



THE GRACE OF GOD

Joseph S. Benner

Converted to text for easier reading and printing — original article provided at the end.

PAPER No. 63

MARCH, 1934

WE WISH to talk in this Paper of Grace, that word often used in the scriptures, but which very few understand in its full significance. Many quotations could be given, but we have chosen a few that we will consider, trying to show their true meaning.

Paul tries to tell us in his Epistle to the Romans, 11:2-8, what constitutes God's Grace:

God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

But what sayeth the answer of God unto him? "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Ba-al."

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

And if by grace, then is it no more from works; otherwise grace is no more grace.

What then? Israel hath not obtained what he seeketh; but the *Chosen* obtained it, and the rest were blinded;—

As it is written, "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that should not see, and ears that should not hear," even till this very day.

There can be no question that there is a remnant of the elect or chosen ones of Israel in the world today, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Ba-al. These have *found favour* in God's sight.

Then if they have found favour (and the translation from the original Greek Text uses the word favour instead of grace), it is no more a case of striving and working to obtain it; the Grace of God is with them — *is theirs to use*, and there must be the continual outpouring of His Spirit through them, empowering them to do all things in His Name.

But they must *know* this *in their outer minds*, and must require their minds to accept of this truth, and with it the Grace of God that awaits.

We today are as Paul and the Apostles exhorting you, the children of Israel, God's chosen people, to awaken to your divine birthright. For you would not be reading these words if they were not meant for you as chosen ones. Therefore, read also Paul's other words in this 11th chapter of Romans and continue into the 12th chapter, and learn how surely he is speaking to you today as much as he was to the Israelites of his day, in his desire to bring all the chosen ones to the blessings that await. And remember that the real Israelites, God's chosen people, are all those who have found Him in their hearts, have accepted Jesus Christ and His Teachings as *God's Word* speaking direct from out their hearts, and who are following Him only.

Know that all that has gone before was given you by the Grace of *God in you*; all these teachings, all these great truths were but to prepare you for the awakening to the realization of His Grace, ever waiting to come forth and work His power in and through you.

Listen to the translation from the original Greek Text of Paul's words in the 25th to the 27th verses:

For Brethren, that ye may not be conceited with yourselves, I wish you not to be ignorant of this secret, that hardness in some measure (*trials and testings*) has happened to Israel (*those God has called to His Service*), till the fullness of the Gentiles may come in (*till the fullness of the folly of the rulers of this world has become known*).

And then shall *all Israel* be saved, as it has been written, "The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (*the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, will come with His Grace and shall drive out all darkness, flooding the mind with light, enabling the chosen ones (Israel) to know God's will, love and purpose in their fullness*)."

And "This is the Covenant with them from Me, *when I shall take away their sins*."

Surely it is a case of earning it, of growing to it, of becoming ready. All nature proves that nothing can come to its fruitage until its time. But you may say, if such is the case, how can we *earn* it if it is only a matter of growth?

In reply we will ask, *what* is growing, and who—what is growing it?

Are not You, a Son of God, growing and making perfect Your instrument, Your human personality, so that You can take charge and use it perfectly in the Father's Service? You are doing this to Your instrument, even as the Father, through Jesus Christ, is doing it to humanity. Are You not guiding, teaching, helping and in every way possible bringing to Your human mind a knowledge of its Oneness with You and with God, so that there may be nothing left in its consciousness to hinder Your perfect expression?

Shall we tell how You are doing this? First, through all previous experiences You prepared Your mind for this journey to the Kingdom you are taking with us. Then You brought to the mind's attention the Impersonal Teachings, that it might learn as fast as it was able just what is the mind, what is self, what is the soul, what is the Spirit, and what is *You*, and its relation to each; then how to let go of self, its concerns, its desires, its emotions, and all the things that are separating it in consciousness from You and God.

NOW ALLOW US to point out to your mind the way this was done. Try to grasp what follows, so that once and for always it will understand clearly the great value of the Impersonal Teachings.

In every Paper there were given many deep and important truths. Of these truths, each one was intended to be studied and stayed with until all of its inner meaning was uncovered and made a part of the consciousness — *before going on to the next*. We know that very few did this, for many report that they are going back to the beginning again and again, and each time find many truths they failed to discover before.

Let us consider what would have happened had you made your mind do what was intended, in the light of your past actual experience.

When a truth is stayed with and made a part of the consciousness — and by that is meant, when that truth is automatically used and acted upon, you find yourself freed from something that has been limiting you or holding you back. When a truth that is presented is thus faced until its hidden power is liberated, you find you have risen above some weakness, quality or condition that was preventing your highest

expression. Each truth thus mastered brought about an expansion of consciousness that actually lifted you *above* what you were before.

Then think what would have happened had your mind faced each truth in each Paper until its power was built into the consciousness! It would have been like feeling something substantial, strong and permanent forming underneath, gradually lifting you above the old states of mind and freeing you from their fallacies and illusions and all their hindering influences, into a realm where you were seeing with ever clearer understanding those forces of self that so long had held you down to earth and its harsh bondage.

