

**“Immanuel, God With Us”**  
Christmas 2024  
Pastor Tim Allen

**Key Truth:** God dwells with his people, so that by faith we can stand firm even in the darkest of days.

It’s popular nowadays in the movie industry, in producing sequels and remakes, to explore the backstory of well-known movie characters, generally showing why they are the way they are. Whether it’s Ebenezer Scrooge or the Grinch, it seems we all want to know their backstory, a bit of context. Whether we want to know it or not, the Bible gives the “backstory” of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. In fact, the Bible goes all the way back to creation. The prophet Isaiah picks upon that backstory at around 700 years before Christ to give his readers just a glimpse of the story that culminated in Jesus’ advent on earth 2,000 years ago.

## **DISCUSS**

Read **Isaiah 7:1-16** and discuss with the group a statement or concept that stood out to you or impacted you in the sermon entitled **“Immanuel, God With Us.”**

## **DIG IN**

### **1. A Prophecy in Troubled Times** (Isaiah 7:1-9)

From what you’ve ascertained from Scripture and the sermon, can you describe briefly the political climate of Isaiah’s day?

In what ways does the political, economic, social, moral, and religious climate of Isaiah’s day compare to our time?

**Read 2 Kings 16:1-4:** Describe what King Ahaz was like? Why do you think God would seemingly tolerate Ahaz’s actions?

Why might it have been startling to see Isaiah visiting Ahaz with his young son Shear-jashub (v. 3)?

What are the assurances God gives Ahaz (vv. 4, 7-8, 9)? In what ways do these assurances convey God’s grace to Ahaz and Judah?

### **2. A Savior for Troubled Souls** (Isaiah 7:2, 10-16)

In what ways does the heart of the people often reflect the heart of the king (v. 2; see also Matthew 2:3)? Can you give any contemporary examples of this?

Why might Ahaz have refused to ask for a sign (v. 12)? In what ways was God’s sign to Ahaz (v. 14) good news?

In what ways does the sign of Immanuel (see Matthew 1:23) give us cause to celebrate today?

## **DO**

What lessons do you learn from these verses that you will take with you throughout the coming week?