**Immortality**

**They are like trees planted by streams of water,**

**which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither.**

**(Psalm 1:3)**

**The grass withereth, the flower fadeth:**

**but the word of our God shall stand forever.**

***(Isaiah 40:8)***

**I don't want to achieve immortality through my work. I want to achieve immortality through not dying. *(Woody Allen)***

**If all else fails, immortality can always be assured by spectacular error. *(John Kenneth Galbraith, American economist, diplomat and author)***

**Fred Astaire’s singing was so-so, and his acting was no great shakes. But could he dance. After the star died the other day at 88, one writer said, “Mr. Astaire blithely danced his way into the heart of an America tormented by the Depression and edging toward World War II. He helped people to forget the real world that nagged at them . . . .” Astaire finally quit dancing at age 70, saying he “couldn’t attempt to do the physical exertion now without being a damn fool.” Thank goodness, his movies are preserved on film and will continue to entertain. *(Rocky Mountain News, 1987)***

**Scott Carpenter flew anti-submarine patrols and surveillance sorties during the Korean War, said Bloomberg.com, and in the late 1950s he applied for Project Mercury – the first U.S. human spaceflight program. “I volunteered for this project for a lot of reasons,” he said after being selected along with six other pilots in 1959. “One of them, quite frankly, is that it is chance for immortality.” Carpenter uttered the famous line, “Godspeed, John Glenn,” when astronaut Glenn became the first American to orbit Earth on February 20, 1962. Three months after that, it was Carpenter’s turn. *(The Week magazine, October 25, 2013)***

**Since about 1860 most paper has contained alum, which produces sulfuric acid. That makes paper become brittle. The solution lies in exposing the books to a gas called diethyl-zinc, which neutralizes the destructive acid and leaves an alkaline residue to provide future resistance. For safety and practical reasons, the gassing must be conducted in the absence of oxygen and water, and on a large scale. That’s where NASA came in, making available to the library a vacuum chamber originally designed to test satellites in the simulated conditions of outer space. In it, 5000 books can achieve relative immortality at one time. The library has 20 million books and millions more documents in various stages of decay, all candidates for the life-giving process. *(Phil Gailey & Warren Weaver, Jr., in New York Times)***

**Fool! All that is, at all, lasts forever, past recall; earth changes, but thy Soul and God stand sure: What entered into thee that was, and shall be: Time’s wheel runs back or stops; potter and clay endure. *(Robert Browning)***

**Neither fire nor wind, birth nor death can erase our good deeds. *(Buddha)***

**Two pioneers of the cryonics movement have had their hopes of immortality dashed by a freezer accident. Raymond Martinot, who died in 2002, and his wife, Monique, who died in 1984, were awaiting resurrection in a custom-built freezer at their chateau in the Loire Valley. But a malfunction caused their bodies to thaw, prompting their son Remy to take them out of storage and send them off for cremation. Remy said he was “bitter” that his parents' dream of being revived a century hence was short-circulated by a mere mechanical problem. “Maybe the future would have shown that my father was a pioneer,” he said. *(The Week magazine, March 31, 2006)***

**These Things Shall Never Die: The pure, the bright, the beautiful, that stirred our hearts in youth, the impulses to wordless prayer, the dreams of love and truth; the longing after something's lost, the spirit’s yearning cry, the striving after better hopes – These things can never die. The timid hand stretched forth to aid a brother in his need, a kindly word in grief’s dark hour that proves a friend indeed; the plea for mercy softly breathed, when justice threatens nigh, the sorrow of a contrite heart – These things shall never die. Let nothing pass for every hand must find some work to do; lose not a chance to waken love – be firm, and just, and true; so shall a light that cannot fade beam on thee from on high, and angel voices say to thee – These things shall never die. *(Charles Dickens)***

**It doesn’t matter what happens in the future – if you’ve lived at all, you’ve lived forever. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**The essence of immortality is the tendency to make an exception of one’s self. *(Jane Addams)***

