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THE MAYAN TEMPLE LECTURES

NUMBER FIVE

YOUR SELF-EXPRESSION

MAYAN REVELATION NUMBER 111

Beloved Centurion, Companion on the Path that leads to SELF-MASTERY:

We are about to enter a phase of this series that has to do with the INNER YOU. As your Companion, your instructor, and your true friend in Truth I urge you to read the words of this monograph at a time when you can give it your most concentrated attention. Be sure that you will not be interrupted before you enter into your study period. Be prepared to learn the TRUE MEANING of YOUR SELF-EXPRESSION.

Learn how some small act of Love on your part, some thoughtful deed, a service you do, wherein you give of self, may mean more from the standpoint of YOUR GIVING than the rich man who writes a check for his favorite charity but gives nothing of HIMSELF.

Your instructor considers this lesson very important in your development. You have reached a stage in your glorious travel where you can become rich mentally

and spiritually. You can be a blessing to mankind; you can bless the lives of all you touch. YOU CAN BE a MASTER! And now, let us make every effort to be closely attuned as we enter our study period. Put your mind at ease before you begin to read. Think of your Companions everywhere. Think of your instructor and when you feel truly ready to receive, begin with this sacred

MEDITATION

I realize that God's greatest gift to me is a selfhood bearing His own image, and that its care and cultivation are the most important tasks of my life. I realize also that this selfhood must be expressed in some work that will bear its likeness, even as it bears the Creator's, and that I have an obligation to eternity to do this as well as I can.

THE MEANING OF SELF-EXPRESSION

There is so much mistaken talk about self-expression these days that it seems wise to pause a moment at the beginning of this lesson and try to make it perfectly clear what we do and do not mean by the term. We certainly do not mean what careless living and careless thinking people do in their glib use of it to excuse any and all kinds of self-indulgence.

We do not mean the development of an egotistical spirit, that attitude of self-worship in which the whole world is considered to center in the ego. On the contrary the true self-expression obligation involves the collective viewpoint - the individual sharing the life of the group. No one is ready to live pleasantly and effectively till he realizes the presence of other people in the world and relates his life and its interests to theirs.

We do not mean the spirit of self-interest. There is a simpler name for that, selfishness. Its unfortunate victims have not succeeded in passing beyond the early childhood and the animal mind in their mental and emotional lives. The one measure of success is what they can get out of it. No one is mature till he has found something he puts above himself. "If anyone would come after me," said Jesus, "let him deny himself."

We do not mean the aggressive spirit, the attitude of the go-getter who lives to see how much he can snatch from other people who may need and deserve it more. This is only a cultivated, forced, hothouse variety of common selfishness, and it is the animus of the world's troubles today.

We do not mean just any kind of self-expression. Many people use the term loosely when they defend everyone's right to express himself, even thinking they are taking a scientific attitude. So if Johnny wants to hit the piano strings with a hatchet or if John Doe wants to degrade the life of the community, no one should even protest. They are said to be exteriorizing impulses which if left unexpressed would fester and cause some unsocial or even mental derangement. The trouble is that the wrongdoer is unsocial already, and he is not going to get any better by being encouraged to get worse. No one has any right to express himself till he has a self fit to express. The expression of such a self is what we are considering here.

Long ago Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, bore twin sons and named them Esau and Jacob. Esau was an earthy man, the satisfaction of whose desires was his one immediate concern. He and not Friedrich Nietzsche is the earliest known exponent of the policy of get what you want when you want it, no matter how you have to go about it. He said he would die if he didn't get some food he smelled cooking one day, and proceeded to trade his whole birthright for it. He became the ancestor of the Edomites, a savage tribe of murderous robbers, and their race still endures.

Jacob had much to overcome in his nature, but he overcame it, and was named Israel. He was the kind of person who, even in his unregenerate days, could not lie down under the open sky with his head pillowed on a rock without dreaming of heaven and angels. That dream was in his soul, and when that is the case a bad man will always get better, just as truly as he will get worse if there is nothing in him but appetites. A time came when Jacob wrestled things out with himself by a brookside, and came clean. He became the father of the idealists of the centuries, the followers of gleams. They lose the weeds of life, but they gain the flowers.

The conflict between the viewpoints of these two men has never ceased. It runs through all the civilizations, the Edomites of the world always standing for the flesh and the Israelites of the world for the spirit. King Herod was a descendant of Esau. Jesus was of the line of Jacob. Even at the cross the two viewpoints were in conflict, as they are always everywhere, and will be till one finally prevails. That is the problem of history and the struggle of the centuries. The soldiers of the spirit often fall, but even through their Calvaries they triumph.

We are not here recommending the self-expression of Edom, but that of Israel. The idealism of Jacob struggled up the centuries to Bethlehem, and past Calvary on up to this day. It is moving on toward a redeemed world order, and in that progress the masters of the world will play an indispensable part.

