



*14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. (Gen 1:14)*

*12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. (Psalm 90:12 (KJV))*

This is another gem of a hymn<sup>1</sup> from that old saintly hymn writer, Frances Havergal (daughter of an Anglican clergyman) written in 1874. The lyrics were written by Miss Havergal as greetings included on her New Year's cards to friends. The tune of choice for the hymn is *Aurelia* by Samuel Wesley (1864). An alternate tune is *Llangloffan* by Daniel S. Evans.

I hesitated to write about this hymn since the biblical new year (Nisan – Spring) does not coincide with the secular New Year. It would not be unlike the Creator to have begun His Creation at the beginning of the Season of Life which is Spring. Many other significant spiritual events occur during that period of time.

I offer brief examples of the manner in which God's plan is consistent with that Spring possibility. 1) New Years is recognized by Judaism to be Nisan (March-April). 2) the Middle Eastern Countries still celebrate the first day of Spring as Now-Ruz (New Years). 3) The Ark of Noah came to rest on Ararat on the 17<sup>th</sup> Nisan. 4) Christ was crucified on the 14<sup>th</sup> Nisan (beginning of Passover), rose from the dead on 16<sup>th</sup> Nisan, and appeared to the disciples in the closed room on the 17<sup>th</sup> Nisan (see John 20:19-23). And 5) It was the first month of Nisan in which the children of Israel left Egypt and observed the Lord's Passover. Later in Hebrew law, the lamb was to be sacrificed around 3 PM on 14 Nisan, and the Passover observed beginning that evening and next day (being a High Sabbath). Christ died at 3 PM on 14 Nisan and spent the Passover Sabbath at rest in the tomb. The first day of the week began at sundown at end of 15 Nisan – the 16<sup>th</sup> Nisan. At the end of the first day of the week would have been the beginning of 17<sup>th</sup> Nisan. It is interesting to speculate that if the conception of Jesus had occurred in Nisan, His birth would have occurred in December. (I do not proffer this as

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<sup>1</sup> This hymn is often used, as it was this year, as the New Year's Message in the AOC Sunday Report.

biblical proof, but merely something worthy of consideration amidst all the doubts being shed on the observance of Christmas.)

Even given my doubts on the scriptural merit of celebrating January 1 as New Year, consistent with my belief that it is absolutely appropriate to celebrate Christmas every day of the year, so must it be appropriate to celebrate every day the Lord has given us on His green earth as the first day of the New Year of our lives – even January 1st. As well, the devotion was the request of a dear friend.

### **Another Year Is Dawning**

Another year is dawning, dear Father, let it be  
In working or in waiting, another year with Thee.  
Another year of progress, another year of praise,  
Another year of proving Thy presence all the days.

Another year of mercies, of faithfulness and grace,  
Another year of gladness in the shining of Thy face;  
Another year of leaning upon Thy loving breast;  
Another year of trusting, of quiet, happy rest.

Another year of service, of witness for Thy love,  
Another year of training for holier work above.  
Another year is dawning, dear Father, let it be  
On earth, or else in Heaven, another year for Thee.

*“Another year is dawning, dear Father, let it be In working or in waiting, another year with Thee. Another year of progress, another year of praise, Another year of proving Thy presence all the days.”* The first conscious thoughts of our daily awakening should be to thank God for the coming light of day and the blessings of joy and service it may offer. *O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; 2 To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.* (Psalm 63:1-2) Of course, it should be granted that our souls can neither thirst after God, nor long for Him when in a dry and thirsty land, unless we have first sought after Him under intimate joy in the sanctuary of our hearts. We had best pray for the benefits of the day at hand rather than the whole year itself. *“Give us this day, our daily Bread”* – the only blessing besought in the Lord’s Prayer.

*“Another year of mercies, of faithfulness and grace, Another year of gladness in the shining of Thy face; Another year of leaning upon Thy loving breast; Another year of trusting, of quiet, happy rest.”* Frances Havergal is surely resting on the reminiscences of blessings of past years as she asks for the same in future years. To one such as Frances was, she is assured not only of another year of mercies, faithfulness, and grace; of gladness in the shining of *thy face*; but an eternity of such bliss. In that sense, she asks too little in a YEAR. She, and millions of other faithful saints, now enjoy that trusting, happy rest for which she prayed. *24 The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: 25 The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: 26 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* (Num 6:24-26)

*“Another year of service, of witness for Thy love, Another year of training for holier work above. Another year is dawning, dear Father, let it be On earth, or else in*

*Heaven, another year for Thee.*" This perfectly summarizes the sentiments expressed in the first two verses. We do not ask, in earnest faith, for another year of prosperity (for God will provide whatever is needful), but rather for another year of privilege in service to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. If we are dutiful in that service, our joys and blessings will exceed every expectation. The life of Frances Havergal was consecrated to her Lord in a measure seldom achieved in modern times. As her words above reveal, another year is dawning beyond the last horizon, and her work is still blessing souls untold in number today as much, or even more, than while she was with us and writing hymns about the goodness of the Lord. Instead of another year of service, Frances now has an Eternity of privilege in service.

NOTE: We would be advised to learn of the works of such saints as Frances Havergal, and emulate their example in Christian service and love. She authored hundreds of hymns among which are these old standards; Like a River Glorious, Take my Life and Let it Be, I Gave my Life for Thee, and Who is on the Lord's Side. Of the composition of the second hymn, Frances says:

"I went for a little visit of five days," wrote Frances Havergal, explaining what prompted her to write her well-known hymn, "Take My Life and Let it Be."

"There were ten persons in the house; some were unconverted and long prayed for, some converted but not rejoicing Christians. [God] gave me the prayer, 'Lord, give me all in this house.' And He just did. Before I left the house, everyone had got a blessing. The last night of my visit I was too happy to sleep and passed most of the night in renewal of my consecration, and those little couplets formed themselves and chimed in my heart one after another till they finished with "ever only, ALL FOR THEE!"

"ALL FOR THEE!" A peculiar reference to God found only in Shakespearean English and in the King James Bible. The word 'you' falls short of an English equivalent.