“A Happy New Year”

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Do you want to know how you may have a happy new year, not for one day only, but for a whole year? We do not mean that you may have a happy year only, but that from Jan. 2nd to Dec. 31st, it may be a new year also.

Your parents love to make you happy. They are always thinking of you and planning for you, and doing things to make you happy. But your Heavenly Father loves you much more than the earthly parents to whose care He has entrusted you. Before He brought any of His human family into the world, He provided everything that they could possibly need to make them happy.

He knew that their greatest happiness could come only through knowing Him, so He made for them a wonderful and beautiful book in which they might learn of Him. We call it the Book of Nature. He taught His children to read in this book, so that they might learn to know and love Him. But His Word, which is written there, is infinite, like Himself, and so if one should read there for millions of years, he would not come to the end of it, for there is none.

A great philosopher who had read more in this book than most men, said at the close of his life that he felt like a child on the beach picking up a few shining shells and pebbles cast up by the tide, while the great ocean of truth lay beyond, waiting to be explored.

There are many things that people learn from books written by men, which they must leave behind when Jesus comes, for they will not be of any use to them in the world to come. But it is not so with anything that we learn in God’s Book. The lessons from it that we learn here will prepare our minds to continue the study of the wonderful works of God in the new earth throughout eternity. So if we now neglect this Book that our Father has written for us, it will be an eternal loss to us, while all that we learn in it now will be our eternal gain.

The pages of God’s Book have been marred by sin, and the minds of men are blinded, so that they cannot safely study the works of God, without the Bible which He has given us for our guide. Here Jesus tells us to consider the lilies, to behold the birds, to ask the beasts, the fishes, and the fowls of the air, and they shall all teach us of God. Job tells us to “stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.”

It is for this purpose that God has given us the Sabbath; that we may cease from all our work, and think of Him who in the beginning made the new earth. The Sabbath is to teach

us constantly, every day, to consider the wondrous works of God, and this will remind us always of the beginning—of God who in the beginning made all things new.

This will teach us of His power to create in us clean hearts, to make us day by day new creatures in Christ Jesus. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new, and all things are of God.”

“O timely happy, timely wise,
Hearts that with rising morn arise;
Eyes that the beam celestial view
Which evermore makes all things new.”

Now do you not see how you may have a happy new year all through the year? It is by being yourself made new every morning by that power which in the beginning made the new heavens and the new earth, and the new man, and which will soon restore and again “make all things new.” And all the works of God, which He tells you to consider, will teach you and remind you every day of His power to do this. And this will make a happy new year for you all the time, as the poet Cowper says:—

“Happy who walks with Him; who what He finds
Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flower,
Or what he views of beautiful or grand
In nature, from the broad, majestic oak
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,
Prompts with remembrances of a present God.”

Here is the whole secret of happiness: the presence of God; for “in His presence is fulness of joy.” It is this that makes heaven, and that is the joy of the angels. So everything that reminds us of His constant presence is to make us happy; and this is why He has surrounded us with all the wonderful and beautiful works of His hands.

Then will you not every day read in the Book of God’s works some lesson of His wisdom, love and power? From week to week we will try to help you with some suggestions. Let all the things you see remind you of Him who made them, and who made you, and is with you, giving you life and breath and all things. Thus will His abiding presence with you through all the days give you indeed a happy New Year.