

Degree

10

Number

236-1



OFFICIAL EMBLEM

# THE MAYANS

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The Mayans



San Antonio, Texas

# The Exordium of The Initiatory

## of the Sacred 10th Degree of The Mayan Order

**B**ELOVED COMPANION:

Once more, we stand together on the Higher Path. Much has happened since last we met here. The quiet night hours of study and meditative contemplation have been rewarding, and the daylight hours, too, have brought their blessing as you have lived the Truths you learned.

You are now approaching another plateau of experience that calls you to take a step higher in your journey into spiritual realities. You have come a long way already, and you have been preparing yourself for this special experience.

You have learned many lessons as you have studied, read, meditated, and prayed. Especially have you learned the lesson of Companionship along the way. Even though you have conducted your studies and your initiations in private, you have been increasingly conscious of the spiritual companionship of other members of The Mayan Order who are walking this way with you. Some have come only part way - while others, like you, have come every step of the way you have walked and are standing with you today as you prepare for a new and higher experience.

Perhaps the time has seemed to pass slowly, but there was much to be learned. Through all your hours of study and your days of living Truth, you have been conscious that I, your Guiding Spirit, have been with you in mind and in love through every step of your journey. You have been more especially conscious of the fact that your Lord has walked with you, for the steps you have taken and the path you have pursued have been spiritual steps and a spiritual path, and the One Who said, "I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly", has been walking with you step by step and day by day.

Your journey thus far has been a journey of mysticism, mystery and meaning. You have made use of certain symbolisms to indicate spiritual reality. Some of these have held elements of mystery so deep that for a time they seemed obscured, but through your studies you have been able to penetrate the



veil and find the lessons they have taught you. You have attempted with God's help, to follow these lessons and to build your life upon them.

In our Ceremony tonight, we will make further use of symbolisms to free ourselves from worldly reality and attain the heights of spiritual reality. You will remember that Christ, in His teachings in the form of "parables", used descriptions of conditions and objects that His listeners could understand and remember - descriptions in human language to indicate spiritual meanings - limited human language to lift those He taught to the greater unlimited world of the spirit.

As we picture together the symbols used in this Initiation Ceremony, you must not lose sight of the fact that they are but keys given us to unlock our finite minds to the infinite Truths they represent. This is something you must never forget during the service - that the symbols are used only to reveal the great truths that transcend this plane and lift your soul into that spiritual realm of the Father's All-Knowledge.

If you have any physical condition at this time that makes it dangerous for you to strike a match or light a candle - or if you have a physical problem that makes it difficult for you to kneel - please just sit comfortably in your chair before your Altar during the entire Initiation Ceremony, mentally and spiritually joining your Companions in the lighting of the candles and in kneeling for your prayers and commitments. The only reason we are using the candles is to make spiritual truth more real - but we do not want you to do anything that might be dangerous for you, and certainly your blessing need be no less as you join your Companions in spirit.

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And now, at last, you are ready to walk with me - UP, onto a higher plateau. I have waited long and watched eagerly for your coming, and now I greet you with outstretched hand, for it is my joy to lead you up onto this higher plateau, to the Place of Initiation, and guide you through the High Rites from which you will emerge transformed into a radiant being.

You know, of course, that when we come face to face with life's greatest and most meaningful experiences, we can never be the same again. We will either go backward in rebellion against them - or we will go forward in loyalty to them. As you prepare now to step up higher, you will take everything you have learned with you into this greater experience, and you will be a better person and a stronger person after you take this step than you were before.

As you proceed up the steps you are to follow in this great Initiation Ceremony, you will find each one will help you



immeasurably to translate Learning into Living.

You will move from Symbols into Service. This special experience will help you to move through Spiritual Adventure into Day-by-Day Actions, for what is here to be learned is that great spiritual truths must be put into day-by-day living in order for us to recognize their fullest implication and to thus benefit from their deeper meaning.

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Therefore, as we approach the Place of Initiation, you will keep in mind the fact that this step up into the Higher Degree will equip you to live a better life, to be a more victorious person, to conquer the tasks and tests of life.

You will come to understand what the Master meant when He spoke of "the abundant life", and be able to realize it in your own living more than ever before after you have gone through this service.

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I must warn you, however, that unless you are ready to go all the way with your Lord and Master in translating learning into living, it will be better that you not proceed with this Initiation at this time, for through these steps you will come to a commitment that is a higher commitment than you have ever made before.

Our Lord desperately needs people who will live the Christian life day by day. Our world is hungry, and there are millions waiting to see the Light in us that will glorify God and will prove the worthwhileness of the Christian life.

ARE YOU READY TO GO FORWARD IN THIS ACT OF HIGHER DEDICATION AND DEVOTION TO HIS CAUSE?

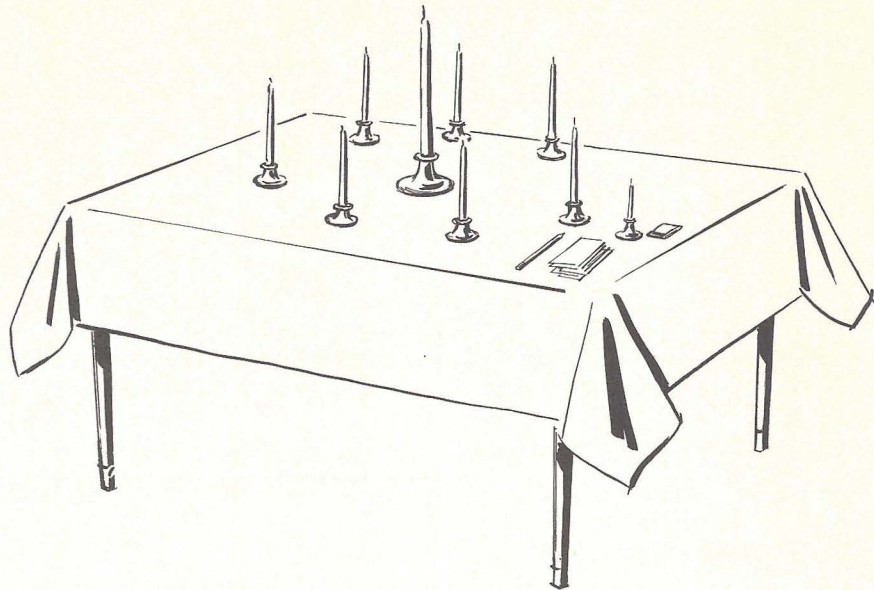
THE CANDIDATE WILL ANSWER:

"I am ready, and now place myself in His hands to be so used to spread His Light."



Let me list these things again, for it is most important they be ready in advance.

STUDY WELL THE DIAGRAM SHOWN BELOW, so that when it is time for you to prepare your Altar, it will be pictured in your mind:



- A small table
- A spotless, clean white cloth, large enough to cover the table
- One large candle, with holder\*
- Seven medium-sized candles, with holders\*
- One small candle, with holder\*
- Matches
- A small pillow
- A comfortable chair
- A pen or pencil
- Seven small pieces of paper
- A lamp or overhead light
- A clock or watch, NOT on the Altar but nearby, so you may begin the Initiation Ceremony at the exact moment as the other members of your class

\*If you do not have, or cannot easily procure the candle holders, use small dishes or glasses if the candles can be firmly affixed and will stand upright. Do not use anything that can not absolutely assure you that the candles will stand upright.



You are now ready, Beloved Companion, for your final preparation before we go to the Higher Plateau - which we have called

## The Plateau of Perfection

The Password for this Initiation is PERFECTION - and its symbol is "7". As we proceed, we need to have a clear understanding of the meaning of the word "Perfection", and of the symbolism of the figure "7".

Our Initiation is based on two selections from the Holy Scripture. The first comes from our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, and appears in the fifth chapter of Matthew, verse 48:

*"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."*

The other selection appears in II Peter, chapter 1, verses 5 through 7:

*"And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."*

These two selections give us a command on the one hand, and show us the pattern of fulfillment of this command on the other hand. You will note there are seven godly virtues listed in the second selection: Virtue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly Kindness, and Charity. One of the newer translations of the New Testament lists these as:

**Real Goodness**

**Endurance**

**Knowledge**

**Trust in God**

**Self-Control**

**Brotherliness**

**Christian Love**

The combination of these two selections from Holy Scripture emphasizes the two words to which we have already referred - PERFECTION and the figure "7".

On the small pieces of paper that you prepared earlier, you will now write the names of these seven godly virtues, one on each piece of paper. Then arrange them in a small pile, one on top of the other, so that the paper with the virtue, REAL GOODNESS, is on the top and the others in the order given you;



CHRISTIAN LOVE being on the bottom. Place them again beside the small candle and matches on your Altar.

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It is very important to understand why the number "7" has been chosen, particularly as it refers to the word "Perfection". Seven was the sacred number among the Jews in the Old Testament. It always indicated perfection or completion. The number, seven, was predominant in the religious life and in the sacred observances of the Jews.

The story of creation is a story of completion and involves the number, seven: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." -( Genesis 2: 1-3).

The "Sabbath" was the most important day in the life of the Old Testament Jew because it was on this day, the seventh day, that God rested from His labors. One of the Ten Commandments is that we must remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy. (Exodus 20:8).

In the New Testament, the number, seven, is prominent. The Lord was asked how many times we should forgive our brother when he repented, and the answer was "seventy times seven", which indicated the spirit of forgiveness should be endless - that is, PERFECT.