**On the neck of a giraffe a flea begins to believe in immortality. *(Stanislaw J. Lec, in Unkempt Thoughts)***

**In all of history, man has recovered only about 115,000 metric tons of gold -- roughly enough to make a cube 58 feet on a side. Because it's virtually indestructible, about 85 percent of it is still with us. *(Joseph A. Harriss, in Reader's Digest)***

**Our Creator would never have made such lovely days and have given us the deep hearts to enjoy them unless we were meant to be immortal. *(Nathaniel Hawthorne)***

**Immortality: I walked beside the silver sea, and you were there alone with me; assuring me how thin the line between your spirit world and mine; That death itself should only seem like passing shadow or a dream. Your presence living on with me, I found that day beside the sea. (Helen Hayes)**

**Honey won’t spoil, due to its high sugar content, which bacteria and fungi can’t tolerate. *(Don Voorhees, in The Essential Book of Useless Information, p. 241)***

**Honey is the only food that does not spoil. Honey found in the tombs of Egyptian pharaohs has been tasted by archeologists and found edible. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 62)***

**Once a new idea springs into existence, it cannot be un-thought. There is a sense of immortality in a new idea. *(Edward de Bono, in New Think: The Use of Lateral Thinking in the Generation of New Ideas)***

**The Benjamin Button jellyfish: In 1988, s marine-biology student unwittingly discovered a mysterious sea creature that seemed to debunk the most fundamental law of biology: You are born, you age, and then you die. The tiny species, called Turritopsis dohrnii, appeared to grow younger and younger until it was transformed back to a polyp, its earliest stage of life – hence the nickname “Benjamin Button,” after F. Scott Fitzgerald’s character who ages in reverse. At that point, the jellyfish would begin its life cycle anew. Today, scientists are working feverishly to discover the immortal jellyfish’s secret, believing that an understanding of the inner workings of primitive creatures like jellyfish, sponges, and flatworms could have radical implications for humans. “Once we determine how the jellyfish rejuvenates itself, we should achieve very great things,” says marine biologist Shin Kubota. “My opinion is that we will evolve and become immortal ourselves.” *(The Week magazine, October 11, 2013)***

**There are ten strong things. Iron is strong, but fire melts it. Fire is strong, but water quenches it. Water is strong, but the sun evaporates it. The sun is strong, but clouds can cover it. Clouds are strong, but wind can drive clouds away. Wind is strong, but man can shut it out. Man is strong, but fears cast him down. Fear is strong, but sleep overcomes it. Sleep is strong, yet death is stronger. But the strongest is kindness. It survives death. (Paraphrased from The Talmud)**

**How will the first person to live forever know that he or she is living forever? *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Even if we were not to believe this, there is ample empirical data supporting a belief in immortality that we no longer have to consider it a vague dream or a forlorn hope. It is a proven fact. We know this universe is one of law and order, and there is no reason to assume that this order does not extend to all life or lives. It is most improbable that there would be one law for this phase of existence and a different one or no laws for subsequent dimensions of life. *(Jim Ockley)***

**The best part of a good man stays forever, for love is immortal and makes all things immortal. But hate dies every minute. *(William Saroyan)***

**I intend to live forever or die trying. *(Groucho Marx)***

**Clement C. Moore was a teacher of classical languages. In the course of his career, he published a Hebrew dictionary and was a major benefactor of the General Theological Seminary in New York City. But it is not for the seminary or his dictionary that he is remembered. It is for a set of verses dashed off in 1822 in an hour of yuletide inspiration – verses that he stuffed away as if of no importance. The magic lines begin: “’Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house. . . .” They never brought Moore a penny, but they did bring him immortality. *(Dale Turner, in Reader’s Digest)***

**At least a dozen multimillionaires have left money to themselves in hope of being brought back to life. The immortality seekers have not only arranged to be cryogenically frozen after death, reports The Wall Street Journal, but have put their wealth in “personal revival trusts” that will be waiting fort them when scientists resuscitate them a century or two into the future. Arizona resort operator David Pizer, 64, has left himself roughly $10 million and calculates that, through the magic of compound interest, he might wake up as “the richest man in the world.” *(The Week magazine, February 3, 2006)***

