

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 414

Paul's Use of the Old Testament: The Messianic Story, Part 2

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Teacher: Dr. Michael S. Heiser (MSH)

Host: Trey Stricklin (TS)

Guest: Dr. Matt Halsted (MLH)

Episode Summary

In the previous episodes 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 episode 413. In this episode, we take a look at the merging of "messiah language" (various story elements and motifs) with "David language" (motifs about his dynasty and catch phrases like "branch" and "servant").

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 414: Paul's Use of the Old Testament Series: The Messianic Story, Part 2, with Dr. Matt Halsted. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing?

MSH: Well, Trey, I know I've used this term before, and I'm going to use it again, because I'm in it. We're in the dead zone, Trey. Football is over.

TS: Ah.

MSH: There's no baseball.

TS: Mm.

MSH: I don't watch basketball or hockey.

TS: It's basketball. What are you talking about? It's basketball.

MSH: I can't watch it.

TS: March Madness is around the corner. March Madness is, in my opinion, the greatest single sporting event. I'm sure I've said this before, but I think it's even greater than the Super Bowl, for me, personally.

MSH: I used to watch it. I don't know why I lost interest in it. I remember when I was in high school and college watching it, but I just lost interest in basketball totally. So I'm suffering. I'm glad to hear you're not. But I'm in the dead zone.

TS: Yeah, no, I'm doing pretty good. My Red Raiders are doing pretty good.

MSH: Yeah. The only thing positive I can say is, it's forced me to get into my computer baseball replay games a little bit more. So that satisfies my baseball hunger, only to a certain extent. Gotta have the games.

TS: Yeah. Well, it was fun talking sports with Matt before the show, too. He's a Sooner. So for those out there, "Boomer Sooners." That's the last time I'll ever say that again, Mike. [MSH laughs] But his Sooners beat my Red Raiders. The Red Raiders, we just cracked the top ten the other day in the nation. We're ranked 9. And we went to New Orleans.

MSH: This is basketball, right?

TS: This is basketball, yeah. And they beat us. So it was fun talking to him about sports a little bit. So I like that it's okay that all these biblical scholars and whatnot are into sports and competition. I like that. You know? It's a fun...

MSH: That's right, that's right. It's no sin.

TS: Yeah! It's fun to talk something other than the Bible sometimes.

MSH: Sometimes. [laughs]

TS: As long as... Yeah, sometimes. Alright, Mike. Well, hey, we've got the Messianic Story, Part 2 today. Could you give us a little heads up on what we're going to talk about?

MSH: Yeah. We're going to continue along with the theme of thinking about prophecy not as statement fulfillment but as story, and then reenacting the story. That's going to become important. Because we're going to be seeing how certain of these threads, especially the servant idea, gets married to David. And the servant idea has long tentacles that reach out and connect to a lot of the things we've talked about up to this point—the servant parts of the Old Testament. And you even get that language in the Psalms as well, which is where we'll start with it. This stuff is going to become really important to start filling out messianic résumé, or the messianic profile, to see how all of these things come together in certain passages. You know, we're leading up to ultimately looking at New Testament (starting our episodes with New Testament), so that we can look at what Paul or another New Testament writer is doing with the Old Testament. And this will help us to understand why he's reading it the way he is. So we're still

table-setting, but we're getting to the point where some of the things are starting to come together.

MSH: Well, we're pleased again to have Matt Halsted back on the podcast. We're continuing our series on how the messianic motifs (the messianic profile of the Old Testament) really gets built out— how that really happens, what's going on in the text. And then how Paul, especially, but other New Testament writers, how they talk about messiah in light of their own reading of the Old Testament as what Matt coined “a storied reading of the text.” So what we've learned to this point in our series (and by this time, we're I think three episodes in here)... I'm not going to ask Matt to reintroduce himself. If you want to know who Matt Halsted is, you can listen to one of the first three.

5:00 But where we're up to at this point is we looked at, initially, the deficiencies or the really kind of a skewered way of looking at the profile of the messiah in the Old Testament where it's just fixating on the word “messiah.” But we did that because that's how academics tend to approach this subject. They say, “Well, we want to know what the Old Testament expectation of messiah was. Let's look up all the places where “messiah” is mentioned. And then we'll see what those verses say in their own context at the time, and there you go. That's it. Job done.” Well, you know, it doesn't take too long to figure out that if you do that, most of the messiah talk is about a present actual king in the line of David at some point—historical kings and not about a future atoner or a future deliverer. You don't really get talk of a divine man. You don't get a lot of the things that we associate with the figure of the messiah if you just approach it that way. And that's what allows a lot of scholars to claim that the New Testament portrayal of Jesus in the Gospels, and then of course, Paul's theology of christology of Christ, how those things do not, they claim, overlap with what you actually read in the Old Testament. And so Matt and I object to that. We think it's quite an exaggeration and a misreading.

And so we're approaching it from a different perspective, and that is that there are lots of places where you read stories in the Old Testament about a deliverer or about the son of God or about a particular seed or offspring from a particular line being God's servant to undo the effect of the Fall and to fulfill the covenants. There are a lot of those passages. And many of them don't even use the word “messiah” at all. But to exclude them is really to do an injustice to the whole concept of a messianic deliverer. And so Matt came up with a phrase that I like: “storied reading of the Old Testament.” Read the Old Testament as a story and see what motifs emerge. And to this point, we've talked about a number of them. There's the seed or the offspring motif. There's the motif of sonship. Israel, for instance, is called the son of God, and so is the king. We know that there's going to be one human son from the line of Adam and Eve who would undo the effect

of the Fall. So there's a theme of sonship and seed or offspring that has to be thought about because it later gets connected with star language, which is the language of divinity. It gets attached to rulership language, fulfillment of the covenants, especially the healing of the nations, where Matt has made the comment several times (borrowing from N. T. Wright) that God's rescue plan for humanity (for the nations) was Israel. And that's emerging out of the Deuteronomy 32 worldview that we spend a lot of time on this podcast talking about. We have all these things working together: the lineage, the star language, the sonship, the seed, the offspring, the rulership. And the last time we talked, we started to get into David a little bit. And so this time we want to turn our attention more to David language—the merging of David language with earlier messiah language and messiah motifs. And so I'm going to bring Matt in here. Matt, thanks for joining us again. And I think we're going to jump into Psalm 132, if I'm not correct.

MLH: Yeah! That's right. I just want to say again, thanks for having me on again. And it's been a blast so far. So I look forward to looking at more texts, this time in the Psalms, about David.

