

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 413

Paul's Use of the Old Testament Series: The Messianic Story, Part 1

February 20, 2022

Teacher: Dr. Michael S. Heiser (MSH)

Host: Trey Stricklin (TS)

Guest: Dr. Matt Halsted (MLH)

Episode Summary

In the previous episode with Dr. Matt Halsted, we discussed how trying to articulate the Old Testament's messiah merely by appealing to passages that contain that word (Hebrew, *mashiach*) was fundamentally misguided. What was needed, we concluded, was a "storied approach" to the Old Testament. We begin that journey in this episode, considering not only why it is important to approach the Old Testament as a story (as opposed to a textbook or reference work), but how doing so reveals important motifs along the way. These story elements provide a framework for understanding the Old Testament salvation plan of God through a human being, one who was also the son of God, who only later would be called "messiah" in a handful of passages. The motifs, it turns out, are far more important than that single term.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 413: Paul's Use of the Old Testament Series: "The Messianic Story, Part 1" with Matt Halsted. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing?

MSH: Well, doing pretty well. I had some good weeks here. Just sticking with the program, you know? It's all we can do. But some weeks are better than others, and this was a good one.

TS: Yeah, well, that's good. I can't believe we're already into February, I mean, how fast 2022's already chugging along. We're into the new series. We're getting closer to the Demons series—the Walton series, Mike. I know everybody's chomping at the bit for that one. Looking forward to that one.

MSH: Yeah, we'll eventually get there. We'll eventually get there. You know, it's kind of interesting, you mentioned being in February... February's kind of a big month. I mean, my birthday was in February. I'm not going to mention the day. And if you know it, Trey, don't mention it.

TS: [laughs] I do.

MSH: [laughs] But you can probably guess after that. Yeah. But I had a birthday. And our semester at the Awakening School started. Again, if you missed that, shame on you. But we're going to have other classes that come up in later terms. So just keep your eye out on my social media. When those things get ready to launch, we'll let you know. But if you want to get in on some classes, there's still plenty of opportunity to do that down the road.

TS: Alright, Mike, briefly, real quick, what are we going to be talking about? The Messianic Story. What have we got?

MSH: Yeah, we want to unpack kind of what we introduced last week. Last time we talked about how you can't create the profile of messiah just by doing a word study on the word *mashiach*. But that's what a lot of scholars do. And since they limit their approach to this whole "Who is the messiah?" question... Since they limit it to that single word, then they can come out with statements like, "Well, the Old Testament picture of *mashiach* doesn't line up with the New Testament portrayal of Jesus." Or "Paul (especially) is guilty of making stuff up about Jesus and cramming him into the Old Testament somewhere." You know, Matt and I both object to that. We think that's nonsense. But the real key to seeing why it's nonsense is to unpack or write the resume of the messiah based upon the story elements of Israel—the story elements of really the Bible, all the way from Adam through Abraham through Israel through David. And that's what we're going to start to do in the next few episodes in this. We're going to start looking at how to approach Scripture as a story so that you can see more fully what's going on when it comes to the character that will become known as messiah.

MSH: Well, we're excited again to have Matt Halsted back with us on the podcast. This is going to be his third visit in a series. And I'm hoping for those who are just jumping in now, you'll go back and listen to the first two, because otherwise you're going to be losing some context. The goal here is to have a discussion about, not just messiah, but really the whole story of Scripture and how Paul especially (maybe not exclusively) quotes the Old Testament in his writings. And we start off by... You know, this is sort of scratching an itch that I've had for a number of years: my dissatisfaction or my objection to this notion that the portrayal of messiah in the Old Testament... You will often hear scholars, (including evangelical scholars) say it does not align with the portrait of the messiah that you get in the Gospels or certainly what you get with Paul, in the way Paul defends his teaching—the way Paul defends his Christology, you know, his whole understanding of the program of God—by quoting the Old Testament. And Paul will get accused of just making things up—making content up. That if

5:00

you go look at what Paul says and you look back at what the Old Testament said, there seem to be these points of disconnection, or in some cases (extreme cases) this notion that Paul's just sort of freewheeling it—making things up as he goes along. And I just think that's so wrong-headed.

And our guest, Dr. Halsted, also feels the same way. And he spent a lot of time thinking about this subject and, of course, it factored into his dissertation, which was on Paul (Paul and Romans, specifically). And so we want to just have an extended conversation about this so that our listeners learn how scholars take this skeptical view and why. And why it's really... I'll call it "something unnecessary." You know, it's one thing to affirm something obvious. Well, Paul adds these words or he takes these words out of an Old Testament citation. That's the obvious part. But you know, why do we need to affirm the obvious and then extrapolate to the unnecessary? Why is it that we can't give some better thought into Paul and what he's doing and how he's approaching things? And last time we talked, Matt introduced this concept (this phraseology that I really like) called "taking a storied approach" to the Old Testament (really the Bible). But it's looking at the Bible as telling a story, and it has characters and it has a plot and it has subplot. There are elements to how the story gets told. And if we looked at things that way, we would see that Paul has the story in his head and he has sort of the final chapters in his head because of the Christ event. He sees how Jesus fits into the whole story, and he presumes that fit in how he understands the Old Testament.

And so what Paul says *does* have deep Old Testament roots, but they're not formed the way you and I would necessarily think to form them if we were approaching Scripture sort of like an artifact that we have to take apart. And now once we've taken it apart, we've got to put it back together again. If you're not thinking of it as a story, there's a real conflict in the way people do Bible study—people do hermeneutics. And that's really where the rubber meets the road in this whole subject matter.

So today, we want to pick up with the storied approach. And we're going to start at the beginning. And I guess the best way for me to get into this is to ask the simple question of all of us, and have each listener ask. And that is, "What does God want? When the story begins in Genesis, what does God want?" You know, the answer to that, I think, is fairly simple, if you read Genesis as a story instead of as a textbook or a list of bullet points to memorize: God wants a family. He wants humanity. He wants a people that he can commune with, that he can have a relationship with, that he can have as partners in doing other things—doing the things that he wants done. Specifically, in the days of Adam and Eve, he wants them to multiply, and he gives them a mandate to multiply so that they can be active participants in stewarding the wonderful creation God has made. And this is God's goal: to have these relationships and to have this sort of mutual

partnership relationship going on. He wants people. I mean, God doesn't *need* people, but this is the decision God makes in creation.