**The average age of the Mediterranean olive trees growing today is 200 years. In Italy and France, it is not uncommon to find groves with fruitful trees between 400 and 500 years old. Many in the Middle East are even more ancient: the six remaining trees in the Garden of Gethsemane are said to be nearly 2000 years old. Indeed, the olive is practically immortal. Even when a trunk dies or is cut down, suckers or roots re-create the tree: “the dry poles produce a living race,” as Virgil noted. For centuries the common form of planting an olive grove had been simply to stick branches in the ground. Olden armies that picketed their horses with olive branches sometimes found, when they returned that way again, that they had inadvertently planted a grove. *(Noel Mostert, in Reader's Digest)***

**Whosoever plants a tree / Winks at immortality. (*From a poem by Felix Dennis)***

**It’s possible that, in some way, we’re all immortal – but I wouldn’t bet my life on it. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**That which is called the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and never did not exist, from the beginning of the human race until Christ came in the flesh, at which time the true religion which already existed began to be called Christianity. *(St. Augustine)***

**The giant sequoia waits 175 to 200 years before it first flowers. The most delayed sexual maturity in all nature. The giant sequoia tree seemingly can last forever. (Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 179)**

**Britney Spears wants to be frozen after her death, says the London Sun. A source says the troubled singer recently became fascinated with cryogenics, after hearing that Walt Disney had his body frozen. Spears’ father, Jamie, who controls her estate, is “happy to let Brit have her little obsessions” if it keep her out of bigger trouble, the source says, and may even agree to let Britney invest in the Alcor Life Extension Foundation. “We’re only talking about $350,000 tops,” says the source. “Much more than that and he may change his mind.” *(The Week magazine, June 11, 2010)***

**Never the Spirit was born; the Spirit shall cease to be never, never was time it was not; end and beginning are dreams. Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the Spirit forever. Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems! Nay, but as one who layeth his worn-out robes away, and taking new ones, sayeth, “These will I wear today!” So putteth by the Spirit lightly its garb of flesh and passeth to inherit a residence afresh. *(Sir Edwin Arnold)***

**The one-penny stamp may soon be obsolete, now that the U.S. Postal Service’s rate-setting board has recommended a “forever” stamp that will be valid no matter how high postal rates go. The Postal Regulation Commission urged the Postal Service to offer an “undenominated” stamp. It would be priced at the first-class rate that was in effect when the stamp was sold. But when rates rise, the stamp would remain valid without additional postage, which often takes the form of 1-cent stamps. *(The Week magazine, March 9, 2007)***

**Spring is a natural resurrection, an experience in immortality. *(Henry David Thoreau)***

**A honey locust tree, which sheltered soldiers during the Battle of Gettysburg, survived the bloody battle in July 1863 and today shades the graves of Union soldiers who died on the Pennsylvania battlefield. Four and a half months after the pivotal Civil War battle, the tree, with its long thorns and spreading branches, also bore silent witness to the immortal speech in which President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed, “We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain.” “It’s the only thing that was there during the battle and also during the Gettysburg Address,” says Kathy Harrison, senior historian at the Gettysburg National Military Park in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. “It gives you a sense of continuity that takes you to those two significant moments. It’s a living thing. You can touch it, you can feel it.” (Vicki Brown, in American Profile magazine)**

**Jesus referred to the pre-existence of the soul when He said, “Before Abraham was, I am.” (St. John 8:58). If we can get the picture of life as an unbroken circle, with the earthly experience as merely one segment of that circle, we can start to see the unending aspect of us all. *(Richard & Mary-Alice Jafolla, in The Quest, p. 355)***

**The universe goes on forever. Most of it is empty space, with huge swarms of stars called galaxies shining out into the blackness. Our sun belongs to a galaxy called the Milky Way containing about 100 billion stars. There are billions of galaxies in the universe. *(Pam Beasant, in 1000 Facts about Space, p. 4)***

**If you really want immortality, you’ve got to be willing to die for it. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Wood has an immortality all its own. Log palisades that protected the prehistoric lake-dwellers of northern Italy have been found intact, as have pilings buried under Venice for 1,000 years. White cedar trees buried in the swamps of Virginia for an estimated 3,000 years have been dug up and sawed into boards that may last another 1,000 years. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 135)***

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