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**VADE MECUM, VOLVENTIBUS ANNIS**

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## HEROES WANTED

Mayan Revelation Number 248

HEROES WANTED

THE NAMELESS ONES

WHAT IS HEROISM?

PIVOTS

THE DRAMA OF LIFE

THE PICTURE OF A HERO

IT IS HEROIC

Beloved Perfector:

In preparing your lessons, we try very diligently to cover all of the aspects of life and to touch on subjects that we believe will help you to grow - mentally, physically, and spiritually. And from the letters we receive daily from our members, we feel very gratified in the knowledge that we are accomplishing our purpose. Certain lessons, of course, will have greater appeal to some than others, but all are designed to make your life richer.

In this lesson, we analyze "Heroes" and what really makes a "Hero". For the most part, we think of a hero as someone returning from the war and, because he has done a brave deed, his homecoming is honored with parades, speeches, sometimes he is even decorated by the President of our Nation. He is a great hero and all pay him homage. This is fine, of course, and it is as it should be, but when we think of a hero, we must learn to think of other walks of life, rather than just those returning from the battlefield, or someone returning from outer space. They are heroes, but we also have heroes that are never heard of, their praises are never sung, but they are Heroes.

Never was there a time in the history of the world when moral Heroes were needed more. If we must have Heroes and need to have wars to make them, we must learn that there is no war as great as the war that an individual may have with wrong and sin. If a man has very great passions but is able to overcome his desires; of if he is a man with a great and uncontrollable temper, yet is able to restrain his temper and forgive the one who has wronged him; this man is a strong man and is a spiritual Hero, for he has dominion over himself.

There are many characteristics in a man that can make him a Hero or a coward, and there is very great heroism in Self-Denial. And we must not forget those who are stricken in the flower of life, maybe never to walk again or never

to see again, or those who lie on beds of pain. All of these who manage to keep a happy outlook on life - and I know many of them personally - are Heroes of the greatest magnitude.

As I write these words, I am reminded of an elderly minister whose job it has been to call on the sick daily in the hospitals or in the homes. Wherever he was needed, he worked very hard giving of himself. Then he had a heart attack from overwork, but his life was spared and he continued his good work. Truly this dedicated man is a Hero just as surely as a man who saves the life of a fellow soldier on the battlefield.

Perhaps even one who gives a cool drink of water to the thirsty may be a Hero. Any act of kindness can come under the category of Heroism. And, as you read the pages that we have prepared for you, which go into detail in explanation of what constitutes Heroism, you will understand more clearly and will, I hope, have a greater appreciation of some heroic deed that you have never thought of before as being an act of Heroism.

We can all strive to become Heroes and live our lives in such a way that even if others do not recognize what we do as outstanding, we will know and God will know of our success. Make your petition in the following prayer that you will be able to do your part.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, may the brave in heart always be with us to keep the life of the world moving toward Thy purposes for it, and help me play my part.  
Amen.

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**HEROES WANTED**

In the classified columns, we see advertisements for all kinds of services every day. Probably none of us has ever seen an advertisement reading "Heroes Wanted", but if we should see a newspaper published by the guiding forces of history, we no doubt would. We may not realize the need, and we might not know what to do if it were supplied; but the need exists.

In times of struggle and hardship this need is known, and usually there are those who step into the place of need and save the day. This is true when a people or a person is trying to make a start or to get on under difficulties and when either is threatened by serious peril. But if we only realized it, the easy and abounding time is often as much of a danger as the trying and uncertain one. There is never really time when heroes are not needed in the world and in any part of it. A hero is the man or woman of the hour in a crisis that only he or she may recognize. In general crisis, a hero is needed to save the people. In a personal one, we need to be heroic to save ourselves.

We are in special need of heroes in the world now, but if that were not the case we would be in need of heroes anyway. We need heroes to turn back the tides of hate and warlikeness, to overcome the current of approval of evil influ-

ences and unconcern about their danger, to meet the general departure from ways centuries were spent in developing and proving, to halt the current of unbelief in the Eternal One and His eternal laws, and to meet the forces that make it difficult for us all to keep trying and not lose heart in an age of discouragement.

The struggle between flesh and spirit has come to a decisive point. Civilization is clinging to a cliffside, and we all share the peril. It is a time demanding that we understand the world's problems and our own, and that we have the discernment to see what is right and true and the courage to cling to them.

The easy thing is to join in the tendencies of the times and follow the crowd, but is not the needful thing. Some see nothing else to do but to share in the general letdown of character and conduct - but there is something else. It is to choose the way of safety and follow it, even though we walk alone. St. Paul said we should dare to be different. The population is sparse on a mountaintop, but it is made up of people who are strong and determined enough to get there. The hero on the battlefield has to be brave, but he is rewarded with praise and honor. In winning the way for truth, right, character, and justice, we have to do it voluntarily and for its own sake; but the effect on human history may be unsurpassed. The small town or the home fireside hero may be most heroic of all.

