

## **Not So Silent!**

### **Matthew Chapter 1**

Four hundred years have passed since the Jewish people heard from God. No prophet saying, “Thus says the Lord”, no angelic appearance, no guidance, no direction, just silence. Yes, they had the oracles handed down by angels, the 10 Commandments and the sundry laws but God did not speak to them. So, what happened in this extended period of silence?

Between the closing words of Malachi and the arrival of John the Baptist (the last Old Testament Prophet) five nations ruled the area of Palestine/Israel; Babylon, Persia, Greece, Egypt, Syria and Rome. Greek became the common language of trade between nations. It was the time when Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-247 BC) requested the Hebrew scriptures be translated into Greek. 70 Jewish scholars drafted what was to become the “Septuagint” (abbreviated LXX) or sometimes called the Greek Old Testament. Malachi finds the Jews with no religious or political parties. However, in Matthew we find there are religious and political parties including the Pharisees, Saducees, Herodians, Essens and Zelots. In Malachi there was the temple led by the priests. By Matthew’s time, synagogues were part of almost every Jewish city and the leaders are called Rabbis. During this time Antiochus Ephapanes attempted to eradicate the Jewish religion much like Hamon in Ester’s time. He forbid Jewish parents to circumcise their sons, if they did not obey the consequences resulted in the death of the child and later the death of the mother. Jews were forced to eat pork and sacrifice to idols. He even built an altar to Zeus in the Temple courtyard and poured the blood and the broth of a sacrificed pig over everything in the Temple. This caused a Jewish uprising led by Judas Maccabeus. After several Jewish military victories, Antiochus was eventually defeated, Jerusalem was recaptured and the Jews cleaned up and restored the temple. (165 BC.) Judas Maccabeus was killed in battle in 160 B.C. and his brother Johnathan became the leader. In 143 B.C., the Syrians put Jonathan to death and the last brother Simon led the now famous and revered Maccabees. By 142 B.C. Simon had completely driven the Syrians out of Jerusalem, reached an agreement with Demetrius II of Syria and the autonomy of Palestine was restored. Simon died in 134 B.C. ending the Maccabean period. Finally, we arrive in the Hasmonean period. Simon’s son, John Hyrcanus becomes the Jewish leader. He is a self-centered, cruel person who aligns with the wealthy Jews who were Hellenistic. Where the Pharisees had their influence in the Maccabean period, the Sadducees were now the more dominate leaders. In 63 B.C., General Pompey besieges Jerusalem, kills several Jews and enters the Holy of Holies and Jerusalem falls under Roman control. Pompey allowed a remnant of independence to Judea, whose puppet king was Hyrcanus II. Conflict arises between Pompey and Caesar. Caesar enters Rome with his army and the senate flees for their lives. Caesar pursues Pompey to Egypt but finds himself and his army besieged in Alexandria, Egypt by Pompey. Antipater convinces Hyrcanus to switch sides and align himself with Caesar. 3000 soldiers are sent to Egypt and help lift the siege of Alexandria. In gratitude, Caesar removes the harsh decrees and heavy taxes established by Pompey, allows the walls of Jerusalem to be rebuilt. He also restores Jaffa and other coastal cities to Jewish rule. Caesar also made Antipater the chief minister of Judea with the right to collect taxes. Antipater divides Israel into two regions and appoints his son Herod as king over Jerusalem and Phasaelus king over Galilee. This cursory glance of history shows us 400 years of silence were not silent but a time of preparation. Everything was now in place. The Scriptures prepared the way telling of the Messiah and His arrival, the Greeks provided a common language, and the Romans provided peace (Pax Romana), the roads and the communication system. The “fullness of time” had come as observed in Galatians 4:4-5, “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”

Matthew’s position in the New Testament is not a coincidence. It was considered to be the first written; it contains significant ties to the Old Testament focusing on the fulfillment of prophecy, it contains over 60 quotes from the Septuagint. Matthew provides proof that Jesus is Israel’s long-awaited Messiah. He begins his gospel with the genealogy of Jesus but the main theme of Matthew’s gospel is Jesus as King. Where John’s gospel focuses on the deity of Christ, Matthew focuses on the kingship of Christ. Matthew tells of Christ’s arrival, spends a significant amount of time describing the rejection of Jesus as King, and reminds his readers their King will return in glory and judgment. It contains not only illustrations, examples and explanations but practical instructions on how to live and walk as His representatives among men.

