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YOUR WINDOWS ON THE WORLD

MAYAN REVELATION NUMBER 235

Windows

Touch

What Do You See?

Taste and Smell

What Do You Hear?

The Sixth Sense

A Sentient Being

Beloved Centurion:

The title of this lesson, which we have called "Your Windows on the World", probably causes you to wonder what it teaches. It has to do with our six senses, those things with which we are so blessed when we possess all of them. They are the Senses of Sight, Hearing, Touch, Taste, Smell, and the Sixth Sense that, as you know, is of an intangible quality. So many things come under the Sixth Sense which is not readily explainable.

Among your friends and loved ones there is probably someone who does not have all these senses - perhaps is not able to see well, or the hearing may be impaired, or a paralytic condition has damaged the Sense of Touch, and so on - and you know how wonderfully God has blessed us when He has given us all of these senses functioning perfectly.

But how often do we stop to be thankful for these things? For the most part, we take these wonderful God-given faculties for granted. It is quite a human thing to do. But do not let us do this. Let us for every beautiful thing we see be grateful, for every wonderful sound we hear thank God, and for the ability to touch lovely things such as soft velvet and fine silk be grateful, always appreciating the ability to smell those things that are agreeable and to turn from those things we do not like to smell. Let us be happy that we have the taste buds to enjoy the food needed to nourish our bodies and know which food is good for us and which is not. All of these things are not to be just taken for granted, but we are to be always thankful for them.

The Eye is "the window of the soul". Our intellect is seen in it, and also

our will can be seen in it. You all have seen an animal look straight into your eyes in order to determine what your will is for it. The Eye is also "the pulse of the soul". A physician judges the heart by the pulse. We often judge a person's character by the eye. It is that fine part of our constitution that has to do with our love and our hate, our appetites. The Eye is really an indication of the mind itself.

You probably wonder what all this has to do with your study, which is designed for self-improvement. If so, believe me, my Beloved Companion, there is every reason to think on these things, for everything in your lessons is designed and worked out very carefully for your growth - spiritually, mentally, and physically - to make you a bigger person, a finer person, and a wiser person, able to converse with anyone on any worthwhile subject. A person who is able to utilize to the fullest all of the Six Senses is a person with more appreciation of life, and more appreciation of the weaknesses and the strength in other persons with whom he or she may come in contact on the Road of Life.

Your Instructor wants you to think on these things - not just read the lesson, but think about the words and Truths that are expressed therein. If you are privileged to look at beautiful scenery or anything of beauty, do not just glance at it and think you have seen it. Really look carefully, taking in all of the details of its beauty. And if you hear beautiful organ music, beautiful church music, or beautiful symphonic or operatic music, listen carefully to the tones and think of the instruments or voices that are causing these beautiful harmonies. These are just two examples of what I mean when I say to utilize your senses to the fullest. If you will make a practice of doing this for a while, you will see how important these senses become to you.

I could go on with more examples in speaking of Touch, Smell and Taste, and so forth, but you will find more on this in the pages to come. These opening remarks serve as a prologue so that you will understand the aims of your Instructor in bringing you this lesson.

Above all, be grateful and express your gratitude in the following prayer before proceeding with that which is to follow:

PRAYER

I thank Thee, Heavenly Father, for all that enlarges my awareness. Help me to use it to the increase of my understanding and its use. Amen.

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* WINDOVS *
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How necessary windows are to a house! They are the eyes through which its occupants know the world and what is happening in it. Without that knowledge life would be meaningless and we should be lost and wandering creatures. Windows enlarge

our environments. They really add space to the house itself, space with the sky for a ceiling and the ground for a floor.

The bodies that serve us for houses are also given certain windows through which we may see and in other ways be conscious of the larger world around us. They too make the entire scene around us a part of our house of life. They reveal things about us, and they reveal us to each other, so we are not alone nor lacking in charm and significance of environment.

