

December 10th, 2023

# Spectacular Sons Born to Save the World Pt. 2: Moses

Exodus 1:22-2:2; Deuteronomy 34:7-12

## **Spectacular sons in history**

Jesus Christ wasn't the first Son born to save the world. God sent forerunners into the world to show what He would do. This is the story of human history—Genesis 3:15—that the offspring of the woman would crush the dragon's head. So profound was this promise that it set the expectation for all redemptive history. Last week we saw how Isaac was a spectacular son. He was taken up to Mt. Moriah to be a human sacrifice. He was spared, but a later son would not be. Likewise there have been many other spectacular sons born to the race of men.

- Noah was born to save the world from the flood (Gen. 5:28-29)
- Joseph was born to save the world from the famine (Gen. 45:5)
- Jeremiah was born to be a prophet to the nations (Jer. 1:5)
- Paul the Apostle was born to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Gal. 1:15-16)

But all these sons and many more are only shadows of the Spectacular Son sent from Heaven. However, it is through all these other sons, that we get a fuller picture of what Jesus accomplished when He came to save the world. So last week we looked at Isaac, God-willing next week we will look at Solomon. This week we look to Moses.

★ The Spectacular Birth of Moses

★ The Spectacular Biography of Moses

★ The True and Better Moses

## I. The Spectacular Birth of Moses

### Who is this Angel of the LORD?

Let's pick up where we left off last week. Turn to Genesis 22. A teenager came up to me last week and asked if this Angel of the LORD who rescued Isaac was Christ the Son of God. Look again at v.10 "Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. <sup>11</sup>But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."<sup>12</sup>He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, *for now I know that you fear God*, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." How do we know this is Christ? Because, on the one hand, He distinguishes Himself from God by speaking about Him in *the third person*. Notice, halfway through v.12 He says "...now I know that you fear God." However, on the other hand, He identifies Himself with God by speaking in *the first person*, end of v.12 "...seeing that you have not withheld your son, your only son, from *me*." How can He speak this way? There's only one solution.<sup>1</sup> He is simultaneously the One who is sent (the Angel of the LORD), and is equal with the One who sent Him

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<sup>1</sup> As an 'angel', He is a messenger sent from God. But He is no ordinary messenger. He is one of the Divine Persons of the Godhead. That's how He can speak in about God in the third person and the first person at the same time.

(the LORD Himself). Who fits that description? The Son of God. We'll come back to that.

### **The covenant renewed**

What does He promise Abraham? Look at v.15-18 “And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven <sup>16</sup>and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup>I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, <sup>18</sup>and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” This is a renewal of the Abrahamic Covenant. Why is that relevant for us? Because all who belong to Jesus Christ *belong to the Abraham Covenant*. Galatians 3:29 “And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.” We are Christians today because God is fulfilling His promise to Abraham.

### **Jacob and Esau**

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. What happened after this? Consider the timeline. From Genesis 15 where God cut the covenant with Abraham until Israel enters Egypt due to the worldwide famine is about 215 years. During that time Isaac and Rebekah give birth to Jacob and Esau. Just as Ishmael was rejected while Isaac was chosen so Esau was rejected but Jacob chosen. Romans 9:13 “As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” Why does God make statements like this? Doesn't He know how 'harsh' it sounds? It only sounds harsh to sinners. To the angels in Heaven it sounds like tender mercy. Loved ones, how was Jacob any better than Esau? His name means

*deceiver.* At his core Jacob was a rebellious sinner, saved by grace alone. We should not be shocked that God would reject Esau. We should be shocked that God would ever love Jacob. Loved ones we should be shocked that God would ever love us. The Gospel is good news that God loves sinners, wicked undeserving sinners. If you truly knew how bad I was, you would never love me let alone want me as your pastor. And if I knew truly how bad you were, I would never love you let alone want to pastor you. But God knows all, and still loves us. Romans 5:8 “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

### **Joseph the world saver**

Jacob and his wives then gave birth to the 12 patriarchs which became the 12 tribes of Israel. Joseph, whom Jacob “loved more than any of his other sons” (Genesis 37:3) was hated by his brothers (Genesis 37:4) and betrayed to slave traders for 20 shekels of silver (Genesis 37:28). [He who has ears, let him hear] And God was behind all of this. Psalm 105:16-17 then tells us that God “summoned a famine on the land and broke all supply of bread, [and] He had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave.” Joseph interpreted Pharaoh’s dreams—that God was going to send a world-wide famine (Genesis 41:1-36) Pharaoh then promoted him and had him sit down at his right hand and re-named him Zaphenathpaneah which in Egyptian means “Savior of the world” (Genesis 41:45).<sup>2</sup> You see Joseph was another spectacular son. By God’s grace, he saved all Israel, providing for them during the famine.