And so this is what God wants. And it's not... That goal (what God wants) is not surrendered after the Fall—after humans mess it up and after there's rebellion in the supernatural world as well. There's opposition to what God wants. You know, God doesn't bag the whole program. He has committed himself to working with and through people. And so it shouldn't surprise us that thematically we get this notion of God intervening from time to time in human history and doing things like electing a subset of humanity to make sure that his program or that his wishes—his will—gets moved ahead. But God has committed himself, not to exempt people from what he's doing, but to include them in what he's doing.

And we see this, first of all... I think this will be the first passage we start with if we're looking at the storied approach. And I know Matt is going to look at this as sort of in groups of... You're going to see us group passages of Scripture here and go through different... Matt uses the word "motifs." If you think of it as a story, maybe you could think of it as a plot element. But the offspring motif is one—that humans are the result of God's creative activity and they are supposed to multiply and God has committed himself to working with and through humans in the rest of the story. So this is why you get Genesis 3:15, for instance. Genesis 3:15 is a familiar passage, but I'm just going to read it here so we have this ringing in our heads. Genesis 3:15 is God speaking to the serpent. He says:

10:00

**15 I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring^(a) and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel."**

And then to the woman he turns in verse 16 and talks about multiplying pain in childbearing, and so on and so forth. So promise has something to do with humanity, and humanity being the conduit through which (or the means by which) God is going to get back to business. He's going to reverse the Fall, ultimately. He's going to use people to get what he wants. So Genesis 3:15 is an important passage. And we can start there because we know that Paul at least alludes to this in Romans 16:20. This isn't a messianic prophecy or anything like that. But it's really interesting. Because Paul writes:

20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under *your* feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And you think, "Well, that's not really a quotation about *one* offspring, i.e., Jesus, crushing the serpent. Because, "under *your* feet," Paul actually pluralizes it. It's under the feet of the people that he's writing to. There again, you get the human

element. By the time Paul's writing Romans, we have this concept of the body of Christ being united to Christ, defeating Satan. And so we get this interplay. So Matt, why don't you just jump in, and you can add to that, and we can go off into some other places in Genesis. The most obvious ones are going to be Genesis 12:3 and Genesis 15:5-6. And when we get to them, you can read them for our audience. But those are going to be two real familiar passages to our audience. So what would you add? And you can riff off Romans anytime you want, because this is your territory. [laughs]

MLH: Yeah. Yeah. I think I would back up and just commend the whole storied approach here. Because especially when it comes to the Old Testament, I know for me, growing up, the Old Testament was pretty intimidating and I wasn't quite sure what to do with it. I remember reading the Prophets. Some of my earliest Christian memories are of reading the Prophets. And I just wasn't quite sure what to do with it. And so later on, I found that, "Okay, if I read this as a story, then it makes a lot better sense." And that's sort of my passion is to help people see how this bit of the Old Testament goes to this other bit of the Old Testament, and so forth. Now in order to do that... I mean, how do we read the Old Testament as a story or the Bible as a story? And I think it helps to find anchors within the text.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: You know? Motifs in the text. Key motifs, key anchors in the text, that we can kind of latch onto and follow throughout Scripture and see if we can connect some dots. And I think one obvious motif is the offspring motif. It's sort of an anchor in the text. Because, just as you read in Genesis 3, it comes in the middle of this divine curse, where God sees the sin of humanity and the serpent, and he's dishing out consequences for that. And yet embedded in that is this hope—this first gospel, as some scholars call it. You know, somebody will come along and crush the serpent's head. A serpent-crusher. And then he's described... It's described very vaguely, just as offspring, right?

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: And there's sort of like an announcement of war. [laughs] You know? There's going to be enmity. You know, "You're going to be enemies. Your offspring will be enemies." Okay, so we just take that word "offspring" and let's just see where it goes. And as it turns out, it goes somewhere. It goes to many places.

MSH: This is the "seed" terminology in a lot of English translations.

MLH: Right, yes. It's variously translated "seed" or "offspring," maybe a "descendant," or something like that. It's everywhere. And it's in key places in Romans and the New Testament too. But I mean, this is something listeners can

15:00

just do on their own. They can just go do a little word search and see where it takes them. And it'll take you to very key, pivotal places in Scripture, actually. And that's why I call it a key motif. And it starts in Genesis 3:15 in a very important context. And it actually ends up in another important context in Genesis 15, where Abraham enters into covenant with God. And God has...

MSH: Let's just read that.

MLH: Yeah, go ahead.

MSH: So Genesis 15, we'll read verses 5-6. This is Abraham is met by God in a vision.

⁵ And [God] brought him outside and said [to Abraham], "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ⁶ And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

MLH: Hmm. Yeah, that's an important text. It's one Paul quotes in Romans and it's a key text for him. It's one of his very significant texts, in fact. But...

MSH: I don't know if you know this, but we had David Burnett on a number of years ago, and he talked about how Second Temple Judaism took this "star" language, and it was not merely *quantitative*, like an innumerable amount, but it was also *qualitative*. And so you get themes of divinization or sanctification or *theosis* in that language, that someday, humans (the seed of Abraham)... And of course his seed goes all the way back to Adam. And it goes forward into David. They're all part of the same genealogy. But in some way, qualitatively, they're going to be like the stars. And the stars of course... This was a metaphor used for supernatural beings—beings that dwell in the presence of God. So this audience will be familiar with that language in that episode in that way as well.

MLH: Yeah, absolutely. And the stars idea is a motif, too. It's an anchor in the text, I think. You can see it here. I mean, Abraham is invited to take a look above and look at the stars. And you know this, obviously, and your audience knows this, but cosmic language (heavenly bodies, stars, things of that sort) are always associated with the divine beings and things of that sort. That's what they would've thought—the original audience.

MSH: Yep. "That's where God is. He's up there."

MLH: Right. Exactly. Exactly. And in fact, I'm kind of jumping ahead here, but just to put the thought in listeners' minds, the star motif appears in a place like Revelation and with respect to Jesus, in fact.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: In Revelation as well as at his birth, you know, the star that rises and so forth. We can maybe get to that in a moment. But when you get to Genesis 15, it's so important that people understand what that moment is doing in the story of Genesis. And I think it's very important that we take a wide step back and a broad look at just Genesis itself. You have to read Genesis like this, in the following way. At least, this is my opinion. Some may disagree. But I teach this all the time. I say, "Look, you can divide Genesis between Genesis 1-11 (which is a very important section of Genesis for a number of reasons), and then you have Genesis 12-50, and that's another section." And so scholars typically refer to that first section (chapters 1-11) as "universal history" or something to that effect. And then chapters 12-50, you notice a shift in chapter 12 where the focus is not on humanity in general, but it's focused on a certain family, namely the family of Israel/Abraham. And so we can call that "patriarchal history" or "the history of Israel" or something to that effect.

