

## Blessed Christmas Joyous New Year

*Luke 1:28-38*

*And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.*

*1 Samuel 1:27-28*

*For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the Lord there.*

### Grace Worship

Mary was highly favored (Ephesians 1:4-6) and blessed because she would receive in her the Word that became flesh (John 1:14) and of His fullness we receive grace for grace. Hannah prayed for a child and the Lord gave her Samuel, and then she gave him to the Lord. Grace worship is giving to God what we receive from Him.

As Christians we have been given the person of the Holy Spirit by grace, so worship is living a Spirit-centered life. Christmas is about grace worship and we freely give what we have received from Jesus. Hanna gave Samuel and Mary allowed Jesus to live His life in the hands of His Father's purpose. Praise God for Christmas as we worship in grace.

**In reflecting upon the New Year** I have considered Matthew 1:23 and 28:20; I am with you –God with us always. What a promise and a provision from God; always with us as a Christian and with us as a church. The word 'meta' means in the midst, union, communion, fellowship and direction.

As John was on Patmos, he had a vision of God with him as Alpha and Omega, beginning and the end; the first and the last; He who was, is, and is to come; and He who was dead and now alive forevermore. Yes, God with us in 2010.

He is with us in all circumstances, places, conditions, everywhere in everything –amen. From Genesis to Revelation God is with us. Let's go forward knowing in certainty that God is with us. New souls, new countries, new fruit, new rewards in a renewed vision.

Let's worship in grace for God is with us,

Pastor Steve & Linda Scibelli  
and GGWO Missions staff