MSH: Yeah. I hope that listeners are getting the point here that if you want to have a conversation about messiah with a Jewish friend, the conversations that we're having here, right in this series of podcasts, are absolutely essential. Because if your Jewish friend has been taught anything in synagogue about "what those Christians say," they're going to think they can easily debunk it by appealing to passages where the word "messiah" occurs. But the subject matter is so much larger than that—so much wider—that this becomes really the way that these things need to get talked about. Because they're the way that Scripture presents the idea of a messiah, not just stuck in history at a particular king in the Old Testament that we can read about. It goes far wider than that. There's an expectation of more to come that's consistent with what was there earlier, but is not limited by what was there earlier. So Matt, why don't you get us into Psalm 132 and we'll see what we're talking about here today.

10:00

MLH: Yeah, absolutely. I want to just piggyback off of that real quick. If we do just look at those messiah texts and point our Jewish friends to those texts, then it'll be a huge letdown, and really our defense of the gospel and our witness for Christ Jesus as messiah. You know, it's going to fall flat. And we end up kind of looking silly and maybe even disappointed later if we don't take that storied approach that we've been talking about. And I want to say about that, I actually didn't come up with that myself, by any means. I really lean into N. T. Wright, of course, on this, his *The New Testament and the People of God*. That changed my hermeneutical life. And so I highly recommend that book. And of course, my own PhD advisor, Torsten Moritz. He's a German scholar. Just an absolutely brilliant man. And he really put that whole "storied" idea into my heart. And I just can't get away from it [laughs], every time I read Scripture.

MSH: Yeah, it's good stuff.

MLH: Yeah!

MSH: You know, it's more plain language than metanarrative, which is why it has an appeal.

MLH: That's good. Yeah! I think you're right. It has a lot of value (cash value, I guess you could say—reading value) when it comes to reading Scripture. I think I mentioned this last time: when I began reading the Old Testament for the first time, and just the Bible in general, I didn't know what to do with it. Like, just, "Is it a bunch of random texts that have no connection with each other?" And a lot of people see that about the Old Testament. I mean, unfortunately, we Christians aren't known for knowing our Old Testament as much as we should because it's hard to understand. But it's *easy* to understand if you can trace the story. You do that by tracing motifs. And, like we've been talking about, in Psalm 132... You mentioned we can jump into that. This is a text that is going to continue with some of these same motifs that we've been talking about. And specifically, the David motif. We've talked about the Davidic covenant, the sonship idea, that God would raise from David a leader, a king, and so forth. And Psalm 132, I think, is super insightful in this regard.

MSH: Are you going to read any of it? If you do, tell us what version you're reading from.

MLH: Let's use the ESV. So Psalm 132. It's fascinating because it's a pre-exilic text. Right? So by that we mean, of course, that it's a text written before the exile. So there is currently a king. I'm not sure who, but there's currently a king on the throne. And this psalmist is praying for that king. And he spends... Starting with really verse 1 (1-9 or so)... So starting with verse 1, he says:

**Remember, O LORD, in David's favor,
all the hardships he endured,
2 how he swore to the LORD
and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob,
3 "I will not enter my house
or get into my bed,
4 I will not give sleep to my eyes
or slumber to my eyelids,
5 until I find a place for the LORD,
a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob."**

And of course, this recalls 2 Samuel, how David wanted to build God a house

and so forth. So I read verse 1-5. By the time we get down to verse 10, we see this interesting text. I'll read verse 10 and following. He says:

**¹⁰ For the sake of your servant David,
do not turn away the face of your anointed one.**

Or literally there, "your messiah," your anointed. And how should we take this? Is he talking about a future messiah here? You know, scholars are going to rightly say, "Well, no. He seems to be talking about the current king. So whoever this psalmist is, they're writing about the current king.

MSH: Sure.

MLH: And they're asking that the favor of David would rest upon the current king, who is called *mashiach*, the messiah. And it's really interesting there for a number of reasons. And I think one observation we can take away is that, like we've mentioned before, historical kings could be called the anointed one, or the messiah.

MSH: Sure.

MLH: So that's pretty simple, straightforward. But what's even more fascinating (I was thinking about this text yesterday and today specifically) is that the psalmist appeals back to the Davidic covenant for the blessing and favor upon the current king. And that's very, very important.

15:00

MSH: It gives you the flavoring right away that it has some ongoing or everlasting value.

MLH: That's the key. Ongoing, everlasting value. It really reveals that the early Jews, even pre-exilic Jews, they were thinking along the lines of how the Davidic covenant had ongoing, continual effectiveness throughout history.

MSH: Before we depart from that, that's important. Because what scholars will say is that it took the exile to generate the idea of looking forward to an ultimate Davidic ruler. And what you're saying is, "Well, here we have people before the exile. They're not in exile. And they're still thinking along these lines."

MLH: Right. It's fascinating. It's so fascinating. Yeah. Definitely pre-exilic here. Definitely praying for the king, this Davidic king here. But this Davidic king, it seems, is only labeled messiah here based on his lineage from David. Okay? Now that's interesting. But again, you pointed it out very well here, that there's ongoing significance. And this implies (and we'll see this later on in additional texts) that there is still a future anticipation that the Davidic covenant will be fleshed out on down the road.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: Right? So while it is true that this text is talking about a past historical king and not the future eschatological messiah, it still allows for ongoing interpretation for a coming messiah, because of the Davidic covenant's ongoing meaning that it has in the life of Israel. So that's a very important text here.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: We could go own down to... Well, I'll just read, picking back up in verse 11 down to 17 or so. Verse 11:

- ¹¹ The LORD swore to David a sure oath
from which he will not turn back:
"One of the sons of your body
I will set on your throne.
¹² If your sons keep my covenant
and my testimonies that I shall teach them,
their sons also forever
shall sit on your throne."
¹³ For the LORD has chosen Zion;
he has desired it for his dwelling place:
¹⁴ "This is my resting place forever;
here I will dwell, for I have desired it.
¹⁵ I will abundantly bless her provisions;
I will satisfy her poor with bread.
¹⁶ Her priests I will clothe with salvation,
and her saints will shout for joy.
¹⁷ There I will make a horn to sprout for David;
I have prepared a lamp for my anointed.**

Here, it's really interesting, the "my anointed" here, *mashiach*, messiah... I don't know what you think about this verse. It seems to me to point back to David himself, right?

MSH: Well, in parallelism there in verse 17, I think you can make a really good argument for that.

MLH: Yeah, that's what I was thinking, too. The horn and the lamp are parallel; David and the anointed there are parallel. When we read the psalms, that's definitely what we have to look for. But nonetheless, here I think you have...