So you have this split between Genesis 11 and Genesis 12. And those are two pretty big chapters, right? Genesis 11 is, of course, the Tower of Babel scene, and God has placed a curse (for lack of a better word) on humanity. And of course, the curse is that they cannot understand each other. And of course, everybody knows, when you break down communication between people, you get a result called "war." [laughs] Right? If you have a breakdown in communication between a man and a wife...

MSH: It's chaos.

20:00 **MLH:** Chaos, yeah! It's communication failure. And so you have that... That's the key word: chaos—a return to primordial chaos that you see in Genesis 1. But this time it's a chaos of humanity. And if the story ends there, it's pretty sad because you have a fracturing of humanity. Humanity is fractured. So what goes next? Well, sort of the big scene that happens next is Genesis 12:1-3, where God calls this man named Abram...

MSH: Out of that mess. [laughs]

MLH: Yeah, out of the mess. Yeah. God always works in the mess, right? [laughs] That's really all he's got to deal with is the mess. And he makes this statement in verse 3, of course: "I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." And when I read that to my students, my first question is always, "Why do the families of the earth need to be blessed?" And they say, "Well, because they'd just been cursed. They were just cursed in the previous chapter." And I was like, "That's exactly right." So what you see here is, as I mentioned a couple episodes ago, N. T. Wright always says, "Abraham is called to be the rescue plan

for the world.” Israel is the rescue plan for the world. So the rescue plan is immediately put into effect after the Tower situation.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: So you have that here. And of course, Israel turns out not to be capable of being used as a rescue plan because she needs to be rescued herself, right? [laughs] And yet God promises to use Israel. He's got to use Israel. And so he's got to look for a faithful Israelite to do the job.

MSH: He's always going to find somebody in there who's faithful. Again, you're going to have this elect subset of mess that God's committed himself to work with.

MLH: Exactly. You know, here's the thing. Even among *those* people... I mean, we can think of faithful Israelites... You know, there's one person who is called “a man after God's own heart”—David. And yet there are events in his life that are pretty disappointing, right? Solomon...

MSH: To put it mildly. [laughs]

MLH: Very much so. [laughs] Very much so. We can look all throughout Scripture and in the Old Testament and see great heroes, and yet there are pretty tragic stories in the midst of it. So the reader is left longing for the Offspring—left longing for the person through whom God will rescue the world, *and* the person through whom he can rescue the rescue plan (namely Israel). And he has to use Israel. He can't say, “Okay, well, I'm going to use the Americans.” [laughs] We're not capable of that.

MSH: He's not going to use aliens, either. So... [laughs]

MLH: [laughs] That's exactly right. Yeah. He cannot use them... [laughs] He will not use... Yeah. The answer is Jesus, really. And so he's the faithful Israelite. That's why in the New Testament you see Jesus reenact the story of Israel. He climbs a mountain and teaches people, like Moses did. He goes through the Jordan River, like Israel did. He is in a wilderness for 40 days, like Israel was in the wilderness for 40 years. And he's tempted just like Israel was tempted. And you know, he's reenacting the story of Israel because he *is* Israel. He is the faithful Israelite.

So that's... It seems like I've gone off-track, but really I haven't. Because you come back to the Abraham story in Genesis 12, and God strikes a covenant with Abraham. And that covenant is really seen the best in Genesis 15, the passage you read earlier about him saying, “Look at the stars (if you can count them, that is). And that's what your offspring (your *zerah* or your *sperma* in the Greek) is

going to be like.” And so we find offspring as this key motif that is integral to this whole “Israel being the rescue plan for the world” idea. So yeah. Again, think of the story along those same lines. And it’ll get somewhere. It’s going somewhere. And Genesis 15 is one of those key texts.

MSH: Yeah, we don't want to leave Genesis 12 out of the loop either. Genesis 12:3, when God tells Abram that it's going to be through him... You alluded to it earlier, but just so that the listeners are reminded, that this is a scriptural idea (Genesis 12:3) that's it's going to be through Abram and his seed that all of the nations of the earth will be blessed. The Scripture actually does say that. It's not like we're sitting here trying to come up with a motif or some sort of anchor point. The text is very clear.

25:00

MLH: Right.

MSH: This is the purpose through which God... It's the purpose that God has in mind. It's also the mechanism that he has in mind to bring the whole thing about. It's this one act of finding Abram, a man who is righteous, who will pass the text that God gives him and believe. So it's all there and it actually means something. Because it doesn't end there. We tend to read the Old Testament as disparate stories. We fail, again, to look at the connection points (the way that the stories are actually intelligently connected) to form the bigger story. I think that's one of our handicaps that Paul *didn't* have. [laughs]

MLH: Right.

MSH: You know, Paul knows how they're all connected. And we struggle with trying discern how *any* of them are connected. Well, they're *all* connected. They're all supposed to be parts and subparts of this grander plan—this grander story. But we, again... Last time we talked, one of the, I guess you could call it a “conclusion” we reached was just how badly we need a better knowledge—a storied knowledge—of the Old Testament. Because this is what Paul had floating around in his head.

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: He couldn't get away from the story. And he could recognize instantly something about Jesus or that Jesus said or did or something that was done to Jesus that fits into the story. Because he never got away from it. It was always present in his mind. So that's really what we need to be able to see what Paul is doing in a lot of these cases. You brought up Romans 4. I don't know if you want to hit on that specifically now or you want to hold that.

MLH: Yeah! Let's do it.

MSH: Alright. Go ahead.

MLH: I guess before I do, just to remind the listeners here that the offspring motif didn't start in Genesis 15. It was back in the garden (Genesis 3), where offspring was used there. So just kind of tracing the dots here or the lines. If God says that there's going to be an offspring that's going to crush the serpent's head, and then the next key event is the Abraham story where he said, "By the way, the offspring's coming through *you*..." And so you have that. And it's an offspring that's *numerous*. It's too many to count. And Abraham can't quite calculate the number for sure. So it's vague at this point. But if we jump into the future and we go to Romans where Paul is, he actually quotes that text that we read (Genesis 15:5-6). Those are very important texts in his Romans 4 chapter. And it's interesting what he does there with it. There are several key texts we can look at. He tells... Let's see. I guess maybe chapter 4, verses 11-12, he talks about how Abraham is the father of everyone who believes, of all the believers. And of course, when he says "believers," he doesn't mean "those who are optimistic," or "those who have faith that good is coming." No, no. This is the idea of faith in an object, specifically in Jesus. So it's the father of all Christians. Abraham is the father of all Christians. And he makes this explicit in verses 16 and 17. Romans 4:16-17.

