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THE MAYANS

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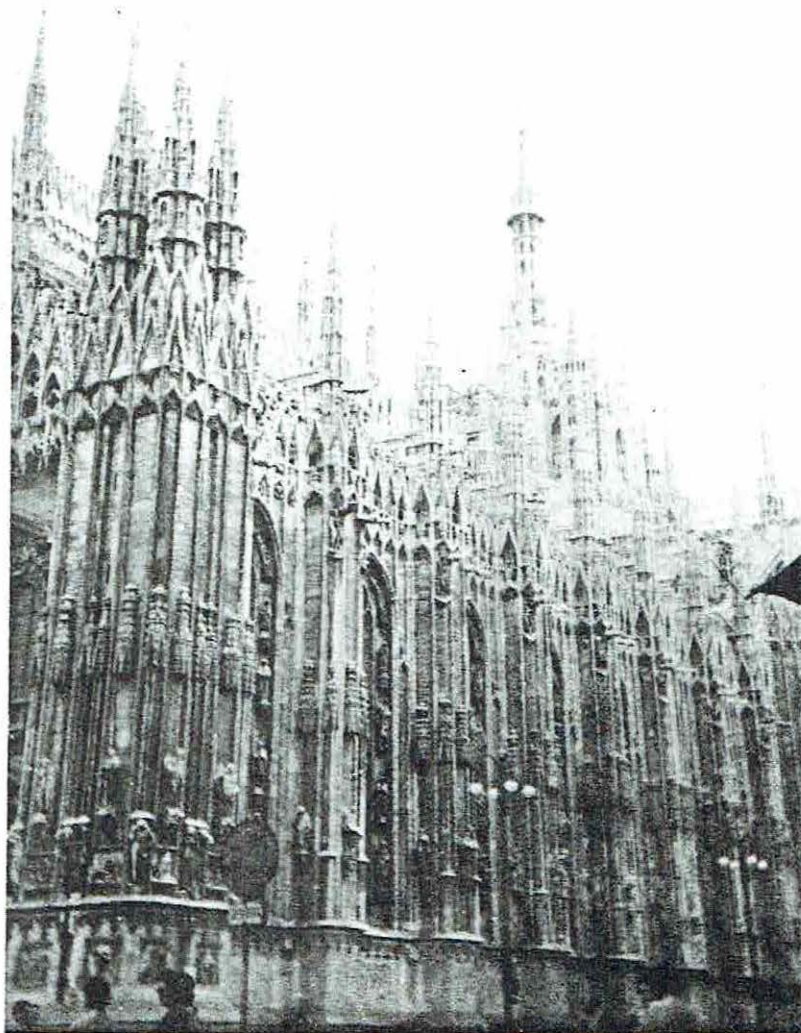
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MORE STATELY MANSIONS
Mayan Revelation Number 188
PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Safety Measures

Character

Conscience

Optimism

Good Will

Build Strong

Dedication

Affirmation

Beloved Centurion:

Have you been studying this series of lessons which we call MORE STATELY MANSIONS thoughtfully and carefully? Your instructor sincerely hopes so for it can be such an important part of your Mayanry; it can be so great a step forward in your progress.

We know that, under certain circumstances, it is often very difficult to believe that we can overcome the obstacles that keep us from attaining the things we want in life; but we also know, as difficult as it may seem at times, it can be done. If we did not know this, we would become very discouraged.

But we do know that from the lowest depths there is a path to the loftiest heights. The tendency to persevere, to persist in spite of hindrances, discouragements and impossibilities - it is this in all things that distinguishes the strong soul from the weak. The man without purpose is like a ship without a rudder - a waif, a nothing, a no-man.

What your instructor is endeavoring to teach you is to have a purpose in life and, having it, throw the strength of mind and muscle into your work that God has given you.

Remember, you are building a new mansion in which to house your soul. Many people have asked the question, "What is the soul?" The answer is, your soul is your character, and your character is you.

When your life is well-spent and you have nothing on your conscience, and when you feel that your hope of heaven is well-founded, then there should be nothing for you to fear and nothing to keep you from building a more stately mansion.

