



*'History of the Christmas Hymns!'*

**Sermon #3: 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!'**

Matthew 1:23

Sunday, December 22nd, 2024 at 11 AM

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Earlier in 'History of the Hymns!':

- Earlier this month we began a special sermon series entitled 'History of the Hymns!'.
  - In this series, we've looked at 2 so far (number 3 today), of Christmas hymns that were written years ago and were inspired by a certain passage or verse of scripture.
- *We've looked at 'While Shepherds watched Their Flocks!'* as we studied **Luke 2:8-10**.
- *Two Sundays ago we looked at 'Silent Night, Holy Night!'* as we looked at the 19 words found in **Luke 2:11**.

- In each of these sermons so far, it has been my goal that we would see the Christmas story far differently than before, as we look at those who were inspired by these Christmas Scriptures years ago, to write some incredibly theologically rich pieces of literature that we now sing today.
  - And today is no different, with 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!'

**Sermon #3: 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!'**

*Matthew 1:23*

**Sermon in a Sentence:**

*Emmanuel means God with us. We celebrate God coming to earth in the form of a baby, Jesus Christ. We find the miracle, the Messiah and His mission in Matthew 1:23.*

**Intro:**

- This hymn that we have sung today is very rich with theological and spiritual truths.
  - *In this hymn, you find the experiences and feelings of different people through several different centuries, religions, and cultures.*
- Before we look at the history that is behind this well known Christmas hymn, let's look at the lyrics to the hymn:

- **[Verse 1]:** O come, O come, Emmanuel. And ransom captive Israel. That mourns in lonely exile here. Until the Son of God appear.
- **[Verse 2]:** O come, O come, Thou Lord of might. Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height. In ancient times didst give the law. In cloud, and majesty and awe.
- **[Verse 3]:** O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free. Thine own from Satan's tyranny. From depths of hell Thy people save. And give them victory o'er the grave.
- **[Verse 4]:** O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer. Our spirits by Thine advent here. Disperse the gloomy clouds of night. And death's dark shadows put to flight.
- **[Verse 5]:** O come, Thou Key of David, come And open wide our heavenly home. Make safe the way that leads on high. And close the path to misery.
- Let me share with you some of the theological nuggets that are interwoven into each of the verses of this hymn:

- ***In Verse 1...***

- The word 'Emmanuel' literally means Deliverer.
- God's people now separated from Heaven are here compared to Israel, during its Babylonian exile, being separated from God's Holy temple in Jerusalem.

- ***In verse 2...***

- The phrase 'Lord of Might' is addressing Almighty Jehovah, the One who first gave the Law at Mount Sinai to Moses where lightening and thunder accompanied it.
  - 'On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled.' Exodus 19:16

- ***In verse 3...***

- The phrase Rod of Jesse here signifies that the hymn writer had Isaiah 11:1 in mind...
  - 'There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.' Isaiah 11:1
- This prophecy in Isaiah 11:1 is not discussed often, but was perfectly fulfilled with the birth of Christ, who came from the Kingly line of David, the Son of Jesse.

- ***In Verse 4...***

- The phrase 'Day-Spring' addresses the fact that the Word Messiah in the

original greek literally means ‘Sun rising’.

- This is a prophetic reference that Zacharias reechoed when he heard of Christ’s birth in Luke 1:78-79.
  - ‘because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us[a] from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.’ Luke 1:78-79
- ***In verse 5...***
  - The phrase ‘Thou Key of David’ is an expression that is first recorded in Isaiah 22:22...
    - ‘And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.’
  - The well-known verse of Isaiah 9:6, also confirms the royalty that comes with the authority of Christ...
    - ‘And the government shall be upon His shoulder.’
- ***As you can see, almost every phrase in this hymn has great theological significance. But, where did it come from, how old is it, and who wrote it?***

- As far as historians, scholars and theologians can tell, this hymn finds its origin in the medieval Roman Church of the 12th century, and could be even earlier than that.
- ***It began as a series of short statements that would be sung at the beginning of the Psalm or Magnificent (scriptures that were sung) during the advent season in the medieval period.***
  - Each of the ‘Antiphons’ (short statements) would begin with the titles of Christ that are found in the beginning of each verse: Emmanuel, Lord of Might, Rod of Jesse, Day Spring, and Key of David.
- ***It would not be until the 19th century that several different Anglican ministers and scholars developed an interest in rediscovering old Greek, Latin and German writings.***
  - John M. Neale came across these writings that were originally in latin and translated it to english.
    - This is one of many modern day Hymns that John Neale translated.
- ***The theology in this hymn is over 900 years old, and well preserved.***
  - But the message that it carries about our Messiah, certainly remains the same and is relevant today.

