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VADE MECUM, VOLVENTIBUS ANNIS

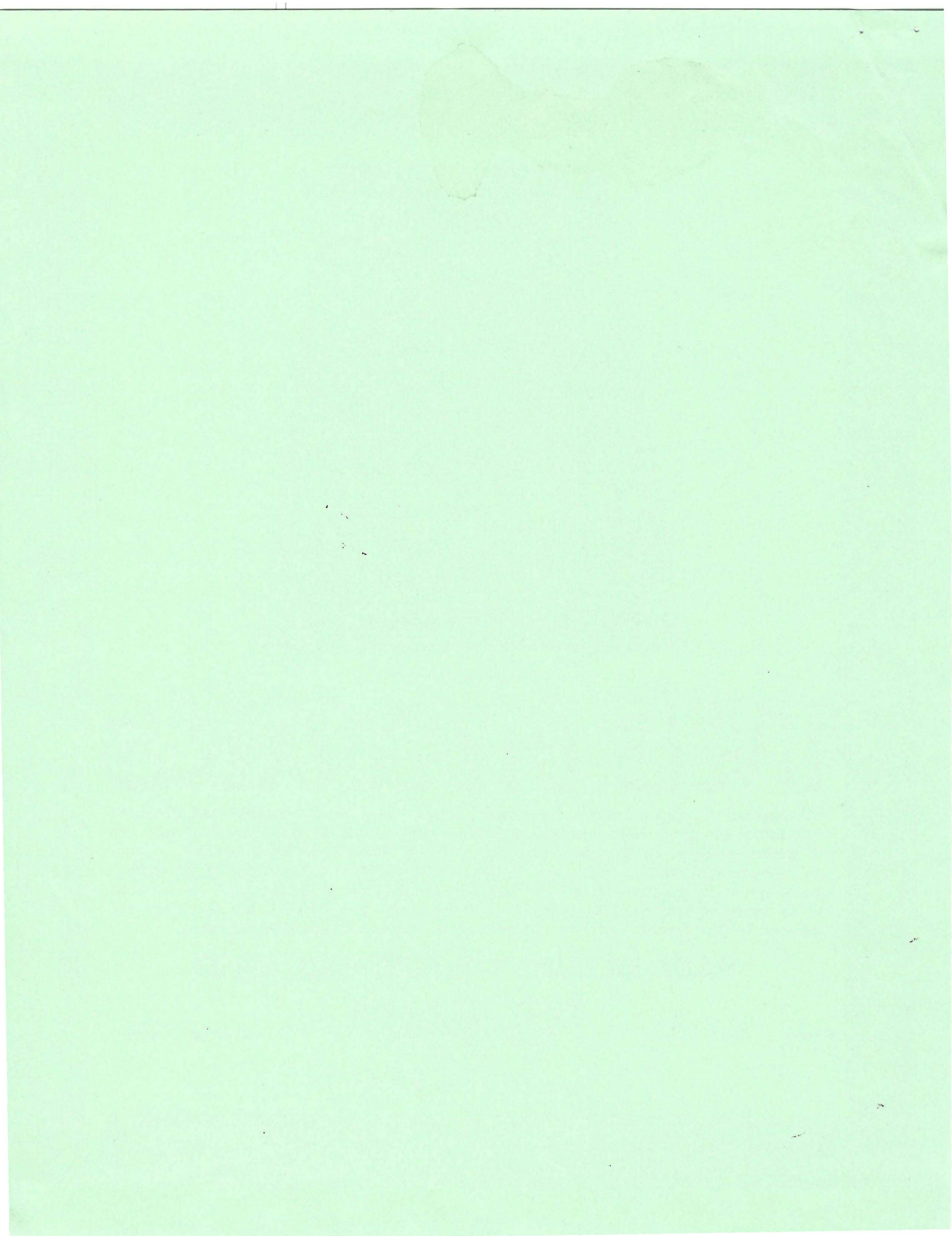
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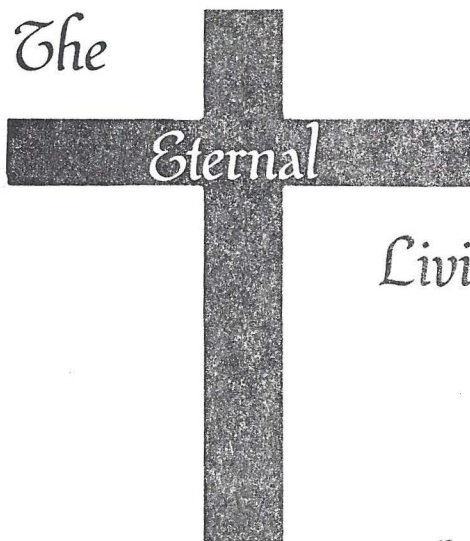
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Living Series

