



BIBLE CONFIDENCE SERIES

How the Whole Bible Points to Jesus

A beginner-friendly guide to recognizing Jesus throughout the story of Scripture

One Bible. One unfolding story. One Savior.

The Bible contains many books, writers, settings, and kinds of literature, yet together they reveal one saving plan. The Old Testament creates the promises, patterns, questions, and hopes that Jesus fulfills; the New Testament announces who He is, what He accomplished, and how all things will be completed in Him.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When we read only isolated verses, the Bible can feel like a collection of unrelated stories and rules. Learning to see its larger movement helps us understand why Jesus came, what His cross and resurrection accomplished, and how every part of Scripture belongs within God's plan of redemption.

"Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

Luke 24:27 WEB



START HERE

What does “points to Jesus” mean?

It does not mean Jesus is secretly hidden in every word, object, number, or person. It means the whole Bible moves toward Him and finds its fulfillment in Him. Some passages predict Him directly. Others establish promises, offices, sacrifices, events, and themes that prepare us to understand who He is and why we need Him.

01

Jesus said Scripture testifies about Him

Jesus told His listeners that the Scriptures bear witness to Him and that Moses wrote about Him (John 5:39–46).

02

Jesus explained the Scriptures through Himself

After His resurrection, Jesus showed how Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms spoke about the Messiah’s suffering, resurrection, and worldwide message of repentance and forgiveness (Luke 24:25–27, 44–47).

03

The apostles read the Old Testament this way

The New Testament repeatedly explains Jesus through earlier Scripture—as the promised offspring, Passover Lamb, greater priest, Son of David, suffering Servant, and risen King.

Three guardrails from the beginning

- Respect the original meaning: ask what the passage communicated in its first biblical setting.
- Follow Scripture’s own connections: give special weight to links made by Jesus and the New Testament writers.
- See fulfillment, not erasure: Jesus completes God’s earlier work; He does not make the Old Testament meaningless.

The goal is not cleverness

A Christ-centered reading should make the biblical story clearer, not depend on imaginative details no biblical writer supports. We are learning to follow the Bible’s own path to Jesus.



THE BIBLE'S UNFOLDING STORY

Seven movements that lead to Jesus

01

Creation

God makes a good world and creates humanity in His image to live under His loving rule (Genesis 1–2). Jesus is the eternal Word through whom all things were made and the One through whom creation will be renewed (John 1:1–3; Colossians 1:15–20).

02

Rebellion

Human sin brings guilt, death, fractured relationships, and exile from God's presence (Genesis 3). Jesus comes to destroy the devil's works, bear sin, and bring life (Romans 5:12–21; 1 John 3:8).

03

Promise

God promises that Abraham's family will become a blessing to all nations (Genesis 12:1–3; 22:18). The New Testament identifies Jesus as the promised offspring through whom that blessing comes (Galatians 3:8, 16).

04

Rescue and covenant

God redeems Israel from slavery, gives His Law, and dwells among His people (Exodus 12–20; 25:8). Jesus brings the greater rescue from sin and establishes the new covenant through His blood (Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 5:7).

05

Kingdom

God promises David an enduring royal line (2 Samuel 7:12–16). Jesus is the Son of David whose kingdom will never end (Luke 1:31–33; Acts 2:29–36).

06

Exile and hope

Israel's rebellion brings judgment, yet the prophets promise return, a new heart, God's Spirit, a faithful Servant, and a righteous King (Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Jeremiah 31:31–34; Ezekiel 36:24–28).

07

Jesus and new creation

Jesus announces God's kingdom, dies for sins, rises, pours out the Spirit, gathers a people from all nations, and will return to judge evil and renew creation (1 Corinthians 15:1–28; Revelation 21–22).



HOW SCRIPTURE POINTS FORWARD

Five kinds of connections

01

Promises and prophecies

God gives words that later Scripture identifies as fulfilled in Jesus: the promised offspring, Davidic King, suffering Servant, and ruler from Bethlehem (Genesis 3:15; 2 Samuel 7:12–16; Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:1; 2:5–6).

02

Patterns and previews

Earlier people and events establish patterns that Jesus fulfills in a greater way. Adam, Moses, David, Jonah, and Israel each provide comparisons—but Jesus is never merely another version of them.

03

Roles and offices

Prophets speak God's word, priests represent the people before God, and kings rule God's people. Jesus perfectly fulfills all three: final Prophet, great High Priest, and eternal King (Deuteronomy 18:15; Hebrews 1:1–3; 4:14–16; Revelation 19:16).

