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The Hand of Destiny (Purim Sermon), 1951.



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THE HAND OF DESTINY

A Purim Sermon

March 18, 1951

Within a few days our people will celebrate the festival of Purim. Purim is an important holiday although the carnival spirit which legitimately attends it often obscures for many people its truly great significance. Our Rabbis said that "in the days to come all other parts of the Prophets and the Writings will lose their worth, and only the Torah of Moses and the Book of Esther will retain their value." Clearly these Rabbis found in that Book of Esther and in the holiday which commemorates the events recorded in it some very profound and some very universally applicable lessons. And indeed, there are great lessons, great truths adumbrated in them. The most apparent of them, of course, concerns that universal theme of intolerance and hate, their underlying motives, their danger, and how by vigilance and loyalty they may be frustrated. Haman has become the symbol of all that satanic hate in the world which, stemming from hurt pride and private pique and vindictiveness, often does not rest content until it has destroyed not only the one object of that hate, but the victims of the entire people or race.

Mordecai and Esther, on the other hand, have become the symbols, universal symbols, of that steadfast and intrepid love and loyalty which, heedless of personal danger, succeeds in bringing rescue and salvation to a doomed people.

Because of this unreasoning and unwarranted hate, Haman, symbolized by hate, has been a common experience of the Jewish people because that kind of hate became a universal experience of all minority peoples and groups everywhere, and because salvation and redemption have likewise come to mankind as the result of the love and the loyalty of brave men and women.



The Purim story is always fresh and always pertinent. It can never lose its powers, its message or its appeal.

This morning I should like to speak to you of yet another message which flows from the story of Esther. We are told in the Book of Esther that the word "Purim" means the casting of lots. Haman fixed upon the day for the extermination of the Jewish people in the 127 provinces in the empire of Persia by the device of casting lots. A chance throw of the dice, another form of sortilege, fixed the day for the execution. Thus, the element of chance in history is dramatized in this story of Esther where other incidents of chance intervene to determine the course of events.

By chance, did the Queen Vashti displease King Ahasuerus who, when his heart was merry with wine, summoned her to appear at the feast which he had arranged, to show the peoples and the princes her beauty, a rather indecorous thing to do in a country where it was customary for women to appear in public only veiled. This chance refusal to do the bidding of the king caused the downfall of Queen Vashti, prepared the way for the elevation of Esther to the position of queen, which in turn, enabled her, when the time came, to save her entire people.

A small unpredictable, unforeseen event through a chain of events - led to a tremendously important historic achievement. It was by pure chance again that Mordecai, sitting one day in the King's gate, overheard two of the King's chamberlains plotting to kill the King. Mordecai informed Esther about the plot, who in turn told the King. This incident, this accidental incident, was written down in the book of the chronicles of the Kings of Persia and ultimately this incident was to bring Mordecai to the attention of the King and to cause the downfall of Haman, who wanted to destroy Mordecai's people.

Again, it was by chance that the King, on that fateful night before the execution of Haman's terrible design against the entire Jewish people, said by chance that he could not sleep and he commanded to bring the book of the chronicles of the Kings of Persia, and they were read to him, and by sheer chance again, it was the story of the



plot of these two men against his life that was read aloud, and how Mordecai, the Jew, had first told of the plot, and thus saved the King's life. And the King then asked, "What honor and dignity have been done to Mordecai for this?" And when he was informed that nothing had been done, he asked, "Who is in the court?" And again, by sheer chance, Haman had just at that moment come into the court to speak to the King about hanging Mordecai upon the gallows. The King then asked that Haman should come in, and said to him, "What shall be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honor?" Haman, thinking that the King was undoubtedly referring to himself, said, "For the man whom the King delighteth to honor, let royal apparel be brought which the King useth to wear, and the horse which the King rideth upon, and let a royal crown be set on his head, and let one of the King's most noble princes lead him through the streets of the city and proclaim before him: Thus, shall be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honor." And the King said to Haman, "Make haste and do even so to Mordecai."

Now, dear friends, there are those who deny that chance plays any role whatsoever in history. History, they maintain, is a science. It follows a predestined course. It is guided by irresistible social forces. There are no accidents in history, no chance, no spontaneity, no unforeseen contingencies. Necessity controls the moral and social life of mankind, even as it controls the physical universe. Everything is directed by an undeviating law of causality. The individual man cannot affect the pre-ordained trends of history. Human aims and purposes cannot affect the future of the race, and for that matter, man's own individual destiny.