In the Book of Revelation, the New Testament book of symbolism, our Lord reveals Himself in the most beautiful symbolism that involves the use of the number, seven. The message is given "to the seven churches of Asia Minor". John, the writer, saw seven golden candlesticks, "and in the midst of the seven candlesticks One like unto the Son of Man." And then there followed seven messages to these seven churches, messages that have the avowed intention of perfecting the seven churches.



As you proceed, therefore, you will be taking an adventure along the higher path to THE PLATEAU OF PERFECTION where you will explore the seven virtues that indicate a perfect life. We will not believe that we have reached the end of our growing experiences, the completion of responsibility, but we will enter THE PLATEAU OF PERFECTION in which, as liberated, free sons and daughters of God, we are to live and continue to grow in the life of perfection.



We must attempt to understand what we mean by "Perfection". Most people are confused at this point - dreadfully confused - and the usual human reply to any call to perfection is: "Nobody can be perfect in this life." Using this rationalization, they usually turn away from the goal of perfection because they neither understand its full meaning, nor believe it is possible to achieve it.

We must first understand that perfection does not mean "perfection in performance", for this would rule out the possibility of growth. It does not mean the absence of human limitations for so long as we are human beings, we are hedged about with limitations. It is our desire to overcome these limitations that presents to us the most exciting challenge of our lives.

Perfection does not mean that we will make no mistakes, nor that we will never stumble, or that we will never be in error, for such conditions would mean that we had reached a state in our growth beyond which we could grow no more. Such a state would be impossible in this life.

But perfection, as we understand it in Holy Scripture, means PERFECTION IN LOVE, IN FAITH, IN OBEDIENCE, IN DEDICATION, IN EFFORT, IN TRUST IN THE LIVING GOD AND OBEDIENCE TO HIS HOLY WILL. To simplify it - if this can be done with spiritual reality - Perfection means to "love the Lord our God with ALL of our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourself." It means to give God ALL of the love of which we are capable, day by day and year by year, and to follow in His footsteps to the best of our knowledge and ability.

One of the ancient prayers of the Church calls upon God to "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee and magnify Thy Holy Name, through Jesus Christ, our Lord." This is the prayer we pray as we approach the study of the word and meaning of "Perfection", for Christian Perfection means to love God with all of our capacity and to demonstrate that love in daily service to God and to our fellow man.

Obviously, we are more capable to love now than we were years ago - and, likewise, we should be more capable to love years from now than we are now. Our capacity to love will grow; and with each growth of our capacity to love God, we are still to love Him to the fullest, day by day and year by year. This is "perfect love".

Furthermore, we are to understand Perfection as "Christian Perfection" and not "human perfection". We might well say it is impossible for a human to be perfect, but we must never say it is impossible for the Christ to live perfectly in the soul of a human being. It is CHRIST IN YOU that is both the condition and the realization of perfection.



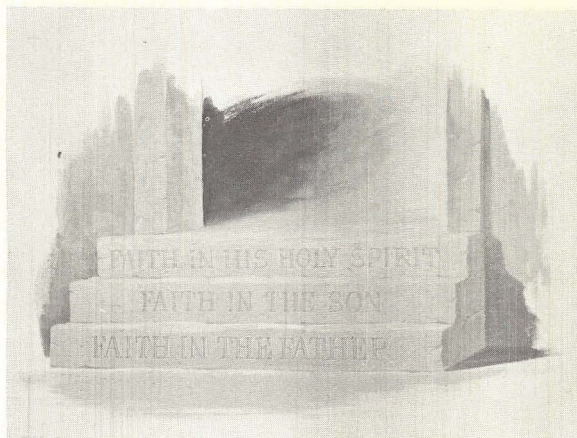


And now, Beloved Companion, you are ready to take my hand and go with me into the Place of Initiation. Stretch forth your hand and clasp mine. Do not be discouraged if you do not feel at once the gentle pressure of my hand in yours. Wait - willing your spirit to join me, your Guiding Spirit, and when you sense my presence, when you feel the cool touch of my hand on yours, you will know that once more you have bridged the gap and are again in communion with me and with your Companions who wait with us to go forward up onto THE PLATEAU OF PERFECTION.

Before us are three steps - and on them, you will see their names. They are:

1. Faith in the Father
2. Faith in the Son, our Elder Brother
3. Faith in His Holy Spirit

As you step with me onto the first one, let us then renew together, our Faith in the Father:



CANDIDATE WILL REPEAT THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

*"Oh, God our Father, in Whose almighty power and all-wisdom was everything created perfect, I now pledge anew my faith that in Thee all things are possible.  
—Amen."*

Pause for a moment, thinking on the words of the pledge you have just made.

Let the realization that Our Father is indeed all in all, that there are no limitations to His wisdom and power, permeate your entire being.

Wait until the magnitude of His greatness has surged through every fiber of your soul - bringing with it the confidence that, with His help, it is possible to live the life of Christian Perfection. And then, step with me, up onto the second step of Faith.

THE CANDIDATE WILL NOW REPEAT THE FOLLOWING RENEWAL PLEDGE:



“Oh Son of God and Son of Man, our Elder Brother, Who has gone before us, having walked the perfect life here on earth, I now pledge anew my faith that if I follow the way that Thou hast shown, with the consciousness of Thy companionship I, too, can live the life of Christian Perfection here on earth. Amen.”

Do not these words bring assurance to you? Christ has gone before us. He was tempted as we are tempted - and yet He walked the Perfect Way and now is at the right hand of our Father, God. Throughout all His teachings, we are told that His way is our way, and that even greater works than His are ours through belief, faith, and obedience.

Meditate a moment on this - on the way shown us by our Elder Brother - the Way of Perfection.

With hearts full of joy, let us step boldly onto the third step of Faith.

CANDIDATE WILL REPEAT THE FOLLOWING PLEDGE OF FAITH:

“Oh Holy Spirit of God, the Comforter Who is with us always, I now pledge anew my faith in Thee, that Thou may always find my heart receptive to Thy leading into the perfect will of God. Amen.”

This pledge of faith is also a vow - to not only recognize the work of God's Holy Spirit to lead us into the Perfect Life, but to accept it to ourselves. It is a pledge that we will allow His cleansing power to keep our hearts free to receive His guidance and follow it. It must be not only the desire, but the will to do what He reveals to us of God's Perfect Way. It is the complete and absolute surrender of your will to Him.

After prayerful consideration of your pledge, if you are so willing - you will feel the deep peace of God's harmony steal through you, for with your pledge you have put an end to the "warfare" within you and you can now step with me - stripped of all doubts and fears - up onto THE PLATEAU OF PERFECTION.



THE PLATEAU OF PERFECTION is a lovely place - a place of true beauty, for it is the place of harmony - harmony with our loving God, harmony within ourselves, and harmony with all of God's creatures.

It is so vast that we cannot see its edges, for it

represents the power and wisdom and love of God to which there is no end. Its thick carpet of grass, the heavy foliage of the sheltering trees overhead speak to us of the abundance of His promises - promises to "supply all our needs", to be "an ever present help in time of trouble", to give to us "according to His riches in glory", even the gift of eternal life.

As we walk forward, the enormity of these promises overwhelm us, for we realize more than ever before how tremendous indeed is the love of Our Father for us.

Thoughtfully, with humbly grateful hearts, we move on, toward the center of the Plateau, wherein is a great open space. There, rising before our eyes, is the Temple of the Soul - a Spiritual Temple unlimited by the earthly or the material - the epitome of perfection, for its beauty is beyond description, a perfect blending of line and color.

There are no interruptions of its flowing contours, nor corners or sharp edges - there is no place of beginning or place of ending, for the design of our Spiritual Temple is that of a perfect circle representing God's perfect plan stretching from eternity to eternity.

It is at once no color, and yet all colors, for its brilliance is greater than the sun - and it is only through the eyes of faith renewed that we can look upon it and comprehend it,

#### THE PERFECT PLAN OF GOD



As we approach the Temple, although there is no door to mar its perfection, it is as if an opening is made for us to enter, and we are met by a Spirit in flowing white robes.

At once, we feel the aura of perfect peace surrounding him. It is like the untroubled surface of a placid pool into whose depths we gaze on a hot day, drawing from it surcease from all our cares as we relax our weary bodies at its edge.

Look up, Companion, into his face.

Have you ever seen a face more serene? The noble features and kindly eyes reflect an inner calm that nothing can disturb. Here is the countenance of one who has completely surrendered to the perfect way - for this is the Spirit of Submission.



It is only because of your own vows of recognition and submission to God's perfect way for you that you are now ready to enter the Temple.

IT IS THROUGH YOUR PLEDGE OF RENEWED FAITH  
THAT YOU ARE NOW ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE  
PLACE OF INITIATION.

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Let us linger while the throng of your Companions join you before we enter.