Mayan Revelation Number 202

Clock of Destiny

Prayer

Red Letter Days

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Determining Destiny

Now

Two Kinds of Clock Watchers



Beloved Centurion:

The lesson to follow has to do with TIME. I am always shocked when I hear a man or woman say that they do not know how "to pass their time", for my experience through life is that there has never been enough time to do all the things I would like to do, for as every thread of gold is valuable, so is every moment of time. Some people have no regard for it. I consider that next to God, it is important that we respect time. It is really a rule of good conduct.

So I admonish everyone to make use of his time now. Yesterday can never be recalled, and tomorrow we can never be sure of, but TODAY IS YOURS. When we lose our wealth, we can often gain it back by working industriously. When we lose our health, medicine and care can usually restore it. When we lose our wisdom, it can be restored through study. If we lose a friend, we can often regain that friendship through smoothing out misunderstanding or forgiveness. But lost time is gone forever, and there is nothing we can do to bring it back. In fact, in the opinion of your Instructor, there is not a single moment of life we can afford to lose. It passes so quickly, and the important thing is NOW.

We are living in a wonderful age. If you were to travel with me in my archaeological pursuits, if you were to walk amongst the ruins of the temples built hundreds of years ago, the impact of time would register more forcefully upon you. The wonderful things man has done with time! If those people had not used their time wisely, we would not be the great nation we are today. If they had had no thought of time, if they had not attempted to build and improve, there would be no todays as we know them.

God has given us intelligence. He has loaned us time, and we cannot be too diligent in the way we use it, always remembering time is precious, it is short, passing, uncertain, and when it is gone it is too late for us to do that thing we should have done yesterday.

Make every day a day of preparation for eternal living. As I have already said, time lost yesterday may never be regained, but a new opportunity is always given us tomorrow. For while we may have lost yesterday, the tapestry we are making of our life never stops, and the pattern which was weaving when the sun went down is still weaving when the sun comes up in the morning, and we in turn are given a new day - a new opportunity.

So with this thought of a better use of our time in mind, let us repeat together the following prayer, after which we will go forward with the study of the Clock of Destiny.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me to invest well my precious heritage of Time by making full use of it as I move up the years. By keeping in time with the Clock of Destiny, help me to live in terms of eternity.

AMEN.

Clock of Destiny

TWO CLOCKS

MOST of us, when we think of the homes where we were born and grew up, think especially of the clock. For some it was a modern clock with plain and elegant lines. For others it was an older fashioned clock with ornamental trimmings and the then new spring action. For others it was an old-fashioned clock with weights that ran down and had to be wound up with a key. For still others it was that really old institution known as the grandfather's clock in a case resting on the floor and standing higher than a man's head.

We remember the tick of whatever kind of clock served our family, for the tick of a clock is as individual to its personality as the speech and manners of a person are to his. Even now if in a dream or from some hidden place we could hear a clock chiming we would know whether it is ours. It would distinguish itself as positively as would the voice of a loved one or a friend.