What we need to see here is (again, same thing) the ongoing significance of David. God's going to continue to be faithful to the Davidic promise to carry that out into the future. And so what's interesting here is if *mashiach* here is a reference to David, that's interesting because in the verse we just read, verse 10, *mashiach* was applied to the son of David or one of the sons of David—whoever the current king was.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: So “messiah” language... And this is kind of the point with this. Messiah language is intimately associated with David and the Davidic line. And I think that's going to be important for...

MSH: Yeah, it will be. Because of what David connects to—four or five different things.

20:00

MLH: Mm hmm. Yep. Exactly. Yeah. I mean, like we talked about last time, we have that offspring motif, which is very much important for David. And the kingship motif. That's going to be important, and it already has been important, of course. So you have all these motifs. And really, they do coalesce and they come together in the Davidic dynasty, right? And especially when we get into some other texts, it's going to be interesting because I think we'll see that this coming one, whoever he is, he's going to be part of the line of David, but he's also going to be something different as well. Jumping too far ahead here, but nonetheless, something we can anticipate. I think what's interesting here, too, is that if we can just maybe venture into the prophet Jeremiah for a moment, he mentions David in chapter 33:15. And it's an interesting text because, for those who are familiar with that context, Jeremiah has just finished talking about the new covenant. Jeremiah 31... this is the famous text where he's outlined this new covenant idea. And it's a really neat text. But after that in chapter 33 is where he gets into David. So let me look at this, pull it up here. Jeremiah 33, begin with verse 14. He says:

¹⁴ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵ In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’

So this is important because even during Jeremiah's time (the prophet of doom, as he was known in his ministry) [laughter], he...

MSH: Yeah, “the weeping prophet” just doesn't quite capture it.

MLH: [laughs] No. I mean, he's the beat-up prophet. He's the depressed prophet. I mean, he's an interesting character. If anybody wants to do a fun case study on a character in Scripture, Jeremiah is your man. [laughs] He's one of my favorites. Yeah, he's got a lot going on in his life, and here he is prophesying right on the edge of exile. So Judah is about to be beat up [laughs] and launched into exile, and yet they're waiting. There's this anticipation, I should say, at this point for the Davidic son (a Branch he's called) to come execute justice and bring righteousness back to the land. I think this is interesting here in some respects. Because later on in the chapter, David is once again called a servant—God's servant. And even here, it's important to take note of that, I think. Because there is a servant motif like there is an offspring motif and a sonship and a kingship motif. There's a servant motif that's going to be important for Isaiah. We'll look at that later, of course. But here you have the servant motif paired with David pretty regularly in Scripture. And I think there's something to that.

MSH: You get that branch language back in Psalm 132 as well.

MLH: That's correct. There's a connection there.

MSH: Yeah, it's easy to read over that.

MLH: Exactly, yep. The branch language—the springing up or the sprouting.

MSH: Yeah, in verse 17.

MLH: Yep, that's exactly right. And so here we have... You know, is this a messiah text? Well, it is in one respect, because we saw how messiah language is paired with David language in Psalm 132. Here you don't have "messiah" in this verse that I read, but I think you still have sort of the same concept.

MSH: You have, like, a future David. [laughs]

MLH: Yeah, exactly right. What were they expecting? Were they expecting this eschatological messiah at this point or were they expecting just the restoration of the Davidic monarchy once the exile ended? Right?

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: That is what seems to be in view here. But anybody familiar with how the story of Israel continues to go is that there's a lot of disappointment because the monarchy doesn't quite get restored in the way that people want it to.

MSH: It fails.

MLH: Yeah. [laughs]

MSH: It fails before the exile and it's just as much of a disappointment afterwards.

25:00

MLH: Right. That's exactly right. Interestingly, if we jump back to the Psalms—Psalm 89... I think Psalm 89 here is a very important text in this respect. Because here we see the reaffirmation of the Davidic covenant, that God's going to use David's son to do great things for his people, and yet there's a complaint—a lament—in Psalm 89. And I think it's worth reading the text itself because it really captures how the hopes were dashed for the people of God, and also how they're holding that in tension with the promise that God's going to use David. But it's a fascinating... Yeah, I don't know. I think the whole thing... How many verses is this? It's kind of long.

MSH: We can read it at length.

MLH: Okay, yeah. Maybe start with verse 1. It's fascinating. This is verse 1:

**I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever;
with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations.**
**² For I said, "Steadfast love will be built up forever;
in the heavens you will establish your faithfulness."**
**³ You have said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
⁴ 'I will establish your offspring forever,
and build your throne for all generations.'"**

So here you see the affirmation of the Davidic covenant. Pretty simple. Straightforward. And then... We'll just keep reading.

**⁵ Let the heavens praise your wonders, O LORD,
your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!**
**⁶ For who in the skies can be compared to the LORD?
Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD,
⁷ a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones,
and awesome above all who are around him?**
**⁸ O LORD God of hosts,
who is mighty as you are, O LORD,
with your faithfulness all around you?**
**⁹ You rule the raging of the sea;
when its waves rise, you still them.**
¹⁰ You crushed Rahab like a carcass;

you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.

**¹¹ The heavens are yours; the earth also is yours;
the world and all that is in it, you have founded them.**

**¹² The north and the south, you have created them;
Tabor and Hermon joyously praise your name.**

**¹³ You have a mighty arm;
strong is your hand, high your right hand.**

**¹⁴ Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;
steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.**

**¹⁵ Blessed are the people who know the festal shout,
who walk, O LORD, in the light of your face,**

**¹⁶ who exult in your name all the day
and in your righteousness are exalted.**

**¹⁷ For you are the glory of their strength;
by your favor our horn is exalted.**

**¹⁸ For our shield belongs to the LORD,
our king to the Holy One of Israel.**

**¹⁹ Of old you spoke in a vision to your godly one, and said:
“I have granted help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.**

**²⁰ I have found David, my servant;
with my holy oil I have anointed him,**

**²¹ so that my hand shall be established with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.**

**²² The enemy shall not outwit him;
the wicked shall not humble him.**

**²³ I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.**

**²⁴ My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him,
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.**