**1. What does Matthew establish in the first two chapters of his gospel and why is it important? The opening verse of chapter 1 identifies three men. Why are they important and what can we learn from them? Both Matthew and Luke contain genealogies of Jesus Christ, how and why are they different from each other?**

**2. In verse 11, Jeconiah is in the lineage of Jesus Christ. Why does this pose an interesting problem and what are possible answers to this issue? (See Jeremiah 22:30;**

**3. Matthew divides his genealogy into three list of fourteen generations. What are they? Pick three people, other than Abraham, Isaac, David or Solomon, from Matthew's genealogy and describe who they were, what they did during their lifetimes or anything you found interesting from your research.**

**4. What do we learn about Mary, Joseph, angels, the Holy Spirit and Jesus conviction, character, belief and decisions from verses 18-21?**

**5. What was Matthew's point in the closing two verses 22-25? What does he emphasize, what Old Testament verse does he quote and what are other Old Testament scriptures that prophesize Christ's birth?**

## 44 Messianic Prophecies of Jesus

	Prophecies of Jesus	Old Testament Scripture	New Testament Fulfillment
1	Messiah would be born of a woman.	Genesis 3:15	Matthew 1:20 Galatians 4:4
2	Messiah would be born in <a href="#">Bethlehem</a> .	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1 Luke 2:4-6
3	Messiah would be <a href="#">born of a virgin</a> .	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:22-23 Luke 1:26-31
4	Messiah would come from the line of <a href="#">Abraham</a> .	Genesis 12:3 Genesis 22:18	Matthew 1:1 Romans 9:5
5	Messiah would be a descendant of <a href="#">Isaac</a> .	Genesis 17:19 Genesis 21:12	Luke 3:34
6	Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob.	Numbers 24:17	Matthew 1:2
7	Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33 Hebrews 7:14
8	Messiah would be heir to <a href="#">King David's throne</a> .	2 Samuel 7:12-13 Isaiah 9:7	Luke 1:32-33 Romans 1:3
9	Messiah's throne will be anointed and eternal.	Psalms 45:6-7 Daniel 2:44	Luke 1:33 Hebrews 1:8-12
10	Messiah would be called <a href="#">Immanuel</a> .	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23
11	Messiah would spend a season in <a href="#">Egypt</a> .	Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:14-15
12	A massacre of children would happen at Messiah's birthplace.	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:16-18
13	A messenger would prepare the way for Messiah	Isaiah 40:3-5	Luke 3:3-6
14	Messiah would be rejected by his own people.	Psalms 69:8 Isaiah 53:3	John 1:11 John 7:5
15	Messiah would be a prophet.	Deuteronomy 18:15	Acts 3:20-22
16	Messiah would be preceded by <a href="#">Elijah</a> .	Malachi 4:5-6	Matthew 11:13-14
17	Messiah would be declared the <a href="#">Son of God</a> .	Psalms 2:7	Matthew 3:16-17
18	Messiah would be called a Nazarene.	Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 2:23

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19	Messiah would bring light to <a href="#">Galilee</a> .	Isaiah 9:1-2	Matthew 4:13-16
20	Messiah would speak in <a href="#">parables</a> .	Psalm 78:2-4 Isaiah 6:9-10	Matthew 13:10-15, 34-35
21	Messiah would be sent to heal the brokenhearted.	Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
22	Messiah would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek.	Psalm 110:4	Hebrews 5:5-6
23	Messiah would be called King.	Psalm 2:6 Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 27:37 Mark 11:7-11
24	Messiah would be praised by little children.	Psalm 8:2	Matthew 21:16
25	Messiah would be betrayed.	Psalm 41:9 Zechariah 11:12-13	Luke 22:47-48 Matthew 26:14-16
26	Messiah's price money would be used to buy a potter's field.	Zechariah 11:12-13	Matthew 27:9-10
27	Messiah would be falsely accused.	Psalm 35:11	Mark 14:57-58
28	Messiah would be silent before his accusers.	Isaiah 53:7	Mark 15:4-5
29	Messiah would be spat upon and struck.	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67
30	Messiah would be hated without cause.	Psalm 35:19 Psalm 69:4	John 15:24-25
31	Messiah would be <a href="#">crucified</a> with criminals.	Isaiah 53:12	Matthew 27:38 Mark 15:27-28
32	Messiah would be given vinegar to drink.	Psalm 69:21	Matthew 27:34 John 19:28-30
33	Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced.	Psalm 22:16 Zechariah 12:10	John 20:25-27
34	Messiah would be mocked and ridiculed.	Psalm 22:7-8	Luke 23:35
35	Soldiers would gamble for Messiah's garments.	Psalm 22:18	Luke 23:34 Matthew 27:35-36
36	Messiah's bones would not be broken.	Exodus 12:46 Psalm 34:20	John 19:33-36
37	Messiah would be forsaken by God.	Psalm 22:1	Matthew 27:46
38	Messiah would pray for his enemies.	Psalm 109:4	Luke 23:34
39	Soldiers would pierce Messiah's side.	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34

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40	Messiah would be buried with the rich.	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
41	Messiah would <a href="#">resurrect from the dead</a> .	Psalm 16:10 Psalm 49:15	Matthew 28:2-7 Acts 2:22-32
42	Messiah would <a href="#">ascend to heaven</a> .	Psalm 24:7-10	Mark 16:19 Luke 24:51
43	Messiah would be seated at God's right hand.	Psalm 68:18 Psalm 110:1	Mark 16:19 Matthew 22:44
44	Messiah would be a <a href="#">sacrifice for sin</a> .	Isaiah 53:5-12	Romans 5:6-8