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THE MAYANS

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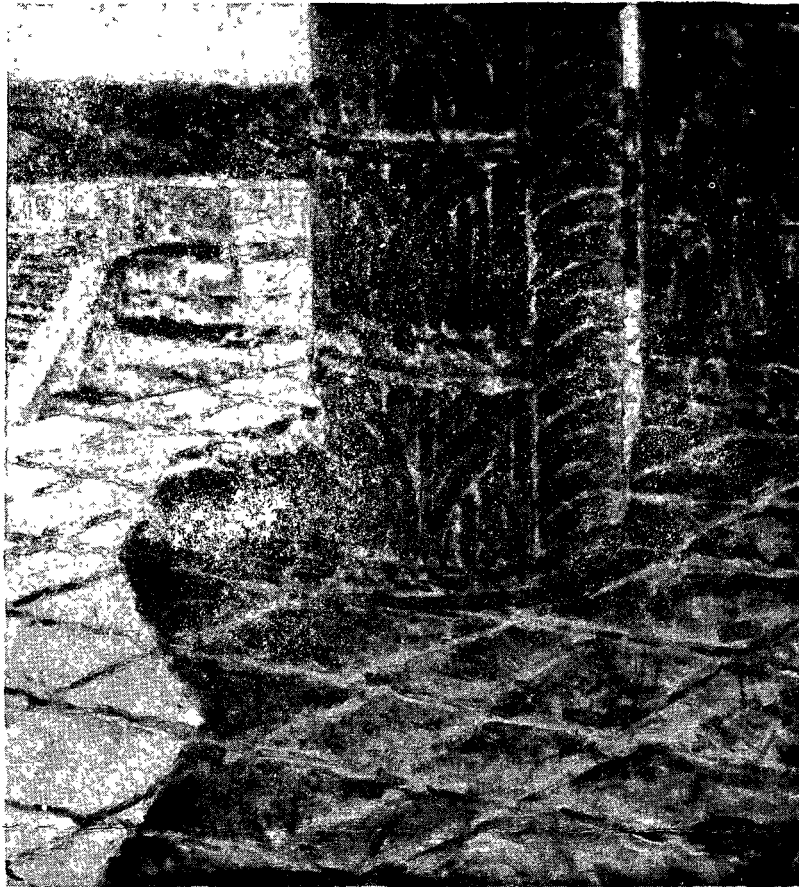
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THE MAYAN TEMPLE LECTURES

NUMBER THREE
YOUR READING

MAYAN
REVELATION

109

Beloved Centurion:

Again we meet, you and I, atop the pyramid and within the portals of this lovely Mayan Temple.

Deep in the heart of old Chichen Itza this temple still stands today. Each eventide, the sun casts its shadow exactly as pictured above. For a few days of each twenty-eight day lunar month, the moon too casts shadows like these. And in these shades we meet again to meditate and to expand our consciousness.

The picture at the beginning of this series, and the one beginning this

Monograph, - you will recognize at once as the work of the great Viggo H. Hansen. Your Order has all but two of this priceless collection of oil paintings and we hope that you will rejoice in this, and enjoy fully the richness of the great Hansen's technique. Commissioned by the Danish Government to do this series, World War II intervened when only seventeen were ready. Hansen died in Charity Hospital in New Orleans, and the collection found its way to your Mayan Order.

So perhaps the artist too joins us, - if you permit, ... in our Meditations within the portals of this lovely Mayan Temple. Spirits, like mortals, are happy and gay in thought, not sad or morose, but enjoying intellectual pursuits and development. We are all Eternal. God is All! All is God! In all evolving personalities, God is present. In you, in Me, in Hansen, ... In ALL good spirits, all our Companions, whether in mortal encasement or in pure, immortal form.

From the thinkers of all ages, in books and in ancient glyphs there is carefully recorded knowledge, and oft-times great wisdom. They too, through Mayanry, become our teachers and our Companions. To make you more aware of this, this Monograph is created for you. And we send to you our greetings, our blessing and our prayers, that you will wholeheartedly dedicate this Lecture with us, - together - atop the Pyramid, within the Temple Portals, with this solemn

MEDITATION

I realize that my reading, like the counsel of a Companion, helps to shape my life, and that I owe it to my soul to make wise choices of both. I turn with gratitude to the words of those who have adventured far in the world of truth and who have made the richness of what they found there available to me.

With this dedication, let us consider the matter of YOUR READING, and to begin, let us give this thought the following sub-title:

TO BEAR THE SOUL AWAY

"There is no frigate like a book to bear the soul away" wrote a thoughtful American poet. Certainly reading is one of the gates from the now to any time and from the here to anywhere. It is also a transforming power, and can therefore be used as a means to MASTERY.

