

First Day of the First Month 1 of 2

#0595

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—January 1, 1982

Let us turn to Exodus, the 40th chapter, verses 1–2. I'm interested to see how many people will find out why we have this text tonight. As soon as somebody finds out what you think is the reason, I want you to raise your hand.

What is it, David?

[Brother David] The first day of the first month.

[Elder Frazee] All right. We call that what? New Year's Day. It wasn't the same time of the year, but whenever you start, you start.

“On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation” Exodus 40:2.

God does things in an orderly way. He has a certain time for certain things to take place. It's by God's appointment that you and I are here tonight to start a happy new year. I'm not a prophet. I don't need to be to tell you that this coming year is going to be the worst year the world has ever seen up to date. But I am happy to tell you it can be the best year in your life and mine, and everybody else that will let God have His way.

You see, this tabernacle that Moses set up on New Year's Day was according to the divine specifications. When God gave him the directions in the 25th chapter of Exodus, He told him to make it how? According to the pattern. As Paul puts it in Hebrews 8:5:

“See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount” Hebrews 8:5.

There's a great trouble in the world today. The thing that's responsible for the chaos, the violence, the utter inability to solve human problems is simply this. Men have turned away from the divine blueprint and have set up architectural agencies of their own. And some are building without even consulting their own architects. But thank God there is a people in this world who are looking heavenward for direction.

This evening, I want to share with you some things that have blessed and are blessing me, and I present them to you as a kind of a buffet luncheon this New Year's night. You can select whatever you find that will help *you*.

First of all, I want to present to you three wonderful blessings that I get by looking to Jesus and then some practical applications of them.

The first blessing that I get by looking to Jesus this New Year's Day, and I expect to do it every day this year, is the blessing of acceptance, the blessing of acceptance.

Turn, if you please, to Ephesians the first chapter and the sixth verse. You know, I like to be accepted. I find that even the dog likes to be accepted. And I've got more brains than he has, and I need the acceptance more than the dog does. Don't you hate to feel rejected? Or even taken for granted casually? To know that you're loved, that you belong, accepted, that's a wonderful thing.

Well, God lets human beings give us some lessons in this, but the real acceptance is in Jesus. He has made us accepted in Whom, does this text say?

“...He hath made us accepted in the Beloved”
Ephesians 1:6.

Now, that isn't put in there just to fill up space, “the Beloved.” This tells me this, that as Christ is God's beloved Son, if I'm in Him, I'm part of what's accepted; I'm part of what's beloved.

You see, Jesus got that all settled in His death and resurrection and ascension and intercession. When Jesus died upon the cross, He took my place, bore my sins; suffered my punishment. When He rose from the dead, the Bible says He rose for my justification [a paraphrase of Romans 4:25].

You remember that that Sunday morning, the first one to see Him was who? Mary Magdalene.

She wanted to worship Him, but He said, “Don't detain me, Mary, not now. I must go” where? “To My Father. And go tell the other disciples that I'm ascending to My Father and your Father” [a paraphrase of John 20:17].

And He was on His way. What a wonderful trip that was. Just think, for more than 30 years, He'd been away from heaven. Now, He was coming back. In the ages of eternity past, He'd been there as the divine Son, one equal with the Father, sharing all His attributes. Now, He is also a member of what family? The human family.

Explain it? No, I couldn't begin to explain it, but I believe it with all my heart. And I thank God that the One that went to heaven that morning went there for *me*. And do you know that when He got there, the angels all wanted to worship Him, and He wouldn't receive their worship any more than He would Mary's worship? Not yet. He went in to the Father, and the Father held out His arms, but He wasn't ready to receive that embrace.

Think of it, after more than 30 years being away, there was something on His heart that had to be settled before He could receive the worship of the angels or the embrace of His Father.

What was it?

“Father, I want those that Thou hast given Me to be with Me where I am” [a paraphrase of John 17:24].

And He was thinking not merely of a mass of human beings. He was thinking of them individually. He was thinking of me just as if I were the only one.

You say, “How can that be with the millions?”

I don’t understand it, but I believe it with all my heart because He says so. And really, friends, the more I look at it, the more sense it makes, because why would He come down here for just a number of people? He was coming down for *me*. I’m worth that much to Him. He came down for you. You’re worth that much to Him.

And my point is when the Father said, “Yes, all those people can come. Your sacrifice is sufficient. You are accepted, and all your church is accepted in You. I was accepted *in* the what? In the Beloved.

Do you see the meaning of that word?

“...This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”
Matthew 3:17.

