

Title: On ONE of the biblical-theological themes (1000 words; 30%): covenant, exodus, temple, mission, kingdom of God. A theme will be assigned to you.

– Using the biblical-theological approach outlined in this course, consider how your theme develops within the progressive revelation of Scripture. Do not just outline the theme in general. You must mention points of continuity, discontinuity and escalation as the theme unfolds from the OT to the NT.

Course: Biblical Theology

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DECLARATION

I certify that this ASSIGNMENT is my own work. I have acknowledged all material and sources used in it, and that I have not plagiarised in part or whole the work of others without stating the references.

Good evening, today I'd like to explore the themes of Exodus through the approach of Biblical Theology. But as always, let us first dedicate this time to the Lord:

Dear Lord, I commit my words and thoughts to you. Holy Spirit, take charge of this time and let me speak according to your guidance and will, the lessons and truths you want to convey. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Now to begin with, the discipline of Biblical Theology attempts to explain how the whole of the Bible – from Old Testament to New Testament, Genesis to Revelation – conveys a unified message.¹ Individual books of the Bible may have been written by many different humans², and contain their own distinct points and lessons for the reader, but in harmony together they present the greater overall story intended by their ultimate author – God.

The idea can be likened to a TV show with an episodic format, but also a grand overarching plot underlying the story progression – where each episode can stand alone in its own right and might even be scripted by different writers, but also forms part of the grander narrative that ties together the whole series. Episodes can be *littered* with cleverly included references, foreshadowing and setups leading to the full reveal of what the whole story is all about.

As a demonstration of this concept, I shall use the Exodus narrative – a long-running 'episode' in the Old Testament, full of events and typology that the New Testament reveals was pointing to the life and work of Christ all along.

The Exodus was *the* formative event of the Israelites – the time when they were birthed as an independent nation, pledging loyalty to YHWH as their sole sovereign and god.³ With this important milestone in mind, several Old Testament prophets (Isa 40:3, Jer 16:14-15, Mal 3:1) spoke about a time when the Israelites were scattered out of the Promised Land and into the ends of the earth – God's just punishment for their constant rebellion and idolatry⁴.

However, just as Moses had once led the Israelites in an Exodus out of Egypt – from slavery to freedom – YHWH promises an escalation: a future, new and greater Exodus⁵ for all peoples, from death to life. It would represent continuity in that YHWH would still be the one whom Himself carries out this momentous task – but also discontinuity in that it would not be liberation from physical slavery, but freedom from the power of sin and death.

Mark 1:1-3 makes clear that these prophecies were in fact pointing toward Christ as their fulfilment. Not only that, but as both the Isaiah and Malachi passages are clearly about preparing YHWH's way and sending YHWH's messenger, Mark portrays Christ as the very same YHWH who gave those prophecies in the first place.⁶

Indeed, the very one whose divine glory Isaiah saw in Isaiah 6:1 is said by John 12:41 to have been Jesus (a point which even the Jehovah's Witnesses – who go to great lengths in denying that

¹ T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D.A. Carson & Graeme Goldsworthy, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (IL/USA: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Perlego Edition, Part One, Biblical Theology as construction site, Analysis and synthesis

² Jerry L. Sumney, *The Bible: An Introduction* (IL/USA: IVP Academic 2021), Perlego Edition, Chapter 1, The Bible: A Collection

³ L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption* (MN/USA: Fortress Press, 2020), Perlego Edition, Chapter Three

⁴ Walter A. Elwell and Robert W. Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey* (MI/USA: Baker Publishing Group, 2013), 36

⁵ Morales, *Exodus Old and New*, Perlego Edition, Chapter Nine

⁶ Anthony Rogers, "THE "HEAVENLY" & "EARTHLY" YAHWEH: A PROTO-TRINITARIAN INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS 19:24 Part II," in *Our God is Triune: Essays in Biblical Theology*, edited by Michael R Burgos Jr (N.p.: Church Militant Publications, 2018), 77-78.

Jesus is divine – inadvertently admit⁷). Elsewhere, the New Testament also plainly states that Jesus is the same YHWH who carried out the first Exodus (Jude 5, 1 Cor 10:1-4, 9). Hence, it really should come as no surprise that Jesus Christ would be the one to carry out the new Exodus just as YHWH carried out the first Exodus.

The life and ministry of Jesus indeed represents a greater Exodus. Hosea 11:1-2 in its literary context clearly refers to the past history of Israel – YHWH saving them out of Pharaoh's hand through the Exodus, but followed by their ungrateful response in worshipping Baal once establishing themselves the Promised Land. Yet Matt 2:13-15 cites this same passage from Hosea as prophecy, future to Hosea's lifetime, and tells us that this greater fulfilment is found in the life of Jesus.

An examination of events in Jesus' life as recorded in the Gospels draws intentional parallels to the Exodus narrative in the Old Testament.⁸ For example, after his birth Moses came under threat of death as commanded by the ruler of the land, but was saved from this danger (Exo 1:22 - 2:10). Jesus experienced a similar threat after His birth (Matt 2:13-16). YHWH calls Israel His 'firstborn' (Exo 4:22), and Jesus Himself is called 'firstborn' over all creation (Col 1:15). Just as Moses spent 40 years in the wilderness before returning to Egypt to challenge Pharaoh (Acts 7:29-34), Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness before starting His public ministry (Mark 1:12-13).

Immediately preceding the Exodus out of Egypt, YHWH instituted the Passover ritual whereby a lamb is killed and its blood saves the Israelites from death (Exo 12:1-28). Jesus is called the Passover lamb (1 Cor 5:7) whose blood saves us (Eph 1:7) by taking away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

Just as the Plagues on Egypt were a sign of YHWH defeating the gods of Egypt (Exo 12:12)⁹, Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection marked the final defeat of all spiritual powers and principalities (Col 2:14-15, Eph 1:19-23)¹⁰.

Just as YHWH 'rebuked' the sea allowing the Israelites to cross over safely (Psalm 106:9), Jesus 'rebuked' the wind and waves for the disciples to cross over safely (Mark 4:35-41). Whereas YHWH fed the Israelites with bread from heaven (Exo 16:4,13-21) – Jesus declares that He is the true bread from heaven sent by the Father (John 6:30-35).

Just as Moses climbed to the mountaintop where he entered God's presence and returned with a shining face (Exo 34:29-35), Jesus on the mountaintop shone with light (Matt 17:1-5) – greater than Moses who attended Him, and whom God commands "Listen to him!" (in an echo of Exo 23:20-21¹¹).

The list could go on and on, from the Israelites being 'baptized' in the Red Sea (1 Cor 10:1-2) to the Law, tabernacle and sacrifices being a shadow of Christ's final and completed work (Heb 8:4-5, 9:22-24, 10:1,12-14).

Hence the Exodus account in the Old Testament is but a foreshadowing of God's great master plan – and this is according to the New Testament, that is, no less an inspired authority than the very same YHWH who brought the Israelites out of Egypt.

⁷ James White, "IS JESUS YAHWEH?", *Alpha & Omega Ministries* (accessed 05-Jun-2022): <https://www.aomin.org/aoblog/jehovahs-witnesses/is-jesus-yahweh/>

⁸ Anthony Rogers, "Dr. Dale Tuggy Vs Anthony Rogers: The Book of Mark Teaches Jesus is the One True God? EP 158", *The Gospel Truth* (accessed 05-Jun-2022): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6vH3G0kf-c> [9:39 to 24:42]

⁹ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* (Bellingham/USA: Lexham Press, 2015), 150

¹⁰ Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, 330.

¹¹ Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*, 142.

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