

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript
Episode 333
The Israelite King and Jesus as King
July 19, 2020

Teacher: Dr. Michael S. Heiser (MH)
Host: Trey Stricklin (TS)

Episode Summary

Listeners to this podcast know that the New Testament's use of the Old Testament is crucial to being an intelligent reader of the New Testament. Usually this takes the form of a New Testament writer citing a specific Old Testament passage and either interpreting it or applying it. Sometimes the relationship between the testaments is much broader, where New Testament writers presume an entire backdrop of worldview elements or practices. In this episode we illustrate how the gospel writers intentionally present Jesus in the context of specific elements of Israelite kingship. Knowing this helps us get more out of the gospel presentations of Jesus' life.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 333: The Israelite King and Jesus as King. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing?

MH: Pretty good. What's new?

TS: Well, let's see. I've been watching a little bit of Netflix. And you're never going to guess what I've been enjoying on Netflix.

MH: I don't know.

TS: It is an old '80s TV show: *Highway to Heaven* with Michael Landon. [laughs] Did you ever watch that show?

MH: I remember that. I watched a couple shows. I'm familiar with it. Victor French was one of the actors in that, but I don't remember what his character's name was. And of course, Michael Landon was in there. Yeah, I probably caught that three or four times. Same thing with *Touched by an Angel*. I probably watched half a dozen of those. So yeah, I'm familiar with it.

TS: Yeah, yeah. It's awesome. I'm going old school. So I watched it when it was on as a kid. I didn't see every episode. That's what great about Netflix now. I can see all the seasons, and in order. They're awesome.

MH: Yeah. Well, I would've never guessed that. Netflix would've frozen me, because I don't watch much TV anyway. But Drenna's latest thing is on the History Channel. And no, it's not Ancient Aliens. [TS laughs] It's that show *Alone*, where people go out in some remote location or whatever and then they have to survive. So yeah, she's been into that. I've probably watched maybe ten of those, just going in and out of the room. Because she binged the series. I think it's, like, five seasons or something. But yeah, I caught maybe a dozen of those.

TS: Is it a reality...? I don't think I'd heard of that one. Is it reality stuff?

MH: It is. There's no camera crew there. They take cameras themselves and they go out to like Vancouver Island. I think this is what got her attention, because we lived really close to Vancouver Island. It's a rain forest in British Columbia. It's the only one in that hemisphere. So that's where they sent these people, just to survive. I guess they made it 50 or 60 days. But they just take cameras out themselves. And the crew (or the people responsible for the show) will show up periodically to give them new batteries and weigh them (that kind of thing). But they get no external supplies or anything like that. They have to live off the land, which is pretty difficult, to say the least. So she was into that. They put them in Patagonia one year. The latest season has them in the Arctic. And the prize is \$500,000. But the one for the Arctic is \$1,000,000 if they can make it to 100 days. So whoever lasts the longest is the winner and nobody knows who has dropped out. So it's just this... It's really mental. A lot of the survival is how it plays with people's minds, to be alone for that long. And not know how much longer you have to do it. So it's interesting. To me it's psychologically interesting.

TS: Yeah.

MH: "Okay, you ate a mouse. Good for you." [TS laughs] You know? I guess I would do the same thing if I had to survive. But what's more interesting is just how it plays with their heads. That would be much more of a challenge.

TS: Yeah. Well, as soon as I finish *Highway to Heaven*, Mike, I will check out *Alone*.

MH: There you go. [laughs]

TS: I've got a few seasons to go. I think there are four seasons. I'm still on season one. But it sure is nice, just how simple things were back then.

MH: Yep.

TS: It's nice—a good, wholesome show, just like the Naked Bible Podcast.

MH: Yep, not trying to preach anything to you. You know, it's just...

TS: It's true.

MH: Really, it's like... It's not, like, a social, cultural, "Here's the way we want you to think, in the way we tell this story or the content of the show." Nowadays, that's just so unusual.

TS: Well, that's Michael Landon. That was kind of his whole thing. I mean, he wrote and directed a lot of these episodes. And that's how *Little House on the Prairie* kind of was—just wholesome. It taught you good lessons by example and really didn't preach at you. So *Highway to Heaven* is kind of that, and *Little House on the Prairie* as well. I grew up with both of those shows.

5:00

MH: Yeah. It was entertainment that never lost sight of the fact that it's entertainment. [laughs]

TS: Right.

MH: So yeah, a distraction from life. TV as it used to be.

TS: [laughs] So please tell me that what we're talking about today can be tied in to *Highway to Heaven*.

MH: [laughs] I don't know. That's actually an interesting question. Um... In theory, it could be. What we're going to talk about today is... The title of the episode is "The Israelite King and Jesus as King." And what we want to get into here is how... I'll just give it in a nutshell before we actually jump in here. There were stages to kingship in the Old Testament in Israel. So the Gospel writers will mimic those stages of kingship in the way they present the story of Jesus. So in theory, if there was a Jesus character in *Highway to Heaven*, the writer could put him through these three stages, and there we go. So in theory, it could work. I don't think that it does. I'll have to tap into your encyclopedic knowledge of *Highway to Heaven* [laughs] once you get through all the seasons. [laughs]

TS: Yeah, sounds good. Definitely, we'll circle back and see if it fits.

