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# THE MAYANS

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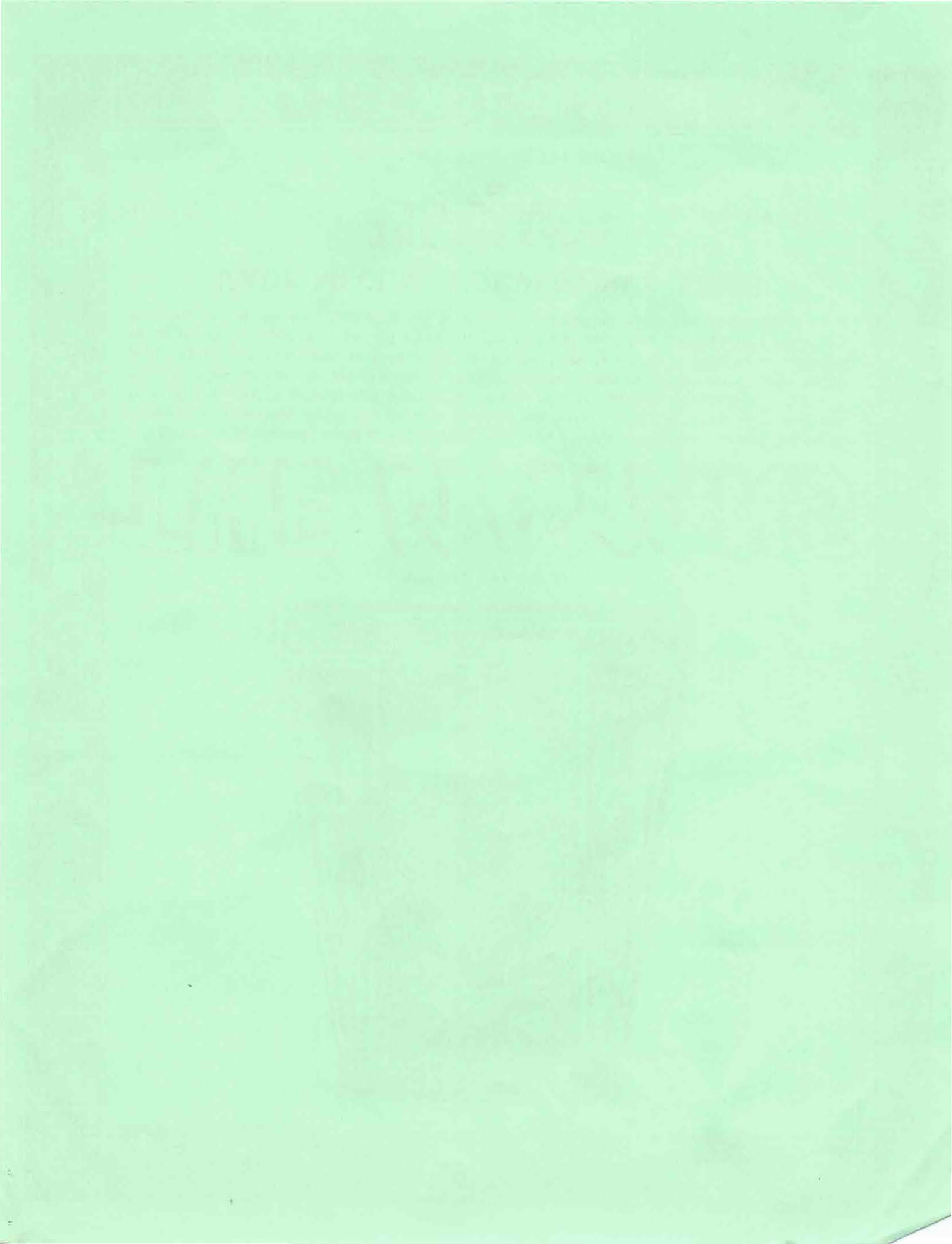
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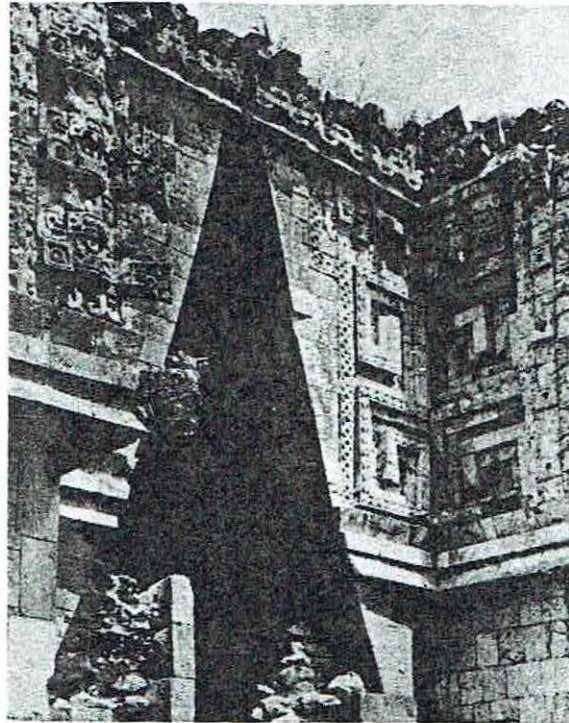
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*Photograph by Rose Dawn*

