



# The Christ & Big Ideas of the Old Testament w/ Chronological Survey

By Matt Boswell

# The Themes & Christ of the Old Testament

By Matt Boswell

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

In **Genesis**, JESUS Is The Promised Offspring That Will Crush The Serpent & Bless The Nations.

Writer: Moses the Shepherd Leader of Israel

Main Theme: Creation, rebellion and the promise of global restoration through Abraham's future descendant who is Christ. Focus on the creation of the nation of Israel to bless the nations.

In **Exodus**, JESUS Is The I AM. The Liberator From Slavery & Bondage.

Writer: Moses the Shepherd Leader of Israel

Main Theme: The Liberation of Israel from their slavery in Egypt through Moses. Here the Law of God acts as a guide to return His people of the Gospel promised to Abraham.

In **Leviticus**, JESUS Is The Sacrifice That Is Given Once For All.

Writer: Moses the Shepherd Leader of Israel

Main Theme: The absolute Holiness of the Lord and thus the need for atonement for sin and obedience to God's covenant expectations.

In **Numbers**, JESUS Is The Bread From Heaven And The Living Water From The Rock.

Writer: Moses the Shepherd Leader of Israel

Main Theme: The presence of God with His covenant people and the enduring promise to reenter their homeland, even through their persistent sinfulness.

In **Deuteronomy**, JESUS Is The Words Of Moses.

Writer: Moses the Shepherd Leader of Israel

Main Theme: The second iteration of God's covenant law with a focus on His divine election and their need to keep the covenant standard. A strong focus on God's blessing for obedience and cursing for disobedience.

In **Joshua**, JESUS Is The Commander Of The Armies Of The Lord.

Writer: Joshua the Warrior Leader of Israel

Main Theme: God's conquest of wicked Canaan so as to restore "the promise land" to Israel as his covenant people.

In **Judges**, He Is Deliverer Of Those Who Cry Out In Repentance.

Writer: Unknown (Jewish tradition associates the work with Samuel).

Main Theme: the compounding sinfulness of Israel in the promise land as they become too much like their pagan neighbors. This leads to the want of a king to lead and constrain the people of Israel.

In **Ruth**, JESUS Is The Kinsmen-Redeemer

Writer: Unknown (Jewish tradition associates the work with Samuel).

Main Theme: A small spinoff story during the time of **Judges** highlighting God's sovereignty, kindness and covenant faithfulness to both people inside and outside of His covenant community Israel. This is also a lineage story in that Ruth "the Moabite" is the great grandmother of Messianic King David.

In **1 Samuel**, JESUS Is The Prophet, Priest & King

Writer: Unknown (Tradition advocates the 3 authors of Samuel, Gad and Nathan the Prophets)

Main Theme: The rise of the Davidic Dynasty, City and Temple for the Cosmic King Yahweh. This is set against the failed monarchy of Saul.

In **2 Samuel**, JESUS Is A House For David With The Promise Of An Enduring Line, Throne & Kingdom

Writer: Unknown (Tradition advocates the 3 authors of Samuel, Gad and Nathan the Prophets)

Main Theme: The challenges of the Davidic Dynasty, City and Temple for the Cosmic King Yahweh. This is shown in relationship to the progressively idolatrous monarchy of Solomon.

In **1 Kings**, JESUS Is The One Who Is Greater Than Solomon

Writer: Jewish tradition assigns authorship to Jeremiah the Prophet

Main Theme: The history of the end of Solomon's reign and the national divide that ensues between the 10 tribes of the north (Israel) and 2 tribes of the south (Judah). The northern tribes endure 19 consecutive sinful kings where as the southern tribes experience a mix of 8 godly and 12 sinful monarchs.

In **2 Kings**, JESUS Is The Faithful Covenant Of Grace & Life

Writer: Jewish tradition assigns authorship to Jeremiah the Prophet

Main Theme: Accounts the early defeat of the northern kingdom to the Assyrians and eventual defeat of southern Judah at the hands of the Babylonians. Yet in all of this God's Messianic line and promise endures even without an earthly throne, city or kingdom.