This determinism, you will recall, is the philosophic basis of Marxian socialism which is today orthodox doctrine for a vast section of mankind. History, it maintains, follows a fixed road of iron necessity to an inevitable goal, and economic forces, themselves unwilled and inevitable, are the decisive causes of historic events. The human will, the personal will of the individual, his personal strivings, his aspirations, his inventiveness, and for that matter, fortuitous chance or accident, in no way affect this regimented course of human events. Everything that is had to be, and everything that will be, must be.



Now, dictatorships of all sorts have a fondness for these fatalistic philosophies because, don't you see, they reduce the importance and scope of the individual, they deny the freedom of the individual, they justify his regimentation. Naziism in Germany fed upon this doctrine, popularized by such German philosophers as Hegel and Fichte. Sovietism fed upon similar deterministic philosophies in Russia, and Fascism in Italy.

They all claimed to be based on science - science, where, they said, the law of causality, the law of continuity, was accepted as unquestioned. From the physical world they carried over this doctrine of rigid, undeviating causality into the moral and spiritual and social life of human society.

Today - today, friends - science is questioning this law of causality and continuity in the physical universe. Science has become sharply aware of a factor of spontaneity and chance, even in the physical universe. Scientists have begun to speak today more and more of the "principle of indeterminacy" in nature. The doctrine of necessity no longer appears to be adequately authenticated. Dogmatic determinism no longer prevails in scientific thought. It is even less authenticated in human life and in social history. Man is aware of an element of freedom in his life and of the exercise of free will, even as he is aware of the element of necessity and compulsion.

Professor Compton, the Nobel Prize winner in physics, writing in his book, "The Freedom of Man", states:

Physical laws "serve to define the limits within which action is possible. Within those limits there may be a wide range wherein a man may do as he pleases without violating any physical law. That he actually does as he pleases is a matter of everyday experience. A man's pleasure... is thus an additional determining factor which supplements the physical laws in defining his actions."

It seems unfortunate that some modern philosopher has not forcibly called attention to the fact that one's ability to move his hand at will is much more directly and certainly known than are even the well-tested laws of Newton, and that if these laws deny one's ability to move his hand at will, the preferable conclusion is that Newton's laws require modification.



Our own sages long ago rejected the doctrine of iron-clad fatalism and determinism.

, they said.

"Everything is in the hand

of God, except the moral life of man." Man is free, if not absolutely, certainly to an ample degree, to fashion his own moral and spiritual life and to determine, together with other men, their common social existence. Man's own will and his own effort count decisively. God sees all, God watches over all, but nevertheless, free choice is given to man.

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil. . . therefore, choose life that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed." Choose life!

And because they are no iron-clad historic procedures, and because there are no inevitable social forces, and because there are no assured and guaranteed destinations for man, man is challenged to fight for his own future which he desires, which he alone can effect, to plan and to organize and to work for it, or it will simply not come to pass, to resist hostile and hurtful forces or they will overwhelm him, to seize every opportunity, and to prepare himself to utilize every chance, every accident of history to his advantage and to the advantage of the good society which he wishes to build.

There is chance, there is accident, and there is risk, and there are hazards in human history. The story of Purim illustrates this fact abundantly. Mordecai and Esther had prepared themselves morally and spiritually to avail themselves of these chances and accidents as far as was in their power, and to convert them to the good use and the desired end. The saving of an entire people depended upon the intervention of one hitherto unknown man and his cousin, an hitherto unknown woman. They were not important people - Mordecai and Esther - they were not important office-holders to whom the opportunity to make important decisions and interventions would normally come. They were common, ordinary folk. The Book of Esther takes pains to point out this very fact.

"There was a certain Jew," says the Book of Esther, "one among many", one among the many exiles who had settled in the far-flung empire of



