy: God prevents sinful humanity from eating from the Tree of Life in their fallen state (Genesis 3:22).
- The cherubim guarding Eden reappear on the curtain of the tabernacle (Exodus 26:31) and in Ezekiel's temple vision (Ezekiel 10) — connecting sacred space and the presence of God throughout the canon.

Cross-References

Romans 5:12-14; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Romans 8:20-22 (creation subjected to futility); **Exodus 26:31; Hebrews 9:7; Revelation 22:3** (no more curse).

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it significant that the first effects of sin were internal — shame and the impulse to hide — before any external consequence appeared?
2. God makes garments of skin for Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21). What does this act of costly provision in the midst of judgment suggest about God's character?
3. How does the expulsion from Eden set up the entire redemptive narrative? In what sense is all of Scripture a story about how access to God's presence is restored?
4. What do the curses on the serpent, the woman, and the man reveal about the comprehensiveness of sin's effects — spiritual, physical, relational, and vocational?

Section II Summary

The Fall is not merely a moral failure — it is a covenantal catastrophe. Adam, who was God's image-bearer and priestly guardian of the garden-sanctuary, failed his calling and plunged the whole human race into sin, guilt, shame, and death. Every relationship was fractured: between humanity and God, between man and woman, between humanity and the created world. Death entered the story. Yet even in the moment of judgment, grace was present — in God's searching questions, in the provision of covering, and most significantly in the promise embedded within the curse upon the serpent. The gospel was not an afterthought; it was already being announced.

The Protevangelium: The First Gospel Promise

Genesis 3:15

A. The Text and Its Immediate Context

Scripture Passage: Genesis 3:15

God addresses the serpent directly in **Genesis 3:14-15**. The curse upon the serpent is comprehensive and severe, and it culminates in the declaration that stands as the hinge of the entire biblical narrative: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). This verse has been called the *Protevangelium* — the "first gospel" — by Christian interpreters since at least the second century, and with good reason.

It is essential to read the verse in its immediate context before pressing it into service as a prophetic text. God is addressing the serpent, and in one sense the verse describes a natural and ongoing reality: there is indeed enmity between serpents and human beings, between the serpent's "offspring" and the woman's "offspring." The word translated "offspring" or "seed" is the Hebrew *zera'*, which can refer to a collective group (all descendants) or an individual. This grammatical openness is itself theologically significant.

The promise has multiple layers that should be carefully distinguished. At the most immediate level, it announces perpetual conflict between the serpent's realm and humanity. At the canonical-typological level, the singular pronoun "he" (Hebrew *hu*) points toward an individual who will be the decisive agent in this conflict — not merely repeated human-serpent enmity, but a specific conquering of the serpent by a particular descendant of the woman. This reading is not imposed on the text from outside; it is the direction in which the canonical narrative itself moves, as it traces "the seed" through Abraham (Genesis 22:18), Judah (Genesis 49:10), David (2 Samuel 7:12-14), and finally to Jesus Christ.

B. The New Testament's Explicit Interpretation

The New Testament confirms the Protevangelium's direction without citing it in a formal "fulfillment" formula. However, several passages make the connection explicit and authoritative. **Romans 16:20** — "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" — echoes Genesis 3:15 unmistakably, applying the "head-crushing" language to Satan's defeat through the gospel community. **Hebrews 2:14** states explicitly that the Son "destroy[ed] the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil." **1 John 3:8** declares that "the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil."

Taken together, these NT passages confirm what the long arc of redemptive history suggested: the promised Seed of the woman is Jesus Christ, whose death (the bruising of the heel) accomplished the decisive defeat of Satan (the crushing of the head). The wound the serpent inflicts upon the Seed — the cross, with all its suffering — is not the defeat of the gospel but the instrument of the serpent's own destruction. This is one of the great reversals of the biblical narrative: at the very moment Satan seems to have won, he is undone.

Key Observations

- Genesis 3:15 is addressed to the serpent, not to Adam and Eve — making it both a curse on the serpent and, implicitly, a promise of hope for humanity.
- The Hebrew word for "offspring/seed" (*zera*) is grammatically collective but the verse uses a singular masculine pronoun ("he shall bruise"), opening space for an individual interpretation.
- The canonical trajectory of "the seed" through the entire Old Testament consistently narrows toward a single individual: the promised Messiah.
- The wound to the heel (the cross) and the crushing of the head (the final defeat of Satan) are not two separate events but two aspects of the one decisive act of Christ's death and resurrection.
- Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14; and 1 John 3:8 are NT passages that explicitly confirm the defeat of Satan by Christ — the fulfillment of the Protevangelium's promise.

Cross-References

Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8; Galatians 3:16 (Paul's reading of "seed" as referring to Christ); **Revelation 12:1-17** (the cosmic conflict between the dragon and the woman's offspring); **Colossians 2:15** (Christ disarming the powers at the cross).

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it called the Protevangelium — the "first gospel"? What makes this a gospel promise rather than merely a description of ongoing conflict?
2. How responsible is it to read Genesis 3:15 as pointing to Jesus Christ? What evidence within Scripture itself supports this reading?
3. What does it mean that the "wound to the heel" — Christ's suffering and death on the cross — was simultaneously the instrument of the "crushing of the head"? How does this shape your understanding of the cross?
4. How does seeing the gospel promised in the very first judgment of God in the Bible shape your understanding of God's character and his redemptive purposes?

Section III Summary

In the darkest moment of the biblical narrative — the judgment pronounced after the Fall — God speaks the first gospel word. The Protevangelium of Genesis 3:15 is not a fully developed doctrine of the atonement; it is a seed-promise whose full meaning unfolds across the whole of Scripture and is finally made unmistakably clear in Jesus Christ. The canonical wisdom of this placement is profound: the gospel is not added to Scripture as an afterthought — it is announced at the very beginning, embedded in the curse upon the enemy of God and humanity. From this moment forward, the whole of the Old Testament is the story of how this promise is kept.

Cain and Abel, the Seed Line, and Early Humanity

Genesis 4–5

A. Cain and Abel — Two Kinds of Worship

Scripture Passage: Genesis 4:1-16

The story of Cain and Abel is the first illustration of the "enmity" announced in **Genesis 3:15** — the conflict between the serpent's seed and the woman's seed playing out within the first family. Abel brings an offering from "the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions," and God has regard for it. Cain brings an offering "of the fruit of the ground," but God does not have regard for it (**Genesis 4:3-5**). The text does not spell out why — but **Hebrews 11:4** provides the NT's own interpretation: "By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain." The difference was faith, not merely the material of the offering. **1 John 3:12** adds that Cain "was of the evil one" — connecting Cain explicitly to the serpent's side of the Genesis 3:15 conflict.

The murder of Abel is, in Jesus's words, the first in a long line of righteous martyrs whose blood cries out for justice (**Matthew 23:35**). Abel becomes a canonical type of all who are persecuted for righteousness, and his blood is contrasted in **Hebrews 12:24** with "the sprinkled blood" of Jesus, which "speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." Abel's blood cried for judgment; Christ's blood speaks forgiveness.

B. The Genealogy of Life and Death — Genesis 5

Scripture Passage: Genesis 4:17–5:32

The divergence between the line of Cain and the line of Seth (**Genesis 4:17-26; 5:1-32**) maps the conflict between the two seeds. The line of Cain produces civilization — cities, music, metalwork — but it also produces Lamech, a man of boastful violence (**Genesis 4:23-24**). The line of Seth produces a different kind of legacy: "At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD" (**Genesis 4:26**). This is the birth of formal, communal worship — a people defined by calling on God's name.

Genesis 5 is often dismissed as a dry list of names, but its theological weight is enormous. The relentless refrain "and he died" — repeated through the genealogy — is the echo of God's warning in Genesis 2:17. Death is real, pervasive, and indiscriminating. Yet within this genealogy are two remarkable exceptions. Enoch "walked with God, and he was not, for God took him" (**Genesis 5:21-24**). **Hebrews 11:5** interprets this as translation before death "by faith." Enoch is a sign that death does not have the final word. And at the end of the genealogy stands Noah, of whom his father Lamech says, "Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed, this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands" (**Genesis 5:29**) — a word of hope that points forward.

Key Observations

- The contrast between Cain and Abel illustrates the two seeds of Genesis 3:15 — the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman — within the first generation after the Fall.
- Hebrews 11:4 interprets Abel's acceptable offering as an expression of faith, not merely ritual correctness.
- The refrain "and he died" in Genesis 5 is the sound of Genesis 2:17's warning fulfilled — death reigning through Adam (Romans 5:14).
- Enoch's translation (Genesis 5:24; Hebrews 11:5) is a prophetic sign that God will ultimately overcome death — a sign amplified in the resurrection of Christ.
- Paul's use of the Adam-Christ typology in Romans 5:12-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-49 gives canonical theological weight to what Genesis 4–5 narratively portrays.

Cross-References

Hebrews 11:4-5; 1 John 3:12; Matthew 23:35; Hebrews 12:24; Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-49; Jude 14-15 (Enoch's prophecy).

Discussion Questions

1. What does the contrast between Cain and Abel tell us about the nature of authentic worship? What role does faith play, according to Hebrews 11:4?
2. Why do you think God included the repeated phrase "and he died" in the Genesis 5 genealogy? What is the theological effect of that refrain?
3. How does Enoch's translation in Genesis 5:24 function as a sign of hope within a genealogy of death? What does it anticipate?
4. How does Paul's Adam-Christ typology (Romans 5; 1 Corinthians 15) help you understand what went wrong in Genesis 4–5 and what Christ has come to repair?

Section IV Summary

The history of early humanity after the Fall is the history of the two seeds — the seed of the serpent (Cain and his line) and the seed of the woman (Seth and his line) — in conflict with each other. Death reigns, and the genealogy of Genesis 5 sounds its drumbeat. Yet within the darkness are glimmers of grace: a community that calls on the name of the LORD, an Enoch who walks with God and is taken before death, and a Noah who stands at the threshold of a new chapter in God's redemptive plan.