Well, if I’m in Jesus, I’m accepted *in Him*. I’d better stay in Him. What do you say? Why not, friends?

Now, this has a very practical application. Where shall I find my joy and satisfaction all during this new year? Shall I find it in keeping track of all the good things I did and gloat over them? No, no. No.

“My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus’ name.”
Seventh-Day Adventist Hymnal, #522, first stanza.

You see, dear ones, it makes a world of difference whether I find my acceptance in what I have done or in what He’s done. Not what these hands have done, but what Jesus did. I’m accepted in what? The Beloved. I think that’s something you’ll want to rejoice over every day this year. I intend to.

Another blessing that I have received and that I expect to receive every day this year is the blessing of looking to Jesus for my power, my strength to do the right thing.

Philippians the 4th chapter and the 13th verse, you see the Gospel includes not only forgiveness for the past, but power for the future. It includes not only pardon but victory. It includes not only changing our record but changing us.

Paul says:

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Now, as the result of that, what is the Christian enabled to say, in Philippians 4:13?

“I can do...” Philippians 4:13.

What?

“...all things through Christ...” Philippians 4:13.

Don’t forget that “through Christ.” That’s the whole point. But don’t forget the “I can do all things,” either.

It isn’t enough for Caleb to do a lot of things and drive the giants out. It isn’t enough for Paul and Peter to raise the dead. I must somewhere get hold of the fact that I can meet *my* problems and do the work God has given to me, through Whom? Through Christ. The same Jesus that pardons my sins has promised to keep me from doing the bad thing over again. Is that right?

“...Call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins” Matthew 1:21.

I want you to repeat Philippians 4:13 again, all together:

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” Philippians 4:13.

“That is, I could if everybody would cooperate; if I can get my wife to be good to me; and if I can get my neighbors to be careful how they treat me; and if I can get the committees to vote what I think will help me most; if I can get the cooperation of everybody I can get something done.”

Is that what Paul is saying? No.

“It’s all right for Paul to say that because look who he is.”

Do you know where he was writing this from? A dungeon, yes. Paul was in a dungeon when he wrote these words. And he was rejoicing (read the first chapter of this book of Philippians), he was rejoicing in the fact that the things that had happened to him that put him in prison were falling out for the furtherance of the Gospel [a paraphrase of Philippians 1:12].

It’s a wonderful thing to be more interested in what happens to the Gospel than what happens to me. When a man has that dedication along with that trust, he can say:

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” Philippians 4:13.

But we’ll never get that courage and faith studying ourselves, friends.

Jesus says:

“Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth...” Isaiah 45:22.

Oh, my heart goes out in longing that everybody here tonight (for God brought you here to hear this message), that everybody here tonight shall go out these doors strong in the assurance that Jesus is going to keep *you* from falling this year, looking to Him, of course.

How did Peter learn the lesson? He had to learn it looking to Jesus. When he took his eyes off the Savior, what happened to him that night on the lake? He sank. He should have. Nobody can walk on water of himself, can he? And nobody can live the Christian life of himself, by himself.

Christianity is not a system of ethics, merely. It’s not a list of things that you must do or not do, and if you do that, you’re okay. It’s an experience of turning from self to Jesus, depending upon what He *has* done for us and *is* doing in us. Alike, we are dependent upon God for both. Aren’t we?

Do you know of any way to take care of the past except in Him? I don’t. Do you know any way to meet the problems of the present without Him? I don’t. I need Him just as much for one as the other. One is just as much His gift as the other. And I thank God looking unto Jesus I’m safe.

Shall we say that Philippians 4:13 again?

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” Philippians 4:13.

Does He strengthen you? How many of you believe it? Can I see your hands? Thank God. Oh friends, don’t be afraid to hold up your hand.

You say, “Well, I don’t feel like it, Brother Frazee.”

Do it anyway because God says so. Do it anyway because God says so.

Now, the third blessing that I get and am getting and expect to get every day this year, this happy new year by looking to Jesus is His guidance. I expect the Lord to reveal His plans and His wisdom, which I need.

And a text that helps me on that is Psalm 32 verse 8. Turn over to this wonderful hymn book of the Bible, the book of Psalms. Oh, I’m so glad to hear all those leaves rustling as you turn to the Bible. It’s what the Bible says that has life in it, isn’t it?

What's the first word in this text? "I." Who's the "I"? God.

"I will..." Psalm 32:8.

Do what? What's that fourth word? "Thee."

"I will instruct thee..." Psalm 32:8.

Who's "thee"? Well, that's you, isn't it?