MSH: We can read these, just so that we're all... I'm going to just start in Romans 4 and I'll go up to verse 16. It won't take long. This is the ESV, by the way.

What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵ And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, ⁶ just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

Paul cites in that passage Psalm 32:

**⁷ "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;**

⁸ blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin."

And the Paul says:

30:00

⁹ Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. ¹⁰ How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. ¹¹ He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, ¹² and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

This is verse 13 now:

¹³ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world [MSH: which is a very interesting phrase: "heir of the world"] did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

Now verse 16:

¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

MLH: That's so good.

MSH: It's good stuff, you know. [laughs]

MLH: Man. Let's do five more podcasts on just this. Right? [MSH laughs] It's so good. But Paul's argument is essentially, "Look, you don't have to be circumcised. You don't have to do works of law in order to be counted as among God's people. Why can I say that? Well," says Paul, "let's look at Abraham." Abraham was declared righteous by just believing that God was going to give him an offspring (Genesis 15). So if Abraham can be counted as righteous without being circumcised, then surely we can too, right? And so the idea is that if we believe in Christ, then we have righteousness given to us as well. We don't have to have works of the law. After all, Abraham didn't. So that's the argument. It is interesting, verse 13, when you read that, Mike, the phrase "heir of the

world.” You paused to look at that. And I think that’s interesting. Because... Let me just read it again. ESV says:

13 For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

By believing. So that’s interesting to me, because there is our key word—our anchor in the text—“offspring,” and it’s coupled with this language of “world.” It’s a universal-type idea. It includes a large proportion. And when you go back to Genesis 3:15, you have the idea of offspring here. And the seed of woman will come and crush the serpent’s head. Now that text... There’s so much commonality between these two texts here, because Genesis 3:15 documents the genealogical start of humanity. And so there’s this worldwide aspect to it, like the beginning of humanity there. And here Paul says that it’s Abraham who is actually going to inherit everything. Somehow in him, the whole world will be his own. It will be... I think the assumption here is that it will be remade, and so forth. So I don’t know. There’s something interesting about the connection between “offspring” and the “world” language, given what we’ve seen in Genesis 3:15.

MSH: Yeah. And God protects it, too, even from within, if you want to call it his initial family (Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel). When Abel is murdered, God raises up Seth. And Eve looks at it that way. “God’s given me a replacement for Seth.” And there’s this sense that he is replacing Abel, and it’s going to be through him that this promise keeps getting extended. Then when you get into the whole Genesis 6 thing, God protects it on a much larger scale from corruption and harm. The genealogies actually mean something. They’re telling this part of the story—that God is protecting this original plan (this offspring of Abraham) all the way back to Adam. That he’s actively keeping it alive. He’s actively making sure that it’s not ruined.

35:00

MLH: Mm hmm. Right. And there’s a worldwide aspect to it all. Kind of a universalistic aspect. I don’t mean universalistic as in universal salvation, but I just mean there’s universal consequences.

MSH: It’s a lot wider than that one family.

MLH: Oh, exactly. And again, that goes back to Genesis 11-12. Abraham was called—he was elected—in the first place so that he could reach out to and be a blessing to the rest of the world. That’s why he’s elected in the first place, right?

MSH: So the non-elect could be ushered into the family.

MLH: That’s the point! That is the point. That God... So yeah, we have to think of election as a vocation. This is something scholars say a lot. It is controversial territory. [laughs] But...

MSH: This is something... I think election has been fundamentally misunderstood.

MLH: Me, too. I agree.

MSH: Theological systems that have attached themselves to it and have grown up around it. But anyway, we don't need to go off on that tangent. [laughs]

MLH: Yeah, you and I are in complete agreement on that, for sure. Yeah, again, we don't want to read these texts through 16th century eyes, right? We want to do the best that we can to get back into the Jewish idea. Right? And the way you've described it is accurate—the elect were elected for a purpose to reach the non-elect, for their salvation and redemption. Now what's interesting here is, election has a lot to do with vocation, like it's a job. They are elected for a purpose, right? And that's a lot like the image motif in Genesis.

MSH: Yep.

MLH: Humanity is given the image-bearing. And you've talked about this a lot, that that's a vocation as well. So there's some correlation between image and election here. Yeah, so anyway, that's something, I think, to consider. So when you look at Romans 4:13 (that text we read), it's in Abraham that the world is blessed. I think that's what Paul's thinking here. Interestingly, though, when Paul continues to talk about offspring down into verse 16-17, that's where he connects the offspring motif to Christians. So let's see. Do you mind if I read 16 and 17?

MSH: Sure, go ahead.

MLH: Verse 16:

¹⁶That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”

And that right there points to the Gentiles—the nations.

MSH: It's the “whole world” aspect again.

MLH: Yeah, exactly right. We have to think along those lines. And again, I keep coming back to Genesis 11-12 because it's important. Genesis 11, the world is cursed. Genesis 12, the world's rescue plan is enacted. And that's what Paul is putting into place here and working with. It's through Abraham that the world is blessed. Now the interesting thing is how he defines offspring. I mean, offspring here is pointed at Christians. Like, we are his offspring. How? That's a good

question. How are we his offspring? Well, because of Jesus. It's always believers in Christ, as I was saying earlier. There's a Christological way Paul is reading the Abraham story. It's always through Christ. Christ is the ultimate offspring. Now this would take us to Galatians 3:16, where Paul talks about offspring there. And I'll just read that one verse. It says, Galatians 3:16:

¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.

So that's interesting. Because he sees the offspring as Christ. Christ is the offspring—Abraham's offspring—which we could connect the dots back to Genesis 3:15, that he is the offspring there too—the serpent-crusher. In Romans 16:20 (the verse you read), God's going to crush Satan under the feet of the Christians. So in Romans, the idea has slightly shifted to offspring being believers in Christ. So which is it? Is the offspring believers in Christ or is the offspring Christ? And the answer is yes. [laughs] Right?

MSH: Mm hmm.