Persia, indistinguishable from the mass - "there was a certain Jew". And Esther - Esther was an orphan child, having neither father nor mother, whom Mordecai had brought up lovingly. But fate suddenly catapulted these two people into the very midst of one of the great dramas of Jewish history, when the life of a whole people was at stake, and these two people ~~met~~ matched their hour. They were prepared for it. Esther had, by an unpredictable stroke of chance, become Queen of Persia at a time when the powerful Vizier Haman had resolved to destroy all the Jewish people of the Empire. "Who knoweth," said Mordecai to her, "whether thou are not come to royal estate just for such a time as this?" Destiny was knocking at her door. Was she prepared to seize the great opportunity? Was she morally strong enough to exploit the great chance which had come to her, to save the people and run the risk of losing her own life? Esther hesitates. There are many instances when men and women, for lack of character or love or faith, missed their chance, and the world is the poorer for it. It was not pre-determined that Esther should make the right choice. She might have chosen the peace and security of the palace of the Persian King, and turned her back upon her people. Others had done so in the past numerous times. Mordecai, who had loved her and raised her as a father, helped Esther to make the right decision. That common man, that certain Jew among the exiles, suddenly, in one great moment, assumes heroic stature, rises to heights of moral grandeur, takes hold of the reins of destiny, and guides events through danger and disaster to a magnificent consummation in a people's rescue and redemption.

Mordecai had made himself fit to become an instrument of God. He did not know when an opportunity to serve his people would come, if ever. He was probably not aware of it when it did come. A cruel turn of the wheel of fortune for his people, a hate-besotted viceroy, a weak and foolish King - and suddenly his people faced total annihilation. What could he do? What could this one common man do? No one designated him to do anything. No one summoned him to do anything. He was just a certain Jew among many - no rank, no title, no power. But in the sight of God and in the service



of man, one man is as good as another. All men are equally commissioned and equally obligated, and was not Esther near to the King, and was not that his heaven-sent opportunity? And so, Mordecai did not hesitate. Inwardly he was prepared - to the palace, to the Queen, to danger, to death - it mattered not what awaited him or Esther. The people must be saved.

It was not the hand of destiny which took hold of Mordecai and Esther. Not at all. They became masters of what was destined for them and for their people. They did not yield to what was doomed, signed and sealed and proclaimed against their people. "On the 13th day of Adar they shall all be destroyed." They fought for their people's life. They fought for their people's survival, as all good men and women must fight for what they love and for what they believe in, or they will perish.

The Bible, my dear friends, time and again, calls attention to these undistinguished, unknown people, men and women, some of them even physically handicapped, who did not resign themselves to what men call fate, but who prepared themselves inwardly for some great summoning moment when they would go forth and determine the course of history.

Joseph, the lad who had been sold into slavery in Egypt, who had languished in prison, and then rose to become second to the Pharaoh in all things - when he finally makes himself known to his brethren, he said to them, "Be not grieved or angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life." He had prepared himself, did Joseph, through trials and sufferings and lowliness for the time when God would use him and when the opportunity came to save Egypt from famine, Joseph was prepared.

Moses, too, was born a slave, and but for his mother's loving strategem, might have been killed as the King had decreed. Moses saw the affliction of his brothers' groaning under the lash of the Egyptian taskmasters. There was nothing he could do, or so he thought. Who was he? His sense of moral outrage led him to slay an Egyptian officer and so, he fled into exile. When the summons came to him at the burning bush



he returned to Egypt and redeem his people. He, too, was not sure. He, too, hesitated, like Esther had hesitated, not because he was afraid of Pharoah - he was afraid of himself. "I am not a man of words," he said. "I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue. Perhaps I am not fit." But he was fit. It was the voice of God which corrected him: "Who hath made man's mouth? And who maketh a man dumb or deaf or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now, therefore, go and I shall be with thy mouth." God uses all men - at times, even the blind and the deaf and the dumb - if they are prepared, if inwardly they are right, if they have the courage to seize the opportunity once it becomes clear to them, the great chance.

Saul, when the prophet Samuel announced to him that he was to be anointed the first King over Israel, said: "Am I not a Benjaminite, of the smallest of the tribes of Benjamin, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore, then, speakest thou to me after this manner?" But humble and modest and not entirely sure of himself, he nevertheless accepted the summons. Inwardly he was prepared. He did not stay long hidden among the baggage.

David - David was the last and the least of the seven sons of Jesse, a little shepherd lad. His father never thought of presenting him to Samuel, the prophet, when the latter came to his house and asked to look at his children to find the future king of Israel. It never even occurred to the father to present David to Samuel. But David grew and by dint of courage and devotion, learning from suffering, profiting from defeat, atoning for sin, always aspiring, never yielding to what man called fate - David founded a dynasty and saved and served his people.

And so, dear friends, what the Bible teaches us and what this beautiful and happy festival of Purim teaches us, teaches all men, is self-reliance. Each man is important. Each man's work is important in the world. To each man, regardless how lowly his station in life, may come a great opportunity, greatly to affect the course of history. And each man should prepare himself inwardly, morally, spiritually for that opportunity when it comes, for no man knows where, when and how it will come.