MH: Yeah, we'll circle back and I'll ask you a question. [laughs] Yeah, I actually ought to do that just to see what your reaction would be.

But anyway, yeah, as I telegraphed here, what we've been doing in these standalone episodes is to take a look at how the Old Testament operates within the New Testament—how the New Testament repurposes Old Testament content. We've had a couple of episodes that deal with Exodus themes, for example.

But that, of course, isn't the only way that this happens. And the point of doing this is really twofold. First, I want to inform listeners as to how the Old Testament informs *us* about what we're reading in the New Testament. Lo and behold, we have this New Testament thing, but three quarters of your Bible is this other thing—the Bible that Jesus actually had, the Bible that the apostles actually had. That was your Old Testament. And believe it or not, your knowledge of that will inform how intelligent and accurate of a reader you are of the New Testament. So that's one goal. And the other one is, I want to expose people to scholarship in this area. So I reference articles and we put them in the protected folder for MIQLAT newsletter subscribers. This is no different. We're going to do that again. But this is going to be a lot broader than the Exodus.

So anybody familiar with the life of David knows that God promised David a royal dynasty. That's 2 Samuel 7. He makes a covenant with David to this effect, that basically, "It's only going to be your heirs that have a legitimate claim to this throne from here on out, in perpetuity." Now, again, that's familiar. That's the familiar part. And since Jesus is from the line of David, we think of Jesus as the messiah-king, as the son of David, because that's the way he gets described here and there in the Gospels. And to be blunt about it, for most Bible students, that sort of sums up the relationship that they're aware of when it comes to Jesus and Israelite kingship. "He's the son of David. What else is there to know?" Well, there's a lot to know, because the more you know about the institution and its trappings, the more intelligent of a reader you will be when you get to the Gospels. Because the Gospel writers know this stuff, and they present Jesus in a certain way so that informed readers will pick up what they're laying down. They'll catch the references. They'll catch the progressions. They'll catch the presentation. They'll catch what the writer wants them to see between the lines or these subtexts.

I want to introduce this topic by introducing this article. I'm going to be dipping into this article and a few others. But we'll start with this one in this regard. W. Brian Shelton wrote an article in *Trinity Journal* back in 2004. It's volume 25 of the new series. That's 2004. And it's entitled, "An Ancient Israelite Pattern of Kingly Accession in the Life of Christ." And he begins the article this way:

10:00

In ancient Judaism, there is evidence that would-be kings engaged in a three-part pattern of accession before they ascended to the throne. These royal candidates would be anointed by a prophet, prove themselves [MH: to be kingly material] through a feat, and then finally receive an official coronation. This particular Jewish ideal, deeply rooted in its OT narratives and in ancient Near Eastern thought, is evident in the gospel narratives of Christ's life... This article examines the presence of this ancient ideal of a tripartite pattern [MH: these three steps—three stages] for kingly accession in the life of Christ. After

presenting the pattern in its OT context, it finds the same pattern in the NT record of Christ's life...

So this is what we want to talk about. And again, the goal is two-fold: 1) To make us a more intelligent reader of the New Testament by virtue of our knowledge of the Old—how the Old Testament content is repurposed in the New Testament. 2) And then expose people to the fact that, “Hey, there are actual studies on this. Scholars actually spend time that this and writing about it. This isn’t something you’re going to pick up in a devotional. This is something that you’re going to have to dip into serious material to learn about.” Or, of course, listen to this podcast. This is why we do what we do.

Now Shelton’s touchpoint for a number of his ideas is another book that I do recommend to listeners if you’re really into the history of Israel. And this is out of print, I believe, but you can still find it used on Amazon. And that is Baruch Halpern, and his book is called *The Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel*. This is a 1981 title, so it’s on the older side—almost 40 years old. But it’s kind of unique. There aren’t too many books like this that really look at the monarchy as a monarchy. Like what are the stages of accession? Is there some significance to biblical references to what a king wears—what he puts on, what he puts off? Rings, other jewelry, other items? All this kind of stuff. The officers of the court. The whole administration. The structure of the monarchy.

Let me just illustrate it this way. My wife and I... One of these shows that I *did* like to watch... I think we only watched the first two seasons. It took us forever (basically because of me). We liked *The Crown*. We haven’t dipped into season three yet because I don’t like the idea of all the actors and actresses changing. But that’s a different subject. But you get to learn about the monarchy, sort of how it works—the dos and the don’ts and the players and the people on the periphery, the rivalries and how things can be done within the system to get something done or impede something else from being done. Well, that’s kind of what Halpern’s book on *The Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel* is like. I have a copy. You can still get it used. And if you’re into this kind of stuff, I highly recommend it.

So what Shelton does in his article is summarize Halpern’s study in this regard (the accession material and its importance with respect to Israelite kingship) this way:

In 1981 Baruch Halpern introduced evidence of an ancient Jewish expectation that its leaders were to engage in distinct stages of progress as they accessed their positions of kingship. First, there was to be an anointing or [MH: some kind of] designation of the potential leader...

It wasn’t always anointing, as we’ll get to in a moment. But that’s the first step. Some anointing or some official “Hey, this is the guy.”

