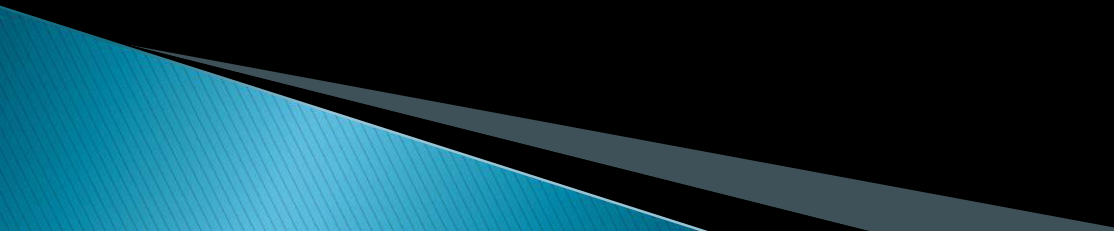


# The Old Testament

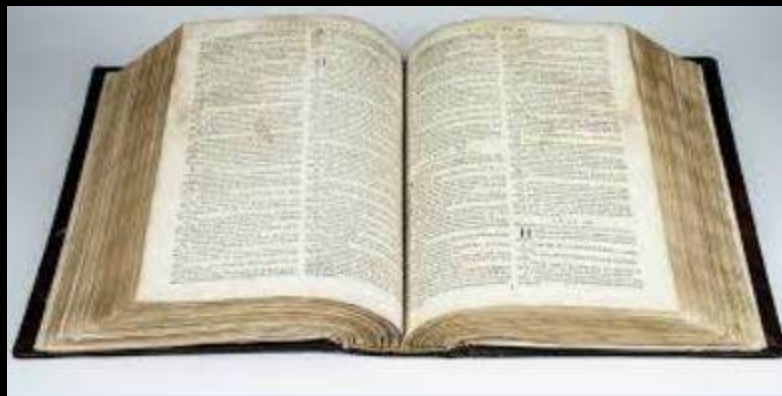
## Lesson 1: Introduction

St Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church  
Preservants Course

# Contents

1. What is the message of the Holy Bible?
  2. Relationship between the OT and NT
  3. Why read the Old Testament?
  4. Structure of the OT
  5. Unity and harmony of the OT and NT
  6. How to read the Old Testament
  7. Languages of the Old Testament
- 

What is the message of the Holy Bible?



# The Holy Bible: the greatest love story

- ▶ The Holy Bible is God's love story toward mankind.
- ▶ God is our Father, our bridegroom, our shepherd
- ▶ The Holy Bible reveals God's **PLAN** to **reconcile us** and **restore us** to our former state as his children, his bride, and the sheep of his pasture.

# God's plan fulfilled in His Son

- ▶ *For if when we were enemies we were **reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (Romans 5:10)*
- ▶ *Now all things are of God, who has **reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ**. (2 Corinthians 5:18)*
- ▶ *and that He might **reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross** (Ephesians 2:16)*

When did God plan our salvation?

- ▶ *He indeed was foreordained **before the foundation of the world**, but was manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter 1:18)*
- ▶ *All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb **slain from the foundation of the world**. (Rev 13:8)*






- ▶ To reconcile us with Him, God had to send His Son to incarnate, shed his blood on the Cross and die, and raise again.
- ▶ Adam and Eve were created 5000 years BC, but God's plan was fulfilled 5000 years later.