- Let's read one of the verses that inspired this Latin Hymn, 900 years ago...

**\*Read Matthew 1:23\***

### Question to Ask:

*How does the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 that is quoted by Matthew here, reveal to us the magnitude of God coming to earth in the form of a Baby?*

### Truth #1: *The Miracle.* (v. 23a)

- “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,”
  - *These 9 words in the beginning of the verse, truly represent a miracle.*
    - Just look at the verse itself ‘the virgin shall conceive and bear a son’.
  - *For a virgin (someone who has not had sexual interactions) to conceive and have a child is a miracle.*
    - To provide context for Matthew 1:23, let's back up to the Birth of Jesus that Matthew described.
      - ‘Now the birth of Jesus Christ[a] took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed[b] to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. **19** And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame,

resolved to divorce her quietly. **20** But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21** She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” **22** All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:’

- *This is Emmanuel. The fact that God came in the form of a baby and through a miracle that only God could do.*
  - Before we look at Emmanuel, I want to look a little deeper into the miracle that occurred. That Jesus was born of a virgin.
- *\*Word Study\**
  - The word ‘virgin’ in the ESV comes from the greek word **‘Parthenos’** which literally means virgin.
    - There are scholars that will argue that this greek word means ‘young woman’, but this word is

never translated as such in the 15 times it is used in the NT.

- ***This word truly means virgin, and that this was a miracle.***
- When you hear the phrase ***‘virgin mother’*** it is quite natural to think that is totally impossible.
  - ***But this shows us that the birth of Jesus was supernatural, and it further points to the Glory that we should give God for allowing this to happen.***
- David Platt wrote ***‘Part of the purpose of the virgin birth of Jesus is to show us that salvation does not come from man, but from God. Salvation is wholly the work of a supernatural God, not the work of natural man. There is nothing we can do to save ourselves from our sins, which is evident even in the way in which Jesus entered the World.’***
  - Just as our salvation is a miracle, and something that only God can do, so was the birth of Jesus Christ into the world!
- ***It’s also important to point out that Matthew is quoting the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14...***
  - ‘Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.’
  - When looking at Isaiah 7:14 in the Hebrew, you will find that the greek

word ***‘Parthenos’*** and the Hebrew word translated to virgin in Isaiah 7:14 ***‘Almah’*** is also a ‘pure’ Hebrew word that literally means ‘unmarried woman who is a virgin’.

- ***Within the context of Isaiah 7:14, Judah was under attack during the time of Isaiah.***
- ***So this prophecy was given to point to God’s enduring promise for the line of David.***
- Matthew quotes it here to present the virgin birth of Jesus as God’s miraculous fulfillment of this promise in the person of Jesus.
  - This is a miracle, but the second part of the prophecy that Matthew quotes, further shows that Jesus is the Messiah...

#### **Truth #2: *The Messiah. (v. 23b)***

- ‘and they shall call his name Immanuel’
  - ***His name being Immanuel is so significant, because it is God with us.***
- ***Church family, that is what we are to be celebrating this Christmas season.***
  - The fact that God came to earth in the form of a Baby, and that now He is with us.
- ***This very phrase Immanuel brings affirmation that God has promised to be with His disciples in every age***

*and empower them to fulfill what we discussed last week, which was the great commission.*

- We must not forget this Christmas season that Jesus was the Son of God, but He was also fully Human.
- He was born of a woman, like any other Child, but He was conceived of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus came into this world crying, cooing, and a bed-wetting baby boy!
  - *We must not forget that Jesus wasn't born with a glowing halo around His head and a smile on His face, but He was born just like us.*
- *He was Messiah in the human flesh who was prophesied and predicted to come and save us...*
  - Both Mary and Joseph belonged to the House and lineage of David.
  - Genesis 3:15 tells us that the Messiah would be born of a woman and Genesis 22:18 tells us that He would be from the seed of Abraham, through the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10) and of the family of David (2 Samuel 7:12-13).
- If you study Matthew 1:1-17, you will find that Matthew's Genealogy account traces through Solomon, but Luke traced through Nathan, another one of David's son.