This lesson gives instructions on PROTECTIVE MEASURES. It can help you and strengthen you in your progress on the path that can lead only to glorious fulfillment.

In the following prayer, you are petitioning your Father for protection as you go about the business of building a new life. As you make your solemn request, know in your heart, without a shadow of a doubt, that it will be granted:

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, sustain and keep me safe while I proceed with my efforts to do Thy will by building a habitation for my soul which will be pleasing to Thee. Amen.

~~§§§~~ PART ONE ~~§§§~~

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 * SAFETY MEASURES *
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In all extensive construction projects two elements of protection are necessary. One is insurance against loss, and one is protective measures for safety. The builder takes out insurance, puts out warning lights, and builds guards and barriers here and there to prevent accidents - whatever is necessary to minimize danger to the building and the public. This provision becomes more and more evident with passing time. Custom and public interest, as well as law, combine to make it so. It is part of the business of building.

In the construction of our more stately houses of life we have to do the same in forms suited to the kind of building we are doing. If we are thoughtful and understanding about our efforts we do not want our work to collapse, nor do we want any damage to others caused by it, nor anything to go wrong. Our plan for the structure is that it bring only good to others and ourselves. That calls for adequate protection in the way of safety measures. In terms of such an effort what forms would these take?

We must take every possible care to make the operation safe for all our helpers, all who come near it or have to do with it, and ourselves. In this case we do not need watchmen and warning signals. We need only to make everything about it wholesome, kind, beneficent, and helpful. These are suited not to temporary walls of perishable materials, but to the imperishable ones of human actions, qualities, and capacities for service and good.

One might suppose that safety in such an endeavor is automatic and will take care of itself, but this is not necessarily so. Good things can do harm when wrongly applied or when wrong relations to them are sustained. One can do damage even when his intentions are good. A usually careful person can let things get out of hand in a careless moment, or when he fails to take everything he should into account. One needs protection against such things, and he can have it.

Protective measures need to be taken for a building throughout its life, but especially during the construction period. Repair is never as good as keeping a structure from needing it. Salvation is always better than salvage. The scars and cracks of a repair job may not show, but the weakness remains. Against this one needs protection too, and it too is available. Save by building well.

Build well, and guard well what you build.

Watch the influences that would wreck your more stately mansion. Maintain defenses of faith and courage against them. You will then build better and be happier and more secure on many a day to come.

Carry insurance in your own heart. See that it is always of the right kind, and enough. Reinforce it by taking every precaution against damage to the dwelling of your inner life. Let us now notice some of its forms.

§§§ PART TWO §§§

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* CHARACTER *
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The first thing you can do for the protection of your life structure is to see that plenty of good, sturdy character goes into its foundations and all its supports. If this is done, and if the rest of the material is of good quality, the walls will never sag or crumble. Character is a word that gets as close as possible to what you are. It is at least a part of the essence of your being. Where else could safety best begin?

One's character is not something fixed and unchangeable. It is a phase of life, and therefore subject to cultivation or deterioration. We may inherit it in undeveloped form; but it must develop with us and by our efforts, so we determine what the fruitage shall be. Character neglected to the point of weakness is like an insurance policy that has been allowed to lapse.

As we have already noted, conduct is the plow that cultivates character. Then, in turn, character determines more conduct. In turn, this new conduct builds more character. So the circle goes. The essence of it is, though, what makes so much for safety as anything that determines and safeguards good conduct and right living? At any rate, the man of good character is the man of whom Jesus told, who built his house upon a rock.

Since character is cultivated and its growth is determined by conduct we can see that our measure of control over having it is very great. We are mostly responsible for its existence, its nature, its measure, and its outcome. It is for us to determine how much benefit we may expect from this safety measure. Analyze it, measure it. If necessary increase it, or change it, or mend it. Fortunately you can. How many times have you heard people say, "A leopard cannot change its spots"; but I am sure that you know this is not true. In my vast experience of helping people overcome faults and weaknesses and rise above certain traits of character, I have found that people can change.

You will be doing these things all along the way, for character needs to go into the placing of every stone and the laying of every timber; but do not overlook the fact that it must undergird your structure from the very beginning. It must guarantee the integrity of the tip of the tallest tower, but it must also underlie the building of the foundation. We sometimes hear it said of a building, as of a life, that it shows character. That is what is meant.

