

The Good News of a God who Sends a Deliverer
Sermon for the 3rd Mid-week Lenten Service, 2026
Exodus 4:1-20

Dear friends in Christ,

Moses was sent by God to deliver the *Israelites*, and Jesus was sent by God to deliver the *world*.

Looking back to the biblical accounts of their lives, a question almost immediately suggests itself: “Could these two deliverers be any more alike?” The similarities practically jump off the page from the start.

As soon as Moses was born, his life was in danger. Because the Egyptian king (or pharaoh) feared that the large Jewish population could become a threat to Egypt, he ordered that every son born to the Israelites be killed, but God had plans for Moses. So, working through Moses’ mother, the Lord preserved his life. And in a remarkable turn of events, Moses ended up being raised in Pharaoh’s own household.

Now fast-forward through the centuries to the time of Jesus’ birth. Already in His infancy, Jesus’ life was in danger. When King Herod learned that some believed the Messiah had been born in Bethlehem, he feared that any such “newborn king” could be a threat to him. So he ordered that all male children in Bethlehem two years old and younger be killed. The tragic result is remembered as “the slaughter of the innocents.” But God, of course, had profoundly important plans for Jesus. So, in His love and providence, He worked through Jesus’ mother, Mary, and father figure, Joseph, to preserve Jesus’ life. To save the infant Jesus, they took Him to Egypt and stayed there until it was safe to return.

The parallels between these infancy experiences of Moses and Jesus are so prominent, and both are so different from practically anyone else’s infancy, that it’s almost impossible *not* to see the hand of God at work here. These similarities did not come about by chance.

God’s fingerprints are also evident in another feature shared by Moses and Jesus. *Both were absolutely astonishing choices for the missions God gave them.*

Few people would have seemed a less likely liberator of Israel than Moses: raised in Pharaoh’s household, previously rejected and threatened by Israelites, and absent for the last forty years and working as a shepherd in Midian. It’s no wonder that when God, from the burning bush, called Moses to return to Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to bring Israel out, Moses felt nervous about how the Israelites would receive him. He complained to God, **“They will not believe me or listen to my voice.”**

As for Jesus, people had certain expectations about what the Messiah would be like: probably someone from a prominent Jewish family; surely someone widely known and respected among the people; certainly, someone with strong support from their religious leaders. Enter Jesus: raised in a carpenter’s household; hailing from the lowly regarded town of Nazareth; unknown to the religious and ruling elites, and completely uninterested in seeking their seal of approval. On top of that, the circumstances of Jesus’ birth were rumoured by some to be scandalous. To say that Jesus seemed an unlikely Messiah would be an understatement.

God’s choices of Moses and Jesus both flew in the face of Israel’s expectations in almost every imaginable way. But God’s thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are His ways our ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His thoughts higher than our thoughts and His ways higher than our ways.¹ This is, after all, the same God who, later in the Old Testament, chose a young shepherd (David) to be king of His people and, later in the New Testament, would choose the leading persecutor of

¹ Isaiah 55:8-9

Christians (Saul, also called Paul) to be His apostle to the nations. Only this God would choose someone like Moses to lead Israel to freedom. *Only this God would send someone like Jesus to redeem mankind.*

That brings us to another point of similarity between Moses and Jesus. As unlikely as they seemed for their missions, *both proved faithful.*

Moses faithfully went to Pharaoh and spoke the words that God gave him, supported by the signs and wonders God worked through him, and Jesus faithfully taught, preached, and reached out to the lost, supported by the testimony of His merciful miracles. Moses and Jesus were both repeatedly rejected as they brought God's Word to prideful people with hard hearts. But both were steadfast in their service and faithfully persisted to the end. In Jesus' case, He was faithful *even to the point of death on a cross.*

That, then, raises the most important parallel between these two deliverers: Through them, God's plans were brought to completion, and His promises were fulfilled. *His people were set free.* As we'll see in the coming weeks, God worked through Moses to lead His people out of bondage in Egypt, and in Christ, God has freed us from the chains of sin, death, and the devil.

So, again, as we asked at the beginning, could these two deliverers, Moses and Jesus, *be any more alike?*

With that, I'd like to highlight one more thing that stands out when we read about Moses' and Jesus' lives in the Bible. As we read, it's almost impossible not to ask, "*Could these two deliverers be any more different?*"

As we've seen, both Moses and Jesus were chosen by God to set His people free. But their responses were as different as can be. Moses was resistant to God's call and went to Pharaoh only reluctantly. He even offered excuses not to go, citing, in particular, his weakness as a speaker. "**Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since You have spoken to Your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.... Oh, my Lord, please send someone else.**" Jesus, on the other hand, was a *willing* Redeemer who embraced His mission of saving us—even knowing all along that the price He would pay for our redemption was His own life. Jesus said how He "*came to seek and to save the lost*" (Luke 19:10).

Another fundamental difference between these two chosen deliverers is that, while Jesus did not need saving, *Moses himself did.* While Moses was not personally a slave in Egypt, he did need—as much as anyone else—someone to set him free from the chains of sin and death. He was a sinner in need of a Saviour. Christ, on the other hand, had no such need. Though He was tempted in every way as we are, He remained without sin and so had no need for a saviour from sin—or from the wages of sin, which is death.

And that points to another vitally important difference: ***the greater Deliverer accomplished a far, far greater deliverance.*** When God worked through Moses to set His people free from slavery in Egypt, that was a great and gracious thing. But when our Lord Jesus Christ redeemed us all from sin, death, and the power of the devil, that was—and remains—the single most important event in the history of the world.

So, in a number of noticeable ways, Moses and Jesus are a lot alike, and in some infinitely important ways, they are dramatically different; ***both of those are important.***

In the faithful deliverer Moses, God was giving His people a partial preview of the greater Deliverer to come, Jesus Christ. And in Israel's liberation, God was foreshadowing our redemption. He was giving His people a glimpse of how He would ultimately fulfil His promise of salvation. So, He was giving them some important pointers on what to look for in the Saviour to come. You could say that in Moses, they were essentially being shown a somewhat blurry black-and-white photo of what would be seen in high-definition colour in Jesus Christ. The parallels between Moses and Jesus did serve this valuable purpose.

But the differences between them are absolutely essential! Moses is deserving of our appreciation and respect, but Jesus deserves our reverent worship and praise. Moses can be seen, in some ways, as a role model of faithful, steadfast, dedicated service to the Lord, but Jesus is the Lord who came to serve us, whose steadfast love toward us is beyond our understanding, whose dedication to us is as immeasurable as it is undeserved, and who alone is truly worthy of our faith. Moses is a fellow sinner and saint to whom we can relate and whom we can respect. Jesus is the Saviour of Moses, us, and all sinners. What a blessed difference!

And this shouldn't surprise us, because just as Moses is both significantly similar to and vastly different from Jesus, *the same is true for all of us*. Like us, Jesus is truly human; unlike us, He is also truly God. Like us, Jesus experienced the sorrows, pains, and temptations of life in this fallen world; unlike us, He remained sinless through it all. As we will, Jesus died; but unlike us, He died not because of His own sin but because of ours. So, like Him, we shall live forever; but unlike Him, it is not because of our merit but because of His mercy—not because of our goodness but because of His grace.

He is like us, and He is radically, blessedly unlike us. Both of these are extraordinarily good news for us! For we need deliverance, and in Jesus, God has given us the Perfect Deliverer.

Blessed be the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ! Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.