**A Man Like Moses**

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

 Back when George W. Bush was president of the United States, he is said to have come upon a man one day who looked just like Moses. I mean, he had the staff, the long beard, and was carrying two tables of stone with commandments written on them. So the president said to the man, “Pardon me, but are you Moses?” But the man just looked the other way, and didn’t answer. So the president said, “Excuse me, but you look just like Moses! Are you Moses?” When the man *still* didn’t answer, the President Bush began to get a little angry. Seeing his agitation, a Secret Service agent stepped in and said to the man in a menacing voice, “Why won’t you answer the president?” The man replied, “The last time I talked to a bush I had to spend 40 years wandering in the wilderness!”

 As you know if you’ve been keeping up with our studies here in Acts Chapter 3, the Apostle Peter is trying to convince the people of Israel that the One they crucified is the One who was their Messiah. And as we continue our study we see that in order to convince them of this, Peter invokes the name of one of Israel’s *favorite* prophets:

 **“For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you” (Acts 3:22).**

Now if you know your Bible, you know why Peter called *Moses* to the witness stand to testify to the Jews that Jesus was their Messiah. The Jews *loved* Moses, as we see when the Lord healed a blind man, and he tried to convince the Pharisees that only their messiah could have restored his sight. The Pharisees answered him,

 **“Thou art His disciple; *but we are Moses' disciples”* (John 9:28).**

Now when those Jews *rejected* the Lord and *clung* to Moses, they were making *a dispensational error.* I mean, was there anything wrong with being a disciple of Moses up till then? No! Moses was God’s man of the hour *for 1500 years.* God gave him the law in Exodus, the second book of the Bible. And do you know what God said about him in the *last* book of the Bible? He told the people of Israel,

**“*Remember ye the law of Moses My servant,* which I commanded unto him in Horeb” (Malachi 4:4).**

That means that throughout the Old Testament, for 1500 years, there was nothing wrong with being a disciple of Moses. It was the right thing to do in the eyes of God.

 But when God raised up *another* prophet, who introduced a *new* dispensation, the people of Israel should have followed Him. Especially since their favorite prophet Moses *told them* that the new prophet was coming, as Peter is pointing out here.

 Now we don’t think of Moses as a prophet, because we tend to think that a prophet did nothing but tell the future. But a prophet was just someone who spoke for God, whether he was telling the future or not. We like to say that prophets weren’t always *fore-*tellers, but they were always *forth-*tellers. That is, they’d always *tell forth the Word of God.* That’s something we know Moses did, and he also told the future now and then.

 And in one of those times where he told the future, he predicted the coming of another prophet like unto himself. And the reason Peter is reminding the Jews of that here is that the prophet he was talking about was the Lord Jesus Christ, the One the Jews of that day rejected in favor of Moses.

 Now we don’t usually think of *the Lord* as a prophet either, but once again, a prophet was primarily a forth-teller, someone who told forth the Word of God. And the Lord Jesus certainly did that. He also made plenty of predictions about the future as well.

 And while Israel’s *rulers* didn’t want to admit that He was a prophet, *the people* of Israel knew, as we see when

**“…the multitude said, This is Jesus *the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee”* (Matthew 21:11).**

As you can see, the common people knew that the Lord was a prophet. And they knew He was a prophet like Moses, for they’d seen Him heal lepers—and that’s something God gave *Moses* the power to do.

When God called Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, Moses said to Him, as it were, “They’re not going to believe You sent me to them! So God told him,

**“…That they may believe that the Lord God…hath appeared unto thee…Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out…*his hand was leprous…*And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, *and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh”* (Exodus 4:5-7).**

God gave Moses the ability to cure leprosy in order to prove that God had sent him, for only God could cure leprosy (cf. II Kings 5:7)! So when God sent *another* prophet who could cure leprosy—another prophet like unto Moses, who could also cure leprosy—you’d think Israel’s rulers would have known that *He too* was sent by God!

Now there’s a lot of *other* ways that the Lord was a prophet like Moses. Moses was what we call a “type” of Christ, a man whose life foreshadowed the life of Christ in more ways than we have the time to go into here, since we are teaching Acts and not the types. We’ll see more of those ways when we get to our study of Acts 7, where Stephen points them out. For now, we’ll limit our study to the ways that Peter mentions that Moses was a type of Christ.

First of all, you’ll notice Peter says that Moses predicted this prophet like him would rise up from among “your brethren,” and he was talking to the people of Israel. So this prophet like Moses had to be a Jew, and everyone knew that the Lord Jesus was Jewish.

But when Moses said that the Lord would be like him, he also had something *else* in mind, something we see when Peter says that Moses said, “Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you” (Acts 3:22).

