

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 415

Paul's Use of the Old Testament Series: The Messianic Story, Part 3

March 6, 2022

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Episode Summary

In the previous episodes with Dr. Matt Halsted, we discussed how trying to articulate the Old Testament's messiah merely by appeal to passages that contain that word (Hebrew, *mashiach*) was fundamentally misguided. In the previous episode with Dr. Halsted, we took 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"). This episode continues that discussion with specific concentration on the Servant of Isaiah.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 415: Paul's Use of the Old Testament Series: The Messianic Story, Part 3 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: Doing pretty well. I mean, I can't complain. Of course, I could complain about my circumstances. [laughs]

TS: Yeah.

MSH: I could go on at length about that. But again, we're just sticking with the program. We're having (I think it's fair to say) more good days than bad. So able to do the things that we enjoy doing, like preparing for the podcast and spending time on it and working on other stuff, too, that is going to be... May already be a little bit, but just wait, there's going to be more of... A trickle's going to turn into a bit more of a stream as far as content. So doing pretty well, I think, all in all.

TS: Good to hear. Alright, Mike, well, I'm ready for continuing the conversation with Dr. Halsted here. It's been great so far. We're right in the middle of it. So hopefully we've got several more good episodes in us.

MSH: Oh, yeah. We do.

MSH: Well, we're back once again with Dr. Matt Halsted, talking again about messianism—the Old Testament profile or portrait of the messiah and how that goes beyond just simplistic approaches like looking up all the places where the word *mashiah* occurs. There's so much more to it. And we're trying to stress to this audience the value of being able to read the Old Testament as story and pull out story elements (plot lines, motifs, whatever you want to call them)—the parts of the story that repeat, that get acted out and reenacted—and how these things like sonship, divinity, and star language, being a parallel both in terms of genealogy and also in terms of what happens to Adam and to Abraham and to Israel... How the life of David sometimes mirrors these other things, how the line of David developed in this sense of what God had promised to David through his covenant in 2 Samuel 7 and repeated in Psalm 89, that he would make sure that only a descendant of David would rule upon Israel's throne... And how that meant more than just the historical king at the time, because as things went on and as the history of Israel unfolded, you have all of this baggage that preceded—all these promises, all these things to look forward to, these things that need to be fixed, like that Fall, like the rage of the nations, the fragmentation of the nations... And how Israel, and before them, Abraham, would be the solution to this. Okay? How there would emerge one person from the lineage of Adam and Eve (and Israel and David) to fix all this.

So last time we were together, we spent a lot of time looking at the complaint in Psalm 89 where we have a pre-exilic psalm, most likely. Even if it is exilic or post-exilic, the complaint's going to be the same. And that is the psalm covers the promise that God made to David about having this dynastic line—this everlasting dynastic line—and how circumstances of life (the exile) just have made everybody question this. "I mean, surely this can't be the fulfillment of these promises." Because in Psalm 89, the psalmist goes over very thoroughly the fact that God would not forsake his promise to David, and he would indeed see it fulfilled. And so they're left with the impression that, "Well, surely there must be something else coming down the line, because this isn't it. Look at our circumstances." Again, the exile is a major factor in how to think about all of this.

And in the midst of that, we looked at a number of psalms. We looked at Psalm 132. We saw servant language there, along with the anointed language. We have the "your servant David," "your anointed one" (*mashiach*) right there. In other cases we didn't have *mashiach* language, but we had servant language married to something else, maybe a branch or a sprout coming from the line of David. We looked at Jeremiah 33 in that regard. We looked again at Psalm 2,

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where you have anointed language, and here you get into not only sonship language and the idea that the king is the proxy of God the Divine Warrior, but once you start thinking in those terms, there's a divinity aspect to that. We looked at how the book of Hebrews plugs into a lot of this expectant thinking that the messiah figure would also be divine. Because they had these categories. They had this co-rulership of the transcendent Yahweh and another figure who was identified with Yahweh or as Yahweh, but still somehow distinguished from Yahweh. So we got into the Two Powers motif a little bit last time, and how when we carry it Psalm 110, it caters to that.

This time we're going to try to add another emphasis to the mix. Now we've brought up Isaiah before. So I'm going to bring Matt in here at this point. And we're going to focus specifically on Isaiah's servant language and how that gets amalgamated to not only David (the Davidic line language) but some of these other things that the Davidic terminology gets amalgamated to (the sonship, the servant, the branch, the sprout). All of these themes—these motifs—get amalgamated together to form a portrait, to form a mosaic, to form a mix. Whatever metaphor helps you. They're the ingredients to a recipe. This is how we need to think about messiah—not just one word in Old Testament Hebrew (*mashiach*). We need to think about it more widely. And Isaiah has a lot to say about that.

So Matt, thanks for joining us again in this discussion. I know you're chomping at the bit here, because you seem to be an Isaiah fan. [MLH laughs] I'm sure that's because of your acquaintance with Paul. [laughter]

MLH: I was about to say, yeah, let's blame Paul for that one. I mean, if you want to learn about Isaiah, read Paul, because he's everywhere in Paul. [laughs]

MSH: Yeah. We're just going to follow your lead here and let you lead us here with what Isaiah does with this information.

