

¹⁵ *The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,* ¹⁶ *according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, “Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.”* ¹⁷ *And the LORD said to me: “What they have spoken is good.* ¹⁸ *I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.* ¹⁹ *And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.”*

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 A 12/3/17 2 Timothy 3:10-17 Luke 1:67-79 Psalm 72 Resp. Ps. 24
Hymns: 62, 98, 91, 645

THE SON OF GOD: LIKE, AND UNLIKE MOSES

Dear fellow believers in the Christchild,

Moses was speaking to the children of Israel, prophesying of the coming of Jesus: *“The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me.”* God would one day send His Son into the world, who like Moses, would be a faithful leader of God’s people. The theme we’ll consider on this First Sunday in Advent is: **THE SON OF GOD: LIKE, AND UNLIKE MOSES.**

Moses told the people the Son of God would come *“from your midst, from your brethren.”* God’s Son would come from the Jewish race. Isaiah prophesied, *“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,”* the father of David, *“and a Branch shall grow out of his roots”* (Is. 11:1). God’s Son would be a descendent of the great Jewish king, David. In the first chapter of his Gospel, Matthew traces the genealogy of Jesus Christ through Joseph (vv. 1-16). The Jews traced a person’s genealogy through his father. So although Joseph was only Jesus’ ‘foster father,’ according to the Jewish way of figuring, Jesus was a descendent of David through Joseph. In the third chapter of his Gospel Luke traces Jesus’ genealogy through His mother, Mary, to David (vv. 23-38). Whether we look at Jesus’ genealogy through Joseph or Mary He was a descendent of David, just as the Old Testament prophets had said the Messiah would be.

Isaiah had prophesied, *“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and call His name Immanuel”* (Is. 7:14b), which means, *“God with us”* (Mt. 1:23). This prophecy was fulfilled when the Son of God was miraculously conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the virgin, Mary (Mt. 1:18-25; Lk. 1:26-38). The baby Jesus was both God and human. Jesus received His human nature from Mary. Because He had no human father, He kept His divine nature: *“God with us.”* Both Moses and Jesus came from the Jewish race. But unlike Moses, who was only human, Jesus Christ is human, and He is God.

Moses was born in Egypt during the time the Jews were slaves there. Pharaoh had commanded that every Jewish boy who was born was to be killed. But God saw to it that Moses’ life was spared (Ex. 1:22-2:10). Years later, after Moses had gone grown up, God told him, *“I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt”* (Ex. 3:10). Through Moses God delivered His people from their slavery, and set them free (Ex. 2:23ff.).

After Jesus was born the Roman king, Herod, tried to have Him put to death (Mt. 2:13). But God saw to it that Jesus' life was spared. Jesus says, *"Whoever commits sin is a slave to sin"* (Jn. 8:34b). Everyone sins, so everyone by nature is a slave to sin. The angel told Joseph, *"[Mary] will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins"* (Mt. 1:21). Jesus forgives our sins, delivering us from our slavery to sin and setting us free. *"Therefore if the Son sets you free,"* Jesus assures us, *"you shall be free indeed"* (Jn. 8:36).

Moses promised the people that God would send His Son *"according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.'"* Moses was God's chosen mediator of the Old Covenant at Mount Sinai. As Moses received the Law from God, God sent lightning and thunder, fire and smoke on the mountain. The people, afraid to stand in the presence of the holy God, looked to Moses as their mediator – their 'go-between' with God (He. 4:14-16).

God told Moses, *"I will raise up for them a Prophet like you,"* referring to His Son, the promised Messiah. Jesus is God's chosen Mediator of the New Covenant. The Son of God took away our sin, so we can come before God without fear.

As Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness, there were times when they committed terrible sins. In His just anger God told Moses He was going to destroy them. The Bible tells us that *"Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth"* (Nu. 12:3). Moses humbly interceded for the people when they sinned, pleading with God to have mercy on them and let them live. As a result of Moses' intercession God did not destroy them.

As loving and faithful an intercessor as Moses was, there was nothing he himself could do to remove people's sins and save them. That is why God sent us His Son. The Bible says, *"Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be held onto, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness"* (Philip. 2: 5c-7). The Son of God humbled Himself, leaving heaven and coming down to earth as the baby Jesus in the manger. The Bible continues, *"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted Him"* (Philip. 2:8-9). As true God and true man, Jesus lived a sinless life in place of our sin-filled lives. And as true God and true man Jesus offered up His life in our place for our sins on the cross, and rose again. Hebrews 7:25 says about Jesus, *"Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."* As the living God Jesus continually intercedes for us before His Father, pleading with His Father to have mercy on us and forgive us for His sake. And for Jesus' sake, God does.

God gave His Word to Moses, and Moses told the people what God said. God commanded the people to listen to His Word through Moses. Along with everything else God taught them through Moses, He taught them about the Messiah who would one day *"crush Satan's head"* and bring them and all people eternal life (Gen. 3:15).

As God, Jesus' words are the Word of God. So in our text when God says about Jesus, *"I will put My words in His mouth and He shall speak to them all that I command Him,"* He's saying in effect that His words as God the Father, and Jesus' words as God the Son, are one in the same. God said, *"It shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him."* Since Jesus' words are the Word of God, we need to listen to them and take them to heart. Jesus warns, *"Whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory"* (Lk. 9:26a). Anyone who rejects what Jesus says is rejecting God's Word. Whoever rejects God's Word can't be saved and go to heaven.

Jesus tells us, *"The words that I speak to You are spirit, and they are life"* (Jn. 6:63b). As we hear and study Jesus' words in the Bible, the Holy Spirit is working in us through those words. Through God's Word the Holy Spirit creates faith within us, and strengthens our faith. Through God's Word the Holy Spirit saves us and gives us eternal life. As we heard in our First Lesson this morning, *"The holy Scriptures ... are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus"* (2 Tim. 3:15b).

Moses spoke the words of our text after he had faithfully led the children of Israel through the wilderness, and they were about to enter the Promised Land. Moses then died, so he couldn't go with them into the Promised Land. Jesus says, *"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life"* (Jn. 8:12). In the twenty-third Psalm we say, *"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for You"* (Jesus, my Shepherd) *"are with me"* (v. 4). Jesus, our living Savior, is faithfully leading us through life and into heaven. Jesus says, *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand"* (Jn. 10:27-28).

God raised up Moses at a critical time for His people, making Pharaoh let them go from their slavery in Egypt, and making sure they got to the Promised Land. God sent us His Son, born in the manger in Bethlehem, crucified on Calvary, and raised from the dead three days later to rescue us from Satan, sin, death, and hell, and give us eternal life in heaven.

"Thank You, heavenly Father, for Your gift to us of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior!" Amen.