
The Diocesan Board of Education

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Those years from the prophets of the Old Testament to the birth of Jesus in the New Testament? I can't say it was something on my mind until it was spoken about in church last week.

Did you know there are approximately 400 years between the Old Testament ending and the New Testament starting? The Old Testament closes with the book of Malachi, a prophet who like many Old Testament prophets spoke into the issues of the day while looking forward to a coming Messiah, a hope coming in the future. The New Testament starts with the birth of a baby, a baby that over 2000 years later has had a transformational impact in the world.



The Old Testament speaks of a hope to come, a way back for mankind to have a relationship with God, that had been disrupted through the actions in Genesis of Adam and Eve. A verse often used at Christmas time to illustrate this is Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The foretelling of a child that would be the Saviour of the world. The New Testament speaks of that Hope realised, through the coming of Jesus.

But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman. Galatians 4:4

But what about that 400 years in between – the dramatic pause before the greatest event in history?

The silence...

The waiting...

When heaven seemed silent

When we look into history there were plenty of things going on. In the Jewish community, the Pharisees blossomed; they worked hard to fulfil the law, creating more laws and regulations in the process to enable that. They tried to bring about hope through the fulfilment of the law.

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The Gentile (non-Jewish) world was also working hard to bring about hope. This is the time of great philosophers and thinkers such as Socrates, Aristotle, Buddha and Confucius exploring big ideas and questions.

But neither of these things brought about the hope of which the Old Testament spoke. Time became pregnant for the birth of hope.

Then there was a sound in the silence.

A baby's cry, piercing the silence.

Ending the silence.

God's final word - his Son, Jesus.

God had spoken.

Hope had come.

God had become flesh to bring the ultimate hope, through his Son Jesus. For Christians this is not just an event at a particular time in history, it transforms history. It ushered in a new era of forgiveness and a restoration of humanity's relationship with God. For Christians, Jesus is the answer to everything. So, I would encourage you this Christmas, particularly if you feel you are in that 400 years of silence or perhaps in a period of waiting: look to the hope of the world, for he has come. As you ponder these words why not listen to this beautiful song by Phil Wickham called Manger Throne.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPiFsJDglq8>

from Lynsey Norris, **Assistant Diocesan Director of Education**

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Diocesan Academisation Strategy

New requirements have meant all dioceses need to publish a diocesan strategy for academisation.

The strategy we have had in place for a while now has not changed—the document we've produced provides a helpful guide for church schools to understand the DBE's approach and processes in relation to academisation.

Please find the document on our website—

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/matstrategy>