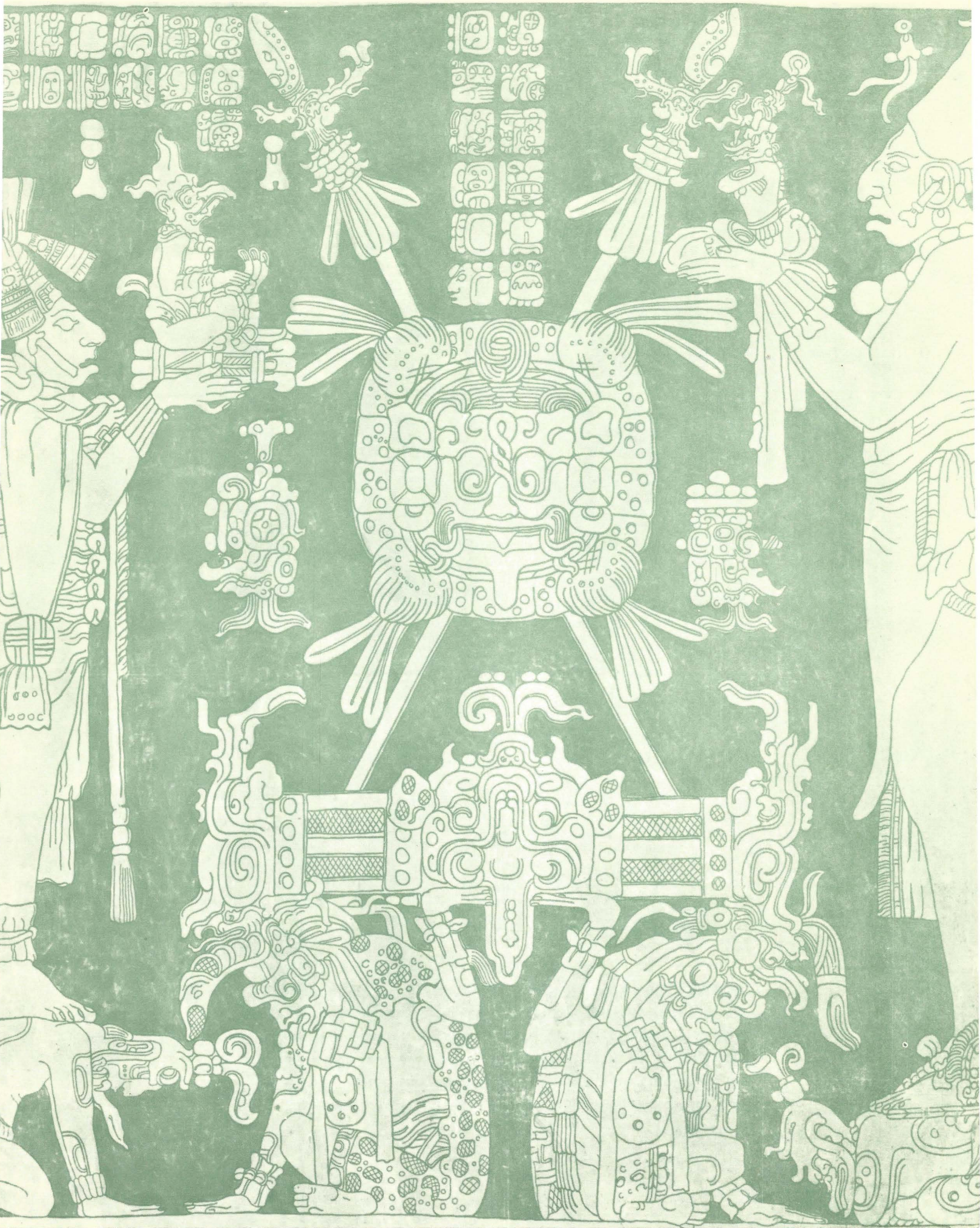


Your Initiation is to begin at 12 o'clock  
midnight of the day of MAY 13 1970

At midnight of this appointed day; - AND  
NOT BEFORE - break the Seal.

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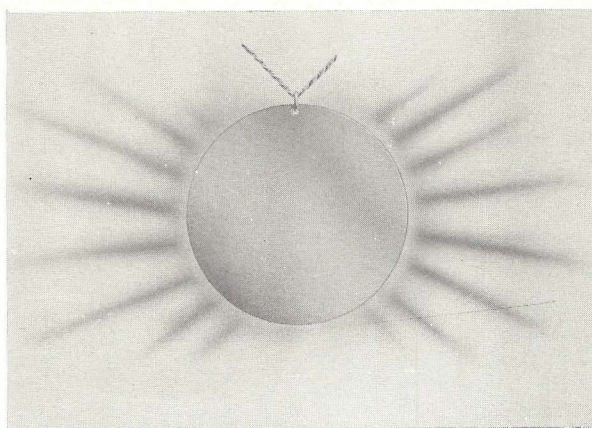
As you await the Midnight Hour, let your  
thoughts be on the joys and blessings of  
the Perfect Way, - God's Way for you.



AT THE STROKE OF TWELVE - the appointed hours of Your Initiation into the higher Tenth Degree of Mayanry - together with your Companions who have joined you at this hour, you will speak the Password given you earlier in the words of preparation:

THE CANDIDATE WILL SPEAK THE PASSWORD ALOUD

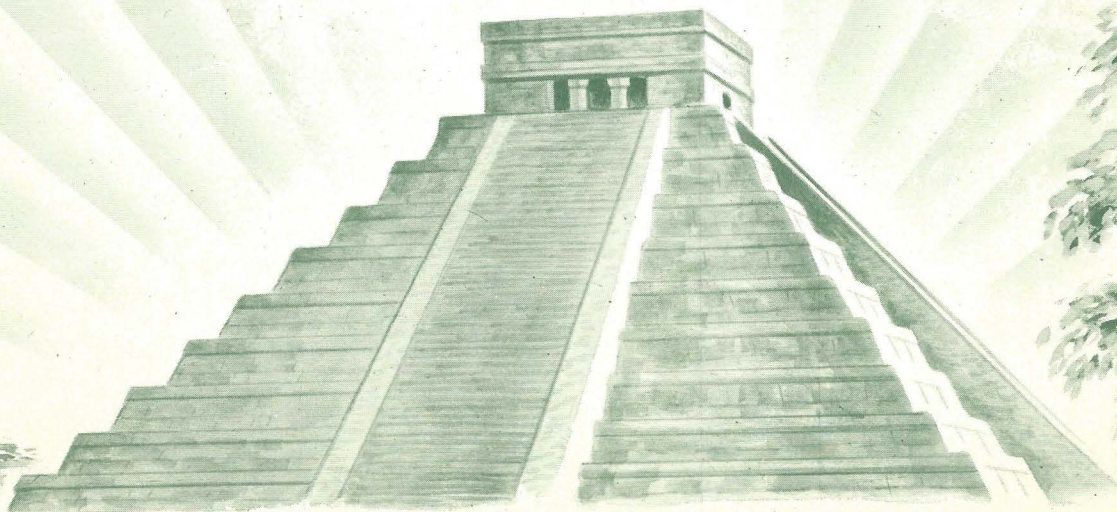
The spirit of Submission smiles and beckons you to move into the Temple with him. About your neck, he places the Cords of Faith, Hope and Love - three single cords, yet intertwined as one. Look down, Companion, and see what it is that the Cords uphold for you.



It is a gleaming BREASTPLATE of purest gold. It is fashioned in a perfect circle - representing the perfect plan by which you are to build your perfect life with the help of our Lord, Jesus Christ. It is smooth and unadorned, save for eight indentations - a large one in the center, and seven smaller ones perfectly spaced around it in a continuous circle. Its chaste beauty is symbolic of the life you are now entering - freed from limitations and demands of self to the new life of limitless abundance, as you walk His Way.

The way of Truth needs no adornment, for its beauty transcends to heights all efforts of our own could not attain. To the life of true beauty you are being led.

Look about you - at the tremendous chamber into which we have been received. How small we feel, and how small are the figures of those gathered with you here,



for its rounded walls rise and continue unbroken into the ceiling that arches high above us. Extinguish the lights of your room, except for the reading light you have prepared, and in the quiet of your room take your place in your comfortable chair before your Altar - that in solitude your spiritual vision may penetrate the mysteries that are to be revealed to you.

Slowly, your vision clears - and your eyes are drawn upward - upward, to the very center of the ceiling high above you - to the brightly gleaming, yet softly glowing brightness that is the only light in this vast room. As you gaze upon it, the cloud of transition passes from before your eyes. Look now about you - see how that light penetrates into even the farthest reaches of the chamber, how it illuminates the figures of your Companions who have taken their places, like you, before their Altars. This light that reaches into and dispells all darkness is the LIGHT OF CHRIST - the only true light - the Light of the World.

REACH FORTH YOUR HAND FOR A MATCH -

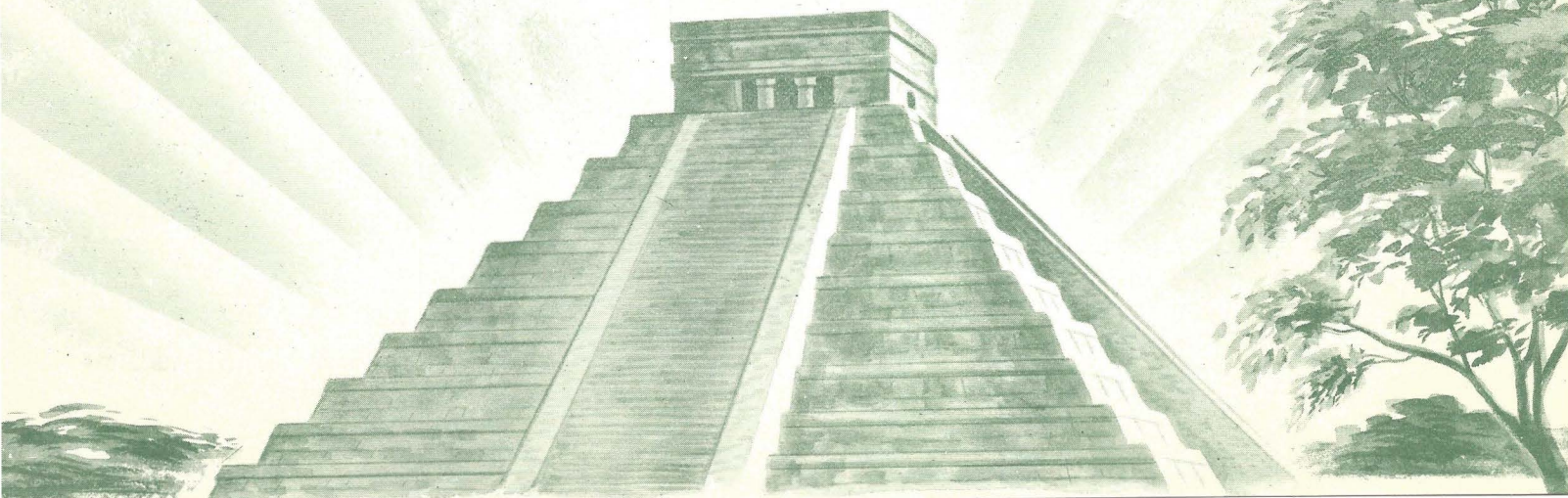
Strike it and light the large candle in the center of your Altar.