These windows are called senses, or the means by which we become conscious of things. Five of them are very familiar - sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. There is at least one more, or perhaps a bundle of several more, by which we perceive things of a different, less material, kind. We call it the sixth sense, and include in it a number of forms of perception which are either inorganic or operate by organs less well known.

Since the senses are means by which we perceive things, the use of them is called perception. This is the primary means of acquiring knowledge of things in a primary way. What they reveal to us is usually only transformed stimuli, but with that, for this present life, we can be content. We may expect in the next phase of life to know things in a much more adequate and dependable way, but that is another story.

Our aim in this lesson will be threefold. It will be first to sharpen the awareness of these powers. Some have them in stronger and healthier form than others, but their usefulness depends not so much on that as the understanding of what they can do. Do you stop now and then to think how wonderful it is that you can see, hear, taste, smell, and feel? Everyone should.

This brings us to the second point, which is the need to emphasize getting maximum results from the use of these extensions of our lives, thus enriching life itself for us all the while. How much do you miss through the careless use of the senses? With many it is a great deal, which is like leaving a gold mine with a large part of the ore in it untouched. The senses are resources to be realized, and one who fails to do it is simply so much the poorer.

The third thing to point out is the need to keep improving these powers as much as possible through proper care and regular use. Like every other ability they improve and gain strength by exercise, which is also practice. Nothing unused remains in good condition long, nor does it yield any gain. Most of us would see, hear, and the like, better if we would do it with conscious care.

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* WHAT DO YOU SEE? *
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Let us think about this in connection with the power of vision. Do you ever pause and ask yourself what you really see, and how much it is of what is

really before you? We never really know by one hurried look or sweeping glance. We cannot take in the details of what is before us without making the effort to become aware of them, and of each of them. What was really in the picture? Where was it? What was its size, its color, its relation to the whole?

Six men had quite an argument about how many trees grew in a certain public square, and where they were located. Each had a different idea and defended it vigorously. Finally they stopped arguing to go out and look. They walked all around the square, and found that all were wrong. There were no trees at all. You can see how well they had been using their eyes.

A great educator has given us the maxim that one should "see life steadily and see it whole". That is a good thing to do not only with the totality of life but also with each detail with which we come in contact in our daily lives, like a landscape, or a road, or a starry sky, or our own home circle. We never know anything till we see it, and we have not seen it till we have done so with enough attention to have seen it well.

Seeing things adequately may have a number of values, but one of them certainly is that of storing the important and the beautiful in memory. What we see is what we are going to remember, and what we remember is going to be quite a factor in our entire lives. We must, then, see aright. If we look carelessly and get a wrong or partial impression, we are going to have to live with it and its inadequacy through the years, often perhaps to be misled by them.

Any one of the men who had the argument about the trees would have believed and told people all his life something that was not so. He might do the same with something that was really vital to his interests or those of others. He would have been perfectly honest and sincere, but he would have been mistaken.

One needs to be discriminating in the use of the sense of sight. That is, it pays to make a difference between what is worth seeing and what is not. A good many people now seem to like to emphasize ugliness in art, music, dress, manners, ideals, and even in appearance. This will leave its mark in the life of our times, and be noted by the future, perhaps with disapproval. Try to see the beauty of life, and the beauty in whatever you see. Two artists painted the same scene. One painted an ash-heap and a junk-pile. The other painted a wooded hillside and a little stream. Both were there. The pictures were not complete. Each was a picture of one man's use of his sense of sight. The one who painted the stream and hillside was the wiser, for he chose the lovely thing to become a part of his life.

That is true because we tend to become what we look at, and should therefore choose it well. A little of everything we have ever seen dwells in us, and will to the last. We choose our food with some care, and none too much. Vision is food.

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*   WHAT DO YOU HEAR?
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What a wonderful thing it is that we are all born with our own private broadcasting facilities and receiving sets, our organs for speaking and hearing! Visualize living without them, and your pity for those who are deprived of them will be profound. We must realize, however, that these are not for careless and indiscriminate use. They can do their best for us only as we do our best with them.