First, there was to be an anointing or designation of the potential leader to inaugurate his period of accession. [MH: This was just to sort of get him into the loop.] Second, there was to be a demonstration of his ability as a warrior and ruler—a proof of his worthiness to be king. Finally, there was to be a coronation following this demonstration, permanently and charismatically confirming him as the rightful ruler.

So those are the three steps. Just to even pare that down: three steps—three phases. 1) There's a designation or some consecration of who the guy—who the candidate—is. 2) Then, that candidate has to demonstrate that he's fit to be king. 3) Then, there's a coronation.

15:00

Now Shelton (and Halpern, for that matter), they go through ancient Near Eastern parallels to this, mostly focusing on Mesopotamian and Ugaritic material. What I'm going to do here... I'm not going to go into all that material. I just want to sketch the three stages and then look at how the Gospels imitate them—how the Gospels repurpose them. So the first one (designation) is sort of the obvious one. This is the one that we'd all recognize out of the gate. And typically, the candidate to be the king would be anointed (like by the prophet). Samuel anointing David to be king instead of Saul, and we know that from 1 Samuel 16. Those are kind of the obvious ones. And of course, Samuel anoints Saul. This is what we pick up on, because it's pretty transparent as we go through. Shelton writes, in this regard:

During the Israelite monarchy, Jews believed that Yahweh himself designated Israel's king-elect [MH: think president-elect] or savior-judge. The event of designation took on many aspects in ancient literature, most notably an explicit public or private unction [MH: anointing] (as with David, Saul, Solomon, Jehu) or an implicit unction (as with Abijah, Jeroboam, Baasha).

Now the explicit ones are the big names (Saul, David, and Solomon). So in 1 Samuel 10:1... But just so that we get the one with Saul here.

Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, "Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over his people Israel?"

"Prince" there is actually an important technical term. Elsewhere you have *nagid*. But in this case, the ESV sort of... We don't have the *nagid* in this passage, but the translator is still using the wording that you'll find elsewhere. But it's an official status. We'll just leave it there. "Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over his people Israel?" Of course, the answer is, "Yeah. Look at what you just did."

And, of course, in 1 Samuel 16, we get Samuel doing this to David. Solomon has an anointing in 1 Kings 1:34. Let me just turn there real quick. If you've read the Old Testament, you know that there was a controversy around Solomon becoming the next king, not only because of the circumstances of his birth and the whole Bathsheba/David/Uriah affair and all that stuff, but there was someone who considered themselves (and not without reason) to be the next in line. So there was a controversy about the succession. So Adonijah presumed that he was supposed to be the heir to the throne and not Solomon. But when we get to 1 Kings 1, when we get to what King David actually wants, we find out that, "No, it's indeed Solomon. So verse 34 in 1 Kings 1 says:

³⁴ And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there [MH: in Gihon] anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'

And so this is what happens. So there's this official designation. In this case, it comes from David. And that is basically law then. Then Solomon has to deal with this pretender to the throne and whatnot.

So these are the easy ones to see. Now we have this other sort of category though—these implicit designations. And what Halpern (and Shelton after him) mean by this is, there's some sort of prophetic act. It's not an anointing, because that's just too transparent. That's too explicit. But there are passages (and there are transitions from one king to the next) in the biblical material where you don't get anointing but you get some sort of prophetic act or a divine declaration ("Thus says the Lord" kind of thing) that designates the next king, even if anointing is never actually mentioned.

20:00

So I want to go to one of these. I'm going to go to 1 Kings 11:29, just so that you get an idea of what Halpern and Shelton are referring to here. So this concerns Jeroboam. This, of course, is when the kingdom is going to split after Solomon's death. The kingdom is going to split in two and Jeroboam is going to be the one that takes control of the northern kingdom, which is going to get called Israel or Ephraim. The capital is going to be in Samaria and all that. And then the southern kingdom is the two tribes of Judah. So Jeroboam is over ten; Judah has two tribes. So this is that whole circumstance. Now if you go to 1 Kings 11:29 and you read this, it says... They've tried to convince Rehoboam to not be like his dad. [laughs] Okay? This is part of the whole complex. But you get into verse 29 and it says:

²⁹ And at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem [MH: this is leading up to this whole set of circumstances], the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite [MH: so we have a prophet here (Ahijah), kind of a minor character that nobody's going to really... you have to play Bible Trivial Pursuit to get this guy] found him on the road. Now Ahijah had dressed himself in a new garment, and the two of

them were alone in the open country. ³⁰ Then Ahijah laid hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces. ³¹ And he said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and will give you ten tribes ³² (but he shall have one tribe, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), ³³ because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and they have not walked in my ways...

So here we have a prophet prophesying the split of the kingdom. And when you get to the Rehoboam story, part of it is presented as “Rehoboam’s just an idiot.” But there’s a bigger issue here that gets mentioned here, and that is the idolatry. Because Solomon married all these women, they led him astray, and he worshiped... I mean, it’s his fault. It’s not their fault. But he worships these other gods. He allows them to be worshiped on holy ground, and so on and so forth. And so you have this prophet. God tells him to do this. “Thus says the Lord.” He tears his garment in twelve pieces. Gives ten to Jeroboam and says, “You’re going to be king over ten of these tribes.” Now there’s no anointing here. You can read through the whole thing. And he’s never anointed. Ahijah never pours oil on him. But this is an obvious prophetic act that designates Jeroboam to the office of kingship.