Noah, the Flood, and the Covenant of Preservation

Genesis 6–9

A. The Corruption of the Earth and God's Grief

Scripture Passage: Genesis 6:1-8

By the time of Noah, the corruption of the earth has become total. "The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (**Genesis 6:5**). The language is comprehensive — every intention, only evil, continually. Sin has metastasized to the root of human thought and will. God's response is described in terms of grief: "it grieved him to his heart" (Genesis 6:6). The Creator who called his creation "very good" now looks upon it in sorrow. This is one of Scripture's most profound anthropomorphic expressions — not a change of God's eternal nature, but a genuine expression of the relational dimension of God's engagement with his world.

Interpretive Note: The "Sons of God" (Genesis 6:1-4)

Genesis 6:1-4 is one of the most debated passages in the Old Testament. The phrase "sons of God" (*bene ha-elohim*) has been interpreted as: (1) divine beings or angels (cf. Job 1:6; 2:1 — where the same phrase clearly refers to heavenly beings); (2) kings or rulers claiming divine status; (3) the line of Seth intermarrying with the line of Cain. All three views have been held by serious scholars and interpreters across church history. The text does not resolve this question explicitly, and this guide does not require adoption of any single view. What is clear is that the intermarriage described represents a catastrophic breakdown of created boundaries and moral order that contributes to the judgment of the Flood.

B. The Ark and the Covenant — A Canonical-Typological Connection

Scripture Passage: Genesis 6:9–9:17

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (**Genesis 6:8**). This is the first occurrence of the Hebrew word *hēn* (grace, favor) in the Bible. Noah's righteousness (Genesis 6:9) is not the basis of God's selection in a Pelagian sense — the narrative makes clear that God's favor precedes Noah's described character, and that Noah too is a sinner who will demonstrate this after the flood (Genesis 9:20-21). He is chosen not because he earned grace but because God sovereignly extended it.

The ark as a means of salvation through judgment carries typological weight that is explicitly developed in the New Testament. **1 Peter 3:18-22** draws a direct canonical-typological parallel: just as a few were saved through water in Noah's day, so baptism now "saves" as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Peter explicitly makes this comparison (1 Peter 3:20-21), calling it a "corresponding" or "antitype" — which means the NT itself authorizes reading the ark as a type of salvation in Christ. The flood simultaneously judges the old world and

brings Noah's family through to a new world — a pattern of death-and-resurrection that recurs throughout redemptive history.

The Noahic covenant (**Genesis 9:1-17**) is universal and unconditional — God's promise to all living creatures that he will never again destroy the earth by flood. The rainbow is its sign. This is a covenant of preservation, not redemption — it maintains the stage upon which redemption will be enacted. Its universality (encompassing all nations and all creatures) anticipates God's concern for the whole world that will be fully revealed in the Abrahamic promise and ultimately in the gospel going to all nations.

Key Observations

- The first use of "grace" in the Bible appears in relation to Noah — God's unearned favor toward a sinner.
- The Flood is simultaneously a judgment of the old creation and a re-creation — the waters recede, dry land appears, the ark rests on a mountain, and Noah's family emerges into a renewed world (echoing Genesis 1).
- 1 Peter 3:20-21 explicitly identifies the Flood/ark as a type (antitype) of baptism into salvation through Christ — the NT's own authorized typological reading.
- The Noahic covenant is unconditional and universal — requiring nothing of Noah or his descendants, signed with the rainbow as a permanent reminder.
- The Noahic covenant preserves but does not yet redeem — it holds the world open for God's further redemptive acts.

Cross-References

1 Peter 3:18-22; Matthew 24:37-39; Hebrews 11:7; 2 Peter 2:5; Isaiah 54:9-10 (the Noahic covenant referenced as the ground of God's steadfast love).

Discussion Questions

1. What does it tell us about God that his first recorded emotional response to sustained human sinfulness is grief (Genesis 6:6)? How does this shape your understanding of God's holiness and love?
2. How does 1 Peter 3:20-21 use the flood narrative as a type? What does baptism "save" us from, according to Peter?
3. Why is it significant that the Noahic covenant is unconditional and universal — extending even to animals (Genesis 9:9-10)?
4. How does the Noahic covenant fit within the larger structure of covenant history? How does it differ from the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and New Covenants?

Section V Summary

The Flood narrative is a story of judgment and grace, de-creation and re-creation, and the persistence of God's redemptive purpose in the face of radical human corruption. God preserves the world through Noah, enters into covenant with all living creatures, and establishes the rainbow as the sign of his steadfast faithfulness. The Noahic covenant does not yet accomplish redemption — it maintains the world in which redemption will unfold. The pattern of salvation through judgment, however, already sounds the themes that will crescendo in the death and resurrection of Christ.

The Call of Abraham and the Covenant of Promise

Genesis 12–17; 22

A. The Call and the Threefold Promise

Scripture Passage: Genesis 12:1-3

With the call of Abram, the narrative of redemption takes a decisive turn from universal history to particular election. God calls Abram out of Ur of the Chaldeans and commands him to go to a land he will show him, attaching to this command a remarkable threefold promise: land ("I will show you"), seed ("I will make you a great nation"), and blessing ("in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed," **Genesis 12:3**). The scope of this promise is stunning — it begins with one man, but its ultimate reach is "all the families of the earth." God is not narrowing his concern when he calls Abram; he is choosing one man as the channel through whom his concern for all people will be expressed.

The apostle Paul's reading of this text is the most important canonical comment upon it. In **Galatians 3:8**, Paul writes: "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.'" Paul explicitly calls the Abrahamic promise the "gospel preached in advance" — the good news that God intends to bless all nations through the seed of Abraham, ultimately identified as Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:16). This is not a speculative typological reading; it is the NT's own authoritative interpretation of Genesis 12:3.

B. Faith Credited as Righteousness and the Covenant Ceremony

Scripture Passage: Genesis 15

The covenant God makes with Abram in Genesis 15 is one of the most remarkable events in the Old Testament. Abram believes God's promise of a son, and God "counted it to him as righteousness" (**Genesis 15:6**). This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament — in **Romans 4:3**, **Galatians 3:6**, and **James 2:23** — each making the point that justification by faith is not a Pauline invention but the oldest principle of God's relationship with his people. Abraham was justified by faith, not by the Law (which had not yet been given), not by circumcision (which had not yet been given), not by works.

The covenant ceremony of Genesis 15 is ancient and strange to modern readers. Animals are cut in half, their pieces arranged in two rows, and the parties to the covenant would normally walk between the pieces — a solemn oath symbolizing "may what has been done to these animals be done to me if I break this covenant." In Genesis 15, however, when the covenant is formally ratified, Abram does not walk between the pieces. God alone does — represented by a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch (**Genesis 15:17**). God takes the covenant oath upon himself alone. This is the gospel in covenant form: God swears by himself that he will keep the promise, and Abram does not walk between the pieces. The cost of covenant-breaking will fall on God himself — a foreshadowing of the cross, where God in Christ bears the covenant curse on behalf of his people.

C. The Near-Sacrifice of Isaac on Mount Moriah

Scripture Passage: Genesis 22

Genesis 22 is the climax of the Abraham narrative. God commands Abraham to offer Isaac — the son of promise, the child of the covenant, the one through whom "your offspring shall be named" (Genesis 21:12) — as a burnt offering on Mount Moriah. Abraham obeys, Isaac is bound and laid on the altar, and at the last moment God provides a ram caught in the thicket as a substitute. The place is called "The LORD will provide" (*Yhwh-Yireh*), and Abraham declares, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided" (**Genesis 22:14**).

The typological connections to Christ's sacrifice are numerous and have been recognized by Christian interpreters since the earliest centuries of the church. The only son offered by his father, the place of sacrifice (Moriah — the same region as Jerusalem, 2 Chronicles 3:1), the wood carried by the son, the substitutionary ram, and the declaration of divine provision all form a pattern that is canonically responsible to read as foreshadowing the cross. **Hebrews 11:17-19** makes an explicit canonical connection: Abraham "was ready to offer up his only son," and "he considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back." The NT here explicitly identifies Isaac's binding as a figure (parable/type) of resurrection. God's oath-bound promise in **Genesis 22:16-18** is cited in **Hebrews 6:13-20** as the ultimate anchor for the believer's hope.

Key Observations

- Galatians 3:8 explicitly calls Genesis 12:3 the "gospel preached in advance" — the authoritative NT reading of the Abrahamic promise.
- Justification by faith (Genesis 15:6) predates the Law and circumcision — Paul's key argument in Romans 4 and Galatians 3.
- In Genesis 15, God alone walks between the pieces — taking the covenant oath upon himself. This is unique and theologically momentous.
- The near-sacrifice of Isaac on Moriah is explicitly called a "figure" of resurrection in Hebrews 11:17-19 — an NT-authorized typological connection.
- Paul identifies "the offspring/seed" of Genesis 22:18 as Christ (Galatians 3:16), making the Abrahamic promise explicitly Christological.

Cross-References

Romans 4:1-25; Galatians 3:6-29; Hebrews 6:13-20; Hebrews 11:17-19; James 2:21-24; 2 Chronicles 3:1; John 8:56 (Abraham saw Jesus's day and rejoiced).

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it significant that Paul calls the Abrahamic promise in Genesis 12:3 the "gospel preached in advance" (Galatians 3:8)? What does this reveal about the unity of the Old and New Testaments?
2. What is the theological significance of God alone walking between the pieces in Genesis 15? What does this tell us about the nature of the covenant God makes with Abraham — and with us?
3. In what ways does the binding of Isaac on Moriah parallel and anticipate the crucifixion of Christ? What details of Genesis 22 are most evocative to you?
4. Hebrews 11:17-19 says Abraham expected God to raise Isaac from the dead. What does this tell us about Abraham's understanding of God's faithfulness?

Section VI Summary

The call of Abraham is God's formal answer to the catastrophe of Babel and the corruption of the nations. Through one man, chosen by grace and not by merit, God purposes to bless all the families of the earth. The Abrahamic covenant is the backbone of all subsequent redemptive history: its promises of land, seed, and blessing run through every covenant that follows and are fulfilled in Jesus Christ — the true Seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:16) in whom all the families of the earth are blessed (Galatians 3:8). The gospel is not a Plan B; it is the plan God announced to Abraham, confirmed by oath, and kept in his Son.

Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph: The Covenant Line Continues

Genesis 24–50 (selected passages)

A. Isaac, Jacob, and the Election of Grace

Scripture Passage: Genesis 25:19-26; Romans 9:10-13

Isaac is the child of promise, born to parents who were humanly incapable of having children (**Genesis 21:1-7**). Paul uses this explicitly in **Galatians 4:28**: "Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise." The line of the covenant is not carried by human ability or natural generation — it is sustained by God's miraculous faithfulness to his promise.