04

Sacrifices and sacred places

Passover, sacrifices, priesthood, tabernacle, and temple teach about holiness, sin, cleansing, substitution, access, and God's presence. Hebrews explains their greater fulfillment in Christ (John 1:29; 2:19–22; Hebrews 8–10).

05

Themes that grow

Kingdom, covenant, rest, life, wisdom, shepherding, marriage, exodus, exile, and God dwelling with humanity develop across Scripture and reach their center and completion in Jesus.

Promise and pattern are not identical

A prophecy may directly announce what God will do. A pattern becomes clear as later Scripture repeats and fulfills an earlier person, event, role, or institution. Both must be established from the Bible—not invented from resemblance alone.



SEVEN WORKED EXAMPLES

Adam → Jesus: the head of a new humanity

Adam's disobedience brings sin and death. Jesus obeys, bears judgment, rises, and gives life to those who belong to Him. Paul calls Jesus the "last Adam" (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12–21; 1 Corinthians 15:20–22, 45–49).

Passover → Jesus: the Lamb who rescues

At the exodus, a lamb dies and its blood marks Israel's households for deliverance. The New Testament calls Christ our Passover and the Lamb who redeems through His blood (Exodus 12:1–32; John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:18–19).

The wilderness → Jesus: true bread and life

God gives manna and later healing through the bronze serpent. Jesus is the true bread from heaven and compares His cross to the serpent being lifted up (Numbers 21:4–9; John 3:14–16; 6:30–35).

David → Jesus: the promised King

David is an anointed shepherd-king, but he sins and dies. Jesus is David's greater Son: the righteous Shepherd-King whose resurrection and reign are everlasting (2 Samuel 7:12–16; Psalm 110; Luke 1:31–33; Acts 2:29–36).

Melchizedek → Jesus: the lasting Priest-King

Melchizedek appears as king of Salem and priest of God Most High. Psalm 110 promises a priest forever in his order, and Hebrews explains that Jesus holds this greater, permanent priesthood (Genesis 14:18–20; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:5–10; 7:1–28).

Psalm 22 → Jesus: the righteous sufferer

Jesus quotes Psalm 22's opening words from the cross. The Gospel accounts also connect its mocking and divided garments with His crucifixion, while the psalm moves toward vindication and worldwide worship (Psalm 22:1, 7–8, 18, 22–31; Matthew 27:35, 39–46; John 19:23–24).

The suffering Servant → Jesus: sin-bearer and victor

Isaiah describes a Servant who is rejected, bears the sins of many, dies, and is afterward exalted. Jesus and the apostles apply this passage to His saving work (Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Luke 22:37; Acts 8:26–35; 1 Peter 2:21–25).

Notice who makes the connection

These examples are not based on visual similarity alone. Jesus or the New Testament writers explicitly identify and explain each connection.

READ RESPONSIBLY

Seven habits for seeing Jesus without forcing the text

01**Read the passage first**

Identify its setting, audience, genre, main point, and place in its biblical book before moving to a Jesus connection.

02**Place it in the whole story**

Ask where the passage belongs: creation, fall, promise, Israel, kingdom, exile, restoration, Jesus, church, or new creation.

03**Look for an explicit New Testament use**

Search quotations, cross-references, and explanations. A connection made by Scripture carries greater authority than one based only on our imagination.

04**Trace the theme across several passages**

Do not jump from one shared word to a conclusion. Watch how a promise, role, institution, or theme develops through the Bible.

05**Compare and contrast**

Biblical patterns include both likeness and difference. Moses mediates a covenant; Jesus mediates a better covenant. David rules Israel; Jesus rules forever.

06**Do not turn every detail into a symbol**

A tent peg, number, color, or minor character is not automatically a coded reference to Jesus. The passage and the rest of Scripture must support the connection.

07**Return to worship and obedience**

Seeing Jesus should deepen trust, gratitude, repentance, hope, and faithful following—not merely produce interesting information.

A dependable order

Original context → place in the biblical story → later biblical connection → fulfillment in Jesus → faithful response today.



COMMON QUESTIONS

Is Jesus in every verse?

Not as a direct prediction, symbol, or hidden name. Every verse belongs to the Bible that leads to Jesus, but each passage contributes differently. A genealogy, proverb, lament, law, or battle account should first be read according to what it actually says and does within Scripture.

Is the Old Testament mainly a list of predictions?

No. It is the true account of God's work with creation and Israel, containing Law, history, wisdom, poetry, prophecy, and promise. Its people and events mattered in their own time while also preparing for the Messiah and God's completed kingdom.

Does fulfillment mean the first meaning was unimportant?

No. God worked through real people and events. The exodus truly rescued Israel before it became a pattern that helps explain Christ's greater rescue. Fulfillment grows from the earlier meaning rather than replacing it.