**²⁵ I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.**

**²⁶ He shall cry to me, ‘You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.’**

**²⁷ And I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.**

²⁸ My steadfast love I will keep for him forever,

and my covenant will stand firm for him.
²⁹ I will establish his offspring forever
and his throne as the days of the heavens.
³⁰ If his children forsake my law
and do not walk according to my rules,
³¹ if they violate my statutes
and do not keep my commandments,
³² then I will punish their transgression with the rod
and their iniquity with stripes,
³³ but I will not remove from him my steadfast love
or be false to my faithfulness.
³⁴ I will not violate my covenant
or alter the word that went forth from my lips.
³⁵ Once for all I have sworn by my holiness;
I will not lie to David.
³⁶ His offspring shall endure forever,
his throne as long as the sun before me.
³⁷ Like the moon it shall be established forever,
a faithful witness in the skies." *Selah*
³⁸ But now you have cast off and rejected;
you are full of wrath against your anointed.
³⁹ You have renounced the covenant with your servant;
you have defiled his crown in the dust.
⁴⁰ You have breached all his walls;
you have laid his strongholds in ruins.
⁴¹ All who pass by plunder him;
he has become the scorn of his neighbors.
⁴² You have exalted the right hand of his foes;
you have made all his enemies rejoice.
⁴³ You have also turned back the edge of his sword,
and you have not made him stand in battle.
⁴⁴ You have made his splendor to cease
and cast his throne to the ground.
⁴⁵ You have cut short the days of his youth;
you have covered him with shame. *Selah*
⁴⁶ How long, O LORD? Will you hide yourself forever?
How long will your wrath burn like fire?

30:00

47 Remember how short my time is!
For what vanity you have created all the children of man!

48 What man can live and never see death?
Who can deliver his soul from the power of Sheol? *Selah*

49 Lord, where is your steadfast love of old,
which by your faithfulness you swore to David?

50 Remember, O Lord, how your servants are mocked,
and how I bear in my heart the insults of all the many nations,

51 with which your enemies mock, O LORD,
with which they mock the footsteps of your anointed.

52 Blessed be the LORD forever!
Amen and Amen.

MLH: So it's quite a lengthy psalm there. But it's...

MSH: There are some very clear things, though. There's a clear connection between David and *mashiach*—between David's line and *mashiach*. I was [audio breaks] focusing on how Psalm 89, there are various places it follows the Baal Cycle, which lends a flavor of divinity to the one about whom is being spoken. So we don't need to get bogged down in that. But it is still an element—the whole thing about setting David's hand, or the descendant of David setting his hand on the sea (*yam*) and his right hand on the rivers.

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: Again, not just to pull that out, but this is in a section where the psalm borrows from the Baal Cycle. And it's a clear reference to Baal (who was the coregent under El)—his victory over the sea and the rivers (over *yam* and *nahar*—two names for the same deity). And the Baal Cycle was about who gets to be king. It's about kingship. But it smacks of this divine ordering and, really, divine character in it. But again, I don't want to get back down into the really, really ancient stuff. [laughter]

MLH: Yeah. It's good stuff, though. It's really cool.

MSH: But it's good. And you know, the whole setting and the Divine Council... That's where your Baal motif begins, back up in verses 5-8. And then the witness in the clouds (again, it's more Council language) later on. It's just a lot of good stuff. But for our purposes here today, yeah, why don't you just track through it and show how Psalm 89 really borrows from all these motifs we've talked about.

MLH: Yeah, it's a complex psalm, in one sense, because it's a praise psalm celebrating the rule and reign of Yahweh (like you were saying) over the forces of

darkness and that realm and so forth. Specifically, here for our purposes is that it's in the context of both celebrating God's rule through David and the covenant that he made with David. So we saw that in the first several verses: "Lord, you've made a covenant with the chosen one—with David your servant," and so forth. So that's celebrated. But then, starting in verse (what is it, 38?) all the way down to the end, there's a lament. A deep...

MSH: Yeah, it's dark.

MLH: Yeah! It's very, very dark. It's a cry. It's desperation. It's a lament. In a sense he accuses God or raises the question about whether or not God has left off his covenant and forgotten it. He accuses God of being *against* his anointed, and even renouncing the covenant. So in 38-39, he says:

**38 But now you have cast off and rejected;
you are full of wrath against your anointed.**

**39 You have renounced the covenant with your servant;
you have defiled his crown in the dust.**

And so this is just a very typical, in-your-face sort of prayer for a Jew in the Old Testament. It's very Jeremiah-like. [laughs] Jeremiah chapter 20 is quite the chapter where he's really accusing God of stuff. And here we see the same thing. So why is this important? Well, it's important because it captures kind of the dissatisfaction with how things have turned out for the Davidic son that is around at the time, whoever the king was.

MSH: Which is real.

MLH: Yeah, a real historical king. And it captures that. "Okay, this is not working out like we thought. God, have you forsaken the covenant? Have you done that?" Again, what's interesting is if you go back to the section above that, so verses 20-37, God says, "I will not lie to David. I'm going to be steadfast and I'm going to be faithful to the covenant." "I will not violate my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips." That's in the text [v. 34].

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: And yet right after that, we see the lament: "Lord, have you actually done that, though? Have you forgotten?" And so I guess I just point this out, that there is reaffirmation of the covenant with David, but there's deep dissatisfaction with the way things have turned out. And I think that yeah, even though this is not specifically messianic in the sense that it's saying, "Hey, here comes a messiah at the end of time," it nonetheless causes the reader... There's a rhetorical effect here that it causes the reader to think, "Okay, so we're going to need somebody else to do this. We're going to need somebody else."

35:00

MSH: "God's got to do better than this."

MLH: He *has* to.

MSH: For sure.

MLH: Because currently it looks like he's forsaken the covenant and he's forsaken the promise. Jumping just real quick to the New Testament, I think it's fascinating when we look at Paul, who in Romans 15:8 might be alluding to at least part of this psalm. So in 15:8, Paul says this:

⁸ For I tell you that Christ [MLH: now this is *christos* or the equivalent of messiah, so I'm just going to say "messiah," because that's definitely how they understood it] became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹ and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

So Romans 15:8-9. Why is that important? Well, it's interesting because when Paul talks about messiah or *christos*, obviously he's talking about Jesus. But he calls him a servant. And he's a servant who came "to show God's truthfulness and to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs." Now that's important because when we read that side-by-side this psalm (Psalm 89), we see that, at least for Paul and many of the early Christians, Jesus is the one in whom we can find the fulfillment of the Davidic promise. He is the servant who did come, who reveals God's truthfulness to what? To the covenant—to the promises that God has been making in the past. And so I think just keep in mind that Paul and early Christians, as they're thinking through Jesus' role in his ministry and his function on the earth in the first century, they are using Old Testament categories such as servant—again, the servant motif.

MSH: Yeah. But it's right there in Psalm 89:20, the term servant is used.

MLH: Yeah! That's right. And so there's no reason to think that Paul's just inventing stuff out of thin air. No, he's read this psalm (Psalm 89). "I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him."