Now this isn’t contrary to the Davidic Covenant. This is just, “If you’re going to have a king,” not only just in ancient Israel, but the broader ancient Near Eastern world, “there’s a process to doing that.” And so even though Jeroboam is going to be illegitimate because he’s not Davidic, this is a judgment of God. And the same sort of procedural steps are at least observed or telecast to the reader—to somebody reading 1 Kings 11. They’re going to know that this was of God. This was a prophetic act. God is judging the twelve tribes for this or that reason. It’s a complex picture. It’s idolatry but it’s also Solomon’s just oppressing his people, which he wasn’t supposed to do. He’s multiplying horses. He’s multiplying wives. He’s doing this contrary to all the stuff that you’d read in the rules for kingship in Deuteronomy and all that stuff.

So there’s a complex of ideas here—complex reasons why Solomon is getting the kingdom yanked from him. But God is going to be working behind the scenes in these sets of circumstances to split the monarchy. But the reader knows what’s on the table here. And he knows that, at least in terms of a judgment, the hand of God is here. And the hand of God isn’t going to endorse what Jeroboam does with the authority and does with the power, setting up a new place of worship instead of Jerusalem—golden calves and all this kind of stuff. That isn’t the point that... Because God specifically says, “Look. We’re going to preserve what’s in Jerusalem here, the Davidic dynasty...” So what Jeroboam does isn’t

God's idea or ideal plan. God's not endorsing that. But he is endorsing the judgment of the monarchy.

So we have a prophetic act here. So that's what Halpern and Shelton mean by these implicit sorts of things. That you know that this person who calls themselves king, that, yep, a prophet actually said, "Thus says the Lord. This is the guy," through some activity—some statement, some activity.

Now the second step was, "Okay, if you're designated this way, then you need to demonstrate that you're worthy of the title. You're worthy of the office." And Shelton... Just a couple of sentences here from his article. He writes:

25:00

Like a savior-judge of ancient Near Eastern mythology, the Jewish king-elect proved his anointing and his "charisma" by defeating a foe. Halpern declares, "The designation of the earthly monarch precedes the real or ritual battle upon the successful conclusion of which, his permanent enthronement will ensue."

That's when the coronation will happen. Now in Saul's case... This is kind of interesting. I'm going to go to 1 Samuel 10. Because you actually get this sort of playing out in Saul's life. And it's kind of an obscure passage. Saul, of course... We started this passage already. He's anointed to be king when the passage begins. But after he's designated, then there's something else that's going to come into play here. I'm just going to read you a few verses. So he's been anointed by Samuel. And verse 2 says (Samuel is speaking to Saul):

² When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you, 'The donkeys that you went to seek are found [MH: remember Saul was out looking for his dad's donkeys. And that's when Samuel meets him and anoints him], and now your father has ceased to care about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, "What shall I do about my son?"' **³ Then you shall go on from there farther and come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. ⁴ And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand. ⁵ After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim [MH: which could be translated "the hill of God" or the "hill of the gods" or Gibeath-elohim—it's a place], where there is a garrison of the Philistines. And there, as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them, prophesying. ⁶ Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. ⁷ Now when these signs meet you [MH: here's a key statement], do what**

your hand finds to do, for God is with you. ⁸ Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do [MH: from that point on].”

So we have this cryptic statement, where he’s been anointed. Samuel tells him, “Hey, there’s going to be some things that happen to you. And I’m going to spell them out for you. And when you’re changed (especially when the prophesying thing happens through the Spirit of God and you go up to Gibeath-elohim), when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do.” Now remember the Philistines are there, and they’re the enemies of the Israelites, very obviously.

Now another source here I just want to read a little bit from... Because you look at that and you go, “I don’t really know what to do with that. What’s the point?” This is from Diana Edelman’s book, *King Saul in the Historiography of Judah*. This is volume 121 in the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series*. This is a 1991 book. This is still in print. She writes:

The fulfillment of the final part of the sign is to be Saul’s cue ‘to do what your hand finds to do’, that is, to perform a military deed under the guidance of the newly received divine spirit as the final event during Saul’s reported return home (v. 6). The completion of a military deed forms the second ‘testing’ step of the tripartite royal coronation ceremony.

In other words, it’s the second stage. Samuel could have just as well said, “Okay, Saul. You’re anointed now. There are going to be some things that happen to you. The Spirit of God is going to come upon you and you’re going to prophesy and you’re going to get this, that, and the other thing. You’re going to go up to Gibeath-elohim, where the Philistines are. Do the math. Show us you’re worthy of the designation.” I mean, the implication is, “You go up and you take that garrison.” These are the enemies of God. They’re the Philistines. That’s the implication. Edelman says:

The reference in 10:5 to the presence of a Philistine garrison/commander at Gib’at ha’elohim, the site where the prophesying is to take place, strongly hints that the anticipated military deed is to take place immediately after the prophesying.