We are all what we are, partly because of what we have read, or have not read. One cannot THOUGHTFULLY give his mind to a printed page through even a FEW sentences, - without being CHANGED BY THEM for better or for worse. We become WHATEVER our thought-life makes us, and our reading directly affects that spring of action.

Some unfortunate things have happened to our reading facilities lately, but things a master must be wise enough to meet. Literature has become commercialized, so that much undesirable material is produced because, "it is financially profitable". The cost of books has advanced formidably over the years when a dollar would buy a well-made book, and one not so well-made could be had for much less. The tempo of life has so speeded up that what leisure time people have is

not always spent at anything so "unexciting" as reading.

All this tends to bring taste for good books to a seriously low point. Some even go so far as to say that some form of mechanical reproduction, perhaps like sound pictures, will eventually replace books altogether. But will it replace the kind of material with which some books have so long and so well fed the human soul? Or will it merely tend to standardize minds to a pattern of someone else's choosing?

Still anyone can afford an occasional good book, and a few good books well read are BETTER THAN A WHOLE LIBRARY OF NEGLECTED VOLUMES. Then there are the free public libraries, and for that matter the fine OLD books lying around that you have not read or might well read again. In spite of discouraging changes in the cultural habits of the people, the SEEKER FOR MASTERY will still manage to feed his mind.

Suitable reading for what one is trying to be and do is no less than a NECESSITY. Without food the body weakens and starves, without nourishing reading the mind dwarfs and withers, and without a diet of truth and inspiration the SOUL shrivels and fails. By truth, we do not mean local and temporary "scientific" fact, but that which is UNIVERSALLY and ETERNALLY true!

One trying to keep on the road to mastery must grow. He may observe, and should; but what he can observe will be limited to his own time, place, and experience. Something more than that is needed. Through the right reading he may SHARE the experiences of those who made the quest long before him and the vision of those who look out into the future BEYOND anything he can conceive. He may thus be led by other adventurers of the spirit to HEIGHTS and DEPTHS of UNDERSTANDING he never dreamed were possible. OBSERVING he walks ALONE; reading he walks with the wise, the good, and the GREAT of ALL time.

You have doubtless cultivated the reading habit already, but if not this is the time to begin. You will learn that a good book is like a good friend. It must be known to be appreciated.

You need not be a "bookworm". A bookworm is one who reads for reading's sake, who learns without ever DOING ANYTHING about it, who comes to live a life full of knowledge and empty of achievement. A MASTER learns in order that he may DO; - searching out new paths that he may walk in them, glimpsing new reaches of life that he may encompass and possess them.

This gives the master the right balance between thought and action, between knowledge and application. He reads that he may better know how to practice. He withdraws from the crowd that he may learn how better to return to the crowd and serve it. Thus he becomes one who is neither wholly introvert nor wholly extrovert. His life is rounded on both sides. He is equally at home in the world within and the world without. If he does not learn this he will not be a master.

The books of the world are letters to us from people who thought they had something to say. Some are written for the big publishers to sell to the masses and may just as well be disregarded. Some are written to mislead us, and should be avoided or read only to observe their untruth. Some are written to inform us,

and have their importance because every fact is a work of God. Some are written to amuse us, and if they do so in unobjectionable ways they have their value for times of relaxation. Some are written to feed our understanding, and serve their purpose well. Some are written to ENRICH the soul life; and they are the supreme teachers of mastery.

GUIDED MEDITATION

We have already pointed out how important meditation is. A piece of reading, whatever its nature, is a guided meditation. Your Companion who is writing these words has before him a collection of the proverbs, - words of wisdom - of various nations. He turns through the book and writes down a few noticed at random as the pages turn. Fit thoughts for the Temple's Portal. Notice what food for meditation each one is.

"Friends, though absent, are still present." -- Cicero.

"Fools need advice most, but only wise men are better for it."

-- Franklin.

"The hardest step is that over the threshold." -- Anonymous.

"I believe because it is impossible." -- Tertullian.

"He is most cheated who cheats himself." -- Danish Proverb.

"Whoso knoweth himself shall find the kingdom of heaven."

-- Greek Proverb.

So we could go on and on. The ink marks on the page are highway signs, marking a road for the mind of the reader to follow. So determining and creative is this mental journey that we can often tell what someone has been reading by "the mark" it has left on his talk and conduct. We say that he has been influenced by this writer or that; and though he himself may not realize it, this is true. The language of the books one reads shows in his speech, and the viewpoints they present show in his beliefs and actions.

