

Immanuel

God's Great Plan

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

Over four thousand years after a promise was given to Eve in the Garden of Eden, the fulfillment of that promise was born in Bethlehem of Judea. The sixty-six books of the Bible describe the work of God and His Son to create the universe, provide a place for people, and make it possible for people to join them in Heaven's eternity. The fact that Jesus came, proved Himself to be the promised Prophet, Priest, and King, and returned to Heaven, is summarized by the Holy Spirit, *"By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory"* (1 Timothy 3:16). Only the Holy Spirit can condense the life and work of Him, who is both Son of Man and Son of God, into one sentence, even though several writers emphasize Immanuel's characteristics

Luke recounts the announcement of the birth of God's Son to Mary as the fulfillment of prophecy. *"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end"* (Luke 1:31-33). Mary's baby grew into the man, announced by John the Baptist, and into the deliverer of God's Word as the prophet and lawgiver promised by Moses. (Luke 3:1-18; Matthew 3:13-17; John 1:26-36; Luke 4:14-15; John 5:17).

The apostle John describes the Son of God, made into flesh, this way. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it"* (John 1:1-5). John describes Jesus as eternal, the all-powerful creator, the source of life and intelligence, and the giver of that intelligence to all people. In all things, Jesus is equal to God (John 5:17-18, 21-22).

The Hebrew writer expressed the superiority of Jesus in all characteristics of personality and abilities of Godliness and God's servants. As Moses promised, Jesus is declared to be superior to all previous prophets and teachers of the law. *"God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world"* (Hebrews 1:1-2). The writer also reminds us that we must obey His Word by comparing the prophets' teaching to the Son's. *"For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him"* (Hebrews 2:2-3 NKJV).

The Hebrew writer also addresses the description of Immanuel as a priest. *"Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession"* (Hebrews 3:1). Unlike the priests of Levi. Jesus is the anointed priest capable of being the sacrifice (Hebrews 2:14-15) and offering the sacrifice. *"Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek"* (Hebrews 5:8-10). *"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession"* (Hebrews 4:14).

Jesus himself confessed that He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords before Pilate during the trial (John 18:36-37). Paul refers to Jesus as "...the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords" as he writes to Timothy (1 Timothy 6:15). As King, Jesus has the authority to establish His Kingdom and

specify who may be a citizen and the behavior of each. God's Great Plan set the criteria of choosing people of righteousness who would serve His Son. Therefore, God *"saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"* (2 Timothy 1:9-10).

Are you part of the chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation, and God's possession? And, are you able to proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)?