The election of Jacob over Esau goes even further. The two sons are twins — same father, same mother, same womb — and before either had done good or evil, God declared "the older will serve the younger" (**Genesis 25:23; Romans 9:11-12**). Paul reads this in Romans 9 as an illustration of divine election: God's purpose in calling does not rest on human works but on him who calls. Jacob is not chosen because he is morally superior (the narrative makes abundantly clear that he is a deceiver), but because God's sovereign promise is not dependent on human qualification. This is not comfortable doctrine, but it is the doctrine of Scripture — God's grace is not earned; it is given.

Jacob's vision at Bethel — the stairway/ladder connecting earth to heaven, with angels ascending and descending, and God speaking the covenant promise above it (**Genesis 28:10-22**) — is taken up explicitly by Jesus in **John 1:51**: "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." Jesus applies Jacob's ladder to himself — he is the true meeting place of heaven and earth, the one through whom access to God is provided.

B. Joseph — The Suffering Servant Who Saves

Scripture Passage: Genesis 37–50

The story of Joseph is one of the most carefully constructed narratives in all of Scripture. Joseph, his father's beloved son, is hated by his brothers, stripped of his robe, and sold for silver into Egypt. He is falsely accused, imprisoned unjustly, forgotten, and eventually exalted to the right hand of Pharaoh, where he becomes the instrument of salvation for his brothers and the surrounding nations during a great famine. When his brothers stand before him, Joseph reveals himself and declares: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (**Genesis 50:20**).

The parallels between Joseph and Christ are extensive and have been noted throughout the history of Christian interpretation: the beloved son, the robe stripped away, betrayal by brothers for silver, false accusation, suffering, exaltation to the right hand of the ruler, saving his people and the nations, and forgiving those who wronged him. It is important to be clear about the interpretive category here:

the New Testament does not explicitly call Joseph a type of Christ in a formal fulfillment citation. However, the pattern is so consistently developed and so widely recognized in both Jewish and Christian reading of the text that the typological connection is a canonically responsible and historically well-grounded reading — it simply must not be overstated as explicit NT teaching.

The Blessing of Judah in **Genesis 49:8-12** is directly Messianic in its canonical trajectory. "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples" (Genesis 49:10). This narrows the covenant line from the twelve tribes to Judah specifically, and the one who comes is described with images of royalty and abundance. The NT traces Jesus's lineage from Judah (Matthew 1:2-3; Luke 3:33; Hebrews 7:14; Revelation 5:5), confirming the canonical-typological trajectory of this blessing.

Key Observations

- The election of Jacob over Esau illustrates that God's covenant purposes are not based on human merit — a principle Paul develops at length in Romans 9.
- Jesus's self-identification with Jacob's ladder (John 1:51) is an explicit NT use of the Bethel narrative, presenting Jesus as the true connection between heaven and earth.
- Joseph's story is a typological parallel to Christ that is widely recognized but not explicitly stated in the NT — it should be identified as plausible and well-grounded typological inference, not explicit fulfillment.
- Genesis 49:10 (the scepter of Judah) narrows the covenant line further and anticipates the coming Messianic king — a text with strong canonical connections to the Davidic covenant and to Jesus.
- The principle of Genesis 50:20 — that God works through human evil for redemptive purposes — is a theological motif that reaches its apex in the cross (Acts 2:23).

Cross-References

Galatians 4:28; Romans 9:10-13; John 1:51; Acts 2:23; Acts 7:9-16 (Stephen's retelling of Joseph); **Hebrews 7:14; Revelation 5:5.**

Discussion Questions

1. How does the election of Jacob over Esau challenge common assumptions about fairness, merit, and God's grace? How does Paul use this story in Romans 9?
2. Why is Jesus's application of Jacob's ladder to himself (John 1:51) so significant? What does it mean for Jesus to be the place where heaven and earth meet?
3. What are the parallels between Joseph's story and the story of Jesus? Be specific about where the parallels are strong and where they may be less precise.
4. How does Genesis 50:20 anticipate Acts 2:23? What does this teach us about God's sovereignty over human evil?

Section VII Summary

The covenant line moves through Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph — not because these men are the best or the most deserving, but because God's grace is sovereignly given to whom he wills, for purposes that reach far beyond the individuals themselves. Jacob's vision at Bethel anticipates Christ as the ladder between heaven and earth. Joseph's story of suffering, exaltation, and saving grace forms one of Scripture's richest typological anticipations of the gospel. And the blessing of Judah narrows the covenant line toward the coming king who will hold the scepter forever.

Moses, the Exodus, and the Covenant at Sinai

Exodus 1–20; Selected passages through Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy

A. The Burning Bush and the Divine Name

Scripture Passage: Exodus 3:1-15

Four hundred years after Joseph, the descendants of Abraham are slaves in Egypt. God appears to Moses in a burning bush that is not consumed — a theophany that arrests attention and commands reverence. When Moses asks God's name, the answer is one of the most theologically significant statements in all of Scripture: "I AM WHO I AM" (Hebrew: *'ehyeh 'āšer 'ehyeh*). Tell the people of Israel that "*I AM* has sent me to you" (**Exodus 3:14**). The divine name YHWH (rendered LORD in most English translations) is connected to the verb "to be" — God is the self-existent, eternal, uncaused one who simply is.

Jesus's "I AM" statements in the Gospel of John carry deliberate echoes of this divine name. Most pointedly, when Jesus declares "before Abraham was, I am" (**John 8:58**), the response of the Jewish crowd is to pick up stones to kill him — they understood exactly what he was claiming. The seven "I AM" declarations in John (the bread of life, the light of the world, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way the truth and the life, the true vine — John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1) are all extensions of this divine name claim.

B. The Passover, the Exodus, and the Paradigmatic Redemption

Scripture Passage: Exodus 12:1-30; 14–15

The Passover is the redemptive event par excellence of the Old Testament — the moment when God delivers his people from bondage through judgment by blood. The blood of a lamb without blemish, applied to the doorposts of each household, causes the angel of death to "pass over" that house (**Exodus 12:13**). The people are redeemed by blood, through water (the Red Sea), and brought to God at Sinai — a pattern of sacrifice, deliverance, and covenantal meeting that runs through the whole of Scripture.

Paul makes the typological connection explicit: "For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" (**1 Corinthians 5:7**). John the Baptist's declaration "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (**John 1:29**) is set in deliberate Passover categories. The Passover became the central festival of Israel's redemptive memory, and Jesus chose the Passover to institute the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:17-30) — establishing himself as the fulfillment of the lamb's role. Paul also speaks of the Exodus cloud and sea as a canonical anticipation of Christian baptism (**1 Corinthians 10:1-4**), and identifies the spiritual rock that followed Israel as Christ himself.

C. The Law, the Tabernacle, and the Day of Atonement

Scripture Passage: Exodus 20; Leviticus 16; Hebrews 9–10

The Mosaic covenant at Sinai is a conditional covenant of law — unlike the Abrahamic covenant, it attaches blessings and curses to Israel's obedience (Deuteronomy 28–30). Its function in redemptive history is not to replace the Abrahamic promise but to serve it — to reveal the sinfulness of sin, to restrain transgression, and to prepare Israel for the need for a better righteousness (Galatians 3:19–24; Romans 3:20). The Law is good, holy, and righteous (Romans 7:12), but it cannot justify — it can only reveal the need for justification by another means.

The tabernacle and the sacrificial system at the heart of the Mosaic economy address the fundamental problem: how can a holy God dwell among a sinful people? The Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 16**) is the answer's annual enactment. The high priest enters the Most Holy Place once a year, with the blood of sacrifice, to make atonement for the people. The Letter to the Hebrews develops this in meticulous detail, arguing that these sacrifices were never able to finally take away sin — they were "a shadow of the good things to come" (**Hebrews 10:1**) — until Christ the great High Priest entered the true sanctuary once for all with his own blood, obtaining eternal redemption (**Hebrews 9:11–12**). The entire sacrificial system was a pedagogical institution — teaching the necessity of blood atonement, pointing forward to the one sacrifice that would make all others obsolete.

The bronze serpent in the wilderness (**Numbers 21:4–9**) provides another explicit NT typological connection. When Israel sinned and was bitten by serpents, God commanded Moses to make a bronze serpent and lift it up on a pole — all who looked at it would live. Jesus himself explains this as a type: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (**John 3:14–15**). This is explicit NT fulfillment language applied by Jesus himself. The prophet like Moses (**Deuteronomy 18:15–19**) is also explicitly applied to Jesus in **Acts 3:22–23** and **Acts 7:37** — Peter and Stephen both identify Jesus as the prophet Moses promised.

Key Observations

- The divine name "I AM" (Exodus 3:14) is the foundation of Jesus's "I AM" statements in John — a direct canonical connection confirmed by John 8:58.
- Paul explicitly identifies Christ as our Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7) and the Exodus events as types of Christian experience (1 Corinthians 10:1–4).
- The Mosaic covenant is conditional; its function is to reveal sin and prepare Israel for Christ (Galatians 3:19–24) — it does not replace but serves the Abrahamic promise.
- The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16) is developed by Hebrews 9–10 as pointing to Christ's final, effective, once-for-all sacrifice.
- Jesus explicitly applies the bronze serpent (Numbers 21; John 3:14–15) and the prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15; Acts 3:22–23) to himself.

Cross-References

John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Corinthians 10:1–4; John 3:14–15; Acts 3:22–23; Acts 7:37; Galatians 3:19–24; Romans 3:19–20; Hebrews 9:1–10:18.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does the Law not contradict the gospel, but rather serve it (Galatians 3:19-24)? What is the Law's proper function in God's redemptive plan?
2. How does Paul's identification of the Passover lamb with Christ (1 Corinthians 5:7) illuminate the meaning of both the Passover and the cross?
3. Hebrews argues that the OT sacrifices were "a shadow of the good things to come" (Hebrews 10:1). What does this tell us about the relationship between OT law and NT fulfillment?
4. Why is the bronze serpent (Numbers 21; John 3:14-15) such a striking type of Christ? What made Jesus choose that particular image to explain his coming death?