This candle represents our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Light of the World. You will recall that Jesus said, "I am the Light of the World: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12). Read this verse several times - until it becomes a fixed fact in your mind - and never lose sight of it and its meaning throughout this entire Ceremony. He is the Light of the World! He must be the light of your life. There is no light without Him - with Him your life can be a living light among men. Bow your head and your heart in adoration of Him and pray with me:

CANDIDATE HERE WILL - THOUGHTFULLY AND MEANINGFULLY - REPEAT THE WORDS OF THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

*"Oh, Light of the World, I praise Thee and magnify Thee, the only True Light of men. Come into my heart that I may become a living light to bring Thy truth to all men. Amen."*

You lift your head - and it is, once more, as if you are alone - and yet not alone, for as you gaze into the flame of the candle now burning brightly upon your Altar, you know that He is ever with you, you feel His presence within your joyous heart. It is only when your life is illuminated by the indwelling Light of



the World that our Lord can work out the fulfillment of His plan of perfection for you.



On the Altar before you, covered with the white Cloth of Purity, the Light of Christ shines through the darkness.

Surrounding it are the seven unlighted candles. These candles represent the Seven Godly Virtues given you from Holy Scriptures in the passages of preparation you read earlier. To these virtues, you must dedicate yourself if you are to live the Perfect Life, - if you are to enter into the higher spiritual companionship.

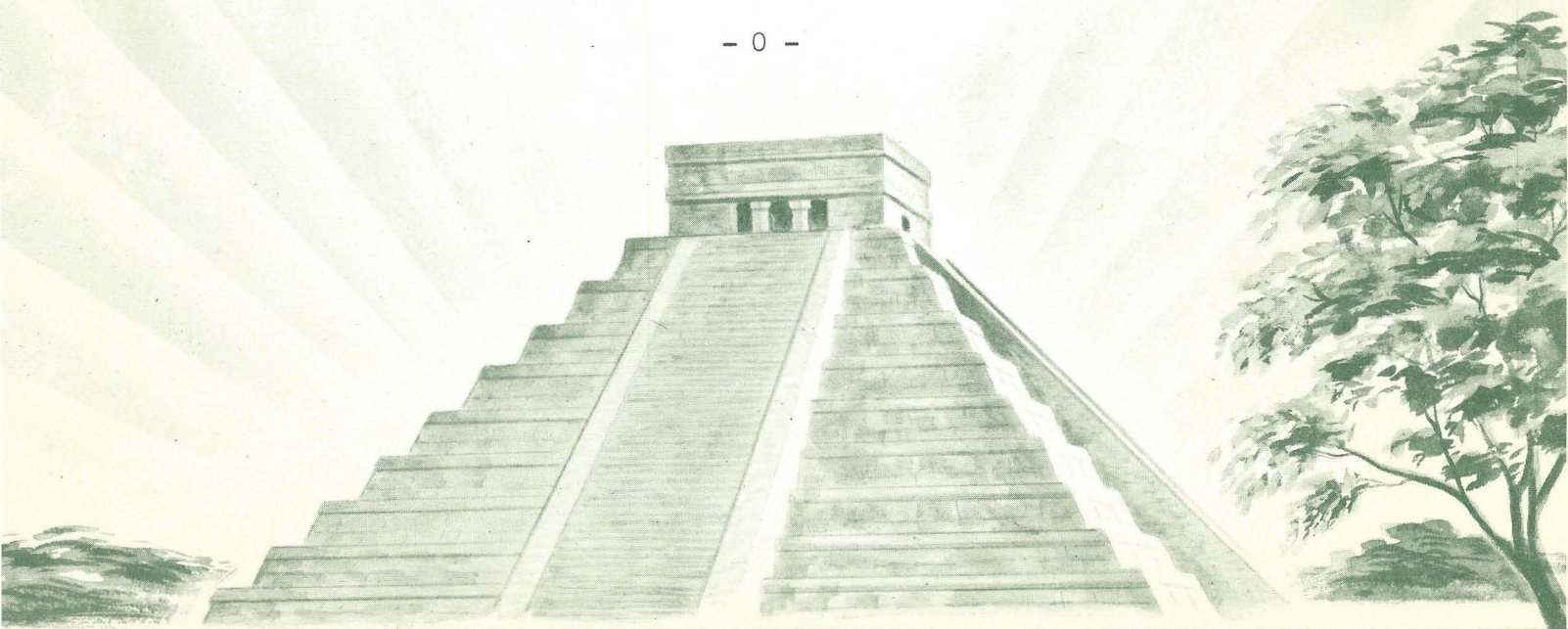
If it is your sincere desire to go ALL the way with your Saviour and Lord, letting Him lead you into the Life of Perfection, take my hand - and let us walk together up the Steps of Faith into a private chamber where we will consider the First Godly Virtue, the first level of the Life of Perfection. Here, we will meditate together on its meaning and you will make your vows of dedication.

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In the small room we have entered is an Altar like the one you prepared, covered with the white Cloth of Purity, on which is a single unlighted candle. Rising above it in classic simplicity of design is a lovely stained-glass window. Crystal-clear in its center like a benediction, shines the Light of Christ. Ever-present, in all circumstances, wherever we may be - He is there to inspire and guide us to His Truth.

But the decision of dedication is ours alone - and so we approach the Altar, there to contemplate the First Godly Virtue, together.

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## Real Goodness

THE CANDIDATE WILL HERE TAKE THE PIECE OF PAPER ON WHICH IS WRITTEN THE WORD, "GOODNESS", AND PLACE IT IN FRONT OF THE CANDLE NEAREST HIM.

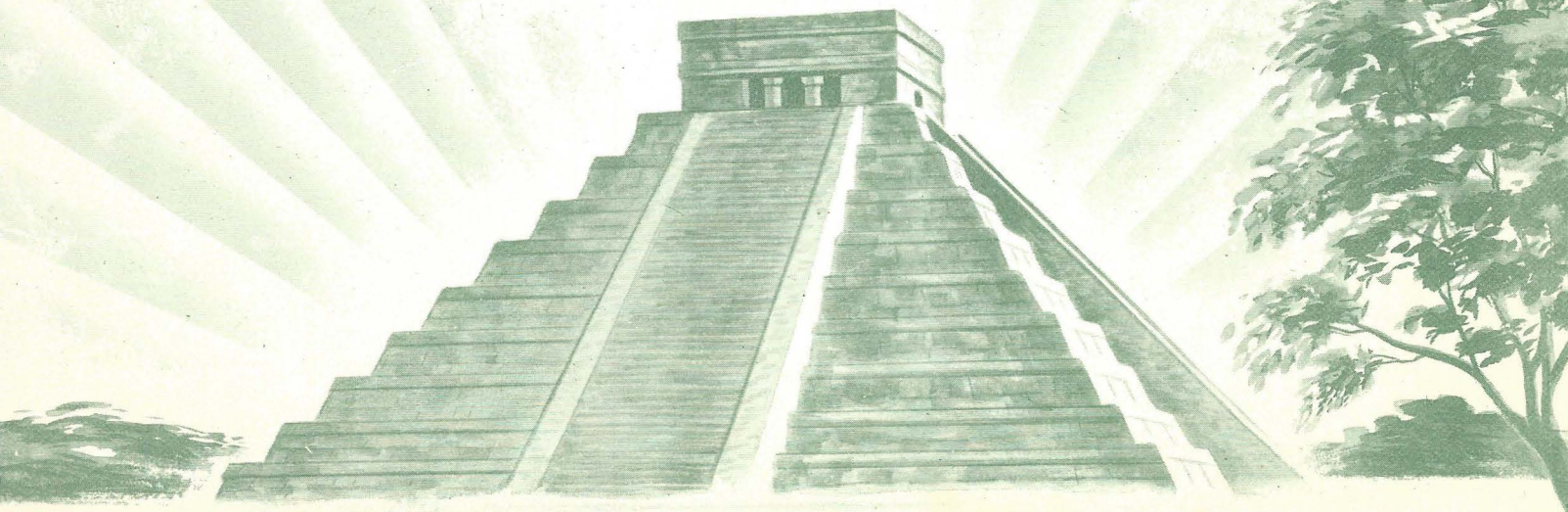
REAL GOODNESS has to do with character, cleanliness, purity and holiness. Goodness is a divine derivative, and we possess it only as we open our souls to the goodness of God. Whatever goodness there is in us is "God's Goodness".

