

OLD TESTAMENT FIGURES

Son of David

A warrior-worshipper, his son's prayers, and a king who needs no name but his own

SPEAKER	Matt Ryniker
DATE	Sunday, January 30, 2022
PASSAGES	Matthew 12:22-29; Psalm 91; 1 Samuel 16:14-23; 1 Samuel 17:45; 1 Kings 4:29-32; John 8:36; Colossians 2:15
MESSAGE	Begins at 1:03:57 in the service

THE BIG IDEA

David and Solomon were both remembered, in the centuries before Jesus, for deliverance from evil — and both got that reputation by taking shelter under the name of the Most High. So when Jesus casts out demons and the crowd asks whether this is the Son of David, they are reading him correctly, and still underestimating him: he does not invoke a greater name, he speaks in his own. The freedom that follows is not the end of the matter. He set us free in order that we would be his.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ◆ The Bible is mostly narrative, and the narrative is mostly about God. “The story of God in the Bible is not primarily, how do I go to heaven and have fun.”
- ◆ David’s worship and his warfare were the same act performed in the same name. He fought in the name of the Lord of hosts and he worshipped the Lord Most High, and that is why darkness gave way around him.
- ◆ Solomon inherited his father’s reputation, not just his throne. By Jesus’ day, Jews associated Solomon with collected prayers — including prayers for deliverance from evil.
- ◆ Psalm 91 was read in the ancient world as a prayer against real powers. The Greek translators rendered “the destruction that wastes at noonday” as the midday demon; the Aramaic turned the arrow that flies by day into the arrow of the angel of death.

- ◆ The difference between David and Jesus is the name. David took shelter under the Almighty; demons go out at Jesus' word, in his name, on his own authority.
- ◆ The kingdom that arrives in Matthew 12 is not a set of principles. "The kingdom of God is centered around a person who in fact is the king of heaven."
- ◆ Israel's purpose was never to be another fiefdom or even a model society. "Israel's main export was to be their God."
- ◆ Obedience, trust and proclaiming Christ are honor to God and defiance toward the powers at the same time — and the outcome is already settled, whether or not this life feels like winning.

► 1:04:02

Before he opened a Bible, Matt spent a few minutes on something he said he had been praying about: Hope Chapel needs more small groups, and not bigger ones. His case was not logistical. We spend our days looking at screens rather than at people, he said, and social media "can make derangement popular" — but the real danger is not the person watching the livestream. "Church life was never meant to be passive. Your faith was never meant to be passive." The root issue is choosing not to engage when you could. His suggestion was small and concrete: ask two or three friends, start something, "leave a couch empty on purpose" and see who comes to fill it.

Why these Old Testament figures

► 1:07:03

The series has plain reasons behind it. If you do not know the Old Testament you will miss what the New Testament is referring to; and familiarity makes a long, sometimes confusing book less intimidating. But Matt pressed a third reason harder. Most of the stories in this series have had very little to do with us directly. "The story of God in the Bible is not primarily, how do I go to heaven and have fun." It is mostly historical narrative, and that is a lens: not a how-to guide, not a ticket counter, but an extended revelation of who God is and what he has done. The benefits of knowing God are real. The danger is dwelling on them until you lose sight of what God himself said he was after — "I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God".

A warrior king who worshipped

► 1:09:26

What Matt finds remarkable about David is that he knew his own place. He was a king who understood himself to be under authority, under the Most High. He fought in the name of the Lord of hosts and he worshipped the Lord Most High, and those were not two separate careers. Out of that came a reputation most of us have forgotten he had: David was known for deliverance from evil through worship, prayer and devotion to God. The psalms are full of him seeking the Lord in danger. What surprised Matt in his own study was that his son carried the same reputation.

Solomon inherits his father's trade

► 1:11:54

“And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all other men... And his fame was in all the surrounding nations. He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005.”

1 KINGS 4:29–32 ↗

The wisdom is familiar. What is less familiar is that before the New Testament period Jews had also built up around Solomon a reputation for collecting prayers of all kinds — including prayers for deliverance from evil. Josephus, summarizing this same passage in *Antiquities*, says God gave Solomon wisdom beyond the Egyptians and that Solomon composed prayers and even exorcisms. So Solomon is a son of David twice: literally, and because he is up to the same kind of thing his father was.