MLH: Okay, so this is going to be fun. Because Isaiah is going to introduce somebody called the servant. There are in Isaiah passages that scholars call the "Servant Songs"—beautiful texts that we'll look at in a moment. But it's important to realize that Isaiah's not just coming on the scene and saying, "Hey, guys, I want to talk about this person no one else has talked about before, namely the servant." [laughs]

MSH: Yeah, "this person I'm just making up... I made up a new character; here he is."

MLH: Yeah! And the opposite is the case. Isaiah is talking about a servant. I think that is because that's a motif that has been ongoing, hinted at, echoed here and there. We've caught glimpses in the text that we've surveyed in previous

episodes (especially the last one) talking about David, because we recall in these psalm texts that David is often called God's servant—"My servant, David." "My servant, David, this..." or whatever. David is God's servant. And the Davidic dynasty *itself* is a servant of God, to bring about God's desired effect through Israel. So I think the servant motif can be traced from David to Isaiah's Servant (with a capital S).

But before we get to that, there are some very important texts, I think, at the beginning of Isaiah before we come to the Servant Songs, that I think would help us introduce the topic better. So Isaiah 9 is I think the place to start. Because here we see the merging of sonship, kingship, and the Davidic motifs—all three coming together here once again. We've seen this before. Nothing new. But again, it shows that Isaiah is well within continuity with all those other texts that we've looked at. So everybody's going to recognize Isaiah 9:1-7. We read about it at Christmastime, right? A few months ago we were all reading this text.

MSH: Go for it. [laughs]

MLH: Yeah, verse 1:

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

**² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.**

**³ You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.**

**⁴ For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.**

**⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.**

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**⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.**

MLH: And that's Isaiah 9:1-7. That's the ESV version. So why is this text important? What does it have to do with anything? Well, it has a lot to do with it, obviously. Because you see this sonship motif ("a son is given to us"). Kingship... There's talk about "government shall be upon his shoulders," so this person is a ruler. And he sits on a throne, but it's David's throne. And it's the continuation of the Davidic dynasty. So you see these three motifs merge once again here.

Now we Christians quote this all the time, like I said, at Christmas. And of course, we do that because think Jesus is the divine Davidic son who has come and launched a kingdom, continuing David's dynasty forever. What's interesting, though, is that scholars are a bit more hesitant to just jump to that interpretation. So many scholars are going to say, "Well, okay, let's read this in its original context. What's really going on?" And some scholars—many scholars—are going to say that the son who is given on whose shoulders the government will rest is probably one of the other historical kings. And scholars can't quite decide on who that king was. Some have said it's Hezekiah, perhaps Josiah. Those are some options. Of course some as I said are saying, "No, this is a future messiah." Okay. So which is it? And how do we understand this? Is this a prophecy about the far distant future? So if Isaiah's writing... Isaiah is around, what 750 B.C., some 8th century timeframe. Is this a prophecy about 750 years in the future? Now I always caution... I would say, "Well, look. You have on the one hand, is it a historical king (Hezekiah, say) or is it future messiah 700 years in the future? And I want to say, "Well, why do we have to choose? Why do we have to choose between the two?"

MSH: Yes, especially if you're thinking "act and reenactment."

MLH: That's exactly where I was going to go here. Because I think it can be both. I think it can be both. So I don't ever get upset or worried when we look into the

context. I mean, I'm a context guy. Get into the context. Know your historical sources and so forth. That's what I always push. People who know me know that that's what I always point them toward. So let's just do it. Let's just say that this was a reference to some historical king back during this era. Can it also be a reference...

MSH: It certainly reflects the expectation.

MLH: It really does. It really does. And especially when...

MSH: Whoever wrote Psalm 89 would have read this and, "That's what we're talking about, right there. *This* is what we're looking for."

MLH: "The Prince of Peace," right? "The Mighty God—the one who executes God's will and sits on the throne, like we've always been promised." That's exactly correct. So supposing that contextually this was a reference to a historical king, how can we legitimately also say that it's also a reference to Jesus? And I want to (if its okay) talk just very briefly about proxy and the way it works.

MSH: Sure.

MLH: Because I think this is just so important for us going forward.

MSH: It is. Because the evangelical orbit that most of our listeners come from think of prophecy only as one-to-one statement fulfillment sort of equations.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: You know? And it's... So yeah, okay, sometimes it works that way, but a lot of times it doesn't.

MLH: Right.

MSH: A lot of times there's this reenactment stuff. There's typology. There's foreshadowing. Again, if you're familiar with the story, you don't need a one-to-one statement. "Oh, here's a statement. Now I've got to look for in some way that this specific propositional statement will come to pass, or did come to pass." Rather, it's like I'm looking at this story element and look at what happened here. Look at how Jesus repeated it. Look at how he reenacted it. I mean, we have to be thinking more broadly. But go ahead. You can jump on this bandwagon all you want.

MLH: Yeah, and I think it's helpful to do so. And I always like to point to an example about how prophecy works. And I've actually got two examples from Scripture. So if you go to Matthew chapter 2, this is the time where Herod's off

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killing all the children because he wants to kill off Jesus and find out where Jesus is and kill him. And of course, we know the story all too well. It's a terrible story, actually, about Herod. But Jesus and the holy family run off to Egypt in a bit of an exile for a time until Herod dies off and then it's safe to return. And once they return (as Matthew narrates this event), they return home and Matthew in Matthew 2:15 actually quotes from Hosea the prophet saying that Jesus' return from Egypt has been fulfilled. So he says (Matthew 2:14-15):

¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet [Hosea], "Out of Egypt I called my son."