In **1 Chronicles**, JESUS Is The Faithful David

Writer: Ezra the Priest

Main Theme: A Post-Exile reflection on the Davidic Dynasty with an emphasis that the Davidic Covenant is NOT rooted in the conditions or circumstances of this world's kings or kingdoms. God works above and outside of human constraints to maintain His goal of blessing the nations through the Chosen One promised to Abraham and through the line of David.

In **2 Chronicles**, JESUS Is The Unfailing Promise Through Good and Bad

Writer: Ezra the Priest

Main Theme: A Post-Exile reflection on Davidic Promise after the death of David and all the way to the exile of Judah under the Babylonian occupation.

In **Ezra**, JESUS Is The Unbroken Messianic Line

Writer: Ezra the Priest

Main Theme: Records the events of the "Second Exodus" out of exile in Babylon. The first 6 chapters focus on the first wave of those returning under Zerubbabel to re-build the Temple. The final 4 chapters highlight the second wave with a focus on Ezra's quest to restore the spiritual condition of those returning.

In **Nehemiah**, JESUS Is The Restorer Of Worship & Witness

Writer: Nehemiah the Politician

Main Theme: Nehemiah records in his personal memoirs the third and last wave of those returning from the Babylonian exile. Primarily places an emphasis on the repentance of the people and the re-fortification efforts regarding Jerusalem despite internal and external opposition.

In **Esther**, JESUS Is The Advocate Of The Condemned

Writer: Unknown (Tradition points to a younger contemporary of Mordecai)

Main Theme: A small spinoff story occurring between the first and second wave of those returning to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and Ezra. The central story focuses on God's sovereign deliverance of His people in the face of impossible social and legal odds through Queen Esther. The primary thrust of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther relates to God's working out His promises regardless of the human constraints or conditions.

In **Job**, JESUS Is The Redeemer Who Lives

Writer: Unknown (Traditionally associated with the Books of Moses, but no definitive evidence for Mosaic authorship).

Main Theme: Chronologically Job is the earliest book of the Bible with the story transpiring roughly during the same time as Abraham and the patriarchs. The core of the story wrestles with the question of the why bad things happen to righteous people. The final conclusion to such pressing questions is the realization that God is sovereign over the deepest mysteries of life, but He is also just and good regardless of our human vantage point.

In **Psalms**, JESUS Is The Inspiration For And The Longing Of Deep Song

Writers: David the Warrior King x73, Asaph x12, Sons of Korah x10, Solomon x2, Moses x1, Heman x1, Ethan x1 & Anonymous x50

Main Theme: A massive collection of songs dealing with themes such as the creation, the patriarchs, the theocracy of the exodus, the kings and through the exile period. This was the Temple hymnbook and devotional guide for Israel.

In **Proverbs**, JESUS Is Wisdom Who Eternally Dwells At The Side Of The Father

Writers: Solomon the Wisdom King (Ch. 1-29) Agur (Ch. 30) & Lemuel (Ch. 31)

Main Theme: The idealistic wisdom of King Solomon to his son about godly conduct, responses and consequences to the daily affairs of life.

In **Ecclesiastes**, JESUS Is The Satisfaction, Joy And Wisdom That Transcends All Earthly Vanity

Writer: Solomon the Wisdom King

Main Theme: The realistic wisdom of King Solomon about the uncertainty and unfairness of the vanity of life even when one lives godly. Ultimately life cannot satisfy apart from God and His ability to bring purpose.

In **The Song of Solomon**, JESUS Is The Bridegroom Of The Bride

Writer: Solomon the Wisdom King

Main Theme: A love song of Solomon replete with metaphors and images describing the passion of a bride and groom. Traditionally seen an allegory depicting God's relationship to Israel and Christ to the Church.

In **Isaiah**, JESUS Is The Coming Messiah

Writer: Isaiah the Prophet to Southern Judah

Main Theme: The first 39 chapters report the guarantee of God's judgment for the idolatry of Israel. Yet these are a people with whom God has guaranteed to use and bless the nations with. Therefore the final 27 chapters recall the promise of a future messianic hope. Isaiah's message is to the last 4 kings of southern Judah.

In **Jeremiah**, JESUS Is The Lord Our Righteousness

Writer: Jeremiah the Prophet to Southern Judah

Main Theme: The promise of God's damning judgment on a stiff-necked Judah at the hands of the Babylonians. Jeremiah is a rejected and weeping prophet who still maintains compassion toward a people who harshly reject him with the same fervor as they do their God.