We never know when the world, the country, or some great interest, will need heroic help, so we need to be in practice. If they never need it, we will, for our practice prepares us for the victorious living of our own lives.

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**WHAT IS HEROISM?** The word, "heroism", would be hard to define exactly because it has so many sides, takes so many forms, and has to meet so many kinds of situations. In general, it is being adequate to the crises that arise, but crises also take many forms. We might say it is to cultivate the necessary wisdom and courage and use them well when and where they are needed. We may say it is to be brave, but we must keep the distinction clear between bravery and recklessness.

Discretion is said to be the better part of valor. It is at least a proper control for valor. It is of no use to be valorous for a cause not worth the risk or where even valor is certain to lose. Courage never seeks a fight, and it may be braver to avoid one when weightier issues are involved. A good general saves his army, if possible, for the most important moment and decisive day. There are exceptions, of course, but this is generally true, and it applies more in our ordinary problems and conflicts than in great battles, because there are more of them. A responsibility of all of us is to build and conserve courage and use it in such a way as to make it count for good. Brave people are sometimes called cowards until it is seen that restraint was a part of their strategy of success.

We need first of all to train ourselves not to be afraid of things, situations, and people. That does not mean to be braggarts or bullies. These are one kind of coward who are usually the first to run from opposition. One needs to be courageous enough to stand up and speak for what is right and just, even if he

stands alone. The hero must be courageous enough to act in time of need or emergency, even if others oppose. Such occasions are good times to prove that one with God is a majority, and having a right cause is always an alliance with God, Who in the long run never loses.

This makes it always safer to be on the right side than the wrong one. The person on the wrong side will ultimately go down with his cause, while the person on the right side will ultimately win. We should never fail to take a right position because we are in the minority, for if it is a right position the time will come when we will be in the majority.

Courage is not an action that may be performed at will. It is a fiber of character that controls action, though it can be strengthened by brave action or weakened by cowardly action or no action at all. If courage is in us, we act and speak courageously, remembering that courage is not harsh, cruel, or ruthless, but kind. It is so regardless of whether it is recognized or not, and the lack of opportunity does not smother it. It is not after praise, but results. It gets them, and is content.

We need more of this courage devoted to good in the world. It does not boast what it will do, but simply acts when need arises and according to that need. Neither does it boast about its deeds after they are done, but lets them speak for themselves. Of such material are the true heroes made.

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## THE DRAMA OF LIFE

Life is like a drama because a drama is built to represent the lines of action and influence in human affairs. Shakespeare truly said that "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players". In the cast of characters we always have the hero, the villain, the clown, and the bystander, along with others necessary to the plot.

Here we are concerned with the hero. As in a play or a story, he represents a cause. He is striving for something supposed to be right and desirable, and he is opposing and trying to defeat some interest that is harmful and wrong and that rises from the designs of the villain or conditions rising from the actions of others in the cast. But, just as in life, he is meeting a major crisis and perhaps minor ones.

In the stage drama, the characters are cast arbitrarily to fit the story. The man who plays the villain may not be bad at all, and the hero may not be very heroic off the stage. But in the drama of life, each chooses his own role and the story grows from what they do. The hero and villain never play each other's parts. We cannot have too few villains promoting wrong, or too many heroes seeking goals of good. What the proportion is through the years determines how long it will be before the better world life changes from a hope to an accomplished fact.

You have watched the heroes in well-acted plays and seen the glamour of the stage settings in which they work. There, everything is arranged exactly

right for the action and the situation, working toward a fixed climax that represents the victory of the hero and what he stands for. Every time he does something that brings this victory nearer, the audience applauds.

In the drama we play on the stage of life every day, it is not so. There, the scenes are not always promising or the settings glamorous. Some of the moments are unattractive and some unfavorable. While the final outcome of the play is pre-determined, for God never loses, the individual struggles of which it is made up are subject to the Law of Cause and Effect.

There is no hand clapping and shouting. Few are even paying any attention. The hero has to be heroic because it is right, and, unlike in the stage play, the hero part may not even be the popular one at the moment. The hero has to get his reward in the approval of his conscience, the strengthening of his soul, and the better conditions created. It is well worth it, but it is not always the easiest way.

There comes a time of sadness in a stage play. It is when the play is done, the curtain down, the lights out, and the spectators gone. Then the question is, how much of it lives in those who were there, and whether that how much will make for weal or woe through the years. This is the measure of the play. The acts in the drama of life are long and the characters are countless, but every moment of it is built into the life of the world from that time on. The shadows that reach so far are cast by the villains of the world, the empty spots are where the bystanders stood, and the places where peace and happiness dwell were created by the heroes of time.