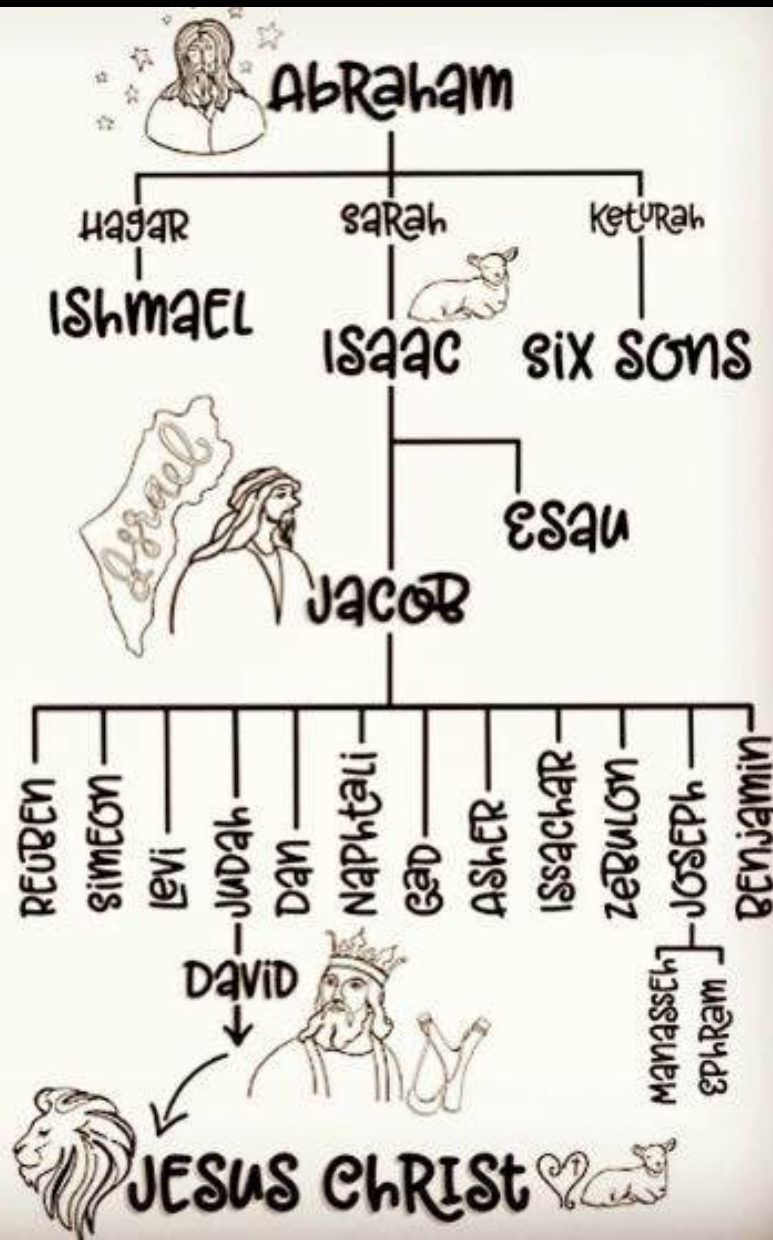


Why did it take 5000 years for God to fulfil His plan?

God had to first introduce us to some unfamiliar concepts:

- ▶ 1. To tell us about our fallen human condition and our need for redemption
  - ▶ 2. Shedding of blood and sacrifice for remission of sin.
  - ▶ 3. The incarnation of the Son of God, and His sufferings, and resurrection.
  - ▶ 4. He had to raise up a nation (the Jewish nation) through Him Christ would be born
- 

# son of David-son of Abraham



- ▶ From this nation came prophets through Him God would reveal His plan.



# Relationship of the OT and NT

- ▶ So without the OT, we would not understand why Christ had to come and be incarnate and die on the cross.
- ▶ The OT and NT are **ONE** book.
  - OT: God **REVEALS** His plan for our redemption
  - NT: God **FULFILLS** His plan in Jesus Christ
- ▶ The Old Testament and New testament are not two books but **two chapters** of **ONE** and the SAME book.

- ▶ *The New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is unveiled in the New (St Augustine)*