MSH: So what you're suggesting is that when Paul's thinking of Jesus as messiah and servant, his mind could be going out to any number of passages that depict the offspring of David as a servant, whether it's here in Psalm 89 or somewhere else in Isaiah.

MLH: Absolutely. In fact, just talking about Romans, he begins his letter to Rome (Romans 1) by calling Jesus a descendant of David. So we know that this is the paradigm that...

MSH: Yeah, that's where he's going. That's where he's mentally going.

MLH: Absolutely. And here (Psalm 89:20) you have the name "David," the word "servant," and the verb *mashakh*.

MSH: To anoint.

MLH: To anoint, right. And so you have all three of those in one little verse here. And going back to Romans 15:8 you have "*christos*" (or messiah) and "servant" there as well. And so it's not unreasonable to think that Paul's operating with these same categories. He's not doing anything *new* in the sense like he's inventing his own sort of religion. Right? No. He's a good Jew and he's got categories through which he can make sense of the Christ event.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: So that's very important. So there's lots we can say about Psalm 89. But I think the main thing for us is just to say that there's deep dissatisfaction with the way things have turned out. And by the way, Psalm 89... There is debate about when it was written or the context date and time. Is it pre-exilic, exilic, or post-exilic? I know Joseph Fitzmyer is going to say that it probably has something to do with a pre-exilic king, but he calls it a mixture of everything. But there's a lot of scholars who are going to question it and say maybe this is post-exilic or exilic or something. Whatever's going on, though, there's definitely deep dissatisfaction.

40:00 **MSH:** As soon as you link it to David, you're before the exile anyway.

MLH: True.

MSH: So you can't just wipe that off the table.

MLH: Mm hmm. Right, right. Exactly. Yeah. Lots of things there. So I read this as anticipating someone else to come. It's not messianic in the sense that he's prophesying a messiah. No, he's... But he's leaving open a door through which the messiah can come. And that's where the Paul text in Romans 15 comes in.

MSH: Yeah, he's creating part of a profile of expectation.

MLH: Yeah. That's a great way to put it. He's creating that profile. Psalm 2 is another psalm. It's a very, very important psalm. Pre-exilic. It's an enthronement text with many echoes to 2 Samuel 7—you know, the Davidic idea. So let's see here...

MSH: This goes back to creation, just like Psalm 89 did.

MLH: Yeah, yeah, that's right. So let's see. Where do we begin with this? I'll let you read it this time. I'm going to get another drink. [laughs]

MSH:

Why do the nations rage

and the peoples plot in vain?

² The kings of the earth set themselves,

and the rulers take counsel together,

**against the LORD [MSH: that's Yahweh, the divine name] and against
his Anointed [MSH: so there we have our *mashiach*], saying,**

³ "Let us burst their bonds apart

and cast away their cords from us."

⁴ He who sits in the heavens laughs;

the Lord holds them in derision.

⁵ Then he will speak to them in his wrath,

and terrify them in his fury, saying,

⁶ "As for me, I have set my King

on Zion, my holy hill."

⁷ I will tell of the decree [MSH: which, that's an interesting statement, just that:

"I will tell of the decree"—what decree are we talking about here?]:

The LORD said to me, "You are my Son;

today I have begotten you.

⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,

and the ends of the earth your possession.

⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron

and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

¹⁰ Now therefore, O kings, be wise;

be warned, O rulers of the earth.

¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear,

and rejoice with trembling.

¹² Kiss the Son,

lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,

for his wrath is quickly kindled.

Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

That's the whole psalm. There's a lot in here with some of these motifs that we've been tracking on.

MLH: Yeah, exactly. And immediately as you said verse 2, the “Anointed” one is there. The rulers of the earth, they come together *against* the Lord and *against* his Anointed. So like, who’s the Anointed here? Who is the *mashiach*? Well, you know, it depends who you ask, of course. But some scholars are going to say, “Well, this certainly seems to be a pre-exilic king. It’s an enthronement text to celebrate this king’s crowning, or something to that effect.” Right?

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: And there’s many scholars who root it back into history. “This is not a future... whatever.”

MSH: Right. And where do coronations take place? There’s a king and a court and a priesthood—basically all the trappings of coronation.

MLH: Mm hmm. Exactly.

MSH: The reason I mention it is because you know, I’m the Divine Council guy. Okay? So when you see the reference to the nations, well, where else have we seen the nations? We just saw them in Psalm 89.

MLH: Yep.

MSH: This is not just a negative judgment, but it’s the cure for the national problem that emerges out of Babel—the whole Deuteronomy 32 worldview thing. And Psalm 89 was rooted in a Council decision. And that matters, because when you get into the exile and you get post-exile, you’re going to have some really important texts (like Daniel 7) that are absolutely related to messiah and kingship in a very futuristic sort of way that are set in the Divine Council. Isaiah 40 is set in the Divine Council. You get six or eight plural verbs there. It’s as though when Scripture writers want to convey that God is getting down to work, you’ll often get one of these coronation scenes or one of these Divine Council scenes—one of these commissioning scenes. [audio breaks up] ...some way.

45:00

MLH: Yeah. I think rooting it back into and finding those connections with the Divine Council scene is super important. Like the text you just read, there’s that Divine Council scene there. Everywhere. And it opens up... I don’t know. I mean, it opens up new ways of thinking about messiah himself. You know what I mean? Like especially in these texts. Because Psalm 2 here is what we’ve just read. New Testament scholars are going to quickly identify their quotations in the book of Acts and in Hebrews. And so I guess we can just go to Hebrews real quick—Hebrews 1. Because there’s a scene here... Hebrews chapter 1, verse 5 or so. We’ll start with Hebrews 1:1. It says:

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He [MLH: the son] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say,
 “You are my Son,
 today I have begotten you”?
Or again,
 “I will be to him a father,
 and he shall be to me a son”?

So that's verse 5. So this is a quotation, the part where it says, “to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you’?” comes from Psalm 2, the psalm that we just read. And I'm curious. I'm sure you have a lot to say about the whole angels thing (“to which of the angels did God ever say”), and there's like this setting apart of the Son. Is this a Divine Council sort of text? I mean, I know the word “angel” is used here.

MSH: Yeah, well, there are several pretty deep connections, especially in Second Temple lit, like “the radiance of the glory of his power,” the *apaugasma*. It's a term that's used only one place in Greek literature other than here...

