

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

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EDITORIAL

A HAPPY NEW YEAR, AND HOW TO MAKE IT

One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark. Phil. 3:13.

It is quite natural for all people to want to be happy. In fact most people are spending their time, money, and energies in quest of the thing which they think will bring happiness. But how often many people are disappointed, even when they have obtained the object of their seeking; because they sought the wrong thing, and it brought with it misery instead of happiness.

The scriptures teach us that God wants His people to be happy, and enjoy life; for He loves all the creatures that He has made, and "does not willingly afflict the children of men." We have many expressions of happiness from the inspired writers in both the old and new testaments. The psalmist David often gave expression to great joy. He said I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth. Ps. 34:1.

Some saints like Habakkuk of old, found it possible to be happy and joyful, under most trying circumstances. Hear him: Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall the fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Hab. 3:17-18. Also, the Apostle Paul, said he was as sorrowful yet always rejoicing.

I think the words of our text spoken by the Apostle, give us at least a part of his secret of being able to be happy, and rejoicing, in the midst of such trials as he passed through. The secret was he had learned how to forget. Note, he said, "One thing I do forgetting those things which are behind."

With many of us, our memories are too retentive to permit us to be happy. We ought to forget some things, yea, many things. We try to carry too much rubbish with us which belongs to days that are past; we carry it over into the New Year.

If we tried to carry only our own sins, mistakes, follies, etc., that would not be so bad; in fact, we might derive some benefit from remembering our own failures, especially if we determined in our New Year resolutions

that we would, by God's help, do better in future. But when we remember all the evils of other lives, and all the slights, insults and all the gossip that we have heard about others and probably had taken part in ourselves, when we try to drag all that rubbish over into 1951 me thinks, we will find our load too heavy to bear, and we will not be very happy.

Perhaps, the reason that some folks don't forget the unpleasant things that come into their lives is because they have not learned to forgive. We are told to forgive others, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. Eph. 4:32. And when God forgives he says I will remember their sin no more. Jer. 31:34. I have met some people who even seemed to hold spite against the Lord, because of some trouble that came into their lives several years back. They often referred to their trouble with a hard unforgiving spirit. Their lives were bitter, they were miserable and at times made others unhappy who lived with them. I surely pitied those unfortunate souls, and tried to persuade them to forget the things behind, and press on looking unto Jesus.

The Apostle Peter also gives us some good instruction about happy days. He says, For he that will love life, and see good days let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. I Peter 3:10.

The Apostle not only tells us what to forget, but he also tells us some things to remember. Here they are: Finally my brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things. Let us try God's way and 1951 will be a Happy New Year indeed.

(To be continued)

GOING FORWARD WITH GOD

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

(Joshua 1:9).

Moses, God's servant had died, and to Joshua was given the task he had laid down. It was a great task, and the words we are to consider would suggest, one from which he shrank. Godly though he was, and warrior as he had shown himself to be, he evidently faced his future and his task with a deep sense of need. The words of the Lord would suggest, with a realization of weakness, and a tendency to fear. Thus it was that God spoke to him the words recorded in verses two to eight, and climaxed or clinched them with those of the ninth: "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

These latter words are an appropriate message to God's servants at this season. The facing of a New Year, with its untrodden path, and its God given responsibilities, ought to move us all to appreciate and appropriate such a helpful word from God.

"Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed," was perhaps God's reply to Joshua's objections or excuses. It was His word of encouragement and assurance. And it is His message to us. That is, if like Joshua, with all seriousness we have faced the call of God, and the challenge

and demands of the future, and so feel deeply our weakness and insufficiency.

The words, "Have not I commanded thee?" imply that God had previously spoken to Joshua, and that verses six, seven and eight confirms. His words in verses seven and eight are: "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee; turn not to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein."

The exhortation there, is to be strong and courageous to do all the will of God,—the will of God as revealed in the Word of God. In the future which lay before Joshua God wanted a careful and prayerful observance of all His law. He demanded a perfect performance of all His will as revealed therein. And does God require of us one whit less?

But does it require strength and courage to do God's will? It does to do it as God has commanded. Let us make His Word our daily meditation, seeking to know God's will, and purposing to embrace it fully, and we shall doubtless realize our need of both.

God's word to Joshua, recorded in verse six was: "Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land which I sware unto their fathers to give them." There is suggested the need of strength and courage to do the work of God. To Joshua was given the responsibility of leadership, and the task of helping a people to obtain their God given inheritance. How he must have felt his need as he considered his assignment. He doubtless reviewed the past, and remembered that even Moses had failed to fully accomplish his work, chiefly because of the unwillingness and unbelief of the Israelites. Most likely those past forty trying and disappointing years passed before Him, with all their temptations to discouragement. Could he accomplish what Moses had failed to do? Could he fulfil his mission? Surely he needed to be strong and of a good courage.

Our calling may not be to such leadership, and our God given task may be different to that of Joshua's, yet we are called to faithfully serve God in helping others to obtain a great spiritual and eternal inheritance. And for that ministry we too need strength and courage. It is true that the work of God brings it joys and rewards, but its responsibilities are great, and its tasks at times most difficult. There is no work so taxing. There is no work at times more discouraging. Unwillingness and unbelief are still the response of many to our best efforts to win them for God, or lead them into the inheritance of the sanctified. The wilderness experiences and the failure at Kadesh so often have their counter-part in the Christian work of today. Then, in all the territory we seek to take for God we find the enemy strongly entrenched, and powerfully equipped. We too need to be strong and of a good courage to do the work of God.

But this word from God is not only an exhortation, it is also a communication. Consider the ground upon which His exhortation was made. First, "Have not I commanded thee?" The emphasis here is not so much on the word "commanded." God was not just saying, "Now I have given my orders, obey me." The emphasis is on the pronoun "I". "Have not I commanded thee." The chief responsibility in the