

**WELCOME
MESSIAH!**

The silence has been broken:

WELCOME MESSIAH!

Dec. 23, 2012

Sermon in a sentence: Let us joyfully receive the Messiah whom God has sent to deliver us from our sins!

Scriptures: (all scriptures KJV) Isaiah 7:14-15; Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 40:1-11; Malachi 3:1-3; Luke 1:39-56, 68-79; Luke 2:22-38

By the end of the O.T., 400 years before Christ, the relationship between God and Israel had degenerated to a point where it seemed there was absolutely no hope of reconciliation. For those who still attempted to maintain worship in the Temple, it was a matter of performing rites and rituals without the interaction with God that previous generations had enjoyed. Having returned to Jerusalem after many years under the rule of Assyria and Babylon, the Jews were just trying to survive and stay out of harm's way.

Alexander the Great came along and conquered most of the known world, instituting the Greek language and culture throughout his domain. This continued until sometime around 30BC when the Roman Empire firmly took hold and Roman kings and pro-consuls came to power in Israel.

Life continued with no prophetic word, no freedom, no joy.

Yet there were those who held on to the promise that one day, their Messiah would come, and they read and quoted writings of the prophets like these:

(PLAY TRACK 1 SOFTLY IN THE BACKGROUND: "Comfort Ye, Comfort Ye My People" – Welcome Messiah! CD)

Isa 40:1-2 KJV Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. 2 Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.

With hope in their hearts, they reminded themselves of what God had said:

Mal 3:1a KJV Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me....

Isa 40:3-4 KJV The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain....

(PLAY TRACK 2: "Ev'ry Valley Shall Be Exalted")

Isa 40:5 KJV And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see *it* together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

So they kept looking for the fulfillment of a major miraculous sign that would point them to their conquering King, for Isaiah had said:

Isa 7:14 KJV Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

He continued:

Isa 9:6 KJV For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

(PLAY TRACK 3: "For Unto Us A Child Is Born")

Isa 9:7 KJV Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Is 40:9-11 KJV O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift *it* up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! **10** Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong *hand*, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward *is* with him, and his work before him. **11** He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.

Mal 3:1b KJV ... and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

God had not forgotten the Covenant He made with Abraham, and as bad as things had become, the people of Israel could be confident that the "Messenger of the covenant" was still on His way.

And so it was, after 400 years of silence, God sent Gabriel to Zacharias to finally break the silence! John the Baptist, the one who would “prepare ... the way of the Lord” was about to arrive. The forerunner of Christ was conceived, and six months into his mother Elizabeth’s pregnancy, Gabriel broke the silence again as he told a young woman named Mary that Is. 7:14 was about to be fulfilled in her body.

Immanuel, God with us, the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Paraclete, Adonai, the Teacher of Righteousness, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Rose of Sharon, the Bright Morning Star, the Lily of the Valley, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World and the Lamb of God, was about to be conceived in her!

When Mary heard the news, she rushed off into the hill country to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who was probably the only person who could actually understand and believe the miracle that was taking place in her body. As soon as she arrived -- with Jesus in her womb, Elizabeth and the unborn child John were instantaneously filled with the Holy Spirit. And the only appropriate response for Mary in a situation like that was to lift her voice and worship God.

Luke 1:46-55 KJV And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is* his name. 50 And his mercy *is* on them that fear him from generation to generation. 51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. 52 He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree. 53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and

the rich he hath sent empty away. 54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of *his* mercy; 55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. She stayed with Elizabeth for the next three months until John was born, at which time Zacharias was able to break the silence God had imposed on him. He also was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to prophesy saying:

Luke 1:68-79 KIV Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, 69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: 71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; 72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; 73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, 74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. 76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

And so, in rapid-fire succession, God broke the silence and Jesus Christ our Saviour was born!

Luke 2:22-38 KJV And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord; 23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. 25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. 36 **And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser:** she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; 37 And she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day. 38 **And she** coming in that instant **gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.**

And so, it is my privilege today to bring this word to those of you who may never have heard. Like Mary, Zacharias, Simeon and Anna, I want to let you know that God has not forgotten His covenant. Mary's little Lamb has come to take upon Himself the sins of all humanity. Redemption has come. Salvation is free for those who will receive it. This is news we all need to have.

The silence has been broken and I encourage you to join us in welcoming the Messiah, Jehovah Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord!

(PLAY TRACK 4: "Hallelujah Chorus") or show video:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3TUWU_yg4s&feature=em-share_video_user

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Songs:
Come Let Us Sing, Let Us Rejoice
O Come Let Us Adore Him
He Is Here Hallelujah