► 1:14:08

Then the detail that sets up the rest of the message. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran there is a small collection of exorcism prayers bound together. The first is too damaged to read. The second is legible and attributed to Solomon — a song of deliverance invoking the God of creation for protection against evil, in which the psalmist calls on the powers of heaven to fight on behalf of God’s people. The third is attributed to David. The fourth one, Matt said, you have already read.

Why Psalm 91

► 1:14:43

“He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, ‘My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.’ For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.”

PSALM 91:1-6 ↗

Matt was careful about authorship: the psalm is anonymous. Some think David wrote it, some think Moses did, and that is not the point. The point is that it is thoroughly in the character and quality of David’s life — “this describes the way David responds to pressure, temptation and attack. Taking shelter.” He admitted he had to look up *pinions*, found they are flight feathers, the outer edge of the wing, and only then noticed the parallel waiting in the next line: under his wings.

► 1:16:59

Then come the lines most of us skim. In the ancient world the terror of the night was associated with actual demonic power; the only other place the phrase surfaces is [Song of Solomon 3:8](#), where Solomon’s guard of valiant men carry swords because of fear in the night. The arrow that flies by day sits close to the Canaanite deity Resheph, who shot people with arrows in his wily, evil ways — which put Matt in mind of Paul’s [fiery darts](#). *Pestilence* is an ordinary Hebrew word, but in Ugaritic it names a god of destruction. He was honest that these are loose connections. What is not loose is what the translators did with the psalm. When the Hebrew went into Greek, “the destruction that wastes at noonday” became the *midday demon*. When it went into Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, it became “you will not be afraid of the terror of demons that go about in the night, nor of the arrow of the angel of death that shoots in the daytime.” The people who received this as scripture plainly understood that more was going on than random misfortune.

► 1:18:06

Which makes a familiar scene stranger than it looks. It is [this psalm](#) that Satan quotes at Jesus in the wilderness ([Matthew 4:5-7](#)). “Jesus might have been praying from that psalm while he was getting tempted,” Matt offered — Satan could have been picking up a line already in the air. Either way, the text the tempter reached for was the one bundled at Qumran with the prayers of David and Solomon, and read by the rabbis as a psalm about deliverance. People really felt that about it.

The harmful spirit and the lyre

► 1:19:29

“Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from the Lord tormented him. And Saul’s servants said to him, ‘Behold now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord now command your servants who are before you to seek out a man who is skillful in playing the lyre, and when the harmful spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well.’”

1 SAMUEL 16:14–16 ↗

This picks up directly from the previous week’s message on Saul — the first king, the tall king, useful in some ways and tragically disobedient more than once. What the passage says about the young man they send for is that he is a man of good presence and that the Lord is with him. It also says something about the spirit: all spirits finally answer to God and in that sense belong to him, which is why Satan has to ask permission before he touches Job. And the relief Saul got when David took up the lyre and played was not a property of the music. “It’s not that skillful music alone would give you comfort from evil,” Matt said; it was David’s relationship with God and the very presence of God in his praise. So the reputation begins. David is a figure whose loyalty to God is his strength in opposing darkness.

Goliath, and Israel’s only real export

► 1:22:21

You can see the same loyalty in the valley. When David argues his way onto the field, the argument is not that he is brave; it is that he has struck down lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because “he has defied the armies of the living God.” What bothers David is the name being defied.

“You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.”

1 SAMUEL 17:45 ↗

► 1:22:49

That, Matt argued, is David grasping at Israel’s true purpose as a nation. Israel was never meant to be one more fiefdom competing for resources — nor even, he added, a model society whose better way of living the surrounding nations would gradually copy. “Israel’s main export was not supposed to be spice or gold. Israel’s main export was to be their God.” He let that cut two ways out loud: it is wrong to treat the nation of Israel as the home team we root for no matter what, and it is unwise to get drawn too

far into the benefits God can hand out, when the stated goal was a people who would know him and serve as a nation of priests representing him to the world. David fits that model as king by standing on the name of the Lord.