So Jesus, according to Matthew, has to go to Egypt, right? And as he comes back from Egypt, that is to fulfill kind of a new exodus out of Egypt.

MSH: It's an expected reenactment.

MLH: That's right. Now what's fascinating and so much fun is when you go back and look at Hosea 11:1 from where this verse comes, "Out of Egypt I called my son," you'll notice that what's going on here is that Yahweh is recounting the first exodus. All he's doing there is saying essentially (my paraphrase), "Hey, I remember the time where out of Egypt I called my son."

MSH: Yeah, he's not looking forward; he's looking into the past.

MLH: That's so important. Yeah. And yet Matthew thinks it's a prophecy that was fulfilled later. So how do we reconcile that? Well, we *don't* need to say, "Well, Hosea was looking forward to the future." No. In fact, he's actually looking at the past. Right? He's recounting a past event, from his perspective.

MSH: Yeah, and guess what? So is Matthew, but he has something else to say. [laughter]

MLH: That's exactly right. He sees this as a prophecy fulfilled in Jesus. And so the point is, we're taking our cues from this Matthew figure here that the prophecy is a prophecy because it's been reenacted. Right? It's been acted first at the original exodus and then it's been reenacted later.

MSH: So what you're suggesting is that the reenactment *qualifies* it as a prophecy.

MLH: Exactly. It is a reenactment that qualifies it as a prophecy.

MSH: So maybe instead of propositional Old Testament statements we can look for and then go and look for their fulfillments, maybe we should be looking at stories that were reenacted.

MLH: Exactly. That's so important. And by the way, nothing in Matthew 2 commits us to say, "Well, the first exodus never happened." [laughter] No! No. You can have both. You don't have to choose.

MSH: Gosh.

MLH: So I think people can see why this is an important example. Because when we look at Isaiah 9, okay, so it's a reference to a historical king, whoever that king may be. So what? It can also be reenacted in the future. And I think there are clues in Isaiah that a reenactment is *needed*. Right? Just like the first exodus, even when Israel escapes Egypt, it turns out if you read the rest of the Old Testament, they're actually still in bondage. [laughs] Right? [MSH laughs] To their own sin and to their own grumbling. It kind of begs for another exodus. And by the way (this is a freebie here), if you keep reading through Matthew (Matthew 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7), Matthew depicts Jesus as constantly reenacting the story of Israel. Because after he leaves Egypt in an exodus (well, not right immediately after, but later on), Matthew depicts Jesus as being baptized in the Jordan River, which I'm sure if you know that Old Testament, the Jordan's kind of important. [laughs] Right?

MSH: Yep. He instructs the people from a mountain, the Sermon on the Mount.

MLH: Yeah, he's in a wilderness for 40 days being tempted by things that are quite similar to the 40-year wilderness. Yeah. It's act and reenactment. This is Matthew's logic.

MSH: It's not all coincidence, yeah.

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MLH: No. Okay, so somebody can say, "Yeah, but Matthew doesn't know what he's doing. He's just a New Testament guy, right? Isn't he doing something... Is he just making this stuff up? Actually no. Because he's operating within the same paradigm as even Old Testament authors and prophets were operating. Take a look at Jeremiah. Jeremiah prophesies that the exile would last 70 years. But then Daniel comes along and does something with that prophecy. He has an angelic visit, and the angel helps him out to understand it more. And that prophecy actually gets expanded a little bit further. Right? So it's 70 times seven, 490 years. And so it's not unusual for prophecies to have reenactments and expansions in some respect. And so even among the Old Testament writers, their taking of old prophecies and repurposing them for further development is perfectly reasonable. So Matthew's not any weirder than Daniel. [laughter] I don't know if that helps, because they're both kind of weird, right?

MSH: That's too bad, yeah. [laughter]

MLH: But what's even funnier (more interesting) is that Jesus will repurpose some of Daniel's prophecies in Matthew 24, too, right? So my point is this: Don't get caught up or in despair or anything of the sort when you read about, "Oh my goodness. Isaiah was really talking about a historical king. So that must mean he can't be talking about Jesus." I'm like, "No, no, no. There's plenty of room for Jesus in a messianic understanding of this or a futurist understanding of this. In fact, there's actually more than just room. I think these texts *beg* to be interpreted for additional enactments (or expansions—whatever you want to call it)."

MSH: You would think that stands to reason. Because I mean, let's put ourselves back in David's shoes and Israelites that knew about the Davidic covenant, which would've been plenty of them because that's something that the monarchy's going to make known. What do you have here? You have people understanding that God had made a promise about kingship and dynasty and how that would impact Israel's relationship to the nations, and really the nations themselves and their relationship to their creator God, who is Yahweh of Israel anyway. So if they know just these basic thoughts, their expectation of how this is going to work out is going to be pretty high. Because the one who promised it was God.

MLH: Hmm.

MSH: You know, and they're going to be looking at the historical figures they get, and they're going to be looking for the reenactment of what all this will mean once all the pieces come together. So you have all these successive enactments—the people that they know, the kings they know. And they're going to be judged accordingly to the height of the expectation. The expectations are pretty high. And so it trains them to keep looking. [laughs]

MLH: Absolutely. Oh, that's so good.

