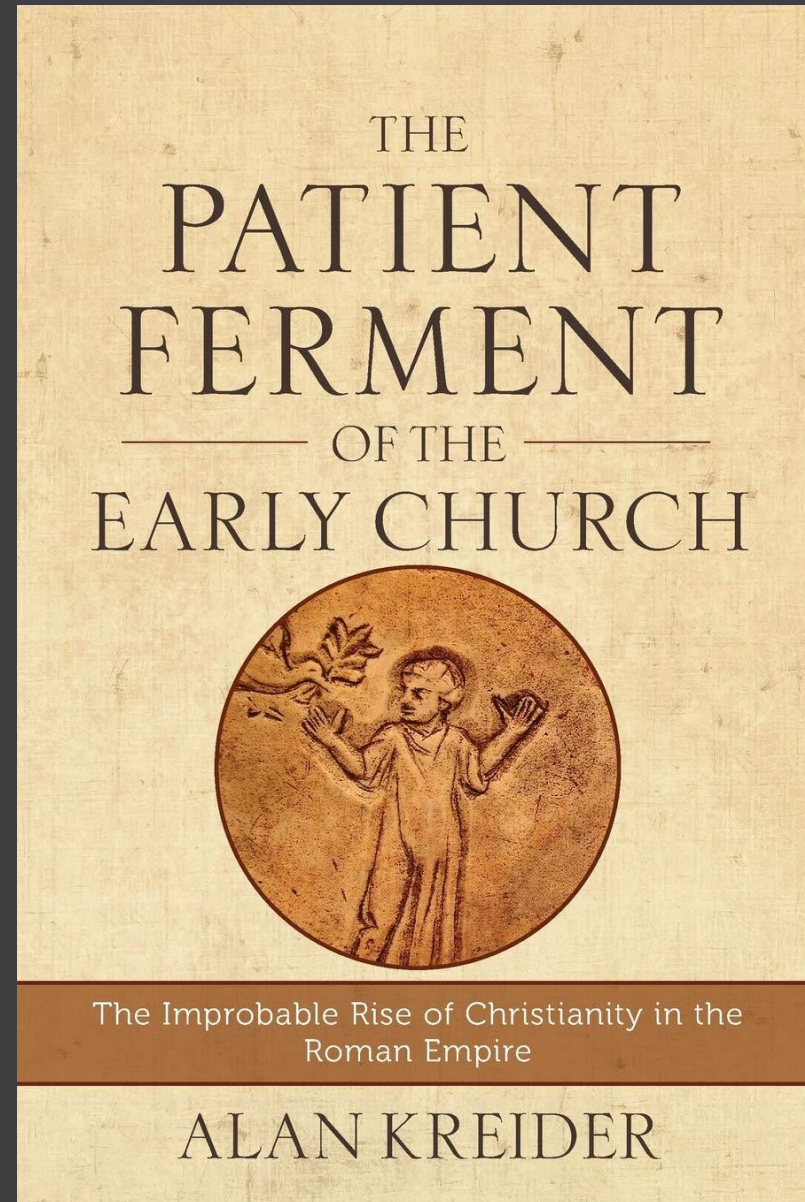


“...it was the Christians who were merciful to everyone, including strangers.”





**CHRISTMAS
PRESENCE:
HOW IS
GOD
WITH US?**

Exodus 3

7 Then the Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, 8 and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Exodus 3

9 And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. 10 Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” 11 But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” 12 He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

Exodus 3

- I have surely seen the affliction
- I have heard their cry
- I know their sufferings
- I have come down to deliver
- the cry of the people of Israel has come to me
- I have also seen the oppression

The Meaning of God's Name (יְהוָה)

- 'Existence' or eternal existence
- 'Becoming'
- 'Presence'

Hard Questions for the God with us.

- **Where is God when people are suffering?**
- **Why does God allow suffering?**
- **How can a good, all-knowing, all-powerful God exist in a world like ours?**
- **Why can't God eliminate human suffering?**

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“Immanuel” (God with us) means that He has chosen to enter into the suffering of humanity.

He knows...

- what it is like to be alone and abandoned. (Mark 14:50)
- the pain of grief and loss. (John 11:35)
- the struggle of family disharmony. (Mark 3:21)
- what it is like to see suffering in the people around. (Matt 9:36)
- the agony of being unfairly accused. (Mark 15:3)
- a thing or two about physical suffering. (John 19:18)
- the pain of our failures and mistakes. (1 Peter 2:24)

“God with us” means that His response to human suffering is not elimination but engagement so that in all of our suffering we have a friend, Immanuel.



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