Each truth, in fact, was a brick that was intended to be laid in the structure that was to form your Spiritual Understanding. These bricks had to be laid in the order given, or the structure would not be sound and permanent; for they would fit well only in their proper places. In fact, each lesson in each Paper was prepared to lift the mind in consciousness One stage higher; so of course unless that stage had been truly reached and you were established thereon through your mastering each truth in a lesson, it would be impossible to stay there — any truth not thoroughly understood would weaken the support, and you would necessarily have to go back and build more surely and substantially.

This is proven by what you yourself have found, as stated above, Yes, you have all grown, but how substantially? Do you truly understand and are able to use in your daily life all the truths in the Papers? If not, you can now see why.

You have only to look back at the states of mind you were in one year, two years, five years ago, and see how much you have grown in spite of this; showing that even a few truths mastered will free and lift you out of the old consciousness and above conditions that hampered in the past. But now you can also see what might have been, had you made yourself study and stay with each truth given you during the last five years!

Why, dear ones, had you done this, you would now be One with Christ, your Divine Self; and would be using all the powers of God, your Father in Heaven, even as Jesus was using them when on earth!

Can you deny this? Can you now see why we have been so insistent on your doing what was so often urged? Not one thing was urged that would not help lift you above those weaknesses, qualities and limitations of self that were holding you down to their level and preventing your being where all might be now — in the Kingdom, and your serving as conscious Members of the Great Brotherhood of Christ.

In your souls you know this. Can we make it any stronger?

Of course this is meant only for those who feel that they are not getting as much from the lessons as they should, and to point them to what is necessary — if they wish to accompany us all the way. It may help all of our members to see more clearly the only right way to study these precious truths so that the mind and soul can grow and unfold consciously under the direction of the Loving One within.

May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

HIS GRACE IS SUFFICIENT

WE WERE discussing the subject of Grace with some of our dear ones the past month, when one of them later, while meditating on its deep meaning, received the following message. Note how Grace is the last gift bestowed by God, and that with it comes a *sure knowledge*, the spiritualizing of what before was faith and belief.

DEAR Brother:

May the peace, the Love and the Grace of Christ Jesus be thy heritage and that of thy Brethren, who also are my Brethren.

Let this message be known to thee: Thou seekest Love and Wisdom and Peace. Let this be thy assurance; that God is all these, and more. But God does not give of Himself to them that strongly desire Him, though He is a jewel beyond price and greatly to be desired; neither can this gift be earned by them that seek to possess it solely for themselves.

Art thou so blind that thou canst not see it is the trophy *given* to them that win the race; that fight the good fight against selfishness? What is selfishness? It is the desire that man gain for himself, even to bless others, any gift that adds one inch to his stature.

Be not misled, dear brother; God seeks out the one who can blot out the thought of self so utterly that he ceases to exist himself. Dost thou prate of humility, of love, of anything of God, and thinkest thou deniest self? Then thou art a liar. When self is truly selfless, then art thou unable to talk of humility, of mercy of love; for being wholly God — or Spiritual — it doth then speak for itself.

When thou canst lose thyself in God — knowing without limitation that thou art nothing, — *then*, and not until then, art thou abiding in Love or in the Great Heart of God.

How canst thou, being of flesh, give thyself utterly to God, Who is Spirit, and yet remain flesh? Cease thy strivings to attain Spiritual gifts — to heal, to demonstrate. When thou art truly learned, then thou dost know with sureness that God *is all there is*, and there is nothing beside Him. In this manner doth Grace come — then is it not possible for thee to make *any* claims; for His Grace is sufficient.

In thy heart is a question, — What is Grace? Know ye that Grace is the last gift bestowed upon thee, and comes with the *sure knowledge* that God, and God alone, worketh all things, and that thou canst not alter by a hair anything that God is; that God, being unseen, worketh in secret. And what canst thou do, Oh Child of man, but realize that that which hath not depth, nor breadth, and therefore is not to be measured, is God.

Learn this lesson; it is necessary before thou canst taste of the hidden Manna, which is truly the Bread of Life.

Peace,

INNER EXPERIENCES

WE ARE happy to state that our last talk caused our friends to read and study more carefully the letter from the dear soul in the 61st Paper, and more than a few have written of the illumination and blessing that resulted therefrom.

But we also find there are still some who think it not worthwhile, feeling either they can get nothing from its seemingly foolish or childish statements, or that they understand all they care to know of what she “is trying to say.”

In answer to such we invite them to go with us in consciousness with our dear sister through her experiences while we explain the spiritual significance of the wondrous things she described. They may ask how we know that she understands them as we do?

In Spirit there is only one language, and that is understood by all who are able to retire into the consciousness of their Christ Selves and allow the Spirit to unfold its meaning — which we have been trying to aid you who read these words to do for many months past.