Our Lord admonished His disciples and the multitudes that heard Him deliver the Sermon on the Mount to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." (Matthew 5:16). This is the light of goodness. It will rule out dishonesty, fraud, deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, greed, hatred, and all the forces that would destroy us from within.

You are to pledge your life to Goodness in this service of Initiation, and thereby set as one of the goals for the rest of your life the goal of GENUINE GOODNESS. Remember as you do, however, that goodness is in proportion to one's willingness to receive the Spirit of God and to submit to His leadership.

When our Lord suggested that we were to let our lights shine before men, He did not imply that our light was in us alone and separated from His Light. We are told that there are two types of light - the one original and the other reflective. The light of the sun is one, and the light of the moon is the other. The sun is its own light, while the moon reflects that light. It is precisely in proportion to its association with the sun that the moon can reflect light.

Let us think of His light and our light. His is the original light; ours is the reflective light. We can let our light shine before men only as we reflect His light. This, we believe to be the meaning of our Lord's admonition. He is the Light of the World and we are to live in such close proximity to His light as to be



able to reflect it in the lives of others.

This is GENUINE GOODNESS BY REFLECTION - and what a privilege it is to be the instruments through which divine goodness is to shine to the rest of the world.

Jesus made it quite clear that "there is none good but God", but over and over again He taught us to believe God can live in our lives if we will admit Him, receive Him, and let Him shine through us. The presence of Real Goodness means the absence of evil. We should pray daily to be cleansed of evil in order that goodness, GOD'S GOODNESS, GENUINE GOODNESS, may reign in our hearts.

Think on these words - on this Virtue of Goodness - GENUINE GOODNESS - GOD'S GOODNESS- and if it is your sincere and earnest desire to be a chosen instrument through which God's Goodness may shine

KNEEL BEFORE THE ALTAR ON THE PILLOW YOU HAVE PLACED THERE.

PICK UP THE SMALL CANDLE IN THE CORNER OF YOUR ALTAR, THE CANDLE THAT REPRESENTS YOUR LIFE, AND LIGHT IT FROM THE LIGHT OF CHRIST, THE LARGE CANDLE IN THE CENTER OF THE ALTAR.

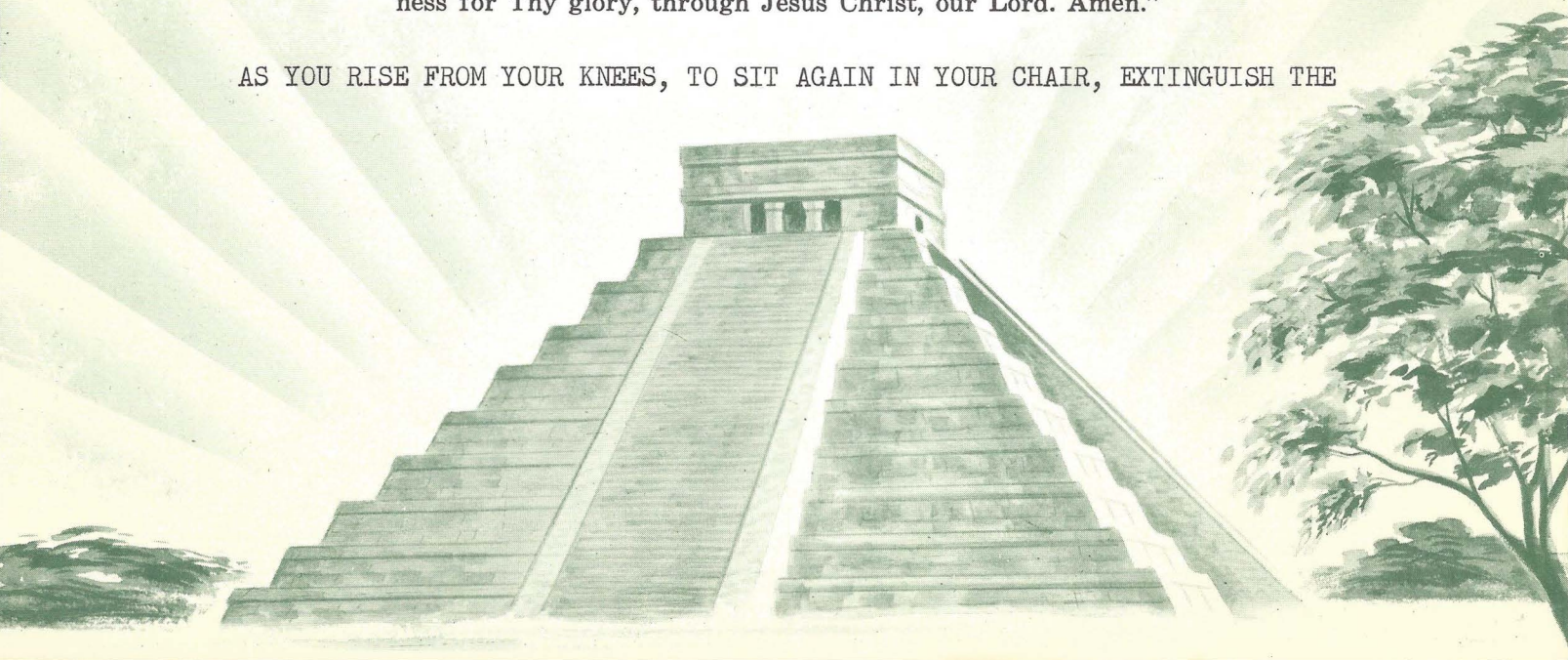
By your act - the act of lighting the Candle of Your Life from the Candle of His light - you have indicated your willingness to go ALL the way with your Lord. NOW TOUCH THE CANDLE OF YOUR LIFE TO THE CANDLE OF GOODNESS. As its flame begins to burn, you will pray with me:

*"I Pledge my life to the Virtue of Goodness, resolved by the help of God to give daily attention to this quality in my own life, to call upon God for divine help in the cultivation of this quality."*

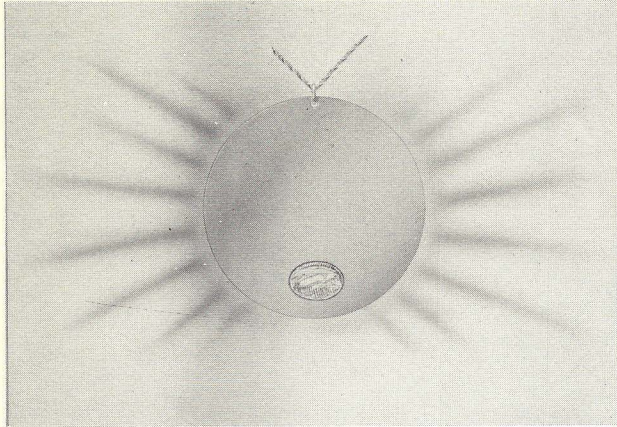
Now, as the Candle of Goodness burns brightly, will you then make the following affirmation:

*"Oh, Thou Holy God, God of beauty and goodness, shine Thy light in my soul, beautify my life, cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may live the life of goodness for Thy glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."*

AS YOU RISE FROM YOUR KNEES, TO SIT AGAIN IN YOUR CHAIR, EXTINGUISH THE



CANDLE OF YOUR LIFE AND PLACE IT IN THE CORNER OF YOUR ALTAR.



The Spirit of Submission reaches into the flame of the candle and, with his hand aglow, places in the golden breastplate you are wearing, a beautiful stone of deep, clear sky-blue - a precious gem TURQUOISE. It is like none you have ever seen, for it is the precious, rare Turquoise mined from the rocks of northeastern Persia. Many, many years ago, the Persians traveled the long miles to Russia with these rare gems. At the great fair of Nijni-Novgorod, those in Russia of tremendous wealth eagerly sought out the Persian merchants, for only from them

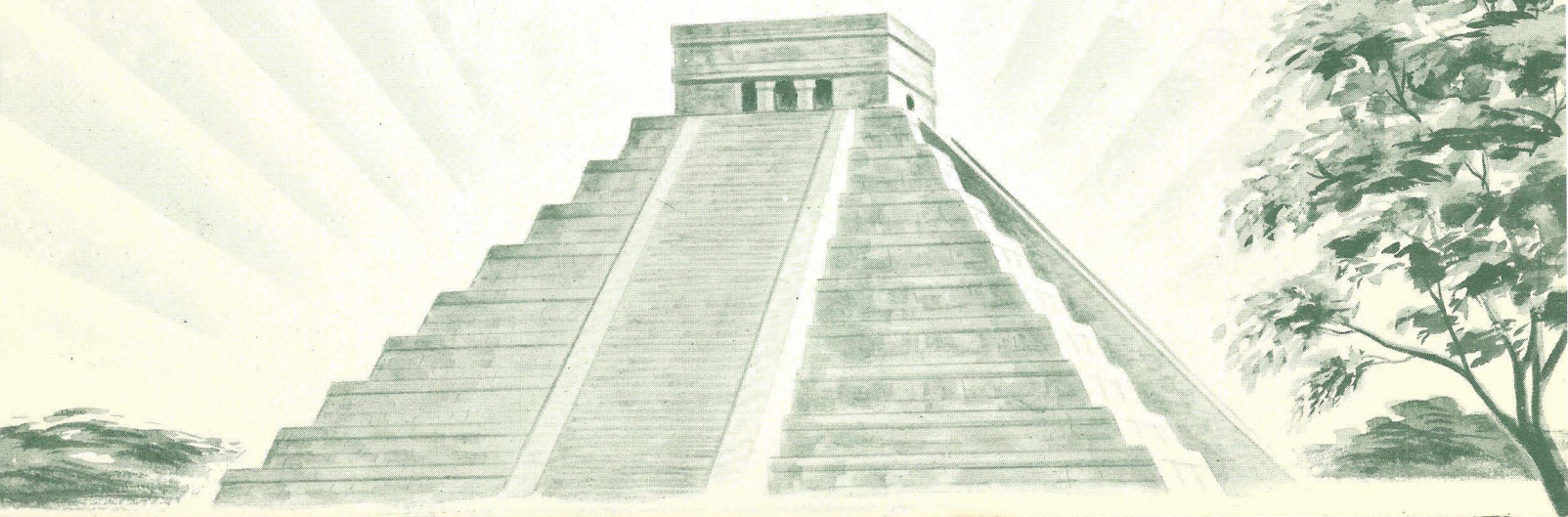
were the rare gems available. Today, Turquoise of lesser quality and many imitations are very common - but let us not confuse them with the precious rock Turquoise that you have been given.