Section VIII Summary

The Exodus is the Old Testament's great act of redemption — a paradigm of salvation by grace through blood, through water, to the presence of God. The Law given at Sinai reveals the holiness of God and the sinfulness of Israel, preparing the people for their need of a better righteousness. The tabernacle and the sacrificial system give visible, enacted form to the theology of atonement — approaching a holy God requires the shedding of blood. Every element of the Mosaic economy points forward: the Passover lamb to Christ, the high priest to Christ, the Day of Atonement to the cross, the prophet like Moses to Jesus. The Exodus is not the end of redemption — it is its prototype.

The Davidic Covenant: The Promised King

2 Samuel 7; Selected Psalms; Isaiah 9; 11

A. Nathan's Oracle and the Eternal Throne

Scripture Passage: 2 Samuel 7:1-17

When David desires to build a house (temple) for God, God's response through the prophet Nathan turns the question on its head: God will build a house (dynasty) for David. The Davidic covenant in **2 Samuel 7:12-16** is one of the most expansive promises in the Old Testament. God promises David a son who will build the temple, whose throne God will establish forever, whom God will treat as his own son ("I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son," 2 Samuel 7:14), and whose kingdom will be established forever. Solomon initially fulfills aspects of this promise — he builds the temple (1 Kings 8:20). But Solomon's failure (1 Kings 11:4-13) makes clear that no merely human son of David can sustain the "forever" dimensions of this covenant.

This sets up one of the OT's great canonical tensions: a promise of an eternal Davidic throne, and a line of Davidic kings who repeatedly fail. The prophets return again and again to this promise — Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah all anticipate a coming Davidic king who will fulfill what the historical kings could not. Jesus is presented from the opening genealogy of Matthew as "the son of David" (Matthew 1:1), and the angel Gabriel announces to Mary that "the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end" (**Luke 1:32-33**) — language that unmistakably echoes 2 Samuel 7.

B. The Royal Psalms

Scripture Passages: Psalm 2; 16; 22; 110

Psalm 2 presents the LORD's anointed king installed on Zion despite the rage of the nations. The declaration "You are my Son; today I have begotten you" (Psalm 2:7) is applied to Jesus in three NT passages: **Acts 13:33** (at the resurrection), **Hebrews 1:5** (at the exaltation), and **Acts 4:25-28** (at the cross). Each NT text applies it to a different moment in Christ's ministry — because the Davidic sonship of Psalm 2 is fulfilled comprehensively in Jesus, not in any single moment. **Psalm 16** — "you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption" — is quoted by Peter at Pentecost as predicting the resurrection of Christ (**Acts 2:25-31**). David himself did die and was buried, Peter notes; therefore he was speaking prophetically of the resurrection of the Messiah.

Psalm 22 is one of the most remarkable messianic texts in the Psalter. The psalm begins with the cry of dereliction — "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" — words that Jesus quotes from the cross in **Matthew 27:46** and **Mark 15:34**. The psalm describes the suffering of the righteous one in terms that correspond precisely to the events of the crucifixion: being mocked (Psalm 22:7-8; Matthew 27:39-43), the piercing of hands and feet (Psalm 22:16; John 19:18, 37), the casting of lots for garments (Psalm 22:18; Matthew 27:35), and the surrounding of enemies. Yet the psalm moves to praise and the declaration that "all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD"

(Psalm 22:27). This is a canonical-typological connection that is plausible and widely recognized, though Psalm 22 does not use formal prophetic language — it is most accurately described as a Spirit-inspired lament that corresponds with astonishing precision to the passion of Christ.

Psalm 110 is the most frequently quoted Old Testament passage in the New Testament. "The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool'" (Psalm 110:1). Jesus himself uses this text to challenge the scribes' understanding of the Messiah (Matthew 22:41-46). Peter quotes it at Pentecost (Acts 2:34-35). The author of Hebrews quotes it in relation to both Christ's royal session (Hebrews 1:13) and his eternal high priesthood "after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6; 6:20; 7:17). The combination of priest and king in Psalm 110 — the Messiah who sits at God's right hand and ministers as a priest — is fulfilled in Christ alone.

C. Isaiah's Vision of the Coming King

Scripture Passages: Isaiah 9:1-7; 11:1-10

Isaiah's vision of the coming king in **Isaiah 9:1-7** reaches across the generations. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). The names given to this child are divine — "Mighty God" (Hebrew: *El Gibbor*) is not a title given to any merely human figure in the OT. Matthew quotes **Isaiah 9:1-2** explicitly in **Matthew 4:12-16** to describe the beginning of Jesus's ministry in Galilee. Luke's Gabriel echoes Isaiah 9:7 in the annunciation (**Luke 1:32-33**). **Isaiah 11:1-10** describes a "shoot from the stump of Jesse" — a new beginning for the Davidic dynasty after it has been cut down — who will rule with righteousness, upon whom the Spirit of the LORD will rest, and whose reign will result in universal peace and the knowledge of the LORD. Paul quotes Isaiah 11:10 explicitly in **Romans 15:12** as referring to Christ.

Key Observations

- The "forever" dimensions of the Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7:13, 16) cannot be fulfilled by any human king — they require a king who is more than human.
- Psalm 2:7 ("You are my Son") is applied by the NT to the resurrection, exaltation, and cross — Christ's Davidic sonship is comprehensively messianic.
- Psalm 16's resurrection prediction (Acts 2:25-31) is an explicit NT fulfillment — Peter's argument is exegetical: David died, so he was speaking of another.
- Psalm 22 corresponds to the passion narrative with extraordinary precision — a canonical-typological connection recognized across church history.
- Psalm 110 is the most quoted OT text in the NT, applied to Christ's royal session and priestly ministry.
- Isaiah 9:6's title "Mighty God" for the coming child implies a divine king — this is quoted in the NT in relation to Jesus.
- Isaiah 11:10 is explicitly quoted by Paul in Romans 15:12 as a reference to Christ.

Cross-References

Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:25-35; Acts 4:25-28; Acts 13:33; Matthew 4:12-16; Matthew 22:41-46; Matthew 27:46; Hebrews 1:5, 13; Hebrews 5:6; Romans 15:12.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does the "forever" character of the Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7:13, 16) require a king who is more than human? How does Jesus fulfill this "forever" dimension?
2. How does Peter's argument about Psalm 16 in Acts 2:25-31 work? What does his exegesis tell us about how to read the Psalms?
3. Read Psalm 22 alongside the passion narratives in the Gospels. What specific details correspond? What does this correspondence tell you about the nature of biblical prophecy?
4. Psalm 110 combines the roles of king and priest in the Messiah. Why is this combination significant, and how does Jesus uniquely fulfill both roles?

Section IX Summary

The Davidic covenant is the culminating royal covenant of the Old Testament, promising an eternal throne, an eternal kingdom, and a son who is also God's Son. No historical Davidic king can sustain the "forever" dimensions of this promise. The Psalms amplify the expectation of a Messianic king who will suffer and be exalted, who will sit at God's right hand as both king and priest, whose resurrection will be the vindication of his righteousness. Isaiah envisions a coming king whose names include "Mighty God" and whose rule will bring universal peace and the knowledge of the LORD. All of these threads converge on Jesus Christ — the son of David who is also the Son of God.

The Prophets and the Promise of a New Covenant

Isaiah 40–55; 61; Jeremiah 31; Ezekiel 36–37; Daniel 7

A. Isaiah's Servant of the LORD

Scripture Passages: Isaiah 42:1-9; 49:1-13; 50:4-11; 52:13–53:12

Four passages in the book of Isaiah are commonly identified as the "Servant Songs" — poetic descriptions of a figure called the "Servant of the LORD" who will accomplish God's redemptive purposes. In the first song (**Isaiah 42:1-9**), the Servant is introduced as God's chosen one upon whom God puts his Spirit, who will bring justice to the nations quietly and faithfully. In the second (**Isaiah 49:1-13**), the Servant is called from the womb, made God's mouth, and given a mission not only to restore Israel but to be "a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6). Matthew quotes Isaiah 42:1-4 at length in Matthew 12:17-21 as being fulfilled in Jesus.

The fourth Servant Song (**Isaiah 52:13–53:12**) is the most remarkable and most extensively quoted passage in the entire Old Testament — and the most explicitly applied to Jesus Christ by the New Testament. The Servant "was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). He "has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4). "He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). "The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). He is led "like a lamb to the slaughter" (Isaiah 53:7). He makes "his soul an offering for sin" (Isaiah 53:10) and is "numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12).

The NT citations of Isaiah 53 are numerous and explicit: **Matthew 8:17; Luke 22:37; John 12:38; Acts 8:30-35** (Philip explaining to the Ethiopian eunuch that the Servant is Jesus); **Romans 10:16; 1 Peter 2:22-25**. There is no passage in the OT more thoroughly identified with Jesus Christ by the NT itself than Isaiah 53. This is not typology — it is explicit prophetic fulfillment. The text is the clearest OT description of substitutionary atonement: the innocent Servant bearing the sin of the guilty in their place.

B. The New Covenant — Jeremiah 31

Scripture Passage: Jeremiah 31:31-34

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke" (**Jeremiah 31:31-32**). Jeremiah explicitly names the inadequacy of the Mosaic covenant — it could be broken and was broken — and promises a qualitatively different covenant: one in which God's law is written on the heart, in which all will know the LORD, and in which sin is forgiven completely and finally ("I will remember their sin no more," Jeremiah 31:34).

The Letter to the Hebrews quotes **Jeremiah 31:31-34** in full in **Hebrews 8:8-12** and again in abbreviated form in **Hebrews 10:16-17**, explicitly applying it to Christ's ministry as the mediator of

the new covenant. Jesus himself uses new covenant language at the Last Supper: "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood" (**Luke 22:20**). The new covenant is established by the blood of Christ, it is universal in scope (reaching all nations), it is effective (producing genuine heart transformation through the Spirit), and it brings complete forgiveness.

C. Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Coming Age

Scripture Passages: Ezekiel 36:26-27; 37:1-14; Daniel 7:13-14

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (**Ezekiel 37:1-14**) is one of the most dramatic passages in the OT — the prophet watches as dry, scattered bones are reassembled, clothed in flesh, and breathed back to life by God's Spirit. The text itself interprets the vision as a prophecy of national restoration for Israel after the exile. As a canonical development, the language of death-to-life by the Spirit carries forward into the NT's theology of the new birth (John 3:5-8), the resurrection (Romans 8:11), and the new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). **Ezekiel 36:26-27** promises the "new heart" and the "new spirit" that characterize the new covenant, which are fulfilled in the gift of the Holy Spirit through Christ (Acts 2:33; Titus 3:5-6).

