

[R3913 : page 3]

1907 – OUR YEAR TEXT – 1907

OUR book of "Daily Heavenly Manna" is evidently being greatly used of the Lord for the blessing of the household of faith. The bringing thus of a morsel of meat from the storehouse of Truth, with a comment upon it, at the beginning of each day, is evidently tending toward the strengthening of the new nature, the new mind, by continually directing it in the ways marked out in the Lord's Word. Additionally our year-texts are helpful, as tending to remind us along the lines of our general duty, as the daily texts refresh us and strengthen us along particular lines. We have had this in mind in the choosing of this text, and believe it to be one the frequent consideration of which will be profitable – and the value of all these spiritual refreshments is enhanced by the realization that the minds, the hearts, of the Lord's people

See more Books & Articles at www.foodfornewcreature.com

same times.

As announced in a previous issue we have this year's texts in large supply, very elegantly gotten up and at a trifling cost, so that none need do without them – none need be deprived of this help and encouragement. Desiring that every reader of this journal should have the comfort and profit of this means of grace – this assistance in the narrow way – we have made the prices extremely low, simply to cover cost, but additionally now propose that if there be any of you who cannot afford to purchase we will take pleasure in supplying you without charge: that thus we may assist in washing the feet of the Lord's disciples – assist in cleansing them from earthly defilements and thus in preparing them for the heavenly courts.

TO WHOM IS OUR TEXT APPLICABLE

The Apostle does not address the world, however morally well disposed they may be. None has an interest in the things above unless first of all he has heard of Jesus as the Redeemer, renounced sin and fled to the Savior for refuge – justification. He must have gone even further than this to have an interest in the things above: he must have consecrated his justified life, presenting it a living sacrifice to the Lord (Rom. 12:1), and been accepted of the Lord and been begotten again of the holy Spirit, and thus have started his experiences as a spirit being – a New Creature in Christ Jesus.

It is well for us to have continually in mind the sharp distinction which the Scriptures draw as between the natural man and the New Creature. The natural man, however well disposed, is of the earth earthy. This does not signify that he must be sensual, degraded, devilish; for, on the contrary, some natural men have very fine characters indeed, considering that they are sharers with all of mankind in the degradation of the fall. Adam thus was a natural man in his perfection, in the image of God. He could not set his affections on things above, for he had no revelation respecting them, no hopes or prospects centered there. His interests, in harmony with his nature, were earthly. So it will be also in the future age. While mankind under the blessings of restitution will be restored to the full perfection of human nature lost through Adam, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ (Acts 3:19-21), although they will be reverencing the heavenly laws, messages, authorities, they will, properly enough, be giving their thought and attention largely to earthly things – appreciating especially the restitution blessings, privileges, opportunities that will then be afforded them.

THE CHRISTIAN'S CONFLICT

It is because the Lord has called us out of the world to constitute the New Creation, his "body," his "Bride," to share with him his spiritual, heavenly glories and honors, therefore we should ever keep this in mind and strive for these things, for "even hereunto were ye called." – I Pet. 2:21. Called to "glory, honor and immortality," it remains for us to make this calling and election sure. (Rom. 2:7; 2 Pet. 1:10.) Again he reminds us, "Let us fear lest a promise having been left us of entering into his rest [the heavenly rest] any of you should seem to come short of it." – Heb. 4:1.

The Apostle forewarns us that we must not forget that, although we are reckoned by the Lord and by ourselves and by the brethren as dead according to the flesh and alive according to the spirit, nevertheless we have this treasure of the new life in the earthen vessel, which is only reckoned dead, but which really is very much alive and constitutes our chief enemy. Not that we have two wills and are thus double-minded (Jas. 1:8). Thank God, No! We have only the one will, and it is fully devoted to the Lord according to the terms of its consecration. But this one new will can **[R3913 : page 4]** not have its new body until it proves itself worthy of it, and then will gain it as a reward in the resurrection. Meantime the conflict is on between the new will (which has no body of its own kind) and the old flesh (which has no will of its own kind). In order to be a conqueror the new will must struggle with the old flesh, and by the Lord's assistance keep it under, in subjection until the end of the course, until literally dead.