40:00

MLH: It's both because Paul has a concept of union of Christ, such that what is true of Christ is now true of us. And so you have this unity so that he can speak of both ideas. Right? This whole union with Christ thing is just a driving motif in Paul's letters. So we expect it and we see it here as well, this is how he's interpreting and playing with the Genesis text. So the idea is this offspring motif. We've traced it to Paul, Romans. And it's definitely got a Jesus-centered implication to it.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: And so yeah, anyway. So that's... I don't know if you want to move on to Genesis 49. Because this offspring motif, it really begins to get narrowed down and focused on a particular...

MSH: Yeah.

MLH: You want to go there?

MSH: Yeah, we might as well. I'll read Genesis 49:8-10. Because it's not the only place you're going to see the offspring idea developed, but we can't hit every one of them, but these are the major stopping points. So this is part of Jacob's blessing. In reference to Judah, he says in Genesis 49:8-10:

**⁸ "Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;**

your father's sons shall bow down before you.

⁹Judah is a lion's cub;

from the prey, my son, you have gone up. [MSH: which again is interesting language]

He stooped down; he crouched as a lion

and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?

¹⁰The scepter shall not depart from Judah,

nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,

until tribute comes to him;

and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

MLH: Mm hmm. That last line I think is interesting here. Because it, “the obedience of the peoples.” The nations, right?

MSH: Going back to their forefather, Abraham, who in Genesis it says he will be the father of many nations. It's not just Paul. Paul gets that from Genesis 15 and Genesis 17.

MLH: Mm hmm. Right, right, yeah. I think what we see here, and this is something that's... We have to factor this text in. And it has dividends later on. It gives some good results later on. But the thing to kind of focus on here is that last bit, that there's going to be kind of this idea of the peoples and nations coming to him, and they're going to be subjected to whoever this person is. And he's described as a ruler. He's got a scepter. He's...

MSH: You know who else it sounds like? It sounds like the servant later on. You know, and last time we talked about how you can't articulate a theology—a theological profile—of messiah just by looking at the one word “messiah.”

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: And this is sort of Exhibit A. I mean, you've got the nations coming to him. That's language that people would more associate with Handel's *Messiah* or something, something out of Isaiah. But here it is in Genesis.

MLH: Right, yeah. And you really begin to see this future person, whoever it is. It's really narrowed down into kind of another motif—a ruler/king motif. And later on, all of this sort of comes together. You get all these pieces, and toward the end, as you progress through the Old Testament, these things begin to come together in a way that's pretty logical. It's interesting in Revelation 5:5, Jesus is described as this Lion of the tribe of Judah. And people are familiar with that phrase. But he's also described as this Root of David.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: So you see, for the writer of Revelation, these two things come together, this...

MSH: Yeah, they dovetail together real nicely.

45:00

MLH: They do. And the reason I put that together is, well, just to make the observation that this Lion of the tribe of Judah idea and the Root or Offspring of David idea, they go together because later on when we get to 2 Samuel 7, the offspring motif appears again, but with respect to David himself (and his descendants). But anyway. So we just want to factor this Genesis 49 thing in, because it's going somewhere. What we're seeing, the larger picture considered, is the offspring motif is being narrowed down. So it's not just Israel, it's a certain group within Israel—a certain family, a certain dynasty in Israel. And again, as the story progresses, Genesis 3, it's this offspring of a woman. She's unspecified, just this woman. The mother of humanity. And then it gets narrowed down to Abraham, to Israel's family, and now it's going to get narrowed down to Judah, and then to David's family. It just keeps getting narrowed and narrowed down until we arrive at the finale.

MSH: For our audience, I mean, what essentially we're doing... Think of it this way: we're creating a résumé. What kind of résumé should this individual—should this *mashiach* that we talked about last week... If we can't understand what the job is or who would fit the job description based upon a single word... Okay, he's anointed. Wonderful. Okay? But there's just so much more to it than that single term. And so now we've got a couple of elements on the résumé. We've got the offspring motif... Matt mentioned the star motif and we've got now the offspring motif that's funneled down to a very particular family and a particular person. But we've also got it expanded to one whose identity many, many, many others from all nations are going to be identified with—this whole “in Christ” idea. So we're starting to build a résumé out is what we're trying to do here. We might want to jump to Numbers 24:17 here.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: Do you think it's a good time to do it? Okay, I'll read that. Again, this is ESV, Numbers 24. This is part of the Balaam oracles. This is his final oracle, where he says:

**¹⁷ I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near:
a star shall come out of Jacob,
and a scepter shall rise out of Israel;**

**it shall crush the forehead of Moab
and break down all the sons of Sheth.**

That's Numbers 24:17. So we've got a few things there I know you're going to riff of, so... [laughs]

MLH: So good. Oh my goodness. This is so good. We might notice maybe some parallelism here. "A star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel." So Jacob paralleled Israel, of course. That makes sense. And star paralleled a scepter. That's really interesting to me. I don't know if you have any thoughts on that. But yeah, anyway...

MSH: If star language is associated with the supernatural family—the supernatural beings of God's court—and really of God himself (this is where God lives; this is where his home is, up there in the heavens), well of course he's a ruler. [laughs]

MLH: Right.

MSH: You know? What else would you call him? If this personage is somehow inextricably linked to the place where the stars are, of course he's a royal son. Of course he's a ruler. It's not hard to figure out in the Israelite mindset.

MLH: Right. That's a good connection. And again, in Numbers 24:17 we have that word "scepter," which I'll say something about. There's something interesting there. But again, that word "scepter" was seen in Genesis 49: "the scepter shall not depart from Judah." And "scepter" there in the Greek Old Testament is *archon*, which means ruler. So it's pronounced there in the Greek. Interesting, going to Numbers 24:17 (the text that you just read), scepter language here in Greek is interesting because in Greek they use the word for "man." So the idea is that "a man shall arise from Israel." I don't know. That's really interesting to me.

MSH: Right.

MLH: So they don't use the word "scepter" in the Greek. So anyway, that's just kind of an interesting point of data there.

MSH: Well, part of it is because, we see this in some of the census passages and some of the war passages in the book of Numbers, and places like that, where you have the word for a staff (like a ruling staff or a scepter) also be the same word that's used for the leader of a tribe.

MLH: Hmm.

50:00

MSH: So you've got an overlap of Hebrew vocabulary here, at least a semantic... You have two semantic points that arise out of the same terminology. And so again, as I look at it, it's not hard for me to figure out that a Jew would look at this and think of the ruler's staff, okay? And he would think of the staff as representative of a particular tribe. And here he is talking about Jacob. So of course it has to be a man who would come out of Jacob. I mean, these things are not disconnectable. They're not disconnected in the Hebrew mindset. In the Hebrew mindset, these are natural points of connection. They're natural possibilities as to how to read this passage. So it is, indeed, interesting that the Septuagint says what it says. But the path there is actually not terribly surprising if we're familiar with the Hebrew vocabulary and its semantic range.

