

WHO WILL SHOW US BETTER TIMES?

Many people say, "Who will show us better times?"

Let your face smile on us Lord.

Psalm 4:6

Tuesday, February 16, 2021 had all the signs that "better times" were ahead. The reason for this optimism had to do with many areas in the Province of Ontario having the STAY-AT-HOME restrictions lifted and returning to various colour zones. Many nonessential businesses, restaurants, hair salons, gyms and sports groups were looking forward to this day.

Two of my family members were looking forward to this day as well. The Rev. Mother had a hair appointment booked for 11:00 a.m. Tuesday morning. She could not wait to get her hair done. My daughter Coral was also excited about getting to school. She was looking forward to getting to see the faces of her classmates in her Family Studies class for the first time. Two weeks ago when she first had this class, it was online for the entire week. She got to learn the names of her classmates and hear their voices when they answered questions but with the cameras off, she could not see their faces. She was excited to match the faces to the names. It seemed like better times were ahead starting on Tuesday, February 16th.

Then the unpredictable happened and delayed the start of better times. The heavy snowfall overnight caused the cancellation of school and bad road conditions resulted in my mother cancelling her hair appointment. For Coral, better days ahead had to be delayed until the next day and the Rev. Mother's hair appointment had to be put off until the following week.

It wasn't just my two family members who were disappointed that "better times" were delayed by the snowstorm. I imagine many restaurants, small businesses, gyms and salons saw lower turnouts or cancelations as a result of the weather.

Unpredictable events such as a snowstorm, a pandemic, an illness, or a loved one's death can cause our lives to be disrupted from routine and make us desire "better times". David had this desire when he went through the struggle he was facing in Psalm 4. Scholars believe the struggle David was going through had to do with his son Absalom's rebellion causing David to leave Jerusalem and flee for his life. This sudden change in David's life would certainly cause him to wish for "better times" to return. David not only thought about it but asked the question in verse 6:

"Many people say, "Who will show us better times?"

David knew Absalom would not, nor would his enemies. He also knew life wouldn't because of its nature of being unpredictable. He knew God would show him "better times".

LET YOUR FACE SMILE ON US LORD

David had a close and trusting relationship with God. He came to understand from his relationship with God that the key to happiness is not just to wait until circumstances come together making a period of time pleasant. He understood "better times" may make you happy but are not lasting. Unpredictable events can make life quickly unpleasant again. This one-time shepherd understood that the key to getting through rough days until "better days" return was knowing and trusting God. In the verses that follow, David pointed out the "inward joy" he had found as He trusted God for "better days" ahead:

- 1) Knowing that God's face was smiling on him,
- 2) Knowing an inward joy was steadier than mere happiness because he could trust God as he waited for better times,
- 3) Knowing this inward joy would help him overcome the discouragements that would arise with unpredictable events,
- 4) Knowing this inward joy would keep his mind and heart at peace knowing God was present and would make better times come again.

Many of us have wondered like David when will "better times" come? If we are looking to our medical officers, to our elected officials, to the rollout of the vaccine, or to other things to make things "better," we will be happy at times and disappointed quickly again whenever unpredictable setbacks occur. The one true way to maintain an inward joy despite the unpredictability that still awaits us through this pandemic is to follow David's example by knowing God personally and trusting in Him each day. If we do this, we will be blessed with an "inward joy" that will sustain us and bless us. If others should notice this "inward joy" and ask the question, "Who showed you how to be positive about better times?" your response can be like David's:

THE LORD DID, HIS FACE IS ALWAYS SMILING UPON US.

Better days are ahead for us. It will take more time and there will be some unpredictable setbacks that delay it from happening soon. Regardless of when, we know that God is smiling upon us each day. Doesn't this put an immediate smile on your face?

Keep Safe & God Bless

Pastor Dean