If sometimes you pause, reflect, and listen, with your mind open to the universe, you may get the impression that another and quite different kind of clock is ticking and chiming away not the hours of the day but the years of eternity. This experience may be so definite that your mind's eye may even seem to catch a glimpse of its broad, patient face, with the hands set to go forever.

In thought you begin at once to notice differences. The markings are not numerals but great moments. There is one toward which all the others lead for you. It represents your destiny. There is another one toward which all the personal destinies lead. It represents the outcome of human history, the destiny of the world, and the human race.

The great hand never stops moving, but the sign to which it points at any moment is NOW. That is all the time there ever is, and it is another word for forever. Behind it are all the nows that have been, before it are all the nows that are yet to be, and the sum of them is eternity. The clock of destiny will never run out of nows to which to point, and each now will be a moment of opportunity.

By this clock of destiny humble and commonplace men have acted so wisely as to become heroes, and heroes have acted so foolishly that they become humble and commonplace men. The clock did not create their destinies. It only pointed to the moments of opportunity the use of which determines the outcome of our lives.

If you decide to drift the clock of destiny will make no objection. If you decide to do the wrong thing it will merely go on ticking off the moments while you receive your inevitable reward. It will not decide the consequences. It will only announce their arrival, which is judgment.

Watch the clock of destiny. Consider often whether you are making a step forward at each opportunity it registers, whether each now it has ticked off for you marked a victory rightly and fairly won.

The clock of destiny is like the odometer in an automobile. It adds up the miles we travel up a long and winding road - the road of time, which is a part of eternity. How far does it say you have traveled, and what have you to show for it? The answer will indicate what to do about it the rest of the way.

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MEMORIAL STONES

IN the Book of Joshua we read of the first great fulfillment in the conquest of Canaan, the entry into the promised land. Behind the tribes in some unknown spot in the valley around Mt. Nebo lay the body of the aged Moses who had led them thus far. Beyond that lay the track of the long journey through the wilderness. Ahead of them lay the intervening Jordan River, and beyond it the long awaited country that Abraham had won and the sons of Jacob had lost. Joshua, the new leader realized that this was not a moment to be taken lightly, for he was listening to the voice of God.

The Ark of the Covenant was carried by priests before whose feet the swollen waters of the river divided for a safe crossing. Behind them the vast company of the tribes marched over on dry ground. As they went one man from each tribe picked up a long-concealed stone from the river bed and carried it with him. When the last tribe was across the river, and the stream was again sweeping on its way, the bearers were commanded to lay their stones in a heap as a memorial of the day when deliverance from bondage was complete, and Israel had a home at last. All this Joshua commanded the people to do because, as he said, "Ye have not passed this way heretofore."

In this event and what Joshua said about it is revealed a great and solemn fact about an experience that comes to us all. Who of us is not marching from some Egypt of bondage to some Canaan of hope? Who of us is not always crossing some river between a wilderness and a promised land? It is appropriate at these moments of realization, when struggles are past and triumph is near, to pause and set up some memorial in our thoughts in recognition that this is a great place to which we have come and a great day that has brought us here, for we have not passed this way heretofore.

While this is grandly true of the special times and places in our lives it is also true of the seemingly lesser ones. What we can say of the Red Seas, the Sinais, the Meribahs, and the Nebos, of our journey we can also say of each experience to which we have come - we have not passed this way heretofore. At any spot on any day we can pause, say a prayer of gratitude, think on the significance of the fact that we are a little farther from the dream and a little nearer to its fulfillment, and rededicate ourselves for the rest of the journey.

As Abraham had long before made the original journey from his old Chaldaean home to Canaan and left a trail that could be traced by the altars he built, we can make a pilgrimage through the years that can be traced by the times when we reflected that we were following a leading, and that every new point we reached was wonderful, different, and full of importance.

Each morning we look up the road over a new distance to be traveled that day. Each evening we look back on a little more of the wilderness trail behind us. Each day the distance is less between us and the goal we seek. You have not passed this way heretofore, and will not pass this way again. Make the most of it while you can.

