

“WELCOME TO TOMORROW”

A Meditation for a New Year

Each day is your own personal new year...your private mark in time between the past and future...your own farewell to yesterday, your welcome to tomorrow.” Robin St. John

“Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” If we can begin again today, “start a new leaf” in the book of our life, recognize that this moment is the first moment of the rest of our lives, how shall we begin?

A New Year is a good time to open a “new leaf” in our own book of life

Because we all face this question, we will share these thoughts that have come to our mind: If we are actuated by zeal for God and for His cause and for His people, let us act on this incentive. Let us be more than ever on the alert to be used and useful in the service of our King. Let us remember that the moments and the hours are important, that no matter how many cares of life we may have, we must always look to see if there is some time in which we can serve Him better, in our own hearts and homes, and in doing good to all men as we have opportunity. Let us cultivate a sober mind, a loving tenderness, a cheerful smile. Let us comfort others by telling them of the goodness of God and the great blessing that is in store for them and all mankind.

THE CHRISTIAN OUTLOOK

If we do not feel this earnest longing to obey God and help others, let us pray for that desire. There is no richer, more peaceful, contented life than that of a Christian. We have the temptations and experiences which are common to all mankind, but the difference is that the Lord is with us in our lives—and our confidence in Him gives us strength and courage and finally wisdom which no others have.

If faith in God and the Bible are shaken, the thinking man, even though rich or influential, faces the future with fear and trembling; but the child of God does not. We look to the promises of God, and know they will not return unto Him void. *“So shall MY word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.” (Isa. 55:11)*

We pity the non-thinking man – *“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”* *“Woe to those; they do not pay attention to the deeds of the Lord, nor consider the work of His hands.” (Psa 14:1; Isa. 5:11, 12)* They are indeed fortunate that the merciful Creator will permit them to learn His ways on the Highway of Holiness described in Isaiah 35:8.

But the Christian is more blessed than anyone else, regardless of his trials. *“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, but rejoice.” (1 Pet.*

4:12) If this is more than we can accept in the midst of our sufferings, let us look at those around us in similar trials, but without our hope.

“WHY ME?”

When wondering “Why?” or “Why me?” II Corinthians 1:4 is a help: *“God comforts us in all our tribulation so that we may be able to comfort them which are in trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted.”* We can’t truly say, “I know how you feel” if we haven’t been there ourselves.

The man or the woman possessed of a hope beyond the grave has, in the storms of life, an anchorage for the soul which others do not have. As we look at the trouble spots of battle on the globe, we rejoice in God’s promise that He will soon speak through Messiah’s Kingdom, “Peace! be still!” *“Beat your spears into pruning hooks and your swords into plowshares, and learn war no more!”* (Micah 4:3)

<p>Prayer enables the Christian to face an uncertain future</p>
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Anyone with compassion sorrows to read of the sadness of mankind. But an interesting by-product is also evident: some turn to religion for solace. In distress, there is a tendency to turn to heaven for help. How wise! Some accept any placebo as a panacea for their frustrations. But others are examining the creeds and superstitions of the past selectively. And they are being drawn closer to God’s truth thereby!

We live in a sick, sick world. Because we are human, we are limited in how much we can do to cure it. But there is no soldier on the battlefield who is more powerful than the prayer warrior, because he is praying for God’s will in God’s due time. *“The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth MUCH!”* (Jas. 5:16) As we mature as Christians, we bow to God’s perfect timing: our prayer may not be answered tomorrow if there is patience to learn or a better result to achieve by waiting. OUR prayer may NEVER be answered, if God’s infinite wisdom sees that our finite minds have prayed for something inappropriate.

A calm, unprejudiced view of crime and drugs and cruelty is easier to achieve when they do not affect us personally. But we become more desperate and impatient when we see those we love suffer, or suffer ourselves. Then, we cherish each hope of help, particularly the total help from God.

THE PROMISED KINGDOM

We know in Whom we have believed. We believe that the promised return of our Redeemer has taken place, and that he is the potent factor in all the affairs of his Church and the supervisor of the conditions which will lead up to the establishment of his Kingdom, *“Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth.”* (Matt. 6:10)

Specifically, what are we told about that Kingdom?

“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth.” – John 5: 28, 29

“Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, ‘Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’” – Matthew 25:34

“The anxious longing of creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God” – Romans 8:19 because “The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet.” – Romans 16:20

“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” – Isaiah 11:9

The desire of all nations shall come.” – Haggai 2:7

What will that kingdom be like? For a description of the blessings which God has in store for this world in that kingdom, read the faith-inspiring booklet, *“Paradise Without Pollution”* available through this web address.

God’s Tomorrow

*God’s tomorrow is a day of gladness,
And it’s joy shall never fade.
No more weeping, no more sense of sadness,
No more foes to make afraid.*

*God’s tomorrow is a day of greeting,
We shall see the savior’s face;
And our longer hearts await the meeting
In that happy, holy place.*

*God’s tomorrow is a day of glory.
We shall wear the crown of life.
Sing through countless years love’s old, old story,
Free forever from all strife.*

*God’s Tomorrow! God’s Tomorrow!
Every cloud will pass away
At the dawning of that day.
God’s Tomorrow! No more sorrow!
For I know that God’s tomorrow
Will be better than today.*

“FORGETTING THE THINGS WHICH ARE PAST”

The Apostle Paul advised Jesus’ followers to “Forget those things which are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before.” This is a good principle for anyone who is about to begin anew, try again, not to be enslaved in the prisons of the past.