But before giving you our spiritual interpretation, we are going to quote from some of the letters received, that you may know their views and what some think of such experiences. In the first one that follows only part is given of what was received during meditation — there not being enough space for all of it.

OH GOD, when you call me by name, what do you call me?

“A....., My dear A..... . You are My obedient A..... You seek only to do My will. Presently we shall be One indeed, with no other consciousness but Mine. You *are* My beloved child in whom I am well pleased. Let the Joy of My Life flow through every cell of your body, which is My body. See My body as pure Spirit, perfect and whole. I have taken your cross from you and lifted you up many times. Let Me always carry the burden of your cross. In My Consciousness there are no burdens — just Joy and Bliss ineffable. Glory in My Cross, A..... ; We can save the world when you cheerfully bear the Cross of Christ, that all may look up and see its Glory shining.”

“Oh God, my Father, hold my hands. Let them be Thy hands, that I may do Thy work in the world.”

"Yes, My child. Be still and know that I do all things. I use your hands, your heart, your mind, that My good may manifest always.”

“Father God, earnestly I study Thy great Book of Truth, Thy Book of Remembrance.”

“A..... , remember who thou art, a son of the Living God. Remember you are His outer expression. Hold your head high, yet know humbleness of spirit.”

“I thank Thee, Father, for Thy great heart of matchless Love that is open to me and to all Thy children.”

“Enter, My child, at the Straight Gate.”

“Father, I vision that Gate, that no man can shut. I enter and I am alive for evermore, full of Peace that passeth understanding. I am covered there by the garment of Thy Love, shielded, protected and divinely guarded. Father I thank Thee. Because of Thy great Love, I have passed in safety over dark seas of doubt and despair. Thy wings bear me aloft. Light shines in my being. I enter and abide in the Holy of Holies.”

“ ‘Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear. It is not night when Thou art near.’ ”

"I know Thee as God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — all One in me, Thy instrument. I serve Thee joyfully. I listen and let Thy Word speak through my mouth. Even my mouth is not mine but Thine. Thou use it only, dear God."

"THE 61st Paper, is a marvelous number when one can enter the proper consciousness to understand it. The first time I read the lesson with the mind only, and did not see so much in it, but after entering the Spiritual consciousness and meditating upon the symbols used, I found them very wonderful. Some of them are not unlike my own experiences. For instance, on Sunday night I entered meditation with the earnest desire for further light for this New Year of 1934, and almost immediately found myself enveloped in a white mist, the Christ right by me; and for a moment I was overwhelmed with joy. Then I seemed to be withdrawn within Him, could see my body, but it appeared empty; and Oh the happiness of that conscious moment when I realized that I, in my Higher Self, *was* the Christ, and there was no longer a lower self — just the instrument through which the Christ worked. 'Oh', I declared, 'I *am*, I *am*, I *am*!' Then again when I was in the body, I was still in His Consciousness. And how different everything seemed. There nothing mattered — so long as I could remain in that loving hallowed place."

"I NOW think I should have written this before, since reading the points on the Inner Meaning in that wonderful Paper, No. 62; so that you might be reassured that some of the humbler students found the inner meaning of that beloved soul whose message came so purely through her halting words. 'I was there on my knees — with His feet, *inside* His garment,' came from an experience so deep and holy that I am thankful to be allowed a contact with one at once so childlike and so high."

"THE experiences of others are great helps, and I have received much Light from those of our dear illumined one. We all know these things intellectually; but only when we contact one who has *experienced* these truths do they become real to us.

"It is so marvelous consciously to *feel* these great truths; the mind's consciousness being drawn into the Christ Consciousness so gently and lovingly (these surges of life become more and more frequent as one learns to search out their inner meaning), one sincere thought of God immediately creates this inner wave of silent power that opens the understanding so that it all stands forth a living reality."

THE INTERPRETATION

NOW FOR our interpretation of some of the more interesting and illuminating symbols. Try to realize that through her *feeling* the great Love for God and the Lord Jesus, which is really God's Love pouring out of her heart, her mind pictures this Love

as God or Jesus — as Their very *Presence*, and that everything she experienced is but her *feelings* thus out-pictured.

Study our meaning until you get it, and try to prove it by carefully watching the pictures that form in your mind when you feel intensely any emotion — no matter what. Those of you who love God very dearly will discover, whenever you pray to Him or to Christ, that unconsciously you hold some kind of a picture of Them in your mind. Well, a strongly psychic type of mind will clearly see that picture, while the mental type will take no note of it, unless consciously watching for it, as we have suggested.

For instance, when she asked God to use His power for her, and “He was looking at me so Wonderfully, His eyes so full of love,” that Love she actually *felt so strongly* that she pictured It as being God.

When He “called her by name,” it was but her response to Love’s inner call; and for three days she was submerged in that Love. What passed during that period she tries to describe, as her mind reasons or pictures it out for her.

