

“The Boy Shall be Called Immanuel”



Today marks the beginning of Advent. Advent, also known as the season of preparation, which is the time preparing for the celebration of Christ's birth. Over 700 years before Christ was born, Isaiah prophesied the Lord's birth. 14 "...and His name shall be called Immanuel." Immanuel means "God is with us" (Matthew 1:23).

The prophet Isaiah (the First) spoke these words to King Ahaz of Southern Judah (the house of David). He advised him to stop the war against the combined forces of Aram and the Northern Kingdom of Israel. King Ahaz intended to fight, seeking the aid of the great nation of Assyria. Isaiah advised him to trust in God's protection and focus solely on defensive warfare. 11 "Deep into the underworld or high into heaven" presents a binary choice. Will you follow Assyria, face destruction, and descend into the underworld? Or will you entrust everything to God, who dwells on high in heaven? King Ahaz responds, "I will not put the Lord to test," appearing faithful to his belief in God. This was an indecisive

attitude toward both God and man. Thus Isaiah spoke the Immanuel prophecy in verse 14. Do not rely on the power of great nations through worldly, shallow thinking - This was Isaiah's assertion. King Ahaz refused to heed the prophet's counsel and sought Assyria's aid. Yet in later years, Southern Judah became a vassal state of Assyria, the very power it had borrowed.

Isaiah prophesied the birth of Jesus Christ, the will of God. For those who trust in God, Jesus, who is with us, is the Christ who supports and encourages us as we live in reality. Let us follow Imma (with us), Nu (us), El (God), not immediate gain or indecisive attitudes. The birth of the Son is near.