MSH: It trains them.

MLH: Mm hmm. And you know, I think in our first episode, we talked about tension within the Old Testament and we talked a lot about some of that. And in Psalm 89 (which we looked at last episode), there's this tension between "God promised he would use David and bring us a Davidic king," but "Lord, where is that?" You know? [laughs]

MSH: This ain't cutting it. Yeah.

MLH: Yeah. [laughs] So there's this expectation. There's hope and expectation even as there is faith in clinging to the promise, right? So it's not surprising to me

that Isaiah 9, in talking about a Davidic king... this is just their expectation. So expectations demand fulfillment in the future. And so that's what they're pointing toward. And I love the way you put that just now. So I'm just thinking again, Isaiah 11 is another text. Isaiah 11, is it the whole chapter? I think we should just read the whole chapter if that's okay.

MSH: Go ahead. Yeah. Go ahead.

MLH: Okay. So Isaiah 11 revisits some of these same themes, but actually develops them just a tad more. So let me just read it. It says, verse 1:

**There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.**
**² And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of [MLH: here's our word that we talked about that last
time:] *wisdom* and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.**
**³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.**
**⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.**

**⁶ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;
and a little child shall lead them.**
**⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.**
**⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.**
**⁹ They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;**

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**for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.**

¹⁰ In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

¹¹ In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

**¹² He will raise a signal for the nations
and will assemble the banished of Israel,
and gather the dispersed of Judah
from the four corners of the earth.**

**¹³ The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart,
and those who harass Judah shall be cut off;
Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah,
and Judah shall not harass Ephraim.**

**¹⁴ But they shall swoop down on the shoulder of the Philistines in the west,
and together they shall plunder the people of the east.
They shall put out their hand against Edom and Moab,
and the Ammonites shall obey them.**

**¹⁵ And the LORD will utterly destroy
the tongue of the Sea of Egypt,
and will wave his hand over the River
with his scorching breath,
and strike it into seven channels,
and he will lead people across in sandals.**

**¹⁶ And there will be a highway from Assyria
for the remnant that remains of his people,
as there was for Israel
when they came up from the land of Egypt.**

That's Isaiah 11. Just real quickly, you see the "stump of Jesse" language. What does that mean—the stump of Jesse? You know Jesse was David's father, of course. And some have kind of mused that perhaps this might be a way to say

that the Davidic dynasty has just been so decimated—that there's not much left of it. And so are we looking at a future king that's coming to restore a monarchy that's been reduced down to a stump? I mean, that makes sense to me. I think something like that may be going on. And if that is the case, then we see here again what we talked about a moment ago, that there's anticipation that something must happen and it needs to happen. Because God's going to fulfill the promise to David, even though it's been beat up to the point of nothing. [laughs] And of course, we don't necessarily have to get quite into this, but Paul picks up on this (Romans 15:12). He quotes from Isaiah 11. And I guess I'll go ahead and read Romans 15:12. Paul says:

¹² **And again Isaiah says,
 “The root of Jesse will come,
 even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
 in him will the Gentiles hope.”**

And this is in that context of him talking about Christ Jesus, the messiah (*christos*, messiah). And that's where he... People recall from the last episode, we looked at this verse. Paul call Jesus a servant in Romans 15:8. And here in 15:12 is where he quotes Isaiah 11:10. And so Paul sees that this root from Jesse that has come up is Jesus himself. And I think that's kind of an important thing to note, because for one we see how Paul is interpreting Isaiah and he sees that all the expectations have been met once again in Jesus. And again, that is not a weird move for Paul to make. It's not anything shocking. It shouldn't be. All he's saying here is that “we found the king, and we found the messiah.”

MSH: The only shocking element is how he's obviously either using the Septuagint or has it in mind.

MLH: Yeah, that's true.

MSH: Connecting it to Jesus. Because we have in the Septuagint (this is the Lexham English Translation of the Septuagint) of Isaiah 11:10:

In that day there will be a root of Jesse, and the one who rises up to rule nations, nations will put their hope in him and repose will be his honor.

“Rises up” there of course is *anastēmi*.

MLH: Mm hmm.

MSH: Which the noun form (*anastosis*) is sort of your technical term for resurrection. Even though the verb (*anastēmi* and *egeiro*) can be used pretty much equally to describe the resurrection. But it's in that family of terminology.

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It's very, very clear that Paul is parsing the Jesus event (the resurrection) and probably his own confrontation on the way to Damascus. All this is processing in his head when he reads Isaiah. And there you go. He's the one who's risen up. He is the descendant of David.

MLH: Right. And at the beginning of Romans 2, it's really important to remember that the way that Jesus is seen to be son of David and son of God is through his resurrection.

MSH: Yeah.

MLH: Romans 1:3-4 it says:

³ concerning his Son [MLH: so the Scriptures made promises about God's Son, and concerning that Son], who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead,

And so the idea is that, it's not that Jesus *became* the Son at the resurrection. It's that he was shown to be, declared to be, manifested to be who he said he always was, the Son. It proves...