Have you ever asked questions of the Loving One within, and received similar loving replies? We hope you all have, and that you now understand how some of the replies came.

When it “came” to her that “*I, God, alone Am,*” and the shepherd burned the big Cross on her bosom while God held her arms, it was but her yielding herself to this Great Love, allowing It to hold and restrain her human self while Love’s Cross was burned on her heart so that she could feel It always — could *feel It only*, and know “It alone Is” — the guiding influence of her life.

In her deep meditation upon this she tells how she humbly prayed, and on opening her eyes saw *Jesus* on her Cross. Jesus only pictured to her, her crucified self; and of course as she looked on self thus, it was lifted up for her to see more clearly — see that it was the Christ of her on the Cross stretching out His arms to her to draw her to Him. Stop here until it all unfolds to you and you get the picture, its glorious meaning, and that of the words in the following paragraph in the Paper.

Now try to imagine yourself going inward through the Cross, The Cross represents the sacrifice or giving up of self, which when really done enables you to go inward in consciousness toward a great Light. But Love was with her, enfolding her in His arms, even as she described; and it must have been “a wonderful time.” When she wrote her name on His chest, it was but her simple childlike response to His Love. And when He

wrote His Name in her right hand, it was Love's natural response to such yielding of self — the transferring of Love's Power to her, *to use* — in His Name.

It was and is “very wonderful to be led by (Love) Jesus, and a great joy to be with Him.” And when Love opens wide and allows you to enter His Consciousness, you do indeed find there a “big book” of knowledge and the six lights or sacred centers of the soul are lit, making us wish never to leave this Consciousness until all of its precious knowledge is unfolded to us.

So there she abode for some time, feeling the great reverence she describes, going down on her knees in prayer; when an Angel with Jesus in a new white robe appeared to her, symbolizing the glorification of Love or God's Holy Spirit in her consciousness, as she had never seen or felt it before; which naturally lighted the seventh, or holiest center, and Love wholly reigned, taking the place of self entirely. Then Love descends and covers her (enfolds her soul) completely, and she is filled with His Understanding, and she dwells there many days.

In that great Love and her desire never to leave It, she turns to God praying if Love's Cross has brought her all this joy that It never leave her; when, because of her unselfishness and true worship of Him, God's grace caused the Cross to shine *through* her, appearing on her back as well as in front of her, thus giving her all of Its Light; so that she could walk outward towards God in humanity, as well as inward toward Him in Spirit. And she attempts to describe what she saw as she walked inward. See if you can get what she means, what was meant by the devil appearing, and by her being victorious over him.

By this time, if you have followed understandingly with us every step of the way, what follows will not seem so preposterous — a door opening in Jesus' leg, her going through it and up a stairway and stopping before every Holy Place, and coming at last to the open door of His Heart, where Jesus was standing waiting to welcome her. For you will realize it was but her naive way of picturing how in her Christ Understanding the way opened permitting her to rise higher (or go further inward) in consciousness, until she found herself before the Holy Places, on her way to the Holy of Holies, the Secret Place of the Most High, where Divine Love waited to lead her.

In this Secret Place it is indeed dark, for she is stripped of every mortal sense and she has to make her way alone (for there for awhile even Love leaves her) into that Realm of Glory. She must earn it by fearlessly conquering every force, known and hidden, still left in her nature.

Finally she reaches the goal, the very center of her being, where God awaits, there finding Jesus and God are One, and that it was Their Love that was leading, inspiring, supporting and strengthening her all the way.

THIS gives you but a glimpse of what you might have got, had you stayed with each symbol when first read until Spirit unfolded its meaning for you. This meaning would have been “spiritual,” the above being mere words and meaning but little unless you get in a consciousness that understands them, even as you must get in a deeper consciousness before Spirit can give you direct any symbol’s meaning.

We are trying to impress upon all who heretofore have not had the patience to stay with a truth until they have wooed from Spirit its blessing, that they will never get anywhere spiritually, or in the acquirement of the very faculties and powers they seek, until they make themselves do what we have shown. Such is the only way to meditate properly, — to concentrate upon a truth, a symbol, or any abstruse statement, until you have compelled it to give up its meaning. In other words you must keep boring into consciousness until it opens up and discloses to you what you seek.

Think you this is impossible? It may have been so to you — because of your lack of patience or of faith in the Spirit in you. But we say to you, it is the only way to get acquainted with Spirit, to woo It, to get It to serve, teach and bless you.

Dear friend, It is always waiting to do this; but It reserves Its secrets and Its blessings only for those who seek and want them more than anything else in life — and then only for use in the Father's service. It has no use for the weak, the mentally lazy, or the skeptical; for impatience, vacillation, or lack of persistence and courage. But It loves, and works with those who have faith and believe in Its power to grant any gift that will make for more efficient service in the Cause of Christ.