I speak of great opportunity. The lesser opportunities are just as important. The lesser opportunities, which come frequently to man, perfect life on a narrower and more limited scale - in the home, in business, in the profession, in the community. These lesser opportunities, these summoning, challenging opportunities are not important. They add up to an imposing total. Cumulatively, they determine historic trends. Collectively, they give tone and direction to social progress. For the lesser opportunities, too, we must prepare ourselves and be prepared. We must prepare ourselves for the hour when the lot is cast. We must prepare ourselves for the moment when the important decisions must be made.

There is no hand of destiny. The hand of destiny, as far as social life is concerned, is the hand of man which can be directed to the good or to the evil, to the right or to the wrong, to the blessing or to the curse. Amen.





- 1) Within a few days we people will celebrate the Jewish New Year.  
It is an important holiday - although the carnival spirit which by tradition attends it, often obscures for many people its great significance.  
(b) Our rabbis taught: that "in the days to come all other parts, the Purim and the Writings will lose their worth and only the Torah & Moses and the Book of Esther will retain their value."  
(c) Clearly they found in that book and in the holiday which commemorates the events recorded in it - some profound and universally applicable lessons.

2) And indeed, there are great lessons and great truths inherent in them - the most apparent of them, I think being that ~~concerning~~ <sup>concerning</sup> ~~understanding~~ <sup>understanding</sup> and hate, their underlying motives, their ~~underlying~~ <sup>underlying</sup> danger, and how by ~~understanding~~ <sup>understanding</sup> and loyalty they may be frustrated. Haman is the symbol of that satanic hate which, stemming from lust for power and personal figure and vindictiveness, does not rest content until it seeks to destroy not only the object of its hate - but the ~~entire~~ <sup>entire</sup> race. Mordecai and Esther are symbolic of that steadfast love and unshaken loyalty for faith and people, which, hidden in profound danger, can turn to the rescue and success in bringing rescue and salvation to the ~~doomed~~ <sup>doomed</sup> people.

(a) Because <sup>unforgotten and unvanquished</sup> hate has been a common experience, the Jewish people through the centuries, because hate has been a universal experience of all minority people and groups everywhere - and because ~~resistance~~ <sup>resistance</sup> saving and redemptive love has ~~been~~ <sup>never</sup> failed the human race, and ~~has~~ <sup>has</sup> succeeded in defeating in the long run the designs of the envious and hateful mankind - the Purim story is



always fresh and always pertinent. It can never lose its power, its message or its appeal.

3) I wish to repeat this morning I get another message which flows from this story of Purana. — ~~We~~ We are told in the Book of Esther that the wicked Persian means the casting of lots. Haman had fixed upon the day for the extermination of all the Jews in the 127 provinces. <sup>the Persian Empire by the</sup> <sup>the day of the casting of lots</sup> ~~the day of the casting of lots~~ A chance ~~the day of the casting of lots~~ <sup>fix</sup> the day of execution. The element of chance is thus in history is thus dramatized in this story where other incidents of chance intervene to determine the course of events.

(a) By chance Javan Vazhta displaced the King Ahasuerus, who, when his heart was merry with wine, summoned her to appear at his feast to show the peoples and the provinces her beauty — an indecorous thing to do in a country where it was an outlaw for women to appear in public, only veiled — this chance refusal to do the bidding of heriling caused her downfall and prepared the way for the elevation of Esther to the Persian throne, which in turn enabled her to serve her entire people when the hour

(b) It was by pure chance <sup>too</sup> that Mordecai, ~~overheard~~ <sup>overheard</sup> two of the king's chamberlains plotting to kill the king. Mordecai informed Esther who in turn told the king. This incident was written down in the book, the chronicles, the story of Purana. Ultimately this incident was to bring Mordecai



to the nobles of the kingdom and caused the death of Haman. (3)

(C) Again, it was by her chance that the king on the fatigue  
right before the execution of Haman's terrible design against  
the Jewish people, could not sleep and he commanded to bring  
the book of the chronicles, the books, psalms and they were  
read to him, and by sheer ~~one~~ chance again, it was the  
story of the plot, the two chamberlains against his life  
that was read aloud, and Ben Hordocai, the Jew, first  
found the plot and thus saved his life.