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: In your [audio breaks up] Septuagint, and that's in a passage that talks about wisdom as the co-creator figure from Proverbs 8. She is the *apaugasma* of the glory of God. And she's enthroned with God. So in a Divine Council setting, there are a number of Wisdom texts in Second Temple literature. This was a big deal to them because the Jews interpreted wisdom as Torah, which puts Paul's problem in a whole new light. He's trying to elevate Jesus above Torah. And when he does that, when he calls Christ the wisdom of God or when the writer of Hebrews here starts equating Jesus with the wisdom figure (the co-creator), that strikes against the heart of what a lot of Jews were thinking. Because they were thinking that was the Torah's place, not an inherited son or not a messianic figure. They actually wanted to displace messiah in certain passages like this with Torah. [laughs]

MLH: Mm.

MSH: So it really heightens the tension that Paul is trying to get them to look at Jesus instead of Torah for their identity. It really thickens the plot there.

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: And then the whole idea in verse 4 about possessing the name, again, you can't talk about possession of the name and not run into the *malak adonai* (the angel of Yahweh) "in whom was the name," or God himself who is the name in other disparate passages. I mean, it gets very tight when it comes to associating this figure with deity in a Council setting. And then the messianic stuff, as you're talking about with Acts and some of these other passages in Romans, it's one of these things... We'll just start putting the pieces together, put the pieces of the profile together and look at what's emerging.

MLH: Mm hmm. Yeah, and here in verse 5, he elevates the Son, who obviously is Jesus here, *above* the angels. And I'm assuming here, you don't take angels as just the regular messengers that go do stuff. Like, is this somebody... I mean, is this the group of Council... Is it just everybody?

50:00

MSH: I think this is a pretty sweeping statement. There are no exceptions to being inferior to the Son.

MLH: Right. Yeah, yeah. *All* spiritual beings, essentially.

MSH: Yeah.

MLH: Yeah, I would agree with that. I think that's the natural way to read this. And interesting the way the author of Hebrews, whoever that person was, the way they do that, the way they elevate the Son, is by quoting Psalm 2:7: "You are my Son; today I have begotten you." So they bring in this Psalm 2 text, this messiah passage. The word "messiah" occurs in Psalm 2:2, right? But... So here he quotes verse 7, but it's still definitely the messiah in view. And so the messiah figure is elevated above all the spiritual beings, right? So he's somebody... And as you said, a co-creator with Yahweh. I mean, he's not mere man. He's not...

MSH: Yep. Even the "begotten" language, if you're tracing this back through Jewish thought in the Second Temple literature, Wisdom gets pre-existence status.

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: You can quibble about how, "Does this match later formulations of the Church Fathers, with the Trinity?" and all this kind of stuff. The fact is, if you have

a hypostatized attribute of God (Wisdom), which everybody more or less agrees on... We have Wisdom and... We have a personified figure here. Well, then, if you ask the question, "Was there a time when God lacked wisdom?" it points to the absurdity of trying to come up with a beginning point for this pre-existent figure. And all that baggage is lurking in the background of Hebrews 1 here of Jesus.

MLH: Yeah. And anybody who has read Hebrews knows that it's very much a Jewish text, right? [laughter] So whoever wrote it knew their Bible. [laughs] Right?

MSH: Yep.

MLH: So yeah, you would definitely expect this. Interestingly, Paul (who I don't think wrote Hebrews, but I guess it's possible) mentions how Christ is our wisdom. So in 1 Corinthians 1:30, he says (reading from the ESV):

³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

So here Jesus is just clearly identified as wisdom. Right? And to us Westerners who may not have the Old Testament and even Second Temple Jewish ideas in the back of our brain, we just read that as, "Oh, okay. Jesus is the person who makes us really smart and wise." [laughs]

MSH: Yeah, "he helps us study for our SATs."

MLH: [laughs] That's right. And this is why...

MSH: Or "he's a really smart guy." Yeah.

MLH: You know, we would agree. I mean, he's super smart. But that fails to capture what is being said there. This is why (and I know your audience knows this) I tell my students all the time that "if you don't know background stuff (if you don't know the background literature, the worldview of the time), these texts won't make sense." I say all the time, "If you want to understand the content of Scripture, you have to know the context of Scripture. And that context means more than reading the verse ahead and below and around. No, no. You've going to get behind, underneath, the text. You know? You've got to get into that world." And that's exactly what you're doing here. Even though...

MSH: Wisdom was the chief mechanism by which God did everything.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: Because he creates with the spoken word, and the word reflects his wisdom. All these things work together to create this portrait of God. And then when wisdom becomes this separate figure that gets talked about in cooperation with God, then that just ups the ante. You know, wisdom is just part of the whole Second Temple Jewish Two Powers in Heaven thinking. I mean, you have the Word, you have the Name, you've got the Glory, you've got the Angel, you've got Wisdom, you've got the *memra*, the rider on the clouds—any number of ways that this idea was expressed that you have the invisible, transcendent Yahweh, and then Yahweh coming to be with his people in some visible, corporeal, tangible, detectable form. That's very Jewish.

MLH: Absolutely.

MSH: And Wisdom is part of that.

55:00

MLH: Absolutely. So I think we see this as well in what Jesus himself says. In Matthew 22 he quotes from Psalm 110. And so I'll just read Psalm 110. It's a real short text. It says:

The LORD [YAHWEH] says to my Lord:

**“Sit at my right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool.”**

**² The LORD [YAHWEH] sends forth from Zion
your mighty scepter.**

Rule in the midst of your enemies!

**³ Your people will offer themselves freely
on the day of your power,
in holy garments;
from the womb of the morning,
the dew of your youth will be yours.**

**⁴ The LORD has sworn
and will not change his mind,**

**“You are a priest forever
after the order of Melchizedek.”**

**⁵ The Lord is at your right hand;
he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.**

**⁶ He will execute judgment among the nations,
filling them with corpses;
he will shatter chiefs
over the wide earth.**

**⁷ He will drink from the brook by the way;
therefore he will lift up his head.**

Yeah, this is such an important text, especially for New Testament scholars, because it's quoted in various places in the New Testament. And that first verse there, "The LORD said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.'" It's very important, because Jesus actually quotes from this in Matthew 22:41-46, which is an interesting text. I'm bringing this up because it really will affirm what we've been saying, what you've been pointing out about how there's this divine nature to this messiah—this coming one—that early Christians and of course Jews, I think, had categories for. And we see this in Matthew 22, where Jesus actually addresses the messiah's Davidic sonship. Anyway, I'll just read the text. Matthew 22:41 says:

⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, ⁴² saying, "What do you think about the Christ [MLH: the Messiah]? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." ⁴³ He said to them, "How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying,

**⁴⁴ "The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet"?"**

⁴⁵ If then David calls him Lord, how is he [MLH: the Christ] his son?" ⁴⁶ And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

And I bring this up because it sounds like Jesus is denying the messiah's Davidic lineage or sonship. But I don't think that's what he's saying here. I think what he's doing is he's urging the Pharisees to reconfigure what it means to be a Davidic son. He's saying the messiah *is* David's son, but he's also divine. That there's an element to this whole equation that takes it beyond mere...