Such are the ones who win the “last gift,” the Grace of God; they the conquerors of mind, heart, body, soul, — yea, and of Spirit.

THE GRACE OF GOD



PAPER No. 63

Printed in the U. S. A.

MARCH, 1934

WE WISH to talk in this Paper of Grace, that word often used in the scriptures, but which very few understand in its full significance. Many quotations could be given, but we have chosen a few that we will consider, trying to show their true meaning.

Paul tries to tell us in his Epistle to the Romans, 11:2-8, what constitutes God's Grace:

God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

But what sayeth the answer of God unto him? "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Ba'al."

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

And if by grace, then is it no more from works; otherwise grace is no more grace.

What then? Israel hath not obtained what he seeketh; but the Chosen obtained it, and the rest were blinded;—

As it is written, "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that should not see, and ears that should not hear," even till this very day.

There can be no question that there is a remnant of the elect or chosen ones of Israel in the world today, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Ba'al. These have found favour in God's sight.

Then if they have found favour (and the translation from the original Greek Text uses the word favour instead of grace), it is no more a case of striving and working to obtain it; the Grace of God is with them—is *theirs to use*, and there must be the continual outpouring of His Spirit through them, empowering them to do all things in His Name.

But they must *know* this in their outer minds, and must require their minds to accept of this truth, and with it the Grace of God that awaits.

We today are as Paul and the Apostles exhorting you, the children of Israel, God's chosen people, to awaken to your divine birthright. For you would not be reading these words if they were not meant for you as chosen ones. Therefore, read also Paul's other words in this 11th chapter of Romans and continue into the 12th chapter, and learn how surely he is speaking to you today as much as he was to the Israelites of his day, in his desire to bring all the chosen ones to the blessings that await. And remember that the real Israelites, God's chosen people, are all those who have found Him in their hearts, have accepted Jesus Christ and His Teachings as God's Word speaking direct from out their hearts, and who are following Him only.

Know that all that has gone before was given you by the Grace of God in you; all these teachings, all these great truths were but to prepare you for the awakening to the realization of His Grace, ever waiting to come forth and work His power in and through you.

Listen to the translation from the original Greek Text of Paul's words in the 25th to the 27th verses:

For Brethren, that ye may not be conceited with yourselves, I wish you not to be ignorant of this secret, that hardness in some measure (*trials and testings*) has happened to Israel (*those God has called to His Service*), till the fullness of the Gentiles may come in (*till the fullness of the folly of the rulers of this world has become known*).

And then shall all Israel be saved, as it has been written, "The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (*the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, will come with His Grace and shall drive out all darkness, flooding the mind with light, enabling the chosen ones (Israel) to know God's will, love and purpose in their fullness*)."

And "This is the Covenant with them from Me, when I shall take away their sins."

Surely it is a case of earning it, of growing to it, of becoming ready. All nature proves that nothing can come to its fruitage until its time. But you may say, if such is the case, how can we *earn* it, if it is only a matter of growth?

In reply we will ask, *what* is growing, and who—what is growing it?

Are not You, a Son of God, growing and making perfect Your instrument. Your human personality, so that You can take charge and use it perfectly in the Father's Service? You are doing this to Your instrument, even as the Father, through Jesus Christ, is doing it to humanity. Are You not guiding, teaching, helping and in every way possible bringing to Your human mind a knowledge of its Oneness with You and with God, so that there may be nothing left in its consciousness to hinder Your perfect expression?

Shall we tell how You are doing this? First, through all previous experiences You prepared Your mind for this journey to the Kingdom you are taking with us. Then You brought to the mind's attention the Impersonal Teachings, that it might learn as fast as it was able just what is the mind, what is self, what is the soul, what is the Spirit, and what is *You*, and its relation to each; then how to let go of self, its concerns, its desires, its emotions, and all the things that are separating it in consciousness from You and God.

NOW ALLOW US to point out to your mind the way this was done. Try to grasp what follows, so that once and for always it will understand clearly the great value of the Impersonal Teachings.

In every Paper there were given many deep and important truths. Of these truths, each one was intended to be studied and stayed with until all of its inner meaning was uncovered and made a part of the consciousness—*before going on to the next*. We know that very few did this, for many report that they are going back to the beginning again and again, and each time find many truths they failed to discover before.

Let us consider what would have happened had you made your mind do what was intended, in the light of your past actual experience.

When a truth is stayed with and made a part of the consciousness—and by that is meant, when that truth is

automatically used and acted upon, you find yourself freed from something that has been limiting you or holding you back. When a truth that is presented is thus faced until its hidden power is liberated, you find you have risen above some weakness, quality or condition that was preventing your highest expression. Each truth thus mastered brought about an expansion of consciousness that actually lifted you *above* what you were before.