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A little while back we were thinking about the clock of destiny, and we said that it was not marked with numerals but with steps to our individual destinies and finally the destiny of mankind. We also said that the long hand is always pointing to one of the nows that make up eternity.

Into these endless nows human history has been built from the beginning to this present day. In them earth's men of destiny, some great and some small, but all important, have come, and labored, and gone. In them the growth and development of the world life has been carried from the jungles of savagery to the wonder we now see. Into them we must build our lives and efforts as other ages have built theirs. NOW is the wonderful word for a wonderful time. Its meaning for us is great because it is always a moment of opportunity.

The sweeping of the hand around and around on the face of the clock reminds us that the nows of eternity are numberless. In our Canaans, or whatever lands of promise we reach, we shall have these nows of opportunity constantly coming so that in them we may achieve still greater victories of good. But that is within the limits of mortality. We never have more than enough. Moses did not have quite enough to make it because he wasted some through error and weakness. Joshua had more, but none too many. None of us has any to lose or waste.

In youth most of us have sometimes thought there was no need to begin work so early, stay with it constantly, or keep at it so late. We said the days were many and long, and there would be plenty of time. Perhaps we were told that no day is long enough to justify the wasting of morning hours; that we should finish our work with dispatch so that if there were any time left to take it easier it would come later when there was less danger of never getting it all done. We did not agree at the time, but as the sun of life's afternoon begins to shoulder down we all come to realize that the principle is true.

This is also a good way to think of the longer journey and the greater task. We never know what hindrances we will meet nor how much more there may be of the task than we expected. If we get it out of the way while there is still time we will save ourselves the worry of seeing the sun sink faster than we are approaching the completion of the day's work, of hurrying too fast in the fear that we shall not be ready for the end of the day; and quite possibly finding at the last that the worry and the fear were justified. Do not let your nows get away from you without enough to show for them. They are your inherited capital. Invest them wisely and well.

Stop where you are and reflect what a wonderful thing life is now, what a glorious creation the world is now, how many wonderful things and people there are around you now; how blessed it is to have friends, tasks, and inspiring experiences now, what a marvelous thing it is to be living now, how secure is the protection and how lavish are the blessings of God now. It is as it has been and will be, but remember that each moment brings a separate experience in which all this wonder is renewed for you now.

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RED LETTER DAYS

THE calendar on your wall or desk differentiates between ordinary days and red letter days. Most of the dates on it are printed in plain black. These are the run of the mine days, so to speak, the supposedly commonplace days, the days that are just dates, the days that have no special distinction.

A few, however, stand out in emphasizing red ink, which proclaims of each that it is a so-called red letter day. It is a day that carries some special significance, a day honoring some person or interest, or a day commemorating some important achievement or event.

Are you disposed to agree with the calendar that most days are ordinary and meaningless, and leave it at that? If so you probably have a passive attitude that will keep your life dull and empty as long as you have it. There is nothing inevitable about these red letter days. Some of them may deserve their distinction less than some others, of course. God did not put that red ink on the pages. The printer did, and he did it only because on that date at some time someone had done something that seemed to justify it. Someone may make this a red letter day on the calendar. If it is not you, it might just as well be.

Why don't you become a dispenser of printer's red ink yourself? You can make a few red letter days of your own. Even if the printer should fail to honor them with red ink on the calendar, you can do something better - you can make them deserve it. You can build yourself quite a career if you try - one that will inspire others to make their lives important and at the same time give you some very good remembering.

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Some are content just to let life act upon them. Others are disposed to act upon it. The first live ordinary black letter days that come and go without suggesting anything to anyone. The second put red letter days into the year. The way to animate the calendar with days that at least deserve to be printed in red ink is to set yourself a course, assign yourself a task, establish an objective, work for a victory, and never give up. Don't just read history. Make a little of it yourself. Don't let your life be made up of clock ticks. Give the clock ticks a meaning. Let them make a difference.

