

December 8, 2010

Dear Members & Friends of New Zion!

Matthew 1:23 quotes Isaiah's prophecy, "*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,*" which is translated, "God with us." This is the beauty, the majesty, the love of Christmas!

Since the beginning of time, mankind has struggled to find a way to God. Adam and Eve yielded to the serpent's temptation to be like God. Building the Tower of Babel was a futile attempt to climb up to heaven. The altars of false gods were built in the "high places." Every attempt to ascend to God's abode, to find Him, to imitate Him, failed.

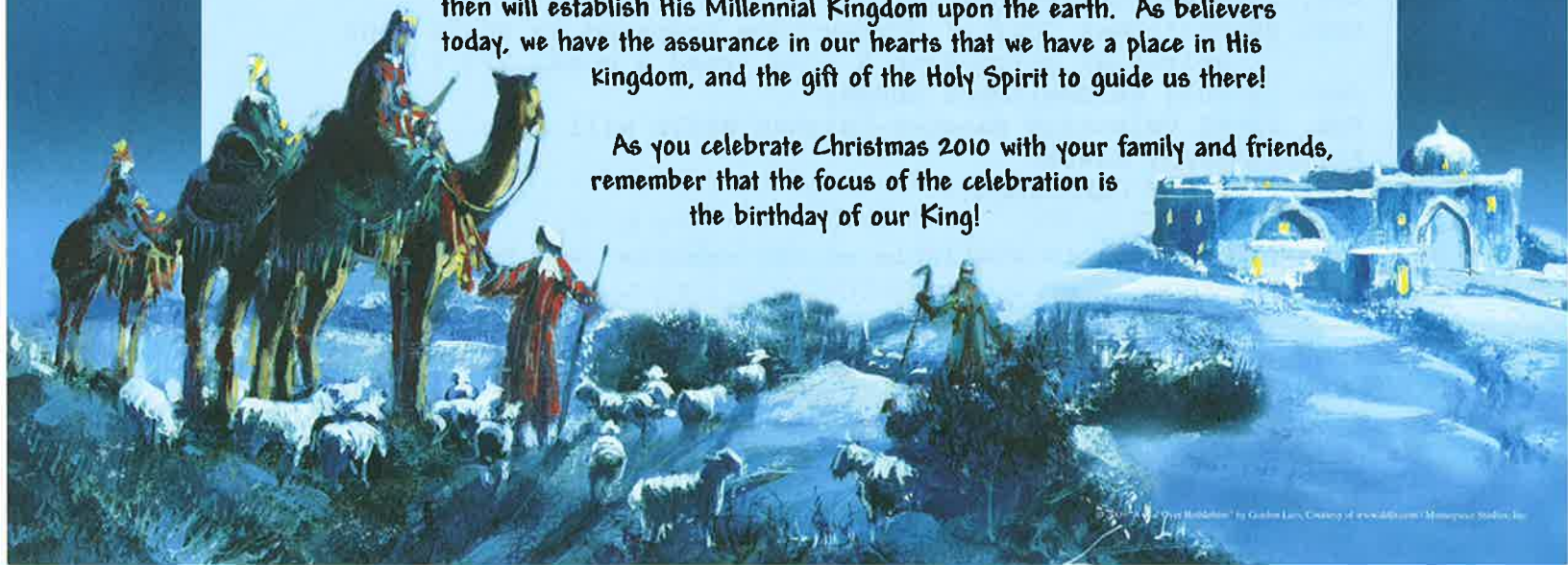
When the timing was right, however, according to the Lord's divine plan, God left His throne in heaven to come to us—Immanuel, God with us! John 1:14 explains: "The Word [Jesus] became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This is the beauty of Christmas!

John calls Jesus "the Word" to emphasize that He is the true expression of God, the One Who came to reveal Himself to mankind in a way that we could understand. The God Who dwelt spiritually in the Old Testament tabernacle now came in human form, to dwell with us literally. This is the majesty of Christmas!

John also writes, "He came to His own [creation], and His own [people] did not receive Him" (John 1:11). Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). Their seemingly hopeless response: "What shall we do?" Peter's consolation: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission (forgiveness) of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Not only are we offered forgiveness for killing God our Savior, but we are also given a gift, His Holy Spirit. This is the love of Christmas!

Of course you know the rest of the story. On the third day, Jesus arose from the dead and eventually returned to His throne in heaven. Jesus promised that when the Father's time is right, He will again come to His own to rescue His followers away from the wrath to come, and then will establish His Millennial Kingdom upon the earth. As believers today, we have the assurance in our hearts that we have a place in His Kingdom, and the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide us there!

As you celebrate Christmas 2010 with your family and friends, remember that the focus of the celebration is the birthday of our King!



The Wise Men gave gifts to celebrate the birthday
of the Christ-child, so we give gifts to others from a heart of genuine love.
Many stories have been written to stimulate the imaginations
of young children during the holiday season,
just make sure you emphasize the Christmas story recorded in the pages of the Bible.

One of the best ways to make sure that Jesus Christ remains your first priority during the
Christmas season is to worship Him with your New Zion family every Sunday morning. If you
start every week with Jesus, you will find that the rest of your week will be more organized,
more productive, and more satisfying!

My family and I wish you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas
and a Happy and Blessed New Year!

Pastor Chuck

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP
Sunday School--9:45 AM; Morning Worship--10:45 AM

Our NZ Children's Choir practices at the beginning of SS every
Sunday. It's not too late to be a part of the Christmas program!

- Dec. 14-5:45 PM NZ Ladies' Fellowship will meet at the church to
proceed to Clarion Golden Living to visit.
- Dec. 18-10 AM Pack Christmas bowls for shut-ins-Cookies needed!
- 6 PM Christmas Caroling
- Dec. 19-Junior Class will light the Advent Candle
-Youth will deliver Christmas cards
NEW ZION CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION!
-5:30 PM Covered Dish Christmas Dinner-Bring 2 covered
dishes, table service, and a friend!
-6:30 PM Annual Congregational Meeting
-7:00 PM Christmas Program-Invite your friends & family!
- Dec. 24-6:00 PM Candlelight Christmas Eve Communion Service
- Dec. 25-MERRY CHRISTMAS!
- Dec. 26-Christmas "Gifts" Sunday-Come prepared to share your
spiritual gifts-Sing a song, read a poem, ??? !
- Jan. 2-2011 Recommitment Sunday
- Feb. 12-NZ Valentine Banquet-Leighan Wells will sing
- Apr. 24-Happy Easter
- Dec. 25-MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

More information is available on our website: www.NewZionEC.com.