When you read that a moment ago, perhaps you thought, “Well, wait a minute! The Jews *didn’t* listen to all the things whatsoever the Lord said to them!” But Moses didn’t mean to say that *all* the Jews would listen to the Lord. And you know that because of what Moses *went on* to say about the Lord. Look how Peter quotes him in the next verse of our text:

**“And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:23).**

This is how you know that Moses didn’t mean *all* the Jews would listen to all that the Lord had to say, for he *also* predicted what would happen to Jews who *didn’t* listen to all that He had to say. Moses said that *not* listening to the Lord would mean *the destruction of their souls.*

That certainly sounds frightening. What might it mean? Well, it means the same thing it meant when the Jews did listen to Moses. Moses told them to observe the sabbath, right? Do you know what happened if they didn’t?

**“…whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, *the same soul will I destroy from among his people”* (Leviticus 23:30).**

If you disobeyed what Moses said about the sabbath, they took you out *and stoned you to death* (Num. 15:32-36). But if you disobeyed what Moses said about the sabbath, it meant that you weren’t saved either, for the Jews knew they had to keep the law to be saved. That means that getting your soul destroyed from among the people meant two things. It meant to die physically, but it also meant to die *spiritually.*

And if you think about it, that’s *another* way the Lord was like Moses. If you didn’t listen to the Lord, it meant you had to die spiritually, of course. But it also meant you had to die *physically.* Remember, if the dispensation of grace hadn’t interrupted God’s prophetic program, the Jews who rejected the Lord would have gone into the Tribulation *and been killed at the Second Coming of Christ* (II Thes. 1:7,8). And the Jews that Peter was talking to here were Jews who *hadn’t* heard what the Lord said, and they were heading for that destruction.

But before we say more about Verse 23, I need to point out that these two verses that Peter is quoting from Moses have a verse sandwiched in between them that Peter is *not* quoting. It was a verse that Peter knew the Jews would know, and would be thinking of when he quoted the verses around it. So let’s check the passage he’s quoting, where Moses says to the people of Israel,

 **“The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken; *According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly,* saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, *that I die not”* (Deuteronomy 18:15,16).**

Now what Moses was talking about was what we read about in Deuteronomy 5:17-28, where Moses described what happened when God gave Israel the 10 commandments. The people of Israel were *terrified* at the fire and the smoke and the fearful sound of God’s voice that they heard on that mountain. They were *so* terrified they told Moses, as it were, “*You* go up and hear God’s Word, and come back and tell us what He said!”

 That always reminds me of when Indiana Jones was looking down into a pit of snakes that were guarding the artifact he needed to help him find the ark of the covenant. His guide looked down and said, “Those are asps. Very deadly.” Then he looked at Indy and said, “You go first!”

In much the same way, the Jews told Moses, “You go up into that scary mountain and hear the Word of the Lord, then come back and tell us what He said. We’re not going up there!”

 And do you know what? That’s what Moses did. He went up into the mount and heard the Word of God, and came back down and share it with the people of Israel in a *much* less frightening way than the manner in which God was sharing it, with all that fire and smoke and that thundering voice.

 And listen, Moses didn’t just do that back in Deuteronomy. When he died many years later, he went up into the mountain of God *in heaven* (cf. Rev. 21:10), and came back down, so to speak, *in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ,* a prophet like unto Moses. You know. The Lord who gave the people of Israel the Word of God in a *much* less scary way than what they were hearing from God on Mount Horeb.

 Do you know what God said about the Lord through Isaiah the prophet? Speaking prophetically of His Son, the Father said,

**“Behold My servant, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My spirit upon Him…*He shall not cry*, nor lift up, *nor cause His voice to be heard in the street*. A bruised reed shall He not break, *and the smoking flax shall He not quench…”* (Isaiah 42:1-3).**

Now is a voice that couldn’t be heard in the street *different* than a voice that was so fearful that people feared to hear it? I mean, is there anything more gentle than a bruised reed? A reed is just a piece of grass, and grass isn’t too sturdy to begin with. If you bruise it, it becomes even *more* fragile. Hey, we’re talking about *the lamb of God* here! Is there anything more gentile, and less frightening, than a lamb?

And listen, the Jews were used to the idea that one of their leaders could return, due to what Malachi went on to tell the Jews after telling them to remember Moses:

**“Remember ye the law of Moses…*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet* before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD” (Malachi 4:4,5).**

Now did Elijah return *personally?* What did the Lord say about that when the apostles asked him about Elijah? He said,

**“*Elias is come already*, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed…Then the disciples understood *that He spake unto them of John the Baptist”* (Matthew 17:12,13).**

Elijah didn’t return personally, he came back *in John the Baptist.*

 And you know why the apostles were asking about Elijah. They were up on a mountain with the Lord that day, and

**“Jesus…was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them *Moses and Elias* talking with Him…and…behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; *hear ye Him”* (Matthew 17:1-5).**

The apostles asked about Elijah because they’d just seen a *vision* of Elijah. So they wanted to know why the Lord had come, but Elijah hadn’t. You see, they knew the Lord was the prophet like Moses that God said He would send them. So they wondered why they had the prophet like Moses that God promised to send them, but not the *Elijah* that God promised to send them first! Well, as the Lord explained, Elijah *had* come in the person of John the Baptist, *and Moses had come in the person of Christ,* as Peter was explaining here in Acts 3.