“Can this be the Son of David?”

► 1:25:40

“Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, ‘Can this be the Son of David?’”

MATTHEW 12:22-23 ↗

The crowd reacts appropriately, Matt said, and they react out of exactly the association the message had just reconstructed. Deliverance from evil was part of the messianic profile, and Jesus was doing it — “quite frankly out the wazoo,” far more of it than anything recorded of David or Solomon. The Pharisees made the opposite connection and credited Beelzebul, and Jesus took their logic apart: a kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, no city or house divided against itself will stand, so if Satan casts out Satan, how does his kingdom stand? Then he turned the question back on them — by whom do your own sons cast them out? “Therefore they will be your judges” ([Matthew 12:24-27](#)).

► 1:27:08

But the detail Matt wanted was mechanical. David took up the name of the Lord. The prayers gathered under David’s and Solomon’s names were addressed to the God Most High; they were the prayers of men taking shelter under the Almighty. Jesus, in his deliverance ministry, “appears to simply give out eviction notices on his own authority.” He is not invoking a higher name. Demons are cast out in his.

► 1:27:53

“But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can someone enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.”

MATTHEW 12:28-29 ↗

So which kingdom has come upon them? Not the kingdom of the Jews. “The kingdom of God is not a collection of principles or vibes,” Matt said. “The kingdom of God is centered around a person who in fact is the king of heaven.” Jesus is heir to David’s throne, and he is king over the Jews. He is also, in a

ministry where demons leave at his word, shown to be king over all the hosts of heaven. In his own illustration he is the plunderer, and the strong man is already tied up. And the contrast with David is the whole point of the comparison: David saw himself under the authority of the Most High, with Israel under the Almighty and meant to be a light showing the world which God is truly God. Jesus, king of the hosts of heaven, has absolute authority — which is what makes the next verse land.

Free indeed — and free for what

► 1:29:52

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

JOHN 8:36 ↗

If he has the final word, if devils go out at his command, who is left to stand against him? That is the force of the verse. But Matt would not leave the freedom sitting there as its own reward.

► 1:30:48

Yes: you cast your cares on the Lord, you ask forgiveness in his name, he forgives you and gives you eternal life. You take shelter under the Almighty and find deliverance in the name of Jesus, and you are free, and truly free. “But why did he set us free? The story never really changed. All along God wanted for himself a people” — “I will be your God and you will be my people.” It is for freedom that he set us free, and it is to be his children that he forgave our sins. Cast yourself on Jesus today to be free and forgiven, Matt said, “but even more importantly to be his. That’s what he wants.” And then the question he left hanging: what does Jesus want out of all this? You.

His triumph becomes ours

► 1:31:29

Paul says Jesus

“disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them” — and Matt asked who those rulers are. Pilate? Herod? There is more going on than you can see. The victory transfers to us because he opened his own body to us, so that we join him in his death, his resurrection and his life, which is how we can face an uncertain future and a discouraging present and still be more than conquerors. He read the same victory out of Revelation 12:10–11: the accuser thrown down, and his people conquering him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, loving not their lives even unto death.

► 1:32:33

Which is why we can be strong in the Lord, put on the armor of God and stand against the schemes of the devil — the wrestling was never against flesh and blood. The enemy named in [Ephesians 6:12](#) is not Herod or Pilate or Nero either; it is the cosmic powers over this present darkness, the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. People are not our enemies.

How we stand, and how it ends

► 1:33:06

So how do we stand? The same way David did — taking shelter under the real and true God, finding deliverance in his name. Not an incantation, not the right music, not something homeopathic spread around the house. Matt put the psalm into the room's own mouth: "we like David can say we take shelter in the shadow of the Almighty, we take shelter under his pinions, we say to the Lord, my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust" ([Psalm 91:1-6](#)). "We like David worship and wage warfare in his name, under his shadow."