*The Archway to the House of the Governors  
(Yucatan)*

## **DO IT YOURSELF**

**Mayan Lesson Number 157**

**THE GREAT UNITY**

**FIND A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP**

**THE SYMPHONY OF GOD**

**DO YOU FIT?**

**THE GREATEST MACHINE**

**THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE GROUP**

**FREEDOM**

**MEDITATION**



Beloved Centurion:

It is my hope and my sincere belief that in this lesson you will find the answer to a question which is universally asked, and that is the question of why does God permit things to happen that are unpleasant to us, as his children. How it is my deep conviction that God does not send these misfortunes to man, such as wars, the loss of loved ones, the handicapped condition of many good people.

So often you hear people say, "I wonder why this had to happen to her or him - whichever the case might be; he, or she, was always such a good Christian person." If our students will stop to think for one moment they will know that God is a God of love and it is not his desire that we have heaped upon our heads unhappiness, misery or misfortune.

God does not bring us these things, He creates everything perfect. His life pattern for us is right, but at times somewhere along the line his plan is violated by something or some person or some series of events, and when that pattern is broken, defiled or devastated, the whole plan falls to pieces, and some one person is hurt, or some group of persons or, for that matter, whole nations.

It is only human to ask, "Why does God do this to me?" God, my dear student, did not do this to you. Something else brought this condition about.

I have one small illustration which I have probably used before because I like it very much. It is just this - if you have in your yard a beautiful garden, and it is growing healthily and sturdily, with perhaps a beautiful pansy or rose thriving according to God's plan for it; then one day you walk into your garden and find a cutworm has cut down your lovely pansy, or perhaps an insect which is an enemy of the rose has completely desecrated it and it is no longer a thing of beauty, it is mutilated and will no longer bring joy to all who look at it; on the contrary, it will probably die. Surely you know GOD did not send this cutworm to cut down this lovely pansy, nor did He send the insect that destroyed the rose. All was perfect, according to God's pattern, but the perfection of the pattern was interfered with.

In this lesson, there are many explanations of God's harmonious way of life. For you, I hope it will be the answer to many of the questions which you may have in your mind or, if your understanding is already clear on this subject, perhaps you will be better able to help someone else when they ask the question, "Why did God do this to me?"

God does not perform tragic events, but he can transform these same events into blessings. He never hurts; in all things He heals. All things work together for good to those that love God. We do not direct the way in which our good will come to us; in other words, we must not question God.

For example, if I am on my way to see someone who is ill, perhaps a hospital patient, maybe someone who is a member of our Order, I do not ask God specifically to keep me from having an accident on the road or from going into a ditch, or to avoid any of the other pitfalls one may encounter when driving a car; instead I seek

His guidance and protection in maintaining the necessary alertness and the necessary response when danger threatens, the skill to do just the right thing at the right moment, in order that I may accomplish my mission; those are my petitions.