The Apostle assures us that in proportion as the new mind, the New Creature, grows on the spiritual food, the promises of the Lord's Word – in proportion as it affiliates with other New Creatures and is thus strengthened and sustained by the holy Spirit granted to all such, it grows stronger and stronger for its

conflict with the world and the flesh and the Adversary. It cannot hope to conquer the Adversary nor the world, even though it may resist them; but it is encouraged to hope for victory in its combat with the flesh. The Apostle's assurance along this line is that "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11.) If the power of God was sufficient to quicken and energize the dead body of Jesus, surely he is able as well as willing to make it sufficient for us – to give us the victory over our flesh to the extent that sin need not reign in (dominate) our mortal bodies, but instead we, as New Creatures, will be able to use them more and more efficiently in the service of our Lord, to whom we have pledged our all.

WHY SET OUR AFFECTIONS ABOVE?

Since the new mind (the will) has no way of expressing itself except through the mortal body, and since the latter is prone to sin through inherited weaknesses, the new mind has a difficult task before it to rise from the grovelling things of sin and the sordidly selfish conditions surrounding everything at the present time to the grand heights of perfect love and unselfishness inculcated by the Spirit of the Lord, by which we have been begotten. Realizing that the tendency of the fallen flesh is continually downward, the New Creature is obliged to make heroic efforts to overcome **[R3914 : page 4]** the tendencies of the flesh and the spirit of the world in order that he may live in the world as not of the world, but on the contrary as a New Creature, a spiritual or heavenly creature, merely tabernacling for awhile with men in a body of flesh, far from perfect or acceptable to himself. Since, then, the constant tendency of the flesh is downward and in opposition to the new mind, it follows that those even who have already consecrated to the Lord need to reset or reestablish their affections on the heavenly things continually. A

little carelessness, a little looking away from the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him, a little putting of our minds and affections on earthly things, earthly hopes, earthly ambitions, earthly prospects, would speedily mean great loss to us – the revival, the strengthening of the old nature and the proportionate weakening of the new, and correspondingly a great backset as respects the race we are running for the heavenly crown, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus.

Is it any wonder then that the Apostle urges the Lord's faithful ones to set their affections on things above and not on things on earth? Surely not! It was his duty to remind us of the danger along this line and our duty to remind ourselves continually and to remind each other of the necessity for setting, fixing our affections, our minds, our hearts, more and more firmly on the heavenly things. It is with this in view that the Scriptures have been provided us as a guide to our new minds, and the throne of grace has been opened to us that we may come there, too, and obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. And the same gracious Provider has in these days given to the household of faith still further meat in due season whereby we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. At a time when earthly things are more attractive, more seductive than ever before in the world's history, the Lord opens before his faithful ones still clearer views of the heavenly crown, heavenly glories, honors and privileges and blessings, that they thus may give the strength to the new mind which will offset the seductive influences affecting us through the flesh.

HELPS OR HINDRANCES, WHICH?

We have today in the advancement of art, in the increase of wealth, in the better homes and their better furnishings, in improved roads and landscapes and more artistic clothing, in pictures and music and conveniences and wider business

prospects and opportunities, in the conveniences of mail, telegraph and telephone – in all these things we have a hundred-fold more to attract our minds and ambitions and desires to the earth and earthly things than had our forefathers of even a century ago. How needful it was that the Lord should open simultaneously to his faithful a clearer understanding of his Word and plan – of the riches of his grace and his lovingkindness toward us, his wonderful provisions which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of the natural man, but which God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit. (I Cor. 2:9.) Moreover, by the same Word we can see that these heavenly glories are nigh, even at the door, and that the earthly joys, ambitions and prospects under present conditions will be transitory, leading to the great time of trouble and anarchy which will blight every earthly prospect and at the same time mean the realization of our heavenly hopes and prospects and the ushering in of the glorious Kingdom of God's dear Son for the blessing of the world in general.

