

Meet My Savior: Jesus (Slide 1)
God With Us

Reading: Isaiah 41:1-13

I was looking for some, I guess you might say, inspiration as to how I wanted to introduce this lesson. It came from someone I just wasn't expecting.

Tuesday morning, as I often do, I was sitting in the quiet contemplating how to start. Just sort of thinking, researching and meditating, when my inspiration came from an interview that popped up on my feed featuring a WW 2 veteran and the book he had written about his experiences. He said it was a story that needed to be told.

I never realized that someone I knew many years ago would be so connected to this lesson.

As a young person, I met a man that you might say very quickly became a friend and someone I truly admired even though I knew very little about him. What I don't recollect precisely is how we met. I had either helped him get his car started and repaired the problem or performed some other service on his car. I just can't remember. Either

way, I became acquainted with this man and soon would visit him from time to time.

I brought his car back to him that first time and he invited me up to his apartment while he gathered the money to pay me. He was a very soft spoken person and seemed to be very lonely. I would estimate that he was likely 60 years old or a little better. He wasn't necessarily frail but wasn't in great physical condition either.

His home was in an old apartment building. It was what you would expect to see for someone who was on a fixed income and had little in reserve financially. When I entered his apartment, on one wall he had several medals that were mounted in a large picture frame. He had received them from his service in WW 2.

I asked him about his time during the war and as is typical with many veterans, he told me very little. He did say that he was in the *Battle of the Bulge* and that he was one of the lucky ones.

The *Battle of the Bulge* was the single largest and bloodiest battle during WW 2 eventually involving 700,000 allied forces and over 400,000 enemy forces. That conflict began December 16, 1944 and lasted until January 25, 1945. Some sources estimate that there were 81,000

allied casualties, including many wounded, captured and killed. Some estimates say Americans KIA reached nearly 20,000.

What he witnessed during that conflict and what he had to do explains his reluctance in recalling his experience and so I never knew nor did I ask him any more about it.

I knew this man by name but more so by his unique “*nickname*,” though I won’t share either. I learned he had been married and had children. Nevertheless, as often happens, the nightmare of war and its memory decimated his relationship with his wife and children. He had little to no contact with his children and they remained estranged even unto his death.

I think I visited this man 3 or 4, maybe 5 times. The last time I went to visit him I didn’t get an answer when I knocked on his door. As I left, another tenant of the building informed me that he had died. His death is much like many “*Nameless American Heroes*.” What a tragedy because this man really had quite a story that should be told.

As I mentioned earlier in this lesson, a veteran from that bloody battle had written a book and I just happened to catch an interview as he talked about the book. He spoke

of the experience he had in the war during the *Battle of the Bulge*.

Though he didn't mention a fellow soldier with him during that time by name, he did refer to him by his "*nickname*." I recognized that nickname and incredibly I knew exactly who he was talking about. Yes, it could be coincidental but I don't think so. He described this man's heroism.

He described how he had survived and rescued others who were severely wounded and how he fought so fiercely and heroically. And he wrote it all in his book.

He was an eye witness and knew the story had to be told and gave more than just a name to the man I knew, he gave him dignity, honor and lasting, though in his civilian life, unrealized respect.

His story is written in a book by someone who was there. If he had not recorded his and so many others stories, I would have never really known the story of this man I so, so admired.

As Christians, we follow a man who was written about in the "*Book of Books*" by God's Prophets and by eyewitnesses. It is different from the book written by the

WW 2 veteran because the writers were Holy Spirit inspired.

Nevertheless, if it wasn't recorded, we would never have come to know our Savior.

From the Holy Scripture, I want to invite you to *Meet My Savior: Jesus. **God with Us.***

The Prophet Isaiah predicts that His birth will be like no other. An improbability without the Hand of God who is the author of *The Greatest Story Ever Told*.

Isaiah 7:14 (Slide 2)

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Matthew 1:23 (Slide 3)

“BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,” which translated means, “GOD WITH US.”

What is meant by **“GOD WITH US.”**

The Lord God had been so active and present in so many ways during the Old Covenant. He spoke directly to Moses and then from Moses to the people. His voice was

magnified on top of a mountain and the people were terrified.

His authority and power were on full display during the flood as He caused a great ship to float rescuing 8 people and two of every kind of the animal kingdom.

He commanded the plagues that ravaged the leaders and people of Egypt. He spoke and performed miracles through the prophets.

He held Kings up and brought Kings down. He took a shepherd boy and slew a giant, a bear and a lion.

