

Pathwork Lecture 52: The God-Image

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This Pathwork lecture is rendered in an **expanded poetic format**, what I call a **Devotional Format** of the lecture. In this sense it is **my interpretation** of the **intent** of the lecture. I may have interpreted portions differently from you, and when this is the case, I ask you to ponder the words for **your own interpretation**.

I did this Devotional Format so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry -- **devotionally**. *I invite you to slowly read and ponder this format of the text – with an open heart to experience the Pathwork Guide’s Presence, Wisdom and Love emerging from among the words. May the Pathwork Guide’s Wisdom come to live you.*

For clarity: The original text is in bold, italicized, and mostly underlined. [My interpretations and intended clarifications are in brackets, italicized, mostly underlined, but never bolded.]

To learn more of my Devotional Format and to access the lectures I have rendered in this form, go to <http://www.garyvollbracht.com/quotes/pathwork-lectures-expanded-versions/>

Blessings on your journey, Gary

¶	Content
03	<p><u>Greetings.</u></p> <p><u>I bring you blessings</u> <u>in the name of God.</u></p> <p><u>Blessed is this hour</u> [<i>i.e., <u>blessed is this time</u></i> <i><u>we now spend together in this lecture</u></i>], <u>my dearest friends.</u></p>
04	<p><u>In the Bible</u> <u>it is said</u> <u>that you should</u> <u>not</u> <u>create an image</u> <u>of God.</u></p> <p><u>Most people</u> <u>believe this statement means</u> <u>that you should not</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>draw a picture or</u>• <u>make a statue</u><u>of God.</u></p>

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But this [i.e. But making a picture or statue of God]
is by no means
the entire sense [of creating an image of God].

If you think about this statement
a little more deeply,
you will come to the conclusion
that this could not be
all that is implied
in this commandment.

You must now perceive
that this [commandment not to create an image of God]
refers to the
inner
image.

You are still
so involved in
your own

- wrong conclusions and**
- your**
- irrational impressions**

that you are bound to have
an inner image

- about God,**
- as well as [inner images]**
- on all other subjects**

that are most important
in your life.

05

Children
experience
their first conflict
with authority
at an early age.

I have talked at length about this.

They [i.e., children]
also learn that
God
is
the highest authority.

Therefore
it is not surprising
that children
project
their subjective experiences
with

- authority

on
their imaginings
about

- God.

An image
is formed,
and whatever

- the child's,
- the adult's,

relationship to authority is,
his or her
attitude toward God
will,
most probably,
be

- colored and
- influenced

by it [i.e., colored and influenced by the child's or adult's
relationship to authority in its various forms].

06

Children
experience
all kinds of authority.

When they [i.e., when children]
are prohibited
from doing
what they enjoy most,
they
experience
authority as
• hostile.

When parental authority
indulges a child,
authority
will be
felt as
• benign.

When there is
a predominance
of one kind of authority [i.e., a predominance of either hostile or
benign authority]
in childhood,
the reaction to that [childhood experience of authority]
will become
the unconscious
attitude
toward God [i.e., an unconscious attitude of seeing God as being
either hostile or benign, and reacting accordingly].

In many instances, however,
children
experience a mixture of both [i.e., a mixture of both the hostile and
the benign types of authority].

Then
the combination
of these two kinds of authority [i.e., combination of the hostile and
the benign types of authority
will form
their image about God [i.e., will form their God-image].

To the degree
a child
experiences
• fear and
• frustration
[with authority],
to that same degree
will
• fear and
• frustration
unconsciously
be felt toward God.

God
is then believed to be
• punishing and
• severe,
often even
• an
• unfair and
• unjust
force
that one has to
contend with.

I know, my friends,
that you do not think so [i.e., do not think of God as punishing, severe, and
even an unfair and unjust force one has to contend with]
consciously.

But in the pathwork
you are asked to find
the emotional reactions [that at first are usually unconscious]
that do
not correspond at all
to your
conscious
concepts.

The less
• the unconscious concept [behind one's emotional reactions]
coincides with
• the conscious one,
the greater is
the shock
when one realizes the discrepancy [i.e., the discrepancy between the
unconscious and conscious concepts].

07

Practically
everything
the child enjoys most
is forbidden.

Whatever
gives most pleasure
is prohibited,
usually
for the child's own welfare;

this [i.e., this prohibition against what gives the child the most pleasure]
the child
cannot understand.

Parents may also
prohibit pleasure
out of

- ignorance and
- fear.

Thus
it is impressed
on the child's mind
that
for everything most pleasurable in the world

one is subject to
punishment from God –
[who is] the

- highest and
- sternest
authority.

08

In addition,
you are bound to encounter
human injustice
in the course of your life,
in

- childhood

as well as in

- adulthood.

*If these injustices
are perpetrated
by people who stand for authority –
and are, therefore,
unconsciously
associated with God –
your
unconscious
belief in
God's severe injustice
is strengthened.*

*Such experiences [i.e., experiences of injustice coming from people in authority]
also
intensify
your fear of God.*

*All this [i.e., All this experience of injustice coming from human authority]
forms
an image
which makes,
if properly analyzed,
a monster
out of God.*

*This god,
living in
your unconscious mind,
is really
more of a
Satan.*

09

*You yourself
have to find out
in your work on yourself
how much of this
holds true for
you
personally.*

*Is your soul
impregnated with
similar wrong concepts?*

If and when
a growing human being
becomes conscious
of such an impression [i.e., **conscious of such**
wrong concepts about God],

he or she often
does not understand
that

- **this concept of God**
is false and

that

- **God is**
not
what is
experienced
in the psyche.