Look how Luke described what happened on the mount of transfiguration:

**“…Moses and Elias…appeared…there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: *and they feared as they entered into the cloud*. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: *hear Him”* (Luke 9:30-35).**

If that sounds familiar, it is because God the Father was *recreating the scene* when the Jews were afraid of His voice, and told Moses to go hear Him and tell them what He said. God was saying, as it were, “This is what you asked for. Moses is there, giving you My Word, *hear Him!* He’s the prophet I said you’d hear!”

 Now even though Peter didn’t quote everything Moses said in that prophecy, he knew the Jews would be thinking of all that, and realize that when God sent the Lord to them, He was sending Him *in answer to their request to hear someone less scary!*

 And you *know* they knew that prophecy because of what Philip told Nathaneal when he first discovered the Lord:

**“Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto Him, *We have found him, of whom Moses in the law*…*did write,* Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph” (John 1:45).**

Philip was talking about the prophecy Moses made in Deuteronomy 18! It was a famous prophecy in those days. It still is!

 Do you know how Moses summed up what happened that day on Horeb, when he got God’s Word and brought it back to the people of Israel?

**“The LORD talked with you…in the mount out of the midst of the fire, (*I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to shew you the word of the LORD*: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;) saying…Thou shalt have none other gods before Me. Thou shalt not make thee any graven image…keep the sabbath…thou shalt not kill…” (Deuteronomy 5:4-8,12,17).**

Here we see that the specific Word of God that Moses brought them down on Horeb was the law, the 10 commandments.

 And let me ask you, what do you call a man who stands between two people to help them understand each other, and mediate their differences? A mediator! Well, isn’t that what Paul called Moses when he described how the law was given to the Galatians?

**“…the law…was ordained by angels *in the hand of a mediator”* (Galatians 3:19).**

Moses was a mediator between God and the people of Israel! And do you know what? So was the prophet that God raised up like unto him!

 Now to explain *how* the Lord was a mediator, let me ask if you remember *how* Moses mediated between God and Israel that day? He did it *with blood!*

**“…when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, *he took the blood of calves and of goats…*and sprinkled both the book,and all the people, Saying, *This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you”* (Hebrews 9:19,20).**

*That’s* how Moses mediated the Old Covenant of the law. God gave His people a law that they couldn’t keep, *and Moses gave Him blood* to satisfy His holiness. And do you know how the Lord mediated the New Covenant? The same way, with blood! After describing the giving of the Old Covenant, Hebrews 9:14,15 went on to say,

**“How much more shall *the blood of Christ,* who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause *He is the mediator of the new testament…”***

Now I share all that just for your edification, for Peter didn’t get into any of that. But after he told the Jews that the Lord was the prophet that Moses talked about, he went on to tell them what would happen if they didn’t hear Him. Let’s read it again in Acts 3:23:

**“And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:23).**

 Now don’t skip over those opening words, “and it shall come to pass.” Peter used those dame words earlier when he said,

 **“*And it shall come to pass in the last days,* saith God, *I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh:* and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams” (Acts 2:17).**

The Jews saw that happen with their own eyes when the disciples spoke with tongues. So they knew that prophecy was being fulfilled that day. Then when Peter used those same words *again* to say,

**“*And it shall come to pass,* that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21),**

the Jews at Pentecost knew that it must be time for *that* prophecy to be fulfilled as well. And then when Peter said that it had *also* come to pass that whoever *didn’t* listen to the Lord and call on His name *wouldn’t* be saved, but be *destroyed* instead, they knew it was time for *that* prophecy to be fulfilled as well.

Now if they *didn’t* know that prophecy was being fulfilled, Peter went on to tell them so in the next verse in our text:

**“Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days” (Acts 3:24).**

Samuel was the first of God’s prophets, and as Peter pointed out here, he and all the prophets who followed in his wake all spoke about the days in which they were living at Pentecost. And as we’ve seen several times in this study of Acts, God was giving them a taste of the kingdom of heaven on earth in those days.

And do you see that word “likewise” there? Peter was saying that prophets like Moses didn’t just predict the coming of a prophet like unto Moses, they *also* predicted the coming of the kingdom, and the coming of a *king* like Moses to rule over it. You did know that Moses was a king, didn’t you?