MSH: What's really funny about this, I mean, and I say "funny" and I almost mean it (humorous). Because you'll have people object (especially Jewish friends) to this language and they're going to try to make the point that you can't have the messiah also be divine, and so on and so forth. "Because there's only one throne, and there's only one..." Hey, Judaism has room for a dual throne in lots of passages.

MLH: Absolutely.

MSH: Both in the Hebrew Bible (and here's one of them) and outside the Hebrew Bible. I mean, you have Adam get exalted to occupying the throne of God with God. You get it for Jacob (for Israel). You get it for Moses. You get it for different select angels. You get it for the Wisdom figure. The people who say this are just not informed of how Jews were thinking about this. To a literate Jew (someone who had run into these texts), the idea that there could be a twin throne in heaven and both of them be Yahweh (there's this Yahweh here and then there's a figure that is Yahweh but is also different than Yahweh), that was familiar thinking. It was familiar thinking. So for Jesus to basically make himself part of the conversation, that would have been the crazy talk because he's standing right there in front of them. The idea of sharing God's throne would not.

MLH: Right. Right. I mean, it's here in the text. "The LORD said to my Lord: 'Sit here.'"

MSH: And if it's God's throne, it's by definition divine rule.

MLH: Right.

MSH: You can't take a step down and still call it the rule of God.

1:00:00

MLH: Hmm. Yeah, and do you think here the Pharisees, are they not that acquainted with Psalm 110 and really thought this out, or is it... You know? Because we have to remember there are Judaisms.

MSH: I think there are answers they could have given, but they would have been answers offered by some of their theological opponents.

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: And I think they're averring to their own position here. There would be plenty for them to talk about, but it wouldn't be subject matter that they were very warm to.

MLH: Gotcha. Okay. Yeah, that makes sense. Yeah, Psalm 110, it's just another example of how it provides categories for thinking about the Two Powers, and how Jesus' divine prerogatives... He's carrying out the functions of deity in many aspects of his ministry. So he's not doing anything that the Old Testament doesn't have categories for, right? He's operating still within...

MSH: Even intercession. There's a very strong motif in the Old Testament that the Divine Council (the members of the Divine Council) were mediators. This was part of their function. So even that smacks of divine status. And in the New Testament, of course, Christ becomes the lone intercessor, which in and of itself is a very important concept. But it has this backdrop to it.

MLH: Yeah, absolutely. Another piece here that falls right in line with 110 in this respect is Psalm 45, which is an interesting text, especially the way the New Testament interprets it. So again, some scholars think it's pre-exilic. It's a celebration of marriage, perhaps of Solomon's marriage or something. This is according to Joseph Fitzmyer.

MSH: Sure.

MLH: And we can just kind of go with that. But when we read the first seven verses, we see something pretty interesting. It says:

**My heart overflows with a pleasing theme;
I address my verses to the king;
my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.**

Now that's important because here it tells us who this psalmist is talking to. He says, "I address my verses to the king." Okay. So what's being said is said to the...

MSH: Pretty clear.

MLH: Yep, the one on the... The current king at the time. Maybe Solomon. He says:

**²You are the most handsome of the sons of men;
grace is poured upon your lips;
therefore God has blessed you forever.**

**³Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one,
in your splendor and majesty!**

**⁴In your majesty ride out victoriously
for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness;
let your right hand teach you awesome deeds!**

**⁵Your arrows are sharp
in the heart of the king's enemies;
the peoples fall under you.**

**⁶Your throne, O God [MLH: elohim], is forever and ever.
The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness;**

⁷ you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.

**Therefore God, your God, *has anointed you*
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;**

I'll just stop there.

MSH: How can you get away from the combination of divinity—deity—and anointedness? Right there in two verses.

MLH: Yeah. Yeah. It's interesting.

MSH: Which is why Jesus goes there, you know what I mean? [laughs]

MLH: Yeah! The New Testament does for sure, yeah. In Hebrews, right? Hebrews mentions this here as well. You know, it's interesting. Joseph Fitzmyer says that in verse 6, where it says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. Your throne, *elohim*, is forever and ever." He says that that is maybe a reference to the current king. So it's like elevating the king and depicting the king with god-like status. That's why the king is called *elohim*. And I'm really curious. When I was reading through this and looking through the Hebrew of it all, I was really thinking, "I wonder what Mike thinks about this." Because I know you've done a lot of work on *elohim*, [laughs] right? And it's a broad term. I don't know. Is this a reference to the current king? What do you think about that? Or is this something else?

MSH: Goldingay translates this with some significant difference...

MLH: Okay.

1:05:00

MSH: ... to essentially do away with the question. And I'm not saying it that way to be dismissive. I think Goldingay could very well be right, so we don't have this tension here. What I see is I see the king being portrayed as the divine warrior. And so if the king is functioning... Now think back to the demand for a kingship: "We want to have a king just like all the other nations, who can go out and come back in, conduct warfare." And this is why Yahweh was offended. Because up until their request for a king, he was the divine warrior. He was the warrior of Israel. Now they want to replace him with a man. God acquiesces to that, but of course warns them what the results are going to be, way back in 1 Samuel. So I see the psalmist kind of doing this here. And so I don't think it would have been strange if you look at the king as God's proxy in him being the warrior on your behalf. I think you could use language like this to get that point across. Because in the very next verse, he distances the king from God. So I think what he's trying to do is this proxy thing going on, and it's not an ontological statement per se.

MLH: Right.

MSH: You do enough of this kind of thing, where you're blurring the distinction between the two, and it's going to raise questions. It's going to create categories, like you said a few minutes ago. To me, there are other passages that smack of

divinity stronger than Psalm 45. I think Psalm 110 is one of those, but only because you can look at it in terms of this proxy thinking.

MLH: Right, right. I like that. I like the language of proxy and seeing it like that. I agree. I mean, a person could... I think that's what he's doing. I mean, I've just been thinking about this a lot in the past couple of days. Now why this is important...

MSH: He doesn't demand that we pick, either. "Well, either pick a proxy or say that the messiah is God." Well, the answer to that is, "Yes."

MLH: Right. Right. Because the messiah functions as a king.

MSH: Right. And it arises out of the Two Yahwehs thing. When I say "Two Yahwehs," "Two Powers in Heaven," you have to think "co-regency"—the way they looked at co-regency on an earthly level. And then that gets transported to the heavenly level. But both figures who have kingship status... They have an ontological equivalence, but they also have ontological distinction on both the earthly realm and in the heavenly realm. And we're not forced to deny one or the other. These are familiar categories of thinking.