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## THE NAMELESS ONES

There is only one grade of heroism itself, but there are all grades of opportunities for its exercise. Heroism is heroism wherever you find it and in whatever form. Some of earth's heroes have outstanding opportunities to show their metal while others must play their parts along the common way in different but unpublicised situations. Which is the more heroic - to act spectacularly in one grand moment before the crowd, or through a long period, perhaps even a lifetime of obscure situations that call for no less courage and have no less vital results?

In his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard", Gray notes that among its silent tenants may rest "some mute, inglorious Milton", or "some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood". Among both the living and the dead, are many unsung heroes who might have been famous if Destiny had called them to be, but who still did their best in the situations in which they found themselves, and may have been as important in their way as any noted leader.

There is seldom any hand clapping or shouting to encourage us in the plain living of heroic lives. The common hero has to be heroic because it is right, and be content with the chance that his credit may come later. Socrates had to wait until he had been gone a long time before the world saw anything heroic in him or thought he deserved any appreciation. It was said that:

"Seven cities claimed great Homer dead,  
Where Homer, living, begged his daily bread."

During his presidency, Abraham Lincoln was reviled, even in the United States Senate. One prominent newspaper reported his Gettysburg Speech, which became a world classic, as "dishwatery and silly". He, himself, was surprised when he was elected for a second term, and suffered martyrdom when that term had scarcely begun. Lowell wrote in "The Present Crisis":

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide  
In the strife of truth with falsehood, on the good or evil side.  
Right forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne,  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadows, keeping watch above His own."

Think of Jesus of Nazareth, martyred at thirty-three after playing the hero every day of His public life. Who realized it except a little band of friends and followers? His ecclesiastical enemies thought Him a menace to destroy. His political enemies thought Him a nuisance whose death would at least stop the disturbance about Him. To be famed in words of bitterness, however false, is worse than the gloom and silence of obscurity.

If you know the occasion to which you rise, that is enough. Only the fact that you met it is important. He who sees to it that not even a cup of cold water is forgotten will see that you do not lose your reward. Do not miss your call to heroism close at hand while you wait for an opportunity to do something great and famous. Heroism's claim to recognition is in the results of what it does. It is its own compensation.

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**PIVOTS** A pivot is a point on which something turns and without which it could not turn. Many mechanical operations depend on pivots, and so do many things in human action and experience. Without the pivot, life and the world would be very different and very less manageable.

There are pivotal situations in history. How much has depended on the sailing of the Mayflower, the arrival of the Cavalier settlers on the Virginia Coast, the Declaration of Independence, and many other events without which future developments would have been different and perhaps absent altogether!

The same is true in each of our lives. One can look back across the years and see many things on which the course of his life swung around another way. They were moments when he made a certain decision, chose a certain friend, married a certain person, went a certain place, or resolved on a certain course of action. Sometimes when we think of these things we can see how different our lives would have been if it had occurred some other way or not at all. We may think it would have been better if some of them had been otherwise or not at all, but there is no certainty of that - it might have been worse. At any rate these situations were pivots, and they show how important pivotal situations are.

Your future will be just as full of pivotal times as your past has been, and they tend to seem of increasing importance as time passes. Hope for and try to be fortunate in the pivotal hours of your life, and do what you can to have them be such as will turn your life in good directions and make your changes for

the best. The old people used to pray, "Lord, mete out our many changes for us". That is a good hope to carry in one's heart and a heroic one to try to realize.

Now comes the important truth about all this. What has it to do with heroism? Just this, that the pages of history show that the pivots on which the world life has often been turned away from perilous directions to safe and happy ones, have mostly been in the lives and deeds of heroic people who saw crises ahead, threw themselves into situations, and turned matters from peril to safety, despair to hope, unhappiness to happiness, and wrong to right, not alone for themselves, but for all. Labor and sacrifice did not halt them, for they put duty above everything else.

This brings the matter straight to you. Whatever your life may be like, it has critical moments. The same is true of your environment and time. A critical moment is one of crisis. Neglected, it will pass and never be anything better. Adequately met, it becomes a pivotal moment, to be remembered as the time when someone did something that preserved the safety, happiness, and well-being of himself and others. The crisis that became a pivot is now a vital occasion.

You have these moments that call you to do courageous things - everyone does. Do not miss them because they seem small. Almost any crisis looks small, like a mustard seed or the rill that grows to a mighty stream; but the anointed soul can see to what great things a small matter may lead, and deals with it while it is small instead of waiting till it is beyond his power.