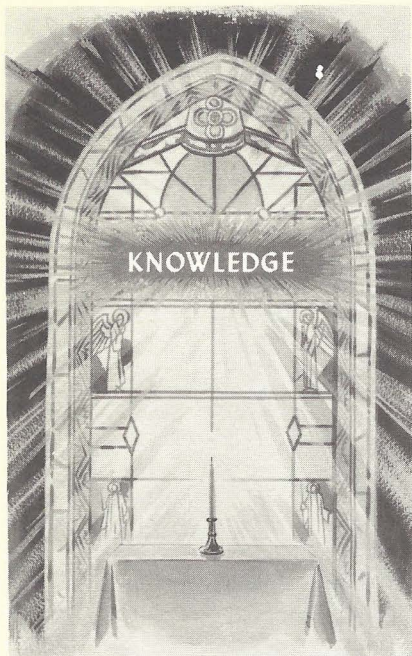
You admire its beauty and think how like Real Goodness it is. There may be many kinds of goodness, in varying degrees of quality, but there is only one goodness that is true and perfect - and it is God's Goodness, to which you have dedicated your life.



Take my hand again - that we may walk once more up the Steps of Faith into the second private chamber where we will consider the next virtue, the second level in the Life of Perfection.

The small room is identical to that we just left - unadorned and bare, except for the beautiful, colored window through which the Light of Christ shines on the purity of the Altar with its single unlighted candle. The clear letters of the word "Knowledge" are in its center, and in reverent anticipation, we silently approach the Altar to meditate together on the Second Godly Virtue.





## Knowledge

THE CANDIDATE WILL HERE TAKE THE PIECE OF PAPER ON WHICH IS WRITTEN THE WORD "KNOWLEDGE", AND PLACE IT BEFORE THE CANDLE TO THE LEFT OF THE CANDLE OF GOODNESS.

KNOWLEDGE is the second level in the Plateau of Perfection and here, again, we find words of the Holy Scripture to guide us. The Old Testament words, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom", and the New Testament admonition to seek the Truth, which is a part of knowledge, the truth as we find it in God. Jesus declared, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Light." And, day by day, He invites us to seek knowledge and truth down the pathway He has trod and down which He will lead us.

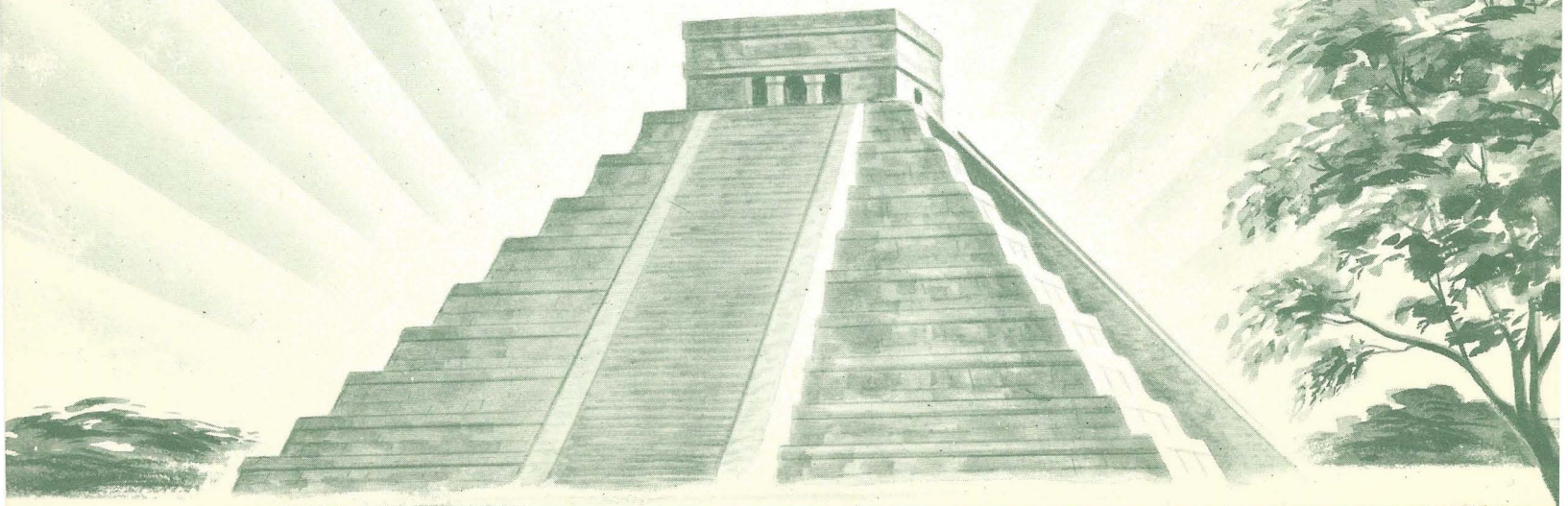
KNOWLEDGE is a prerequisite to freedom. People are bound as prisoners when ignorance and illiteracy predominate. Superstitions and fears, misguided motives and emotions, unwise decisions and actions, are a result of lack of knowledge.

Frequently we feel called upon to quote something our Lord said about truth and freedom and yet to quote it out of context. Many times we repeat His words, "The truth shall make you free", without reference to the context out of which the words have come.

What our Lord actually said was, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32).

We are promised freedom through truth only if we come to know truth in companionship with our Lord. We can never really know truth in its fullest except as we know it in companionship with our Lord.

Can't you feel the last vestiges that may have remained of vanity and pride of self slipping from your being as you think on these words? All the "knowledge"



we may attain, all the studying we may do to obtain that "knowledge" is empty unless we have been walking with Him each step of the way. All our efforts to learn the Truth are futile unless our hearts are receptive to His leading us into the Truth - for He is Truth, and Knowledge, and there is no other way to find the freedom that Truth and Knowledge bring except from Him. It must not be what "I think" - but what "He has shown me". This is TRUE KNOWLEDGE.

We thank God that He offers the abundant life to all mankind, both learned and unlearned, but He challenges us to pursue knowledge so we can better understand the fullest meaning of the abundant life. Knowledge and Goodness are inseparable companions if the abundant life is to be our experience - and our Lord must be our constant Companion if we are to attain these golden virtues.

In humility of spirit, as you kneel before the Altar, if you would willingly dedicate your life to learning His Truth - His Knowledge -

AGAIN KINDLE THE CANDLE OF YOUR LIFE FROM THE LIGHT OF CHRIST, AND THEN LET ITS FIRE LIGHT THE CANDLE OF KNOWLEDGE. As it begins to flow, let this prayer speak your sincere desires:

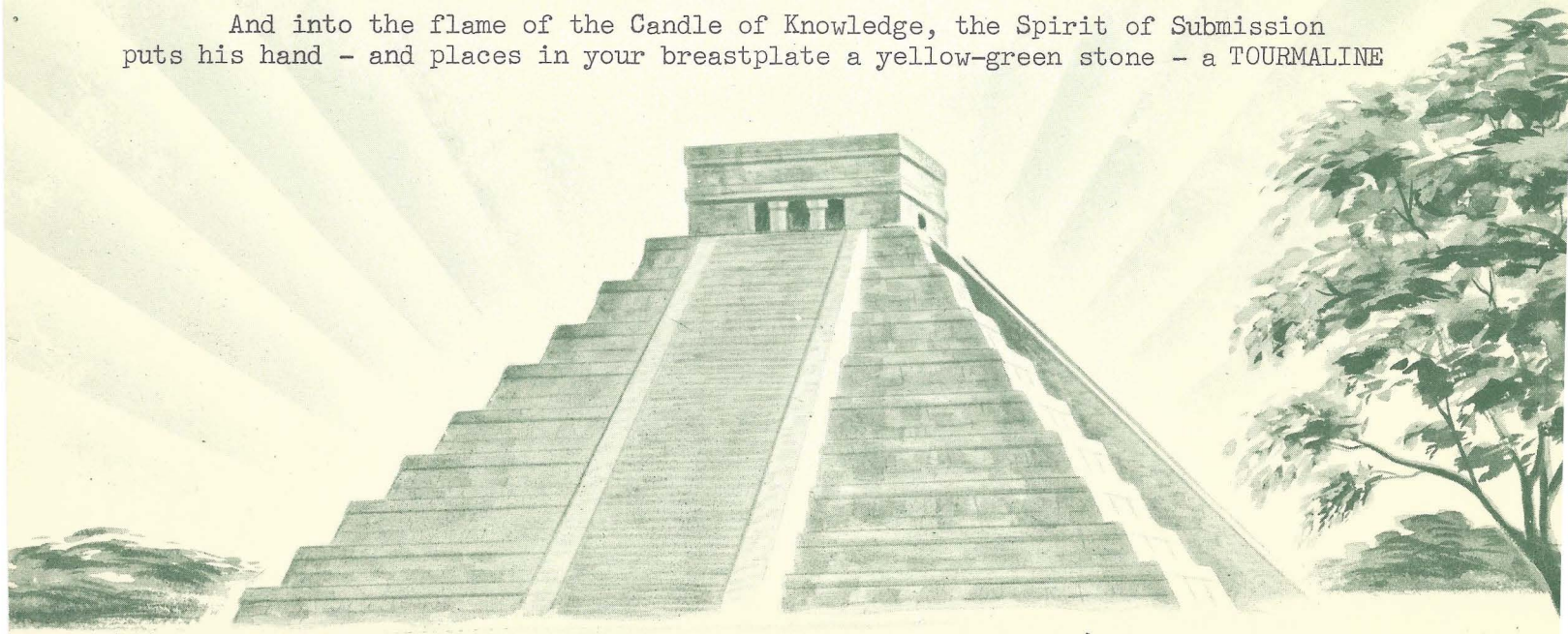
*"Oh, Thou Source of all truth and wisdom, give me the capacity to receive Knowledge, the will to obey it, and the strength to follow it, in the name of Him Who is the Way, the Truth, the Light, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."*