MLH: Mm hmm. Right, right. All the more interesting in light of what you just said is whenever the New Testament picks this passage up, going once again back to Hebrews 1:8-9. Speaking about Jesus, the writer of Hebrews says:

**⁸ But of the Son he says,
"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.
⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."**

MSH: Yeah, it's the same thing. There's an association or an identification, but also a distancing.

MLH: Right, right. Yeah. And I think we can ask our question, "Okay, is the writer of Hebrews... He's interpreting this about Jesus Christologically. This is a reference to Jesus. But it's not..."

MSH: This is where the wisdom stuff becomes real important in Hebrews.

MLH: Hmm. Yeah. And the important thing to remember, too, is that the writer of Hebrews is not doing anything odd with his interpretation that the psalmist is doing in Psalm 45. Right?

MSH: Or that you're going to have Second Temple Jewish writers do.

MLH: Right, absolutely.

MSH: He's right there with the mainstream.

MLH: Right, yeah. So labeling Jesus as this messiah who is anointed and so forth like that, it's no different than what the psalm is doing with Solomon, if indeed this is about Solomon, as the king who carries out the functions of Yahweh on the earth. So it operates within the same sort of field of play. So again, if we're talking to our Jewish friends, the author of Hebrews is not doing anything that's really that odd. And I think that's important to point out. I mean, they're on the same playground here, if you will.

1:10:00

MSH: Yeah. We have to realize, too, that when we have Jewish friends or we want to engage in these discussions with people who have Judaism as part of their background, a lot of them do not know their Old Testament well, either. I mean, they're in the same boat as the Christians. But they do know how to pick at this argument of, "Well, if you're talking about the messiah, you can only use passages that use this terminology." Well, you know, here we've seen how you can find those with some of these other motifs in them. But you have to be able to build out the motifs to have a coherent, dare I say winning, discussion with your Jewish friend when it comes to how we look at Jesus as messiah and as the God-man. You know, if all you can do is talk about the verses that have this term in them, you're really cutting off a lot of the discussion and a lot of what your friend needs to hear, a lot of what we need to have inculcated in our own theology so that it makes more sense when we compare the testaments.

MLH: Right. Absolutely. Yep. I think that's a good point there. When we look at these texts like Psalm 45, Psalm 132, we look at these as messianic texts and people listening to us, they might be a little... I don't want to say alarmed, but just kind of maybe confused. Okay, if these are just about historical figures (Solomon or some other historical king), how can they at the same time be held as prophecies about the future, about the eschaton or Jesus? And I just wanted to say one quick thing about that. And this is so, so important. When it comes to biblical prophecy (the Old Testament and the New Testament's use of prophecy), we cannot think about prediction fulfillment as the definition of prophecy, right? Prophecy's not...

MSH: Yeah. It's not always the way it works.

MLH: No, no, not at all. And I think a better way to see it is another way, what sometimes scholars describe as "act and re-enactment." I think this idea that you have, in the stories of Scripture, you might have an event, something that happens, like say the exodus...

MSH: But what you're talking about is typology.

MLH: Yeah. In a sense, I think yeah. Typology.

MSH: Events or institutions or figures that get re-enacted.

MLH: They can. I think that's the way we can see these events here, or these descriptions of King Solomon or whatever Psalm we're looking at, is that those can be types of the one who is coming. And like we said a moment ago, looking toward the future was not out of the question. Because as we saw in Psalm 89, they were themselves (early Jews themselves)...

MSH: "You've got to do better than this, Lord." [laughs]

MLH: Yeah! They were on the lookout. And so it's appropriate, I think, to look at the New Testament and say, "Well, the New Testament writers, they were on the lookout, too. And as it turns out, they found him. They found the messiah."

MSH: The writer of Psalm 89 and some of this other stuff you've tracked through today, there's no way that he's thinking, "God did his job," with the way things are. I mean, they're still definitely looking. So they're taking God at his word. He's not going to deny his covenant with David. Well, I think their attitude would be, "If we can take God at his word, he is going to not forsake his promises to David." Then what we see to this point (the point being the point of Psalm 89 when it was written and the complaint therein), "God has not fulfilled... He's not been faithful. He's not fulfilled his part of the bargain. There's no way that we're going to consider *this* as a display of the truthful fulfillment of the promises of God, so therefore there must be something to come."

MLH: Mm hmm. Right, right. And what's interesting is (and I guess we'll talk about this in the next episode), but Isaiah is going to point to that same thing. He's going to bring in the David motif. He's going to bring in that whole idea of sonship, too. And he's going to be talking about someone he calls the servant. And that's where things get really interesting. Because I think the servant is definitely someone who is coming in the future (at least from the perspective of Isaiah). And he's going to meet all those requirements and fulfill all the hopes and expectations of these early Jews that we've been seeing.

MSH: Yep. Yeah, that's a good place to stop. Because Isaiah's just such a...
There's such a truckload of data there. So we want to reserve that for next time. But it's a good place to wrap up. So thank again for the discussion, Matt, with all of this. And again, for our listeners, what we're trying to do is we're trying to help you think about messiah more biblically. It's that simple. So that you can defend the consistency and continuity between the Old and New Testament on the subject matter of messiah and not fall prey to objections that you might get

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through academia that the Old Testament portrayal doesn't match the New Testament. Or again, people who might be Jewish and might have been taught, "This is how you talk to Christians and get them off your back." We can do a little bit better for them and help them think through Scriptures that they take seriously too, and show how, "Well, the portrait of Jesus is very consistent with what your forefathers would've been thinking." And so maybe we need to be able to think about a little bit better. So thanks again for joining us.

TS: Okay, Mike, it's fun to hear y'all two talk about this stuff. And we're getting into the weeds, which I love.

MSH: Yeah, the weeds are good. And we'll hit more weeds when we get... Like I said earlier at the beginning, when we get into sort of starting with New Testament passages, you're going to see how the weeds are important. You'll be able to see, "Here's this weed. Here's that weed. And they're functioning together in this way. They're growing together. They're coming together." Again, this is how we need to become better readers of our Old Testament. We need to know the stories, or we need to know the story elements—the plotlines, the subplots, the motifs (whatever word helps flesh it out in your mind). All these elements of the story are going to be repurposed in the New Testament by Paul and by other writers. So if we can read the stories with them, we'll understand what they're doing a lot more.

TS: Alright, well, I'm really looking forward to next week as the conversation continues. And with that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.