

## IMMANUEL (GOD WITH US)

Mary's baby, Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem's manger, was none other than the Almighty God in human flesh.

### KEY POINTS

- ❖ After Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, God spoke a prophetic word in Genesis 3:15 that struck terror in the heart of the serpent, Satan.
- ❖ Satan had no delusion regarding what this would mean for him. Just as Adam and Eve were now under the penalty of death due to their sin, one day a descendant of Eve would deliver the same penalty to Satan.
- ❖ Later in the same chapter, God gave a graphic example of how He would deal with Adam and Eve's death sentence. He took the skins of innocent animals to cover Adam's and Eve's nakedness—substituting their lives for Adam's and Eve's.
- ❖ This was the earliest foreshadowing of what God was going to do on behalf all of sinful humanity: be the One to stand in for us and receive the death penalty our sins demanded from a righteous God.
- ❖ During the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah, the Syrians, under the leadership of their king Rezin, allied themselves with Pekah, king of Israel, and attacked Judah and her capital city Jerusalem.
- ❖ As a result of this attack, fear gripped the hearts of the men of Judah, and God sent Isaiah to Ahaz with a message of hope and deliverance in the midst of their hopelessness: "...The Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." (See Isaiah 7:10-14.)
- ❖ Bible scholars are quite familiar with the meaning of "Immanuel". It comes from the Hebrew words "im", meaning "with", and "El", the first biblical name we have for God in Genesis. Immanuel is none other than "God with us," as we see in Matthew 1:23.
- ❖ Isaiah 40, verse 9 says:  
O Zion, you who bring good tidings, get up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, you who bring good tidings, lift up your voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"
- ❖ Malachi follows in Chapter 3, verse 1b of his prophesy:  
...And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts.
- ❖ God had not forgotten the covenants He made with Abraham, with Moses and with David. As bad as Israel's relationship with God got at times, and as far as Israel strayed from Him, the "Messenger of the covenant" was still on His way. Immanuel, the Messiah, the man Christ Jesus, was coming to His people.
- ❖ After Malachi prophesied, there were 400 years with no direct word from God until the archangel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias the priest and promised him a divinely appointed son.
- ❖ After months without speech, Zacharias spoke again at the naming of his son. He proclaimed that God— Immanuel, the Dayspring from on high—was coming to His people (see

### KEY SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1:18-23

Luke 1:68-79).

- ❖ And the message we have for our world today is even greater than the prophecies of Isaiah, Malachi or Zacharias. We are no longer just *anticipating* God with us. Jesus is here! God is with us!
- ❖ And He came with purpose, as the writer to the Hebrews tells us (see 10:5-6, 7, 8-11-14, 25).
- ❖ He came, saying, "Behold, I have come—in the volume of the book it is written of Me—to do Your will, O God" (Heb. 7:10).
- ❖ And what was God's will? Nothing less than salvation for all humanity!
- ❖ That's what all the prophecies were trying to tell us. Jesus didn't just appear out of thin air. The volume of the book had been written.
- ❖ The prophets all pointed to Him. He was clearly identified as the suffering servant who would bear the sins of the world (Heb. 10:8-14; Is. 53:5-6).
- ❖ We are blessed people! God continues to sanctify us and make us holy through the blood He shed for us and the life He gave for us at Calvary (Heb. 10:19-22).
- ❖ This is what Immanuel came to do: to open the way for us to return to God our Father in peace, purity and holiness.
- ❖ In Luke 19:1-10, Jesus invited Himself to the home of a despised tax collector, Zacchaeus.
- ❖ As it were, He stood at the door and knocked. He didn't force His way in. He never does. He had to be welcomed in, which Zacchaeus did joyfully – and Jesus transformed his life!
- ❖ We, too, need to accept Jesus' request to be a guest in our house (and into our heart).
- ❖ Two thousand years ago, Immanuel came to Earth as a man. Today, He wants to enter your world as the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ So, why not pray a prayer of invitation right now and welcome Him into your 'heart home'?

### DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. When the Lord knocked at the door of your heart, was it an easy decision to follow Him or did it take some time? If the latter, what ultimately helped in choosing "whom you would serve"?
2. And for those who may say "tomorrow," what are barriers they may be facing and how can we help?

### PRAYER TIME

"Into my heart, into my heart; Come into my heart, Lord Jesus; Come in today, come in to stay; Come into my heart, Lord Jesus." Amen.

## WEEK OF SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2021

### NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms)    💡 (New idea)    ☁️ (Think about)

! (Do this)    ❤️ (Speaks to my heart)    ↔️ (Must share)

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### PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

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Go deeper with your Life Group family.  
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD  
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

Start-up: What is the longest amount of time you had to wait for anybody? Why were you willing to wait that long; why not leave?