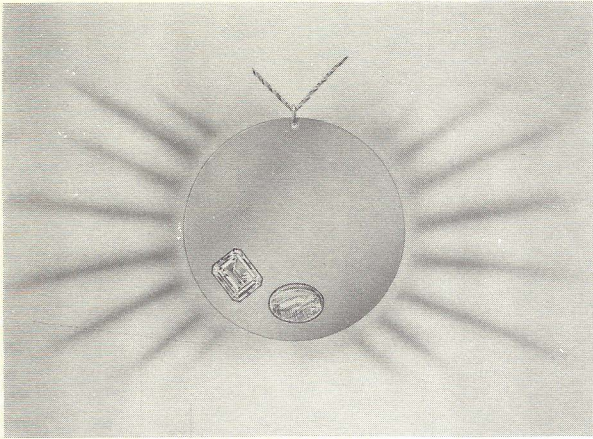
During your words, you will notice that the flame has risen higher and higher and now that it is fully kindled you will dedicate your life to the Second Godly Virtue with these words:

*"I dedicate my mind to the pursuit of Knowledge, to the accumulation of Wisdom, to the principles of Truth. I will keep my mind open to daily revelations of Truth. I will keep ever before me the fear of the Lord as the beginning of Wisdom."*

YOU WILL NOW EXTINGUISH THE CANDLE OF YOUR LIFE AND REPLACE IT ON THE ALTAR, THEN SEAT YOURSELF AGAIN IN YOUR CHAIR.

And into the flame of the Candle of Knowledge, the Spirit of Submission puts his hand - and places in your breastplate a yellow-green stone - a TOURMALINE





large and beautiful. Among the pebbles in the gravel beds of Ceylon, this lovely jewel was found by one searching for beauty. It was several hundred years ago in that far-off land that some Dutch Navigators spied it in the hands of its owner - and one of them became possessed with the wish that it might be his own. The owner was reluctant to part with it for a time, but then, knowing that he would never lose the richness that had come to him in his search for it, in the hours he had spent in contemplation of its beauty while turning it over and over in his hands - and knowing that if he but searched more

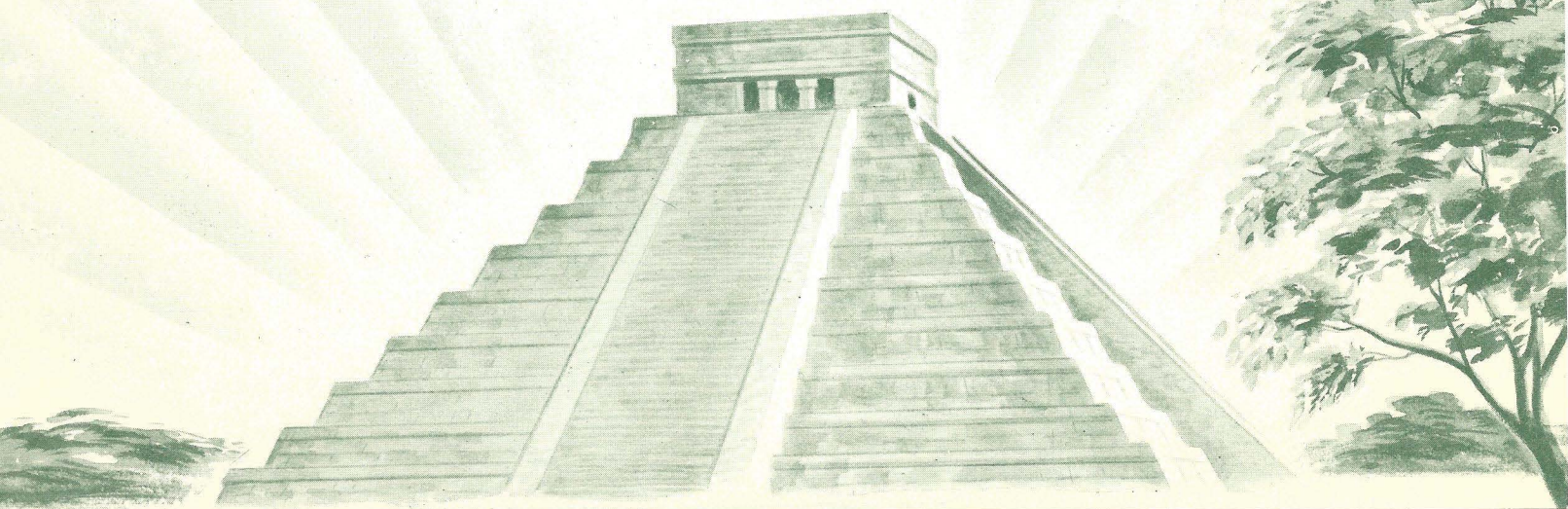
diligently through the pebbles, another of equal or even more beauty might be his - he gave it to the Dutch trader, disdaining the coins that were offered him. And so it found its way into a sea chest in Holland where the new owner kept the treasures he brought home from his journeys over the waters.

One warm summer day, a few years later, some children were playing in a courtyard in Amsterdam. Among their playthings was the precious stone their father had brought from Ceylon, which they had pilfered from the chest, as children will do. They found it particularly interesting for it seemed to be possessed of the strange power of attracting and repelling small bits of light substances. In more recent years careful experiments disclosed wonderful electric powers of the Tourmaline.

How like true Knowledge is this lovely gem - shining forth from among the "pebbles" of information that stretch endlessly along our way - often obscured by the pebbles - found only by him who will diligently search it out and possess it. And what wonderfully electric spiritual powers it has in the life of him who has found it! Ah, yes, there could be no more suitable stone than the mysterious Tourmaline to represent KNOWLEDGE in the gleaming pattern of your life.



Thoughtfully, humbly - we ascend the Steps of Faith that will lead us still



further upward to the third level in the Life of Perfection.

Above the Altar in the third chamber, the Light of Christ shines through the word, "SELF-CONTROL", for this is the next virtue that must be ours if we are to live His way.