Daniel's vision of the **Son of Man** coming on the clouds of heaven (**Daniel 7:13-14**) is one of the most explicitly Christological OT texts. The Son of Man comes "with the clouds of heaven" to the Ancient of Days and receives "dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away." Jesus repeatedly identified himself as this Son of Man — most explicitly before the Sanhedrin: "you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (**Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62**). Revelation 1:7 and 14:14 continue this imagery. This is an explicit self-identification: Jesus presents himself as the one to whom Daniel 7:13-14 refers. **Isaiah 61:1-2** — the anointed preacher sent to bring good news to the poor and release to the captives — is explicitly applied by Jesus to himself in **Luke 4:16-21**, when he reads it in the synagogue at Nazareth and says, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Key Observations

- Isaiah 53 describes substitutionary atonement with remarkable clarity and is the most extensively cited OT passage in relation to Jesus's death in the NT.
- Jeremiah 31's new covenant is explicitly quoted in Hebrews 8 and 10, and echoed in Jesus's words at the Last Supper (Luke 22:20) — its application to Christ is unambiguous NT teaching.
- Ezekiel 36–37 anticipates the Spirit's new creation work, which the NT connects to regeneration (John 3:5), resurrection (Romans 8:11), and new covenant experience.
- Jesus explicitly applied Daniel 7:13-14 to himself before the Sanhedrin (Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62) — a direct messianic claim.
- Jesus explicitly applied Isaiah 61:1-2 to himself in the Nazareth synagogue (Luke 4:16-21), announcing that the age of fulfillment had arrived.

Cross-References

Matthew 8:17; Acts 8:30-35; 1 Peter 2:22-25; Hebrews 8:7-13; Hebrews 10:14-18; Luke 22:20; Luke 4:16-21; Matthew 26:64; Revelation 1:7; John 3:5-8; Acts 2:33.

Discussion Questions

1. Isaiah 53 describes a servant who suffers in the place of others for their sin. How did the Ethiopian eunuch come to understand this passage (Acts 8:30-35), and what does this tell us about how to read Isaiah 53?
2. What makes the new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34) fundamentally different from the Mosaic covenant? In what ways do you experience the new covenant's realities in your own life?
3. Why is Jesus's explicit claim to be the Son of Man of Daniel 7:13-14 (Matthew 26:64) so significant? What was he claiming, and why did the Sanhedrin react as they did?
4. When Jesus reads Isaiah 61 in Nazareth and says "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled" (Luke 4:21), what does this reveal about his understanding of his own identity and mission?

Section X Summary

The prophets did not merely predict coming historical events — they received and communicated God's own interpretation of his redemptive plan. Isaiah describes a Servant who will bear the sin of many in their place with a precision that the NT unanimously applies to Jesus. Jeremiah promises a new covenant qualitatively superior to the Mosaic — a covenant that will transform the heart, extend to all peoples, and bring complete forgiveness. Ezekiel envisions new life poured out by the Spirit, and Daniel sees a Son of Man who receives an everlasting kingdom. Each of these visions reaches forward to the one who is at once the Servant, the new covenant mediator, the life-giver, and the Son of Man — Jesus Christ.

The Fullness of Time: The Incarnation and the Arrival of the Kingdom

Matthew 1-4; Luke 1-4; John 1; Galatians 4:4-5

A. The Genealogies of Jesus — Covenant History Arrives at Its Goal

Scripture Passages: Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38

Matthew's genealogy is structured theologically, not just genealogically. It divides Israel's history into three sections of fourteen generations: Abraham to David, David to the exile, and the exile to Jesus (**Matthew 1:17**). This is the covenant line — from the Abrahamic promise through the Davidic king and through the darkness of exile — arriving at Jesus. Matthew's opening line, "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1), is a deliberate announcement: all the covenant promises of the OT reach their goal in this person. Luke's genealogy runs in the opposite direction, tracing Jesus back through David, Abraham, and all the way to "Adam, the son of God" (**Luke 3:38**). Luke connects Jesus not only to the covenant line but to the whole human family — he is the son of Adam, the Last Adam who will reverse the damage of the first.

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons" (**Galatians 4:4-5**). Paul's compact summary captures the whole logic of the incarnation: the Son of God enters precisely the human condition — born of woman (the seed of the woman, Genesis 3:15), born under law (to fulfill and bear its curse, Galatians 3:13) — in order to accomplish the adoption of those who were enslaved under it.

B. John's Prologue — The Word Became Flesh

Scripture Passage: John 1:1-18

John opens his Gospel with a conscious echo of Genesis 1: "In the beginning was the Word" (**John 1:1**). The Word (*Logos*) was with God, and was God. All things were made through him. Life and light were in him. And then — the great announcement: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (**John 1:14**). The Greek word for "dwelt" is *eskēnōsen* — from the same root as the tabernacle (*skēnē*). The Word tabernacled among us. This is a direct canonical connection to the tabernacle in Exodus 25–40, where God commanded Israel to build a sanctuary so that "I may dwell in their midst" (Exodus 25:8). Jesus is the true tabernacle — God dwelling with his people in human flesh. John even says that in him "we have seen his glory" (John 1:14) — the *shekinah* glory that filled the tabernacle and temple now radiates through the person of the incarnate Son.

C. The Baptism and Temptation — The Last Adam

Scripture Passages: Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 4:1-11; Romans 5:18-19; Hebrews 4:15

Jesus's baptism is marked by a theophany: the Spirit descends as a dove, and the Father speaks: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (**Matthew 3:17**). The words echo both Psalm 2:7 (the Davidic son) and Isaiah 42:1 (the Servant of the LORD) — Jesus is simultaneously the royal Son of David and the Servant who will suffer. The Spirit's descent upon Jesus at his baptism recalls the Spirit hovering over the waters of creation (Genesis 1:2) — a new creation is beginning.

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness is the story of the Last Adam succeeding where the first Adam failed. Adam was tempted in a garden, with abundance, and fell. Jesus is tempted in a desert, in hunger, and holds firm. Each of Satan's three temptations strikes at the foundation of trust in God's word, God's care, and God's timing — the same categories as the Eden temptation. Jesus's responses are all from Deuteronomy — the covenant renewal of the Mosaic law — demonstrating that he is the true and faithful Israelite that the nation failed to be. **Hebrews 4:15** makes the point explicit: Jesus was "tempted as we are, yet without sin." **Romans 5:18-19** develops the theological weight: through the obedience of the one, many will be made righteous.

Key Observations

- Matthew's genealogy traces the covenant line; Luke's traces the human family. Together they establish Jesus as the goal of covenant history and the representative of all humanity.
- John 1:14's "dwelt among us" uses tabernacle language — the incarnation is God fulfilling his purpose to dwell with his people, first in a tent, then in a temple, and now in a person.
- Galatians 4:4-5 identifies the incarnation as the fulfillment of the Genesis 3:15 Protevangelium: born of woman, under law, to redeem.
- The baptism of Jesus combines Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1 — king and servant — and signals the arrival of a new creation through the Spirit's descent.
- The temptation narrative presents Jesus as the Last Adam (canonical-typological) who succeeds where the first Adam failed — explicitly developed in Romans 5 and Hebrews 4.

Cross-References

Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 5:18-19; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Corinthians 15:45-49; Colossians 2:9; Isaiah 42:1; Psalm 2:7; Exodus 25:8.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Matthew structure his genealogy into three groups of fourteen? What theological story is he telling about Israel's history and Jesus's place in it?
2. Why does John use tabernacle language ("dwelt among us") in John 1:14? What does this tell us about the meaning of the incarnation?
3. In what ways does Jesus's temptation in the wilderness mirror and reverse Adam's temptation in the garden? What significance does his victory have for us?
4. Galatians 4:4-5 says Jesus was "born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law." Why were both of these conditions necessary for our redemption?

Section XI Summary

The incarnation of the eternal Son of God is the hinge of all history. In him, the covenant line arrives at its promised goal, the human family is represented by a new head, the tabernacle-presence of God is realized in flesh, and the long-promised age of redemption breaks into the world. The Last Adam stands where the first Adam fell and holds firm — and his obedience becomes the ground of the righteousness he will give to all who are united to him. "The fullness of time" has come.

The Ministry, Miracles, and Teaching of Jesus

Selected Gospel Passages

A. The Kingdom Come — Miracles as Signs of Restoration

Scripture Passages: Matthew 11:2-6; Isaiah 35:1-6; John 6:1-58

When John the Baptist, imprisoned and doubting, sends messengers to ask "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" (**Matthew 11:3**), Jesus responds not with a theological argument but with a description of his works: "the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them" (Matthew 11:5). This is a composite of language from **Isaiah 35:5-6** and **Isaiah 61:1**. Jesus's miracles are not merely demonstrations of power — they are signs that the age of Isaiah's restoration has arrived. The Kingdom of God has come in the person of the King.

The feeding of the five thousand (**John 6:1-15**) and the subsequent bread of life discourse (**John 6:22-58**) present Jesus as the true manna — the bread from heaven that gives life to the world. "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die" (John 6:49-50). Jesus explicitly compares and contrasts himself with the wilderness manna — he is what the manna pointed to. He is the true sustenance for which the Exodus provision was an anticipatory shadow.

B. The Transfiguration and the "I AM" Statements

Scripture Passages: Matthew 17:1-8; John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1

The Transfiguration (**Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36**) is a momentary unveiling of Jesus's divine glory. Moses (representing the Law) and Elijah (representing the Prophets) appear with him — a statement that all of Scripture testifies to him. The Father's voice from the cloud says, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Matthew 17:5) — the "listen to him" echoes Deuteronomy 18:15's command about the prophet like Moses. **2 Peter 1:16-18** uses the Transfiguration as foundational confirmation of the apostolic witness to Christ's divine majesty.

Jesus's seven "I AM" declarations in John deserve careful attention as a unit. Each one — "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35), "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12), "I am the door" (John 10:9), "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11), "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25), "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), "I am the true vine" (John 15:1) — is a divine-identity claim rooted in Exodus 3:14. Jesus is not merely saying he performs these functions; he is claiming to be the divine source of them. The climax of John 8:58 — "before Abraham was, I am" — brings this to its sharpest point and provoked an immediate attempt at stoning for blasphemy.

