

## Meditation #24: Miracle Immanuel

### What does it say? –

STUDY: Isaiah 7:1-14

GOLDEN TEXT: Isaiah 7:13 and 14 = *Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

### What does it mean?

For numerous reasons, a Godly leader's patience—and God's patience—could certainly be tried hourly by the failures of billions of people all over the earth. What Isaiah claimed in his day (verse 13) still applies today. How does the Creator respond? He gives us a miracle "sign" that he is with us, pouring out his life, grace and personal presence for us. That sign was something that happened only once, starting nine months before Christmas: *The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.* Angels speaking individually with Mary and with Joseph made direct connections between Isaiah 7:14 and the special birth of Jesus. (See Luke 1:26-38 and Matthew 1:20-25.) The Creator is able to create new life, giving us a fresh start.

1. Do we ever try God's patience? How? Do we ever honor and please him? How? Does he care how we treat his creation? How much does it matter to him?
2. Why did the Creator choose a *very fresh start* with the virgin birth for the Infant of Christmas? Was it important that no man was involved? (See also John 1:12 and 13)
3. Can the Creator create new life when he chooses? Can he design and create an embryo inside Mary without a human father?
4. Is naming the special Child "*Immanuel*" (God with us) a powerful affirmation of the Creator's choice to be present in his creation? When is the Creator with us?

### What are we going to do about it?

5. Should we say that God "was the Creator" or that he "*is the Creator*"? Are we, his images, ever also his co-creators? What is his ongoing work for the creation? What is ours?
6. Is the Creator "*Immanuel*" still with us? How is his presence felt or affirmed in your life? If he can design and create a new humanity inside Mary, can he give us fresh starts? Can he add the true Christmas joy of knowing his wonderful presence?
7. Is the repeated use of Isaiah 7:14 by the Christmas angels a way of giving an especially strong emphasis to the message? Is "*God with us*" this Green Advent?

Truth To Celebrate: *Already centuries before the first Christmas, the Creator revealed to his prophet Isaiah his unique sign: a miracle creating new life, a new humanity within a young virgin.*

Advent-Action: *Make house-cleaning even more special this Christmas. Use all-natural and safe cleaning products for a healthier environment in the home and everywhere else—as our actions affect people at home and even thousands of miles away.*

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