Then [i.e., **when the person thinks these now-conscious concepts of God**
as unjust are true, and that God is what is experienced in the psyche]
the person
turns away from God altogether,
wanting no part
of the monster
discovered hovering
in his or her mind.

This [i.e., **wanting no part of the monster god discovered in one's psyche**],
by the way,
is often
the true reason
for someone's
atheism.

The turning away [from this monster god, as is done in atheism]
is just as erroneous
as the opposite extreme
of fearing
a god
who is

- **severe,**
- **unjust,**
- **pious,**
- **self-righteous and**
- **cruel.**

	<p><u>The person who</u> <u>unconsciously</u> <u>maintains</u> <u>the distorted God-image</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>rightly</u> <u>fears</u> <u>this deity and</u>• <u>resorts to</u> <u>cajoling</u> <u>for favors.</u> <p><u>Here you have a good example of</u> <u>the two opposite extremes [regarding one's attitude toward God – the atheist</u> <u>denying the existence of God and the fear-stricken person</u> <u>trembling at the very thought that God exists],</u></p> <p><u>both of which</u> <u>lack truth</u> <u>to an equal extent.</u></p>
10	<p><u>Now let us examine the case in which</u> <u>a child experiences</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>benign authority</u> <u>to a greater extent than</u>• <u>fear and</u>• <u>frustration.</u></p> <p><u>Let us assume that</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>overindulging and</u>• <u>doting</u> <u>parents</u><u>fulfill</u> <u>the child's</u> <u>every whim.</u></p> <p><u>They do</u> <u>not</u> <u>instill</u> <u>a sense of responsibility</u> <u>in the child</u></p> <p><u>so he or she</u> <u>can get away with</u> <u>practically anything.</u></p>

The God-image

resulting from such a condition [i.e., from a condition of overindulging and doting parents, where no sense of responsibility is instilled in the child]
is, at first glance,

closer to

a true concept of God –

- forgiving,
- "good,"
- loving,
- indulgent.

This causes the personality to unconsciously

think

that one

- can get away with anything in the eyes of God,
- can
 - cheat life, and
 - avoid self-responsibility.

To begin with,

such a child

will know

much less

fear.

But since

• life

cannot be cheated,

• one's own life-plan

cannot be cheated,

this wrong attitude [of an indulging God who never requires self-responsibility]

will produce

conflicts,

and therefore

fear

will be generated

by a chain reaction of

wrong

- thinking,
- feeling, and
- action.

	<p><u>An inner confusion</u> <u>will arise,</u> <u>since life</u> <u>as it is in reality</u> <u>does not correspond to</u> <u>the unconscious</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>image and</u>• <u>concept</u><u>of an indulgent God.</u></p>
11	<p><u>Many</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>subdivisions and</u>• <u>combinations</u><u>of these two main categories [i.e., the two categories of God-images: an image of a severe fear-producing God and an image of an indulgent God]</u> <u>can exist</u> <u>in the same soul.</u></p> <p><u>The [God-] image</u> <u>does not only depend on</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the particular kind</u> <u>of predominant authority</u> <u>experienced in childhood,</u><u>but also [depends] on</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the characteristics</u> <u>the entity</u> <u>has brought into this life.</u></p> <p><u>The more</u> <u>the entity has developed</u> <u>in former incarnations</u> <u>in this area [i.e., has developed in the area of the God-image],</u> <u>the less will</u> <u>the environment</u> <u>influence</u> <u>the psyche.</u></p>

12

Other factors
also play a role [in forming the personality's God-image].

For instance,
when hostile authority
in the person of
a domineering parent
is the predominant factor,
the atmosphere
in the child's home
is filled with
fear
of this parent.

The other parent
may be

- doting and
- permissive.

Although this influence [of the permissive parent]
is

- outwardly
weaker,

it [i.e., this outwardly weaker influence of the permissive parent]
may have
a much stronger

- inner
impression on the soul, and

the resulting [God-] image
may reflect that [i.e., may reflect that indulging permissiveness].

The same holds true
in the opposite case.

Although

- severity,
- injustice and
- fear

may have manifested
as the

- weaker elements
during childhood,

the impression on
the individual soul
may be

- much stronger,

thereby

creating

a more powerful image.

13

In most cases,

both currents [i.e., both the fear-producing and the indulgent authority currents]
can be found.

- How,
- in what way, and
- why,

what the attitude
to the

- individual parent or
- parent-substitute
- was and
- is –

all has to be

- found out and
- investigated

in the [God-] image-work.

But do keep in mind, my friends, that

both alternatives [i.e., both the severe fear-producing authority and the indulgent
authority that limits the development of self-responsibility]

are to be looked for,

even if one [of the two alternatives] appears stronger to begin with.

The

- pampering and
- indulgent

God-image

is not

simply added to

- the monster-image,

but is often a

- reaction to and
- compensation for

the false concept [i.e., the indulgent-God-image is a reaction to and compensation for the monster-God-image].

The personality

may grapple

between these two concepts [i.e., between the indulgent-God-image and the monster-God-image],

unconsciously

trying to find out

which

is right,

never winning the battle

because

both concepts [i.e., both the indulgent-God-image concept and the monster-God-image concept]

are false.

In every child's life

both kinds of authority

are experienced,

no matter

how much stronger

one manifests [over against the other].

You may have

- one indulgent

and

- one stern
parent.

Or you may even have
• two indulgent parents,
but
• a severe teacher
• instills fear in you
and
• has a greater influence
on your
inner growth
than you realize.

