

## The Good Old Days

Written by Winta Weldeyesus

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Every time the family gathers at my grandmother's house, the conversation will drift to the past and before we know it, every one will be caught in their own memories and try to share some pleasant anecdotes. In such occasions my grandmother is the one who does most of the talking, but just before she begins narrating one of her life's episodes or after she finishes one story she will close her eyes, lift her chin, tilt her head, smile and say with a sigh "the good old days". Every time I hear those words, I say why does every one always appreciate the past. Is the past really better than the present? Were the so-called old days all good?

Although every one might have different reasons, for my grandmother, what makes her past good is that all she remembers are the memories she treasured not the bad incidents or the mistakes she had done in the past. Every time she recalls those incidents she will have a smile because in relation to the present she would have done things differently due to maturity, experience or knowledge and that makes the old days honest and genuine days of ones life. She believes that majority of the time, people recall past incidents that are beneficial for the present, incidents that can lift one's spirits and make him/ her smile.

The past also seems better depending on how it is told, and majority of the time people romanticize history leaving or "cutting out" all the bad memories. Take for example, a grandmother telling a story to her grandchildren; she will tell a story about the times when people used to care for each other, when everyone had enough and all the resources were plenty and available to all. She will never tell her grandchildren the times when famine or drought hit, when there used to be no transportation and people had to carry their sick and other similar stories. She will "cut" and "edit" the scenario to her grandchildren so they will view the past as "good old days".

No one wants to dwell in past mistakes and regrets, because if we do, we might have the tendency to lose the present too and as a result we choose to recall the good old memories and forget all about the bad ones.