► 1:33:51

Then he named three ordinary things and insisted each one is two things at once: obeying God is an honor to him and an act of defiance; casting our cares on him and giving him our trust and attention is honor and defiance; proclaiming Christ as he is to a dead and dying world is honor and defiance. David and Solomon acquired a reputation for deliverance in the name of God, and Jesus took that up perfectly and to another level, because he *is* the name — there is no other name by which man can be saved. "We revel in that, we boast about that," he said. That is how we show the world that we conquer, and not by our own strength or power.

It also means we can take the posture Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and Daniel took — even if the Lord does not deliver us, we are not bowing to your statue. We may feel in this life like we are failing. We may face death, persecution, discouragement. But we know how the story ends: dark powers come to justice, and every knee bows and every tongue confesses.

► 1:36:18

"Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet."

1 CORINTHIANS 15:24-25 ↗

Which makes the arithmetic of a poured-out life simple. “It’s never a wrong investment or a poor investment to pour yourselves out in service to him, knowing his victory is already sure.” Whatever resistance you are meeting, that source is on a clock.

► 1:36:52

And one day it will not take faith to see it. Whatever opposition to the gospel we face, that dark power will be put to justice — and when we rise at the end of days to face judgment and see God establishing his kingdom finally and fully, recreating the heavens and the earth, “we will see his victory clearer than day.” It is not only future either: “even now his victory breaks in. Even now those whom the Son has set free are free indeed.” Then the appeal the whole message had been walking toward: “I appeal to all of us, throw yourself at the feet of Jesus. There is no other source of deliverance in your life.”

Psalm 91, prayed standing

► 1:37:48

He ended by asking the church to stand and praying the psalm back to God — we dwell in your shelter, we abide in your shadow, deliver us from evil and lead us not into temptation, establish your kingdom in our lives and our families, cast out many devils among us, bring forth your power and your presence. Then he had the room say verse two aloud together, and renounce the devil and all his works. “I don’t care if that feels goofy. It’s good. We do.” And he declared the psalm’s next promise over Hope Chapel by name: deliverance from the snare of the fowler and the deadly pestilence, covering, refuge under his wings.

FOR FURTHER STUDY**SCRIPTURE IN THIS MESSAGE**

- Exodus 6:7
- 1 Kings 4:29–32
- Psalm 91:1–6
- Song of Solomon 3:8
- Ephesians 6:16
- Psalm 91:11–12
- Matthew 4:5–7
- 1 Samuel 16:14–16
- Job 1:12
- 1 Samuel 16:23
- 1 Samuel 17:36
- 1 Samuel 17:45
- Exodus 19:6
- Matthew 12:22–23
- Matthew 12:24–27
- Matthew 12:28–29
- John 8:36
- Galatians 5:1
- Colossians 2:15
- Romans 8:37
- Revelation 12:10–11
- Ephesians 6:10–11
- Ephesians 6:12
- Acts 4:12
- Daniel 3:17–18
- Philippians 2:10–11
- 1 Corinthians 15:24–25
- Psalm 91:2
- Psalm 91:3–4

FOR YOUR HOPE GROUP

1. Matt said the Bible is mostly narrative, and mostly about who God is rather than how we secure a place in heaven. Where does your own reading of scripture lean the other way?
2. David's worship and his warfare were the same act, done in the same name. What would it take for those two to stop being separate categories in your life?
3. Psalm 91 was prayed in the ancient world as protection against real powers. What do you make of reading it that way, rather than as poetry about general safety?
4. Jesus casts out demons in his own name instead of taking shelter under a greater one. How does that change what you understand yourself to be doing when you pray in his name?
5. Matt named obedience, trust and proclaiming Christ as honor to God and defiance toward the powers at the same time. Which one of those is being asked of you this week, and what is the first step?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Matt Ryniker is Hope Chapel's senior pastor — his own description of the job — and reports to the church's governing board, who he cheerfully calls his boss. He and his wife Mandy have been held up from Hope's own pulpit as an example to the congregation. He spent a stretch of his working life as a public school teacher, and he still teaches the parent dedication classes where families commit to raising their children to follow Jesus — a theme that runs straight into this message.

Watch the full message:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNY-0ArrJ-Y&t=3837s>

These notes summarise a message preached at Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas. They are a reader's aid, not a transcript — scripture references link to the full passage so you can read it in context.