Then think what would have happened had your mind faced each truth in each Paper until its power was built into the consciousness! It would have been like feeling something substantial, strong and permanent forming underneath, gradually lifting you above the old states of mind and freeing you from their fallacies and illusions and all their hindering influences, into a realm where you were seeing with ever clearer understanding those forces of self that so long had held you down to earth and its harsh bondage.

Each truth, in fact, was a brick that was intended to be laid in the structure that was to form your Spiritual Understanding. These bricks had to be laid in the order given, or the structure would not be sound and permanent; for they would fit well only in their proper places. In fact, each lesson in each Paper was prepared to lift the mind in consciousness one stage higher; so of course unless that stage had been truly reached and you were established thereon through your mastering each truth in a lesson, it would be impossible to stay there—any truth not thoroughly understood would weaken the support, and you would necessarily have to go back and build more surely and substantially.

This is proven by what you yourself have found, as stated above. Yes, you have all grown, but how substantially? Do you truly understand and are able to use in your daily life all the truths in the Papers? If not, you can now see why.

You have only to look back at the states of mind you were in one year, two years, five years ago, and see how much you have grown in spite of this; showing that even a few truths mastered will free and lift you out of the old consciousness and above conditions that hampered in the past. But now you can also see what might have been, had you made yourself study and stay with each truth given you during the last five years!

Why, dear ones, had you done this, you would now be One with Christ, your Divine Self; and would be using all the powers of God, your Father in Heaven, even as Jesus was using them when on earth!

Can you deny this? Can you now see why we have been so insistent on your doing what was so often urged? Not one thing was urged that would not help lift you above those weaknesses, qualities and limitations of self that were holding you down to their level and preventing your being where all might be now—in the Kingdom, and your serving as conscious Members of the Great Brotherhood of Christ.

In your souls you know this. Can we make it any stronger?

Of course this is meant only for those who feel that they are not getting as much from the lessons as they should, and to point them to what is necessary—if they wish to accompany us all the way. It may help all of our members to see more clearly the only right way to study these precious truths, so that mind and soul can grow and

unfold consciously under the direction of the Loving One within.

May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

HIS GRACE IS SUFFICIENT

WE WERE discussing the subject of Grace with some of our dear ones the past month, when one of them later, while meditating on its deep meaning, received the following message. Note how Grace is the last gift bestowed by God, and that with it comes a *sure knowledge*, the spiritualizing of what before was faith and belief.

DEAR Brother:

May the peace, the Love and the Grace of Christ Jesus be thy heritage and that of thy Brethren, who also are my Brethren.

Let this message be known to thee: Thou seekest Love and Wisdom and Peace. Let this be thy assurance; that God is all these, and more. But God does not give of Himself to them that strongly desire Him, though He is a jewel beyond price and greatly to be desired; neither can this gift be earned by them that seek to possess it solely for themselves.

Art thou so blind that thou canst not see it is the trophy given to them that win the race; that fight the good fight against selfishness? What is selfishness? It is the desire that man gain for himself, even to bless others, any gift that adds one inch to his stature.

Be not misled, dear brother; God seeks out the one who can blot out the thought of self so utterly that he ceases to exist to himself. Dost thou prate of humility, of love, of anything of God, and thinkest thou deniest self? Then thou art a liar. When self is truly selfless, then art thou unable to talk of humility, of mercy, of love; for being wholly God—or Spiritual—it doth then speak for itself.

When thou canst lose thyself in God—knowing without limitation that thou art nothing,—then, and not until then, art thou abiding in Love or in the Great Heart of God.

How canst thou, being of flesh, give thyself utterly to God, Who is Spirit, and yet remain flesh? Cease thy strivings to attain Spiritual gifts—to heal, to demonstrate. When thou art truly learned, then thou dost know with sureness that God is *all there is*, and there is nothing beside Him. In this manner doth Grace come—then is it not possible for thee to make any claims; for His Grace is sufficient.

In thy heart is a question,—What is Grace? Know ye that Grace is the last gift bestowed upon thee, and comes with the *sure knowledge* that God, and God alone, worketh all things, and that thou canst not alter by a hair anything that God is; that God, being unseen, worketh in secret. And what canst thou do, Oh Child of man, but realize that that which hath not depth, nor breadth, and therefore is not to be measured, is God.

Learn this lesson; it is necessary before thou canst taste of the hidden Manna, which is truly the Bread of Life.

Peace.

INNER EXPERIENCES

WE ARE happy to state that our last talk caused our friends to read and study more carefully the letter from the dear soul in the 61st Paper, and more than a few have written of the illumination and blessing that resulted therefrom.

But we also find there are still some who think it not worthwhile, feeling either they can get nothing from its seemingly foolish or childish statements, or that they understand all they care to know of what she "is trying to say."

In answer to such we invite them to go with us in consciousness with our dear sister through her experiences while we explain the spiritual significance of the wonderful things she described. They may ask how we know that she understands them as we do?

