MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICE 3, 2026

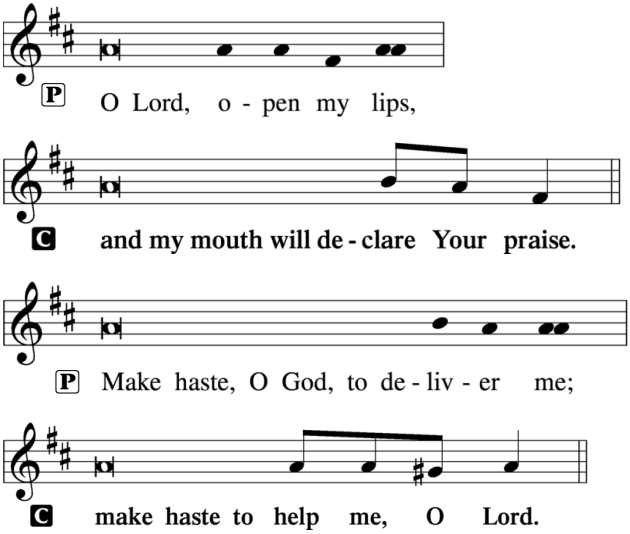
THE GOOD NEWS OF A GOD WHO SENDS A DELIVERER

The similarities between Moses and Jesus are striking, but the differences between the two are even more significant. In Jesus, God has given us the perfect deliverer. Blessed be the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

May the Lord bless our worship tonight

VESPERS

As the minister approaches the altar the congregation stands



PSALM

Psalm 25:1-7

P To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

C **O my God, in You I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me.**

P Indeed, none who wait for You shall be put to shame;

C **they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.**

P Make me to know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths.

C **Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; for You I wait all the day long.**

P Remember Your mercy, O LORD, and Your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

C **Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to Your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of Your goodness, O LORD!**

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Sit

HYMN 438

FIRST READING *Exodus 4:1-20*

P The First Reading is from Exodus, the fourth chapter.

Then Moses answered, "But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my
voice, for they will say, 'The LORD did not appear to you.'" 2 The LORD said to
him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A staff." 3 And He said, "Throw it
on the ground." So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses
ran from it. 4 But the LORD said to Moses, "Put out your hand and catch it by the
tail"—so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand—
5 "that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of
Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you." 6 Again,
the LORD said to him, "Put your hand inside your cloak." And he put his hand
inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous like snow.
7 Then God said, "Put your hand back inside your cloak." So he put his hand
back inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the
rest of his flesh. 8 "If they will not believe you," God said, "or listen to the first
sign, they may believe the latter sign. 9 If they will not believe even these two
signs or listen to your voice, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour
it on the dry ground, and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become
blood on the dry ground."
10 But Moses said to the LORD, "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." 11 Then the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Who
makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? 12 Now
therefore go, and I shall be with your mouth and teach you what you shall
speak." 13 But he said, "Oh, my Lord, please send someone else." 14 Then the
anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and He said, "Is there not Aaron,
your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming
out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. 15 You shall
speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I shall be with your mouth and
with his mouth and will teach you both what to do. 16 He will speak for you to
the people, and he will be your mouth, and you will be as God to him. 17 And
take in your hand this staff, with which you will do the signs."

18 Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, "Please let me
go back to my brothers in Egypt to see whether they are still alive." And Jethro
said to Moses, "Go in peace." 19 And the LORD said to Moses in Midian, "Go
back to Egypt, for all the men who were seeking your life are dead." 20 So Moses
took his wife and his sons and had them ride on a donkey, and went back to the
land of Egypt. And Moses took the staff of God in his hand.

P This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING *Hebrews 3:1-6*

P The Second Reading is from Hebrews, the third chapter.

Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus,
the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, 2 who was faithful to Him who
appointed Him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. 3 For Jesus
has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the
builder of a house has more honour than the house itself. 4 (For every house is
built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) 5 Now Moses was faithful
in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken
later, 6 but Christ is faithful over God's house as a Son. And we are His house,
if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

P This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST DRAWN FROM THE FOUR GOSPELS

When they had sung a hymn, He went out, as was His custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed Him. Then Jesus said to them, "You will all be offended because of Me this night; for it is written, 'I shall strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I am risen again, I shall go before you into Galilee."

Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all the others deny You, I shall never deny You."

Jesus said to him, “Truly, I say to you this night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny Me three times.”
But Peter said more vehemently, “If I have to die with You, I shall never deny You.” And all the others said likewise.
They went over the brook Kidron and came to a place which was called Gethsemane. There was a garden there, and He went into it with His disciples. Judas, who betrayed Him, knew the place, for Jesus often met there with His disciples. And when He was at the place, He said to them, “Sit down here, while I go on ahead and pray. Pray that you do not enter into temptation.”
He took with Him Peter and James and John and began to be full of sorrow and turmoil. Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Wait here, and watch with Me.” He went on a little from them, about a stone’s throw. He fell on His face and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible to You. Take this cup from Me; nevertheless, not what I shall, but what You will.”
An angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him; and He prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I shall, but as You will.” In agony, He prayed more earnestly, “Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Yours be done.” His sweat fell on the ground like great drops of blood.
When He got up from prayer, He came to His disciples and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”
He went away again the second time and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Your will be done.” When He returned, He found them asleep again; for their eyes were heavy, and they did not know what to answer Him. He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.
Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour is come; behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. Look, the one who betrays Me is here.”
Even while He was saying this, Judas, one of the Twelve, came with a detachment and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees. They came to the place with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went out to them and said, “Whom do you seek?”
They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

Jesus said to them, “I am He.”
Judas, who betrayed Him, had taken his stand with them. When Jesus said to them, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground. Again He asked them, “Whom do you seek?”
They said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”
Jesus replied, “I told you that I am He. If I am the one you seek, then let these others go.” This was to fulfil the word He had spoken, “Of those You gave Me I have lost none.”
Now he that was betraying Jesus had given them a sign, saying, “The one whom I shall kiss, that is He; seize Him and be sure to take Him away securely.” He went straight up to Jesus and said, “Hail, Master,” and kissed Him.
Jesus said to him, “Friend, why have you come? Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?”
They came then and laid their hands on Jesus and took Him. When those who were about Him saw what would happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.
Jesus answered, “No more of that.” And He touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into its sheath. All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Do you imagine that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will send Me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that it must be so? The cup which my Father has given Me, shall I not drink of it?”
Then Jesus said to the chief priests, and the captains of the temple, and the elders who had come out against Him, “Have you come out as against a thief, with swords and clubs to take Me? When I was with you day after day teaching in the temple, you did not lay your hands on Me; but this is your hour and the hour of the power of darkness. All this has happened that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.
There was a certain young man who followed along. He had only a linen cloth about his naked body. They laid hold on him, but he slipped out of the linen cloth and fled away naked.
Then the detachment and its captain and the officers of the Jews seized Jesus, and bound Him, and led Him away to Annas first; for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year. Now Caiaphas was the one who gave counsel to the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.

After the Narrative:

P Here ends the reading.

Stand

P Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are the God of my salvation.