Remember that there are no unimportant days. There are empty days, to be sure, but only because someone let them be so. Do not surrender just because a day seems to start out dull. That is its challenge. It is trying to tell you that it is waiting to be made a red letter day. All it needs is the touch of a hero. And what is a hero? It is anyone who rises in a heroic way to a heroic opportunity. There is nothing in that to shut you out.

Consider any so-called great day in history. It did not make itself so. It was made so by someone to whom it may have looked very unpromising. All days are alike till people start making them different. Then they become as great or as ordinary as the way they are lived.

Improve on the calendar. Put more meaning into it by giving it more important days. Make the printer buy more red ink.

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TWO APPROACHES

SUPPOSE you have decided to do something for the benefit of the calendar by putting some more red letter days on it, that is, by turning into significant days some that would otherwise have been only ordinary ones. There are two ways of going about it, ways by one of which you might succeed and by the other of which you are practically certain to.

You may have been thinking while you were reading this that making red letter days is all very well for the unusual people called geniuses, but that you are not such a person and could not possibly do anything outstanding. What you mean is that you think you are not the kind of person to do anything spectacular, which is quite a different matter.

You might surprise yourself some day by doing something quite spectacular and doing it very well. Then you might find that the big show would reduce down to something not very important after all. It is all very well if the occasion calls for it, and if you can rise to the occasion; but it is not the only way to accomplish important things in life. Whether the occasion will come, and whether you can rise to it in exactly the right way at exactly the right moment, is more or less accidental. A few do it successfully. Many try and fail. Many more do not even know how to begin. It is not a bad way to make history, but it is a rather uncertain one.

The other way, the one that practically always wins, is to undertake something that needs to be done and work at it faithfully till it is accomplished. By far the greater part of the important chapters of history have been made possible just that way. Many of them have even been made possible by faithful workers after opportunists had tried it by the showy method and failed.

Among the twelve men Jesus chose to extend and perpetuate his work all were plain, everyday people and only a few ever became famous. Yet all the rest did their work and built their lives into the success of the project. We read of little

that James, the brother of John did, yet he was one of the Master's closest and most trusted helpers. No great exploits are attributed to Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, yet but for him his great brother would probably never even have met the Master.

After the death of Judas, the traitor, the remaining eleven felt it necessary to choose someone to take the place he had left vacant, and the choice fell upon a man named Matthias. We know little else of him, either before or after his appointment. We read of nothing he did to obtain the appointment. But by inference we do know two things - he was there and he was ready to accept the burden of responsibility. We can assume a third thing - that he did his part in the laying of the foundations of the Christian movement in those early years.

The doors are not closed to you. There are no roadblocks in the way. No one demands that you do something spectacular, though no one will object if you do and it succeeds. The real requirement is to find something that needs doing, do it well, and carry it through to completion. You can do that, and it will make another red letter day on the calendar for you and perhaps for the world.

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DETERMINING DESTINY

THERE are some things about destiny we cannot determine because they are set in the order of things in a way we have no power to change. We operate on a basis of free will, but we do it in two ways. In some cases we will what we will do in relation to things already established. In others we actually determine what shall be or not.

This can be illustrated by the operation of an old-fashioned loom. In setting up a loom for weaving a piece of fabric certain threads are first strung vertically on it in selected colors and numbers according to the pattern to be woven. That is the warp, and once set it cannot be changed.

With the threads to be woven in horizontally it is different. They are wound on a shuttle which is threaded under and over the warp back and forth across the width, and each time pushed tightly into place. We decide and choose, and if desired, even change it at will.

Life is like a fabric being woven on a loom. Certain elements of it we find already set in place. We had nothing to do with it, and we have no power to change it. We do not determine it. We only make and carry out our choices in relation to it.

But certain other elements of living are entirely in our control, and these two kinds of choice make up what we call freedom of the will. What you do with relation to the fixed conditions of your life, and how you choose the weft threads to combine with those conditions determines the pattern of what you will produce. That pattern is your destiny. You will have determined part of it, and had a share in determining all of it.