I mean, God has come upon... Or think of the judges. We’re still in the time of the judges, because Samuel is the last judge. So this is familiar. When the Spirit of God comes upon you... The Spirit of God comes upon people to empower them to do military things—to deliver the people. The whole book of Judges is this pattern. So the fact that the prophesying (the presence of the Spirit) is supposed

30:00

to coincide with this trip up to this Philistine garrison... Again, "Saul, do the math! Do the math."

It would also seem to foreshadow the nature of the actual deed Saul is expected to execute: the overthrow/slaying of the Philistine garrison/commander at the 'hill of the gods' [MH: (Gibeath-elohim)], a task which links up in turn with Yahweh's command to Samuel in 9:16 to anoint Saul as the one who will deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines.

Now let's go back to 1 Samuel 9:16.

¹⁵ **Now the day before Saul came, the LORD had revealed to Samuel:**

¹⁶ **"Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince [MH: there's the word *nagid* actually in the text this time] over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines..."**

Now it's kind of obvious. This is how God introduces Saul to Samuel. "Hey, you're going to meet this guy. This guy's going to be the guy to get rid of the Philistines." And then Samuel turns around after he anoints Saul and says to Saul, "Okay. This stuff's going to happen to you. And you're going to wind up at Gibeath-elohim. And there's a Philistine garrison there. Do what your hand finds to do." So the taking of this garrison is supposed to be the thing that Saul is supposed to do to show he's worthy of the kingship. It's not hard to see, especially when you go back to chapter 9 and you read what God says, "This is the one who will deliver my people from the hand of the Philistines."

Now there's only one problem. Saul doesn't do it. He doesn't take the garrison. He doesn't even attack it. He doesn't do it. Instead (if we keep reading in 1 Samuel... this is 1 Samuel 11), he defeats the Ammonites. So now he *does* do a military act. He does show that he's worthy of this position of essentially Commander-in-Chief in 1 Samuel 11. But it's not [laughs] really what he was supposed to do. And if you know anything about Saul, this is, like, Saul's life—where God puts something in front of him to go do, and then he finds a way to mess it up. But, you know, along the way he does some good stuff. And then he turns around and says, "Hey, look at me! I did some good stuff!" And, you know, Samuel... Facepalm. "Alright. [sigh] What are we going to do with you, Saul?" Again, there are episodes like this in Saul's life. So when he turns around or he goes after the Ammonites instead, here's what we read in 1 Samuel 11. Cutting to the chase here, Samuel says, "Okay, this is good enough." [laughs] You know? It's like, "Alright. You're legit. We get it. Even though it was not quite what you were supposed to do, okay." Because there are people who didn't like Saul. They thought he was a hack. Like, "Who's this guy?" And they opposed him. But

then he goes up and he beats up on the Ammonites. So Saul's supporters come to Samuel and say to him:

¹² Then the people said to Samuel, "Who is it that said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Bring the men, that we may put them to death." ¹³ But Saul said, "Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the LORD has worked salvation in Israel." ¹⁴ Then Samuel [MH: who is there at the scene] said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingdom."

Remember, this is where they were supposed to go anyway, but after taking the Philistine garrison. But Samuel's like, "Okay. Alright. You're good enough. Let's go to Gilgal."

35:00

¹⁵ So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal.

So it's like, "Alright. We got us a king. Even though this wasn't really what he was supposed to do, he does a good thing. He handles this situation well. Okay. He's legit. He's in."

Now with David, this is a little more overt and a little more following really the circumstances God had set up. David is anointed, and what is his deed? What is his second step to show that he's worthy of being king? He kills Goliath—right after the anointing.

And what does Solomon do? Just to illustrate, let's go to 1 Kings 2:13. And with Solomon, there's a bit of a difficulty with the succession from David to Solomon. But we have here this whole matter of Adonijah. So 1 Kings 2. These are the early days of what Solomon is up against and how he gets into office. David has died a few verses earlier.

¹³ Then Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, "Do you come peacefully?" He said, "Peacefully." [MH: And she already knows something's up here, or she suspects it.] ¹⁴ Then he said, "I have something to say to you." She said, "Speak." ¹⁵ He said, "You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel fully expected me to reign. However, the kingdom has turned about and become my brother's [MH: Solomon's], for it was his from the LORD. ¹⁶ And now I have one request to make of you; do not refuse me." She said to him, "Speak." ¹⁷ And he said, "Please ask King Solomon—he will not refuse you—to give me Abishag the Shunammite as my wife."

Now if you remember who this woman is, this was one of David's concubines. She's the one who slept with David to keep him warm in his old age, whether she was, like, a real concubine or not. But she was part of the harem, anyway. So she's sort of the last woman that's in the picture when David is about ready to die. He's elderly. So Adonijah, who was presuming that the kingship was going to be his... He loses it to Solomon. He goes to David's wife (Bathsheba). Obviously, she has a high position here (sort of the queen mother at the time) and says, "Hey, can you give me Abishag the Shunammite as my wife?"

¹⁸ Bathsheba said, "Very well; I will speak for you to the king." [MH: "I'll go ask Solomon."]