MSH: He was exposed. [laughs]

MLH: Yeah. That's exactly right. Yeah. I mean, look... When he was alive he could go around saying these sorts of things ("I'm the Son of God," or whatever), which anybody can talk the talk. But when you raise yourself from the dead, [laughs] right? And it's important to know that Jesus was not the first to be resurrected from the dead. But he was the first to raise *himself* from the dead, which that's a pretty good feat, right?

MSH: Isn't it interesting how Paul's impulse is still to look forward, though, for reenactment? Because you get this "already, but not yet." So Jesus already is this, but then there are these other aspects of it that are now in process but will reach ahead. There's a point of future consummation or culmination to all of it. So it's like Jesus has... He is the final reenactment, or the final reenactment is still in progress.

MLH: Oh, that's good. That's really, really good. And I think that we have to understand that the messiah was really expected to show up, to launch a kingdom, to just bring about the end of all things and the consummation of all things. But what's interesting...

MSH: That's Isaiah 9. That's what they were expecting. That's what they're talking about.

MLH: Right, right. And you see this in even the disciples. Like they're ready for this to happen. "When are you going to show up?" And Jesus is all acting cryptically, "I'm going to heal somebody, but don't tell anybody yet." [MSH laughs] And there are reason for that, this cryptic idea. And you've talked a lot about that, too, right?

MSH: Yeah.

MLH: But my point there is that the one coming of the messiah for the New Testament has really just been (you can say) split into two (the first coming and the second coming), but I think it's better just to see it as just one long event that is bookended by his first advent and bookended at the end by a second advent. And this long stretch in between is the end time—"we're living in it but yet there's still more to come" kind of idea. Right? So that's one way to see it, of course. But you're right about this reenactment idea coming up again. So yeah, just these two passages that we looked at, clearly David is still very important for Isaiah. Right? That is very clear. And there's still anticipation that there's something else to come. I mean, Isaiah 11 prophesies and speaks about this time of peace where a wolf shall live with a lamb. Right? So this is clearly an eschatological time. And so that's what he's looking forward to. So there is no king that I know of in the history of Israel that brought about that sort of thing.

MSH: Mm hmm.

MLH: Right? Jesus is the one, though, who has brought it about, is bringing it about, and will finally consummate it in the end.

MSH: Yeah, so you could have good kings, but again, if the expectation is laid out in Isaiah 9, and even before that, even Psalm 89, some of that language... And Psalm 110, I mean, just go down the row. I mean, if these are the parameters, if this is what's expected, even if you get a good king, it's like, "Okay, that was nice." But [laughs] there's still something to be looked for.

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MLH: Something else has got to happen. Right. And I think this is a good little segue into Isaiah's Servant Songs—the servant motif. So scholars have identified these Servant Songs in the text—typically four. So you have Isaiah 42:1-9, then you've got Isaiah 49:1-7 (that's the second song), Isaiah 50:4-9, and then the most well-known, I think, is Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

MSH: Sure.

MLH: This is the one that says, "He was bruised for us and crushed for our iniquities," and so forth. The two servant songs that I think we could really dwell on are probably Isaiah 42 and Isaiah 49. Because there are things embedded in

that text that I think will go a long way in revealing the expectation of what sort of...

MSH: Alright, let's track on those two then.

MLH: Yeah, okay. Let's see. Isaiah 42:1-9 says:

**Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.**
**² He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
³ a bruised reed he will not break,
and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.**
**⁴ He will not grow faint or be discouraged
till he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law.**

**⁵ Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people on it
and spirit to those who walk in it:**
**⁶ "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people,
a light for the nations,
⁷ to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.**
**⁸ I am the LORD; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to carved idols.**
**⁹ Behold, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth
I tell you of them."**

Now that text is very important because again, you see this servant language. And that's something that everybody needs to keep in mind because it's important for later. But that's the anchor—this servant language. But what does the servant bring about? He is himself a covenant. He's a covenant for who? People. A light for the nations. Now that's real important, too. Because whoever this person or whatever is, they are appointed, called (“chosen” is the word) to bring forth justice to the nations—to the rest of the world, not just to Israel. But as we look in the second song (Isaiah 49:1-7), more details emerge. And we actually see the identity of the servant given. The servant is identified as Israel. So let me read this text, verses 1-7 of Isaiah 49:

**Listen to me, O coastlands,
and give attention, you peoples from afar.
The LORD called me from the womb,
from the body of my mother he named my name.
² He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.
³ And he said to me, “You are my servant [MLH: there's the word “servant”],
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”**

So there you see “servant” is identified as Israel, the nation. And then it goes on. He says:

**⁴ But I said, “I have labored in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my right is with the LORD,
and my recompense with my God.”

⁵ And now the LORD says,
he who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him;
and that Israel might be gathered to him—
for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—
⁶ he says:
“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;**

**I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”**

**⁷ Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation,
the servant of rulers:
“Kings shall see and arise;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”**

Now this raises some interesting questions, I think, because who's the servant? Well, on the one hand, it is Israel? Right? We see that pretty clearly in chapter 49:8-9.

MSH: And that shouldn't jar anyone because Israel was the solution to the world's problem.

MLH: Right. That's why it makes sense. “You're the light to the nations.” Right? You are the one who is called, chosen, elected, whatever word we want to use. That you were appointed for that job.

MSH: And God's going to see through that through a subset [laughs] of one.