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<sup>2</sup> For other ways that Joseph was a type of Christ, see “Types of the Messiah” in Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Vol. 2*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2009), pg. 651-653. Also check out <https://graceambassadors.com/biblestudy/100-types-found-in-genesis> Accessed December 9, 2023

## **The Holocaust of the ancient world**

That brings us to the book of Exodus. Please turn with there. Now the time between Israel entering into Egypt and their Exodus was about 215 years. Spurgeon says here: “Then there was a long pause and a dreary silence. No prophet spoke in Jehovah’s name, no voice of God in priestly oracle was heard, but all was silent while Israel dwelt in Egypt.”<sup>3</sup> And we read in v.8 “Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. <sup>9</sup>And he said to his people, “Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. <sup>10</sup>Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.” <sup>11</sup>Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens.” But this didn’t work. So Pharaoh, the dragon, the seed of the serpent incarnate established his final solution. First he commanded the midwives to kill every Hebrew male child (v.16). But when that didn’t work, he says in v.22 “Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live.” This was the holocaust of the ancient world. Baby boys were being ripped from their mother’s breast and cast to the crocodiles. Just like before the flood, the seed of the woman was in danger of extinction.

## **The birth of a savior**

And right at this point when it seemed that all hope was lost, God sent a spectacular son into the world. Look at 2.1 “Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. <sup>2</sup>The woman conceived *and bore a son*, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. <sup>3</sup>When she

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<sup>3</sup> C.H. Spurgeon, *Christ in the Old Testament: Sermons on the Foreshadowings of Our Lord in Old Testament History, Ceremony & Prophecy*, (Chattanooga, TN.,: AMG Publishers, 1994), pg. 94

could hide him no longer, she took for him a *basket* made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank.” The Hebrew word for *basket* here is only used here and of the ark that saved Noah and his family. Moses was placed in an ark. The Church was saved through Noah’s ark. The Church would be saved through that little ark in the Nile that carried Moses. This is reinforced by his name which means to “draw out.” Look halfway through v.10 Pharaoh’s daughter found him, and adopted him as her own and “She named him Moses, “Because,” she said, “I drew him out of the water.”” Michael Morales says here “...his salvation *out of the waters* becomes a prophetic sign of his future role in *drawing Israel out of the waters of the sea.*”<sup>4</sup> Why did God send this spectacular son? Because, halfway through v.24 “...*God remembered his covenant* with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.”

### **Consolatory Use**

Loved ones, this is *why* God sent His Son into the world, because *He remembered His covenant.*<sup>5</sup> Jesus said “...this is my blood of *the covenant*, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:28). Advent—the arrival of Jesus Christ—is proof that God is a covenant-keeping God. Just as Pharaoh could not destroy God’s covenant neither can anything happening in the world today. It doesn’t matter if it looks hopeless. Another holocaust cannot stop the Son of this covenant. The collapse of nations cannot stop Him. If dragon looks like He is about to swallow the church whole, then just watch and

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<sup>4</sup> L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption*, (Downers Grove, IL.: IVP Academic, 2020), pg. 80

<sup>5</sup> He remembered His covenant to send the seed of the woman to—Jesus Christ born of the virgin Mary—to crush the serpent’s head. He remembered His covenant to bless all nations through Abraham’s Offspring who is Christ.

see what happens next. God's spectacular Son will act—He will save. That's *why* He was born.

## II. The Spectacular Biography of Moses

### **The supreme prophet of the OT**

Let's look at Moses' life through the lens of his obituary. Turn to Deuteronomy 34. Isaac was a type of Christ because of how He was brought forth as a human sacrifice. He was a type of Christ's priestly office. Shorter Catechism Q. 23 asks "How does Christ execute the office of a priest?" A. "...in his one offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice..." Moses is type of Christ because of His prophetic office. Shorter Catechism Q. 24 asks "How does Christ execute the office of a prophet? A. "...in revealing to us, by his word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation." Look at v.10 "And there has not arisen *a prophet* since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face." In other words, there was no prophet like Moses in the entire OT. . God knew him face to face, the verse says.

### **God's continuous revelation with him**

God first appeared to him on Mt. Horeb through the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-4:17), and revealed to him His plan to save Israel. And He does this again and again and again. Do you realize since we've been in Exodus God has spoken to Moses in every single chapter since the burning bush? Spurgeon says here "Sometimes God spoke to Noah, or to Abraham and others; but it was upon

occasions only...but with Moses the Lord [spoke continually].”<sup>6</sup> When Israel arrived at Mt. Sinai, God invited Moses on the mountain with him for 40 days and 40 nights where “he neither ate bread or drank water” (Exodus 34:28) because communion with the LORD was his food and drink.