The real receiving set is, of course, in the auditory centers of the brain. The ear picks up sound waves, and the auditory nerve channels them in; but we still have to manage all this combination of equipment and interpret its results. The way to test that is to ask ourselves what we hear, and see whether it is anything like what we should hear and all that is there to hear. Only the careful listener gets the best results from what he hears, or could hear.

The sense of hearing can give us negative results as well as positive ones, valueless ones as well as important ones. But never forget that it is capable of bringing us at least as much enrichment of living as the sense of sight can do. It can bring us sounds that interpret facts in ways that vision never can, even reporting some of them in intelligible words and sentences that convey information and ideas. The only way we could ever fully appreciate this would be to be without it for awhile.

The sense of hearing can bring us important facts, valuable information, needed revelation, inspiring ideas, helpful guidance, noble thoughts - anything that can be expressed in words or sound. It can bring us friendly conversation, beautiful music, the countless voices of nature, invitations to happiness, warnings of danger, and countless other values expressed in sound. The process by which these are received, reworked, and interpreted, is itself one of nature's great miracles. He who has ears to hear is a favored individual, and he should appreciate the fact and be careful. It is amazing how much that makes life good to live comes to us through the ear.

Like the sense of sight the hearing apparatus can and does turn its work over to Memory to preserve for future review. Visual memory years later can turn over pictures of vanished scenes and times like the leaves of an old photograph album, but auditory memory can also recall, as on old phonograph records, voices and other sounds that accompanied them. All this is wonderful experience to have, and the most wonderful thing about it is that this shows that these experiences have become parts of ourselves.

We owe it to our ears, as we do to our eyes, to spare them from admitting anything that is not a credit to such wonderful powers. They will admit the low and degrading, but they are at their best only when admitting the good and the worthwhile, seeing that whatever they admit lives in us ever afterward. What do you hear? That is not merely an important question, but a vital one.

Listen to the lovely sounds of earth. Be grateful to your hearing for making them available to you, and the recorded memory in mind and in print that stands ready to bring them back to you in after years.

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* TOUCH *
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Next we pause to think of the sense of touch, the tactual sense, the fact that under the skin everywhere are little nerves very near the surface that inform us at once of any contact, or change in temperature, or other matter of importance to our comfort and welfare.

What treasures of experience and memory these touch nerves have given us - the contact of familiar hands, guidance in the dark, the ability to grope where we cannot see, the power to distinguish between substances, and the like. It would really be difficult to get along without the power this touch sense gives us.

The sense of touch is universal, but the degrees of its sensitivity vary. It can be cultivated to marvelous degrees of accuracy and delicacy. It often serves the blind and the deaf for eyes and ears. They become able to distinguish kinds of fabric, the features of faces, even colors and various denominations of paper money, to say nothing of the ability to open combination locks.

You are familiar with the story of Helen Keller, how a girl both blind and deaf learned to read faces, have books and writings interpreted to her, and become a great thinker, writer, and person, herself, all through a delicate and highly cultivated sense of touch, with fingers that can read what people are saying by touching their moving lips or vocal organs in the throat as they speak. What wonders we see and even carry around with us all the time!

The tactual nerves, especially those in the hands, have another kind of sense of touch too - the touch of ability and skill. We see it in the delicate hands of the painter and the precise fingers of the sculptor or artisan on the field of labor. Aptitude may be there at the beginning, of course, but it would never count for much if its possessor did not use it, give it practice, and otherwise improve upon it. We say of one skilful at anything that he has "the touch".

It is a great thing to have it said of one that everything he touches turns into something beautiful or valuable. This is a skill to be dedicated, for its possessor owes something to mankind as well as to himself. To withhold it or fail to use it is to cheat destiny, which is one way of cheating one's self.