C **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

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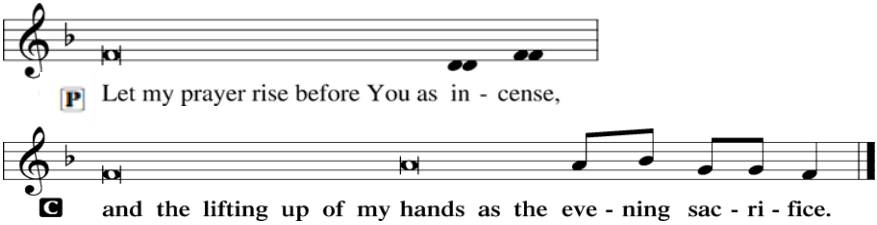
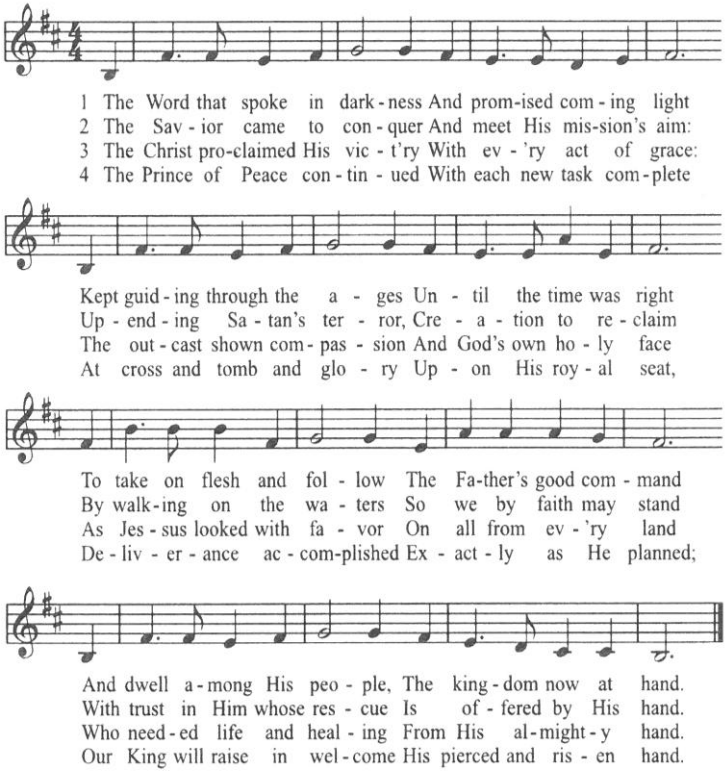


The Word That Spoke in Darkness

Lisa M. Clark — Mark Knickelbein



SERMON The Good News of a God who Sends a Deliverer 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 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?*"

[1] Isaiah 55:8-9

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. <u>The parallels between Moses and Jesus did serve this valuable purpose</u>.

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.

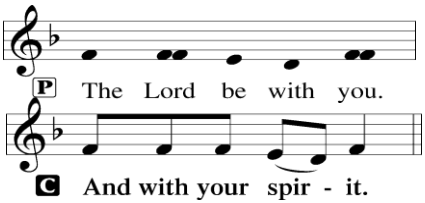
Blessed be the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ! Amen.

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

HYMN 338

Stand

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY *LSB 233*



P Let us pray.

C **Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that, lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

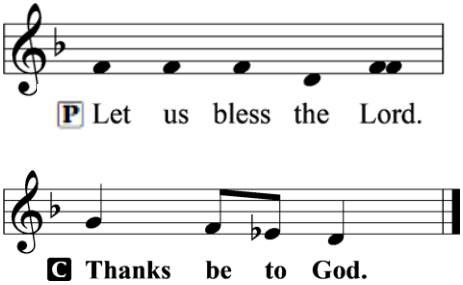
LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **Our Father who art in heaven,**
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

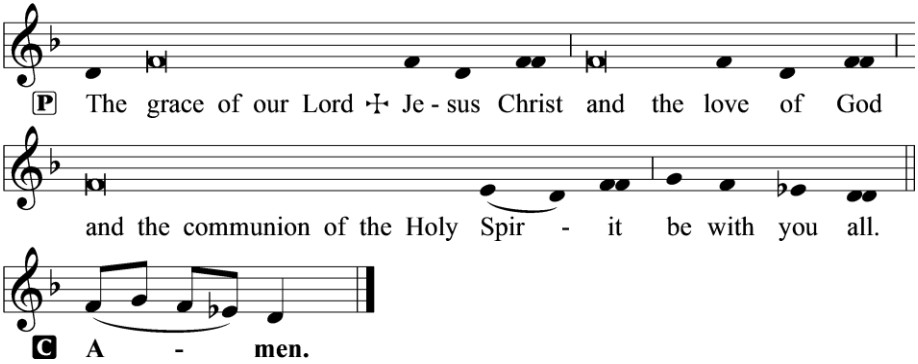
BENEDICAMUS

LSB 234



BENEDICTION

LSB 234



Sit

HYMN 757