Or it may be
• another relative or
• a sibling.

It is
never
just one kind
of authority.

14

It is very important, my friends,
to find out
what your
God-image
is.

This [God-] image
• is basic and
• determines
all other
• attitudes,
• images and
• patterns
throughout your life.

You should all
examine
this attitude [toward God]
that may be
deeply hidden
within yourself.

Do not be deceived
by your
conscious
convictions [*concerning your attitude toward God*].

Rather
try to

- **examine and**
- **analyze**
your emotional reactions
to
 - **authority,****to your**
 - **parents,****to your**
 - **fears and**
 - **expectations.**

Out of these [*emotional*] **reactions**
you will gradually discover
what you
feel
about God
rather than
what you
think
[about God].

Your God-image
reflects the whole scale
between the two opposite poles,
from

- **hopelessness and**
- **despair** –
believing that the universe is unjust [*and that God*
is severe, unforgiving, and a monster to be feared] –

to

- **self-indulgence,**
- **rejection of self-responsibility, and**
- **the expectation that**
God will
 - **indulge and**
 - **pamper**
you.

15

Now the question arises
how to dissolve
such an image [of God].

How do you dissolve
any image?

First
you have to become
fully conscious of
the wrong concept [contained in the image, here in your God-image].

That [i.e., becoming fully conscious of the wrong concept in the image,
here your God- image]

is not as
• easily or
• quickly
accomplished
as it might seem.

Although
you may be aware of
the image [here, aware of your God-image]
to some degree,
you by no means
recognize
all its [i.e., all the image's, here all your God-image's]
• implications,
• effects and
• influences on your personality.

You may
not have recognized
its [i.e., the image's, here your God-image's]
significance
on all levels of your being.

This [i.e., becoming fully conscious of the wrong concepts in the image,
here, the wrong concepts in your God-image]
must always
be the first step.

You may often
be aware of
an image [*which is always false,*
otherwise it would not be an image] –
but
you may not even be aware
that it
is
false.

Even in your
intellectual perception
you are
[at least] partly convinced
that the image-conclusion [*here, your God-image-conclusion*]
is correct.

As long as this is so [*i.e., as long as you even partly believe even in your*
intellectual perception that the image is not false but rather is true]
you cannot free yourself
from the enslaving chains
of the false belief [*here, the enslaving chains of your false*
concepts about God].

So the second step
is to set
your intellectual ideas
straight.

It is most important to understand
that the proper formation
of an
• intellectual
concept [*i.e., an intellectually true concept*]
should never be
superimposed on
the still-lingering
• emotional
false concept.

This [*i.e., This superimposing of an intellectually true concept on top of*
the still-lingering emotional false concept]
would only cause
suppression [*of the emotional false concept*].

On the other hand,
you should
not allow
wrong
• conclusions and
• images,
rising to the surface
due to the work you have done so far,
make you believe
that they [i.e., that your wrong conclusions rising
to your surface consciousness]
are true.

In a subtle way,
this [i.e., believing that wrong conclusions and images rising to
surface are not wrong but true]
is sometimes the case.

Realize that
the hitherto suppressed
wrong
• concepts and
• ideas
have to
evolve clearly
into consciousness;

nurse the awareness of them [i.e., nurse the awareness of the heretofore
suppressed wrong ideas]
in your surface consciousness,
but
realize
that they [i.e., that the hitherto suppressed wrong ideas]
are false.

Formulate
the right concept.

Then these two [i.e., the concepts rising to surface from your heretofore
suppressed unconscious and the right concepts that
you clearly formulate]
should be compared.

	<p><u><i>You need constantly check how much you still deviate</i></u> • <u><i>emotionally</i></u> <u><i>from the right</i></u> • <u><i>intellectual concept.</i></u></p>
16	<p><u><i>Do this [i.e., Constantly check how much your emotions deviate from the right intellectual concept]</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>quietly,</i></u>• <u><i>without inner</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>haste or</i></u>• <u><i>anger at yourself</i></u> <u><i>that your</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>emotions</i></u><u><i>do not follow your</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>thinking</i></u> <u><i>as quickly as you would like.</i></u> <p><u><i>Realize that your emotions need time to adjust,</i></u></p> <p><u><i>while doing everything in your power to give them the opportunity to grow.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>This [i.e., giving your emotions the opportunity to grow] is best accomplished by constant</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>observation and</i></u>• <u><i>comparison of</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>the wrong</i></u> <u><i>and</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>the right</i></u> <u><i>concept.</i></u>

	<p><u>Observe also</u> <u>your resistance to</u> • <u>change and</u> • <u>growth.</u></p> <p><u>The lower self</u> <u>of the human personality</u> <u>is very shrewd.</u></p> <p><u>Be wise to it</u> [i.e., <u>Be wise to the lower self's shrewdness and ruses</u>].</p>
17	<p><u>As I have said,</u> <u>some [right] concepts</u> <u>are easy to formulate.</u></p> <p><u>They</u> [i.e., <u>these right concepts</u>] <u>are obvious.</u></p> <p><u>It</u> [i.e., <u>formulating some right concepts</u>] <u>merely requires</u> <u>a little thinking through.</u></p> <p><u>The resisting emotions</u> <u>do not care</u> <u>whether</u> <u>the proper concept</u> • <u>is obvious</u> <u>or</u> • <u>[is] not [obvious].</u></p> <p><u>In either case</u> <u>they</u> [i.e., <u>the resisting emotions</u>] <u>will find</u> • <u>ways and</u> • <u>means</u> <u>of trying</u> <u>to avoid a change</u> <u>of</u> <u>inner</u> <u>attitude.</u></p>

But as far as
your
intellectual understanding
is concerned,
you must
differentiate
between
two kinds of concepts:
• those that are obvious
if you think about them
and
• those requiring
• development from inside –
• inner enlightenment
that has to be
earned
in order to
formulate
the proper concept,
even in your intellect,
to begin with.