Is that you, John? Is that you, David? Is that you, Roy?

"I will instruct *thee* and teach *thee* in..." Psalm 32:8.

What?

"...the way which thou shalt go..." Psalm 32:8.

Well, isn't that what we want to know?

"...I will guide thee with Mine eye" Psalms 32:8.

Prayer, then, is not a matter of bringing to God what we want Him to do.

We're not to come with a list like we'd make out for Santa Clause and say, "Lord, give me this, give me that, give me this, give me that, give me this, give me that, give me this, give me that."

Nothing wrong with praying for something we think we need or even might want. But remember, the great purpose of prayer is not to get God to give us what we want, but it's to find out what He wants. Are you with me? Are you really? Thank God.

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye" Psalm 32:8.

Isn't it far better to let God plan for us than to make our own plans? Some people don't even bring their plans to God to be blessed.

But oh, how sweet it is in the ears of God when He hears one of His children say, "Father, I've come to find out Your will."

This was the great victory that Jesus experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane. And He had built that character through 30 years of always choosing to do His Father's will and of seeking His Father's guidance.

You see, when Jesus was here, He was dependent upon His Father, just the same as we're dependent on God. He had put Himself in that position. Instead of

drawing on His own divine resources to meet the enemy, He drew on His Father. Why? So that you and I could learn from Him how to do it ourselves.

And so, He claimed this promise in Psalms 32:8. He knew it by heart.

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye” Psalm 32:8.

Was He guided? Will you be guided this year? Oh, that it may be so for every one.

Now, God has various ways of guiding us, and I’m not going into all that tonight. Perhaps another evening we can review some things on that. God guides us through His Word and through His providence and by His Spirit, through committees and counsels and all that.

But I want to tell you something. Unless I’m looking unto Jesus, I won’t understand His leading through any of these channels.

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye” Psalm 32:8.

If somebody’s guiding you with his eye, where do you need to be looking? You’ll need to be looking at his eye, won’t you?

Did you ever see a well-trained child? There *are* some around. Did you ever see a well-trained child that just a nod or even a look from father and mother would direct that child what to do? It’s a beautiful thing, beautiful thing.

Oh, that you and I may be so sensitive to the will of God, so anxious to do our heavenly Father’s will, and so adept in experience in learning it, that just a nod, a look of His eye and we’re off on His errand.

It’s true it comes more and more by experience. But unless we’re willing to do His will, we’ll never know the fine details of His beautiful plans.

Somebody says, “Well, I try that, and I get into all kinds of trouble.”

Yes, Jesus got into more trouble than you’ve ever had, and He was following that plan. The path that Jesus leads us on is not a path free from difficulty or trial. The beautiful thing is that it’s a way *through* those trials and obstacles, through them.

Now, let’s see, what are the three things that I’ve shared with you this new year we find by looking to Jesus? First is what? Acceptance. The second is? Power and strength to do His will. And the third is? Guidance, to know His will.

Isn’t that wonderful? I was going to say if we get even half of that, we’d have a lot to be thankful for, wouldn’t we? But it’s a package deal, friends, it’s a package deal. We need the *whole* package to get *any* of it the way it should be gotten—acceptance, power, and His plan, His guidance.

Now, turn to Matthew the fourth chapter and the fourth verse. Because I want these three blessings, I'm thankful for this verse. And I've made up my mind this New Year Day; I've been thinking about it this week. You know New Year's is a time for resolutions, isn't it? I've made a resolve that I'm going to do what Matthew 4:4 says or suggests. Let's see if you can find it in this text. Do you find it?

“...Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word
that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” Matthew 4:4.

Life comes then by listening to what? The Word of God. By doing more than listening to it, by receiving it, as a man gets physical life by taking bread, not merely looking at it but by putting it in his mouth a little piece at a time (a big piece if you *have* to do it that way), but doing what with it? Masticating it, chewing it, cutting it up into fine pieces, letting the saliva mix with it, and so on in the digestive process, till it becomes a part of the blood and on till it becomes a part of bone and muscle and brain. Wonderful process, isn't it?

Now, Jesus is the author of that, and He says that this illustrates how we're to live by what? By the Word. What kind of words? Words that proceed out of, what? The mouth of God.

I wonder how I'd find that.

Somebody says, “Well, take the Bible.”

But when I read the Bible, I find what Moses wrote, and David wrote, and Samuel wrote, and Luke wrote, and Matthew wrote, and Peter wrote, don't I? But I want to hear what God says.