The sense of touch is a great searcher. It seeks and finds things in dark places and reports them to the mind. Sometimes it is even better than a light, for instance when a surgeon is working by the feel of sensitive fingers where he

cannot see. Many delicate operations are performed mostly in this way. It would not be possible if the touch sense had not been refined by practice and care.

The story of King Midas is that of a man who wanted and received the golden touch, but it only brought him loss and sorrow. Without even asking for it, we all have something better. Delicate nerves under the skin can detect greater values than he found and that bring no loss or sorrow with them. Probably many of us do not realize the wonder of this tactual sense, and therefore do not reap all the great value it has for them. Begin now to see how much it can do for you.

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*   TASTE AND SMELL   *
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For our present thought let us consider these separately named senses, for they are not merely similar. They are really one. They give us touch with the outside world that is not only important and helpful, but different from anything we have discussed so far. They would really give us much information if we did not have or did not use the major senses of sight and hearing at all.

They are both based on the action of little buds on the back of the tongue, mouth and nasal passages. Taste could be called smelling with the tongue, and smell could be called tasting with the parts of the nostrils opening into the back of the mouth. The process is the same. These tissues are so differentiated as to give off a sort of flavor, agreeable, disagreeable, and widely varied, stimulated by the contact of a given substance in a given combination, nature, or condition, so that one is led to consider it desirable or undesirable. You can readily see that this is a very valuable and important help and safeguard to us.

These little unseen servants work a valuable miracle all by themselves. They attract us to foods and substances that are desirable and wholesome and, at the same time, warn us away from those that are dangerous, undesirable, or unpleasant. The eye might judge them by appearance, yet miss the important point. The ear could not appraise them at all. What a wonderful little set of guards they are!

This process has the quality of extending itself some little distance, especially in the case of the sense of smell. Most substances give off enough of an emanation to make what we call an odor, so we may be attracted to something agreeable or repelled from something disagreeable, even though we may not be near enough to see it.

There are two words of counsel that should be given concerning the use of this double sense, especially as it applies to the substances we eat and drink. The first is that they enable us to enjoy the wholesome and reject the unwholesome, thus saving to us the benefits of the one and saving us from the harmfulness of the other. Nothing should be taken into the body that is not clean and good, for the body will ultimately become as clean or as unclean as that which it assimilates.

The second suggestion is akin to the first, in that it merely carries the first to its inevitable conclusion. Many harmful practices of the human race are based on perverted appetites, and appetites become perverted through eating and drinking what is neither wholesome nor agreeable until finally the appetite calls for and the person thinks he really likes it. The taste has become deceptively agreeable, but the habit never becomes wholesome. Who, for instance, would ever like the taste of tobacco, or liquor, or narcotics, if he had not been trained to, or had not built up a bodily demand for its effects? Shun anything that can lead to a perverted appetite. God has given us plenty that is good, but even much that is good can be and is changed into unwholesome forms. Your taste will guard you, if you will let it.

The word taste has been carried into other phases of living too, so that we speak of good taste and bad taste in connection with almost anything. Good taste is the tendency to like and choose the best. It is a good thing to cultivate.

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* THE SIXTH SENSE *
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This term is inclusive and indefinite. We will gather under it all the instinctive recognitions of facts of the outside world. There are several known ones, and perhaps many yet unrecognized; but they will tend to separate themselves and take on individuality as we examine them.

These may or may not have organic implementation like the ear or the eye, but something makes them work. Some are thought to center in some of the ductless glands like the pituitary and pineal bodies, and probably do. Others may be stimulated by other organic agencies. We keep learning more about their physiology as time goes on and we become more familiar with their operation. The sense of balance we know is made possible by little spirit levels called semi-circular canals in the inner ear. Look it up and you will discover some very interesting things about the wonder of the human body.

Whether it is organic, acquired, hereditary, instinctive, or what, there are people who seem to have a sense of direction. They are hard to lose. Even away from all familiar landmarks, and the sun or stars obscured, they seem to have some built-in equivalent of a compass by means of which they can keep their bearings and keep headed in any desired general direction. We see pronounced instances of it in migrating birds and fish. They will find distant, but exact, locations with uncanny precision.

