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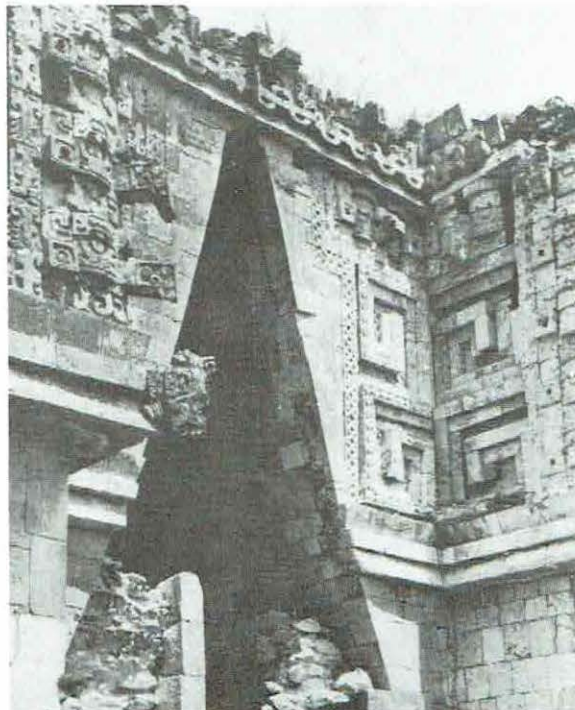
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*The Archway to the House of the Governors
(Yucatan)*

DO IT YOURSELF

Mayan Lesson Number 161

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THE INCLUSION TEST

THE SUBSTANCE TEST

MEMORANDA

MEDITATION

Beloved Centurion:

This is the last lesson in the DO IT YOURSELF Series, and it is important because it can be a summary of your life at the present time. I, as your instructor, feel that we have come to a place where an analysis of yourself made by you would be beneficial.

As you read the lesson you should have by your side a pencil and piece of paper, and answer the questions which are asked of you as you come to the paragraphs in which they are contained. This will not be a difficult task, but should be a fascinating job for you, for there is no one more interesting to you than yourself. This is only human.

I am not going to ask you to send the results of your examination to Headquarters. This is a private examination, made for yourself and by yourself, for your own benefit, as stated above, and I am sure you will find it most enlightening. You have come a long way on the Path, and you have reached a point where I know you are perfectly capable of self-analysis.

You should KNOW YOURSELF and examine yourself from time to time, in order to know whether or not you are doing all the things you should be doing to live the more abundant life.

I ask that you pay particular attention in this lesson to an explanation of what is the abundant life. Note carefully our explanation of it, and be thankful as you read the following prayer that you are making every effort to live for the Immortal Things:

P R A Y E R

I thank Thee, Heavenly Father, that Thou hast taught me to include the everlasting things in my thinking and desires. Help me so to make them a part of myself that I may live with them. Amen.

LESSON NUMBER SEVEN

LIVE FOR THE IMMORTAL THINGS

MATERIALS

WE have been referring constantly to what in the words of Jesus we have called more abundant living. What and how much do we mean by that? We do not mean merely that by living a more abundant life you will become more

successful in the affairs of the world, though that might be one of the by-products. Coveted positions and outstanding accomplishments with the recognition they bring are well and good, but the more abundant life reaches deeper than that.

By more abundant living we mean the kind of person you become and the kind of life you live. Naturally that will produce results, and the results will be as good as the kind of living that has caused them; but the abundant life as we think of it here is one built of the things that really last and is filled with all the elements that make life really free, noble, and good. Such a life is bound to stand and hold in terms of what it really is.

Edwin Markham wrote of Lincoln that he was like a great tree which, when it fell, left a lonesome place against the sky. A great life is not just automatically great, and the sense of loss left by its passing is no accident. There has to be a reason, and that reason is the way the life was lived which was the effect of the fabric of its essential making. In Lincoln's case one clue to it was given when he declared his hope that he might never fail to pluck a thorn or plant a rose where he thought a rose would grow.

The aim of the farmer is always to produce a more abundant harvest. He will do that if he is capable and intelligent, loves and enjoys his work, has good land and cares for it well, has good tools and knows how to use them, manages well, and lives up to his ability and opportunity. But he can have all these things and still fail if he does not use them and if he does not make them produce something worthy of their possibilities. You see it all goes back to what he is and what he does as a result of it. There was never a great soul who could not have failed if he had not refused to do so.

