

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: Sunday 31st December 2023

By Revd Kit Gunasekera

THE GATE OF THE YEAR

'God Knows'

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown".

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way".

So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.

And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.

- by Minnie Louise Haskins.

This is the opening section to 'God knows and I am reminded of it in the run up to every New Year. The poem, written in 1908 and privately published in 1912, was part of a collection titled' *The Desert*. It caught the public attention when King George VI quoted it in his 1939 Christmas broadcast, and it was widely acclaimed as inspirational in the early days of the Second World War. In the book *The Servant Queen and the King She Serves* published for Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday, its foreword being by that monarch, says that it was the young Princess Elizabeth herself, aged 13, who handed the poem to her father.

May it inspire us as we head into a new year, with all of life's uncertainties ahead of us, knowing that God knows, and that God loves us.

BIBLE VERSES:

So I reflected on all this and concluded that the righteous and the wise and what they do are in God's hands, but no one knows whether love or hate awaits them.

- Ecclesiastes 9:1