The means for the dissemination of this light of Present Truth for our aid is undoubtedly of the Lord. This journal, under the Lord's providence, cheers, comforts, and helps to inspire with fresh zeal and courage for the heavenly race about 50,000 of the Lord's advancing followers twice a month (we are now publishing about 30,000 at each issue, and estimate that this represents approximately 50,000 readers). The DAWNS, as Helping Hands and Bible Keys, are in the homes of nearly 2,000,000 of the most intelligent of the Lord's people, many of whom we find are considerably interested yet not on the WATCH TOWER list. (We deplore this fact: we would like to have on our lists, even though free, as to the *Lord's poor*, every child of God interested in Present Truth. We suggest to our readers cooperation along this line.)

An additional aid in setting our affections on things above is the fellowship of the brethren and participation with them in Berean Studies, DAWN Circles for Bible Study, and Prayer and Testimony meetings for mutual upbuilding in the fruits and graces of the Spirit through ministries of the Truth, in proportion as they are found helpful and valuable in aiding us to lose the spirit of the world and to receive more and more the Spirit of Christ – to set our affections on things above, and not on things on the earth.

HELPFULNESS OF METHOD AND RESOLUTION

The whole world is rapidly learning the value of method and resolution – learning that wobbling and indecision are responsible for the majority of failures, learning that a positiveness of will, of intention, is necessary to every good or noble result. As Christians – as disciples of Jesus, as soldiers of the cross, followers of the Lamb – we need to have this great fact well **[R3914 : page 5]** impressed upon our hearts. All of the Lord's teachings are in accord with this. He instructs us that in order to be acceptable to the Father at all we must make a full self-surrender, turn over an entirely new leaf, because we are now New Creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom old things have passed away and all things have become new – new motives, new hopes, new aspirations, new relationships, new rules, a new mind, a fixity of the will for the Lord and his righteousness.

"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways," hence the Lord does not expect the double-minded amongst his true followers, running in the race for the prize of the high calling. On the contrary, he instructs those who would be his disciples, his members, to sit down first and count the cost. Those who love sin and its joys and sorrows would not be acceptable to the Lord as members of his Bride class. He desires only those who, after counting the cost – the renouncement of earthly things and

ambitions, etc., in favor of the heavenly blessings, hopes, promises and joys – do with full purpose of heart give themselves unreservedly to the Lord, to henceforth be his at any and every cost, with the understanding that if we suffer with him we shall reign with him, if we be dead with him we shall also live with him, and with the resolution to count all earthly ambitions, opportunities and hopes but as loss and dross that we may win Christ and be found in him – members of his body.

Whoever takes this step of full consecration does the proper thing and realizes a blessing, and that blessing will continue and increase in proportion as the same spirit continues to guide and control in all the little affairs of life. If a Christian at all, his will is fixed so far as its general purpose and direction go; nevertheless this is not enough – there might be a firmness, a positiveness of the will as respects the great fact of consecration, yet a slackness as respects the little details of everyday life. Our suggestion is that this fixity of purpose should be extended to all of life's matters – that the words of our mouths, the meditations of our hearts, and so far as possible every act of life might speak forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. Whoever takes this position is setting, fixing, establishing his affections, his mind, his heart on things above, and loosening them as respects things of earth.

Such will grow the more rapidly, the more thriftily. On the contrary those who, even with fixity of will, rule their mortal bodies slackly, too leniently, are in danger of failing to come off more than conquerors, failing to become members of the little flock. They are in danger of becoming members of the great company, for whose development it will be necessary that they pass through a time of trouble for the washing of their robes in the blood of the Lamb and for the development of character thereby. Much better is it that we develop this character in harmony with the Lord's Word without the bitter experiences, but

with, on the contrary, the continued assurance of the Lord's favor and smile, encouragement and blessing upon our endeavors to set our affections on things above, to cut loose from the earthly things, and to take a firm stand in even the small affairs of life for the Lord and his cause in harmony with the directions of his Word.

Let us unite our hearts and our prayers the one for the other, that this Year-Text may be deeply impressive to all of us and deeply helpful, for we realize that its admonition is from the Lord and is the essence of wisdom, the wisdom that cometh from above.