In **Lamentations**, JESUS Is The Prophet Of Sorrows Who Is Acquainted With Grief

Writer: Jeremiah the Prophet to Southern Judah

Main Theme: The warnings of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled. Judah has been overrun and Jerusalem has been devastated by the Babylonian invasion. Lamentations is the eulogy of the city of God on earth.

In **Ezekiel**, JESUS Is The True Shepherd Who Rescues & Feeds His Flock

Writer: Ezekiel the Exiled Prophet (Taken into Babylonian captivity just before the destruction of Jerusalem)

Main Theme: Here the message is to God's covenantal people who have been taken away to Babylon in the "exile." The method of the prophet is to use sings, symbols and pictures to process what has happen to Judah under the judgment of God, but also to inspire hope for what will happen when the 70 year exile ends. This will not be due to Israel's faithfulness but God's.

In **Daniel**, JESUS Is The Son Of Man Who Appears On The Clouds Of Heaven

Writer: Daniel the Prophetic Politician to Exiled Israel, Babylon & Persia

Main Theme: The book is divided in two halves. The first half (Ch. 1-6) is a display of both godly faithfulness and civic loyalty in a pagan land. The second half (Ch. 7-12) is laced with prophetic events to reassure God's people that He is sovereign over both their present exile and future restoration.

In **Hosea**, JESUS Is The Faithful Lover Who Endures Through Unfaithfulness.

Writer: Hosea the Husband in Northern Israel

Main Theme: In 1 Kings 12 the unified kingdom of Saul, David and Solomon divided into the northern 10 tribes of Israel and the southern 2 tribes of Judah. While the south had a mix of godly and ungodly kings, the north had a run of 19 straight idolatrous rulers. Hoses lives within the unfaithful northern kingdom and God uses his marriage to his unfaithful wife Gomer as a profound object lesson regarding the destructiveness of sin, the guarantee of judgment and the loyalty of divine love even in unfaithfulness. Hosea is only one of two Minor Prophets to address the northern tribes directly in the Canon.

In **Joel**, JESUS Is The Spirit's Presence And Power.

Writer: Joel the Prophet to the Priest and Elders of Southern Judah

Main Theme: A locus plague has destroyed crops of wheat and wine in the southern region, thus risking the ability for Temple offerings. This disaster acts as a living parable to the deeper spiritual plague that is swelling in the hearts of the tribes of Judah and thus makes room for a plea of repentance and return to God.

In **Amos**, JESUS Is The Judge Who Restores.

Writer: Amos the Shepherd Arborist turned Prophet to Northern Israel

Main Theme: At this juncture business and life was prosperous in the north, but sin and idolatry had invaded all the nooks and crannies of their daily affairs. Thus Amos is risen up by God to remind the people that the justice of God is not simply reserved for those who are outside of or opposed to God's covenant people. At the most fundamental level Amos reminds the people of God that they too face an even harsher judgment from God since they have an informed knowledge of law and sin. Amos is one of two Minor Prophets who address the northern tribes of Israel in the Canon.

In **Obadiah**, JESUS Is The Lord Our Savior & King.

Writer: Obadiah the Visionary to Edom

Main Theme: The shortest book of the Old Testament is also the most particular. It addresses the failure of Edom (The decedents of Esau) to aid their brothers the Judeans (The decedents of Jacob in the south) during the siege of Jerusalem. From this God will judge those who oppose or neglect His people just as He has brought judgment upon His people so as to lead them to blessing and the Kingdom of God.

In **Jonah**, JESUS Is The Missionary Who Dies, Is Buried And Rises 3 Days Later.

Writer: Jonah the Reluctant Missionary to Assyria (During the reign of Jeroboam II in 2 Kings 14)

Main Theme: God's forgiveness and mercy is not exclusively for the Israelites in the Old Testament but also extends to pagan sailors and sinful Ninevites. This story stands as a powerful demonstration of God's desire to fully relent when people humbly repent. Sadly the book concludes with Jonah embittered seeing that the Assyrians of Nineveh fell under the mercy of God rather than His wrath.

In **Micah**, JESUS Is The Everlasting One Who Comes Out Of Bethlehem.