Prayer for
recognition [of misconceptions]
is important.

When you pray,
observe
how sincerely
you desire the answer.

You may
dutifully
pray for
the recognition of your misconceptions,
but
inside
there is a resisting block
that you can
feel
if you look for it.

Then [i.e., when you feel the resisting block against you yourself recognizing your misconceptions],

at least,
you know
that

- you yourself
obstruct
 - light and
 - freedom,
- not God.

Then
you can begin arguing with
that part in yourself
that persists
in being

- childish and
- unreasonable.

18

As far as
the proper concept of God
is concerned,
this is certainly
one of
the most

- difficult awarenesses
to come by –

because it is
the most

- precious!

Whatever your image is
in this respect [i.e., in respect to God],
this [i.e., this God-image]
is where you have to begin [in your search for
the proper concept of God].

If you are convinced of
injustice [in the world],
so that you cannot see
even factually
that this conviction [i.e., that there is injustice in the world]
is wrong,
the remedy
is in finding
in your own life
how
you [yourself]
have caused happenings
that seem entirely unjust.

The better
you understand

- the magnetic force
of images and
- the powerful strength
of all
 - psychological and
 - unconscious
currents,

the better
will you

- understand and
- experience

the truth of these [pathwork] teachings,

the deeper
will you
be convinced
that there is
no
injustice.

Find the

- cause

and

- effect

of your

- inner

and

- outer

actions.

19

Humans
like to concentrate
unduly
on the
apparent
injustice
that has happened to them.

They focus on
how wrong
others
are.

This [i.e., your focusing on how wrong others are]
• should and
• can
be recognized.

But [rather than focusing on how wrong others are]
try to find
your part.

If you make
half the effort
you usually make
when finding
• other's faults
to recognizing
• your own [faults],

you will see
the connection
of your own law of
• cause
and
• effect.

This [i.e., this seeing your causes and their effects on you and others]
alone
• will set you free,
• will show you
that there is
no
injustice.

You will see
that it is
not
• God,
nor
• the fates,
nor
• an unjust world order
where you have to suffer
the consequences of
other people's
shortcomings,

but
• your
ignorance,
• your
fear
• your
pride
• your
egotism

that
• directly or
• indirectly
caused
that which
seemed,
so far,
to come your way
without
your
attracting it.

Find that
hidden link [i.e., find those hidden aspects within yourself that give rise to
and cause, directly or indirectly, effects which come your way]
and you will
come to see
truth.

You will realize
that you are
not ever
a prey to

- circumstances and
- other people's imperfections,

but really
the master
of your fate.

You will
deeply
understand,
not only in

- theory

but in

- practice,

that
everything happening to you
is a

- direct or
- indirect

result of
your

- attitudes,
- deeds,
- thoughts and
- emotions.

As far as the latter [i.e., As far as your emotions]
are concerned,
they are
most powerful
of all –
and this is
constantly
overlooked,
even by my friends
who have

- learned,

and at times

- experienced,

this truth [i.e., this truth that your emotions hold the most
powerful influence over your life experiences].

Your own
unconscious
affects
the unconscious
of the other person.

This truth
is perhaps
most relevant
to the discovery of
how you
call forth
all happenings
in your life,

- good or
- bad,
- favorable or
- unfavorable.

20

Once you experience this [i.e., once you experience that everything happening to you is a result of your conscious or unconscious thoughts and attitudes],
you can
dissolve
your God-image,

- whether you fear God
because you
 - believe in injustice and
 - are afraid of being the prey
of circumstances
over which you have no control, or
- whether you
 - reject self-responsibility and
 - expect an
 - indulgent,
 - pampering
god
to
 - fix your life,
 - make decisions for you,
 - take self-inflicted hardships from you.

	<p><u>The realization of</u> <u>how</u> <u>you</u> <u>cause the effects of your life</u> <u>will dissolve</u> <u>either</u> <u>God-image</u> [i.e., <u>either the god you fear or the god you trust to pamper you</u>].</p> <p><u>This</u> [i.e., <u>this realization of how you cause the effects of your life</u>] <u>is one of</u> <u>the main breaking-points.</u></p>
21	<p><u>One of your handicaps</u> <u>is</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>your guilt feeling,</u><u>or rather</u>• <u>your wrong attitude</u> <u>toward guilt.</u> <p><u>To understand that</u> [i.e., <u>to understand that the wrong attitude toward guilt is</u> <u>a handicap to your realizing that you cause the effects in your life</u>], <u>it might be advisable</u> <u>to reread my lecture</u> <u>on the subject of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>justified and unjustified</u> <u>guilt-feelings and</u>• <u>the proper attitude</u> <u>toward shortcomings</u> [see Pathwork Lecture 49 <u>Obstacles on</u> <u>the Path: Old Stuff, Wrong Guilt, and Who, Me?</u>]. <p><u>If your faults</u> <u>depress you</u> <u>so deeply</u> <u>that you are</u> <u>afraid to face them,</u></p> <p><u>then</u> <u>this wrong attitude</u> [about your faults] <u>has to be worked on first,</u> <u>because it</u> [i.e., <u>this wrong attitude about your faults</u>] <u>hinders you</u> <u>in coming out of</u> <u>your own vicious circle.</u></p>

The guiltier
you feel
about possible wrongs
you may have to face,
the more
do you
• escape reality
and thereby
• inflict harm on your soul.