We hear all the time of the collapse of magnificent mansions of life. Some of them were laboriously built and gave every prominence of service and permanence. The breakdown does not occur for lack of good intentions, but it often does at the character level. Without that safeguard even the heart is not to be trusted. Its intentions are usually good, but its judgment is not always so.

Examine and test your character often. What would you do in this crisis or that? The answer will tell you what you are. Whether others trust you is important, but whether you trust yourself is even more so. Others see your deeds, but you know the character and motive that makes them what they are, and that is what gives them whatever credit they receive and deserve. Character will set the bounds of your living, and they will all be within the limits of safety.

*** PART THREE ***

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 * CONSCIENCE *
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Another safeguard closely related to character is conscience. In fact, it is so closely related to character at its best it really is character in action. Its guiding word is, "This is a safe road. Travel it without fear", or "This road is dangerous. Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther." One may say this is destructive of freedom. Think again. In one way it limits freedom, and in another way it protects and preserves it.

It is an admirable thing to have the reputation of being a conscientious person. The fiber of a nation's strength, the safety of today, and the hope of the future are all made of them. You can have good conditions socially, politically, economically, and otherwise, only where good people dwell. You can have only the opposite of them where good people do not live. Only right living, the certain output of a good conscience, can make good conditions in our own hearts and lives, as well.

We are here referring only to a good or real conscience, for there are imitations that are not dependable, that mislead and deceive, and that lead us the wrong way when we think we are finding the right one. Some of these imitation consciences are desire, self-interest, questionable customs in which one has grown up; or the arguments of sophistry, weakness, imitateness, and the like. You have to be discriminating, even in such a matter as that of conscience. Too, conscience at its best is an instructed conscience that takes all facts into account.

These imitation forms of conscience will afford you no protection because they do not keep you on safe ground. The ground over which they lead you looks like bedrock when it is only shifting sand. Yet the voice of deceit takes on varied tones and makes various argumentative approaches. Some of the arguments Satan used with Jesus in the great temptation will show how clever the voice of Wrong can be. One has to learn how to distinguish them by considering the nature of the facts involved. That is con-science, or knowing together.

Conscience is the voice of informed reason. You have an equation with all the known quantities expressed in their appropriate figures and combinations. Then you have an unknown quantity - the right thing to do - expressed by the letter X. When you figure out all the known values with their additions, subtractions, you can see what value it will take to make the two sides of the equation equal, and that is your once unknown quantity. That is one way conscience works.

But conscience is also a voice of the Spirit which makes us feel the rightness of one course or the wrong of the other. It is a good test if we make sure it is real and not the deceptive voice of some less admirable desire or interest.

In any event, true conscience will keep you and your work safe from any temptation or tendency to build something that will decay or break up under the ravages of time or the stress of error and wrong. It has been doing so as far back as we know anything about the history of mankind. It has been doing so in our own experience and that of all the conscientious people we know. What can we do but trust it to do so for us now?

Take your faith, which is the essence of optimism, into your life building. It will always protect you against the dangers of discouragement and despair. Always know - and you can - that most things will always turn out well of themselves; others can be made to, and the few that will not are negligible anyway. Optimism may not do everything for you, but it will keep you from failing - if you have it.

*** PART FIVE ***

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 * GOOD WILL *
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Another dependable protection against failure and loss is the saving spirit of good will. This, you know, is one of the elements of living the Saviour came to bring into the hearts and relationships of men. It is almost as essential as air, food, and water. You must think well of people and act kindly toward them or you will surely run into difficulty. This is the best insurance there is against the enmity and opposition that can ruin your work.

Good will can be depended upon to confirm your friendship, add to its quality, and increase the number and value of your friends. If you have any enemies or any of those envious and vengeful people who are potential enemies, good will can disarm them and even transform some of them into friends. It is nothing less than a magic of the spirit. It can do more for you than could an army with banners. It can give you better protection than could the walls of a fortress.