Writer: Micah of Moresheth the Prophet to Southern Judah

Main Theme: The leaders of the southern kingdom have lost their sense of justice. The rich oppress the poor, sin flourishes over righteousness and power is corrupting its civic stewards. Thus Micah is infused with the Spirit of the Lord to warn of the coming judgment of God by the hand of the Babylonians for their failure, "to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God." Yet after the scattering God promises He will again return to gather them as Shepherd and King.

In **Nahum**, JESUS Is The One Who Brings Good Tidings And Proclaims Peace.

Writer: Nahum the Prophet of Judgment Regarding the Ninevites of Assyria

Main Theme: Nahum is the sequel to Jonah. Under Jonah the city of Nineveh repented, but their repentance was short-lived to about 100 years. Now that God has finished leveraging the Assyrians for the correction of Israel in the north He will begin to bring judgment on the Assyrians at the hands of the Babylonians for their mistreatment of His people.

In **Habakkuk**, JESUS Is Salvation's Promise Where "The Earth Will Be Filled With The Knowledge Of The Glory Of The Lord, As The Waters Cover The Sea."

Writer: Habakkuk the Prophet to Southern Judah

Main Theme: The plight of the pagan Babylonian Empire looms large over southern Judea. The clear judgment of God will come by the hand of the wicked invaders. However false prophets among the Judeans have been claiming that God will not judge His people through evil deities such as the Babylonians. In the midst of these false promises Habakkuk is risen up to confirm that in fact the opposite is true. In the midst of this the prophet wrestles with God on the justness of such an action on the part of God, God confirms His justness in this and finally the prophet rests in the sovereignty of God.

In **Zephaniah**, JESUS Is The One Who Will Gather His People And Reign In Victory.

Writer: Zephaniah the Royal Prophet to Southern Judah

Main Theme: The thrust of the prophet focuses on "the Day of the Lord." On that day the outcomes is black and white; God will judge the sinful and reward the righteous. It may well have been this prophecy that produced the short-lived reforms under King Josiah.

In **Haggai**, JESUS Is The Lost Heritage Reclaimed.

Writer: Haggai the Preacher to Early Returning Exiles

Main Theme: After nearly 16 years the efforts to rebuild the post-Exile Temple have stalled. This delay stems primarily from personal distraction among the people and thus postpones national worship. Because of this Haggai produces a series of burning sermons to convict and motivate the people to complete the Temple.

In **Zechariah**, JESUS Is The Shepherd Rejected, Betrayed & Abandoned And Yet Still Stands As Righteous Judge & King.

Writer: Zechariah the Priest Out Of Exile

Main Theme: Zechariah is the sequel to Haggai some 4 years later. The basic difference being that while Haggai slung spears of conviction, Zechariah employed words of motivation and inspiration through a continued focus on the future glories of a completed Temple.

In **Malachi**, JESUS Is The Sun Of Righteousness Rising With Healing In His Wings.

Writer: Malachi the Prophet to Established Post-Exiles

Main Theme: While the climate in Jerusalem was orthodox and monotheistic, the spiritual heart of the people had fallen into a new form of decay that was just as deadly as idolatry. Tragically much of the obedience under the restoration efforts of Ezra and Nehemiah became nothing more than a series of rote actions with little affection, thus opening up fissures that were leading to moral leniency. In light of this new spiritual toxin Malachi calls the people to covenantal renewal with joy and gladness of heart.

Covenant & Law

GENESIS  
EXODUS  
LEVITICUS  
NUMBERS  
DEUTERONOMY

History

JOSHUA  
JUDGES  
RUTH  
1 SAMUEL  
2 SAMUEL  
1 KINGS  
2 KINGS  
1 CHRONICLES  
2 CHRONICLES  
EZRA  
NEHEMIAH  
ESTHER

Wisdom

JOB  
PSALMS  
PROVERBS  
ECCLESIASTES  
SONG OF SOLOMON

Major Prophets

ISAIAH  
JEREMIAH  
LAMENTATIONS  
EZEKIEL  
DANIEL

Minor Prophets

HOSEA  
JOEL  
AMOS  
OBADIAH  
JONAH  
MICAH  
NAHUM  
HABAKKUK  
ZEPHANIAH  
HAGGAI  
ZECHARIAH  
MALACHI



