The Foreshadowing of Advent

So far this Advent, we've looked at the Need for Advent and the Promise of Advent, this morning I want us to think about the Foreshadowing of Advent.

And to help explain that… kids, can any of you tell me what this is?
(A shadow. Of a Cat)
So if you saw that shadow coming you'd know a cat was coming.

Or what about this one - what's this a shadow of?
Camels
So if you saw that shadow coming you'd know camels were coming.

So when we talk about the foreshadowing of advent, we don't mean we can see Jesus' shadow. We mean we can see things in the Old Testament that are like a shadow of Jesus, that tell us something about who Jesus is even before he was born.

So… can anyone tell me who this is supposed to be a picture of?
(David)

And David was one of Jesus' great-great-great-great-great… grandfathers. In fact, in Matthew's gospel, before Matthew tells us about the wise men visiting the baby Jesus, before even he tells us about Jesus' birth on that first Christmas, he first gives us Jesus' family tree, his genealogy. And he begins it: 'The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, *the son of David*…'

It's why in our last Bible reading the angel said to Mary, Jesus' mother, before he was born, "Do not be afraid, Mary… You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and… the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

But David wasn't just Jesus' great-great-great-great… Grandfather. He was also like a shadow for Jesus. When we look at David, we get some clues about who Jesus is, when he came.

So… can anyone tell me where David was from? What was his hometown?

Bethlehem! And do you know anyone else who was from Bethlehem?

Jesus! The angels appeared to the shepherds and said, "Fear not, for I bring you good news of great joy… For unto you is born this day *in the city of David* a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord."

And what's the city of David? Bethlehem. It's why the prophet Micah said, 'But you, O Bethlehem… from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.' And he's talking about Jesus.

But… does anyone know what David's job was? What did he have to look after?

He was a shepherd. So he's also like a shadow for Jesus because Jesus came saying, "I am the good shepherd", the one who cares for and protects God's flock, his people, you and me.

But look at David. What's he carrying?

A Sling.

Why's he got a sling, what's he going to use it for?

To fight a giant - called Goliath.

He fought and killed the giant.

When the other men in the army faced the giant, were they brave or scared? Scared. They were quivering with fear. They needed someone to fight the giant for them.

So here too David is like a shadow of Jesus. Because you and I also face giants - not called Goliath, but the giant of our sin - all the wrong things we do; the giant of fear - all the things we're afraid of; The giant of despair and hopelessness - the things that tell us there's no point to our lives.

And just like the army before David came, we can't beat them - they're too big and powerful for us. But by dying on the cross and rising from the dead, Jesus came and fought those giants and killed them: he's removed our sin; he's told us he loves us and we have nothing to fear; he tells us he has a plan and purpose for our life, which kills the despair.

But, when David fought the giant was he a big and strong man, like me, or a small, young and weedy boy like Rhys?

He was just a boy! And that's also like a shadow of Jesus. Because when Jesus came to save us, he didn't come as a great strong warrior, but as a baby: the youngest and smallest of them all. And, he doesn't defeat our giants through a great army, but through the weakness of the cross.

But can anyone tell me, when David grew up, what did he become?

The king. And that's also a shadow of Jesus - because he's the greatest king of all. It's why we've just sung 'Christ the king of Christmas'. And it's why the angel said God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign forever!

So David's life is like a foreshadowing of Advent and he was like a shadow for Jesus - when we look at David we can get a glimpse of who Jesus is:

He's born in Bethlehem
He's come to kill our giants and defeat the enemies of sin and death we could never defeat on our own.
But, like David, he does it in weakness - the weakness of the manger and the weakness of the cross.

But above all, he's the greatest king of all. Greater even than David. Because David was far from perfect, but Jesus really was perfect. David's reign came to an end, but Jesus will reign forever. Unlike David, Jesus really is the King of Christmas.