The truth of the matter is if I want to hear what God says, I'll have to listen as He speaks through the Spirit of Prophecy, from Genesis to Revelation. Am I right? God has chosen this channel of revelation to communicate His will to human beings.

And again and again, through the Bible, we find instances of where people got into all kinds of trouble through not listening to the prophet. They thought their own ideas were better. And again and again, praise the Lord, we have beautiful illustrations of the victories and successes that came by listening to what God said through the prophet.

And so, we have that classic statement of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20:20:

“Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be
established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper”
2 Chronicles 20:20.

Does God speak through a prophet? Well, if He doesn't, he isn't a prophet. I mean, the man that claims to be a prophet isn't a prophet because to be a prophet means to speak for God. That's what it means to be a prophet.

Just like an ambassador. We send an ambassador from the United States to the court of St. James in England. That man speaks not for himself but for the United States government, right? The prophet is heaven's ambassador, speaking for God. And I repeat, if he doesn't speak for God, he's not a prophet. If he pretends to and isn't, he's a what kind of a prophet? False prophet. There's no middle ground. Anybody that claims to be a prophet is either speaking for God or he's a fake, a humbug, a false prophet, speaking for the Devil. No middle ground.

I've made up my mind that this year I'm going to spend more time with the inspired Words of God through what we call the Bible and through what we call the latter-day revelations in the Spirit of Prophecy.

Now, I'm not going to be so foolish or so extreme as to say I'm not going to look at *anything* all year long except those inspired sources. I'm merely telling you I'm going to spend more time with the inspired, and that means I've got to spend less time with what? The uninspired because there are only so many hours in a day.

And I really believe I'll get along better. What do you think? Would you advise me to follow that plan? Do you believe it enough to follow it yourself? Do you? If you find you're getting too much of it, let me know. Oh, I thank God for the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

You know, this month I've been on this hill and in these valleys here for 40 years. And one of the things that has inspired me all these years has been the experience in the example of a man by the name of John Burden.

How many of you ever heard of John Burden? He's the man that God, through the prophet, called to establish Loma Linda, a name that's now known through the world, a school for the training of Gospel medical missionary evangelists.

I was reading not long ago (I'd read it before, but I read it again; I got Dona to copy it out for me). It's something that the messenger to the remnant wrote to Elder Burden in 1906. You'll find it in the *Magan and Spalding Collection*, 395, or the same thing in *Loma Linda Messages*, page 332. Some of you have one; some the other.

But now, listen; listen to the message of the man that started that wonderful training program and that sanitarium at Loma Linda:

"Elder Burden, carry your work intelligently, ever consulting the Word of God, for this Word is very precious to the worker in the cause. Study the messages that God has sent to His people for the last sixty years through the Spirit of Prophecy. Do not seek the counsel of men, but by earnest prayer seek the wisdom of God. A mistake has been made in the past by leaning upon the guidance of men. Seek to correct this mistake" *Loma Linda Messages*, page 332.

Isn't that a wonderful statement? Anybody here like to hear it again? All right, for their benefit, I'm going to read it again:

“Elder Burden, carry your work intelligently, ever consulting the Word of God, for this Word is very precious to the worker in the cause. Study the messages that God has sent to His people for the last sixty years through the Spirit of Prophecy. Do not seek the counsel of men, but by earnest prayer seek the wisdom of God. A mistake has been made in the past by leaning upon the guidance of men. Seek to correct this mistake” *Ibid*.

David sings in the 119th Psalm:

“I have more understanding than all my teachers: for Thy testimonies are my meditation” Psalm 119:99.

Oh, I want to be a student of the inspired statements. I want to hear Jesus speaking through Moses and Isaiah, through Daniel and Ezekiel, through Peter and Paul, and through Ellen White.

Just the other day I came across this in a book that I’d read a long time ago, and I’d forgotten all about this statement.

But when I saw it, I said, “I’ve got to have that where I can use it.”

So, here it is. See if you don’t enjoy it. Now, this is not a statement by the Spirit of Prophecy. This is written by one of the leading workers among us back in 1883. None of you can remember that far back, but it’s in the *Review and Herald* of December 11, 1883; it sounds pretty up to date. Listen:

“Do Seventh-day Adventist believe that Mrs. E. G. White is infallible? The answer is no. Neither do they believe that Peter or Paul was infallible. They believe that the Holy Spirit which inspired Peter and Paul was infallible. They believe also that Misses White has, from time to time, received revelations from the Spirit of God, and that revelations made to her by the Spirit of God are just as reliable as revelations made by the same Spirit to other persons” *Review and Herald*, December 11, 1883.

