



Christmas Day 25th Dec, 2018
GOD WITH US

Introduction:

Christmas is celebrated worldwide as the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. While celebrations over the years have come to focus largely on some traditions, the food and the festivities, a closer study of the birth of Jesus and the events surrounding it astounds us. And the significance and impact of His birth is indeed 'good news of great joy'

The Lord Jesus' birth was foretold centuries before He was born. His birth was the fulfilment of prophecies that were made several 100 years in advance.

1) *A supernatural birth - born of a virgin*

Isaiah 7:14

14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Matthew 1:18-24

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. 20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 "*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,*" which is translated, "God with us."

24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife

2) *The place of Jesus' birth - born in Bethlehem*

Micah 5:2

2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

Matthew 2:1,4-6

1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

5 So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

6 '*But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people.*' "



It is interesting to note how this actually came about...

Luke 2:4-7

4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, 5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. 6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

3) *The tragic slaughter - Herod's killing of all male children < 2 years old*

Jeremiah 31:15

15 Thus says the Lord:

"A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children refusing to be comforted for her children because they are no more."

Matthew 2:16-18

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

18 "A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

4) *His Name - Immanuel (meaning - God with us)*

Isaiah 7:14

14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel

Matthew 1:21-23

21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

Jesus (meaning - savior)

Matthew 1:21

21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

Luke 2:11

11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Saviour (Gr. Soter. Meaning - Deliverer, Preserver, Benefactor, Rescuer)



GOD WITH US

1) He is 'God with us' to SAVE us (from our sins)

God created everything perfect.

The devil deceived Eve. Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Sin entered the world and death through sin.

Romans 5:12

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned

-All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

-Our sins *withhold the good things* God wants us to have (Jeremiah 5:25)

-*Separation from God* both now and eternally. (Isaiah 59:1-2).

Isaiah 59:1-2

59 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

-The result of sin is death (Romans 6:23a)

-We are in subjection to satan - who steals, kills, and destroys (John 10:10).

-No peace. Searching for meaning, purpose, direction.

-We cannot reach God with our own good works. Our best actions are not good enough (Isaiah 64:6)

-No one else - no other human person can take us to God - because each one has their own sins that they have committed.

-God loved us so much He decided to make a way.

However, ***the penalty of sin had to be borne***. The power of sin and satan has to be broken. Only someone born of the human race (Adam's race) who was without sin and not in subjection to satan, could fully represent mankind, and pay for sin.

God decided to do this for us (John 3:16)

Jesus Christ was God who became Man - Perfect, Sinless, just like one of us, and yet without sin.

Having paid for all our sins on the cross and having conquered satan, Jesus rose up from the dead, triumphant and victorious.

Today, God offers the free gift of salvation to anyone who will believe (Romans 6:23, John 3:16-17).



2) He is 'God with us' to INDWELL us.

John 14:16-18

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

- He indwells to EMPOWER

Acts 1:8

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

- He indwells to LEAD

Romans 8:13-14

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

He leads us into victory (over sin, deeds of the flesh)

- He indwells to TRANSFORM

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

3) He is 'God with us' to MANIFEST HIS NAME

Isaiah 9:6-7

6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.

And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

a) *Wonderful*

Inspiring delight, admiration, pleasure.. extremely good.

As wonderful as He is, let us not lose our sense of wonder of Him, His ways, His Word, His gifts, His power.

If we lose that sense of wonder, then worship becomes mechanical.

b) *Counselor*

Guide & leader.

Living Word, the infallible source of wisdom & guidance



Isaiah 28:29

29 This also comes from the Lord of hosts, Who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in guidance.

In counseling,

- There is a high level of trust
- There is a sense of vulnerability and transparency
- There is an exposing of the real motives and intents of the heart

c) *Mighty God*

The child that was born = God incarnate

(made flesh, in the flesh, in human form, in bodily form)

The all-powerful one with unlimited power

Ephesians 3:20 - He is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all..

d) *Everlasting Father*

The eternal, always present, never ceasing-to-be - Father.

e) *Prince of peace*

His reign is characterized by *Shalom* = health, well-being, prosperity, happiness, peace, ending all enmity

Call to action:

Today let's invite the Lord Jesus to be truly Emmanuel.

Let's ask Him for an increase of His rule (His government) and His Shalom (His peace)



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Christmas Day 25th Dec, 2018
God With Us

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at apcwo.org/sermons . Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture passages:

- *Isaiah 7:14 & Matthew 1:18-24*
- *Micah 5:2 & Matthew 2:1,4-6*
- *Jeremiah 31:15 & Matthew 2:16-18*
- *Isaiah 7:14 & Matthew 1:21-23*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights (It is alright if you cannot cover all the questions. Select a few of these questions for your discussion). We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

- 1) When was the last time you felt strongly that God was with you?
- 2) What changes do I need to make to allow God to be true to His Name in my life?

If time permits, each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.



ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

Every family represented in the life group, for specific needs, for spiritual growth.

Close by thanking God together.