Key Observations

- Jesus's miracles are signs of the Kingdom's arrival — not merely demonstrations of power but enacted fulfillments of OT restoration prophecy (Isaiah 35; 61).
- The feeding of the five thousand and the bread of life discourse present Jesus as the antitype of the wilderness manna — explicitly made by Jesus himself in John 6.
- The Transfiguration places Jesus as the fulfillment of both the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) — the one to whom all Scripture points.
- The seven "I AM" statements in John are divine-identity declarations rooted in Exodus 3:14, establishing Jesus's identity as the self-existent God of Israel.
- The triumphal entry on a donkey (Matthew 21:1-11) is explicitly identified by Matthew (Matthew 21:4-5) as fulfilling Zechariah 9:9 — a direct prophetic fulfillment citation.

Cross-References

Isaiah 35:5-6; Isaiah 61:1-2; John 6:49-50; 2 Peter 1:16-18; Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4-5; Deuteronomy 18:15.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Jesus point to his miracles as the answer to John the Baptist's question about his identity (Matthew 11:2-6)? What OT passage is he echoing, and why?
2. Jesus says "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). How does this "I AM" statement function differently from a mere claim about what he can do?
3. What is the significance of Moses and Elijah appearing at the Transfiguration? Why do you think they disappear and Jesus is left alone (Matthew 17:8)?

Section XII Summary

Jesus's ministry is the arrival of the age of restoration that the prophets announced. His miracles are not random displays of power but signs that the Kingdom of God has broken into the present age through his person. His teaching establishes him as the authoritative fulfiller and interpreter of all Scripture. His "I AM" statements reveal his identity as the God of the burning bush, now present in flesh. The OT's patterns of manna, Passover, priesthood, kingship, and prophecy all find their living embodiment in him.

The Cross: The Fulfillment of the Promise

Matthew 26-27; Romans 3:21-26; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9-10; Isaiah 53

A. The Last Supper and the New Covenant in His Blood

Scripture Passages: Matthew 26:26-29; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

On the night of Passover, Jesus gathers with his disciples and institutes a new covenantal meal. Taking the bread he says, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." Taking the cup he says, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood" (**Luke 22:19-20**). The language is deliberate: Jesus is the Passover lamb, his blood establishes the new covenant Jeremiah promised (Jeremiah 31:31-34), and this meal is a covenant meal that will be repeated in his memory until he comes (1 Corinthians 11:26). The old covenant was ratified with the blood of bulls and goats (Exodus 24:8; Hebrews 9:18-20); the new covenant is ratified with the blood of the Son of God.

B. Gethsemane, the Trials, and the Obedience of the Son

Scripture Passages: Matthew 26:36-46; Hebrews 5:7-10; Philippians 2:8

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prays three times: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will" (**Matthew 26:39**). The "cup" in OT imagery is often the cup of God's wrath — the full weight of divine judgment against sin (Isaiah 51:17; Jeremiah 25:15-17). Jesus is not shrinking from physical death alone; he is anticipating the spiritual horror of bearing the sin of the world and experiencing the Father's judgment. Yet his obedience is perfect: "not as I will, but as you will." **Hebrews 5:7-10** reflects on this Gethsemane experience as the moment of Jesus "learning obedience through what he suffered" — not that he was previously disobedient, but that his obedience was realized and perfected through the experience of suffering. **Philippians 2:8** declares that "he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

C. The Cross — Propitiation, Substitution, and the Crushing of the Serpent

Scripture Passages: Romans 3:21-26; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5-6; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 5:6

The cross is the center of all Christian theology. **Romans 3:21-26** is perhaps the NT's most compressed systematic statement of the atonement: God "put forward" Christ "as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith" (Romans 3:25). God both condemns sin and justifies the sinner — "so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26). This is the resolution of the apparent contradiction between God's holiness and his mercy: at the cross, both are fully expressed. The justice of God is satisfied because sin receives its full penalty — poured out on the Son. The mercy of God is expressed because the Son bears that penalty in the place of those who deserve it.

Galatians 3:13 quotes **Deuteronomy 21:23** explicitly: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us — for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.'" This is explicit NT teaching: Jesus bore the covenant curse of the law in our place, by dying on a cross (a tree). **2 Corinthians 5:21** states it with even greater compression: "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." The great exchange — our sin to Christ, his righteousness to us — is the heart of the gospel. **1 Peter 2:24**, echoing Isaiah 53:5, states: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed."

The tearing of the temple veil from top to bottom at the moment of Jesus's death (**Matthew 27:51**) is a profoundly significant canonical event. The veil separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place — the place where God's presence dwelt, accessible only to the high priest once a year on the Day of Atonement. Its tearing signals that through Christ's death, direct access to God has been opened for all who come through him. **Hebrews 10:19-22** makes this explicit: we have "confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh." And the cross is the fulfillment of the Genesis 3:15 Protevangelium: by dying, Christ crushes the serpent's head (**Hebrews 2:14**; **1 John 3:8**; **Romans 16:20**), while the cross itself is the bruising of his heel. The first gospel promise is kept.

Key Observations

- At the Last Supper, Jesus identifies himself as the Passover lamb whose blood establishes the new covenant — explicitly connecting Exodus 12, Jeremiah 31, and his own death.
- Romans 3:21-26 is the NT's clearest exposition of the atonement as propitiation — God satisfying his own justice through his own Son, so that he is both just and the justifier.
- Galatians 3:13 explicitly cites Deuteronomy 21:23 — the crucifixion is the bearing of the covenant curse in the place of those under the law.
- The tearing of the temple veil (**Matthew 27:51**) is developed by **Hebrews 10:19-22** as the opening of direct access to God through Christ's sacrifice.
- The cross fulfills Genesis 3:15: the crushing of the serpent's head through the bruising of the heel — death and resurrection as the decisive defeat of Satan.

Cross-References

Romans 3:21-26; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 9:22; Hebrews 10:19-22; Colossians 2:13-15; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 5:6, 12.

Discussion Questions

1. Romans 3:26 says God is "just and the justifier." How does the cross make God both just and merciful at the same time? Why is this important?
2. What does the tearing of the temple veil (Matthew 27:51; Hebrews 10:19-22) mean for your personal access to God? How should this shape your prayer life?
3. How does the cross fulfill the Protevangelium of Genesis 3:15? In what sense is the cross simultaneously the wounding of Christ and the defeat of Satan?
4. What does it mean that God "made him to be sin who knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21)? How does this describe the mechanism of our justification?

Section XIII Summary

The cross of Jesus Christ is not a tragedy that God redeems — it is the climax of a redemptive plan announced in Genesis 3:15, foreshadowed in the Passover, enacted in the sacrificial system, prophesied in Isaiah 53, and promised in the new covenant of Jeremiah 31. At Calvary, the Son of God bears the sin of his people in their place, absorbs the full penalty of God's just wrath against sin, tears open the veil that separated humanity from God, and crushes the power of the one who held the power of death. Every strand of the OT's redemptive tapestry converges on this point. The long story of the promise has been fulfilled.

The Resurrection and Ascension: Death Defeated

Matthew 28; Luke 24; Acts 1-2; 1 Corinthians 15

A. The Empty Tomb and the Resurrection Appearances

Scripture Passages: Matthew 28:1-20; Luke 24:1-49; John 20-21; Romans 1:4

On the third day, the tomb is empty and Jesus appears — first to Mary Magdalene, then to the two on the road to Emmaus, then to the gathered disciples, and over the following forty days to more than five hundred people (**1 Corinthians 15:3-8**). The resurrection is a bodily, physical event — the disciples touch Jesus, he eats with them (Luke 24:42-43), he shows them his hands and his side (John 20:27). Paul is unequivocal: if Christ has not been raised, the Christian faith is "futile" and believers are "still in their sins" (**1 Corinthians 15:17**). The resurrection is not peripheral to the gospel — it is its proof, its power, and its promise.

Romans 1:4 states that Jesus "was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead." The resurrection is the Father's public vindication of the Son — his declaration that Jesus's death was accepted as the full, final atonement for sin, and that Christ is exactly who he claimed to be. The resurrection is also the dawn of the new creation: Christ is "the firstborn from the dead" (**Colossians 1:18**), "the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (**1 Corinthians 15:20**). His resurrection does not merely reverse his death — it inaugurates a new order of existence that all who are in him will one day share.

The scene on the Emmaus road (**Luke 24:13-35**) is a canonical treasure: the risen Jesus walks with two disciples who fail to recognize him, and "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). This is Jesus himself authorizing the reading of the whole OT as pointing to him — his suffering and his glory. It is the hermeneutical key to the entire Bible and the scriptural foundation for the very study you are reading now.

B. The Ascension, Session, and Pentecost

Scripture Passages: Acts 1:9-11; Acts 2:1-41; Psalm 110:1; Ephesians 1:20-23; Joel 2:28-32

Forty days after the resurrection, Jesus is taken up into heaven before the disciples' eyes (**Acts 1:9-11**). This ascension is not a disappearance — it is the enthronement of the risen King at the Father's right hand (Psalm 110:1; Acts 2:34-35; Ephesians 1:20-23). He is seated in authority "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion" (Ephesians 1:21), exercising his reign as Lord of all. Ten days later, the promised Holy Spirit is poured out at Pentecost (**Acts 2:1-41**). Peter's sermon explains the event by quoting **Joel 2:28-32** — "In the last days," God says, "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh" — and connecting it to the exaltation of Jesus who has "received from the Father the promise

of the Holy Spirit and has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing" (Acts 2:33). The gift of the Spirit is the new covenant's gift of the internalized law (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Jeremiah 31:33), the down payment of the inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14), and the power for the mission to all nations.

C. Paul's Adam-Christ Typology

Scripture Passages: Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:20-58

Paul's most extended treatment of the resurrection's cosmic significance is in **1 Corinthians 15**. He summarizes the gospel (15:3-8), argues for the necessity of the resurrection (15:12-19), and then unfolds the eschatological vision: "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (15:22). Christ is the "last Adam" who "became a life-giving spirit" (15:45) — reversing the death-giving legacy of the first Adam. The resurrection is not just about one man being raised — it is the beginning of the new humanity, the first installment of the resurrection of all who are in Christ. When Christ returns, he will "put all his enemies under his feet" (15:25, echoing Psalm 110:1), "the last enemy to be destroyed is death" (15:26), and the Son will deliver the kingdom to the Father "that God may be all in all" (15:28). This is the story of redemption reaching its cosmic conclusion.

