

THE LOTUS EATERS

In Greek mythology, the Lotophagi, or lotus-eaters, were a race of people from an island near North Africa. Lotus fruits and flowers were the dominant plant life on the island and the primary source of food for its inhabitants, a peaceful, apathetic people calmed by the plant's narcotic effects.

In literature

In *Odyssey* IX, Odysseus tells how adverse north winds blew him and his men off course as they were rounding **Cape Malea**, the southernmost tip of the Peloponnesus, headed westwards for **Ithaca**:

"I was driven thence by foul winds for a space of 9 days upon the sea, but on the tenth day we reached the land of the Lotus-eaters, who live on a food that comes from a kind of flower. Here we landed to take in fresh water, and our crews got their mid-day meal on the shore near the ships. When they had eaten and drunk I sent two of my company to see what manner of men the people of the place might be, and they had a third man under them. They started at once, and went about among the Lotus-eaters, who did them no hurt, but gave them to eat of the lotus, which was so delicious that **those who ate of it left off caring about home, and did not even want to go back and say what had happened to them**, but were for staying and munching lotus with the Lotus-eaters without thinking further of their return; nevertheless, though they wept bitterly I forced them back to the ships and made them fast under the benches. Then I told the rest to go on board at once, lest any of them should taste of the lotus and leave off wanting to get home, so they took their places and smote the grey sea with their oars."^[1]

This passage served as the source for Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem "The Lotus-Eaters." It is also referenced in the fifth chapter of *Ulysses* by **James Joyce**, also titled "Lotus Eaters," and in the sixth chapter of **Edith Wharton's** *The Age of Innocence*.

(<http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Lotus-eaters>).

Today, all over the world, men and women are lured to and overwhelmed by comfort and fun activities—games of all kinds, popcorn, mountain climbing and movies. Our current generation, known as the Millennials, is much like the Lotus-Eaters whom Odysseus described. What could make these pleasure seekers happier than legalized drugs? Once they win that battle, the next one will be to create clubs for congregating to share them.

Are we allowing ourselves to be lured by our love of the world—its comforts and luxury? The love of comfort and play keeps everyone 'useless' but happy. In the name of progress, the comforts of life clear the way for those with ability and ingenuity to be wined and dined so they will produce more and more. Yes! The elite will give popcorn and circuses to the vulgar public to make them happy and useless. With this trained mindset, who will care if they have money?

If there is no God, as the humanists and atheists believe, and the common man is satisfied with feeling good about himself, and his flesh feels good, they have no worries. Then, when one of their own dies, they can celebrate his life, in spite of the fact he and they must go to meet the Maker (Eccl. 7:1-2).

We have LOTS to think about on this topic. Wine and drugs (modern day lotus flowers) aren't the only things that can steal our MINDS. Cell phones and Internet and Facebook can steal our minds and hearts even more insidiously. What are we about—our own pleasure or our Master's work?

Todd Henry, a motivational speaker from the secular arena says, **"The love of comfort is a thief that robs you of your best work."**

<http://www.toddhendry.com/creating/things-you-wont-say-in-10-years/>

Today I came across a government website that features a study of how Americans spend their time. [Bureau of Labor Statistics: American Time Use Survey](#)

The header says, "The American Time Use Survey (ATUS) measures the amount of time people spend doing various activities, such as paid work, childcare, volunteering, and socializing." Unfortunately, many elderly people seem to spend their entire day watching Television.

"Be transformed by the RENEWING OF YOUR **MIND**...." (Rom. 12:2). What if cares, riches, and pleasures of the world dull one's mind? "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present WORLD..." (2 Tim. 4:10).

Proverbs 21:17—"He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich."

Job 21:7-21—Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? 8 Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. 9 Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. 10 Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf. 11 They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. 12 They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. 13 **They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.** 14 **Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.** 15 **What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?** 16 Lo, their good is not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me. 17 How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger. 18 They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away. 19 God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it. 20 His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty. 21 For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

2 Peter 2:13-16—**And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot** (*g5172. τρυφή τρυφή; from θρύπτω thruptō (to break up or (figuratively) enfeeble, especially the mind and body by indulgence) in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; 14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: 15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;...*

2 Peter 2:18-20, 3:1—For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they **allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness**, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is **overcome**, of the same is he **brought in bondage**. 20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

2 Peter 3:1—This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure **minds** (g1271. διάνοια dianoia; from 1223 and 3563; deep thought) by way of remembrance:

1 Timothy 5:6—But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

Proverbs 31:1-9—The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him. 2 What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows? 3 Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings. 4 It is not for **kings**, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: 5 Lest they drink, and **forget** the law, and **pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.** 6 Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. 7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more. 8 Open **thy** mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. 9 Open thy mouth, **judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.**

Revelation 1:5-6—And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made **us** kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10—But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 **For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.** 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 **Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.** 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8 **But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.** 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

Titus 2:1-8—But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: 2 That the aged men **be sober**, (g3524. νηφάλιος nēphalios; from 3525; sober, i.e. (figuratively) circumspect: —.../---g3525. νήφω nēphō; of uncertain affinity: to abstain from wine) grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. 3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; 4 That they may **teach the young women to be sober(g4994. σωφρονίζω sōphronizō; from 4998; to make of sound mind),** to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. 6 **Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded (g4993. σωφρονέω sōphroneō; from 4998; to be of sound mind,).** 7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of **good works**: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, 8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

1 Peter 1:13-17—Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, **be sober, and hope** to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in

your ignorance: 15 But as he which hath called you is holy, **so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;** 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. 17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

1 Peter 4:1-8—Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; 2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. 3 For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: 4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: 5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. 6 For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. 7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober. (g4993. σωφρονέω sōphroneō; from 4998; to be of sound mind), and watch unto prayer. 8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

Ephesians 4:17-24—This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, **in the vanity of their mind,** 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 **And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;** 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

1 Peter 5:8—Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Ephesians 5:8-18—For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: 9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) 10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. 13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. 14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 **Redeeming the time,** because the days are evil. 17 **Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.** 18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Luke 16:1-2—And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had **a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.** 2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward....

Luke 16:8-13—And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. 9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, **when ye fail,** they may receive you into everlasting

habitations. 10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? 13 **No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.**

1 John 2:15-17—Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that **doeth the will of God** abideth for ever. **Ye cannot serve God and mammon.**

Luke 16:19-25—There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

Proverbs 21:13—Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

Isaiah 1:15-23—And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. 16 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; 17 **Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.** 18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. 19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. 21 **How is the faithful city become an harlot!** it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. 22 Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water: 23 Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

Isaiah 5:11-14—Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! 12 And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but **they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.** 13 Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. 14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend

into it.

Amos 6:3-7—Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; 4 That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; 5 That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David; 6 That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: **but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.** 7 Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.

Titus 2:11-14—For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 **Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly (q4996. σωφρόνως sophronos; adverb from 4998; with sound mind), righteously, and godly, in this present world;** 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a **peculiar people, zealous of good works.**

Ephesians 2:10—**For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**

Matthew 7:19-21—Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 **Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.** 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Titus 3:14—**And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.**

James 5:1-8—Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. 3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. 4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. 5 **Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton;** ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. 7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

2 Peter 3:10-14—**But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,** 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. 14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Galatians 6:7-10—**Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man**

soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. 9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

2 Corinthians 9:6—But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully....2 Corinthians 9:10—Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

Matthew 25:30-46—And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 -- When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 -- Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 **Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.** 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.