## Self-Control

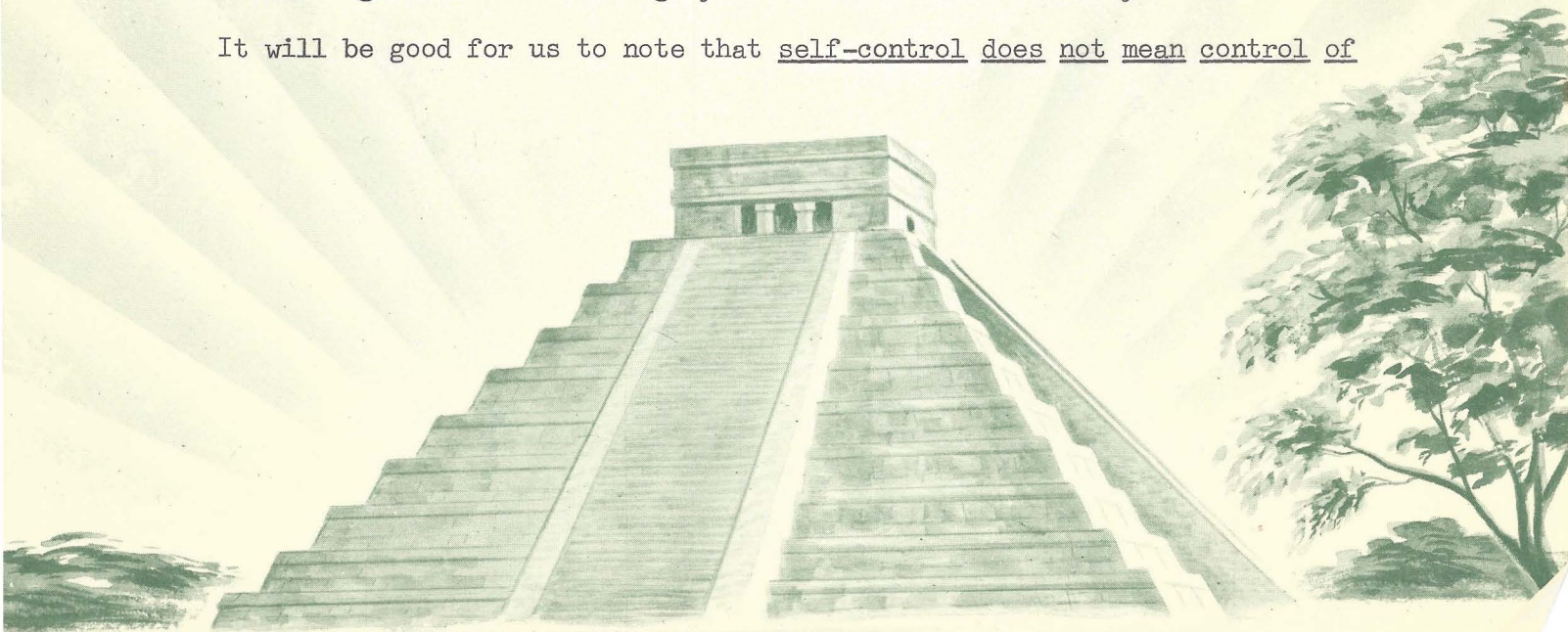
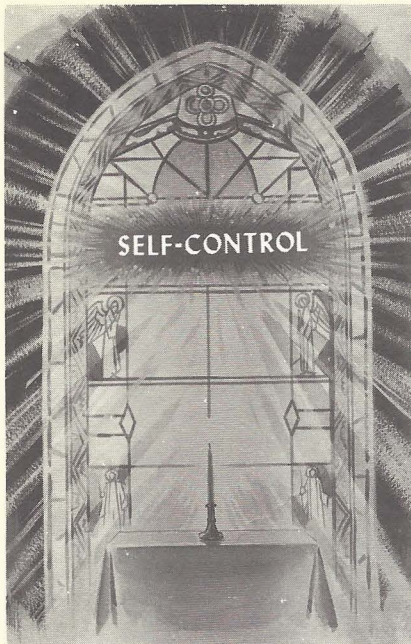
THE CANDIDATE WILL HERE TAKE THE PIECE OF PAPER ON WHICH IS WRITTEN "SELF-CONTROL" AND PLACE IT BY THE CANDLE NEXT TO THE CANDLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

One of the most difficult of the disciplines of daily life is the discipline of SELF-CONTROL. The King James Version of the Bible uses the word "temperance". Most of the modern versions call it "self-control". I think we can best understand what is implied in this affirmation if we use the word self-control.

The Bible speaks in positive and direct language in relation to the importance of this discipline. One who fails at the point of self-control fails at almost every other point of life. One who succeeds in this area lays the groundwork for success in every other area of life.

The writer of the Book of Proverbs has declared, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh the city." (Proverbs 16:32). Again, the writer says, "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." (Proverbs 25:28). Yes, one who does not know and practice the art of self-control is totally defenseless against the forces that seek to destroy the human life. On the other hand, it is clearly pointed out that the individual who does know and practice self-control is greater than the mighty warrior who takes the city.

It will be good for us to note that self-control does not mean control of





the self by the self - this is not a "lift yourself by your own boot straps" philosophy. The deeper meaning of this discipline is the control of the self through the assistance of a power higher than self.

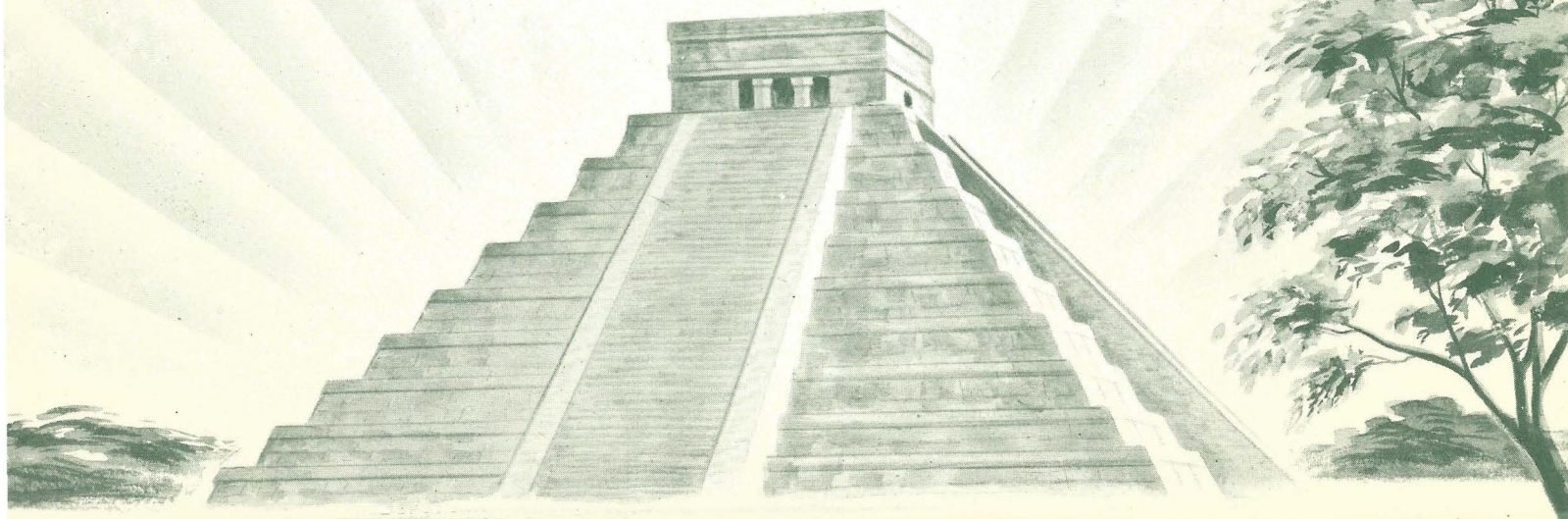
Obviously, the common self cannot control self. Self must be controlled by a power greater than self. Self-control is the control of self by the presence and power of the spirit of Christ living in and through the self, and having free access into every avenue of the self through the door of faith. Self-control means the individual is concerned with the spiritual discipline necessary to control his own emotions and reactions to life.

The appetites of the body and of the mind are natural appetites given to the individual by the creative hand of God. They are not to be destroyed or denied, but they are to be directed into those creative channels that will make possible a blessed and beautified life. Desire is not necessarily evil, and the appetites of the body are not evil within themselves. The direction these appetites take, and the ways by which we seek to fulfill them, can certainly be either evil or good, but desire itself is God-given and is to be disciplined and directed into those channels designed by the will of God when we live the creative life and fulfill His purpose for us. An undisciplined life is a fertile ground for every destructive force that would divide and defeat the individual.

SELF-CONTROL - true Self-Control - is the cooperation of the individual with the power of God, and it must be this cooperation if the self is controlled, disciplined and directed to the highest possible fulfillment of life. This does not mean less power, but more power; not less freedom, but more freedom; not less joy, but more joy.

SELF-CONTROL simply means bringing the self into submission to an intelligence and power greater than our own. That intelligence and power, of course, belongs only to God. Apart from this submission to this Higher Power, the self is thus uncontrolled and undisciplined, and in this condition runs wild without direction or purpose.

When we allow ourselves to be controlled by the Power of God, we have not less power, but greater power because we now have definite purpose and direction in our lives. Furthermore, we have the greatest power of all - the Power of God - which directs our lives according to his creative purpose and eternal destiny. In this and this only, man has perfect freedom as he submits his life completely to



the direction and power of the Heavenly Father.

Do you sincerely want to be brought into the will of God - subjecting every facet of your life, all your emotions, desires, wishes, ambitions, efforts, to His Divine Intelligence? Think carefully what this means. It means that from this moment on, your life must be completely "not my will, but Thine" - not just in words, or in the hope that His will be yours, but in sincerity and complete dedication to His will. There must be no reservations, no areas of your life in which He does not govern. You must earnestly and sincerely seek His will in all things - and follow His leading, without question, in faith. Any less will not be sufficient - your cooperation with Him must be complete, if He is to lead you into the highest fulfillment of His perfect pattern for your life. He will be with you to lead you - His strength will be sufficient - if your desire is sincere and your surrender complete.

If it is your earnest wish to find the power and freedom and joy of the life controlled by the presence and power of Christ in every facet of your life -

**KNEEL ONCE MORE AND LIGHT THE CANDLE OF YOUR LIFE FROM THE CANDLE OF THE LIGHT OF CHRIST, TOUCHING IT TO THE CANDLE OF SELF-CONTROL AS YOU PRAY THESE WORDS:**

*"Give me wisdom, O Lord, to know the areas of life that must be under constant control. Give me the strength to control them, and the direction toward which to discipline them so that my life may reflect Thy love and fulfill Thy purpose for me, for my fellow men and for the world. In the name of Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen."*

And in the strength of purpose given you by Him as you have prayed, make this affirmation of your constant desire:

*"I will seek daily to be aware of those elements in my life that must come under the discipline of daily control. I will seek to direct the energies of body, mind, and soul, into those channels that will glorify God and bless mankind, by the help of God."*

**EXTINGUISH THE CANDLE OF YOUR LIFE AS THE CANDLE OF SELF-CONTROL BURNS HIGHER: REPLACE IT ON THE ALTAR, AND RESEAT YOURSELF IN YOUR CHAIR.**