40:00

MLH: [laughs] Right. That's right. And why does he need to that? Why does he need this one person to bring that about? Well, it's... And that raises the question, “Is the servant purely the nation of Israel?” And in this text (Isaiah 49), no, he's not. Because this servant actually brings Jacob back to him. So the servant is Israel, but the servant is not technically Israel either, because he's bringing Israel back to God.

MSH: He's part of what's being redeemed, yeah.

MLH: That's right. So you see this duality—that the servant is the nation, and yet the servant seems to be one person who brings the nation back to God. That's why you can't say, “It's just the nation of Israel.” It seems to be one particular person within that nation. And so okay, why does that need to be? Well, again, we have to remember what happens. If God has selected or elected (chosen) Israel to be the rescue plan for the world, and if it turns out that Israel herself needs to be rescued... And Paul says this, “Look, just because you have Abraham as your father doesn't mean that you don't have Adam as your father, too. You've got his sin as well.” So Israel needs to be rescued. And yet God

promised to use Israel to rescue the world. So how is he going to fulfill the promise? Well, he has to find a faithful Israelite. And that is who Isaiah's talking about, this faithful servant, who is...

MSH: We have to remember, this isn't that usual in terms of thinking. Look at Moses. If we were talking about Israelites and the way Israelites live, you can't just say, "Well, that's just Israelite culture." It comes from a source. And the source is going to be credited to Moses. So there's a lot of places where you still have this... You can talk about Israel corporately or you can talk about Israel sort of manifested through the life of one individual, whether it be Moses or whether it be David or Solomon or somebody like that—that having the two characterizations is not that unusual.

MLH: Right. Absolutely. Like there's one that stands as representative of the whole. I think that's a very important point to make for sure. But again, yeah, if Israel's the rescue plan, then it makes sense that the rescuer is an Israelite himself. And this is important. Jesus couldn't have been American. He couldn't have been Chinese. He couldn't have been whatever. He had to have been from Israel. Because that's the people that God promised to use to bring back the world.

So in the New Testament, the servant motif is huge. And it's paired to Jesus. So in some of these Isaiah texts, the word for servant, there's a couple of words that are used: *doulos* (I'm thinking of the Greek Old Testament here)... *Doulos* is used. Sometimes it's *pais*. So there are different words. But that word *doulos* is important because it's one that occurs in the New Testament. But I don't want... It's really important. Word studies are helpful and so forth, but I'm more interested in the *concept* that's being communicated. So you can use different words to say the same thing. And so in the New Testament you have the same thing going on, that the word that we translate servant often has different Greek words behind it. So the concept is still the same. But in Matthew 20, Jesus makes this interesting statement. He's telling his disciples to serve one another, to care for one another, and put each other first. In Matthew 20:27-28 he says:

27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave [MLH: or your *doulos*], 28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

So two words there use *doulos*. It's translated as "slave." And then the word "serve" is *diakoneō*, which we get our word deacon from.

MSH: It's noteworthy that the service is defined here, what Jesus says: "giving his life a ransom for many." You could take that back to Isaiah too and talk about the servant.

45:00

MLH: Yes. Because in the other servant song, which we didn't read, but people know so well (Isaiah 52-53), this servant does give his life for the many—for the people. And so that's being brought in here, too, in Matthew 20. And you know, if you just read Matthew 20:27-28, I mean, it's good by itself, but it's rich and deep when you know the Isaiah Servant Song texts. Because no doubt that's what Matthew's drawing from. Another important New Testament text, this time from Paul, comes from Philippians 2:5-11.

MSH: Sure.

MLH: This is one of my favorite passages. It's hard... People ask me, "What's your favorite Scripture?" It's like, "All of it." You know? [laughs] But if there were some key texts, this would be one of them that I like to remember. And it's called the Christ hymn. It's got some rhythm and some cadence to it because it's a song, maybe a creed of sorts. But anyway, Philippians 2:5-11 says this:

⁵ Have this mind [MLH: or "mindset"] among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant [MLH: *doulos*], being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord [MLH: *kyrios*], to the glory of God the Father.

Okay, so this is a rich text. You saw the word *doulos*, you heard the word "servant." That should bring us right back to the servant songs of Isaiah. Jesus is the servant. Paul says that. Okay. So there's more to that.

MSH: But there's *more!* [laughter]

MLH: Oh my goodness, there's so much more. I actually wrote a paper on this. I delivered a conference paper at Tyndale fellowship (I think it was last year or so) on this text, because it's just so good. Because at the end of that Christ hymn that I just read, there's a quotation, actually, from Isaiah. And it's the part where it says, "So that at the name of Jesus..."

MSH: What a surprise. From Isaiah.

