

## **Names of God from the Bible**

### **45 – Emmanuel – God with us**

*I cannot think of Christmas without contemplating the beauty and preciousness of God's name, Emmanuel. Even to say God with us renews within me a sense of peace and security, love and joy, courage and strength.*

#### **Reading: Matthew 1:18-25**

I shall never forget hearing the story of a girl on her way from America to England in the days of ocean-going steamships. The weather became extremely violent and the ship was in severe danger of sinking. In the middle of the night, the captain ordered everyone to put on their life-jackets. The girl was woken by her mother and told to get dressed and to put on her life-jacket. On waking up, the little girl asked her mother, "Is daddy on deck?" "Yes, of course," replied her mother. "Then everything is all right," replied the girl and turned over to go back to sleep. Her father was the captain and she was totally confident in her father's ability to see them through the storm.

Emmanuel – God with us. God is far superior to that girl's earthly father and yet how easily we forget how God is for us, loves us and longs for us to reach our eternal destiny.

Christmas is really all about Emmanuel – God with us. Do you remember the line of the song – *God came down at Christmas*? We should be eternally grateful that is true. Try to look past the food and drinks, the presents, the Christmas tree and the lights. Turn off the TV, the computer games, Internet, DVDs and MP3s, and gaze once more into the scene of the Nativity.

Look, not for a palace, nor for a hotel or motel, nor even an insignificant home. No, seek out a cave in the side of a hill. The sort of shelter for animals.

See the shepherds with their sheep looking steadfastly into the manger, an animal's feeding trough. See the three kings bending their knees in worship before the Baby of Bethlehem. See the humble mother, Mary, and Joseph, her husband, gazing in wonder at what was going on. Look into the face of the Baby. And what do you see?

What do you see? A manger full of hay? A bundle of clothes? A baby? A boy? A son? Or do you see a Saviour? Do you see a King? Do you see your God?

Who is Jesus to you? A baby? A good man? A prophet? A spiritual guru?

Who was Jesus? That is the most important question you will ever have to answer.

Whatever your answer determines how you live and what you live for. It also seals your eternal destiny. Yes, your eternal destiny is chosen by you. Not by your parents, not by your peers, siblings, partner or spouse. Not by the media, not by politicians or your boss. Not by any religious leader or TV evangelist. Not even by God.

Read that again. Your eternal destiny is not chosen by God. It is your choice made by you and you alone. Oh yes, God determines your destiny but He doesn't choose it for you. He gives us a freewill that He will not over-rule.

God has decreed that our eternal destiny is determined by what we do with Jesus. You see, God came down at Christmas. It was not just a baby in that manger – He was God – Emmanuel. Yes,

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God in a human body but God, nevertheless. As the angels said, Jesus is the Saviour of the world – that is every person throughout the world, regardless of race, who chooses Jesus to be their Saviour.

This world desperately needs a Saviour. As we hear the news or read about the challenges around the world and face the day-to-day issues of our own lives, we know we need help. We know we need a Saviour. God came down at Christmas – Emmanuel – to rescue us and to be our Saviour. That's the Good News. God loves you and came to be right where you are. He will be your Saviour, if you ask Him.

### **What does that name mean for us today**

God can be with you every day of your life. Yes, God came down at Christmas, as Jesus, and He lives today in us through the Holy Spirit.

### **Prayer**

*Father, thank You so much that You are with me every day. Thank You that I can turn to You and entrust You with my whole life, today and for eternity. Amen.*

### **Additional Readings**

- Isaiah 7:13-17
- John 1:1-14
- Colossians 1:15-22

### **Questions**

1. What does Christmas really mean to you?
2. Has God revealed Himself personally to you? How and when?
3. How does Jesus fulfil that name?