### **God told him everything Israel needed**

Whenever He would go to the tent of the meeting, Exodus 33:9 says “the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak to Moses...[v.II] Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.” During these regular encounters, which took place over 40 years God revealed to Moses everything we find in the 5 five books of our Bible. The record of the creation, the fall, the covenant of grace, the flood, the calling of Abraham, Israel’s slavery, the ten commandments, the pattern of the tabernacle, the priesthood, the sacrificial system, the civil code of Israel, all the promises and threatenings. God revealed to Moses everything that Israel would need for salvation, for their family life, their religious life, for their civil order. Moses was, humanly speaking, the author of the entire old covenant. He was the prophetic light of the ancient world. He revealed to all mankind the will of God for our salvation.

### **Priest vs. Prophet**

You have to realize that before this spectacular son was born, Israel was in darkness. Dear congregation we have to feel the gravity of this. I think many evangelicals are unbalanced in the way they view the prophet, priest and king offices of Christ. My tendency is to emphasize **the priestly office**—*the sacrifice*

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<sup>6</sup> Spurgeon, pg. 101



*needed for our sins*, and to de-emphasize **the prophetic office**—*the revelation of God's will for our salvation*. It's true that Isaac, not Moses, was brought to Mt. Moriah as a sacrifice, but we only know this about Isaac *because Moses told us*.

### **The mind of a beast**

Children, boys and girls, what if your parents never taught you anything? What if there was no such thing as the function of teaching? You never learned how to speak, never learned your ABCs, never learned how to clean yourself, what to eat/what not to eat. If you survived infancy, what type of a human being would you be? You'd have the mind of a beast.

### **No prophet like him...**

Likewise without the prophetic office, we'd be like beasts. We would no saving knowledge of God; no accurate knowledge of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; no blessed and happy knowledge of God's covenants; no proper understanding for our purpose in life; no knowledge about a sacrifice for sins; no hope for what God is going to do in the future. We'd be in spiritual darkness. But this spectacular son brought light into the world. He brought the knowledge of God for our salvation into the world. This is why our text says "there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses..."

### **The Greater Prophet**

But it raises the question: who was it *precisely* that gave Moses this revelation? Who taught Moses? Turn back to Exodus 3:2. "And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush." The same Angel who intervened at sacrifice of Isaac is here instructing Moses. He is the One sent by God, who is God Himself—this is the Son of God, this is Christ.

Jesus did not begin His prophet ministry in the NT only, He began it in the OT.<sup>7</sup> Who do you think it was who gave Moses the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai? Turn with me to Acts 7:37-38 “This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, ‘God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.’<sup>38</sup> This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with *the angel* [i.e. the Angel of the LORD] *who spoke to him at Mount Sinai*, and with our fathers. He received living oracles [the Law] to give to us.” Christ gave the law to Moses. As an aside we see how foolish it is to pit Jesus against the law. He’s the One who gave it. He is not merely a prophet but the Prophet of prophets. Moses was great precisely because He spoke the Words of the Son of Man.

### **The meekest man**

Now *how* did Israel receive all this prophetic light from Moses? Did they rush to hear him, did they eagerly eat up his words, did they cry out with grateful hearts for this unspeakable gift? No they hated him for it. Over and over again, the children of Israel rebelled against Moses. They wanted to stone him (Exodus 17:4). They wanted to choose new leadership and go back to Egypt (Numbers 14:4). His own brother and sister opposed him (Numbers 12). Korah mustered up wicked men and attempted a coup accusing Moses of exalting himself above the assembly (Numbers 16). Acts 7:39 “Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt.” And yet how did Moses respond to them again and again? He patiently bore it. Except for the one incident where He struck the rock out of anger (Numbers

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<sup>7</sup> Jesus was the Prophet that spoke to all the other prophets in the OT. 1 Peter 1:10-11 “Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, <sup>11</sup> inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.”

20:10ff),<sup>8</sup> Moses's behavior towards Israel was exemplary. As Spurgeon says "He was so meek and gentle that for 40 years he bore with the most rebellious and provoking nation that ever existed."<sup>9</sup> Numbers 12:3 "Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth." He loved the people of Israel even when they deserved it least. When they made the golden calf while Moses was on Mt. Sinai—akin to a wife committing adultery on her wedding night—God wanted to destroy them. Exodus 32:10 "...let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you." But Moses instead intercedes for the people and offers his own life for theirs. Exodus 32:32 "But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written." Truly Moses was a spectacular son. Though he tirelessly served Israel with words from the Living God, they hated him. Though they turned against God and God was willing to destroy them and start over with Moses, Moses prayed for them, and offered his own life in exchange for theirs.