Given all these qualifications and the best use of them, there will still be bad seasons. The success of neither the farmer nor you can be measured by one season, but only by the long-time average. That was why we said the loss of a skirmish is not the loss of a battle, nor is the loss of a battle the loss of the war. You cannot build a life of good intentions, abilities, or opportunities. You can only build it of good materials.

MATERIALS - II

A great architect once said that four elements are involved in a good piece of building - planning, materials, construction, and decoration. Failure at any one of these points will detract from the value and desirability of the project, and that failure in the matter of materials will undermine and limit its very existence.

In his First Letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul wrote something about foundations and goes on to refer to the buildings intended to rest upon them. He said, "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every

man's work of what sort it is."

If one builds a house of thatch the testing fires of time will claim it quickly and easily. Wood is better, but still temporary. Brick is still better, but not too timeproof. Stone is the surest of all. Any structure is as durable as the material of which it is constructed. So is any life.

Here is where the best intentioned person on earth can make a ruinous mistake. In addition to his qualifications as a builder he must always be a good judge of materials. If he wants his life to be time-proof, fireproof, and test-proof, he must choose his materials for durability.

What are you living for? What do you consider of chief importance as you live from day to day? Do you accept the popular ideas, or do you consider for yourself what is the best set of values? Do you accept notions unthinkingly, or do you check them by the ideals that are tried, tested, and found good? Do you follow the fads, or do you choose your own standards?

"Are you a trailer, or are you a trolley?
Are you tied to a leader through wisdom, or folly?
Are you somebody else, or you?
Do you vote by the ticket, and swallow it straight?
Do you pray by the book? Do you pay by the rate?
Do you tie your cravat by the calendar's date?
Do you follow a cue?"

Do you live for fun? The wisdom of it depends on what you call fun. Do you live for gain? The wisdom of that depends on what you gain and how enduring its value is. Do you live for knowledge? The wisdom of that depends on what you learn. Do you live for power? The wisdom of that depends on the kind of power you seek and how you use it. Do you live for friendship? The wisdom of that depends on the kind of friends you have and what is your influence on each other. Life's building materials come in varied grades, and some of the poorest are most showy.

The builder must know the material market and be hard to deceive in the matter of quality. So must the builder of the more abundant life. Look at a granite mountain, consider how long it has been there, and take the hint.

THE TEST OF SURVIVAL

WE can be mistaken about the values of which we build our lives till it is too late to mend matters very well, so we need sure and dependable tests to apply. Let us consider a few of the possible ones, and let us think first of one that can be easily and quickly applied. We will call it the test of survival. It consists of observing what has and what has not worn well; of noting what you can and cannot see remaining of what you and others have lived, toiled, and struggled for.

Consider it in the light of your own experience. That will be easy because

you will be on familiar territory. You know what you have lived and worked for through the years. Of what you have been able to attain and acquire you know what has worn out and fallen away and what is a part of the fulness of your life today, as satisfying as it was at the beginning, and perhaps more so. What was it that survived - the material thing or the spiritual value, the thrill or the quality, the gift received or the one given, the privilege or the service, the thing that pleased the appetite or eased the conscience?

No doubt some of what you have labored for has already worn out or broken down and been discarded. The hay, stubble, and wood did not survive the testing flames of life and time. Some of the things that dazzled you most have been longest gone from your life, having failed you. Perhaps some of the things that at first seemed least desirable are now among your chief values. That should tell you something about what is most worth seeking. The things that pass leave you impoverished, while the things that abide make you rich.

The other day in a community near here a house caught fire. It burned down quickly, violently and completely, because it was built entirely of flammable material. One night at midnight in a certain city on the way from the railroad station to a hotel we saw firemen just arriving where smoke was pouring from upper windows of a large business building. Thirty minutes later the fire department was leaving the scene, the fire extinguished. That building was constructed of permanent materials. The conclusion is obvious.

Things like that happen all around us all the time. It happens in the experience of all of us, and it has happened in yours. Therein is a test that you can easily apply, and depend on the results. You know of all the values you have bought and paid for in your life what ones have survived and what ones have not, and of course you are not a person who would go right on striving for something you have already had and seen it fail you. Life's values come like a piece of jewelry - gold washed, gold plated, gold filled, and solid gold. They lose their worth in the order named, except the last which is permanent. Choose well what is to become a part of you, for the measure of its permanence will be the measure of yours.