MLH: Hmm. Yeah, that's a good point. That's a good point. This star language here again at this "star rising" idea, just thinking in terms of the New Testament... I mean, there are some interesting texts that we could point to just to help us see how New Testament authors were thinking in this respect. And it comes at the first of the New Testament and it occurs at the end of the New Testament (Matthew and Revelation). So in Matthew, you have this well-known text, Matthew 2:2, where they say, "For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: And that's an interesting text. And I don't think that we would, at least initially, notice the connection to Numbers 24:17 there. But I think there is a connection there.

MSH: There would be a conceptual connection, yeah.

MLH: Right, a conceptual connection. Because given the text that we just read...

MSH: It would be under... If we wanted to name one of our motifs here, we've got the offspring motif, the star motif, we have the star and offspring motif that get funneled into a particular tribe that turns out to be a ruler. So we actually have a rulership motif (you know the ruler/king motif). And under that umbrella, you're going to have this language. Because again, whether it's *shebet* or some other word for ruler's staff... And in some passages, they're going to occur in the very same passage. Isaiah 10:5 you have a reference to the rod and then the staff of Israel. You have two different words that both denote rulership in Israel. Well, both of those things can be subsumed underneath rulership. And when you do that, it links you right back to this star passage in Numbers 24:17. You know? It's just there. Again, it's looking at motifs and then asking the question, "Okay, now that I know what... I'm starting to build out the résumé. We've got these different motifs—these different anchors. And one of them happens to be rulership. Well, what's the vocabulary by which rulership is expressed?" And you're going to get

this terminology for the staff and the scepter and... There's going to be a number of words that the biblical writers can use of this object that represented royalty or that represented a specific tribe. So it's just part of the way the résumé gets written. It's part of the way that part of the résumé is going to get expressed. These ideas are already in the same room. [laughs]

MLH: Oh, that's a good way to put it.

MSH: You more or less just have to notice them. But they're already there. You don't have to ask any of them to show up, you know, if you need help or something or you're going to make something up. They're already in the room.

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: You just have to notice that they're there.

MLH: Right, right. And it's interesting... I was just thinking this. Matthew 2:2, someone might say, "Well, look, the star is not *identified* as Jesus here. It's *associated* with Jesus. 'The star rose and we've come to worship him,' and the star pointing to Jesus. So there isn't, like, a one-for-one identification or correlation between the two." Fair enough, but when you get to Revelation 22:16, you do see star language correlated with Jesus. So that's the text that...

MSH: Well, I think that would be a bit of an unfair criticism. Because if we say, "We saw his star," well, okay. We know that star is going to be, on one hand, one of these anchor points that denotes divinity. Okay, we got that because of the star language of the Old Testament. But if you're talking about astronomically, that to them (to the Magi) is going to denote rulership. Because... And this isn't spelled out in Matthew. I think it *is* spelled out in Revelation 12. You know, I take an astro-theological view of Revelation 12. Because if you take all that as astrological signage (what you get in Revelation 12) and then you incorporate what you get in Matthew 2, the star that they're referring to is in the constellation of the lion—of Leo. So right there you have the kingship motif associated directly with the star.

MLH: That's good.

MSH: And that's not a foreign idea to people outside of Israel as well. Because the reason you... The Magi in other cultures are going to be associated with the ability to foresee things in the heavens about their kings. So it never loses this royal property of it. But a lot of scholars, they don't put any thought into the astral imagery in Revelation 12. And so there is a disconnection in their heads like you just expressed. But I don't think it's a necessary one. I think if you take it astronomically, you've got the connection made there in Revelation again. And our listeners may have noticed, in some of the passages that you've been

55:00

alluding to (Revelation 5:5, and with the star language Revelation 22:16), there's a lot of this stuff in Revelation. It's not just Paul. And I would add Revelation 12, when it comes to the star stuff.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: So it's not unfamiliar turf to the writer of Revelation, either.

MLH: Right. Which suggests there was a broad consensus among early Christians that they were thinking along the same lines. Paul's writing to a different community. And he's definitely familiar with John's community (Asia Minor) obviously, but...

MSH: Look at what Paul says in Romans 10. This is where the whole astro-theological thing gets started, in my head. This is what tilted me toward it. When he starts talking about, "How shall they hear unless they have a preacher," and blah blah blah and so on and so forth. And he says, "Well, they *have* heard." And he quotes Psalm 19, okay, which is filled with astral language—the heavens declaring the glory of God. There's like five or six times that heavenly objects are said to speak or give a message or something like that in Psalm 19. That's Paul's prooftext for everyone being accountable to the one bit of knowledge that a divine king had come. He refers to the stars.

MLH: That's good.

MSH: You know? It's just plain as day (pardon the pun). But it's plain as day there. And he goes to Psalm 19 as his prooftext for it.

MLH: Mm hmm. Yeah. So let me ask you... I was curious. As you were talking I was thinking, going back to the Matthew 2 text, where it doesn't seem like it's explicitly identifying "star" with Jesus. It's just associating the star with Jesus. But as you were talking, I was thinking, and I want to ask you about this. In the ancient world, the idea was that the events on earth were mirrored in heaven and vice versa.

MSH: Yeah.

MLH: So there'd be a correspondence here. So is that idea at work perhaps in Matthew 2?

MSH: I think there is that correspondence idea. I think that the very common idea that rulership comes from God (or the gods) is also part of it. You can, of course, connect divinity with rulership. I mean, this is a consistent **trope** no matter what culture you're in. And so I think that's part of what's in play here too.

MLH: Yeah. Because even then correspondence can imply identity with, right?

MSH: Yeah, it carries weight. Yeah.

MLH: Such that an earthly king could be given a heavenly title almost, right? I mean, you see that as well.

MSH: Yeah, heavenly title. Some association with God himself ultimately is where it goes. Or in your polytheistic view that kingship descends from the gods and descends from the heavens and all this sort of stuff. It's so common that it's really startling to me how some scholars never bother to think about it or include it in the Israelite mindset. It's not that anybody's worshiping the stars, because Scripture tells us plainly, "Don't do that." And it tells us plainly to not do that really because of this association with the gods.