Some of these remarkable abilities may be based on sub-conscious processes or, as some of us prefer to say, super-conscious ones. Some of us are also inclined to think that this may be the point at which the two selves and the two worlds meet. We may well watch developments and discoveries here. It may have more to do with the turning of history than has ever been suspected by most.

Meanwhile it is a good thing that we are learning more and more of these matters, and discovering that there is nothing queer about them but that they are functionings as normal as those of the eye, ear, or any other organ. We should respect them and encourage their development, for each of them is an extension of our lives and ourselves.

How large and wonderful the world is to each of us depends on ourselves. Each day it is just large enough to fit our awareness. The world we know is adjusted to the lives we live, and the lives we live are built to the measure of the functioning of our senses. That is, our world is what we take the trouble to look out the window and see. It is a wonderful world to those who have an eye and a mind for wonder.

Keep your windows open on truth, beauty, and wonder. See, investigate, observe, and use the estate the windows of your life shows you. You will find that the eye can see all the way to the stars, and your mind can see much farther. Claim it and live on it, and you will be a citizen of the universe.

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* A SENTIENT BEING *
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Man bears the high honor of being called a sentient being. That means that on the ladder of conscious life which begins with movement and proceeds to equipment with, and use of, a full set of senses, he has reached the point where he is not shut in in a world of darkness and silence, but that he has all these marvelous contacts with the outside world we have mentioned. He has attained the status of an engineer who sits in his cab with the track before him in full view, and who is in complete control of his engine because of these open windows on the world.

Of course the so-called lower animals are sense-guided too, and some of them have one or more superior senses. A dog can hear sounds a human cannot. He can also detect odors a human cannot. Some of the insects can see at many more angles than a human can. Even a fish or a bird can see farther back on each side. A bird has pivot neck with which it can turn its head and see in any direction without moving its body. So does a snake. But man probably has a greater average and total use of his senses than any other creature. But wherever a means of sense perception is found and whatever it may be, it is a miracle power. That being the case, we can work miracles with it. That is exactly why we have it. In this great world of possibility, claim your share and make the most of it.

The keener one's senses are and the better he interprets what they perceive for him, the more regal being he is. So-called royalty is very easily set apart, but it is synthetic at best; and sooner or later it is usually unmade as easily as it was made, because it is not rooted in the nature of things. The regality of being a sentient person is something that does not wear off and cannot be taken away. He is monarch of all he surveys, and he can survey a great deal.

The things in which we are born unequal are incidental and temporary. But in this primary one of a kingdom as wide as we can see, hear, and know, we stand on common ground if we have our senses and can use them well. Even if not, there are ways of making up the lack. Hence we have people like Fanny Crosby and Helen Keller.

One who is so unfortunate as to lack one or more of his senses often can, if he will, so compensate for it by the unusual development of the other senses that he will have an average of sense powers as high or higher than that of his more fortunate neighbor. If you have ever seen a deaf person lip-reading or throat-reading the words someone is speaking through sensitive fingers, or if you have ever seen a blind person distinguishing with practiced touch the colors of fabrics or the denominations of paper money, you will know what this means.

When you count your blessings and express your gratitude for them do not fail to include your senses and the use you can make of them. If you will honor them with faithful cultivation and right use they will become greater and greater blessings all the while.

React to what they reveal to you, for that is the purpose they are given to serve. Do it wisely and effectively, so you can make your way through life as the watchful pilot steers his boat or the careful engineer scans the onreaching track with his careful gaze; in other words, with complete awareness. That will make you a person who has the satisfaction of real importance in the world.

AFFIRMATION

I observe carefully what my senses reveal, because that is my world, and I am thus able to inhabit it with awareness and understanding.

Blessings,

YOUR INSTRUCTOR.