

## THE PARABLE OF THE POPCORN

Now it came to pass, in the first year of The Ford, that the Prophet was admonished by the Archangel PR to offer up a tribute to the NASA. And the Archangel came to the prophet in a vision, as it were a bright light, shining and flickering with the brilliance of Reason. And the Archangel spake unto him saying, Seek out the Wizard of Kodak and let thy prophecies be shown upon a screen shining brightly, even as I appear unto you now, that the people shall see the Glory of the NASA.

And when the vision had passed, the Prophet was inspired. For he spake unto those around him, in a voice for all to hear, saying, Let there be popcorn. And he saw that it was good. Now in these years, there was a great inflation in the land of Pasadena, and those who journeyed to the marketplace came away with much woe and little meat. Even so, they had no beef.

And the Prophet, seeing these things, called upon the Wizard of Bell that he might speak to the angel Accounting. Canst thou copp, saith the Prophet, a couple of coppers, that I may crop the corn?

And the angel spake in a kindly voice, as it were on a high place saying, Son, this is petty. Cash in thine own chips. For thou art well compensated and enjoy the blessing of the NASA as His Prophet. And the Prophet replied, But is not the angel of the NASA more easily able to copp the coppers as He hath more than coppers, yea even the silvers and the golds of the Priests of NASA?

And the Angel Accounting spake unto the Prophet in a firm voice, saying, Yea, though you utter unprophet-like words, the Glory of the NASA is all knowing, even unto Inflation, and

I shall consult the Scrolls of policy on this matter.

So saying, the angel cancelled the magic of the Wizard of Bell and unrolled the Scrolls. For the Word of the Scrolls concerning popcorn was unknown, even unto the angel Accounting. And the cherubim of the angel set about the work of discovering the teachings of the Scrolls on the subject of popcorn.

Now it came to pass that the cherubim could find no mention of popcorn in the Scrolls of Policy. And the angel Accounting did go forth in search of the Word, saying unto the Scribes and Pharisees, What the hell are we supposed to do about this popcorn thing?

Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of NASA, for he keepeth not the budget. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? He must be of JPL. And there was a division among them.

Now as the Scribes and Pharisees pondered pertinent principles of the Popcorn Policy problem, the disciples of the Prophet made haste to prepare the apparitions of the Wizard of Kodak, seeking salt and saying, Prepare ye the way of the popcorn.

And it came to pass that the wisdom of the Scribes and Pharisees was passed on to the angel Accounting. And they spake unto the angel saying, This, too, shall pass away. And the angel took comfort in these words. For he saw that the words were in keeping with the Scrolls of Policy. And upon the first day following did the angel rest.

And upon the second day, the Prophet sounded a trumpet unto the angel Accounting, saying, "What saith the Scrolls?"

And the angel replied, The Scrolls say many things, my son. Saith the Prophet, Wilt thou copp the coppers that I may crop the corn? No, explained the angel.

And it came to pass upon the same day that a great wave did pass over the Land of Pasadena. For the Prophet hath proclaimed for all to hear, No popcorn, no apparitions.

And the Archangel PR, hearing of these things, appeared again unto the Prophet saying, What, Prophet? A man, though he gain much popcorn and no coppers, even then can he show a profit.

And the Prophet was sore. A fraid man with few coppers hath no fear. And he spake unto the Archangel saying, Please pass the butter.

Now came the waves of dissension even unto the nine levels of the temple of NASA; yea even unto the Ear of NASA, the disciple Luke. And the teachings of the Scrolls on such matters were in the following wise: If thy prophet offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body shall be cast into debt. For the Vikings cometh. And some said, Pluck the Prophet.

Therefore said the Ear of NASA. Hold, this prophet hath pluck. Fain would I pluck the plucky from us lest I compromise unto generals for a mere kernel. And the Scribes and Pharisees, seeing and understanding the wisdom of these words, said, Yes, let there be a compromise.

And the prophet was summoned even unto a high place where saith the Scribes and Pharisees, What wantest thou, Prophet?

Saith the Prophet, Nay, only Justice; for is it not written that the NASA giveth and the Congress taketh away? And may not

the Scrolls of Policy be changed, even as the fall of the Glorious Journey?

And suddenly the Ear was with them saying, Prepare ye the apparitions, the Scrolls shall be reviewed for mention of popcorn, even unto the ninth level of knowledge. And the prudent Prophet profited by yielding, saying, It is enough. And the Ear spake in a kindly voice saying, It is the least we can do, my Son. And it was done.