The real victory is to be found not in what comes to one in life from the standpoint of heartaches and tragedies, but rather in what we allow it to do to us. Every hurt which we encounter as we go through life, and are able to rise above, makes us that much stronger; so instead of saying, "Why does God do this or that to me?" let us not consider that these things were deliberately sent to us by God, but let us think constructively and determine to accept whatever comes, and ask God to help us in our efforts to accept it.

And in this prayerful mood, let us repeat together the words of the following prayer:

### P R A Y E R

Prepare me, Heavenly Father, to sense the great symphony of thought, life, will, and action, which is the universe; and help me to make myself a harmonious part of it. Amen.

### LESSON NUMBER THREE

#### RELATE YOURSELF TO THE UNIVERSAL HARMONY

#### THE GREAT UNITY

I N the progress of our thinking we have now seen that all creation and life is a unified something proceeding from the energizing of the thoughts of an Infinite Being. It is not a miscellaneous and unrelated confusion of this and that, existing and functioning each element in its own way; but that it is a great, related oneness, with God at its heart.

Each sun and star is a part of it. Each spear of grass belongs to it. Each summer cloud and winter snowflake plays its part. You, and each of us, is a conscious, active, determining element in it. Each thing in this vast and complex organization exists and does well when it keeps its normal relation to all the rest of this great unity, and runs into trouble if it does not.

Jesus said that God clothes the lily and marks the sparrow's fall. He was suggesting quickly and briefly the vast fact that everything that exists is a part of the Father's plan and purpose, has the touch of the Father's directing will upon it, and moves forward to a consummation that must be right when it finally appears. God is more solicitous for each person and thing He has made than any human parent can be for one of his children, and as a family needs to live in a unified and loving cooperation, so all God's creatures need to do the same. If

one fails to keep the trust given it and refuses to play its part it not only disturbs and delays the plan, but it also seriously endangers the person who gets in the way of the plan.

This is true of every inanimate thing, it is still more true of the lower animals with their conscious but unreasoning lives, but it is truest of a human being, for he does not follow a blind course like a pebble or a raindrop nor an instinctive one like a lower animal. His plan, though limited by conditions, is the deliberate one of choice. More can be expected of him. He is more responsible and it is therefore all the more wonderful when he plays his part well, and the more tragic when he fails.

Why has God created us with the power to go the wrong way if we choose? Because He was not trying to make a race of robots, but one of people. We could not be made in His image and be automaton. He wanted children who would do the right thing not of necessity but of intelligence, not because they must but because they wish to. Without the power of choice we would not be human.

We are the children of a King. One of the marks of our royalty is the power to decide. By our use of that power we hold our crowns or lose them. Only by the right use of it do we hold our places in the universal unity. Otherwise we make ourselves rebels and outcasts.

## THE SYMPHONY OF GOD

THE history of mankind is like a vast and extended orchestra practice. God, the Infinite Director, labors with us through the centuries, His baton gradually bringing that great aggregation of players, ourselves, into harmony with Him and with each other.

Each of us has a part written into the score. Some are longer and some shorter; but each is different. Many instruments produce many kinds of sound and tone; all to be blended into the ultimate objective of a great harmony.

Each one's part is written into the score. Whatever the sound may be like, the notes are there. We sit with fixed eyes and poised hands waiting for our moment to come. At last the Director looks our way. He is expecting a performance from us that is not only right in itself but that fits so exactly into the total effect that the resulting sound will be like one great tone - a whisper of prayer, an aria of kindly and understanding action, a burst of divine solicitude, a unison of patience, a melody of fulfillment, a thunder of praise. They are all there, and will come out when we become skilful enough to play them, glorified with all their rich overtones and lingering vibrations.

But now and then is heard a wail of failure, a discord of conflicting desire or of action not in harmony with the music and the Director's will. It spoils the passage. God raps with His baton. Someone has not done well. We must try again. The next time someone else makes a mistake, and we do it over yet again.

So the sea of players keep trying to get it right.