A man in a certain rural community was truly eloquent. The people in the little country church he attended loved to hear him speak and pray. His words were well-chosen, his thoughts well-considered, and his voice well-modulated. Yet this man had had practically no schooling, and in youth he had been rather rough and crude. What had taught him such a choice of language and manner of expression? Nothing more nor less than the constant reading of the chaste and majestic diction of the Bible. It had affected his conduct in the same way.

What changed Abraham Lincoln from a crude-spoken backwoods youth to one of the most eloquent speakers and writers of all time, and one of the wisest men as well? The Bible, Shakespeare, Pilgrim's Progress, and the like, first BUILT INTO the MIND and then TRANSLATED into ACTION, probably did more than anything else to bring about that marvelous expansion of mind and soul.

Wisely chosen reading will answer questions that have vexed your mind. It will raise new ones to set your soul again adventuring in the infinite world of truth. It will breathe its own spirit into your personality in some silent and unconscious way. It will lengthen the roads and broaden the fields your mind travels. All these are trends toward mastery.

One day a man showed your Class Instructor a few printed lines pasted inside the cover of his Bible. It had been there a quarter of a century. He and his wife had read it till they knew it by heart, and had thought about it till it had become a part of their lives.

Another day a man on the train showed him a few typewritten lines. "This is the fourth copy I have worn out", he said, looking at the worn piece of paper taken from a leather fold. "I have carried it across both the Atlantic and Pacific and in many countries it has been my philosophy of life." That is how much a little piece of reading can mean in a human life. Probably there are few around us whose lives have not been profoundly affected by something they have read, for where the mind goes the life follows.

The reader and student of life's riches must learn to discriminate, however. Keep to the constructive material, written by people who have experienced something and believe something, and who therefore have something WORTH WHILE TO SAY. Then always read appreciatively, - and thoughtfully. Do not let anything confuse and upset you. Do not become entangled in theories. Do not fail to be open-minded enough to KEEP ADJUSTING your mind and life to TRUTH as YOU discover it.

A book is like an open road. If it is a good book it is a good road and leads to a desirable destination. Therefore, read books that are onmarching, that go forward and arrive somewhere, for you will go with them. You will not be helped much by the doubters, and iconoclasts, and those whose only message is that they HAVE no message. With so many leaders who have good vision, why choose blind or nearsighted ones? In the quest for mastery use the help of those who have attained it and guided others toward it. Be a Mayan in all your growing individuality. Hold tight to your own Revelations to yourself. Give them to others. Thus will you grow.

CHOOSING READING

Whatever you may read for other reasons, - for progress toward the mastery of life, choose reading that will definitely help YOU in that direction. For its own purpose it might be called your professional reading. In a way it is to you what the professional books and magazines of the architect, the engineer, and the surgeon are to them.

Read as much as you can from the writings of the great soul builders of the centuries. You will find you have much in common with the quest they made and how they attained their goals. An ounce of demonstration is worth a pound of theory. How someone else traveled the long, rough road to excellence, what he did about the problems that arose, and how he surmounted barriers he found in the way, WILL BE suggestive to you. Above all, the levels of understanding he reached will INSPIRE YOU and HELP YOU on your OWN way.

If a true prophet appears in your time read what he has to say. Prophecy is not limited to any one age, and it did NOT die with the last of the Old Testament writers. But do not join in the mad rush to just any and every new star that shines in the literary firmament. Some of them will not shine long. Always include in your reading program plenty of the things that have stood the test of time and still continue to be helpful. Be grounded in ancient wisdom, - if you

would well evaluate the "new".

Do a great deal of reading in the field of spiritual and ethical thought. The great minds of Greece, Rome, ancient America, and almost every other nation have left us observations on life that shed great light on the way for any age. There are the shorter musings of men like Epictetus, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and others. There are also the longer studies of the kind of things great minds think about. For instance, Cicero meditated on the later days of life and what they mean to one; and wrote the meditation down. We have it in his De Senectute, or Old Age, which can easily be had in English. It is an example of what a master sweep of the mind can take when it spreads its wings and takes flight toward a given objective.

Every seeker for mastery should read the essays of Emerson, for it was in that field that his mind mostly moved. He was a man whose mind was always reaching and whose soul was always building. As flashes of understanding came to him he wrote them down, and later built them into essays on the GREAT ideas and ideals of life. The method he used is the reason why his great essays SEEM disconnected.

