

The image features a decorative border in a deep blue color, rendered in a style that resembles embossed or carved patterns. The border is highly ornate, with intricate scrollwork, floral motifs, and repeating geometric designs. In the center of the image is a large, empty white rectangle, which is framed by a thin, double-lined blue border. The word "JANUARY" is printed in a dark blue, serif, all-caps font, centered within the white rectangle.

JANUARY

# JANUARY 1

*For our present troubles are small and won't last very long.  
Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs  
them and will last forever!*

(2 CORINTHIANS 4:17, NLT)

**WHAT FORCE** within propels us forward with the determination that there is so much more to which we can look forward? That this life is not all there is; that there is more just beyond the curtain? As Believers, we experience what can perhaps best be described as homesickness. Singer/songwriter Squire Parsons caught the essence of that feeling when he wrote the beautiful song, “Beulah Land”:

I'm kind of homesick for a country  
To which I've never been before.  
No sad goodbyes will there be spoken  
for time won't matter anymore.  
Beulah Land, I'm longing for you...<sup>1</sup>

Mankind is naturally hard-wired to seek God. You will find Him when you turn away from sin and place your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Spend time learning of Him through His Word, the Bible.

## JANUARY 2

*He has made everything beautiful in its time.  
Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one  
can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.*

(ECCLESIASTES 3:11 NKJV)

**BLAISE PASCAL**, a famous French mathematician, philosopher and physicist made this assertion: “There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus.”<sup>2</sup> Sadly, all too often men and women try to fill that vacuum with things that will only kill, steal, or destroy<sup>3</sup>—drugs, alcohol, sex, pornography, thrill-seeking.

Like the innate ability of a carrier pigeon to find its way home, or a salmon to make its way back to its spawning grounds, or a swallow returning to San Juan Capistrano, Believers are inexorably drawn toward home. With eternity in our hearts, we are enticed by all that awaits us. Until we reach the place where Jesus awaits, you and I will be homesick for heaven.

Several times each year, I travel far from home. At some point during the trip, my heart always turns toward home and I long to be there with my wife and family. There is a yearning deep inside the heart of every Believer to be at home with the Father—a desire greater than any other.



## JANUARY 3

*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.*

(ISAIAH 43:2 ESV)

**AS A BELIEVER**, have you endured what you might call a “fiery trial?” If not, at some point in your walk with God, you will. One thing you will not have to fear is that He will take you aside and leave you there. Jehovah assured David in Psalm 23:4, “Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.”

The apostle Peter wrote in his first book, chapter 5, verse 7, “Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you.” It is sometimes difficult for us to remember while in the deep throes of apprehension that God is always ready and willing to shoulder our problems. All we need to do is ask for His help.

King Hezekiah, the twelfth ruler of Judea, was extraordinarily pious. When Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, dispatched a threatening letter to Hezekiah he was so upset that he tore his garments and went to the temple. There, in the presence of God, he spread the letter on the altar and prayed:

O Lord God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. (2 Kings 19:15-19 ESV)

When you are faced with trouble, when problems arrive on your doorstep, spread them out before Jehovah God and call upon Him.

## JANUARY 4

*Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you  
great and hidden things that you have not known.*

(JEREMIAH 33:3 ESV)

JEREMIAH, the Old Testament prophet, faced trying times, not only in his personal life, but in events surrounding his beloved country. As he looked about him, it seemed that things were going from awful to even more awful. It would have been easy for his hope to completely evaporate as he pondered where he might find the help so badly needed. Perhaps Jeremiah even wondered where God was in all the upheaval.

Then God reassured His servant that all he had to do was call upon Him, and He would answer. Jehovah reminded Jeremiah that not only does He know the future; He holds it securely in the palm of His all-encompassing hand.

The prophet was uplifted and cheered by God's comfort and hope during both a national and a personal predicament. Jeremiah 33:3 reminds us that God knows all, sees all, and is in control of all.

Our heavenly Father doesn't promise that troubles will not come, but He does promise that He will walk through them with us. And, after all, it is in the valley that He restores our soul.