We do much better now than we did at the beginning. At times it seems to us that we do quite well, but quite well is not good enough. We must keep trying till altogether we do it right. We are striving for harmony, and harmony is not a matter of degree. Unless it is perfect it is not harmony.

It is not that the Director is unreasonable, but that the result to be obtained requires a good performance, both individually and collectively. It is not that God wishes to make it unpleasant, but that He is trying to lead us to the joy of success.

Some time, as we grow in skill, patience, and cooperativeness, we shall reach that goal of harmonious human living, and attain that unity of heart, mind and hand, with the guidance of the Director's baton, which will lift the mightiest of melodies to the listening skies. Our errant wilfulness and discordant purposes will have gone silent, and the theme of inspired living will sound in the perfect measures of the song of happiness and peace.

Each day's living is a part of our instrumentation. Our problems and frustrations are only difficult passages God is trying to help us master. Some of them will emerge in the grandest portions of the great production when at last we play them as the Director would have it done. Everything will be a part of the harmony when it is right at last.

THE GREATEST MACHINE

T H E greatest of all machines is the first one ever made. It was made by its Inventor - the Infinite, Universal Being, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible, the One whom we ordinarily call God.

Being of infinite wisdom and power, He could create this great inter-related, interacting mechanism, because He had the power to will things into existence. He would think a pattern, energize it by His will, command it to become, and there it would be, a visible, tangible thing; but, however small, always a part of the vast entirety we vaguely call the universe. Among created things the small part of that universe we call our world is of special interest to us, who are still smaller but highly potent parts of it. Many things in our world appear simple to us, yet are so complex as to be nothing short of miracles, and far too perfect to have come about by chance.

The Infinite One who willed this wonderful thing into existence by simply saying, "Let it be so", and saw that it was so, also maintains it through its long existence, doing this also by a constant stream of will power so that it holds up and goes on, with all its parts acting and reacting to do their share in the making of its history.

Suppose that for a single instant the Infinite One failed to do this, in



less than the space of a single breath it would collapse and cease to be. So it is literally true that "By Him all things were created and in Him all things consist" and that "In Him we live, and move, and have our being."

There was one point at which this vast machine became vitally and essentially different from any other ever made. Man-made machines are wholly mechanical, made of inanimate parts which function blindly and feelinglessly till they are broken or worn out. But in our world God has made some of the parts animate, conscious, self-moving, and more or less self-determining.

One species of these, the human one, has these powers to the extent that it has a sense of destiny and the desire to achieve something more than mere existence. It even has a sense of immortality, and dreams of being and doing something that will endure beyond the reaches of that limited portion of eternity we call time. It is even charged with the care of this physical world.

Through us God intended from the first to build the new earth; but, having this power to choose, we sometimes fail Him and create disorder and disaster by the wrong use of our knowledge and ability. The promise is that some day we will all cooperate in doing His will for the world life and set it all to rights.

You are one of those conscious, self-determining units in this vast and intricate mechanism. Your hope here lies in using your will to do God's will, and it is so with us all. You must first find God and know His will for you, then you must have the faith and courage to do it. You may have to try more than once, so allow yourself time for practice. You can no more delegate this to someone else than your breathing. You must do it yourself.

FREEDOM

Y O U may already be asking what all this is going to do for your freedom. The answer is that it will establish and secure it. Let us now consider why this is so.

Freedom is one of the most misunderstood things with which we have anything to do. People confuse it with all kinds of far-fetched matters, including bondage itself, and then wonder why the idea does not seem to work out. A man will consider himself free to enslave himself to some wrong way or bad habit. A citizen will consider himself free to undermine his country, and does not understand why the outcome is the breakdown of its freedom and his own.

What many people seem not to see is that one of the points at which to be careful is that freedom is even free to destroy itself. The law of every man for himself in his own way, and anything goes, is not freedom but its opposite. It tends to break down freedom and all its safeguards. Like electricity, freedom is a great blessing, but it is an equally great peril unless rightly handled.

