

# Advance to the Manger — Day 4

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## Gift of Presence

Matthew 2:23 NLT

““Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means ‘God is with us.’””

### Introduction:

Advancing to the Manger through the Gift of Presence

- Reflect on the meaning of Emmanuel, "God with us."
- Read Matthew 1:23 and consider the profound gift of God's presence.
- Prayer: Express gratitude for the gift of God's presence in your life during this season.

In Matthew 1:23, we read a powerful prophecy that points to the birth of Jesus, proclaiming His divine nature and purpose: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

### Heart Reflection

#### 1. The Promise of God's Presence:

The name "Immanuel" signifies that God is with us. The birth of Jesus fulfilled the promise of God's presence among humanity. The manger became the physical manifestation of God's love and desire to be near us. As we approach the manger, let us remember that God is not distant or detached from our lives. He is intimately involved, understanding our joys, sorrows, and struggles. He is always present, offering comfort, guidance, and strength.

#### 2. Embracing God's Presence:

The gift of God's presence calls us to embrace a deep and personal relationship with Him. Just as Mary carried Jesus within her, we are invited to carry His presence within us. Through faith in Christ, we become vessels of His love, light, and grace. As we advance towards the manger, let us open our hearts to receive God's presence and allow it to transform us from within. Embracing His presence enables us to experience His peace, joy, and abundant life.

#### 3. Advancing in the Gift of Presence:

The gift of God's presence propels us forward in our spiritual journey. It empowers us to navigate life's challenges, overcome obstacles, and persevere in faith. His presence gives us hope, assurance, and the confidence to step into the purposes He has for us. As we advance towards the manger, let us learn to lean on His presence, seeking His guidance and wisdom in every aspect of our lives. Through His presence, we are equipped to fulfill our calling and make a difference in the world around us.

#### 4. Sharing the Gift of Presence:

Just as God gave us the gift of His presence, we are called to extend that gift to others. Our presence can bring comfort, encouragement, and support to those in need. Through acts of kindness, compassion, and love, we reflect God's presence to those around us. As we advance towards the manger, let us share the gift of His presence with others, drawing them closer to the transformative power of Jesus.

## Call To Action

- **Remember**
  - You're not alone.
  - He wants to be near you.
  - He is always present.
  
- **Accept**
  - You are a vessel of the Holy Spirit.
  - You carry His presence wherever you go.
  - Let His presence transform you.
  
- **Overcome**
  - Do not let the difficulties defeat you.
  - His presence empowers you.
  - Lean on Him for understanding, guidance, and wisdom.
  
- **Give**
  - He gave so we give.
  - Give comfort, Encouragement, and support.
  - Bring Hope through kindness, compassion, and love.

## Take A Way

This verse reminds us of the incredible gift of God's presence among us and the significance it holds in our journey to the manger. Let us reflect on the gift of God's presence and how it leads us to advance towards the manger.

## Prayer:

Oh Lord,

Thank you for the gift of Your presence. Help us today to recognize and embrace Your presence in our lives. May Your presence give us the strength, wisdom, and courage to advance towards the manger. Teach us to share this gift with others, that they too may encounter Your transforming presence. In Jesus' name, Amen.