THE MEANING OF SELF-EXPRESSION. II

Having tried to make it clear what we do not mean by self-expression in this lesson, let us now give further attention to the effort to make it very clear what we do mean. To understand this challenging thing well is something that will repay you for a great deal of thought, and for the effort without which the thought would not be worth the thinking.

As this lesson is being written, an early Spring day came to my mind. The sun is shining, and the leaves are just beginning to emerge from the buds. A rose bush by the front porch is budding. The week before the buds were nothing but little knots of green, but one who has watched roses bloom would know that each one had a great dream wrapped up in it, a dream of a beautiful rose. He would also know that dream was a living thing with a certain power to insist on coming true.

Today the buds are being pushed apart, and little telltale patches of pink are beginning to show in the openings. That means that the insistent dream of beauty has actually begun to push through the concealing husk. Perhaps it was some such dream that became each of us and the world in which we live.

These rosebuds will continue to unfold, and in a few more days each will hold out to the world a beautiful flower. It will not be just like any other rose, nor

try to be. It will just be itself. It will not even be all of itself until it has unfolded fully into what it was created to be. What it was created to be is perfection for it. When it has attained the fulness of the pattern in its Maker's mind, and has functioned as such, it will have fulfilled its mission.

A rosebud is never the same any two days, for life is an onmarching thing. Each day the ideal is a little more fully realized. The change is constant, but it is forward change. When it stops growing it begins to decay.

We are like that. Each of us is a bud of what he was created to be. In some the development is only beginning to show. In others it is farther advanced. But back of the bud is a pattern, finer, more intricate, and more beautiful than the finest rose that ever grew. And in the heart of that bud of what one can become if he will, a divine energy is always urging and pushing toward the fulfillment of the pattern, trying to realize the Creator's plan for him and make the hidden dream come true. It is a part of the creation that is ever going on everywhere.

If and when one develops into that pattern made for him before he was born that will be perfection for him. His will not be exactly like any other personality in the world or any other life that was ever lived. He is himself alone, but that self must always keep moving, growing, changing - forward. If that personality ever stops growing it too will begin to decay.

That is what we mean in this lesson by self-expression. It is the development of the true self which is the divine pattern for each of our lives and the expressing of that self in some good work as our gift to the ages.

A rose can never be anything but a rose. It has no will power by means of which it can choose to be anything else. It accepts the place where it finds itself and the nature and color assigned to it. If it is vine it climbs, and if it is a bush it merely puts out branches. It can neither determine these things nor change them. The power of choice is a phase of the divine image it did not receive.

But a human being is different. Like his Maker he has the power of decision and choice. True he has to remain a human being, but he does have the power to decide what kind of human he will be - a low-grade one, a high-grade one, or a mediocre one. If persons possessed no such power there would be no occasion for this lesson, for they could do nothing about it anyway. But, since we do possess it, it is important to try to find the way to what is highest and best - for us.

We might say that the whole matter of mastery adds up to progressing always toward your best self, your only true self, the person you can become that is bound up in the person you are like a rose in a bud. REMEMBER THAT WHAT YOU CAN BE IS ALREADY REAL ON THE SPIRITUAL PLANE. Your task is so to live and labor as to manifest it on the physical plane. That is the only self that can offer the world a gift worthy of you.

LENGTHENED SHADOWS

Whatever self one is at a given time is trying to manifest its nature in some appropriate work, by occupying some appropriate place in the world, and by contributing something appropriate to history. Emerson has said that an institution is the

lengthened shadow of a man. He could have said even more. Every human achievement is. In fact, every condition is.

The Book of Acts tells of a time when so many ailing people were coming to the Apostle Peter and his associates to be healed that these busy men could not possibly give personal attention to each. The problem was solved by placing some of these ailing and broken people along the way where Peter walked so his shadow would fall on them as he passed. The plan worked. Even his shadow combined with their own faith to make them whole. What a wonderful thing to cast a shadow like that!

Not only does every person cast a shadow of his body as he goes about, but he also casts a shadow of his more essential self. It may be a healing and helpful shadow, or it may be a destructive and hurtful one. It may take the form of an institution, a work dedicated to mankind, a creative achievement, an important discovery, or just an influence going out from his life. Some labors would be marks of true mastery; others would not. YOUR PROBLEM AND TASK IS TO CAST A SHADOW THAT WILL.

This nation is the lengthened shadow of the men who dreamed of it, laid its foundations, and fought and sacrificed to get it started on its way. The absence of yellow fever in the Tropics is the lengthened shadow of men like Walter Reed, William C. Goargas, and their associates and helpers in discovering the origin, nature, and cure of that devastating disease. The electric transmission of messages is the lengthened shadow of men like Morse and Marconi who dreamed the dream and blazed the first trails. The phonograph and electric light are the lengthened shadows of Edison. The development of the nursing profession and its service in war are the lengthened shadows of people like Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS THE LENGTHENED SHADOW OF JESUS THE CHRIST.