¹⁹ So Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah. And the king rose to meet her and bowed down to her. [MH: This is his mom, alright?] Then he sat on his throne and had a seat brought for the king's mother, and she sat on his right. ²⁰ Then she said, "I have one small request to make of you; do not refuse me." And the king said to her, "Make your request, my mother, for I will not refuse you." ²¹ She said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as his wife." ²² King Solomon answered his mother, "And why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also, for he is my older brother, and on his side are Abiathar the priest and Joab the son of Zeruiah."

Remember, Joab was David's military commander. I mean, Solomon knows what's going on here. Adonijah still wants to be king, and he's trying to penetrate the harem. This is what you did to usurp the kingly office. You not only did military things, but you took the king's wives and his concubines. Absalom does this to David. It's the most explicit example of this in the Old Testament (and there are others). And so Solomon knows, basically, "Adonijah is still not done." This is what he's up to. And not only that, but he's got Abiathar the priest and Joab on his side in this. This is Solomon's test. Is he worthy? Is he going to stand up to this?

²³ Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, "God do so to me and more also if this word does not cost Adonijah his life! ²⁴ Now therefore as the LORD lives, who has established me and placed me on the throne of David my father, and who has made me a house, [MH: the household, with all the wives and stuff] as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death today." ²⁵ So King Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he struck him down, and he died.

40:00

²⁶ And to Abiathar the priest the king said, “Go to Anathoth, to your estate, for you deserve death. But I will not at this time put you to death, because you carried the ark of the Lord God before David my father, and because you shared in all my father's affliction.” ²⁷ So Solomon expelled Abiathar from being priest to the LORD, thus fulfilling the word of the LORD that he had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.

²⁸ When the news came to Joab—for Joab had supported Adonijah although he had not supported Absalom—Joab fled to the tent of the LORD [MH: the Tabernacle] and caught hold of the horns of the altar. ²⁹ And when it was told King Solomon, “Joab has fled to the tent of the LORD, and behold, he is beside the altar,” Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, “Go, strike him down.” ³⁰ So Benaiah came to the tent of the LORD and said to him, “The king commands, ‘Come out.’” [MH: He gives him a chance.] But he said, “No, I will die here.” Then Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, “Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.” ³¹ The king replied to him, “Do as he has said, strike him down and bury him, and thus take away from me and from my father's house the guilt for the blood that Joab shed without cause. [MH: This is referring to some of Joab's crimes.] ³² The LORD will bring back his bloody deeds on his own head, because, without the knowledge of my father David, he attacked and killed with the sword two men more righteous and better than himself, Abner the son of Ner, commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah.

It goes on, but this is how Solomon takes care of business. This is his rite of passage. If he doesn't do this stuff, he's going to be eliminated. So in the accession pattern, this is what validates Solomon as the legitimate king. It's this military kind of stuff.

Now the third stage... You have your designation (usually anointing, but not always). Then you have some act of legitimacy—some demonstration that you're fit to rule. The third part is the coronation. And Shelton writes this:

The initiation of kingship in Israelite ritual is seen in both narrative and liturgy of the OT... Such language is particularly witnessed in the enthronement psalms, including associations with Yahweh's investment, victory, and royal appointee. Now this is probably the least transparent element of the three, at least to our eye. There's no consistent list of specific elements to a coronation ceremony in the Old Testament. There are a lot of separate, disparate ones, but they're not all

listed in one passage, either in the historical books or in the psalms. It's also difficult to... There are a couple of psalms that read like... "You could see how this psalm would be read at a coronation ceremony." Stuff like that. But there's no superscription that says, "These are the instructions for what you do when you coronate the king." There's nothing that explicit. One of the better books on this I think is Marc Zvi Brettler. His book is called *God Is King: Understanding an Israelite Metaphor*. This is volume 76 in the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series*. It's a 1989 book. I'm just going to read a few paragraphs from this. This is Brettler, *God is King*. A few paragraphs here.

Scholars continue to debate the interpretation of the so-called 'enthronement psalms' (Psalms 47, 93, 96, 97, 98 and 99), which may refer to God's accession as king.

God is portrayed as the king. And this is going to be used of God's Son (the king as his son)—that sort of thing. So this is why they're pictured as enthronement psalms.

45:00

According to the methods developed in this study, it is necessary to examine the accession of Israelite kings to the throne before these psalms may be fruitfully interpreted. Not all elements of the accession need be examined in detail; for example, the various methods through which a king rose to power, which would be prominent in a discussion of human kingship, have few parallels in the realm of the divine as described in the Bible, so they will not be studied here.

Basically, the Bible... God as king... you have these broad categories. And then the human kingship element... These things in these categories can happen in real time and various ways. Brettler says at another place:

Reconstructing the institutions surrounding 'becoming king' is very difficult since we have no complete texts which fully describe or proscribe 'coronation rituals'. Most rituals must be reconstructed from the historical narratives...

Little bits and pieces in the telling of the stories about how this king came to power and died and did this and that. And then the next king comes along. You get little bits and pieces.

...The Bible leaves us with a very incomplete picture of these rituals, which cannot be completed using other types of sources. This is typically done by using ancient Near Eastern materials, or by locating remnants of the earthly enthronement ritual in Psalms, or by projecting divine enthronement rituals onto the human king. Each of these methods is problematic. Ancient Near Eastern material may not be used to fill in such gaps because the Israelite coronation ritual may have differed significantly from that of its neighbors. [MH: We just don't know.] The

use of Israelite divine ‘enthronement’ rituals to fill the gaps is especially problematic because these rituals are often themselves reconstructed...

