Hidden Messages: Jesus, the New Moses
Matthew 5:1-2

Series: In this series we are going to be looking at some ideas or concepts around Jesus's sermon on the mount. We have recently talked about the Sermon on the Mount with our Beatitudes series, but through this series we want to talk about how the Sermon on the Mount set the public ministry of Jesus into motion. This teaching was full of revolutionary concepts, upside-down ideas, and scandalous theology. Jesus connected the past, redeemed the present, and prophesied the future through it. This mountaintop message impacted the world like no other.

This message series is called Hidden Messages. Instead of just reading the Sermon on the mount we are going to talk about the concepts associated with this particular message. We find the sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5. (Matthew is the only gospel that gives us a full account of the sermon on the mount. While other gospels give us some of the teachings Matthew is the only one who gives us the full story.)

Why did Jesus give the sermon on a mountain?: There are many reasons why he would have given it on the mountain top. Practically speaking if Jesus was on top of the mountain and everyone else was below him it would have been easier for people to hear him.

Beyond the obvious, a mountain throughout scripture is seen as a safe place. In war, a mountain is a high place, a place of advantage. You can see from all sides. It is easier to hold your position.

Last week we talked about how Mount Sini and Mount Horeb were the same place where God met with both Moses and Elijah. Mountains are traditionally where people go to meet with God! (see Exodus 19:3-25) In this scripture we see Moses going to the top of the mountain to meet with God to receive instructions on how people should connect with God.

The fact that Jesus was teaching from a mountain was actually an announcement of who he was. People were traveling to the mountain to meet with God, (Jesus). Jesus was both God and man. In fact people had a lot of questions about who Jesus was.

Who is Jesus?: *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" "Well," they replied, "some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets." Then he asked them, "But who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."(Matthew 16:13-16)*

People have compared Jesus to a lot of the old testament leaders, and there is a good reason for this. God tried to establish reconciliation with many people in the Old Testament by making covenants with many of them.

Let's look at one man in particular that Matthew compares Jesus to in the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew records these words from Jesus. *Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did*

not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. (Matthew 5:17)

This may seem pretty insignificant to us in today's world, but this statement would have been pretty massive in Jesus' day. Moses was a big deal to the Israelites. All 613 laws that they followed were a direct result of Moses' encounter with God on the mountain. For someone to say that he was accomplishing the purpose of the law would have been very radical in that time!

In Deuteronomy we see what Moses has to say about Jesus. *The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. (Deuteronomy 18:15)*

Let's fast forward to the new testament and look at the hyperlink found in Acts. *This is the Moses who told the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your own people.' (Acts 7:37)* So now we have not only Matthew, but Luke comparing Jesus to Moses in the book of Acts.

Similarities of Moses and Jesus:

- Jesus is definitely from "among the brothers" of Israel, so that's a good start. The Prophet must be Jewish, and Jesus' heritage was from the tribe of Judah.
- Both were sent to bring salvation after 400 years of apparent inactivity from God – the Israelites had been enslaved for 400 years in Egypt, and the 400 years before Yeshua came had been notably silent years from God.
- Both fasted for 40 days and nights – Moses while on Mount Sinai, and Yeshua in the Judean desert, when being tempted by Satan
- Both were born at a time when evil kings pronounced death to all Jewish baby boys in the area – Pharaoh had commanded all Hebrew baby boys to be drowned at birth, and Herod had issued a command to kill all baby boys under the age of two. Both were miraculously rescued from that threat
- Moses chose 12 spies to explore Canaan, and Yeshua chose 12 disciples. Moses appointed 70 rulers over Israel, and Yeshua sent 70 disciples out to share the gospel.
- Moses led the people out from slavery into… the wilderness. 40 years of wandering, hardship, and a lot of lessons learned the hard way – but all with God's help and presence. The promised land would come only later. Yeshua has redeemed us into… life with Him, still on this fallen earth. A limited time not without pain and struggle, and many lessons learned the hard way – but all with God's help and presence. The life we were created for with no sickness, pain or death is yet to come.

There are more similarities between Moses and Jesus, but there is one major difference between the two, and a reason that Moses tells us to listen to him!

The Major Difference: Moses traveled to the mountain top to hear from God. Then he returned back down to tell others about what he had learned. Jesus, however, is teaching from the mountain top. His words in the Sermon on the Mount were odd and passionate, but yet familiar

and comforting. Moses was just a man who made mistakes, who had doubts, but Jesus was both Man and God. Jesus taught the people who had ears to hear what he had to say, but didn't need a middle man to deliver the message. He was God, so He was telling people about what the Kingdom of God would look like from this point on. It would be a direct connection between humanity and God.

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."
Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. (John 14:8-14)

Conclusion: The Sermon on the Mount was Jesus's announcement to the world who he was, and what his intentions were. Not only that, He was announcing a new way of living that we can still follow to this very day to have a life connected with God!