These people felt the moving of a great dream, the urge of a great vision, the call of a work they were born to do, and extension of themselves over the world and through the years. What they did became their memorials, monuments that never crumble or fail.

Among the things each of us would like to do there is always one from the thought of which he cannot escape. His heart keeps crying, "Woe is me if I do not do this thing." It may be a profession he must follow, or it may be something apart from it. If it is a profession it will be one of service, for this compulsion does not urge us to works of exploitation. Though it may produce a living, it is not essentially something one has to sell but to give.

It is not a possibility but an urge. The soul does not say, "I may", but, "I must."

"So nigh is grandeur to the dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, "Thou must",
The youth replies, "I can."

The way to distinguish this duty is that it is not a choice but a call. You cannot get away from it. It will haunt you and cling to you till it is done. If you do not

do it you will somewhere have to explain why. You may be able to get the forgiveness of God for your failure, but it may not be so easy to forgive yourself. For this is not just something to do and forget. It is what Destiny meant you should leave the world to remember you by.

No matter what this work may look like when it is done, it will be a portrait of your soul. In it mankind will always be able to see what under the surface you really were like. That is because it is the expression of yourself you gave to the world. It is the image you have mirrored in your deeds.

Perhaps the saddest thing possible to one would be to fail to give the world this expression of himself. The next saddest thing would be to be hindered from doing it or from doing it well. Somehow or other a master does it. He is masterly enough to see that nothing prevents. He knows it is his debt to the ages, and he must pay it or leave it standing against him.

THE GREAT OBLIGATION

Let us reflect a little further on the significance of that word "debt". Many people claim the world owes them something and do not seem too much concerned about what they owe the world. A debt is something to pay, not to receive. The world may recognize the value of the gift and render some return in acknowledgement, but whether it does or not the obligation stands. One's self-expression is a sacred thing. To commercialize it is to profane it. He may commercialize certain skills, but not the picturing of his soul. It has been said that if one makes himself necessary to the world, the world will give him bread, and that is true. But it is the service that is primary. The bread is incidental. Other things are added to us after we have first sought the kingdom.

During some of the years that Booker T. Washington was president of Tuskegee Institute an old woman sold peanuts at the campus gate. That was appropriate, for it was at Tuskegee that Dr. George Washington Carver learned more about the peanut and did more things with it than anyone ever had before.

One year an awkward and unsophisticated colored girl enrolled in the school for the first time. She was awed at all the fine buildings on the grounds. Someone told her Doctor Washington had raised the money and had them built.

"My, wouldn't Doctor Washington be a rich man if he had done all that work for himself instead of the school?", she said one day to the old peanut woman at the gate. The old woman was not long in replying.

"Law, Child, he wouldn't a-been worth a nickel", she replied.

She was probably right. Tuskegee Institute was Booker T. Washington's self-expression, the lengthened shadow he was building. He could do all that for mankind but probably he could not have done it for himself, even as the Master of all saved others when Himself he could not save. Like St. Paul, Washington had his keep while he worked to enrich the lives of others.

That seems to be the law where one's stewardship of self-expression is concerned. Is this the reason why some, whatever they do, fail to prosper, while others

prosper whatever they do not do? Like the lilies, they seem to give it no thought, yet get on very well. But look at the beauty of the self-expression of the lilies! Heaven pays its stewards very well, but it does not let them take everything. As in the story of the manna in the wilderness, THOSE WHO GATHER MUCH HAVE NOTHING OVER, AND THOSE WHO GATHER LITTLE HAVE NO LACK.

William Jennings Bryan used to say, "A man can earn a million dollars, but he hardly ever has time left to collect it. On the other hand, some people work so hard collecting it that they have no time left to earn it." In the realm of mastery the magic word is not withhold, but give.

"For life is a mirror for king or slave.
It's just what you are, and do.
Then give to the world the best you have,
And the best will come back to you."

The life you are living is like the sculptor's marble. It has an image hidden in it, but no one knows what it looks like till you have carved it out. Your will, and patience, and skill must chisel away the material around it and release it for the world to see. Only you have looked into the raw marble and seen the image there, so only you can set it free. When you have done so the world will pass by and see what your soul is like. But think what one false chisel stroke can do to the ultimate result. You can change the pattern while the marble is still there, but who can put it back when it has been wrongly chipped away? You see, living and expressing a master life is a fine art.

We have forgotten everything else John Howard Payne ever did but the writing of the song, Home, Sweet Home. That was the work of a little while at the high moment of his whole life, and it became his gift to his people, a gift that by some instinct they recognized and treasured. We have forgotten most of Millet's paintings but The Angelus and The Man with the Hoe. They are his lingering shadow. All the world remembers of us may be a simple deed or brief utterance, but it will be a master's work, the thing the ages have required at our hand.