# The OT and NT are **one** book



OT: foundation  
NT: Building

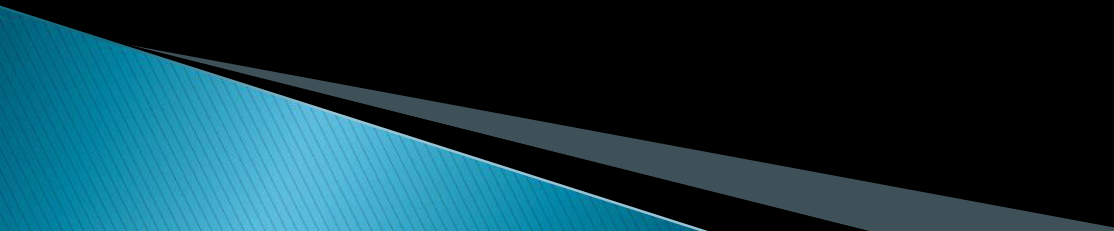



OT: root  
NT: tree



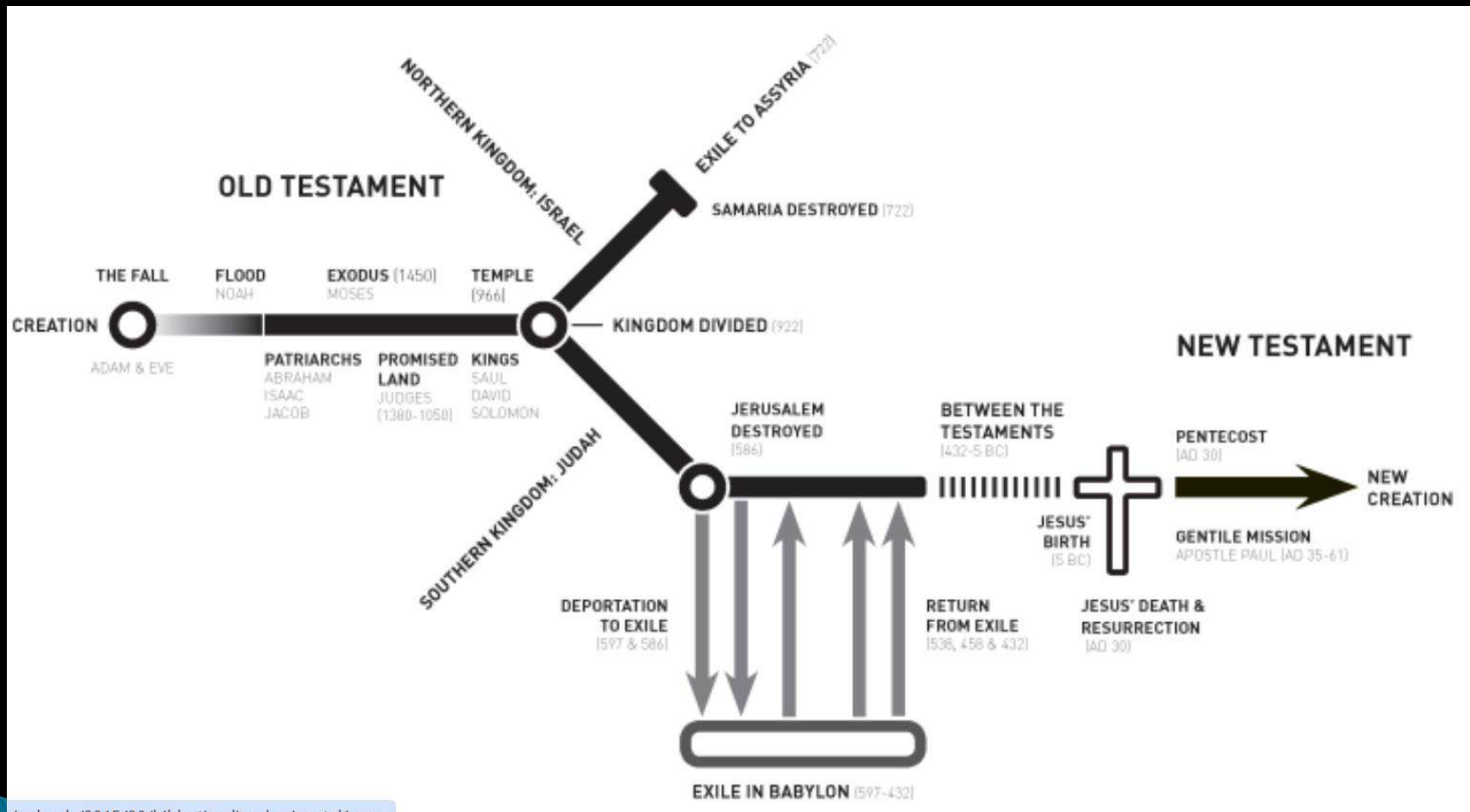
# Why read the OT?