Key Observations

- The resurrection is a bodily, historical event — not a spiritual metaphor. Its physical reality is essential to its meaning (1 Corinthians 15:14-17).
- Romans 1:4 identifies the resurrection as the Father's public declaration of Jesus's divine Sonship and the validation of his atoning death.
- Luke 24:27 records Jesus himself authorizing the reading of all OT Scripture as pointing to him — the hermeneutical key to biblical theology.
- The ascension and session at God's right hand (Psalm 110:1; Acts 2:33-35) make Jesus the reigning Lord from whom the Holy Spirit is poured out.
- The Pentecost outpouring of the Spirit (Acts 2) fulfills Joel 2:28-32, Jeremiah 31:33, and Ezekiel 36:26-27 simultaneously — the new covenant has arrived in power.
- Paul's Adam-Christ typology (Romans 5; 1 Corinthians 15) is not a speculation but a foundational NT doctrinal framework: the resurrection inaugurates a new humanity.

Cross-References

Romans 1:4; Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:3-58; Colossians 1:18; Luke 24:27; Acts 2:1-41; Joel 2:28-32; Ephesians 1:13-14, 20-23; Psalm 110:1.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Paul say "if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17)? What does the resurrection accomplish that the cross alone does not?
2. Luke 24:27 records Jesus opening the whole OT to show it speaks of him. What difference does this make for how you read the Old Testament?
3. How does the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost fulfill specific OT promises (Joel 2:28-32; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Jeremiah 31:33)? What does this tell us about the unity of the two Testaments?
4. How does Paul's Adam-Christ typology (1 Corinthians 15:45-49) give meaning to both death and resurrection? What does it mean for you to be "in Christ" rather than "in Adam"?

Section XIV Summary

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the hinge of history — the event that validates the cross, vindicates the Son, inaugurates the new creation, defeats death, fulfills the pattern of Jonah (Matthew 12:40), and begins the resurrection of all who are in him. The ascension enthroned the risen Christ as Lord of all. The Pentecost outpouring of the Spirit enacted the new covenant promises of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The Great Commission sends the covenant community to carry the Abrahamic blessing to all the nations. Every major OT theme converges on these events and radiates forward from them into the life of the Church and the hope of the final consummation.

The Church and the Mission: The Covenant Community in the Last Days

Acts; Selected Epistles

A. The New Covenant Community — Jew and Gentile United in Christ

Scripture Passages: Ephesians 2:11-22; Galatians 3:26-29; Romans 4:9-17

The Church is not a replacement for Israel but the fulfillment of God's purpose for Israel — and its expansion to include all nations. Paul's vision in **Ephesians 2:11-22** is of two groups — Gentiles who were "far off" and Jews who were "near" — being brought together into "one new man" through the cross, with the dividing wall of hostility destroyed. The Church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ himself as the cornerstone, and is growing into a "holy temple in the Lord" — a new dwelling place for God by the Spirit (Ephesians 2:21-22). The temple imagery is deliberate and canonical: what began in Eden (God dwelling with his people), was instantiated in the tabernacle and temple, and was embodied in Jesus (John 1:14) is now present in the Spirit-indwelt community of believers.

In **Galatians 3:26-29**, Paul draws the fullest implications of the Abrahamic promise: "If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise." The inclusion of Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female in the covenant people is the fulfillment of the promise to bless all the nations through Abraham's seed. **Romans 4:9-17** argues that Abraham is the father of all who share his faith — whether circumcised or not — because he was justified by faith before circumcision was given. The Church's multicultural, multi-ethnic character is not an accident of history — it is the fulfillment of Genesis 12:3.

B. The Royal Priesthood and the Spirit's Down Payment

Scripture Passages: 1 Peter 2:9-10; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:17

The Church's identity in Christ is simultaneously royal and priestly — an identity first given to Israel at Sinai ("you shall be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," **Exodus 19:5-6**) and now fulfilled and extended in the new covenant community. **1 Peter 2:9-10** applies Exodus 19:5-6 and Hosea 2:23 directly to the Church: "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." The priestly identity of the first Adam (Genesis 2:15), the priestly nation of Israel, and the great High Priest Jesus Christ all converge in the identity of the people of God.

The Holy Spirit is not merely a comfort for the journey — he is the "guarantee" (or down payment, *arrabōn*) of the inheritance that is coming (**Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5**). The Spirit's presence in believers is the first installment of the new creation — the already of the resurrection life present in still-mortal bodies, groaning for the not-yet of full redemption (**Romans 8:18-25**). The Church lives in the eschatological overlap: the new creation has begun in Christ and by the Spirit, but the full consummation awaits his return.

Key Observations

- Ephesians 2:20-22 presents the Church as the new temple — the dwelling place of God by the Spirit — fulfilling the OT trajectory from tabernacle to temple to Jesus to community.
- Galatians 3:29 establishes the Church as the heir of the Abrahamic promise — explicitly fulfilling Genesis 12:3's "all the families of the earth."
- 1 Peter 2:9 applies Exodus 19:5-6 to the Church — the priestly identity Adam forfeited in the garden is now restored in Christ and extended to all believers.
- The Spirit as "down payment" (Ephesians 1:13-14) means every believer already has within them a first installment of the resurrection life that awaits the whole creation.
- The "already/not yet" tension of the new covenant age is a canonical-theological framework developed across multiple NT books (Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Corinthians 5; Ephesians 1).

Cross-References

Exodus 19:5-6; Galatians 3:6-29; Romans 4:9-17; Romans 8:18-25; Ephesians 2:11-22; Ephesians 3:1-13; Colossians 1:26-27; Romans 16:25-27; 1 Peter 2:9-10.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the inclusion of Gentiles in the covenant community fulfill — rather than contradict or abandon — God's promises to Israel?
2. What does it mean for the Church to be a "royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9)? How does this identity shape the way believers should live and engage with the world?
3. The Holy Spirit is described as a "down payment" of the inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14). What is the inheritance he guarantees, and how does his presence now change how you live in the present?
4. Romans 8:18-25 describes creation "groaning" for the revelation of the sons of God. How does this eschatological vision shape the way you think about suffering, creation, and hope?

Section XV Summary

The Church is the covenant community of the last days — the multiethnic, Spirit-indwelt people of God gathered from all nations in fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise. It is simultaneously the new temple (God's dwelling presence), the royal priesthood (restored from what was lost in Adam), and the heir of all God's covenant promises. The Church lives in the eschatological tension between the resurrection already begun in Christ and the resurrection not yet fully realized in the world. The Spirit within is the guarantee that the story is not finished — the best is yet to come.

The Consummation: The New Jerusalem and the Restoration of All Things

Revelation 21–22; Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Peter 3; Isaiah 65

A. The New Heaven and the New Earth

Scripture Passages: Revelation 21:1-8; Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:10-13

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away" (**Revelation 21:1**). This is not the annihilation of creation but its renewal and transformation. **Isaiah 65:17** — "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth" — is the OT antecedent, and **2 Peter 3:13** picks up the same promise: "we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells." The Greek word translated "new" in Revelation 21:1 and 2 Peter 3:13 is *kainos* — meaning new in quality, transformed, renewed — rather than the creation of a completely separate entity. The story does not end with the destruction of creation; it ends with the restoration and glorification of creation. What began in Genesis is not abandoned — it is completed and perfected.

The New Jerusalem descends from heaven to earth (**Revelation 21:2, 10**) — it is not that the redeemed ascend to some ethereal realm above. Heaven comes to earth. The voice from the throne declares: "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God" (**Revelation 21:3**). This is the fulfillment of the covenant formula repeated from Exodus through the prophets to the NT: the goal of all God's redemptive acts is this — God with his people, fully and finally.

B. The New Jerusalem — Eden Restored and Surpassed

Scripture Passages: Revelation 21:9–22:5; Genesis 2:9-10; Ezekiel 47:1-12

The dimensions and imagery of the New Jerusalem are rich with canonical resonance. The city's cube shape (**Revelation 21:16**) matches the dimensions of the Most Holy Place in Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:20) — the New Jerusalem is the ultimate Holy of Holies, the entire city a sanctuary. There is no temple within the city "for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb" (**Revelation 21:22**). The goal of the tabernacle and temple — God's presence among his people — is now total and immediate, without mediation through priesthood or curtain. The city needs no sun or moon "for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb" (**Revelation 21:23**) — echoing the creation of light before the sun (Genesis 1:3) and the *shekinah* glory of the tabernacle.

The river of life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb (**Revelation 22:1**) echoes the river flowing out of Eden (Genesis 2:10) and the life-giving river of Ezekiel's temple vision (Ezekiel 47:1-12). The tree of life, now accessible to all, grows on both sides of the river with leaves "for the healing of the nations" (**Revelation 22:2**). The tree that was blocked in Genesis 3:24 is now open and abundant — accessible through Christ who is "the way" (John 14:6) and who grants the right to eat from the tree of life to those who overcome (Revelation 2:7). The curse is lifted: "No longer will there be anything accursed" (**Revelation 22:3**), reversing Genesis 3:17-19. The servants of God "will see

his face" (**Revelation 22:4**) — the vision of God that Moses was denied (Exodus 33:20), that was glimpsed in the garden (Genesis 3:8) and lost through sin, is now fully, permanently restored. The story has come home.

C. The Alpha and Omega — The Eternal Christ

Scripture Passages: Revelation 22:12-13; 1:8; 1:17; Isaiah 44:6; Isaiah 48:12

The final words of Scripture before the closing benediction are the words of Jesus Christ: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (**Revelation 22:13**). This self-identification echoes the same declaration in **Revelation 1:8** and **1:17**, and it deliberately echoes **Isaiah 44:6** ("I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god") and **Isaiah 48:12** — passages in which YHWH declares his absolute uniqueness and sovereignty. Jesus is identified with the God who spoke in Isaiah — the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. The one who was "in the beginning" (John 1:1; Genesis 1:1) is the one who brings history to its glorious conclusion.

