



# Links Players

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## Immanuel---God With Us

*The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means God with us). (Matthew 1:23, NIV)*

At the close of Ben Crenshaw’s Saturday Ryder Cup press conference at The Country Club in Brookline, he was asked the same basic question at least four times. Reporters wanted to know more about the U.S. team’s seemingly insurmountable deficit, which found them trailing the Europeans by a score of 10-6.

He gracefully attempted to answer the question again, but then he looked out over the audience of reporters. He pointed his finger, waggled it at them, and said: “I’m going to leave you all with one thought, and then I’m going to leave. I’m a big believer in fate...[PAUSE] I have a good feeling about this (continuing to waggle his index finger), and that’s all I’m gonna tell you.” And then, he got up and walked out.

We all know the outcome of Sunday’s matches. Call Crenshaw’s last words that took 11 seconds to deliver a “prophecy” or a prediction, but whatever it was, it will live in golf lore long after we’re gone.

Isaiah was a man of many prophecies. He lived and prophesied in and around Jerusalem, the capital city of the Southern Kingdom. He began his 50-year ministry in 740 BC. His name means “the Lord saves.” He was a contemporary of Amos, Hosea, and Micah.

The book of Isaiah contains 66 chapters and is the longest book in the Bible. It was written about 700 years before Jesus’ birth. It has more references to Jesus than any other book in the Old Testament. Over a hundred prophecies in Isaiah are fulfilled in the New Testament.

Matthew relies on one of Isaiah’s most well-known prophecies in Isaiah 7:14: Therefore the Lord will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14, NIV)

Immanuel--what an incredible name! GOD WITH US!

As we take time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas during this Holiday Season, savor the meaning of Immanuel. How comforting is it to know that God is always with and near us, available to provide support and comfort, and will bring us peace in our times of trouble?

He is the ultimate source of love, acceptance, and sustenance. He dwells among and in us, cherishes us, and will never abandon us if we put our faith and trust in Him.

His name shows us that we have a God who understands us and what we are going through. He walked in our shoes; He felt what we have felt in times of trouble, and He understands our pain.

What an incredible promise from God that He will always be with us during challenging times. No matter what we face, He is beside us. He is the ultimate source of love, acceptance, and guidance.

Immanuel is an ever-present and constant companion and friend whose love and grace never fails us or diminishes. His name signifies the power of God's grace and mercy. It is a powerful symbol of hope and assurance to us.

Once we grasp the significance of God's continuous presence, we ought to continually express tremendous gratitude and praise to Him for sending His Son to die for our sins. God was with us before, He is with us now, and He will always be with us in the future.

My prayer for all of you this year is that you experience the true joy of Christmas when you celebrate the birth of Immanuel, who is always with you.

***PRAYER: Heavenly Father, thank you for sending us your Son, Immanuel, who is always with us through the good times and the trying times. May we experience the true joy of Christmas when we celebrate the birth of Immanuel.***

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Mark Olson

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