So he says, “Look. the sources are incomplete here. But we’re going to do the best job we can.” Now what he does in this book... And if you get this book, *God is King* by Brettler... This is still in print. You can also get it in Logos. On page 131 there is a listing of all of the elements of coronation that appear somewhere in the kingly material and in the Psalms. And it’s actually a pretty lengthy list. But again, none of these things occur all in one place or even really in deep clusters. So let me see if I can bring this up here. Here it is: Elements of Biblical Coronations. This is from Brettler’s book. I’m just going to read a few things. And I’m not going to go tell you which passages each of these occur in. But this is the kind of stuff that happens when people become king:

- There’s a special meal.
- There’s a crown given or an armband.
- There’s another anointing.
- There’s a kiss. (That’s part of the ritual.)
- There are peace offerings offered.
- There are certain noises and music that are played.
- There’s a special platform.
- There’s an actual act of sitting on the throne (on the platform).
- There’s a blessing of some officer.
- If the older king is still alive, he blesses the new king, just to show publicly the transition of who exactly is chosen as his successor. And it’s done publicly in front of a group.

That’s a quick overview. I’m skipping some of the elements, but you get the idea. These things, if you read through the historical books, happen in these scenes. And so Brettler says, “Look. This is the best we’ve got.” So this kind of thing happens with Saul in 1 Kings 11. I read that passage where Samuel says, “Okay. It wasn’t the Philistine garrison, but it’s good enough. Let’s go down to Gilgal and offer these offerings and whatnot.”

So Saul is coronated. David is coronated. 2 Samuel 15:10. Adonijah, he’s a pretender to the throne and he starts to go through some of this stuff, but then all of a sudden he hears, “Over here they’ve anointed Solomon and you’re in heap-big trouble because you presumed this.” You get these sorts of pictures in the kingship. There are some sorts of official acts that go with the coronation. So after the successful demonstration that you’re worthy, there was some kind of ceremony that would identify you—now you are the occupant of the throne. And that’s sufficient for our purposes.

What I want to do now is ask the really simple question, “How do the Gospels mimic this? How do the Gospels inform us of Jesus’ rise to kingship following this three-fold pattern?” Now the first one (the designation) is kind of obvious if you’re

thinking about the life of Jesus. So you recall from the Old Testament that Israelite kings were not always and only designated by anointing with oil. Sometimes there were other things, like the bestowal of the Spirit, or some divine declaration. ("Thus says the Lord, 'This is the guy.'") Like there could be the voice of God, or God tells a prophet, "This is the next guy." And the Spirit comes. All this kind of stuff. So Shelton writes this in his article. He says:

God indicates Jesus as his chosen one in his baptism through several specific markers. The last of the prophet figures, John the Baptist, anoints and announces the arrival of the Messiah. Upon his anointing with water by the prophet, God approves him by opening the heavens and declaring, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Besides this water anointing, the gospel accounts suggest a greater and more complex anointing through the Holy Spirit's descent [MH: on Jesus] as a dove. The anointing of the Son of David here echoes that of his type: "Samuel took the oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward" (1 Sam 16:13).

That's what happens with Jesus except it's not oil. He's baptized and then he goes forward. The Spirit of God descends on him and he goes forward and does his ministry. The Spirit of the Lord empowers him. I mean, right after the baptism, the Spirit of the Lord compels him to do what? Think about it. Compels him into the wilderness to do what? To confront an enemy. He has to show he's worthy. And that enemy is Satan. You can't get a bigger enemy.

So here we are at stage two: the demonstration of kingship. "Israelite king, you're designated, and now do something that shows us you're worthy. Defeat a foe. Do some great thing against our enemies." So Shelton writes this:

It is significant that this event [MH: the baptism and what happens afterwards] marked the beginning of Christ's ministry, for the activities of the next three and one-half years function to demonstrate his power over the enemy of God...

Basically, he's not just going to have one demonstration that he's worthy. He's going to have a whole bunch of them.

Immediately after his baptismal consecration, Jesus went into the wilderness to accept the challenge of the prince of darkness, Satan. The cosmological dimension of the battle of good versus evil is reflected in Mark 1:12-13, "Immediately the Spirit impelled him to go out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for days being tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to him." Luke 4:14 notes that Christ's ministry began after the wilderness episode when Jesus "returned to Galilee in the power of the

Spirit." The temptation in the wilderness is the inaugural event of Christ's battle with Satan that characterizes his entire ministry and work as Messiah.

Like ancient Near Eastern kings, Christ engaged in a victorious phase of demonstration—a proof of his worthiness for anointing. This demonstration anticipates the final phase for any Jewish king-elect...

In other words, this is an expectation. To a Jewish audience, this is what they expect, because this is how kings are validated. This is the final phase for any Jewish king-elect. This is how it's done.