The king then asked: What harm and damage had  
been done to Hordocai for this? And when he was informed  
that nothing had been done - he asked - Who is in the  
court? - And, by chance, Haman had just then come  
into the court to report to the king to have Hordocai  
on the gallows.

The king ~~then~~ <sup>then</sup> ~~reminded~~ asked that Haman come  
in, and said to him: What shall be done with the man  
whom the king delighteth to honor? Haman, thinking  
that the king must be referring to him promptly said:  
"For the man whom the king delighteth to honor let royal  
apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the  
horse that the king rideth upon and let a royal crown  
be set on his head, and let one of the king's most noble  
princes lead him through the streets of the city and  
proclaim before him: Thus shall be done to the man  
whom the king delighteth to honor."



Then the King said to Haroun: "Make haste and do even so to Mecca."

4. Then are there who deny that chance plays any role in history. History, they maintain, is a science. It follows a predetermined course. It is guided by causes like natural forces. There are <sup>no chance</sup> ~~no accidents~~ <sup>no spontaneity</sup> in history, no unforeseen contingencies. Necessity controls the moral and social life, manhood even as it controls the physical universe. Everything is directed by an underlying law of causality. The individual man cannot affect the pre-ordained trends of history. Human aims and purposes cannot affect the future of the race and, for that matter, his own destiny.

This determinism <sup>you will recall</sup> is behind the philosopher's bias of Marxian socialism, which is <sup>to-day</sup> ~~is~~ the orthodox doctrine for a vast section of mankind. ~~Even so~~ free history follows a fixed road of iron necessity to an inevitable goal and rem. forces, therefore, unwilled and inevitable, are the decisive ~~causes~~ <sup>cause</sup> of historical events. The human will, his personal <sup>participation</sup> ~~interventions~~, or, for that matter, ~~the~~ <sup>chance</sup> chance accident, in no way affect this represented course of human events. Everything that is had to be, and everything that will be, must be.



5/ Dictates help of all sorts, have a forever for such fatalistic (T. Philosophes - which reduce the scope and importance and deny the freedom of the individual. Nazism fed after these doctrines in Germany when they had been given philosophical respectability by Hegel and Fichte - and ~~Bismarck~~ <sup>Schopenhauer</sup> fed upon them in Russia; and Fascism in Italy.

6/ They <sup>all</sup> claimed to be based on Science. - when the law of causality was <sup>accepted as</sup> unquestioned. From the physical world they carried over ~~that doctrine~~ into the moral, spiritual and social order of human society.

To-day Science ~~has~~ is questioning the laws of causality and continuity <sup>even</sup> in the physical sciences - ~~that~~ It has become sharply aware of the ~~factor~~ <sup>fact</sup> of spontaneity and chance in the physical universe, - Science has begun to shake the principle, "indeterminacy" in nature. The doctrine of necessity ~~does~~ no longer appears to be adequately ~~authenticated~~ <sup>authenticated</sup>. <sup>Dogmatic determinism no longer prevails ~~there~~ in S. & P.</sup>

It is even ~~less~~ authenticated in human life and in social history. Man is aware of an element of freedom in his life, aware of the exercise of free will, even as he is aware of an element of necessity and compulsion.

(a) ~~Working on his book "Faith & Freedom"~~ Dr. Jerome Frank ~~prof. Compston~~ the Nobel Prize winner in Physics - <sup>writing up</sup> ~~from~~ his book "The Freedom of Man" states: (quote p. 158-159)



7/ Our sages long ago ~~re~~ repeated the doctrine of fatalism <sup>in</sup> (6) and determinism. <sup>peril x 10 4 1/2 peril 13 1/2 10 =</sup>

Everything is in the hand of God, except the moral life of man —  
Man is free, if not absolutely, ~~then~~ certainly to an ample degree  
to fashion his own moral & spiritual life, and to determine  
along with other men, their social existence. His will and  
effort count decisively. God sees all and watches over  
all but never takes free choice away from man. ~~that~~  
"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and  
death and evil... therefore choose life, that thou mayest  
live, thou and thy seed"

8/ And because, there are no iron clad historical precepts,  
~~no~~ meritless social forces, no assured destinies  
for man. Man is challenged to fight for ~~his~~ <sup>the</sup> good  
future, <sup>which he desires</sup> ~~which~~ he alone can effect, to plan and  
organize and work for it, as it will surely and  
certainly pass, to resist hostile and harmful forces  
and as they will overwhelm him, to seize  
every opportunity, and to prepare himself to  
utilize every chance, every accident of history  
to his advantage and to the advantage of the good  
society which he wishes to build.