Isn’t that wonderful? That’s so good I’m going to venture to read that again, too. Anybody like to have a second helping of that one? Good. All right. Remember, this is a *Review and Herald* of December 11, 1883. I think it was the president of the general conference writing it, George I. Butler. It sounds like him.

“Do Seventh-day Adventist believe that Mrs. E. G. White is infallible? The answer is no. Neither do they believe that Peter or Paul was infallible. They believe that the Holy Spirit which inspired Peter and Paul was infallible. They believe also that Misses White has, from time to time, received revelations from the Spirit of God, and that

revelations made to her by the Spirit of God are just as reliable as revelations made by the same Spirit to other persons" *Ibid.*

So, you see how happy I am that this year more than any year in my past life, I'm going to zero in on the inspired instructions. You know, I'm at that point in life where I don't know how long I'm going to live, but I know I've lived at least half my life. Would you agree with me? I hope the Lord comes before I go to sleep, but that's all with Him. But I know at least I'm going toward sunset.

And I've said that to say this, dear friends. Do you think that I'll wish that I'd spent more time with this, this, this, this, this and miss all these inspired writings?

Do you think I'll say when I get to the end of the road, "Oh, I wish I'd spent more time with the newspaper"? "More time with the radio"? "More time with the TV"? "More time with the magazines"? "More time keeping up, keeping up, keeping up, keeping up with what's going on"?

Ah friends, I know that students of prophecy are interested in what's going on, but I'll tell you. We learn more about the meaning of it all by digging deep into the inspired writings.

So remember, I haven't said that I'm never going to read anything that isn't inspired. I've just said, and you can join me if you wish, that I'm going to spend more time with the original sources, the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. And I don't have any question but what it's going to be good for me. I even hope that you can tell the difference in better sermons. The Lord grant it, dear friends, the Lord grant it.

Well now, there are a couple of other implications in what we've studied so far that I want to give you just briefly. Then, I want to have time for some testimonies. Then we're going to have the pictures.

If it is really true that my acceptance is in Jesus, if it's really true that He gives me power to do everything He wants done, if it's really true that He's promised to guide me, what should I do when I find myself in difficulties and trials and problems? What do you think I ought to do?

Well now, there are two things I can do. One is to deplore them, and the other is to surmount them. And I found an interesting little statement over here in *Desire of Ages*, 679, that tells me which to do. And oh, I hope there's somebody here tonight that'll decide to do this every day this new year. Listen:

"Though apparent impossibilities obstruct their way, by His grace they are to go forward. Instead of deploring difficulties, they are called upon to surmount them"
Desire of Ages, page 679.

What does it mean to "deplore" difficulties?

“Oh, I wish, I wish that weren’t in the way. I want to go ahead but look at that big log that’s in the road. I’d go if the way opened. I’d do it if I could. But there’s this difficulty, impossibility.”

That gives me an out, doesn’t it? Don’t need to do it because it’s too hard, too difficult, too impossible.

But instead of deploring difficulties, we’re called upon to do what? Surmount them. What does “surmount” mean? It means to get on top and go on over. Now, I could do that if it was a molehill, couldn’t I? But Jesus says we’re to do it with even mountains, right?

Now again, I don’t want to be extreme or lead anybody else to. I really don’t think there’s too much danger if we’ll listen to what God says. But friends, I predict that this year some people sitting right here (and I hope this man standing will be in on it) are going to attempt impossible things for God. But I tell you, we’ll never do it be weeping and crying and telling about how it can’t be done.

Do you remember twelve men that looked at the land of Canaan that God had told them to go in and look it over, and ten said what? It can’t be done. Did they tell the truth? Yes, they couldn’t do it.

But there were two men that gave another report. What were their names? Caleb and Joshua. Is there any man here tonight, or woman, or boy, or girl that can tell me the names of the other ten, any one of the ten? Are their names in the Bible? Yes, you can find them if you want to. But I don’t advise you to call your children by their names.

But Caleb and Joshua, bless their dear hearts, they said:

“Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” Numbers 13:30.

They had the same spirit that Paul had writing from the dungeon:

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” Philippians 4:13.

You know what my ears are listening for? They’re listening for that Caleb spirit. Instead of talking about our difficulties, let’s find God’s solution for them. What do you say?

Well, I had some more for you tonight, but I think that’s enough. What do you say? We can have some more next Friday night. I want to hear from you now. I want to hear about 20 at least people just come right up here quickly so that we can have our testimony meeting, and those who wish can look at the pictures from Belize.

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