The
• proper and
• constructive
attitude
toward your own shortcomings
is the key
to the dissolution
of this
– and all other –
vicious circles
you may be caught in.

Understand that
none of your faults
is committed
• out of malice; or
• because you
wish evil
on other people.

Every
• fault,
every
• kind of selfishness,

is nothing but
• a misunderstanding and
• a wrong conclusion
in itself.

Your fear
often makes you
so paralyzed
that your faculties
cannot function properly.

As a result [i.e., As a result of fear paralyzing your faculties so that you
cannot function properly],

errors in

- judgment,
- action and
- reaction

on your part
bring effects into your life
which you
no longer connect with
the origin of
your fear [i.e., something brought fear, fear led to poor judgment,
poor judgment led to undesirable effects, but you can
no longer connect the undesirable effects to that something
that caused the fear in the first place].

As long as
you shy away from
facing your erroneous reactions,
because of
a faulty attitude
toward your shortcomings,
you cannot find
the breaking-point [i.e., the breaking point in the vicious circle],
which alone
will bring you the recognition
that

- you are not a victim;

that

- you have power over your life;

that

- you are free; and

that

- the laws of God
are infinitely
 - good,
 - wise,
 - loving and
 - safe!

	<p><u>God's laws</u> <u>do not make a puppet out of you,</u></p> <p><u>they make you</u> <u>wholly</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>free and</u>• <u>independent.</u>
22	<p><u>In order to help you</u> <u>find</u> <u>the proper concept of God,</u> <u>I will try to speak about Him.</u></p> <p><u>But remember that</u> <u>all words</u> <u>can, at best,</u> <u>be only a small point to start with</u> <u>in cultivating</u> <u>your own</u> <u>inner recognition [of God].</u></p> <p><u>Words</u> <u>are always</u> <u>insufficient.</u></p> <p><u>How much more so</u> <u>when it concerns</u> <u>God</u> <u>Who is</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>unexplainable,</u><u>Who is</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>all things,</u><u>Who</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>cannot be limited into words.</u></p>

How can your
• perception and
• capacity to understand
suffice
to sense
the greatness
of the Creator?

Every
smallest
inner
• deviation and
• obstruction
is a hindrance
to understanding.

We
have to be concerned with
the elimination of
these hindrances,
• step by step,
• stone by stone,
for only then
will you
• glimpse
the light and
• sense
the infinite bliss.

23

One hindrance is that,
despite the teachings
you have received from various sources,
you still
unconsciously
think about God
as a person
who
• acts,
• chooses,
• decides,
• disposes
• arbitrarily and
• at will.

On top of this
you superimpose
the idea
that
all this must be
just.

But even though
you include the word
"justice,"
this idea [about God's justice]
is false.

For
God
is.

His laws
• are made
once and for all and
• work automatically.

Emotionally,
you are somehow
bound to a wrong concept,
and it [i.e., the wrong concept]
stands in your way.

As long as it [i.e., As long as the wrong concept]
is present,
the
• real and
• true
concept
cannot
fill your being.

God is,
among so many other things,

- life and
- life force.

Think of this
as you think of

- life force
- an electric current,
endowed with
supreme intelligence.

This "electric current"
is

- there,
- in you,
- around you,
- outside of yourself.

It is up to
you

how you use it [i.e., how you use this "electric current"].

You can use electricity

- for constructive purposes,
- even for healing;

or you can use it

- to kill.

That [i.e., how you use "electric current"]
does not make

the electric current

- good
- or
- bad.

You

make it [i.e., You make the "electric current"]

- good
- or
- bad.

This power current
is one important aspect of God
where it touches you most [since you choose to use this important aspect of
God, this “electric current,” for good
or bad purposes].

This [aspect of God that is like a power current that you use for good or bad]
may lead you to think
that God is

- **entirely impersonal**

and therefore

- **to be feared even more.**

It [i.e., this aspect of God that is like a power current that you use for good or bad]
may contradict
the idea of His
infinite love.

Neither [i.e., neither the notion that God is like an “electric current” and impersonal
nor the notion that God is personal with His infinite love]
is true.

God,
being all,
is personal as well
if He chooses to be,
but His personal aspect
has no bearing

- **on the question we are now discussing and**
- **on one of the most important aspects**

of YOUR personal life.

His love
is not only personal
in

- **God-manifest,**

but also [personal]
in

- **His laws,**

in

- **the being of the laws.**

The
apparently
impersonal
love
of the laws
that are –
understand what is implied
in the words **that are!** –
shows clearly
in the fact
that they are made in such a way
as to lead you
ultimately
into

- light and
- bliss,

no matter how much
you deviate from them.

The more
you deviate from them [i.e., from God's laws],
the more
you approach them
through the misery
the deviation inflicts.

This misery [you experience because of your deviation from God's laws]
will cause you
to turn around
at one point or another.

- Some sooner,
- some later,

but
all
must finally come to the point
where they realize
that
they themselves
determine
their

- misery or
- bliss.

This [i.e., *the misery you face when you deviate from God's law, misery that then motivates you change from deviating from God's law to following God's law*]
is
the love
in the law,
as is [*the love in the law*]
the fact that
deviation from it [i.e., *deviation from God's law*]
is the very medicine
to cure the pain
caused by the deviation
and, therefore,
[*deviation from God's law*]
brings you closer to
the aim [*of God's law*].