The OT tells about:

1. The attributes and character of God
  2. The identity of God: the Holy Trinity.
  3. The origin of humanity and the origin of the universe.
  4. The origin of sin and death
- 

5. introduces us to the need for sacrifice and shedding of blood for forgiveness of sin
  6. It gives us prophecies of every aspect of Christ's redemptive work:
  7. It gives an account of the chosen people through whom Christ would come, and through whom he would reveal his plan of salvation for the world.
  8. It gives us role models of faith and virtue
  9. Source of prayers and praises. Many liturgical prayers of the Church taken from Old Testament.
- 

# Timeline of the Old Testament



# The Old Testament Canon

The Protestant Canon: 39 books in 5 divisions

LAW - 5	POETRY - 5	MAJOR PROPHETS - 5
GENESIS	JOB	ISAIAH
EXODUS	PSALMS	JEREMIAH
LEVITICUS	PROVERBS	LAMENTATIONS
NUMBERS	ECCLESIASTES	EZEKIEL
DEUTERONOMY	SONG OF SOLOMON	DANIEL
HISTORY - 12		MINOR PROPHETS - 12
JOSHUA		HOSEA
JUDGES		JOEL
RUTH		AMOS
1 SAMUEL		OBADIAH
2 SAMUEL		JONAH
1 KINGS		MICAH
2 KINGS		NAHUM
1 CHRONICLES		HABAKKUK
2 CHRONICLES		ZEPHANIAH
EZRA		HAGGAI
NEHEMIAH		ZECHARIAH
ESTHER		MALACHI

# The additional books

- ▶ The OT canon according to Orthodox/Catholic Churches have additional books.
- ▶ These are not contained in the New King James Version / NIV because they are not considered canonical.
- ▶ They are referred to as Deuterocanonical or Apocryphal by the Protestant Church

# The additional books

- ▶ OT in Orthodox/Catholic Churches additional books. In Coptic Church
  - Tobit (Great Lent)
  - Judith,
  - Prayer of Manasseh (Bright Saturday)
  - Sequel of Esther,
  - Wisdom of Solomon (Holy Week)
  - Wisdom of Joshua (Son of Sirach), (Lent, Holy Week)
  - Baruch (Good Friday)
  - Sequel of the Book of Daniel (Midnight Praise)
  - 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees
  - Psalm 151 (Bright Saturday)

# Diversity of the Old Testament

- ▶ The Old Testament contains 46 books
- ▶ Written over a timespan of 15 centuries
  - Pentateuch: 13<sup>th</sup> Century BC
  - Maccabees 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC
- ▶ Over 35 authors
  - Some highly educated, e.g. Moses
  - Some less so: e.g. Amos was a shepherd
  - Various social status: Solomon a king, Amos a shepherd
- ▶ Written in different places



# Unity of the Holy Bible

- ▶ Despite this diversity, there is an amazing unity in the Holy Bible
- ▶ The Holy Bible in its entirety despite having 73 books reads as one book, having one author and one message.

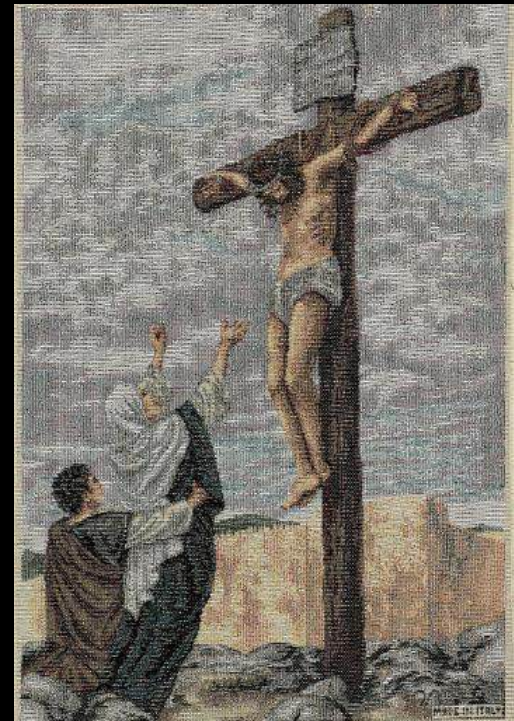
# One author: God

- ▶ The authors are inspired by God.
  - *All Scripture is given by **inspiration of God** (2 Timothy 3:16)*
  - *For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were **moved by the Holy Spirit**. (2 Peter 1:21)*

# One message: Salvation through Christ

- ▶ Jesus Christ is the focus of both OT and NT
- ▶ If the OT reveals to us God's plan for salvation, the NT is the fulfillment of this plan.
- ▶ *The New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is unveiled in the New (St Augustine)*

- ▶ OT and NT are like the vertical and horizontal cords of a tapestry. The image formed is Christ.