MLH: [laughs] Yeah. That's exactly right. Yeah, Paul loves Isaiah. Paul also loves Deuteronomy 32. So he's a kindred spirit, is he not? [laughs] So Paul is

drawing from Isaiah. He says so that at the name of Jesus (quote) “every knee should bow” (unquote). And then he gives “in heaven and on earth and under the earth.” Then he says (quote), “every tongue confess” (unquote) that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. So he takes those two phrases “every knee should bow” and “every tongue confess” and those are quotations from Isaiah 45:23. What’s interesting there (and it’s deeply profound—we *cannot* afford to miss this) is that originally those were references to Yahweh himself. So if you go back to Isaiah 45:18, 22-23, this is what you read. That text says:

**¹⁸ For thus says the LORD,
who created the heavens
(he is God!),
who formed the earth and made it
(he established it;
he did not create it empty,
he formed it to be inhabited!):
“I am the LORD, and there is no other.**

**²² “Turn to me and be saved,
all the ends of the earth!
For I am God, and there is no other.**

**²³ By myself I have sworn;
from my mouth has gone out in righteousness
a word that shall not return:
‘To me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear allegiance.’**

Okay, so this is a text that originally was talking about swearing allegiance to Yahweh and Paul has applied it to Jesus Christ, or Jesus Messiah *kyrios* (Lord). And that’s really interesting. So why is it interesting? Well, it’s super interesting because Paul has just called Jesus Messiah the servant (or the *doulos*) and he’s just applied Yahweh text to the *doulos* (to the servant). What is the conclusion? The conclusion is that Paul understands Jesus to be the servant who is also Yahweh. Yahweh is the servant. Why is that important? Well, just as we saw, we’ve gone through those Old Testament texts that talked about a Davidic king who, goodness gracious, he’s just not quite to the task of being the Davidic king that we hoped for. “Lord, are you going to keep your promise?” We saw those texts. And so the impression is that there’s no man who can do the job. Right? And Paul’s going to agree, “Yeah, you’re right. There is no mere man who can do the job. We need a God-man. We need Yahweh. Yahweh is the servant.” Now again, Mike, this might be a great point to bring up the Two Powers in Heaven

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idea. Because even though this looks pretty radical for Paul, it's pretty consistent with Jewish categories—the Two Powers in Heaven idea.

MSH: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. And the fact that Isaiah 45, of course, is nestled in among the servant language elsewhere in the Servant Songs argues again that this kind of connection is not going to be far off. It's not going to be foreign. Like who else would they expect? [laughs]

MLH: Yeah, right.

MSH: At the end of the day, how are our expectations going to be met? So even if you have a good king, well, you have a good king, but the good king still has failures. There are still things that don't conform to this vision that's emerging of what everlasting Davidic rule should look like. And ultimately, it's almost like you're going to talk yourself into "only Yahweh can do this job." [laughter] You know? And you just sort of wind up there. Because the expectations are so high.

MLH: Mm hmm. Yeah, those texts demand to be interpreted in terms of the future. Even if you do look at some of the great kings of Israel...

MSH: Where you get Two Powers stuff in Isaiah is often through (and I shouldn't just say Isaiah, let's just say the Major Prophets)... It is through the glory, because of the way that is described, especially in the Septuagint. And then you get Second Temple texts that talk about the glory. And the glory is a figure. It's a person. The glory who... I'm trying to remember what Enoch's title for the... "The great glory" is a phrase that comes up in Second Temple literature (Enoch and other books. And the great glory is enthroned. There are actually texts and passages that have the great glory occupying the throne with Yahweh, as though the great glory is a separate entity, separate but still the same. It's the same but still separate. And you get glory language in Isaiah and some of the other Prophets associated with the servant, and the shoot, the branch—all this other language. And this is not going to be unfamiliar to them.

MLH: Right. Yeah. And it demands that the text be interpreted that way, that we need a divine figure here, just as you said. Even when you look at some of Judah's kings, you get some decent ones. I mean, you get... I guess before the civil war—the split—you had David: great guy, but he's sort of a failure too, right?

MSH: Even David, well, he's a man of blood. This is what God himself says.

MLH: Yeah, he can't even build the temple. He's not allowed to do that. So okay, let's hand it off to Solomon. I mean, he's going to be a great guy, right?

MSH: He's a misfit other ways. You know?

MLH: [laughs] Does it end well? At the end of his reign, are people like, "This was great?" I mean, he's not what ultimately...

MSH: They become touchpoints for what the ultimate Davidic king should be. That's why they're looking for the son of David or the son of Solomon. That's about the best we could do. You wonder why Hezekiah and Josiah don't get a little bit of an equal stance in there, but they become touchpoints or templates. But ultimately, it's like there's no way that anybody's going to live up to this unless they're Yahweh.

MLH: Yeah, and even then, with David, I mean, the emphasis is always on God's prerogative to build the house. Because you know David said, "I want to build you a house. I'm going to do this." And, "No, you can't. You've got blood on your hands. But I'm going to build your house." So it's always the zeal of the Lord that does this. It's always God who brings it about. So even with David (the best king, arguably), even he falls short. I mean, yeah, you're right, and you make a good point, why doesn't Josiah get more attention in this respect? And that's a good question. He's a great reformer.

MSH: Maybe because he's not David. [laughter]

MLH: Maybe so. And it was kind of...

MSH: Not quite up to David.

MLH: Yeah, because he dies. In the way that he dies, you know, it's kind of disastrous and a letdown no doubt.

MSH: Sure.

MLH: And then you get the terrible Manasseh, right? Who... Man, he just descends so far down into darkness. Of course, he repents later. But you get the sense even after his repentance that the nation doesn't recover. It's downhill from there, even with Josiah later on, after Manasseh. But anyway, my point is, no matter what king you toss up there, no matter what hope there might be in the next Davidic king, there's always letdown. And there's always some problem with it.

MSH: We didn't talk about part of the... We spent a little time in Isaiah 9 and what a messianic rule would look like or what an ultimate David ruler rule would look like. But we left out some elements. Because other prophets will talk about the reunification of the twelve tribes.