The love
of the law –
and therefore
of God –
is also contained in the fact
that God
lets you deviate
if you wish;
that you are
made in His likeness,
meaning
that you are
completely free
to choose as you wish.

You are
not
forced
to live in
bliss and
light.

You can [*choose to live in bliss and light*]
if you wish.

All this
means
the love of God.

It [i.e., all this that is connected to God's love]
is not easy to understand,
but those of you
who have difficulty in understanding [God's love]
will
one day
see the truth
of these words.

25

When you have difficulty
in understanding

- *the justice of the universe and*
- *the self-responsibility*
in your own life,

do not think of God
as "He" –
although, of course,
God
can manifest as a person too,
since He

- *can do anything and*
- *is everything.*

Rather
think of God
as
the Great Creative Power
at your disposal.

Therefore,

- *it is*
not God
who is unjust,
as your subconscious may believe,
- *but it is*
your wrong use
of the powerful current
at your disposal.

If you

- start from

this premise [i.e., the premise that it is not God who is unjust but rather your wrong use of the powerful current at your disposal] and

- meditate on it, and

if from now on

you seek to find

- where and

- how

you have

ignorantly

abused

the power current in you,

God

will answer you.

This

I can promise.

If you
sincerely
search for the answer [i.e., answer to where and how you have ignorantly abused the power current in you and thereby brought undesirable circumstances and experiences into your life], and

if you
have the courage
to face it [i.e., face where you have abused this power current in you]
without
the wrong kind of guilt feelings –
and you should all be able to do that by now –

• you will come to understand

• cause

and

• effect

in your life;

• you will come to understand

what led you to believe –

perhaps unconsciously,

but [because unconsciously,] all the more powerfully –

that God's world is

• cruel and

• unjust,

• a world

in which

• you have no chance,

in which

• you have to be

• afraid and

• hopeless,

• a universe

where God's grace

comes to a few chosen ones,

but you are excluded.

Only

understanding

the law of cause and effect

can free you

of this fallacious view of God

that distorts

• your soul and

• your life.

26

I know,
you do not
• think
all that.

But many of you
• feel it
deeply hidden
in your subconscious.

Try to find
that part in you
where you
do
feel
that way,
regardless of
your simultaneously sincere
love for God.

Find out whether
you
• fear God
more than
you
• love Him.

If you do [fear God more than you love Him],
you can be sure
• this image of God [i.e., the image that God's world is cruel and unjust,
a world in which you have no chance and have to be afraid and
hopeless, a universe where God's grace does not come to you]
exists in you and
• you are living in
• distortion and
• illusion
since
all
images
are just that [i.e., all images are distortions and illusions].

Enumerate
the injustices of your own life,
but do not examine
• the lives of others, or
• general conditions,
for there [i.e., for in the lives of others or in general conditions]
you cannot
find the answer.

Then try to
• find where you have
abused the power current and
• connect
• these instances [where you have abused the power current]
with
• the injustices you complain about.

If you cannot do so [i.e., If you cannot connect instances where you have abused
the power current with the injustices you complain about]
right away,
• I will help you,
and
• further work
will show the connections
quite clearly,
provided
you truly
desire
the answers.

You have no idea
what this discovery [i.e., this discovery of how you cause what you believe are
experiences of injustice from others]
will mean to you.

The greater
the resistance to it [i.e., The greater the resistance to this discovery of how you
cause what you believe are experiences of injustice]
at first,
the greater
the victory.

You have no inkling

- *how free it [i.e., how free this discovery of how you cause what you believe are experiences of injustice]*

will make you,

- *how*
 - *safe and*
 - *secure.*

You will

fully understand
the marvel

of the creation of these laws

that let

you,

with the power current of life,

do as you please

in creating

your own life.

This [understanding how God's laws let you, with the power current of life, do as you please in creating your own life]

will give you

- *confidence*
and the

• *deep,*

• *absolute*

knowledge

that you have

nothing to fear.

27

There is
a type of personality
so negative
in this respect [i.e., in respect to how one creates one's own life]
– though perhaps only subconsciously –
that he or she
is deeply convinced
• of the futility
of one's own life, and
• that the available
life force
can work
only
in a negative way.

This [i.e., that a person could be convinced that the available life force
can work only in a negative way in his or her particular life]
may sound like
a paradox, my friends,
but it is not.

Life force
is
energy.

And in
a personality problem
of this type,
the energy [of the life force]
is used
only
negatively.

That means, for instance,
that the person
becomes
most alive
• in negative situations –
• in situations of
• fight,
• unrest,
• quarrel, and
• disharmony
of any kind.

Then [i.e., in such negative experiences]
something
vibrates
inwardly.

Yet,
when everything goes
smoothly,
although

- **a part of the personality**
may
 - **enjoy it – usually the conscious side –**
 - **another part** [of the personality, usually the unconscious side]
feels
 - **deflated and**
 - **lifeless.**

This [i.e., this situation where one part of the personality, usually an unconscious part, feels lifeless and deflated when life goes smoothly]
indicates that
the distortion about God
has progressed
to a considerable degree.

To a smaller degree
most people
have this reaction [i.e., this reaction of feeling deflated and lifeless
when life goes smoothly],
at least occasionally.

Examine whether
you
feel

- **more alive**
in a negative situation and
- **more dead**
in a quiet one.

Your reactions [in positive and negative situations]
will have a connection with
your God-image.

28

Are there any questions regarding this subject?

