

Washington

12/27/56

"The New Year"

1/7/56

Scripture Lesson: - Psalm 121

11/59

Text: Psalm 121

12/9/59

Introduction: - The years, the centuries, and the milleniums roll on in their ceaseless march, unimpeded by the events that transpire upon the earth. The movement of the hands upon the clock cannot be checked by any human endeavor or achievement.

Age upon age is calling as we stand at the doorway of another year. Both the heritage of the past and the expectancy of the future converge upon us. The years of the past with their opportunities are gone forever. Like Nebuchadnezzar's dream, they can never be recalled. Whatever the memories, their opportunities can never be recalled.

The new year brings us to a new vantage point of perspective. It is time for inventory and review and for making a new beginning. While the failures of the past can but humble us, they should not crush us. God in his goodness, in each new year, gives us another chance, another opportunity, another page in the book of life on which to write a better record.

The old year was recently taken to the burying ground of the centuries, amid the breezes of the winter. The old year leaped forth upon us, only twelve short months ago, and now has been committed forever to the grave-yard of the centuries. But within the cycle of twelve short months, much of history and destiny were written in our individual lives and in the nations of the world.

There is a "heap of livin'" in every year. Millions of souls are born into the world, while other millions depart from time into eternity. Fortunes of wealth have been accumulated and other fortunes have been lost. There was much rejoicing and much weeping during the swift passage of the old year. Many ambitions were blighted, and still other visions and ambitions were given birth.

I.

It is with mingled hopes, joys, sorrows, and anticipation that the millions of the earth lift up their eyes toward the tomorrows of another year. We enter the New Year with some encouragement for an increase in business activity in all the major industries. Acute economic worries do not seem to be immediately upon the horizon.

A major problem that will be pressing for a settlement is the "cold war" that has been a sore spot for quite a few years. The blunders of the past will continue to plague us. Even, though a settlement was reached, these blunders would continue to embarrass us.

The pivotal issues on which hinge the destinies of mankind are of such magnitude that they are beyond solution by human wisdom. Our only hope and our only sure defense is in God and in the salvation which he offers through his well beloved Son, Jesus Christ. As we stand upon the threshold of a new year we should say with the Psalmist: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

Without the light that cometh from above, a strong case could be made for pessimism and despair. The apostle Peter speaks of: "A light that shineth in a dark place." The light of the day star of hope is still shining. The light has not been eclipsed by the darkness and the confusion of the world.

This fact is sufficient to encourage us to gird ourselves anew for fresh battles and conquests for our Lord. These days call for valiant and courageous living. There are tremendous things to be accomplished for our Lord during the year ~~1964~~ 1965

II.

This is no time to be at ease in Zion. God has s

said in his word: "Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion." Many good people content themselves with a well feathered nest. But the great victories that are to be won for our Lord, cannot be won in a feathered nest. They must be won on the hard battle lines of a forward advance.

As we lift up our eyes beyond the portal entry of the new year, let us not look for ease or the place of least resistance as followers of Jesus Christ. If we follow him, without retrenchment or compromise, we are certain to encounter a cross. Jesus said, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." But whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake in the gospel, the same shall save ~~him~~ ^{it}. (Mark 8:34, 35).

The call of the new year is to spend ourselves completely for Jesus Christ. We save our lives by losing them completely in him. We can well afford to go all the way for him, for his way is the best way. In fact, his way is the only safe and sure way.

Leaders visit III. *Isaiah 40:31*

The reverberations of national and international complexities, should serve as awakening blasts, and should stir all of us to new and higher endeavors for our Lord this coming year. Life is uncertain and we never know what a day may bring forth, but we are certain of peace and security in him and we likewise are certain that Jesus Christ is the only remedy for the ills that may beset our lives and the ills of the whole world.

The supreme need of the hour is a mighty spiritual awakening that will make Christ real in the hearts of men. But it will take more than the assent of the mind for such an awakening. There is a price that must be paid on the part of the followers of Christ. Vast numbers of his followers live in a state of complacency and indifference relative to the urgent and challenging need for a mighty spiritual revealment. It should be a

personal and searching question with each of us as to wherein we may do more for our Lord in 1960 than we did during the old year that has passed and gone forever.

Conclusion:- Let us highly resolve that under God we will give all diligence in the study of the Holy Scriptures, in prayer, in personal evangelism, in attendance upon divine worship, and in the doing of all the good we can, to all the people we can, in every way we can, to the praise of him who "hath made us kings and priests unto God and his father; unto him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

Our failures are a source of ^{embarrassment,} ~~disappointment~~ and we would like to blot them out. of the record. We are unable to do this. The record of our sins stand out to condemn us and our failures to humiliate us. But God has made provision for blotting out the old record of sin. He says in his word, that if we will repent of our sins, that he will remember them no more forever. He says that he will remove them from us as far as the east is from the west. It is possible for all condemnation to be removed from the mind of God.

Conclusion extended:- A worthy prayer for all of us, is expressed in these words. "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!" This prayer cannot be fulfilled in our lives without Christ. With Christ all things are possible pertaining to our eternal welfare. With his, we can walk the dusty lanes of sorrow and disappointment, in triumph and victory. With him, we can walk down the years of the tomorrows, with all of their uncertainties for reverses and disappointments, with assurance and confidence, because our hands are clasped in his. Jesus Christ is our only guarantee for the future. With him, the future is bright, without him, the future holds no single ray of hope.