In other words, you have a great deal, quite enough in fact, to do with determining your own life and its destiny. It will have certain elements you found in your situation and certain other elements you decided to unite with them to bring about a chosen combination. As a builder adapts the materials he chooses by the methods he desires to the conditions provided beforehand, you will adapt your efforts as you see fit to the things and conditions you found awaiting you. On this basis the work of your life will proceed.

As the weaver adds thread by thread to the growing roll, you will add acts, or days, or influences, to the facts and conditions with which you find you must work. The result can be a worthy pattern, or a poor one, or none at all. That is for you to decide and bring about.

You must keep your mind on your purpose all the time as you keep your shuttle flying back and forth. Each solitary thread requires your attention as you make it a part of your total plan. If it is wrongly chosen or poorly thrust into place, the pattern is marred, and a section of the fabric may even be rendered worthless.

The hand of the clock of destiny always stands at now, but that now is related to all the moments before and after it. Some of your weaving is finished, and some is yet to be done, so through it all must run your total plan. Each clock tick adds to or subtracts from the beauty and value of the final result, so keep track of them and let each one add something constructive to what you are doing.

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TWO KINDS OF CLOCK WATCHERS

IN business and industry we are familiar with the so-called clock watcher. People do not employ him if they know it, and having employed him they feel much better satisfied

when they can replace him with someone not so conscious of the clock as noon or quitting time approaches.

We notice that the people who have accomplished most in the world have not bothered about the clock. In the Edison plant at West Orange, New Jersey, in Mr. Edison's day no one could watch the clock. There were many clocks around the place but none was worth watching. Some were broken. Some showed the wrong time. One big clock was kept ticking regularly, but the hands had been removed.

One reason Mr. Edison accomplished the amazing things he did was the fact that he paid no attention to the passing of time. He was interested in his work and never wanted to leave a task till it was finished. One who has his heart in his work does not think of it as something to avoid but as something to finish.

But there is another kind of clock watcher than the one anxious for quitting time to come. To him we are all indebted. He keeps track of the time because he is measuring his work with the time in the effort to be sure he will be able to finish it on schedule. Mr. Edison himself probably did that.

Picture a farmer in hay harvest time. It was so apparent that the work could be finished in less than a day that he was not careful to begin promptly the last morning. There was plenty of time, so he did not rise so early, nor hurry so much, nor keep track of the time so carefully.

Everything went smoothly till he noticed that it was getting later than he thought. He would have to hurry. Then clouds began piling up along the horizon. The hay on the ground must not be rained on, so he could not wait and finish in the morning. He worked harder than ever. A flash of lightning was followed by a roll of thunder. The clouds blew nearer. He was not even going to have the rest of the afternoon in which to finish. He worked frantically, and just managed to get the last of the hay stacked before the storm broke. He had to watch the time in fear and trembling in the afternoon because he had not watched it carefully enough in the morning.

Many people in the later afternoon of life are doing as he did. They were not saving enough of their time in the beginning. They let it get away from them. Then unexpected delays, like summer showers, came up and set them back. Now the sun is sinking in the west faster than they ever thought it could and, very conscious of the time now, they are frantically trying to get life's work done before the night falls when no man can work.

It is a poor thing to be a clock watcher with a view to slighting one's work, but a very wise thing to be a clock watcher with a view to getting through before the time runs out. Keep your eye on the clock of destiny. It will tell you whether you are on schedule. If it moves on before your mission is completed, there will be no help for it, but if your sheaves are in before it registers twilight, yours will be a peaceful heart.

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Your Instructor is giving you the following Affirmation to use daily. It can be repeated several times during the day. Memorize it.

With God's help, I will keep always in mind
the enormous value of life and time, aiming
at its worthiest use, its most gratifying end.

YOUR CLASS INSTRUCTOR.

