

# Matthew's Jesus Proved The Old Testament God

Wayde Miller

In our study of the Old Testament, we learned much about God in the various ways He revealed Himself. We also learned that God was building toward something great in all those years of dealing with Israel. As the Old Testament closed, we read, *“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.”* (Malachi 3:1.) The Lord was coming “suddenly.”

As the New Testament begins with Matthew, He has come in a most unusual way, being born of a virgin. But this too had been prophesied 700 years prior as Matthew points out, *“All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’ (which means, God with us)”* (Matthew 1:22-23.) So, as Matthew begins his gospel, Jesus Christ takes center stage as “Immanuel.” God has come suddenly and is now among His people, to whom He had promised to come.

Matthew is no doubt writing to those very people – the Jews. The question is often raised about whether Matthew is pro-Jewish or anti-Jewish? His strong Jewish perspective and equally strong tirades against the Jewish leaders seem to suggest that Matthew's primary audience is a Jewish-Christian community in conflict with the larger (unbelieving) Jewish community. Both sides, the church and the synagogue, are claiming to be the true people of God. Both claim Israel's Scriptures as their legacy. For Matthew's Jewish opponents, this fledgling movement represents heresy, followers of a false messiah. But for Matthew's community, the prophecies have been fulfilled in the coming of Jesus the Messiah. The church represents the true people of God, made up of both Jews and Gentiles, who have embraced Jesus as the Messiah and accepted his message of the kingdom of God. After all, Matthew is the only gospel writer to use the word “church” in his gospel (Matt. 16:18.)

Prophecy is at the heart of Matthew's gospel. Throughout the Old Testament, God had looked forward to the time when Jesus would come and offered tremendous details about His life hundreds of years before they happened. In fact, one could say that a complete picture of the life of Christ is given in the Old Testament. And knowing something ahead of time is proof of the message's divine origin. Seemingly on a daily basis, Jesus fulfilled all those prophecies, the odds against which are astronomical. And He did so until they were all fulfilled. In this way, Jesus showed the Father as the true God and One worthy to be trusted and served.

That is exactly what Jesus did. He served God always. For example, Israel wandered in the wilderness forty years and complained about being hungry all the time. Jesus was tempted forty days but when Satan tried to get Him to turn stones into bread, He refused to do so (Matt. 4:1-11.) Unlike Israel, Jesus trusted God's care. And this is just one example. Constantly. Jesus is held over against Israel as an example of what they should have been doing all along. In summing up Jesus' ministry, Matthew quotes Isaiah 42:1-4, *“Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him...”* (Matt. 12:18.) Jesus showed the Father as One worthy to be trusted and served. And He gave all people the great example of doing so.