If we weep for the past, we lose the joy of the future. We recall the Jews who returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity, praising God as they laid the foundation of the Temple; and we think how much more spiritual Israelites should shout and sing the praises of our King. *“Thou hast put a new song into my mouth, even the lovingkindness of our God.”* All spiritual Israelites, who are in the right attitude of heart toward the Lord, are full of songs of gratitude and praise.

Full of faith and hope, those Jews were filled with joy as they looked forward in prospect for still further favors from the Lord, in harmony with His glorious promises; and so it is with the Lord’s people today.

Looking backward brings sorrow, looking forward brings joy

But their shouts were discordant – some were joy, but others were of weeping. Those who looked forward in hope shouted for joy. Those who looked backward, and pictured before their minds Solomon’s grand Temple, wept as they thought of the insignificance of the present one in comparison. Are we those who weep because we had expected something more to our liking, when we should be trying to appreciate and understand what blessings God is giving us? Growing from yesterday, we should press forward to the fresh victories and joys which the Lord has in store for us tomorrow.

REVIEWING EACH DAY

Each evening, let us review our day and take note of our successes, that we may repeat them tomorrow or even improve upon them. By God’s grace, I was a blessing to someone today; tomorrow, may He give me the wisdom and strength to bless TWO people. Perhaps we realize we could have done better in some specific way; let us resolve to look for an opportunity to correct that fault. When we succeed, we thank the Lord. When we fail, we are grateful for his help and encouragement to improve. In either circumstance, he will never leave us nor forsake us.

Past mistakes are but stepping stones to future victories

In our theme text, Paul referred to the fact that he was forgetting his former ambitions as a student, his former hopes under Roman citizenship. When we become disciples of Jesus, we also have new ambitions in accord with the goals he has given us. Paul’s faith took hold of the promises of God with such tenacity that to him they were living realities. The heavenly glories which belong to the future of Christ’s followers are made so real, so precious to the truly sacrificing, consecrated disciples of Jesus, that they more than fill the losses and sacrifices of this present time an hundredfold.

THE WISE MOVE FOR TODAY

However unwisely, however foolishly, we have neglected God's will in the past, our wisest move today is to walk in His directions – thus to live in His will from henceforth. The lessons we learn from mistakes should be kept in memory, but need not be mourned over, for the merit of Christ's sacrifice will cover all our unwilling mistakes; they will be forgiven when Jesus becomes our Master.

We could be paralyzed by our regrets from the past, but rather let us be energized by the blessings and the glorious hopes promised in God's Word, as they reach forward to seek new conquests over the world, the flesh and the devil. God bless you in the adventure of your tomorrow!

“THE FUTURE IS AS BRIGHT AS THE PROMISES OF GOD”

“LOOKING BACK”

“Looking back, we praise the way Thou has led us day by day.” When looking back impedes our progress forward, do not look back. He that putteth his hand to the plow and looketh back is not fit for the Kingdom, according to Jesus' words in Luke 9:62.

Jesus also used Lot's wife as an example of one who looked back with longing on the hopes and ambitions she had held in Sodom. When looking back indicates regretting the choice we have made to follow Jesus, do not look back. We do not look back on the treasures of the past, nor its blindness. But we profit in meditating on our Ebenezers: *“Hitherto the Lord hath helped us.”* He will help us now, in this predicament! (I Sam. 7:12) When Sarah laughed at the thought of bearing a son in her old age, the LORD asked Abraham, *“Is any thing too hard for the LORD?”* (Gen. 18:14) Look back to Biblical examples. Look back to this morning, and yesterday, and last week, and last year. Did the Lord see you through? Did you ALMOST have a catastrophe, but not quite? Did you breathe a sigh of relief, “Thank you, Lord, for my guardian angel?” How quickly we forget these daily “miracles” in our lives!

“HAPPY NEW YEAR”

Do we hesitate to say the words “Happy New Year!” because we know the new year will hold difficult challenges? Does “happy” always mean that we will be jolly and satisfied? Or can it mean that we will be at peace with God and content in His providences.

“Happy is that people whose God is the Lord.” (Psa 144:15) Often in fear for his life, punished when he sinned against the Lord, David knew that it is better to be in the hands of the Lord than away from Him.

The proverbs of Solomon, who pleased the Lord by praying for wisdom, give these definitions of happiness:

“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom.” (Prov. 3:13)

“He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.” (Prov. 14:21)

“Whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he.” (Prov. 16:20)

“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.” (Prov. 29:18)

Make happiness happen – look to the Lord, find wisdom, have mercy on the poor, trust in the Lord, see a vision. Happiness doesn't come to the person who is determined to be bored or complaining. **The happiest people are not the people with the fewest troubles, but the people who use the troubles as stepping stones.**

Not only should we look back to reassure ourselves that God has blessed us in the past, but **LOOK AROUND! Be AWARE!** Get out the Kleenex, have a good cry; then wipe your tears away so that you can see the blessing at your fingertips. Join forces with the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and give a bit of happiness to everyone you see today.