MLH: Yep. Hosea 3.

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MSH: Yeah. It's very... A few chapters in Ezekiel are going to do that [audio breaks up] ...that's as good as we're going to get. It happened after David. That's when we had this problem with the tribe splitting (after Solomon), and so that has to be restored. And it's not. It's not restored by Hezekiah or Josiah or anybody else. And so there's still this sense that, "Well, okay, these were good guys, but if God is really going to be faithful to this, there must be more. And who is going to be capable of pulling this off, other than God himself?"

MLH: And that's the great reveal is that, "Okay, who's the servant? Who's the servant?" It's Yahweh. And I think that, itself, is remarkable because Yahweh shows up as a servant. And that right there is interesting—that the way Yahweh is king and crowned king and shows off his rule is through a cross. And it's through his suffering, it's through his death and dying that he destroys the powers that lurk in the darkness. Those are important themes. It's through his death that he entraps Satan and destroys him.

MSH: Right. And of course, Jesus is the servant as well because he is Yahweh in flesh. But Paul does the same thing with the glory. Who is the glory for Paul? It's the Lord. And when do we find that out? Well, it's only on the other side of the resurrection.

MLH: Right, yeah.

MSH: So it's actually very consistent. And again, for Jews of the Intertestamental period, they're not unaccustomed to thinking about these categories and having the two at the top. And so when Christians like Paul come around and say, "Well, have we considered Jesus as a candidate?" [laughs] "We've considered a half a dozen famous Old Testament characters and a bunch of angels that you all like. Might we suggest something else?" And this is why it's important to know that it's significant when Jesus gets referred to as the glory or as the servant or as the Word or possessing the Name.

MLH: The Son.

MSH: These are all important motifs that are directly tied into sonship, kingship (all the things we've been talking about), rulership, dominion, and ultimately the Davidic dynasty, which means, ultimately, profile of the messiah.

MLH: Right. And for the nations. The messiah is for the nations. Because he's the servant. He is the light. Right. Exactly.

MSH: That to me is why it's not a conundrum why... Yes, they're expecting a military deliverance and all this kind of stuff. But it's not a conundrum for me that they wouldn't get that at the first installment. We talked about how these things are fulfilled, but they're still being fulfilled. But you can't very well bless the

nations (Genesis 12, we'll go back to the original Abrahamic promise) if you annihilate them. [laughs] You know? Like one disqualifies the other. [MLH laughs] So it would be very natural to have the first cycle, as it were, be the emphasis on redemption, before the Day of the Lord comes.

MLH: And your audience knows this so well because you've taught on this, but God is reorganizing the Divine Council. Right? I mean, he's bringing people involved to bring about his rule and reign on the earth. And there's that great passage in John where it says, "To those who believed on his name, to them he gave the authority to be sons of God."

MSH: The authority.

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MLH: Yeah, *exousia*, right? That's the word. Sometimes it gets translated as "the right to become the children of God." It's the authority. I mean, that's the idea. Does God need a council? Does God need sons and daughters? No, of course not. I mean, he's Yahweh. He can do anything by himself. But there's something to be said about the way in which he enacts his rule on the earth: it's through people. And you can't do that if they're all judged at the beginning, right? And as it turns out, the Church, as we spread gospel, spread Jesus, we're reclaiming ground that the enemy has taken—reclaiming the nations. And as it turns out, this whole thing is a reenactment of Adam and Eve—the image idea of "spread my image all throughout the world." Why? Well, so that people will know that Yahweh is Lord of earth. And that's what we're doing. It's just we're following in the footsteps, not of Adam, but of the second Adam—the final Adam, the better Adam.

MSH: Yeah, it's just good stuff. I want to thank you again for being with us. I know we still have a lot of ground to cover. I mean, there's still some important passages that we'll jump into before we really get to your forte, where we want you to walk us through Paul, at least a passage or two, very explicitly. And we can put some of this into... We can apply what we've been learning as far as Old Testament and the Jewish mindset to what Paul's actually doing in the New Testament. But we'll get there.

So for our audience, we still have some passages to go. And hopefully you're seeing the value of what we're doing here, to sketch out the messianic profile and to read Scripture as story and to read it as act and reenactment. It's very important. Again, this is how you think in biblical, theological terms. This is how you do it. It's not just collecting verses to talk about one topic, and, "Well, that's our theology now. We can throw verses at a topic or an idea." You have to see how they interact with each other and what the relationships are between the source texts, and what the writers are doing and why they're doing it. And that really comes with reading Scripture as story and emphasizing this act and reenactment way to look at prophecy. So Matt, thanks again for being with us.

MLH: Yeah, thanks again for having me.

TS: Alright, Mike, Part 3 of the Messianic Story is interesting. I enjoy hearing Matt's take on everything. And I think we're getting into his wheelhouse, like you mentioned earlier about some of this stuff.

MSH: Yeah, we're headed there. I mean, once we get through the Daniel material (we'll have to figure out how we're going to do that), then that's going to be ripe for what Paul is thinking. In other words, it's going to give us a full picture of what Paul would've had floating around in his head when he encounters Jesus there on the Damascus road and comes up with his own Christology out of that encounter.

TS: Yeah, really looking forward to that next week. Yeah, absolutely. With that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.