# The OT testifies of Christ

- ▶ *You search the Scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which **testify of me.** (John 5:39)*
- ▶ *For if you believe Moses, you would believe Me; for **He wrote about Me.** (John 5:46)*
- ▶ *And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things **concerning Himself.** (Luke 24:27)*

# OT prophecies

## ▶ DIRECT PROPHECIES

- *“Behold the Virgin shall conceive and give birth to Son and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14)*

## ▶ TYPES: person/event/thing which foreshadows (points to) Christ (person/work) or the Church

- Events
  - E.g. Crossing of Red Sea → Baptism
- Things
  - E.g. Tabernacle → the incarnation and Redemption
- Persons

# Christ referred to the OT

- ▶ Referred to OT Characters:
  - E.g. Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Jonah, Daniel, Solomon, David, Queen of Sheba.
- ▶ He quoted from the OT: “It is written....”
- ▶ He interpreted the OT events to Himself:
  - Jonah in the belly of the whale
  - Manna in the wilderness
  - Bronze serpent



# Apostles also referred to the OT

- ▶ St Paul referred to OT events as types
  - The Passover Lamb → Christ the True lamb
  - Crossing of the Red Sea → Baptism:
  - Priesthood of Melchizedek → Priesthood of Christ
  - OT Sacrifices → the one sacrifice of Christ
- ▶ St Peter
  - The flood at the time of Noah → baptism

# Studying the OT

- ▶ Typological interpretation
  - Seeing the events and persons and things as types of Christ
  - School of Alexandria (Origen, Didymus the Blind, Cyril of Alexandria)
- ▶ Literal interpretation
  - Stories are interpreted literally to obtain moral lessons.
  - School of Antioch (John Chrysostom)

# Example

- ▶ Joseph the Righteous:
  - Literal interpretation:
    - Favouritism led to envy of his brothers.
    - Joseph chaste and faithful to God.
    - God exalts those who are faithful to him
    - Joseph forgave his brothers, and saw God's providence.

## ▶ Joseph the Righteous

### ◦ Typological interpretation:

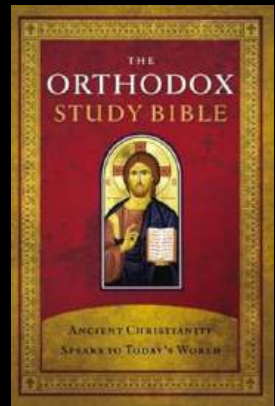
Joseph	Christ
sold by his brothers	sold by his brothers, the Jews
Taken as slave into Egypt	Came into the world as a servant
Falsely accused	Falsely accused
Imprisoned	Was placed in a tomb
Exalted to the right hand of Pharoah	Resurrected and ascended to the right hand of the Father
Saved the world from famine	Gave us His Body and Blood

# Languages of the OT

- ▶ Hebrew: most of the OT
- ▶ Aramaic: 268 verses
- ▶ Greek (Septuagint)
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC in Alexandria for Jewish Diaspora
  - Translated from Hebrew to Greek
  - Seventy two translators (6 x 12).
  - NT writers also wrote in Greek, so they quoted from the Septuagint.
  - The Church Fathers also used the Septuagint

# New King James vs Orthodox Study Bible

- ▶ The New King James is translated primarily from the Hebrew OT (Masoretic Text) except verses where it would be closer to the Christian Faith.
- ▶ The Orthodox Study Bible is based entirely on the Septuagint
  - Includes all the “Deuterocanonical Books”
  - Note: The Coptic OT is translated from Greek.



