

LOOSING THE MOORINGS

“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge will give to me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” - 2 Timothy 4:6-8.

The Apostle Paul sees his sacrifice as a drink offering poured out. Offered on the altar of love to the Lord whom he served as a bond slave. Free and yet not free, because now, his life is about to climax in a death full of surrender to the will of God.

“the time of my departure is at hand”

The Lord’s servant was immortal until his work was finished, or Nero could not have ended his life. The word ‘departure’ has been defined as follows:

The separation - or the detaching - of one thing from another.

The untying of a cord,

Taking up the tent pegs,

Loosing the moorings.

The Apostle would soon weigh anchor and slip out of this earthly harbour to the ‘haven of rest’ on the Celestial shore.

This is not to under estimate the awfulness of death. Scripture describes it as *“the last enemy”* (1 Corinthians 15:28). But for the believer there is something about death that is solid, sure and safe, for our Anchor is within the veil - our Forerunner, even Jesus, is already there!

As well as looking forward, the Apostle reminisces about the past and we hear him say:

“I have fought a good fight”

He casts a swift but searching glance over his life, and sums it up in three sentences, using the figures of a wrestler, a runner and a soldier. For it, he trained hard. The wrestlers arena is now empty, the cinder track is behind him,

and the agony of warfare is finally over. He then adds:

“I have kept the faith”

He has safely guarded the deposit of truth which was entrusted to him through revelation. He has been loyal to the truth of the gospel. His defence of it has been exemplary. He leaves for heaven and home with no regrets!

WHAT AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW!

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