

God with Us

Read Isaiah 7:1-16

Matthew 1:23 is quoting Isaiah 7:14 when it says:

*The virgin will be with child and
will give birth to a son, and
they will call him "Immanuel"—
which means, "God with us." (NIV)*

Isaiah chapter 7 describes a dark time for the Jewish nation, Judah. They were under a serious threat from an alliance of their neighbors.

God sent the prophet Isaiah to Ahaz, King of Judah, to tell him to hold steady and not be afraid, for the threat would come to nothing. God even asked Ahaz to choose a sign – any sign he wanted – and God would perform it to assure him of His promise.

But Ahaz was wicked and faithless. He didn't believe God's promise and refused to ask for a sign.

Instead of walking away, God took the initiative. He himself chose a sign – a promise of His care and provision for His people. The sign: a special child would be born. The child's very name would express God's care. It would be "Immanuel," which means "God with us." God promised that before this child was old enough to choose right from wrong, the nations now threatening Judah would be completely destroyed.

This prophecy was probably first fulfilled in a child born at the time. His birth was a sign of God's presence and protection in that situation.

There is much we're not told about this child. But the Bible does tell us, in Matthew 1:23, that this prophecy was fulfilled in a greater way by the coming of Jesus. Jesus had much in common with the "Immanuel" of Isaiah 7:

1. Jesus' birth was shrouded in mystery.
2. Jesus was a sign of God's loving action to deliver His people. He was a living message, a walking signpost assuring everyone that God was in control, and God was keeping His promises.
3. Jesus came, not as a reward for our faith, but entirely at God's initiative, in spite of our unbelief.
4. Jesus' name and His coming brought comfort and assurance: God is with us! Jesus was the fulfillment of God's longstanding promise to His people: "I will be with you always."

In the midst of our trouble, in the face of our unbelief, God has come to us. God's love is a Person. God's gift is himself: Jesus Christ.

*Father, in Jesus Christ
You have showered on us all Your best gifts,
all that we need for life, peace, and godliness.*

Hymn: [God with Us, Immanuel](#)

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