

Advent, Week 2 - Jesus is Mighty God

□ Monday - Immanuel, [Mighty] God With Us.

In the Book of Revelation, the nation of Israel is pictured as a pregnant woman about to give birth to Messiah (Rev. 12:1-5). And in the Old Testament, Isaiah's prophetic voice acts like a great ultrasound revealing a picture of her unborn child. "Congratulations, you're going to have a boy!" he explains. "But there is something else," he says, "Something shocking!" Then come some of the most startling words in the Old Testament: This child will be Immanuel (Isa. 7:14), God with us (cf. Mt. 1:23) ... Mighty God (Isa. 9:6). Herein lies the mystery and wonder of Christmas, that the infinite became an infant. Selah, pause and meditate. Read Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7

□ Tuesday - Jesus, the Great I AM.

"And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you'" (Ex. 3:14). Of all of the names of God, this is revered by many as the most holy. Formed by four Hebrew letters, Y-H-W-H, the name may be pronounced "Yahweh" (Latinized form: "Jehovah"), which translated means "I AM," referring to the eternal Self-existence of God (Acts 17:24-25). Perhaps the clearest announcement of Jesus' deity was made by Jesus Himself, when He claimed this name as His own. Jesus said, "Unless you believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24), and again He declared, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM" (Jn. 8:58). And so, when Jesus was born, His cry from the manger was not an unfamiliar voice. No, it was the same voice that spoke 3500 years ago from the burning bush and there proclaimed, "I AM". Read John 18:1-6

□ Wednesday - Yahweh Saves.

Preceding Christ's birth, the angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). The name Jesus, which means 'Yahweh saves,' was a common name in Palestine in the first-century. But this baby would be named Jesus, not because it was a popular Jewish name, but because He would actually save His people from their sins. And so, the angel's announcement is a declaration of Jesus' deity: "You shall call his name Jesus" (Yahweh saves), "for it is He [Jesus] who will save His people from their sins," because He is Yahweh. This Christmas, when you speak the precious name of Jesus, remember that you invoke the holy name of the God who saves. Read Isaiah 43:11

□ Thursday - Worship Christ the Newborn King!

Note the posture of the magi at Christ's nativity: "They came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshiped Him" (Mt. 2:11). What a picture -- grown men bowing before a tiny child! But O what blasphemy if that child was not God Himself! Even as an adult, Jesus continued to receive worship, and more importantly -- He accepted it (Mt. 14:33, 28:9, 17; Jn. 9:38, 20:28). Men are not worthy of worship (Acts 4:8-18), nor angels (Rev. 19:10, 22:8-9), but Christ is worthy of our highest praise and worship, because He is God! "O come let us adore Him" as one Christmas hymn says, but even more, let us "worship Christ the newborn King," as another hymn proclaims. Read Psalm 95:6; Rev. 4:10-11

□ Friday - Mighty God, Armed with Power to Save.

We celebrate Christmas not just because "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son," nor only because Christ has given us His promise "that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16). Indeed, our Christmas celebrations would all be for nought, if Christ has not the power to make good on His promise of eternal life. We celebrate Christmas because the Lord is not only willing to save (2 Pet. 3:9), but He is also able to do it. Therefore, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful" (Heb. 10:23). This is our celebration, that God sent His Son armed with the promise of eternal life (Jn. 11:25-26) and the power to bring it to pass (Jn. 5:21). Read 2 Corinthians 1:20