True freedom is closely related to self-restraint. Anarchy, which is the

denial of all restraint, runs in the direction of the loss of freedom. True freedom is effective, cooperative with the power of good. No one who does exactly as he pleases is free unless he pleases to do exactly right, which is self-restraint. One who attempts it is enslaved to himself, and soon will be enslaved to conditions as well.

No one has understood that better than St. Paul did. He boasted that he was free, but at the same time called himself a slave (doulos) of Christ. Yet he insisted that it was Christ who had set him free. Here we have a good example of the way in which freedom and restraint are mingled. This is something it is very important to understand.

St. Paul had learned how it protects one's true freedom to operate under the control of the truth which makes men free. He lived under the control of that which had set him free from his prejudices, from soul-lacerating misdeeds, from evil and all its ravages, from futility, from a hopeless future, from blind groping and from finally turning out a failure and a castaway. Wouldn't you call that freedom?

Jesus gave us the best definition of freedom ever written, one that tells exactly how to possess it - "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Spinoza echoed it long afterward when he declared that one is free as far as he knows. That is the point we wish to stress in these lessons - to see the best way and walk in it. That, and not wandering aside into all sorts of by-paths and detours, is freedom.

You are a conscious part of God's world. You have the power to refuse to do His will, but to do that would ultimately destroy your happiness and freedom. Your hope is to keep related to Him and His plans, and certainly you must do it yourself.

FIND A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP

T H E effectiveness and even the safety of any one of us as a part in the mechanism of the world life depends on whether we are in the right relationship to the rest and doing the thing we are there to do. In mechanics anything made of flammable material must not be in a place of high friction or other source of heat. Something like that applies to the place you occupy and the part you play in the world life. That alone may help you to avoid the wrong place and perhaps find the right one. You know at the start that you and it must be compatible.

Did you ever stop to think that the difference between good and evil is the relation to a thing we sustain. Anything put to its normal use is good, and put to an abnormal use is bad. The same grain can be made into bread to feed people or into intoxicants to inebriate them. The same chemical in one quantity is a medicine, and in another a poison. Sodium and chlorine alone are poisonous, but they combine into salt. You can see that, as Ella Wheeler Wilcox has said, "The devil is only an angel gone astray; evil is only misdirected good." It is not a matter of essence, but one of relationship.

Any part of the physical world will bless and nurture us or ruin and destroy us according to the way we relate ourselves. The same ocean that bears us to ports of enchantment will smother us in its dark, cold depths if we get into the wrong relation to it. The same water that wrought ruin in the Johnstown flood would have filled some desert of death with streams of refreshment. The press of a button or the flip of a switch sets an electric current entertaining you or working for you, but grasp the wire that brings it to you with bare hands, and it will wreak vengeance on you. The same fire that warms your house will burn it down if you let it get into the wrong relation to the situation. Do you not see that a thing is good or bad according to the use to which it is put, and we are safe or in danger, according to the relation in which we get to anything?

Here you are, then, placed with considerable power of choice and decision in a vast organization called the world life. You can choose your relationship to it or to anything in it, but on that choice depends whether you will find it good or bad and whether it will help you or hurt you. The choice you make will add to the harmony of life or break it with discord. One will make you freer still, and one will take from you the freedom you already have.

Look at the world life as it is and think of it as it may be after you have gone into action in it. Will you help it or hurt it? Will you let it help you or hurt you? Can you work together for the good of both? If so you have probably found your place. It will prove out if you can keep your relationship right. That you must do for yourself.

DO YOU FIT?

W H E N we raise the question whether you fit we are not referring to the matter of relationship we have just been discussing. We mean rather the matter of adjustment. After you have adapted yourself to the right relationship to life and things, the next question is where within that framework your niche is. No matter how well you have managed everything to that point, a mistake there could spoil it all.

There is just one place in the whole assembly of an automobile where one small part will fit and function. That place is made for it, and it is made for that place. Anywhere else it will not fit, and if forced in there, it will only make trouble. How can one think he, so much more individualized than an auto part, can fit in just anywhere?