BEAUTY FOR ASHES

The Bible tells us that such is God's plan of exchange that He gives us beauty for ashes. Many of us know the truth of that by experience. How much the world owes to the grace that continually fills with beauty lives that have little but ashes to offer. But we are made in His likeness. Must we not do the same?

Two men were walking in the woods when they passed the old snag of a lightning-riven tree. But it no longer looked like a snag. Its ugliness had been covered with beauty. Ivy had climbed up from the ground and draped the pitiful remnant with leaves and blossoms. Once more God had given beauty for ashes.

"Have you ever noticed", asked one of the men, "how God is always searching out the scars of the world and covering them with something beautiful?"

"Never thought of it before", replied the other, "but come to think of it, it's true, not only of the ugliness in the world but of the ugliness in life as well."

Since we know God is always doing that kind of thing, we who dream of expressing His likeness in our lives must also accept the obligation to do it. The more nearly one approaches the mastery of life the more plainly will that challenge be made to him, for he not only owes it to the world but he also owes it to himself and the completion of the plan for his life.

How pitifully strange it is that in art, literature, and life, some try to reverse the process and cover the beauty of the world with ugliness. They excuse themselves on the ground that they are realists, but they do not understand what true realism is. A flower is as real as a weed, a lovely landscape as a mudhole, a blue sky as a storm cloud, and a good deed as an evil one. The better self in man is as real as the worse one, and the potentiality for good as true as that for bad.

Let your self-expression help reverse and neutralize the efforts of these exponents of a false realism. Help teach the human race the reality of the good, the lovely, and the true. Whatever you do make it beautiful. Wherever you find ugliness cover it with beauty or leave something lovely in its place. But remember that a life must be beautiful before it can express itself in beauty or give beauty for ashes. Behold the lovelier things among the works of men. They are the works of the masters.

One day the writer saw a painter friend giving beauty for ashes. He was a good man to begin with. He had to be to do so well what he was doing. Before him was an ash heap and a pile of junk. His friend wondered if he at last had taken up the fashion of painting ugly things for the world to look at, and approached to see.

There was nothing ugly in the picture. The artist was looking past the ashes and the junk at a very lovely scene beyond them, and the scene was rapidly being reproduced on the canvas. A few weeks later the picture was sold. Did the person who paid some fifteen hundred dollars for it ever dream that the artist had left out the real ugliness and painted the equally true beauty that lay beyond it?

We do not have to reflect or reproduce the ugliness of the world. BY DISREGARDING IT WE HELP TO ELIMINATE IT. Why bother with alleys when we have the mountains? Why depict slimepits when we have the stars? Why paint the hideous when we have the beautiful? The world has its ash-heaps but why emphasize and advertise them? And what kind of taste is it that prefers them? Let us leave them out and put in the beauty that lies beyond them - the beauty of scene, language, mind, conduct. It is worthy to be a part of your self-expression, and they are not.

In the early eighteen hundreds, a quaint figure who had earned the name of Johnny Appleseed ranged over some of the frontier that now comprises the Central States. His self-chosen, unpaid occupation was planting appleseeds. The writer has eaten fruit from decendants of some of the trees he planted. He figured that more and more pioneers would be moving in, and that they would find the region more livable if the orchards were already planted. At least the family would have fruit. That is exactly what happened too. That may seem an unusual form for self-expression to take, but certainly to plant beauty and delight in the wilderness was not a bad idea.

Is there a wilderness somewhere in the world you know? Is there any beauty and happiness you can plant along its frontiers? If so, you can earn the gratitude of people you will never see.

That which especially distinguishes a high order of man from a low order of man; that which constitutes human goodness, human nobleness, is surely not the degree of enlightenment with which men pursue their own advantage but it is self-forgetfulness, it is self-sacrifice, it is the disregard of personal pleasure and personal indulgence, personal advantage, remote or present, because some other line of conduct is more right.

WHEN YOU HAVE MASTERED THIS TRUTH, WORTHY CENTURION, YOU HAVE LEARNED TO USE THE FIFTH KEY IN YOUR SELF-MASTERY TO UNLOCK YOUR SELF-EXPRESSION.

MASTER PRAYER

Thou hast made me, O God, and Thou knowest what I am and what I can become. Guide my unfoldment into the pattern of Thy plan for me, and help me to give it visible form in my answer to the challenge to self-expression. Help me to make my life and its expression truly worthy of each other. Amen.

Blessings,

Your Class Instructor

We will next meet within the portals of the Temple when we take up the following subjects:

YOUR SERVICE

A Special Meditation for You!
As One Serveth
The Expanding Life

Be a Saviour
Let's Get Down to Cases
The Greatest Service of All

* MASTER PRAYER