THE TEST OF SURVIVAL - II

N O W let us move out of the area of your own life and apply the test of survival in the history of the race. Out of the struggle of all mankind what has lasted and what has perished? The answer should tell a story.

What has survived from the lives of men who lived for gold? We still hear about a king who mastered a magic process for turning things to gold by touching them, and spent the rest of his life regretting that it worked so well that even his own daughter fell victim to it. We read of a rich man who died and looked up from the state of sorrow and saw among those on the hills of happiness a beggar who had gathered crumbs from his table. What, though, of the countless host of others? For the most part the world has not even considered them important enough to remember their names.

Consider those who lived for power. We remember more of them, like Caesar, Alexander, Nero, Caligula, Napoleon, and more modern ones we need not name. Does anyone envy them now? Does anyone want to buy power at the price they paid? Everyone who tries it seems soon to be headed in the direction they went. Even if it were not so futile, of what use is power over others, especially when everything now tends toward a higher estimate of the individual?

Now consider those who have seen some great service to mankind challenging them, and have followed the gleam through sacrifice to victory. Jesus dreamed of a kingdom of rightness building itself from human hearts into human conditions. Paul dreamed of an evangelized world. Others have dreamed of a healthy world, or a convenient world, or a just world, or a world improved in some other way. Few of them were ever materially enriched. Their rewards were mostly in gratitude, appreciation, and enduring remembrance. Careless as humanity is, it does not soon forget its servants and saviours.

Take those who have sought wisdom and shared it with their fellow man. From early centuries we still treasure the names of men who built great minds, used them, shared them, and tried to follow the light of the torches they set aglow. To what others do we owe so much? In giving of their treasure to others they did not impoverish themselves, for they dealt in a coin which grows by being given away. Thus, in two ways they have lived on.

Take the Master Life of them all, the One who owned so much and claimed so little, who could have had the kingdoms of the world and asked only for a kingdom of the spirit, who could have summoned all power to His aid yet defended Himself only with a word of compassion, and who turned a cross of shame into a symbol of glory. Everything in His life survives because He shared it with the world.

These are enough examples to show what the test of survival is. It should leave no doubt as to the choices to make of life-building materials that will never fall before the ravages of time or the tests of eternity.

THE INCLUSION TEST

LET us mention two more tests for the durability of the fabric of your life. The first we will call the inclusion test. What is the scope of your actions and endeavors? How much do they include?

If they include only yourself you are due for a bitter disappointment when it may be too late to change to a wiser plan. You can judge this by past history too. Recall the people you have known who lived only for self. Recall those of whom you have heard or read who did so. How did they turn out? They got their share, you say? Yes, but did they shut out of their lives the human values that finally come to be the most important to us? They could always pay their bills, but that is not enough. On the last verge about all they can hope to hear is, "You can't take it with you."

There is an intermediate stage where one extends the boundaries of his own concerns and endeavors a little, but not very much. Do you live, and plan, and work for yourself and a limited number of others - your family, a few favorite friends, and possibly some group that has challenged your interest? Are you like the man whose prayer was, "God bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife, us four and no more?" Or are you like a man the writer once knew, whose total human interest was confined to himself and blind people? If so, the shell of your soul may be cracked a little but not really open to the sunshine of the world and the good of life. You will doubtless find some satisfaction in living, and even do a few things that will endure; but their number and scope will be as limited as your interest and sympathy.

The way that wins is to remove all boundaries, and be an active member of Mankind Unlimited. Be as loyal to your country as you will, but think of it as a part of God's world neighborhood. Be as loyal to any limited group as you wish, but remember that it is a part of God's world family. The welfare of all and the welfare of each cannot be separated for long.

Live light and life, and you will carry them wherever you go. Lend a hand to anyone who needs it. Even if he fails to appreciate it you will not lose your reward. When he saw a human being in trouble the good Samaritan asked no questions but did what he could. You can hardly walk a block without seeing some person or thing to whose life you can add something, and more often than not it is a little encouragement. Every time you open the door of your heart it will be a happier heart, and the more of the world you make room for in your heart the greater heart it will be.

The test is simple and conclusive. If you are working for self your work will perish, if for a chosen list of others it will last for awhile, but if for God's creation it will endure forever.