QUESTION:

*Could you give us
some examples of
abuse of the life force?*

ANSWER:

*The abuse
of the power current
of your life force
consists of
all*

- *actions,*
 - *thoughts,*
 - *attitudes and*
 - *emotions*
- that*
- *deviate from divine truth,*
- that are*
- *self-directed,*
 - *motivated*
- in a spirit of
separateness.*

*Separateness of soul, briefly,
comes about*

- when people*
- *withdraw*
- inwardly and*
- *put*

*an invisible wall
around their soul
in the mistaken idea*

*that it [i.e., the mistaken idea that the invisible wall
around their soul]*

*gives them
safety.*

For instance,
people's fears
of
• life and
• love,
of
• reality,
of
• self-responsibility
all
lead to
separateness.

What this [i.e., What this movement toward separateness because of a person's fears]
actually means
is that
the person
considers
him or herself
different
from others.

The bridge to
brotherhood
is broken.

This [movement toward separateness out of fear]
may happen
in all sorts of reactions
that are not always obvious.

Each
human fault
• contributes to
separateness and
• is of itself
• a wrong conclusion;

therefore
• a falsity,
• an illusion;

therefore
• away from
truth.

If you
analyze
each fault,
you will find
that it [i.e., that each fault]
exists
because it [i.e., because each fault]
is thought to be

- *protective and*
- *advantageous.*

In truth
it [i.e., in truth each fault]
is not [protective and advantageous].

For nothing
can be
to your

- *advantage*

that is
to the

- *disadvantage*

of another person.

This [i.e., something that seems to be to one's advantage and
yet seems at the same time disadvantageous to another]
is separateness –
and separateness
is the illusion
of the world of manifestation.

Does that answer your question?

{Yes, thank you.}

29	<p>QUESTION: <u>In connection with our work,</u> <u>the word</u> <u>detachment</u> <u>has come up.</u></p> <p><u>Would I be correct in stating that</u> • <u>detachment</u> <u>is just another way of expressing</u> • <u>separateness?</u></p>
30	<p>ANSWER: <u>Not necessarily.</u></p> <p><u>When it comes to words,</u> <u>their meaning</u> <u>can often be</u> • <u>subtle and</u> • <u>confusing.</u></p> <p><u>As you all know from your work,</u> <u>a word</u> <u>can mean</u> <u>one thing</u> <u>to one person</u> <u>and</u> <u>something else</u> <u>to another.</u></p> <p><u>A word</u> <u>designates</u> <u>an idea,</u> <u>and you all know that</u> <u>each true idea</u> <u>can be distorted</u> <u>into an untruth</u> <u>by taking it [i.e., by taking a true idea]</u> <u>to an extreme</u> <u>that must be wrong.</u></p>

This distortion [produced by taking a true idea to an extreme that must be wrong] usually happens quite deliberately, although unconsciously.

One seeks to find justification for the problem in one's soul by going to the extreme of a right idea.

This has been the trouble with all great religious teachings throughout the ages.

Detachment undergoes a similar fate.

People who are afraid of

- *life and*
- *love*

often escape into the distorted idea of detachment.

But this [i.e., this distorted idea of detachment, which is a misuse of the idea of detachment by some in order to escape life and love] should not make you forget

- *the real meaning,*
- *the right sense*

of it [i.e., the real meaning and right sense of detachment].

31

The true sense of detachment
is to be detached from
one's own ego-centeredness.

Thereby
the person obtains
a certain objectivity,
which is [the true sense of] detachment.

It [i.e., the true sense of detachment which provides you with objectivity]
means
that you consider
your own

- **hurt vanities,**
- **advantages,**

no differently
from those of
other people.

You know
how difficult
this [i.e., how difficult this capacity to be objective and to consider others
no differently from how you consider yourself]
is to attain,
even to a small degree.

It [i.e., this capacity to be healthily detached and objective]
cannot be attained
by escaping

- **life and**
- **its hurts,**

as some people want to believe,
by misinterpreting spiritual ideas.

Quite the contrary [i.e., the capacity for healthy detachment and for considering
others no differently from how you consider yourself cannot
be attained by escaping life and its hurts].

Only

- by facing
life's hurts
in the right spirit,
- by not being so involved with
your self
that you see nothing else,

will you come to the point of

- healthy detachment and
- objectivity.

Being human,

it is understandable

that you

fear

- life and

- love,

but you cannot

force

fear [of life and love] away

through the

wrong kind of

practice of detachment.

You can reach

true detachment

only by degrees.

32

QUESTION:

*I think this question [i.e., the question above] was asked
in connection with a discussion we [i.e., the other person and I] had.*

Can you tell me whether I see it right?

It seems that

we involve ourselves

in all kinds of emotions

in a negative way,

so I do not

want to be involved any more

before

I learn detachment.

Once I have learned that [i.e., once I have learned healthy detachment],
I would
like
to be involved [with all kinds of emotions]
because then
I can do so
in a constructive way.

33

ANSWER:
Unfortunately, it [i.e., facing the hurts, disappointments, and other
negative emotions in life]
does not always work out this way [i.e., does not always work out by
waiting until you can be detached from them].

It [i.e., being detached from hurts, disappointments and other negative emotions]
would be extremely
• comfortable and
• pleasant –
many people try it
but they cannot succeed –
to avoid
the disappointments of life
in that way [i.e., avoid disappointments by being detached
from disappointments].

As I often said in the past:
you cannot
get around it [i.e., cannot get around hurts, disappointments and
other negative emotions],
you have to
go through it [i.e., go through hurts, disappointments and
other negative emotions].

As long as
you fear
the hurts [and disappointments and other negative emotions],
you do not
become detached from them.

Because
the fear
is worse than
that which you fear.