So then, what about the coronation? Shelton writes that the initiation of kingship in Israelite ritual is that you have some sort of investment—some sort of enthronement event. He writes:

At times in the gospel narratives, Christ's identity in the passion imagery is one that ironically [MH: other writers would say "parodically"] displays his glorious crowning as king. Jesus is tried for claiming to "sit at the right hand of power" (Mark 14:62) [MH: This is what he's on trial for. It's like an insurrection against Caesar. So he's put on trial for claiming to sit at the right hand of power.], he is clothed in a royal robe (Mark 15:17), he is mockingly bowed before and worshiped (Mark 15:19), and he is crowned with a crown of thorns (Mark 15:17). The ascending king, the regal one anointed by heaven who came to usher in the kingdom of God, is now being humiliated and executed.

55:00

But in the process, it's a coronation ceremony. That's the point. He was designated, he showed himself worthy (for three and a half years), and now he's coronated. So the crucifixion is coronation. There's a specific article here. Again, I've put this one (the Joel Marcus article) and the Shelton one in the protected folder. But Joel Marcus has an article on this. And this is some steep reading because this is scholarly journal stuff. But I thought I'd throw this one in. Joel Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation" (parodic means it's a parody). *Journal of Biblical Literature* 125.1. This is a 2006 article. Here's the opening paragraph:

The central irony in the passion narratives of the Gospels is that Jesus' crucifixion turns out to be his elevation to kingship. This seems to be the best way to understand, for example, the fact that in Mark's Gospel Jesus is never called a "king" until he stands before Pilate on the way to the cross; yet from that point forward, within the space of thirty verses, he is called "king" six times: three times by Pilate (15:2, 9, 12), twice by mockers just before and just after his crucifixion (15:18, 32), and once by the inscription over his cross (15:26). These instances of *basileus* [MH: that's kingship] are heavy with irony, since none of the characters—neither Pilate, nor the soldiers who mockingly dress Jesus in royal garb, nor the anonymous composer of the inscription "The King of the Jews," nor the taunting

passersby at Golgotha—really believes that Jesus is a king. Aside from calling Jesus king, dressing him in royal garb, and genuflecting to him, Jesus' executioners also mock his pretensions to royalty by crucifying him between two other "brigands," thus parodying a king's retinue. Yet the reader understands that these characters' actions and words point toward a truth unknown to them: royal garments and crowns rightfully do belong to Jesus, who will show his kingship precisely by not saving himself but by dying on the cross.

Now the point, again... This is Marcus' opening paragraph. The crucifixion *is* the coronation. We've said many times, when we're discussing *Unseen Realm* specifically or some of these other things, that this is *the* thing that *must* take place for the plan of God to work. Without... We can talk about the ascension. We can talk about the resurrection. But you don't have an ascension and a resurrection unless you have a death. Okay? [laughs] He *must* die. This *is* the coronation. This is the path to kingship. This is the final stage. And so that's a familiar discussion for listeners to this podcast.

But I wanted to marry that or give it its rightful place as number three, actually, in a tri-partite system of how Israelite kings were shown to be kings—were put into the office. So you can't read the stuff in the New Testament well... They're English words so of course you can read it, but the impact of those words is lost unless you know what is going on [laughs] in terms of how this would've been perceived in the context of kingship.

So the point, again, is to show you—expose you to—how the New Testament is informed by the Old. It's not always a simple quotation of the Old Testament. I mean, that happens a lot, obviously. Sometimes, like in this case, there's an entire backdrop... There's an entire set of worldview elements or practice that get repurposed in the New Testament. The Gospel writers dip into the Israelite kingship accession process intentionally to portray Jesus as passing through the series of stages that legitimize kingly rule. And knowing that helps us get more out of the Gospel presentations (I think) of Jesus' life.

TS: Another good one in the Connecting the Dots series, Mike. I like it.

MH: Yep, lots of dots.

TS: Yeah, lots of dots. I like it when you connect them. That's good stuff. Because you know, the Bible... Just read and you, anybody, any human today just reads it and you skim over a lot of it, you know? I mean, you don't connect these dots. I mean, you just don't. You don't. So that's why we need this podcast, people like you, who can show us those dots and connect it and the depth of it. And it's very important.

1:00:00

MH: Yep. It's just... The intelligence of what the writers are doing just... It's easy to lose it unless you have the set of glasses that they have on. It's just easy to lose it.

TS: Yeah, absolutely. It frustrates me when people say you don't need that. You don't need to reference Second Temple period material, the Old Testament... It's just frustrating. It just enriches the New Testament. It doesn't take away. And so I wish everybody could...

MH: Yeah, the point is that we're not taking the New Testament away from you and making you suffer through the Old Testament. [laughs]

TS: Yeah, no, not at all.

MH: We're not swapping, okay? It's one thing informs the other. It's not a swap.

TS: Yeah, it's just common sense. I mean, they read the Old Testament. They knew it frontwards and backwards. So it only makes sense to have context in your head when you're reading the New Testament. And it's a shame that people don't do that. They don't believe in that. It's unfortunate. But hopefully... I feel like there's a context movement happening, Mike. Don't you? I feel like more and more people are starting to wake up to context. So hopefully they'll find this episode and all of the rest.

MH: Yep, that would be nice. That's the goal. They're certainly not going to find it if we don't do it. [laughs]

TS: Yeah, I know. That's true, absolutely.

MH: They'll find it.

TS: Alright, Mike. Well, with that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.