This is not suggesting anything unnatural or abnormal, nor is it prescribing anything difficult or unpleasant to do. Unless a soul is warped good will is its most natural and therefore its easiest attitude, and for a warped soul good will is the best possible remedy. It should not be difficult to do the thing one knows will create the happiest situation and produce the best result, and yet that the heart does not have to go out of its way to do.

Good will is the best of protections against contention of any kind, and if contention there must be, it is the quickest and easiest way out. "Love your enemies", was the recommendation of Jesus and the apostles. Pray for them. Treat them well. Return good for evil. Leave vengeance to God. Good will defeat enmity as evil can never do, for evil never fails to make it worse. Kindness and good will have made more great lives than learning, power, skill, or wealth ever did.

It is dangerous to have people wishing you ill. You never can tell how much harm it will add up to or how far it will go. It leaves you standing on ground that is being undermined beneath your feet. It is as needless as it is dangerous and distressing. Having influences working against you may hinder, delay, or prevent your success, but you can soon have the same influences working for you if you meet them with nothing but genuine good will. Practice it, and your enemies are promptly and effectively disarmed.

Life is too short, hearts are too tender, and the people around us have too many troubles already to make us free to treat anyone unkindly. Whether he deserves

it or not is not for us to say, but even if he does ill will cannot help. Even if you must differ or defend, do it kindly. Respect personality, all personality in all you do, and yours will be a peaceful road.

Do not let your life be an arena of contention. A battlefield is a poor place to build a more stately mansion. Dig up the thorns and plant flowers in their places. Leave plenty of room for sunshine to get through. Keep your good will up-to-date and in working order. It will turn destroyers into defenders and replace danger with safety.

*** PART SIX ***

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* BUILD STRONG *
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One of the surest protections against disaster and loss in a structure is to build it strong. Sometimes a weakness develops in a supposedly safe building, and the repairmen discover poor timbers, or too few of them, or careless workmanship in some concealed spot where one has to make an opening to see what was the unseen condition that let the structure down. Every support should be made even stronger than might be considered necessary.

We can make the same mistake with the lives we build. It is said that a chain is no stronger than its weakest link. It is similarly true that a building is no safer than its weakest support. Watch a building under construction and see what generous provision is made for walls, pillars, and beams, adequate to hold everything in its place. A weak place anywhere is sure to reveal itself and make trouble later. It cannot be forever kept concealed, and its revelation will be embarrassing and costly.

Structures meant to endure are always made generously strong. The square, the level, and the plummet have much to do with keeping their walls even and true. Strains and stresses are carefully figured and excesses are allowed for. Living needs straight lines, level surfaces, unleaning walls, and supports that will bear all they are expected to, and more.

Build your more stately mansion true. Time and life will make their demands. There will be decay. There will be unexpected situations. The building may have to house an unexpected amount of activity. Let there be no hidden weaknesses. You would find that no shell of any chambered nautilus has a single spot where the material has been stinted or the work slighted.

We have to use good construction principles about stresses, strains, and thrusts too. They must complement and balance each other, so there will be no conflicts or confusions of force and resistance among them. Here as elsewhere harmony is strength. Anything wrong or out of place is like an untuned harpstring. The uninformed observer would never know when looking at a given spot how much in how many places is geared to that spot.

One who tries to cheat life in his building methods will find he cannot do it. He will only cheat himself. One who tries to deceive destiny will only deceive himself. One who uses shoddy materials and methods will himself be the one

Dedication is a setting aside for a purpose, a declaration of that purpose. Presumably it is a good purpose. The old word for it was to sanctify or make holy. That is the effect dedication is supposed to have. Holy means whole or complete. Do you not see, then, why dedicated things are safest? They are seldom violated, and when a marauder comes he is likely only to stand in respect before a holy thing.

There will be wear and tear. Storms will beat. Time and tide will take their toll. Use will wear newness away. Some day, if you live adequately, you will outgrow what you have built, like a house a growing family finds too small. Meanwhile, however, build it so it will be safe for itself and its users. Dedication will help.

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AFFIRMATION

I throw about the life I am building
the protection of faith and every
worthy purpose to keep it safe for
completion and use.

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May this lesson be blessed for the fulfillment of your ambition to build a better life.

YOUR CLASS INSTRUCTOR.