The canon closes with an invitation: "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price" (**Revelation 22:17**). The same water of life that flowed in Eden, that Jesus offered to the Samaritan woman (John 4:10-14), that flows from the throne in the New Jerusalem — it is freely given to all who come. The gospel, first whispered in Genesis 3:15, is now an open, urgent, joyful invitation at the end of all things.

Key Observations • The New Jerusalem descends from heaven to earth — the eschatological hope is not escape from creation but the renewal of creation. • The absence of a temple in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:22) is not a loss but a fulfillment: the entire city is the holy of holies, and God's presence fills everything. • The restored tree of life (Revelation 22:2) directly reverses the blocked tree of Genesis 3:24 — the canon ends where it began, and the ending surpasses the beginning. • Revelation 22:4 — "they will see his face" — is the reversal of Genesis 3's hiding from God and Exodus 33:20's limitation. The ultimate goal of redemption is face-to-face communion with God. • Jesus's self-identification as "Alpha and Omega, First and Last, Beginning and End" (Revelation 22:13) applies to him the divine titles of Isaiah 44:6 and 48:12 — an explicit claim to be YHWH.
Cross-References Isaiah 65:17-25; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Romans 8:18-25; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Genesis 2:9-10; Genesis 3:17-24; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Isaiah 44:6; John 4:10-14; Revelation 2:7.

Discussion Questions

1. The New Jerusalem descends to earth rather than believers ascending to heaven. How does this shape your vision of the ultimate hope of the gospel? What does it say about the physical, created world?
2. The absence of a temple in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:22) is explained as fulfillment rather than loss. What does this tell us about the purpose of the OT temple, and what has been surpassed?
3. Compare Genesis 2:9-10 (Eden's river and trees) with Revelation 22:1-2 (the river and tree of life). What is restored? What surpasses the original?
4. Jesus says "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End" (Revelation 22:13). How does this title connect Genesis to Revelation, and what does it say about who Jesus is?
5. The final invitation of Scripture is "Come... let the one who is thirsty come" (Revelation 22:17). How does this invitation connect to the first gospel promise in Genesis 3:15, and what does it mean for you personally?

Section XVI Summary

The consummation is not the end of the story — it is the story reaching its glorious intended destination. The creation God called "very good" is renewed and glorified, not discarded. The garden-sanctuary of Eden is surpassed by the New Jerusalem, which is both garden and city, both sanctuary and home. The curse is gone. The tree of life is accessible. The face of God is visible. The covenant community dwells with God forever. And the one who stands at the beginning and end of all things — the Alpha and Omega, the Word who became flesh, the Lamb who was slain, the risen and reigning Lord — is worshipped and adored by the redeemed from every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. The first gospel promise has been kept, in ways more wonderful than could have been imagined when it was first spoken over a serpent in a broken garden.

Christ in All the Scriptures

"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." — Luke 24:27

We have now traced the single story of God's redemption across sixteen major stations of the biblical canon. Let us step back and see the whole.

Creation → Fall → Promise → Covenant History → Prophetic Expectation → Incarnation → Cross → Resurrection → Church → Consummation. These are not disconnected chapters in an anthology. They are the acts of one unified drama, written by one divine Author, moving toward one destined conclusion. The hero of every act — present at the beginning, promised after the Fall, traced through the covenants, glimpsed in the types and shadows, announced by the prophets, revealed in the Gospels, proclaimed by the apostles, and worshipped in the eternal city — is Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul expressed the unity of this story with stunning compression: "For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory" (**2 Corinthians 1:20**). Every promise — to Adam and Eve in the garden, to Abraham on the mountain, to David in his house, to Israel in her exile, to the nations through the prophets — every single one finds its "Yes" in Jesus. He is not the conclusion of the Old Testament promises; he is their very content. They were always about him. They were always leading to him. He is the point.

This is why, when the risen Jesus walked with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, he did not simply announce his resurrection and expect them to be satisfied. He opened the Scriptures. "Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). Later, to the gathered disciples, he said: "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44-45). Jesus himself taught that the whole OT — the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings (Psalms representing the Writings) — speaks of him.

The One Story in Summary

God made the world good. He made humanity in his image to represent him and rule his creation as his royal priests, dwelling with him in the garden-sanctuary of Eden. But our first parents, tempted by the serpent, chose autonomy over dependence, self over God, the creature over the Creator. Sin entered. Death entered. The image was marred. The sanctuary was closed. The curse fell on the ground, on human relationships, on the whole created order. But before the judgment was complete, God spoke the first gospel word — a promise to the serpent, a hope for humanity: there would come a Son of the woman who would crush the serpent's head, though at the cost of a wounded heel.

From that moment, the whole of the OT is the story of how that promise is kept. God preserved the world through Noah and entered into covenant with all creation. He called Abraham and promised that through his seed all nations would be blessed — the gospel preached in advance. He traced that

seed through Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Judah, and the twelve tribes of Israel. He redeemed his people from Egypt by blood and through water, establishing the paradigm of salvation. He gave the Law at Sinai — not to save, but to reveal sin and point to the need for a better righteousness. He established the tabernacle and the sacrificial system as the annual drama of atonement, pointing forward to the one perfect sacrifice. He made a covenant with David, promising an eternal Son on an eternal throne — a king who would also be God's own Son. The prophets cried out for the coming Servant who would bear the sin of many, the new covenant that would write the law on the heart, the Son of Man who would receive an everlasting kingdom, the anointed preacher of good news.

And then, in the fullness of time, God sent his Son — born of a woman (the promised seed), born under the law (to bear its curse), fully human and fully divine. He tabernacled among us and we beheld his glory. He lived the perfectly obedient life that Adam had failed to live. He taught with divine authority. He demonstrated the arrival of the Kingdom through signs of restoration. He entered Jerusalem as the humble King, celebrated the Passover with his disciples and replaced it with the new covenant meal, and then — in the darkest night of history and the most luminous moment of eternity — he was crucified. He bore our sin, our guilt, our curse, our death. The serpent struck his heel. The temple veil was torn. The atonement was made. And on the third day, God raised him from the dead — the declaration that the atonement was accepted, the declaration that death is not final, the beginning of the new creation. He ascended to the Father's right hand, poured out the Spirit, and commissioned his people to carry the Abrahamic blessing to all the nations. And he will come again — to complete what has begun, to raise the dead, to renew creation, to bring the New Jerusalem from heaven to earth, to remove every curse, to open the tree of life, to make his face fully visible to those who are fully his. He is the Alpha and the Omega. He is the First and the Last. He is the Beginning and the End.

A Closing Call

This guide has been designed to show you that the Bible is not a collection of religious texts — it is a single, coherent story of God's relentless, gracious, costly pursuit of his lost and beloved creation. The story is not about your religion, your morality, or your spiritual journey. It is, first and last and always, about Jesus Christ — who he is, what he has done, and what he will do. "And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (**John 17:3**).

If you have read this guide as an intellectual exercise without personally trusting in Christ — we urge you, do not let the knowledge remain academic. The gospel is not merely a theme to trace; it is a person to trust. The invitation of **Revelation 22:17** stands: "Let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price." Come to him. The way is open. The veil is torn. The tree of life is accessible. The last word of Scripture is an invitation — and it is addressed to you.

If you are already a believer — go deeper. Read your Bible with eyes trained to see Christ in all of it. Let the OT become three-dimensional as you read it in light of the NT's fulfillment. Let the NT become richer as you see the OT roots from which it grows. Teach others. Study in community. Use this guide to open the Scriptures with your group, and let the living Lord himself be your teacher, as he was for the two on the Emmaus road — your heart burning within you as he opens to you the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.

Thematic Index of Key Passages

Use this index to trace major themes across the whole of Scripture. References are listed in canonical order within each theme.

The following index organizes key Scripture passages by theme. Each theme is woven through multiple books of the Bible, demonstrating the canonical unity of God's redemptive plan.

Theme	Key Scripture Passages
1. The Gospel Promised	Genesis 3:15; Genesis 12:3; Genesis 22:18; Isaiah 53:1-12; Galatians 3:8; Romans 16:25-27
2. The Covenant Line	Genesis 5; Genesis 12; Genesis 17; Genesis 22:15-18; Genesis 49:8-12; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 89:3-4; Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38; Galatians 3:16
3. Christ as the Last Adam	Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:15; Genesis 3:6-19; Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; 1 Corinthians 15:45-49; Hebrews 2:5-9; Hebrews 4:15
4. The Sacrificial System and Atonement	Genesis 3:21; Exodus 12:1-30; Leviticus 16; Isaiah 53:4-6; Romans 3:21-26; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:1-10:18; 1 Peter 2:24
5. The Suffering Servant	Isaiah 42:1-9; Isaiah 49:1-13; Isaiah 50:4-11; Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Matthew 8:17; Luke 22:37; John 12:38; Acts 8:30-35; Romans 10:16; 1 Peter 2:22-25
6. The Davidic King	2 Samuel 7:1-17; Psalm 2; Psalm 16; Psalm 22; Psalm 110; Isaiah 9:1-7; Isaiah 11:1-10; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Zechariah 9:9; Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:25-36; Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; Romans 15:12
7. The New Covenant	Deuteronomy 30:6; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Matthew 26:28; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:7-13; Hebrews 10:14-18
8. The Resurrection and New Creation	Isaiah 26:19; Ezekiel 37:1-14; Daniel 12:2; 1 Corinthians 15:1-58; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 1:18; Romans 8:18-25; Revelation 21:1-8
9. The Tree of Life	Genesis 2:9; Genesis 3:22-24; Proverbs 3:18; Revelation 2:7; Revelation 22:2, 14, 19
10. The Temple and God's Dwelling Presence	Exodus 25:8; Exodus 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Ezekiel 43:1-7; John 1:14; John 2:19-21; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:20-22; Revelation 21:22; Revelation 22:4
11. The Lamb of God	Exodus 12:1-30; Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 5:6-14; Revelation 7:17; Revelation 21:22-23
12. The Son of Man	Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 24:30; Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62; John 1:51; Acts 7:56; Revelation 1:7; Revelation 1:12-16; Revelation 14:14

"For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory." — 2 Corinthians 1:20

This guide is intended to be used alongside your own Bible. All Scripture references are drawn from standard canonical texts.

Prepared for Bible study groups, small-group leaders, pastors, teachers, and all who love God's Word.

October 2026