He raised up a man whom we would consider akin in our imaginative minds like Hercules, whose name was Sampson and became the strongest man ever known, slaying 1,000 men at one time with the jawbone of a donkey.

He made an animal speak as a human and caused the earth to stand still. He caused the skies to open up and shut them as well.....just by speaking His thoughts.

He orchestrated battles and gave victory to a few hundred men over thousands. He caused a great wall to fall from

men marching and at the sound of blowing trumpets so that the city would be overtaken.

He caused food to fall from the skies and rescued his people by creating walls of water revealing dry land of which they could safely walk.

He struck men dead in an instant as they disobeyed His word, yet, he sealed the mouths of lions in a pit to rescue the prophet Daniel.

He cooled the hottest flames man could fan in such a powerful way that even the clothes of Daniel's righteous companions were not singed nor smelled of fire or smoke.

He gave laws and expectations to all of His chosen to follow. He healed diseases of which there is no cure.

He was with His people when they built His place for them to worship:

1 Chronicles 22:17-19 (Slide 4)

17 David also commanded all the leaders of Israel to help his son Solomon, saying, 18 "Is not the LORD your God with you? And has He not given you rest on every side? For He has given the inhabitants of the land into my hand, and the

land is subdued before the LORD and before His people.

(Slide 5) 19 Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; arise, therefore, and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, so that you may bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy vessels of God into the house that is to be built for the name of the LORD."

He heard the cries of His people and the prayers of many and responded magnificently.

He did much much more and then suddenly.....there was silence. No great booming power from above. No words of prophecies spoken. No answers, no miracles. No spokesman whatsoever. Only these last words:

Malachi 4:5-6 (Slide 6)

5 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. 6 He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse."

Then the voice of God went silent for 400 years. Some call it the Dark Ages. Some, The 400 years of Silence. Some undoubtedly wondered; "Where is God? What happened to Him?"

In darkness many believed that God was more than a great distance away. They feared he was gone, out of their lives for all time. It was a dark, dark time in people's lives.

We get that way sometimes where we feel in dark times or times of trouble that God is very distant. "Where are you God? I need you!"

The Book of Books tells us; "GOD WITH US." Through faith we have come to realize that what seems to be silence is really often God's answer to our prayer.

The connection we have with that truth no matter the circumstance is the *indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God* who has entered us as we make contact with the Blood of the Lamb.

1 John 3:24 (Slide 7)

"And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us."

God is the God of *The Book of Books* who has sent His Son to rescue and to be with us:

Acts 17:24-27 (Slide 8)

24 The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; 25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; 26 and He (Slide 9) made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, 27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

God is not distant. In fact, God is with us!!

Invitation

If God is for us, who can be against us! Today, God is near. He is so close that you can feel His encouragement in His desire for those who have not become His child to do so today. If you haven't been baptized for the forgiveness of sins, don't delay. Do it today.

If you are a child of God but need the prayers of your brethren, let us know. We will gladly lift you up to God who is indeed with us.

Please let us know how we can serve you.....

Reading

Isaiah 41:1-13

**1 "Coastlands, listen to Me in silence,
And let the peoples gain new strength;
Let them come forward, then let them speak;
Let us come together for judgment.**

**2 "Who has aroused one from the east
Whom He calls in righteousness to His feet?
He delivers up nations before him
And subdues kings. He makes them like dust with his
sword, As the wind-driven chaff with his bow.**

**3 "He pursues them, passing on in safety,
By a way he had not been traversing with his feet.**

**4 "Who has performed and accomplished it,
Calling forth the generations from the beginning?
'I, the LORD, am the first, and with the last. I am He.'"**

**5 The coastlands have seen and are afraid;
The ends of the earth tremble;
They have drawn near and have come.**

**6 Each one helps his neighbor
And says to his brother, "Be strong!"**

**7 So the craftsman encourages the smelter,
And he who smooths metal with the hammer encourages
him who beats the anvil, Saying of the soldering, "It is
good"; And he fastens it with nails, So that it will not totter.**

**8 “But you, Israel, My servant,
Jacob whom I have chosen,
Descendant of Abraham My friend,**

**9 You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth,
And called from its remotest parts
And said to you, ‘You are My servant,
I have chosen you and not rejected you.**

**10 ‘Do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, surely I will help you,
Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’**

**11 “Behold, all those who are angered at you will be
shamed and dishonored; Those who contend with you will
be as nothing and will perish.**

**12 “You will seek those who quarrel with you, but will not
find them, Those who war with you will be as nothing and
non-existent.**

**13 “For I am the LORD your God, who upholds your right
hand, Who says to you, ‘Do not fear, I will help you.’**

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