

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

By W. Edmund Smith

All who read the Highway believe the Bible. This is our rule of faith and practice. We support our positions, not by isolated texts of scripture, often wrested from their connection, but by the general tenor of scripture-teaching. It is true that we can make the Bible teach most anything we want to believe. But to do this we must handle the word of God deceitfully and wrest the scriptures to our own destruction.

Those who do not believe in and condemn holy joy and demonstration in a Holy Ghost experience, must ignore the plain word of God, and also the testimonies of God's true children. They express it thus:

"Oh the children of the Lord have a right to shout and sing
For the way is growing bright and our souls are on the wing;
We are going by and by to the palace of the King,
Glory to God, Hallelujah!"

I should like to quote some passages of scripture to confirm the thesis that a real Bible experience of salvation must find vent in joyous expressions of praise and exultation. The Psalms especially, are full of praiseful ejaculations Ps. 50; 23, reads "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God."

"I will bless the Lord at ALL TIMES; His praise shall continually be in my MOUTH. Oh magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together. Enter into His gates with Thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. He giveth the oil of joy for mourning and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Oh Lord open thou my lips and my MOUTH shall show forth thy praise."

I find in my Crudens concordance a full column of praise as a noun and more than a column of praise as a verb. More of these praise references are found in the Psalms than in any other portion of the Word of God. Good old John Bright, that godly Quaker statesman of England said that he could maintain the inspiration of the scriptures by the Psalms.

Think, the psalmist lived under the law and yet he shouted "The Lord will give grace and GLORY, no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Some say that under the law sin was covered and not cleansed away. Well, the Psalmist who was speaking from experience cries out, "Happy is the man whose transgression is forgiven whose sin is covered; Happy is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity and in whose spirit there is no guile." When he cried "Create in me a clean heart oh God and renew a right spirit within me," I believe he expected to receive an answer to his prayer which fulfilled his desire as expressed in his petition.

Brother Job tells us that there was some exuberance of spirit in heaven upon creation's morn, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God SHOUTED for joy. Isaiah 12 is a wonderful praise chapter; "And in that Day thou shalt say, Oh Lord I will praise Thee for though Thou wast angry with me Thine anger is turned away and Thou comforteth me." Again, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" and at the

close of the little chapter he exhorts, "Cry out and shout thou inhabitant of Zion for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of Thee."

We cannot think of Jesus as a melancholy man even though He was the "Man of Sorrows." He was the man of joy. Those who know the deepest sorrow if the Holy Ghost abides, know the deepest joy—Joy that is unspeakable at times, and full of glory. If you understand Paul's paradox you understand this language. Jesus said, "This is my will that my joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full." Did he not say, "Happy are ye when men shall revile you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely?" He told us to shout and leap for joy for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you". There is so much said about praise, gladness, thanksgiving in all the word of God, that all together it would make a book in itself. Paul said "Sorrowful yet always rejoicing." "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice."

Beloved, so long as we keep the spirit of praise in our hearts, and we must have that if we have the abiding of the Holy Ghost, we can run the devil off the lot. If you have never read the story of Billy Bray, the sanctified Cornish miner, you have missed a spiritual treat. He was the irrepressible Billy. He would come out of the hardest situation with a shout of praise. Yes, he said "if they put me in a barrel I would shout glory through the bung-hole." Of trials he had many. The attacks of the devil at times, were fierce, as they always are towards one of God's hot saints. The devil to Billy, was as real as a person could be. He called him by his right name, "You old liar"! That is what he called Satan when he came to tempt him over the small potatoes God had given him, when he might have made them big and nice. Billy said "When I served you I had no potatoes nor anything else but sorrow and disappointment. You Old Liar, get out of here"! And he said the devil left and never said good day.

Mr. Wesley tells us that one of the most praiseful women he ever met, was one whose face had been terribly eaten by a fell disease. She could hardly articulate but it was all praise and thanksgiving to Jesus her king and Lord.

A carnal person cannot understand or hardly believe that such a thing is possible. They cannot understand how the martyrs at the burning stake could shout and praise God till their bodies fell in the midst of the flame. It was that marvelous spirit that put conviction upon even the hard Roman soldiers and caused many to accept Jesus and to suffer a similar fate. I have seen the spirit of praise and glory fall upon a camp meeting, when the saints marched and shouted for joy, hundreds of them, while the sinners sat and looked on with amazement, and some with hungry countenances. It was no base-ball or hockey game demonstration but a gale of glory which gave us a foretaste of heaven, and left all feeling so clean and strong to take up the routine work of the morrow. Yes, a person can do business in the market-place with the blessing of God upon his soul. Hallelujah! What the world is looking for in thrills and exhilaration we have in the Holy Ghost. It is "the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow thereto." We can go down into the valley with praise and joy by faith. In the height of joyous emotion we can cry "Oh God

I am not worshipping this good feeling, I worship Thee. I will not make an idol of my experience. I will walk humbly before Thee and serve Thee in joy or sorrow."

I have been led to write on this line because of several hard days of physical disability when it seemed that if physically speaking the bottom had fallen out of everything but salvation in the weakness that came upon me. But faith held steady and there was not a tremor in my soul. I could praise God even if they might find me dead in my little apartment. But last night the glory broke upon my soul. All I could cry was Glory! Glory! Glory! In surging tides it came. How I bore before God all my long prayer-list that covers a wide space! Well beloved, here is an old man who says with the Psalmist that "it is joy unspeakable and full of Glory. Sorrow and sighing flee away." How good the Lord has been! "All things work together for good to them that love God."

LETTERS FROM OUR PASTORS

Doaktown, N. B.

To you who have given so generously and prayed so earnestly, which we trust takes in all of our people, we owe a report of our work here.

Since our coming here the first of last October, Mrs. Nicholson and I have enjoyed many blessings from the presence of the Lord. Unprepared as we were for such an undertaking as this, we have learned that the words whispered to saint Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," has certainly been true in our case.

There have been some discouraging things, such as the great delay in getting the church building fit to worship in, and to see some who were once interested gradually being pulled away to where spiritual demands are not so pressing. However, God has laid His hand on some people here who want His best, and are willing to pay the price to be recipients of His great grace. The way they have stood by us in every endeavor for the Lord has been most encouraging. Others have been willing to deprive themselves of home conveniences that we might have a place to live and a church to worship in. One man let us have the storm sashes, which he needed on his own house, in order that we might have temporary windows at the church.

These things, however, are nearly in the past. Most of the sashes have arrived for the church, we have a nice hardwood floor laid and varnished, the walls are ready for painting, a fine heating system is in the basement, and the people are getting ready for a revival which we trust will begin the first of April with our Superintendent, Brother Cochrane as evangelist.

Besides blessing us with souls at the altar here in Doaktown, God has called us out to other places. Before Christmas a concerned party asked us to go down the Miramichi river, about twelve miles, to hold a mid-week service in a private home. We were glad for the opportunity and the Lord manifested His presence in the first service. Since that time, as we have gone there weekly on Friday nights, the Lord has given us eight souls in saving grace.

We also hold, besides our midweek prayer meeting, two other midweek engagements in

(Continued on Page 8)