# NKJV vs OSB

- ▶ *<sup>5</sup> Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. (Hebrews 10:5)*
- ▶ *Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. (Psalm 40:6) (NKJV)*
- ▶ *Sacrifice and offering you did not will. But a body you prepared for me. (Psalm 39:7) Orthodox Study Bible*



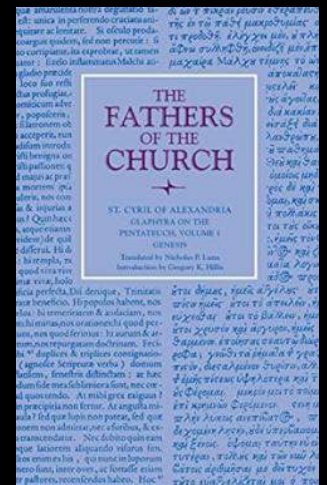
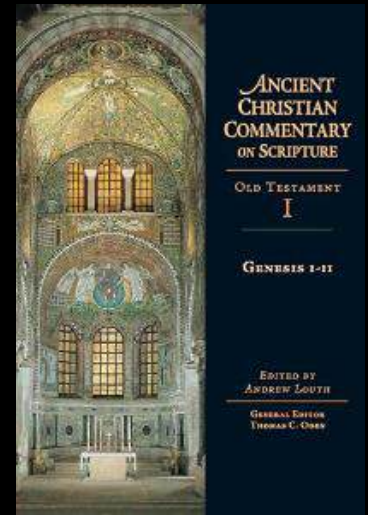
# Reading commentaries

## Catena Commentaries (multiple authors):

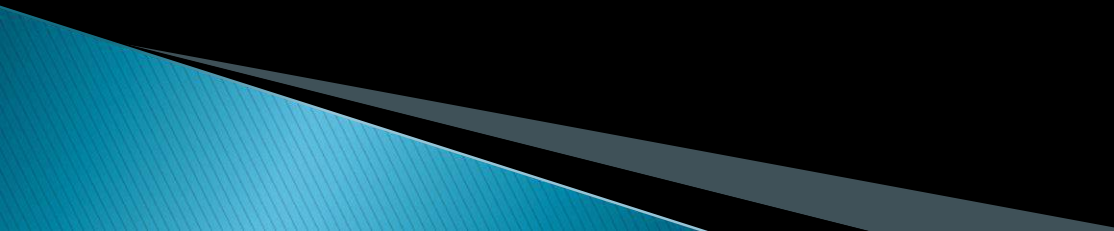
- ▶ Father Tadros Malaty
- ▶ Ancient Christian Commentaries on Scripture
- ▶ Catena website

## Single Author commentaries:

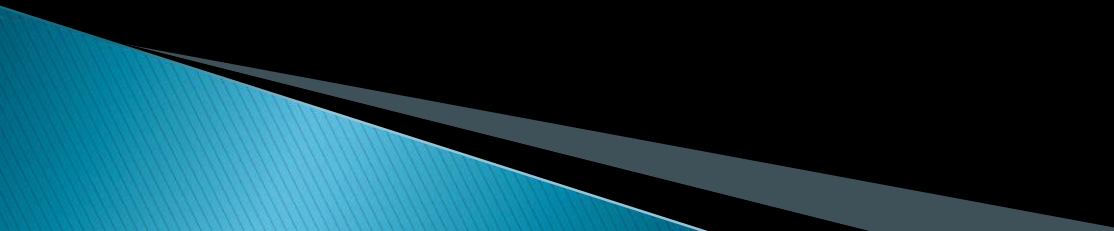
- ▶ NPNF
  - St Augustine (Psalms)
- ▶ Father of the Church series:
  - St Didymus, St Cyril Alex, Origen
  - St John Chrysostom



*“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.” (Matthew 13:44)*



# Summary

- ▶ The OT and NT are **ONE** book
  - ▶ We cannot understand the NT without the OT.
  - ▶ The OT **reveals** God's plan of salvation in Christ.
  - ▶ The NT **fulfils** that plan
  - ▶ The NT is hidden in the OT, and the OT is revealed in the NT
  - ▶ We can interpret the OT from a typological or literal perspective.
- 

# The next four talks

- ▶ Talk 2: The Pentateuch/The Law: Christ my redeemer
- ▶ Talk 3: The Historical Books: Christ my king
- ▶ Talk 4: The Prophets: Christ my hope
- ▶ Talk 5: The Poetic/Wisdom books: Christ my praise and wisdom