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: But nevertheless, this association is there when it comes to the rightful rulership of the nations on earth. Well, who else would it be? It would be someone who God puts there, somebody who has this special relationship with God. I mean, again, to me it's hard to miss.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: But lots of scholars get there. They manage to miss it. [laughs]

1:00:00

MLH: Well, it would be hard to miss in Revelation 22:16, where the identity is explicit, right? Where Jesus calls himself "the root and the descendant of David, the bright..."

MSH: He's the morning star.

MLH: "Bright morning star." Yeah. So the identity's there. A one-for-one identity. Yeah.

MSH: If you're just making up those associations in the book of Revelation, people are going to look at, "Well, what's that? What are you talking about?" Well, they know what he's talking about. You know? He's not just making it up there. He's drawing on something much earlier that does have its roots in the Old Testament as well.

MLH: Right. Eugene Peterson said in his book, *Reverse Thunder*, something to the effect (it's a paraphrase) that we shouldn't let anybody read Revelation unless they've read the entire Old Testament first. Right? [laughter] I agree.

MSH: Well, I would agree after our series. I mean, you can't land in a paragraph and not see the Old Testament. The writer's just doing something with it consistently and constantly.

MLH: Yeah. Oh, absolutely. 100%. It's interesting. So we just kind of... Pulling things together, we've already identified the star motif with the ruler motif (scepter language and star as a ruler and those sorts of things). Those connections seem to be really clear. It is interesting how in the Revelation text the star language is associated with David language.

MSH: Yep.

MLH: So we've had all these plots and these motifs that seem unconnected.

MSH: And I would say, too, that the star language does point to divinity. And we get that with David in the Old Testament, too, because he's called Elyon (Most High) in Psalm 89, which is the Psalm equivalent of 2 Samuel 7, which I know we're going to get there, here in a minute or two.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: You know, you could say, "Well, that just means David's the ruler of all the other nations." Yeah. [laughs] Okay. So how do you get that just being a historic Israelite king?

MLH: Hmm. That's...

MSH: How do you get there?

MLH: Well I think we trace the...

MSH: You can get back there through Abraham, you know, and the star language there, too.

MLH: True. The other way we can get there is just "son of God" language, right? So... Do you want to go to 2 Samuel 7? Because I think that's...

MSH: Yeah, let's do that. What would you like me to read out of that?

MLH: I think verses 12-14.

MSH: And this is the Lord's covenant with David—the Davidic covenant passage. And verses 12-14, we read this:

12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men,

We'll just continue into verse 15.

15 but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you.

MLH: Hmm. That's good.

MSH: There's your "offspring" stuff.

MLH: It's there. It's all there. And rulership stuff, too.

MSH: And we've got singular language, too. Rulership. We've got some singular language going on in there, sprinkled in there. You know, very specific.

MLH: Yeah, absolutely. This connects to everything. I mean, it really does, in more ways than one. It connects back to David. Back to Adam and Eve, it connects... Here you have offspring language explicitly connected to kingdom or kingship language, right? Which connects back to scepter language and all of that sort of thing. It's all connected. And here we have something that we haven't spent a whole lot of time talking about, but it's key, too—namely, sonship language.

MSH: Yep. Verse 14, yep.

MLH: Sonship. Now my first thought when I think of sons is... Well, I actually have multiple thoughts at the same time. [laughs] But one thought out of that is Exodus 4:23, where God says, "Tell Pharaoh, 'Let my son go.'" He identifies Israel as his son. And so sonship language was a corporate idea, namely toward Israel. Israel was God's son because he adopted them. Now here you see that God is adopting David's offspring as son. Okay, so all of that's important. Again, we get connections back to all of this stuff. And your audience would definitely know a second association that sonship has, namely with divine beings, right?

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: So I wonder, is there a connection there that might be worth exploring with respect to looking ahead at the divine son that's coming from David, and son of

1:05:00

God language that is given to Jesus? I don't know. I keep thinking of Job and sons of God there. Is there a connection there? Is this a motif that is worth exploring?

MSH: Yeah, I think it is. And in Revelation... It's hard to not see it in the book of Revelation, because of the morning star language (that's Revelation 22) and you've already read through Revelation 12, where you have the woman who is Israel giving birth to the messiah—the son there. You know, Revelation certainly connects these ideas. But I think it happens here and there before you get to the book of Revelation.

MLH: Yeah, for sure. So even just in the New Testament (I mentioned this in one of our previous episodes), that Paul starts off his letter to Rome with this idea of Jesus being the son who is descended from David according to the flesh. Right? And he is declared son of God by his resurrection from the dead. Later on he says that. And so you have sonship...

MSH: That's Romans 1, correct?

MLH: Yeah, Romans 1. Uh huh. That's right. Verses 3 and 4 and that area. But yeah, so you have sonship language obviously applied there. You have it in the Matthew text. What is it? Near his baptism.

MSH: Mm hmm. "This is my son in whom I am well pleased."

MLH: It's just so important there. I mean, that's right in the middle of Matthew retelling the story of Israel in Jesus, right?

MSH: Right.

MLH: The Jordan River's kind of an important point. Geographically speaking, right?

MSH: Right. It's the whole new exodus thing, just by... Back in Romans it gets connected to the son of David is also the son of God. Here you have the son of David in Matthew later on, at the baptism. God says, "Oh, he's also *my* son." You have the two things connected right there.

MLH: Yeah, that's exactly right.

MSH: And taking the place of Israel is important because of all this other stuff we've talked about today. The fact that you're getting this reenactment of God's relationship to Israel, who by the way was also God's son there in the Exodus passage. It's hard to miss if you know the story elements.

MLH: It's terribly hard to miss. But you can only notice the story elements if you know that it's a story, right? And "story" meaning that there's a narrative flow to it, that there's connections and so forth. And as a side note, too, sometimes the translations don't do a good enough job in bringing these connections out, you know? And so sometimes I think that might be part of the problem, too.

MSH: Yeah, I'm still willing to blame the way we teach hermeneutics. [laughs]

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: Because if you know it's... To my audience, what Matt's trying to say here is it's important to know that it's a story because when you read fiction—when you read a novel—of course what the novelist wrote on page 10 is going to be connectable and important to, in fact, connect over on page 200. It's intuitive because that's the way fiction is written. It's designed to create these points of connectivity and to reinforce the points of connectivity throughout the story. So if we would just read Scripture as a story... This is why I say you'd get more out of your Bible if you read it like it was fiction. It's not fiction, but try to read it that way. And that's just reading a story. And you'll know that, maybe you'll have some intuitive sense that "maybe this language here in this verse, when I see some of it over here in this other verse, maybe we're supposed to connect those things." Yeah! Yeah, you are!