This made a great man of one who might otherwise have been a mediocre one. It never left him even when he was old and broken in mind and body. Even then when taken to look at the dead face of the poet Longfellow, he murmured, "I don't remember that man's name, but I remember that he had a beautiful soul." That was the kind of thing he had looked for and tried to build in himself and others all his life. Read and think through some of life's great lessons with him in the essays written in the days when his magnificent mind was at its best.

The sacred writings of all the great religions of the world have a great deal of mastery material in them. Don't be afraid of them. You will NOT be contaminated by the musings of earnest and wise people who were making their approach to the UNIVERSAL GOD in their own ways and terms. You will be surprised how MUCH they have in common with the rest of us, and how challenging to the BEST were MANY of the things they said and wrote. Collections of the best of the writings in the various scriptures of mankind can be had at reasonable cost. They may not represent to you an adequate religious viewpoint. That is not what you are reading them for, but it is safe to guess that after reading them thoughtfully, YOU WILL NOT AGAIN FEEL SO FREE TO USE THE WORD "PAGAN". A mind unacquainted with them would not have reached the mastery level. With what strange accuracy and deep insight some of these ancient thinkers trained their minds on conditions and problems we thought were peculiar to our own time!

THE BIBLE

Supreme, of course, among the books over which your mind should linger much and long is that inspired collection of Hebrew and Christian writings we call the "Bible", a word taken from the Greek word for Books, for the Bible is a collection of books by many people and dealing with many things from the religious point of view. It is THE BEST of the records of the search of the human soul for God, the tracing of the IDEA of GOD through history, and dealings with God of all kinds of people.

There are many good versions of the Bible, old and new. They range all the

way from the King James Version of nearly three and a half centuries ago to the new Authorized Version published in complete form in 1952. All these versions are SINCERE and COMPETENT ATTEMPTS to express in English the TRUE MEANINGS of the language in the original manuscripts. Whatever version you have and like is good. The main thing is to USE it and let it translate itself into YOUR LIFE.

Let us now consider a little more fully HOW to do that. We will not undertake here to give directions how to become a finished Bible student in the theological sense. However excellent a goal that might be for those who want to make it a life work as a minister or teacher, that is not exactly the purpose here. You are setting out to try to become a master of living. The instructions given here for the use of the Bible have that ALONE in mind.

YOUR need is to be able to get at the heart of any portion of the Bible and appropriate its meaning quickly and readily, to range through the Bible as one might walk through an orchard plucking an especially fine bit of fruit here and there, or as one might stroll through a flower garden KNOWING HOW to choose the rarest blossoms and make them his own.

To do that, in the most satisfying way requires something MORE than simply reading and quoting from the Bible at random. One can do that and still not know what his quotations really mean. What we want now is not superficial memorizing but acquiring such INSIGHT and APPRECIATION that great passages will cling in the chambers of memory without effort. It is not difficult to learn enough about the Book of Books to do that.

Begin by seeing that your personal Bible has adequate helps in the back of it. They are many and they are enriching. At the least there should be a set of maps, and a short Concordance. But the most important thing for you at first is a brief BIBLE DICTIONARY. Such books are published in large volumes and whole sets of volumes, but for now you can do with such a one as is found in the back of many Bibles. If your Bible does not have one, get one that does. It will inspire you and help you more than the few dollars it costs.

Begin by reading the article on the Bible itself, if there is one. If not, begin by reading the material about the book of the Bible you intend to read first. Then read the book. You will understand it better because you NOW know what it is about, and when, why and by whom it was written. Yes, this is important to you.

Read it chapter by chapter. WATCH for optional readings shown in the margins or in a space between the two columns on each page. They will sometimes add light AND meaning to a passage. When you come to a striking passage, PAUSE and read it AGAIN. Reflect on it. Either MARK IT or note it down in a book kept for the purpose. Turn to your Bible dictionary and see what you can learn about the characters introduced, especially the AUTHOR of the individual book of the Bible you are reading.

Go all the way through ALL the books this way the first time. After that you will KNOW where to turn for favorite passages or for counsel and encouragement you need. You can then use any part of the wonderful volume for Meditation, Enjoyment, or Whatever Reason you Choose. You will find many chapters and passages, especially in the Psalms, the Prophets, and the New Testament, especially good for

SETTING UP PERMANENT THOUGHT PATTERNS to fit which, it is your purpose to grow.