What if the New Testament applies a passage unexpectedly?

New Testament writers sometimes show a fuller pattern or completion that may not be obvious from the Old Testament passage alone. Read the earlier passage, the later use, and the wider biblical theme together. Let inspired Scripture teach the connection before building similar ones yourself.

Do Jewish readers understand these passages differently?

Yes. Jewish interpretations do not accept the New Testament's claim that Jesus is the Messiah. Christians should explain their convictions honestly and respectfully, recognizing that Christ-centered interpretation rests on Jesus' identity, resurrection, and the apostles' witness—not on dismissing the Old Testament's Jewish setting.

A safe center

The whole Bible points to Jesus, but not every possible connection is equally clear. Hold tightly to what Scripture explicitly teaches and humbly test broader patterns in context.



WANT TO GO DEEPER?

A closer look at Christ-centered interpretation

Typology

Typology studies God-designed patterns in biblical history. A type is an earlier person, event, institution, or role surpassed by a later fulfillment—often called the antitype. Adam and Christ, Passover and the cross, or priesthood and Jesus' high-priestly work are examples Scripture develops (Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 8–10).

Typology is not free-form allegory

Responsible typology follows patterns grounded in biblical history and confirmed by the development of Scripture. Free-form allegory assigns hidden spiritual meanings to details without evidence from the passage or the rest of the Bible. Biblical writers sometimes use allegory intentionally (Galatians 4:21–31), but readers should not assume every detail conceals a second meaning.

Christ-centered and Christ-completed

Christ-centered reading asks how a passage belongs within the saving story centered in Jesus. Christ-completed reading also asks where that story is headed: Christ's return, resurrection, judgment, and renewed creation.

Covenant and kingdom

God's covenants with Noah, Abraham, Israel, David, and the promised new covenant organize major movements of Scripture. Jesus fulfills covenant promises and reigns as King, while faithful Christians may differ over how particular promises relate to Israel and the church (Luke 1:68–75; 22:20; Romans 9–11).

Already and not yet

Jesus has already inaugurated God's kingdom, defeated sin and death, and poured out the Spirit. Believers still await His return, bodily resurrection, final judgment, and new creation (Matthew 12:28; 1 Corinthians 15:20–28; Revelation 21–22).

Fuller meaning under divine authorship

Because God is Scripture's ultimate author, later revelation can disclose fuller significance within earlier words and events without denying their original meaning. Christians describe this differently. Follow connections demonstrated by Scripture and remain humble where a pattern is less explicit (2 Peter 1:20–21).

Go deeper without losing the center

The aim is not to make every passage say the same thing. It is to hear each passage faithfully and recognize how God's many words and works converge in His Son.



YOUR NEXT STEP

Practice with the Passover story

Read Exodus 12:1–32 slowly. Note the original danger, God’s instructions, the lamb, the blood, the meal, and the rescue. Then read John 1:29; Luke 22:14–20; 1 Corinthians 5:7–8; and 1 Peter 1:18–19. Write down what the New Testament carries forward and what is greater in Jesus.

A simple reading path

Read Genesis 1–3; 12:1–3; Exodus 12; 2 Samuel 7:8–16; Psalm 110; Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Luke 24; John 1; Romans 5; Hebrews 8–10; and Revelation 21–22. These passages provide a compact tour from creation to new creation.

Questions to carry with you

- What does this passage mean in its original setting?
- Where does it belong in the Bible’s unfolding story?
- Does it contain a promise, pattern, role, institution, or major theme?
- Does Jesus or a New Testament writer connect it explicitly to Christ?
- How is Jesus similar—and how is He greater?
- Am I following Scripture or depending on an imaginative resemblance?
- How should this truth shape my trust, worship, hope, or obedience?

Helpful passages for further study

Genesis 3:15; 12:1–3; 22:15–18; Exodus 12; Deuteronomy 18:15–19; 2 Samuel 7:8–16; Psalms 2; 22; 110; Isaiah 9:1–7; 52:13–53:12; Jeremiah 31:31–34; Luke 24:13–49; John 5:31–47; Romans 5:12–21; 1 Corinthians 10:1–13; 15:20–28; Galatians 3; Hebrews 1–10; 1 Peter 1–2; Revelation 21–22.

The goal is confidence—not dependence

Use this guide as a starting point, not a substitute for Scripture. Open your Bible, verify every connection in context, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you see and follow Jesus faithfully.

Made to be shared

There is no charge to use or share this resource. You may print it, copy it, and pass it along so others are encouraged to open and study the Bible. Please preserve source acknowledgments, do not sell the resource, and do not represent the content as error-free.