

THE SCOURGE OF MEDIOCRITY

Early this morning several things came to the fore; one was a vision of a river in its lower reaches where it does nothing other than meander. There it slugs along, carrying its load of mud and silt. It is a somewhat rare event when it overflows its banks; it is highly improbable should it leave its floodplain. Perhaps it may do so by a cataclysmic event such as an earthquake as in the case of Reelfoot Lake in NW TN. This is when the New Madrid fault zone kicked and changed the course of the Mississippi River, causing for a brief period the Mississippi River to flow upstream. Such are the days of a river in its meandering stage. Mud, catfish and other bottom feeders are the main characteristics, with dead humic matter being the norm.

In the mid-reaches of a river, where it traverses areas with a bit steeper grade, the stream has larger diameter bed-load rocks. The stream itself flows much faster, the water is much clearer, and the water itself has much more life within. Quite often the stream leaves its normal boundaries and banks, causing a new path to flow downhill. Occasionally there may be some white water where the water flows over elevated hard substrate. Trout, smallmouth bass and other clean fish abound.

Then there are the headwaters of a stream near the mountains; whitewater abounds, the water is full of oxygen, only the strongest of fish flourish here. The water flow is wild and foaming, cataracts have a continuous effect on all the stream does. Few fauna can survive herein.

This scenario is our lot here in America 2015, especially in arenas associated with ideas, moral behavior, investment, and nearly all other facets of life here. Enlivenment of the mind has been denigrated to the mundane, the common, the ordinary, the comprehensible, the everyday and so forth. Creativity has been relegated to the too-much-effort bin, or the Dempster Dumpster, better said.

A highly respected historian, A.J. Toynbee, made a statement which has left a mark on my outlook. Paraphrased, he said, "A nation or culture which has reached a point where creativity no longer thrives is on the way down."

Our mediocre thought patterns are the problem; no longer do we seem to be able to imagine outside the box, save where it involves entertainment or other expressions which attune themselves toward the brain-dead.

I found myself surrounded by such backwaters of thought ranging from the deep spiritual thoughts of the Almighty to the issue at hand, namely my tent-making. This tent-making is exploration geology looking for oil and gas reserves; the selling (or convincing) problem is the scope of reserves for which I am looking. People have a hard time believing I am looking intentionally for giant reserves.

Then again, people have a hard time believing what God said, much less believe me. People have a hard time believing anything out of the very ordinary. When I say, “believing”, I mean with the whole heart, not just intellectually.

To summarize, it is awfully difficult nowadays to place in the mind of the audience objectives of such magnitude. Their expectations are, as Brutus told Cassius in *Julius Caesar*, “bound up in the shallows.”

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