

The Immanuel Invasions: When God's Presence Interrupts Our Lives

"BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME **IMMANUEL**," which is translated, "**God with us.**" (Matthew 1:23)

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And **the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked**, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush *was* not consumed. Then **Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn."** So when the **LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him** from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." (Exodus 3:1-4)

If Moses were like us, he may have passed by the bush that was burning, with just a casual thought, "that's weird, but I'm too busy to check it out. Maybe it'll be here later when I'm less busy." Instead, Moses "looked" and turned aside to see it closer, and "when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him...." Moses could have missed the presence and voice of God calling him if he had been 'diligent' in his daily task and not flexible enough to allow an interruption to turn his attention away from what he was doing.

God didn't call to him first; he came to him first, in this case, in an unusual manner. But the manner of Immanuel's visit to Moses isn't what's important. What is important is that Moses allowed the interruption to capture his attention away from his probably planned day, and it **WAS THEN** that "**God called to him.**"

In those potential moments that may occur in our daily lives when God shows up (probably in not-so-dramatic ways, perhaps with a "still, small voice" - 1 Kings 19:12), will we be too busy to 'turn aside', listen, and respond? When Immanuel shows up to visit with us, or guide us, or to just be with us and it interrupts our 'productive' flow of living, what will we do? Will we continue what we were doing, thinking that we can respond to that interruption later? If Moses had done that, he could have missed the calling of God on his life; a calling that changed history.

Let's learn from this event that God may want to interrupt us at times when we are the busiest, and it may just be in those times when we 'turn aside' and look that God will speak to us in life changing, perhaps world changing, ways.

Put an asterisk next to each appointment in your day-planner, or in your church's litany of planned activities, that says, "*unless Immanuel shows up.*" He may just want to be "God with us" when we least expect or think about it.

Let's not leave Immanuel out in the cold when He comes knocking on the door of our lives or church activities:
"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." (Revelation 3:20)

[Two Other Invasions: Priests While Ministering in Solomon's Temple (2 Chron. 5:14); Peter While Preaching (Acts 10:44)]