### **III. The True and Better Moses**

#### **The discontinuity between the two sons**

Again, it's so clear isn't it? God raised up Moses in order to point to Another Spectacular Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Moses was indeed the greatest prophet of the ancient world, but consider 10 ways how Jesus far surpasses Him.

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<sup>8</sup> Even in this instance, He is a type of Christ. Looking back on this event, he says in Deuteronomy 4:21 "...the LORD was angry with me because of you" just as Christ could say to us "the Father was angry with me because of you" (Matthew 27:46).

<sup>9</sup> Spurgeon, 102

1. As a prophet, Moses was only a man, but Jesus is both God and man. John 1:1 “...the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
2. As a prophet, whenever Moses spoke, he said “Thus says the LORD” but when Jesus spoke, He spoke as the LORD. John 4:26 “Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”
3. As a prophet Moses was but a servant of God, but Jesus is the Son of God. Hebrews 3:5 “Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, <sup>6</sup>but Christ is faithful over God's house *as a son*.”
4. Moses was the founder of the Old Covenant, but Jesus is the founder of the New Covenant. Hebrews 8:6 “Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.”
5. Moses had such a portion of the Spirit that God took some from Him and distributed it on 70 elders in Israel (Numbers 11:35), but God gave Jesus the Spirit without measure (John 3:34) and He pours the Spirit out on all who come to Him (John 7:37-39)
6. Moses performed unbelievable miracles, but Jesus performed the greatest miracles in the universe—He rose from the dead, He reconciles sinners with God, He gives the new birth. John 21:25 “Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”
7. As a prophet Moses didn't always obey the LORD, but Jesus obeyed His Father even to the point of death. Philippians 2:8 “And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

8. Moses was meeker than any other man, and yet he was unable to bear the burden of Israel. Numbers 11:12 “Did I conceive all these people? Did I give them birth? Why do you tell me to carry them in my arms, as a nurse carries an infant, to the land you promised on oath to their ancestors?”<sup>10</sup> But Jesus bears the burdens of all His people. Psalm 68:19 “Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens.”
9. Moses so loved the people of Israel and “...proposed himself as a sacrifice”<sup>11</sup> to atone for the people (Exodus 32:32). But the Father so loved us that He put forward Christ as an actual sacrifice for our sins. 1 John 4:10 “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”
10. As a prophet, Moses died and was succeeded by another man—Joshua. But Christ our Prophet will never leave us nor forsake us and says He will be with us until the end of the age. Matthew 28:20 “nd behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

### **The Practical Part**

How do we apply this during this Advent season? How do we live in light of God sending His son to be our Prophet?

### **Consolatory Use**

**First** we apply this for our *comfort*. Loved ones, Jesus Christ is your Prophet. Whatever circumstance you find yourself in, Jesus Your Prophet gives you the words of life that You need to hear. Are you afflicted, poor, weary? Jesus has words for that. Are you sorrowful, anxious, afraid? Jesus has words

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<sup>10</sup> NIV

<sup>11</sup> Spurgeon, pg. 103

for that. Have been lied to, abused, and led astray. Jesus can speak to that. Do you feel lost, and confused and ignorant. Jesus can teach you everything that you need to know. God sent His Son into the world to teach you all things that you need to know for life and godliness. Nothing has been left unsaid that you need to hear.

### **Admonitory Use**

**Second**, we apply this as a *warning*. Apart from the teachings of Jesus Christ, no one can be saved. When Pharaoh and the Egyptians refused to listen to the Prophet Moses, it cost them their lives. But much more so for anyone who refuses to listen to Jesus Christ. Hebrews 12:25 says “See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, *much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven.*” The fallacy non-Christians believe today is that they don’t need the words of Jesus. They can get along just fine without them, thank-you. Look around, does it look like the unbelieving culture is getting along just fine? No. We live in a culture of death. And this is because our culture has rejected Jesus’ life giving teaching. They turn to other false prophets, to Muhammad or the Pope, or the President of the Mormon Church, or to their political party or to the image looking back at them in the mirror. What prophet do you look to? If Jesus Christ is not Your prophet you will perish. Jesus said “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”<sup>12</sup> Turn to Christ, hear His words, believe and live.

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<sup>12</sup> John 14:6

**Hortatory Use**

**Finally**, we end with our charge. The Father said it best at Jesus' transfiguration, Luke 9:35 "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" Listen to Christ. Eat up His Words. Shape your life after His teachings. Hide what He has said in Your heart. Loved ones there is no better knowledge than the knowledge Jesus Christ gives us. He has the words of eternal life (John 6:68). He shows us who the Father is (John 1:18). He tells us the mysteries of the kingdom (Mark 4:11). No one ever spoke like this man (John 7:46). This is why God sent His Spectacular Son into the world. This is what Advent is about. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.