 **“Moses commanded us a law…*And he was king in Jeshurun”* (Deuteronomy 33:4,5).**

Jeshurun was another name for Israel, and Moses was their king.

 Now we don’t think of Moses as a king, any more than we think of him as a prophet. But God says he was also *a priest:*

 **“Exalt ye the Lord our God…for He is holy. *Moses and Aaron among His priests”* (Psalm 99:5,6).**

So to recap, Moses was a prophet, a priest, and a king. You know. Like *the Lord* was a prophet, a priest and a king. That’s one of the many ways He was a prophet like unto Moses!

 And remember, the days Peter was talking about here were the days of the kingdom of heaven on earth. And Peter has just *offered* them the kingdom! Let’s review that offer:

 **“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.**

 **“And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:**

 **“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:19-21).**

This is why we call the kingdom God’s prophetic program, as opposed to His *mystery* program for us, His plan to rapture us to the kingdom of heaven *in heaven.* That’s *our* hope! But as we read on in our text, Peter makes it clear that the kingdom of heaven on earth is *Israel’s* hope:

**“Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed” (Acts 3:25).**

 Now first, when Peter says that the Jews in that day were the children of the prophets who spoke of the days of the kingdom, he wasn’t saying that they were the *literal* children of the prophets, though a few of them might have been. I mean, we’d all like to think our family tree goes back to someone famous, like the prophets were in Israel, when its more likely we’re descended from horse thieves or other ne’er-do-wells!

You can send your DNA in to those genealogy services to find your ancestors if you want to. But when I look at my extended family, I think to myself, “Why would I want to locate *more* of these people?” Just kidding, they’re fine. Most of them anyway!

 But not all the Jews who were in Jerusalem listening to Peter that day were *literal* children of the prophets. Peter was using the word “children” in a metaphorical sense, like when Paul used it to describe what we were like before we got saved:

**“…we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature *the children of wrath*, even as others” (Ephesians 2:3).**

Part of what Paul meant by that is that before we were saved we were destined to be *the recipients* of God’s wrath. And that’s how Peter’s using te word “children” here as well. He’s saying, as it were, “The prophets made prophecies about these days, and you’re the *children* of the prophets. You’re the *recipients* of those prophecies about the kingdom.” Of course, Peter has already told them that they’d have to repent in order to *get* the kingdom.

 And he also told them that they were the children of the covenant God made with Israel, the one we read about in Genesis 12:1-3:

**“Now the Lord had said unto Abram…I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt *be* a blessing…*and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed”* (Genesis 12:1-3).**

And the “blessing” that God was talking about—the blessing that Abraham’s seed would give to the nations—was the blessing of *salvation.* Peter was talking about how God plans to use Abraha’s seed in Israel to bring salvation to the rest of the world.

 You say, “How do you know that?” Well, I know it because Peter went on to say in the final verse of our text,

 **“Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (Acts 3:26).**

The lessing of being turned away from your iniquities was te blessing of getting *saved* from your iniquities, ultimately. It’s the blessing God always planned to use Israel to take to the rest of the world.

 But you’ll notice that Peter says that God planned to bless the Jews with the blessing of salvation “first.” Remember, we saw earlier in our studies of Acts that God insists that the people He uses to bring salvation to others be people who *themselves* saved. He’s funny that way!

 But the Jews *killed* the Messiah who tried to bring that salvation to them, and that left them in an eternally precarious position. But as Peter said, God *raised up* the Lord Jesus from the dead, and then sent Him to bless them *again.* They were getting a second chance at salvation!

 Now you know what that means, don’t you? It means *nothing changed after the Lord’s resurrection.* Before He died and rose again, God sent Him to bless the Jews at His birth, as we see when the angel appeared to the shepherds and said,

**“Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all* people. For *unto you* is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10,11).**

Do you see what the angel was saying? A savior was born *to Israel,* but that was good news for *all* people, for Israel had to be saved before *they* could be saved!

 Now if you think I’m misreading what Luke wrote, or reading too much into what he wrote just look what the Lord Himself said after He grew up and began His public ministry:

**“I am not *sent* but unto the lost sheep *of the house of Israel”* (Matthew 15:24).**

Of course, once the people of Israel *do* get saved, salvation will be able to go to the Gentiles. And someday, that’s exactly how it will go down, just as Zechariah predicted:

 **“…it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; *so will I save you,* and ye shall *be* a blessing…It shall yet come to pass, *that there shall come people,* and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, *and to seek the Lord of hosts:* I will go also…In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, *We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you”* (Zechariah 8:13,20,21,23).**

As you can see, that’s going to be a great day of salvation, both for the people of Israel as well as for the all the rest of the people of the world! And if God’s people in Israel would only repent, Peter says that God would have sent the Lord back to get that all started.

 Of course, He wasn’t taking into account the mystery that he later revealed to Paul!