In Spirit there is only one language, and that is understood by all who are able to retire into the consciousness of their Christ Selves and allow the Spirit to unfold its meaning—which we have been trying to aid you who read these words to do for many months past.

But before giving you our spiritual interpretation, we are going to quote from some of the letters received, that you may know their views and what some think of such experiences. In the first one that follows only part is given of what was received during meditation—there not being enough space for all of it.

OH GOD, when you call me by name, what do you call me?

"A....., My dear A..... You are My obedient A..... You seek only to do My will. Presently we shall be One indeed, with no other consciousness but Mine. You are My beloved child in whom I am well pleased. Let the Joy of My Life flow through every cell of your body, which is My body. See My body as pure Spirit, perfect and whole. I have taken your cross from you and lifted you up many times. Let Me always carry the burden of your cross. In My Consciousness there are no burdens—just Joy and Bliss ineffable. Glory in My Cross, A.....; We can save the world when you cheerfully bear the Cross of Christ, that all may look up and see its Glory shining."

"Oh God, my Father, hold my hands. Let them be Thy hands, that I may do Thy work in the world."

"Yes, My child. Be still and know that I do all things. I use your hands, your heart, your mind, that My good may manifest always."

"Father God, earnestly I study Thy great Book of Truth, Thy Book of Remembrance."

"A....., remember who thou art, a son of the Living God. Remember you are His outer expression. Hold your head nigh, yet know humbleness of spirit."

"I thank Thee, Father, for Thy great heart of matchless Love that is open to me and to all Thy children."

"Enter, My child, at the Straight Gate."

"Father, I vision that Gate, that no man can shut. I enter and I am alive for evermore, full of Peace that passeth understanding. I am covered there by the garment of Thy Love, shielded, protected and divinely guarded. Father I thank Thee. Because of Thy great Love, I have passed in safety over dark seas of doubt and despair. Thy wings bear me aloft. Light shines in my being. I enter and abide in the Holy of Holies."

"Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear. It is not night when Thou art near."

"I know Thee as God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—all One in me, Thy instrument. I serve Thee joyfully. I listen and let Thy Word speak through my mouth. Even my mouth is not mine but Thine. Thou use it only, dear God."

THE 61st Paper, is a marvelous number when one can enter the proper consciousness to understand it. The first time I read the lesson with the mind only, and did not see so much in it, but after entering the Spiritual consciousness and meditating upon the symbols used, I found them very wonderful. Some of them are not unlike my own experiences. For instance, on Sunday night I entered meditation with the earnest desire for further light for this New Year of 1934, and almost immediately found myself enveloped in a white mist, the Christ right by me; and for a moment I was overwhelmed with joy. Then I seemed to be withdrawn within Him, could see my body, but it appeared empty; and Oh the happiness of that conscious moment when I realized that I, in my Higher Self, was the Christ, and there was no longer a lower self—just the instrument through which the Christ worked. 'Oh', I declared, 'I am, I am, I am!' Then again when I was in the body, I was still in His Consciousness. And how different everything seemed. There nothing mattered—so long as I could remain in that loving hallowed place."

I NOW think I should have written this before, since reading the points on the Inner Meaning in that wonderful Paper, No. 62; so that you might be reassured that some of the humbler students found the inner meaning of that beloved soul whose message came so purely through her halting words. 'I was there on my knees—with His feet, inside His garment,' came from an experience so deep and holy that I am thankful to be allowed a contact with one at once so childlike and so high."

THE experiences of others are great helps, and I have received much Light from those of our dear illumined one. We all know these things intellectually; but only when we contact one who has experienced these truths do they become real to us.

"It is so marvelous consciously to feel these great truths; the mind's consciousness being drawn into the Christ Consciousness so gently and lovingly (these surges of life become more and more frequent as one learns to search out their inner meaning), one sincere thought of God immediately creates this inner wave of silent power that opens the understanding so that it all stands forth a living reality."

THE INTERPRETATION

NOW FOR our interpretation of some of the more interesting and illuminating symbols. Try to realize that through her feeling the great Love for God and the Lord Jesus, which is really God's Love pouring out of her heart, her mind pictures this Love as God or Jesus—as Their very Presence, and that everything she experienced is but her feelings thus out-pictured.

Study our meaning until you get it, and try to prove it by carefully watching the pictures that form in your mind when you feel intensely any emotion—no matter what. Those of you who love God very dearly will discover, whenever you pray to Him or to Christ, that unconsciously you hold some kind of a picture of Them in your mind. Well, a strongly psychic type of mind will clearly see that picture, while the mental type will take

no note of it, unless consciously watching for it, as we have suggested.

For instance, when she asked God to use His power for her, and "He was looking at me so wonderfully, His eyes so full of love," that Love she actually felt so strongly that she pictured It as being God.

When He "called her by name," it was but her response to Love's inner call; and for three days she was submerged in that Love. What passed during that period she tries to describe, as her mind reasons or pictures it out for her.