- *Either way, it's interesting to note that Jesus is the only JEW who can actually prove His claims to the throne of David because all the other records were destroyed when the Romans took Jerusalem and destroyed in AD 70.*

- *May we not forget this Christmas season or any season, that Christ Jesus is the Messiah who came to die for us.*

- This shows us His mission that God the Father had given Him to fulfill.

**Truth #3: *The Mission.***

- While the Mission of Jesus wouldn't be fully explained and given to believers until Matthew 28, the last chapter of Matthew, in the first chapter of Matthew is when the mission of Jesus truly began.
  - *Now, God did not choose to fulfill this mission in the ways that the Jews had anticipated or even wanted Him too.*
    - Jesus didn't come as a military commander and ruler who was going to liberate the Jews and overcome the Romans, but He came as a baby.
  - *The mission of God was coming, and let me tell you this morning, the mission of God is not yet fulfilled.*
    - We still get to look forward to the rapture of the Church, the second coming of Christ, the millennium, the

new heaven and the new earth, but it all started with a baby.

- *The baby who would come to earth and die on the cross for our sins, so that we may know and have a relationship with the God of the Universe.*

- Emmanuel, God with us...

- “For God so loved the world,[a] that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.’ John 3:16

- *In just a minute, we are going to transition from looking at the Message of Jesus coming as a Baby to the Memory we all need to observe.*

- In just a moment our praise team is going to come and sing.
- *While they sing, this will be our time of invitation.*

- *If you are not saved this morning, if you’ve never asked Jesus to save you from your sin, then today is the day that you need to invite Jesus into your heart as Lord of your life. If this is you, I encourage you to grab my hand or Pastor Steve’s hand during this time.*

- If you know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, it’s time you ponder about your heart condition.

- After the time of invitation we are going to take part in the Lord’s Supper: I’d like to take a brief moment and give some biblical instruction concerning communion.

- **The night before Jesus was betrayed, he conducted the Lord’s supper with His disciples.**

- This has become the way that we remember what our Lord did for us on the cross. The way we remember the Beating.

- **From the Cradle to the Cross.**

- **As Jesus laid in the cradle with all the animals, He would one day journey to Golgotha and be crucified on a cross.**

- As you pick up the communion cup that you received as you walked in, I want to remind you that Communion is for those who are believers in Christ Jesus.

- **If you are not a Christian, we ask that you not partake in communion.**

- Why?

- Because how can you remember something someone did for you if you don’t even believe in them?

- **Preparing ourselves for the Lord’s Supper.**

- **Self-Examination.**

- “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will

be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.” 1st Corinthians 11:27

- We must examine our own hearts and ask Jesus to Cleanse us.

#### ■ Confess my Sins.

- “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1st John 1:9
- It’s important that we confess our sins in prayer and ask that the Lord will forgive us.
  - **He is faithful and just to forgive us.**

#### ■ Recommitment.

- “I appeal to you therefore, brothers,<sup>[a]</sup> by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” Romans 12:1
- Every day that we live on this earth following Jesus we just recommit ourselves to Him and away from sin.

#### ■ Restoring Relationships.

- “So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:23-24
- We should make things right with others before we partake in Communion.
  - If you have beef with someone, make it right.

#### ■ **Let’s take a moment of silence and pray to God before partaking in communion.**

*\*Praise Team sings and we have time of invitation...*

#### ■ **The Bread Represents the Body of Christ.**

- The Body that was pierced for our transgressions.
- <sup>3</sup>For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, <sup>24</sup>and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “**This is my body, which is for you; do this in**



remembrance of me.” -1st  
Corinthians 11:23-24

■ **The Juice Represents the Blood of Christ.**

- In the way we remember His body, we must also remember his blood that was spilled out for us!
- “In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.”-1st Corinthians 11:25-26