There is an old story about the building of Solomon's temple. A piece of stone of peculiar size and shape was found, but no one could think of a place in the planned structure where it would fit. It was cast aside and other refuse soon covered it deep. Long afterward a stone of peculiar size and shape was needed to crown the archway of the Holy of Holies. No such stone was in sight. Then an older workman remembered the peculiar stone that had been thrown away long before. Deep under the pile of rubbish lay the rejected stone, and it fitted into place.

Somewhere in the Temple of Life there is a place for your personality and abilities. There may be others that are nearly right, but this one is exactly so. Seek it. Wait for it. Find it. It may not be the archway above the Holy of Holies, but the lack of it could be even more damaging to the safety of the structure. The place where you are made to fit may not be like any other, but it is just as important. Find that place. You will regret it if you do not, and you will be everlastingly glad if you do.

But suppose that for some reason you do not find the place in the scheme of things where you think you exactly fit, or suppose it is late in the day of life, what then? If you were a mechanical thing there would be no help for it; but since you are a conscious, self-determining one, there is something you can do. You can adapt yourself to what has to be.

If you seem limited to a certain place, and if you doubt whether it is exactly the right one, there are these things you can do. You can make the place right for you, or you can make yourself right for the place, or you can do a little of both and meet the situation halfway. You have the power to change things. Perhaps to do so will be all the greater glory. Why not?

When you have related yourself to the world life in some workable and constructive way, you will be prepared to live the richest and fullest life possible. That is progress. It leaves you headed up the road.

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE GROUP

T H I S places you or anyone as a vital part of the world life, beginning with the smallest group with which you may be identified and reaching out to the rim of things. That takes cooperation, looking toward the best possible race in the best possible world as a total result. A glance at world conditions should convince anyone of the need for it. Experience shows that we do not get a better world through law, organization, agitation, or leadership. The world life can only be the sum of the human lives that are being lived at a given time. That applies from the local community up to the totality of the nations.

There is no danger of any diminished importance of your personal identity in this group effect. On the contrary it will be more emphasized than otherwise. A good collective life is possible only through the good quality of the personal lives that make it up. You have a barrel of good apples only if each individual apple in the barrel is good. Your part of the making of a good world life is still your individual character and personality. Live the abundant life, but live it cooperatively. Let it produce a clear full tone, but keep it in harmony with the rest of the orchestra.

This is all the greater challenge to you to live the abundant life, to make your life as full and rich as possible. A thin tone is almost as bad for a symphony as an incorrect one. A flat life is damaging to the group life on any scale or level. It is no more a contribution to a rich world life than an inferior

seed is to a fine harvest.

This brings the responsibility right down to the individual. It is not only your duty but it is also to your interest to live the highest grade life you can. A drab life is a dreary life. Only a well-rounded, effective life is satisfying and happy. The happy people are not the ones who are wasting the golden days in riotous living. They have nothing but illusions to enjoy while they last. The happy people are the ones who have made all they can of themselves and their opportunities, who are trying to do a really good job of living and to do something to show for their sojourn on earth.

Build the best physical body you can, and take good care of it through work, rest, food, and habits. Take the same kind of care of your mind. Cultivate your inner life. Build up a courageous and responsive soul, conscious of God and duty. Make all this count for something by expressing it in the affairs, responsibilities, and relationships of life. That will relate it to the collective living which makes the world whatever it is and is to be.

When we can approach that kind of a world life with at least the controlling majority of us playing his part, we will begin to see the crowning conditions God planned for His creation - not only a world but a happy one, not only a human race, but a good one. Your part in it? You must do it yourself.

And now that you have taken another step through the archway that leads to a fuller life, let us say with solemnity the words of the following Meditation:

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| MEDITATION |
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I begin to see the wonderful possibilities of my life and that of the world, and that I am a part of its onward march. I go forward with it gladly.

May God's richest blessings be upon you in your efforts to "Do It Yourself" in every department of your life.

God Bless You,

YOUR CLASS INSTRUCTOR.

This is a good series, Beloved Companion. Please look forward to the next lesson with the same joy we experienced in preparing it for you. It is called BE ON YOUR WAY.