Have you ever asked questions of the Loving One within, and received similar loving replies? We hope you all have, and that you now understand how some of the replies came.

When it "came" to her that "I, God, alone Am," and the shepherd burned the big Cross on her bosom while God held her arms, it was but her yielding herself to this Great Love, allowing It to hold and restrain her human self while Love's Cross was burned on her heart so that she could feel It always—could feel It only, and know "It alone Is"—the guiding influence of her life.

In her deep meditation upon this she tells how she humbly prayed, and on opening her eyes saw Jesus on her Cross. Jesus only pictured to her, her crucified self; and of course as she looked on self thus, it was lifted up for her to see more clearly—see that it was the Christ of her on the Cross stretching out His arms to her to draw her to Him. Stop here until it all unfolds to you and you get the picture, its glorious meaning, and that of the words in the following paragraph in the Paper.

Now try to imagine yourself going inward through the Cross. The Cross represents the sacrifice or giving up of self, which when really done enables you to go inward in consciousness toward a great Light. But Love was with her, enfolding her in His arms, even as she described; and it must have been "a wonderful time." When she wrote her name on His chest, it was but her simple child-like response to His Love. And when He wrote His Name in her right hand, it was Love's natural response to such yielding of self—the transferring of Love's Power to her, to use—in His Name.

It was and is "very wonderful to be led by (Love) Jesus, and a great joy to be with Him." And when Love opens wide and allows you to enter His Consciousness, you do indeed find there a "big book" of knowledge, and the six lights or sacred centers of the soul are lit, making us wish never to leave this Consciousness until all of its precious knowledge is unfolded to us.

So there she abode for some time, feeling the great reverence she describes, going down on her knees in prayer; when an Angel with Jesus in a new white robe appeared to her, symbolizing the glorification of Love or God's Holy Spirit in her consciousness, as she had never seen or felt it before; which naturally lighted the seventh or holiest center, and Love wholly reigned, taking the place of self entirely. Then Love descends and covers her (enfolds her soul) completely, and she is filled with His Understanding, and she dwells there many days.

In that great Love and her desire never to leave It, she turns to God praying if Love's Cross has brought her all this joy that It never leave her; when, because of her unselfishness and true worship of Him, God's grace caused the Cross to shine through her, appearing on her back as well as in front of her, thus giving her all of Its Light;

so that she could walk outward towards God in humanity, as well as inward toward Him in Spirit. And she attempts to describe what she saw as she walked inward. See if you can get what she means, what was meant by the devil appearing, and by her being victorious over him.

By this time, if you have followed understandingly with us every step of the way, what follows will not seem so preposterous—a door opening in Jesus' leg, her going through it and up a stairway and stopping before every Holy Place, and coming at last to the open door of His Heart, where Jesus was standing waiting to welcome her. For you will realize it was but her naive way of picturing how in her Christ Understanding the way opened permitting her to rise higher (or go further inward) in consciousness, until she found herself before the Holy Places on her way to the Holy of Holies, the Secret Place of the Most High, where Divine Love waited to lead her.

In this Secret Place it is indeed dark, for she is stripped of every mortal sense and she has to make her way alone (for there for awhile even Love leaves her) into that Realm of Glory. She must earn it by fearlessly conquering every force, known and hidden, still left in her nature.

Finally she reaches the goal, the very center of her being, where God awaits, there finding Jesus and God are One, and that it was Their Love that was leading, inspiring, supporting and strengthening her all the way.

THIS gives you but a glimpse of what you might have got, had you stayed with each symbol when first read until Spirit unfolded its meaning for you. This meaning would have been "spiritual," the above being mere words and meaning but little unless you get in a consciousness that understands them, even as you must get in a deeper consciousness before Spirit can give you direct any symbol's meaning.

We are trying to impress upon all who heretofore have not had the patience to stay with a truth until they have wooed from Spirit its blessing, that they will never get anywhere spiritually, or in the attainment of the very faculties and powers they seek, until they make themselves do what we have shown. Such is the only way to meditate properly,—to concentrate upon a truth, a symbol, or any abstruse statement, until you have compelled it to give up its meaning. In other words you must keep boring into consciousness until it opens up and discloses to you what you seek.

Think you this is impossible? It may have been so to you—because of your lack of patience or of faith in the Spirit in you. But we say to you, it is the only way to get acquainted with Spirit, to woo It, to get It to serve, teach and bless you.

Dear friend, It is always waiting to do this; but It reserves Its secrets and Its blessings only for those who seek and want them more than anything else in life—and then only for use in the Father's service. It has no use for the weak, the mentally lazy, or the skeptical; for impatience, vacillation, or lack of persistence and courage. But It loves and works with those who have faith and believe in Its power to grant any gift that will make for more efficient service in the Cause of Christ.

Such are the ones who win the "last gift," the Grace of God; they the conquerors of mind, heart, body, soul,—yea, and of Spirit.