

MEN TO MATCH THE TIMES

Irving Stone created an interwoven pageant of historical stories of the great westward drive which, in a few rousing decades, settled a continent and gave the United States dimensions of which its founders hardly dreamed. Stone titled his work, *“Men to Match My Mountains”* which was taken from the poem *“The Coming American”* by Sam Walter Foss [1858-1911].

Stone’s use of the phrase *“Men to Match My Mountains”* is somewhat similar to:

1Chron. 12:32 states, *“And of the children of Issachar, **which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment.**”*

“Which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what ... to do.” Men to match the times!

There are times and then there are *times*. Like journeys composed of the times of flatland travel that reach those times of mountainous traversing. Normal times that meet exceptional times. Traditional times that suddenly come face-to-face with unconventional times. The overall amount of times in men’s lives are the casual, the conventional and the normal times, however, these times of the traditional always, sooner or later, meet up with those times of the exceptional and at that meeting the nature of men are exposed. Those qualities and attributes of men that had lain dormant, for the greater part, begin to surface as casual times turn into trying and serious times. **It is those unconventional times that discover those certain men that God has equipped to match the times.**

History avouches that this is true. The unconventional and the unusual times of the past sent many men beneath its tidal wave and yet a few men surfaced to ride its crest—men such as John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and George Washington were such men in American history. Truly history of mankind is dotted with these exceptional men that seemed to arise to match the times. **It was not so much that the times made the men but rather that the times manifested the men.**

Beyond the histories written of men there exists this same principle within the pages of the Bible. **God has always had men to match the times.** As Hebrews eleven states “time would fail us” to speak of them all—men who “through faith” arose in very trying

times to do the will of God. While many remained at sea-level spiritually, God always had those men that climbed the rigorous heights of faith. Some men that made the journey successfully on the plains faltered at the mountain road. **It almost seems that the unconventional times exposed exceptional men.** One is left to wonder then if the average and usual times are the making of the unusual men which mount the heights in exceptional times. If God has men to match the times, He must therefore incite such men before the times of needed conquest. And perhaps He allows many stressful individual times before He uses certain men to influence other men. So, therefore, there must be those times of secret and personal trials along the path of ordinary times to equip some men for the exceptional times of the future—much akin to the words of Mordecai to Esther *“and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”*

Since God knows the end from the beginning He also can and does equip men for the future—in the present. It should never be that God’s ministry must make Proverbs 24:10 a reality, *“If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.”* **It is apparent that God will not allow the “day of adversity” to come without also equipping His man with the needful strength to endure it**—this can only be thwarted if His man fails to allow God to so equip him. 1 Cor. 10:13; *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*

Let every man-of-God understand that his present, individual and sometimes secret trials are only a prelude for future conquest and victory. **God not only places His men in stressful situations for just their own good and development but eventually also for the good and development of others.** 1Peter 5:10 establishes God’s design for the individual; *“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”* And Paul understood that his personal trials were, in the end, to not only strengthen himself but also for the strengthening of others. 2 Cor. 4:15 *“For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.”*

God will have men to match the times because He will equip them before they reach those times. Therefore we must also recall that correction is also a part of the equipping as stated in Heb. 12:5 *“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you*

as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:” and Heb. 12:11 “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

God, Who holds tomorrow, is perfecting a church—both as individuals and collectively. **He, in order to influence the many, must condition the man.** While sometimes the trial of today may be difficult to understand in the present—the future will reveal it. Hold fast therefore your confidence—God knows what He is about! He’s readying men to match the times.

Bring me men to match my mountains
Bring me men to match my plains
Men to chart a starry empire
Men to make celestial claims.

Bring me men to match my prairies
Men to match my inland seas;
Men to sail beyond my oceans,
Reaching for the galaxies.

These are men to build a nation,
Join the mountains to the sky;
Men of faith and inspiration,
Bring me men, bring me men, bring me men!

Bring me men to match my forests,
Bring me men to match my shore;
Men to guard the mighty ramparts,
Men to stand at freedom's door.

Bring me men to match my mountains,
Men to match their majesty;
Men to climb beyond their summits,
Searching for their destiny.

These are men to build a nation,
Join the mountains to the sky,
Men of faith and inspiration,

Bring me men, bring me men, bring me men!

--"The Coming American" by Sam Walter Foss [1858-1911]

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