THE SUBSTANCE TEST

W E will take time and space here to mention one more test, and for want of a better name we will call it the substance test. Stated simply it is this: are you living and working for the things of the flesh or the things of the spirit? - for the material things or for the unseen values which give material things their meaning and worth? The answer will indicate the measure of real satisfaction you find in your life and work.

St. Paul found all these answers in the Christian impulse, in his long and solitary desert meditation, and in his many experiences. He wrote, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal."

The things that are seen have their place and must be considered in the material world, but they are only the rough scaffolding on which we stand while we build a more abiding structure which is not material. In this kind of life we have

to deal with so many material things that we have to take care not to lose our perspective. If one does not keep his bearings he can become so enmeshed in them that he may find himself thinking of them as ends rather than means to ends of more abiding value and significance. You are safe while you deal with them as such, keeping your gaze on the more ultimate values which, being spiritual, are enduring.

If you live in the world at all you will have to have your daily bread, but be content with it. Accept with gratitude the needed supply Providence gives, but do not make it the central aim and final purpose of your life. Your life will reach only as far as what you live for, so make it adequate. Never overlook the bread which if a man eat he shall never hunger and the water which if a man drink he shall never thirst. In other words, do not live for the means of existence but for life itself, life in its fullest, richest, most significant sense; life that is like a full-blown rose or a well-developed ear of grain, - a purpose realized, an opportunity grasped, a quest fulfilled.

Of the things of yesterday much more than the memories remain. The strength they gave, the truth they taught, and the values they contributed to life, are still with us. As the years pass, you will find yourself carrying these precious possessions with you; and when you have finished the introductory part of your journey and are ready for the unchanging land, you will be able to look at these treasures and know that you CAN take them with you.

There is no uncertainty about it. You can depend upon it as surely as one knows what sort of crop a given kind of seed will produce. Sow to the flesh and you will reap the destiny of the flesh, which is zero. Sow to the spirit, and you will reap the destiny of spirit, which is life in its blessed fulfillment.

MEMORANDA

W E have now reached the threshold of the end of this series of lessons.

It remains only to gather up a few fragments and loose ends, and bring the series to a conclusion. We do so with the hope that you may profit in a permanent way from the time spent with these discussions, and that they may have opened up some new paths that will lead to happiness and good. Now just a few memoranda in conclusion:

1. On the world stage appear two strangely misguided figures, both of them failures, one because he thinks he is incapable of doing anything important, the other because he thinks he is capable of doing anything. Neither is true of any of us, though the second is nearer right than the first. Both these men are mistaken for the same reason - they never tried, so they do not know. The wise person is one who knows both his capabilities and his limitations, and acts accordingly, remembering that faith helps realize the one and overcome the other.
2. Living the more abundant life is not a test of speed but one of

endurance. Those engaged in it are not trying to beat each other but to arrive. It is not something that can be done by one brilliant dash. It is not a competition but a common effort. Few, if any, can win by spectacular performance, but anyone can win by persistence.

3. That should not be difficult. It involves only the privilege of living a happy and satisfying life, which is precisely what the more abundant life is. The thought of endurance should not be unwelcome for it pays off in peace and happiness tomorrow as well as today.
4. Starting next year you will make one year's distance less than if you start now. Starting next week you will make a week less of progress than if you begin today. No preparation is necessary. You have to learn as you go along. You can begin at this moment, at least to make ready.
5. How many worthwhile things are you interested in, and how deep is that interest? Does a great thought thrill you? Does beauty touch your deeper nature? Is your sense of wonder keen and constant? Do you sense the throb of life around you and feel yourself moving in its current? Have you a keen consciousness of the Infinite and the fact that you are living and building for eternity? Have you a reverence for life and goodness? These things and others like them are signs of the more abundant life.
6. The richest person is one placed in a world of values and told to take all he is capable of using. Such is your privilege. Money buys only things with a price. Before you is a world of priceless things. They are for you, but you can have no representative. You must take them for yourself.

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MEDITATION

I have sensed the riches of God's grace, and I have learned they are all available to me. I reach forth the hand of faith, gratefully to possess them.

YOUR CLASS INSTRUCTOR.

Your next lesson begins a Series which we have called "REACHING FOR THE STARS". It contains instructions which you need at this time. I hope that you will study it well and it can enrich your life greatly. Be ready to receive it.