

CHRIST JESUS IS IMMANUEL OUR PEACE (MATTHEW 1:18-25; LUKE 2:1-20)

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Matthew 1:18-25 "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph [they were engaged], before they came together [consummated their marriage], she was found with child **of the Holy Spirit**. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example ["love will cover a multitude of sins"-1 Peter 4:8, at least what Joseph was thinking], was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, **do not be afraid** to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is **of the Holy Spirit**. And she will bring forth a Son, and **you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.**" So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and **they shall call His name Immanuel,**" [Isaiah 7:14] which is translated, "God with us." Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus."

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Joseph was told, as we just read, "you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." God's people now, as we are told by the Apostle John, are those who believe on Jesus being the Christ/Messiah, the Anointed One of God, of whom died on a cross for our sins, taking our sins upon Himself to the grave. And then He rose from the dead on the third day, thereby completely, definitively conquering death, sin and evil, as He is far superior to all of that. And then too, WE also will overcome death, sin and evil and have eternal life in and through Him, that is, of course, to all those who will go to that Great Light, Christ Jesus, believing on Him AND receiving Him, receiving the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit into our hearts of which we are then children **of God!** **John 1:12-13**, "as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children **of God**, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God.**"

Now Joseph was also told, that Mary would "bear a Son, and **they shall call His name Immanuel,**" which is translated, "God with us"". That is just one of the many attributes given to Christ Jesus, of Whom He is, what He means to us, and is for us. Jesus clearly stated, "**I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.**" The Apostle John then follows that up for us by saying, the "Truth which abides in us will be with us forever." (**2 John 1:2**) Isaiah the prophet spoke of Christ Jesus and many of His attributes in prophesying around 700 years before Christ by saying, "For **unto us** a Child is born, **unto us** a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor,

Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (**Isaiah 9:6**) Isaiah was speaking to the divinity of Christ, that He would be God incarnate. And that word peace (Prince of Peace) comes from Hebrew word "shalom". Strong's Lexicon says about that word shalom, "Shalom is a multifaceted Hebrew word that encompasses a range of meanings related to **peace and completeness**. It signifies not only the absence of conflict but also the presence of positive blessings such as health, safety, and prosperity. **Shalom is used to describe harmonious relationships between individuals, nations, and between God and humanity**. There is only ONE WAY that we will truly have peace, that is, the peace of God, within ourselves, with others, and with God—through Christ Jesus, the Prince of Peace. When we speak shalom to one another that also conveys a hope of wholeness and well-being, both physically and spiritually."¹ Jesus spoke of that "peace" to His disciples just before He was to leave them. He said, "**Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**" (**John 14:27**) Very similar to the Hebrew word "shalom" then is that Greek word "eirene" (ay-ray-nay) used by Jesus. Its root is "eiro" which means "to join" or "to tie together into a whole"², which is the wholeness we have in Christ Jesus, similar to shalom, which can mean individually, or with others, and with God. Speaking shalom/eirene/peace to someone, may be in one's mind to just be saying, "peace, brother", like, just a greeting. Yet with a better understanding of the Word one may be really saying to someone, "may you have wholeness, completeness, within yourself, with others and with God". As Jesus spoke the beatitude, the divine blessing saying, "**Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God**" (**Matthew 5:9**), that coincides with Jesus saying "**Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**" One more part of the Christmas story I'd like to share is in:

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Luke 2:1-20 "And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they

1 <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7965.htm>

2 <https://biblehub.com/greek/1515.htm>

were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, **"Do not be afraid,** for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth **peace,** goodwill toward men!" [peace=eirene] So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

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Once again, as Jesus said to His disciples, He is then saying to us, "Peace I leave with you, **My peace I give to you;** not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, **neither let it be afraid.**" So our prayer then, through Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord, may God's grace and the peace of God, in wholeness and well-being, both physically (Lord willing in this lifetime) and spiritually be in you and upon you, to the praise and glory of God.