You will find the Bible like the cruse of oil that wasted not and the quantity of meal that did not diminish. In a whole lifetime you will exhaust only a part of its resources. Turning to passages with which you had THOUGHT you were very familiar, you will often find something ENTIRELY new and different. The Bible will cease to be an obscure and neglected book, and become a living message throbbing with light and power. Now and then a word, sentence, or paragraph will seem to rise up from the page to meet your eye and heart. That is INSPIRATION!

ALONG THE WAY

Do not do your meditative reading too rapidly. With ordinary material, rapid scanning may be well enough, but with DEVELOPMENT reading, it is not a good practice. Higher level reading requires time to think, to let the message be absorbed by the subconscious mind, and to glean the between the lines IMPLICATIONS so easily and often missed. Mastery is not a speed-up matter anyway. To become a master in any field takes time. You must think a great deal about what you read. The first look is hardly ever enough.

As you pause OFTEN in your reading to think, you are like a traveler stopping now and then to drink in the loveliness of the scenery along the way. As you hold words and sentences in your mind you will often find them BUDDING and BLOOMING like flowers, 'till they take on beauty and meaning FAR GREATER than was at first apparent. That too is a mark of inspiration.

TRUTH, when we know it, makes us free to live more RICHLY and function more EFFECTIVELY. It SETS US FREE from inertia, sense-boundness, and fumbling. One who is going to write a book, or build a bridge, or lead a movement, or make a machine, MUST LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT IT BEFORE HE IS FREE TO DO IT. The same holds true in the matter of excellent living, effective thinking, and rendering intelligent service to mankind. He whom THE TRUTH makes free is free indeed.

If one sees his prison door open and never walks out he is no freer than before. For him the gate might as well have remained closed. One is free ONLY if he emerges and LIVES a better life. The printed page that is a messenger of truth is a breaker of fetters and an opener of prison doors.

Do not let what you learn and attain make you vainglorious, self-righteous, or critical of others. Great souls are NOT critical but sympathetic and helpful. Let humility and understanding be your "CONSTANT COMPANIONS" on the journey. Your readings will suggest lifting standards of thought and life. They would not be of much value if they did not. Expect the quest for mastery to be a demanding program. Its EXACTINGNESS is its challenge. Who wants to do something little and easy? The road to ALL excellence is straight and narrow.

Learn to love the books that help you, and to think of them as good friends. It would be well to have a special place for them in the library, or better yet in your room; but CERTAINLY IN YOUR LIFE.

Do not press them on people, or even mention them except to those who

mention them first. Let this be a private and confidential area of your life.

A reading program requires regularity. Give it at least a little time EVERY day. Make a reading plan that is easily within your power to carry out, then KEEP FAITH with it. Failure to fulfill a good purpose will itself count against your progress as much as the loss of the reading would do. Let your reading time be like a period set aside to chat with a good friend. Make some great truth your own EVERY day, and see how YOUR life will GROW in ADEQUACY and in POWER.

Always bear in mind the matter of practice. LIVE what you learn. That is WHAT it is FOR. It does two important things. First it applies the laboratory test to determine whether it will work. Second, it EXPRESSES the principle and gives it its value to the world. If you do NOT translate truth into ACTION, you will lose your HOLD on it.

Do not talk to people about what you are reading and intend to do. It invites discouraging attitudes on the part of those who do not understand. It also wastes the PURPOSE AND ENTHUSIASM YOU NEED for the task itself. It is YOUR OWN concern WHAT you are reading and why. As you learn mastery practice it quietly and unostentatiously. If it is genuine, people will notice it and WANT TO KNOW about it. EVEN THEN it is BETTER to LET IT PROCLAIM ITSELF. Never push ANY part of YOUR program on others. It is NOT for EVERYONE anyway, but ONLY for those who HAVE the CAPACITY to FOLLOW IT THROUGH and to make GOOD USE of WHAT THEY ATTAIN by ACHIEVING GREATER EXCELLENCE FOR THEMSELVES and EXPRESSING IT in HELPFULNESS to MANKIND.

MASTER PRAYER

Thou hast lighted many candles of truth in the world, O God. I thank thee that I am privileged to walk in Companionship in the light of some of them. May their number multiply and their light increase, and may I be faithful in seeking light and accepting its guidance. Lead me on from knowledge to wisdom, and let that wisdom be dedicated to Thee and to Thy people. Amen.

Humbly, and Solemnly to You,

Your Class Instructor.

Your Next
TEMPLE LECTURE
Deals Revealingly with the Following Subjects

YOUR ASSOCIATIONS

A Special Meditation for <u>You!</u>	Erosion of Personality
Your Environment	Some Examples
Erosion	Gathered Strands

* MASTER PRAYER