9/ There is chance and accident and risks and hazards in  
history. The story of Persian merchants that abundantly







to her, to save a people and run the risk of losing her own life? She hesitates. There are many instances when men and women, for lack of character, or lack of faith, missed their chance, and the world is the poorer for it - ~~with~~ <sup>without</sup> it was not pre-determined that Esther should make the right choice. She might have chosen the peace and security of the Persian palace - and turned her back upon her people. Mordecai, who had loved her and raised her as a father, helped her to <sup>make</sup> the right decision. That courageous man, that certain ~~a~~ Jew among the exiles, suddenly assumes <sup>heroic</sup> stature, rises to heights of moral grandeur, talks bold of the ruins of Babylon, and <sup>then again and again</sup> ~~finds~~ bravely to a magnum opus - a people's rescue and redemption.

10/ Mordecai made himself fit to become an instrument of God. He did not know when an opportunity to save his people would come - if ever. He was probably an average man - when it did come, fortuitously he threw himself into the task which had to be done - a cruel task, the wheel of <sup>torment</sup> ~~punishment~~, a hate soaked vice-roy, a weak + powerless king - and suddenly his people faced total annihilation. What could he do? No one designated him to do anything - He was just a certain Jew - no army man - no raider - no title, no power. But in the <sup>soft</sup> ~~weak~~ God, and in the same, man, one man is as good as another. All men are equally commissioned and equally deputed. And was not Esther near to the king, and an act







the lord, the Egyptian taskmaster. Then was nothing he could do to thought. His ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> ~~sure~~ <sup>sure</sup>, moral courage led him to ~~that~~ stay an Egyptian officer. He fled into exile. When the ~~moment~~ came to him at the burning bush to return to Egypt and redeem the people - he was not sure. He hesitated - as Esther had done. <sup>He was at heart afraid</sup> ~~He was at heart afraid~~ <sup>Not because he</sup> was afraid of Pharaoh. <sup>I am not a man of words, I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue.</sup> But the voice of God converted him: "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh a man dumb, or deaf, or seeing or blind? is it not I, the Lord? how, therefore, so, and I will be with thy mouth."

God uses all men - at times even the blind the deaf the dumb - if they are prepared - if <sup>unwarily</sup> they are right - if they will have the courage to seize the opportunity the great chance -

(c) Saul, the first King of Israel, said of himself when the prophet Samuel anointed that he was "the least of the sons of Israel" and said: "Am I not a Benjamin, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou to me after this manner? - But humbly and modest and not entirely sure of himself he was <sup>nevertheless</sup> accepted the message. <sup>Inwardly</sup> he was prepared. He did not stay hidden among the hyssop. ~~stays~~"

(d) and David - was the lost and least of the seven sons of Jesse, a little shepherd lad. His father was that



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of presenting him to Samuel when the latter asked to inspect his children to find the future king of Israel among them. But David grew, and by dint of courage and devotion, learning from suffering, profiting from defeat, atoning for sin, always aspiring, never yielding to what man calls fate, he founded a dynasty and saved and served his people.

12. What the Bible teaches man is moral self-reliance. Each man is important. Each man's work is important. To each man, regardless how lowly his station in life, may come a great opportunity, greatly to affect the course of history. Each man should prepare himself inwardly, morally, spiritually, for that opportunity when it comes, for no man knows where, when and how it will come. But even the lesser opportunities which come frequently to men - to affect life on a narrower and more limited scale - in home, business, community - are not unimportant. They add up to an imposing total. Cumulatively, they determine historic trends. Collectively, they give tone and direction to social progress. For the lesser opportunities, too, we must prepare ourselves and be prepared. We must prepare ourselves for the hour when the lot is cast, for the moment when the decisions must be made.



Physical laws "serve to define the limits within which action is possible. Within those limits there may be a wide range wherein a man may do as he pleases without violating any physical law. That he actually does as he pleases is a matter of everyday experience. A man's pleasure. . . is thus an additional determining factor which supplements the physical laws in defining his actions."

"It seems unfortunate," says Compton," that some modern philosopher has not forcibly called attention to the fact that one's ability to move his hand at will is much more directly and certainly known than are even the ~~well~~-tested laws of Newton, and that if these laws deny one's ability to move his hand at will, the preferable conclusion is that Newton's laws require modification."

