

The best lies ahead – 04/09/2016

⁹ *When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter *called the bridegroom,¹⁰ and *said to him, “Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.” (John 2:9-10)*

Beloved in the Lord,

Love has been affirmed, vows made, rings have been exchanged, the blessing received, and now after the ceremony, the family and friends are enjoying the wedding feast. One of the guests turns to a servant and asks him to refill his wine carafe. The servant goes to refill it, only to find that they have run out of wine. What to do? This will be of great embarrassment to the host and his family. Jesus mother, hearing about the wine, went and told Jesus.

Jesus told the servant to fill the water pots with water and then to take some to the steward of the feast. The servants did as they were told. a great miracle happened. The water was no longer water, but was a very high quality wine.

The steward, not knowing about the miracle, but tasting the wine was very impressed. He said to the groom: ***“Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.” (John 2:10)***

Neither the groom, nor the chief steward knew where the wine came from, but the servants knew. This was the first public miracle that Jesus performed and so began to reveal the glory of His Father in Heaven. I think that there are a number of reasons why this miracle came first, but I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the best was saved for last. The good wine came later on. In saying that I come to our theme today “The best lies ahead or the best is yet to come.”

Many people live in the past and reminisce about the good old days, often forgetting with the passage of time, that the good old days weren't really that good. The hardships fade and only the good memories are reflected upon.

I put it to you, and remind myself, that the best lies ahead, the best is yet to come. If we are Christians, then we have a sure and certain hope for a bright future. Paul writes in his letter to the Corinthians: ***“For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.” (1.Cor.13:12)***

We need to understand that mirrors in Bible times were not glass, but usually polished metal such as brass. The reflection was nowhere near as good as ours today, and so Paul is talking about a hazy image. Paul is saying that we see things today as if through a haze or

fog. Last week I had to drive through fog and it was very hard to see the road ahead. I could see vague outlines of cars and trucks. It is how we see things now.

We view life through a fog of sin and evil. Our fallen nature clouds our vision. The waters are sullied. But Paul is saying that the day is coming when the fog will clear and we will see perfectly. Not only will we see, but we will have perfect understanding. We will understand what we do not understand now.

We have often considered that God's thoughts and His ways are far superior to ours, and that often we have to live by faith, trusting in His judgement, knowing and believing that God knows best. We live trusting ***"that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."*** (Rom.8:28)

As we saw last Sunday, a Christian person trusts this promise and lives with an attitude of gratitude in all things. It is very liberating, but we do have to work at reminding ourselves of this truth.

The best lies ahead. The day is coming when we will no longer have to live by faith, for we will live by sight. We will see God. We will see Jesus face to face. On that day we will understand and we will proclaim that all was, and is, and will be well. "He does all things well" will be our confession. All of Gods ways have always been, and always will be good and right.

Paul rightly wrote that now we know only in part, but then we will know fully. We only know in part because we are still living in this fallen flesh. We are often beset with doubts and fears. We have physical as well as spiritual ailments.

But, the day is coming, when we shall leave this body of flesh, this tent will be taken down and we will have a new resurrected body that will be perfect in every respect. Paul writes: ***"For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, ³ inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. ⁴ For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.***

⁶ Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— ⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight— ⁸ we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord." (2.Cor.5:1-8)

You see the best is yet to come. Here we live in a corruptible and dying body, that suffers pain and hardship. A body that will be subjected to death. But there, - there we will have a body that will never die, that will never feel pain. Hallelujah!

Here we have a daily battle with sin and the devil, but there, - there the devil will be no more, for he will be in the lake of fire. Here we have disappointments and discouragements, but there, - there they will be no more. Here we shed tears of pain and sorrow, but there, - there every tear will be wiped away. Here death steals away our loved ones, but there, - there death will be no more. Praise God. Our earthly minds cannot comprehend such a life. Paul wrote quoting Isaiah: ***“but just as it is written, “Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And which have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him.”¹⁰ For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.” 1.Cor.2:9-10***

Oh, how I love this passage. It warms my heart and fills me with hope and joy. We cannot even begin to imagine what a beautiful and wonderful place heaven really is.

Growing up, as a young boy I loved looking at pictures of Niagara Falls. There were some beautiful pictures, but when for the first time I stood at the falls, I realised that the pictures were far less than what I saw. The Falls were far greater than I had imagined. The power, the noise, the volume of water. It was breath takingly beautiful.

I believe that when by God’s grace, we get to Heaven, we will be stunned by the beauty. It will take away our breath. Paul says it is the Holy Spirit who gives us an insight or an inkling of what lies ahead, but it is only a post card. Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor mind imagined, the wonder of what God has prepared for those who love Him.

God is a good Father, a loving Father and He has prepared a beautiful eternal home for us. We do not deserve it, we deserve eternal exile for our sin and rebellion, but loving us, God gave us His Son, who redeemed us with His blood, who saved us from death and gives us life. ***“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (Jn.3:16)***

So great is the Father’s love for us. Today on Father’s day, may we know that we have a Father in Heaven who loves each one of us so very much. How wonderful, how beautiful is His home. How He desires to give each of us a place in His home. There is a place prepared for each and every soul that loves Jesus and believes in Him.

Jesus taught: ***“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.² In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” (Jn.14:1-3)***

Beloved, the best lies ahead, the best is yet to come. May we live in faith, hope and love. May we patiently await the day that Jesus calls us home, for a bright and wonderful future awaits those who believe in Jesus. To Him be the glory. Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.***