

WHO CAN TELL what experiences lie just before us within the portals of the New Year! Ah! 'tis better so; 'tis better that the future is open to our Lord alone, and that we by faith should trust Him for life's blessings and for a measure of the peace which passeth all understanding and which the world can neither give nor take away. It is better, too, that the trials, the difficulties, the sharp stones and thorns of the narrow way we tread are seen alone by our gracious Care-taker who has promised His faithful that all things shall be so overruled as to outwork for their highest welfare.

'My times are in Thy hand; my God, I wish them there.'

But while rejoicing that God knows, not we, what lies before us of joy or pain, we may profitably retrospect the past year and begin the new one with good resolutions. Indeed, the custom of merchants to take an account of stock and to map out their business energies at the beginning of each new year is evidently a wise one which may be adapted to our still more important spiritual interests and activities.

Our special concern should be to abide under the shadow of the Almighty, by abiding in His love and hence under the assurance that all shall work for our good. Then with hearts full of faith and rejoicing that the day of redemption draweth nigh, let us use our every opportunity for promoting peace and consolation amongst those of the world with whom we are in contact.

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God'.

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As the time of trouble closes in, the 'foolish virgin' class are to get the oil, the light; and we should be on the alert to assist them. Many of the worldly also will then be amenable to the Truth who are now deaf to it.

Perhaps this year may be one of our most successful years for witnessing. In the meantime let us never forget that our main responsibility is in connection with our own covenant with the Lord—a covenant of sacrifice—whereby we are to make our calling and election sure.

'They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.'—*Malachi 3:17.* [R4937]