MLH: Absolutely.

MSH: It's not just a professor telling you to do that to kill some class time. This is the way it's written. It's written as *story*. And so we'd have a more intuitive sense of the connectability. But anyway, I'll get off my soapbox there and just...

1:10:00

MLH: It's my soapbox too. [MSH laughs] I get so frustrated when we treat the Bible almost like a dictionary or just some sort of encyclopedia. You know? "I need a good word today," so I just open my Bible and find a good word for me. And we never even consider the context of it and so forth. And you know, the Bible didn't come down in printed form one day from heaven. You know? It was written over time by lots of different people who themselves had their own stories. And their stories were important to what they wrote down. And so we have to think in terms of story. And you know what, the advantage of that, too, is that when you think of... The question of genre immediately comes to the fore.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: And so now you have to ask, "Well, what type of story is this?" And it depends where you are in your Bible if it's apocalyptic or if it's narrative or something like that. So that's why, when you and I are talking about stars and how they mean heavenly beings or something, because we're considering the

genre, right? We're considering the story of the time and the way people used language and so forth. And so yeah, there's just so many advantages of reading the text as stories, or in a storied way I should say.

MSH: Mm hmm. Any other New Testament passages that you think you'd want to bring up in connection with 2 Samuel 7 or Exodus 4:23? You know, some of this Israel imagery—this sonship thing.

MLH: Right, yeah. Last time I think we talked about 2 Corinthians 6:18, where Paul quotes 2 Samuel 7:14. And he applies the Davidic promise to all the Christians in much the same way that he applied the Abrahamic offspring idea to all Christians, right? But it's important to know that elsewhere in the New Testament, the 2 Samuel text is applied pretty straightforwardly to Jesus. So you have Hebrews 1:5, a very important verse. Let's see. It says:

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say,
"You are my Son,
today I have begotten you"? [MLH: that's a quote from Psalm 2]
Or again,
"I will be to him a father,
and he shall be to me a son"? [MLH: a quote from 2 Samuel 7:14]

So this is Jesus. It's sonship coming together with David language. Because it comes from the Davidic promise. So it's applied to Jesus.

MSH: Yeah, but it's applied to everybody else because we're the siblings of Jesus.

MLH: Yeah. And this is the advantage of *your* stuff, where you have Divine Council ideas, which I think is very important. We have to think of sonship as both singular (Jesus) and plural (believers). Right? So the whole Divine Council stuff is just, I think, indispensable. So plug for your book! Go read *Unseen Realm* and all the other stuff.

MSH: [laughs] I would agree with you. [laughter]

MLH: Yeah. I didn't think you would object to that. [laughs] I'm excited. My wife is actually looking through *Unseen Realm* right now, so I'm really excited. [laughs] So Tasha, keep reading! I know she'll listen to this, so she's going to get encouragement. [MSH laughs] So Mike, you encouraged my wife Tasha. Keep reading, it's a great book! [laughs] Yeah, so anyway, you have all of these... I think what we've done here is really pull different motifs together. And we're seeing how they combine and come together. And yet there's so much more to come.

MSH: Yep.

MLH: You've mentioned servant language, which we'll get into I think in the next episode.

MSH: Yeah, next time. I mean, this is just scratching the surface.

MLH: It is. Just to kind of put a teaser for the audience, it gets so good when you get into the servant language in Isaiah and you begin to see more merging or continuous merging of these plots and these motifs, I should say. It gets exciting. And let me say one more thing. I know I'm talking a lot here. But let me just say this, because I have a passion for helping people understand how it's all connected, just like you do. And what I've noticed is that so many Christians are intimidated by the Bible. Right? It's a big book, seemingly disconnected and so forth. And no wonder we struggle to read our Bibles as Christians, because we've never been taught how to put it together. And what I've seen in my own ministry—my own teaching—is that when students see what we're talking about, when they begin to connect the dots... I've seen it countless times, Mike, the lightbulb goes on and people get excited and they start reading the Bible because they *want* to, not because they were told to. Right? And I know that's your passion, it's my passion, and we want to make the Bible come alive again. And so that's the goal.

1:15:00

MSH: Yeah. Well, that's a good way to wrap up this episode. And yeah, it is just scratching the surface. And I have found that a lot of people who do venture into the Old Testament typically venture into the Torah. You know? It's like the Torah gets precedent over lots of other things in the Old Testament. And the Prophets tend to get neglected because they're so obtuse. They can be downright weird. It's hard to know what's going on there. It's a little easier to read the Torah because you do have direct storytelling there (as if you don't in the Prophets). You know? Somehow we've been trained to not read the Prophets that way. And that makes them more difficult and more intimidating.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: But if you're able to get into that stuff, like the servant language, there's just a lot of cool stuff there. I mean, there's just so much there that contributes to what we're talking about. And so we'll be venturing into that. But thanks again, Matt, for spending the time with us. I know our listeners are going to really get pulled into this series. I think they already have been. It's just what we're trying to do. How do you build a messianic profile? And on one hand you can say that our interest is apologetic, that we're objecting to the notion that the New Testament portrayal of Jesus can't be found in the Old Testament. We think that's false. But people can be easily swallowed up by that or persuaded by it if they're only looking at the Old Testament profile in terms of the single word "messiah." Or

they're *not* looking at it as the point of convergence of a whole grocery list of ideas that we're calling motifs here or anchors. Again, we're building out the résumé. So I think our listeners are going to see the value of that pretty well instantly. And the need to be able to think about Scripture in a storied manner, not just in regard to this, but in regard to so many other things. So thanks for being here with us.

MLH: Well, thanks for having me on. It's such a privilege. And I look forward to next time.

TS: Alright, Mike, another great episode in the Paul's Use of the Old Testament series—our third episode, and talking about the messianic story and how it all fits together. You know, the Bible Project is big on that, too. I think they probably helped most of all to educate people on how to read the Bible. But that's great. Because once that clicks, you do get excited about reading the Bible, once you start understanding it a little better.

MSH: Yeah. Yeah, I would agree. The Bible Project, what they do goes a long way to help people to read the Bible like it's a story. Because it is. And they have a great way of doing that. They've got a strong skill set, and really, I think, an intelligent way of doing that for just a huge range of listeners. So yeah, we certainly recommend that as well.

TS: Yeah, absolutely. Alright, Mike, well, we'll be looking for the next installment of this series next week. And with that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.