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## THE PICTURE OF A HERO

Of course a hero must be courageous and resourceful; but what else may be said of him? What else would have to be included in a word portrait of him? Suppose you met one, what would he be like?

You might not be able to judge him, at least at first, by the way he talks and acts. He would not seem conscious of the fact that there is anything heroic about him. He would leave the swaggering to others who are not heroic, but only trying to seem so. His talk would not be about his exploits, but about the ordinary matters of everyday life. If he had to speak of his deeds, he would not depart from the simple facts and might even want to give the credit to others.

He would not be merely one of a crowd. He would walk with others, but he would be exceptional. He would not try to attract attention, but he would not be an imitator, a carbon copy, a faddist. He would agree when possible, but remain independent in his thinking and action.

★ He would be mild-mannered. A hero can afford to be. He does not need to be loud. He is confident instead. He never boasts because he is too wise to give away his strategy. Whatever he does when an emergency rises, it will be original.

★ He will not be complacent. He will approve what he can, and not be disturbed about things that do not matter; but if a vital danger, evil, or injustice appears, he will go into action without fear. Nothing would ever be right if



everyone only acquiesced.

★ He does this because he is perceptive. He does not say everything he thinks, tell everything he sees, or repeat everything he hears; but he thinks, sees, and hears as much as many ordinary people together. He also comprehends it, or sees all of its parts together, interprets it quickly, and takes action if he thinks action is called for. He has an understanding attitude toward situations as a whole, what might be called a collective sense, with the courage and will to act when needful and the wisdom to refrain from acting when not needful.

★ He is a person of good will. Heroes are not surly, for that is not heroic. They know that having a bad temper leads one into making too many mistakes. He does not go about picking quarrels, but is patient and long-suffering with things others quarrel about. He never acts till the situation demands it, then he acts quickly, decisively, and effectively. The matter finished, he puts it by.

★ He is a person who has a great devotion of some kind in his soul. Heroism has a motive, and that motive is likely to be a great cause, conviction, or hope. He does not waste his courage on himself, but spends it on something he believes in, like his country, his loved ones, his people, the oppressed, or something he believes important to them. Did you ever meet a self-centered hero?

★ He is almost certain to be a man of Faith, though he is not fussy or dogmatic about it. A hero needs God as God needs heroes. As Emerson said, "God will not have His work done by cowards. One can more easily be brave about something in which he can feel sure that God is on his side.

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## IT IS HEROIC

It is heroic to find a way to act sincerely, yet kindly, and to speak the truth without inflicting needless wounds.

It is heroic to follow the way of honor, good sense, and good taste, regardless of what fads may be sweetening the world of the imitators.

It is heroic to do and say the right thing, even when doing or saying the wrong one might contribute to some temporary and shallow personal advantage.

It is heroic to lend a hand or speak a strengthening word with no apparent possibility of any reward or personal benefit.

It is heroic to remember the poor, the weak, the helpless, the troubled, the very old and the very young, who were passed by until you came along.

It is heroic to seek and cherish only the real values of life and to waste no time and effort on the unreal and deceiving ones.

It is heroic to deliver others from evil with pity and faith rather than blame and contempt for those who are so unfortunate or have been so weak.

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It is heroic to lend a hand to a little child or a tattered failure as quickly, willingly, and adequately as though it were to a king.

It is heroic to do one's own careful and informed thinking and to reach one's own just and considered conclusions, no matter what the current chatter of the rabble may be.

It is heroic to be true to others as one phase of being true to one's self, and one's self as one phase of being true to others.

It is heroic to accept the new when it is clearly an improvement, and to cling to the old when nothing better is proposed.

It is heroic to live in the present, yet be grateful for the past out of which it grew and have faith in the future into which it will grow.

It is heroic to be just, even when justice has not been done to us.

It is heroic to be grateful in the ordinary things, even though knowing that one's only reward will be consciousness of having done well.

It is heroic to find occasions for courage in the common duties and situations far from parades and demonstrations of praise.

It is heroic to be necessary to others and not to fail in it, even if its beneficiaries do not know.

It is heroic to do as well in the dark as in the light and to be as brave in solitude as in the presence of others.

It is heroic to do one's duty whether anyone else knows or not and to let a good deed be a secret between one's self and God.

It is heroic instead of complaining that a given place is a poor one, to help make it a place that will be known as a good one. Consider the Rose.

It is heroic to cultivate weeds into flowers when one could find flowers some easier way and let the weeds still be weeds.

It is heroic to dream of better times, better ways, and better conditions in a better world, and then to do something daily to help bring them to pass.

#### AFFIRMATION

I realize that true heroism is the real greatness, and strive not merely to be known as a hero, but to deserve it.

Blessings,

YOUR INSTRUCTOR.