That
always
holds true.

Therefore,
one has to
try and find
the right middle way
between these wrong extremes [i.e., *between the extremes*
expanded upon below].

34

At one extreme
is the person
who plunges headlong
into every negative situation.

Various psychological factors
may be responsible for it –

- *self-punishment or*
- *a form of aggressiveness toward others,*
punishing them by one's own unhappiness –

and

- *many other factors.*

These are the people
who
always
become involved in a

- *negative and*
- *destructive*
way.

At the other extreme [opposite the extreme of diving headlong into every negative situation that arises]

is

- separateness,
- the attitude
that makes one believe
one can go through life
avoiding
its negative aspects.

If you are

so much afraid of hurts
that you force
strict measures on yourself
to avoid them,

- you can
never
 - rise above them,

and therefore

- you can
never
 - attain
the right kind of
detachment.

In order to

rise above anything,
you have to
go through it,
so that
you lose
the fear of it.

This [i.e., going through what you fear]
has to be done

in the right spirit –
neither in a

- masochistic,
- self-destroying
attitude,
- nor in an attitude of

- fear and
- a sick kind of self-love [that would resist anything feared].

*So the right middle way [of going through life]
has to be found*
• *in this respect*
as well as
• *in all others.*

This is always the difficulty.

The right middle way
is, briefly speaking,
• *that life brings*
all sorts of experiences;
• *that it [i.e., that life]*
can only bring you experiences
your own soul calls forth;
• *that you do*
not avoid
• *happiness*
because you are afraid of
• *unhappiness;*
• *that you do*
not avoid
• *positive involvement*
because you are afraid of
• *negative involvement.*

35

All
negative
experiences
should make you
stronger.

If they [i.e., If negative experiences]
weaken you,
it is
not
the negative experience
that is the
cause
of your weakening,
but your attitude
to the experience.

This [*i.e., the fact that negative experiences make you stronger*]
does not exclude
[your having]
a certain caution [*when faced with negative situations or experiences*].

It [*i.e., the fact that negative experiences make you stronger*]
does not mean
to rush into things
without
• **thinking through;**
without
• **using one's intuition;**
without
• **trying to really and truly**
see
• **the situation,**
• **the other person, and**
• **everything**
that is part of the issue.

Many times
[this really and truly] **seeing**
is avoided
because
one wishes
to have
• **the other person**
fit to one's
own need; or
one wishes
• **the situation**
to do so [*i.e., wishes the situation to fit to one's own need*],
and therefore
one does
not dare to
[really and truly] **look.**

This
right middle way
demands
a certain objectivity.

*But do not forget,
you can only become
objective
about
• the world and
• the situation around you
to the degree that
you succeed
in being
truly objective
about yourself.*

36

*QUESTIONER:
I am
not afraid
of being hurt,
but I would like to learn
to stand back a little.*

*ANSWER:
That is all right.*

*You see,
my answer is not only given to you personally.*

It is of general interest.

*It is so easy to
• misunderstand [these factors about the right middle way
of facing negative experiences] **and**
• nurture the sick state in a personality.*

*As far as
you yourself
are concerned,*

*you have to find
this right middle way
by testing yourself
constantly.*

Whatever
your extreme
was so far,
it might be wise
to temporarily
lean a little more
in the other direction.

You should be aware
that this [other direction from what your extreme has been so far]
is also
extreme,
but
it [i.e., your leaning temporarily in this opposite direction]
will have to be that way for a while
until
you can reach the right balance.

In this discussion [between you]
you both
have the right idea,
but
each of you
has to find the proper balance
in yourselves
by realizing
toward which one of these two extremes
you
are inclined to lean.

37

QUESTION:
What would be the

- connection,
- similarities, and
- differences

between

- anti-life force

and

- the abuse of the life force?

ANSWER:

The abuse
of the life force
is
the anti-life force.

It [i.e., abuse of the life force]
brings
anti-life force
in its wake.

It is merely a distortion.

They [i.e., the abuse of the life force and the anti-life force]
are not
two separate forces.

It is
one current.

38

QUESTION:

May I bring up
the subject of lying.

What is
the spiritual point of view
about "white lies" –
lies
in order to

- protect a higher cause or
- prevent hurts?

ANSWER:

My answer

- cannot and
- must not

be given on
an
outer
level.

Many

- teachers and
- teachings
remain
on the
 - outer level,on the
 - level of
conduct.

On this [outer] level
the answer
could never be
conclusive.

In fact, it [i.e., an answer on the outer level, the level of conduct]
could be
dangerous.

On the
outer level,
rules are made
that become

- rigid and
- dead.

And [on the outer level, the level of conduct]
you cannot make
one rule.

There are
so many possibilities,
and each possibility
is different.

So my answer
may, at first, seem

- unclear

and, perhaps, even

- a little ambiguous.

It [i.e., my answer]
will not be as satisfactory
as if
I could pronounce
one

- rule and
- conduct

for all alternatives.

The only
true answer
is on the
inner
level,
and it is this:

39

You will
always
know

- what to do and
- what the right course is –
whether it concerns
 - this subject or
 - any other –

if you have learned
honesty
with yourself
to the maximum degree
you are capable of.

That [i.e., learning maximum honesty with yourself],
in itself,
is a long process.

Only in
yourself
do you find
the truth
that will then
govern
your proper
outer
conduct.

If you are
honest
with yourself,
you will be able to judge
• whether your dilemma
is based entirely on
• selfless motives –
• another person's hurt,
• a higher cause or
• whatever – or
• whether
these valid [and hence selfless] motives
may also hide
• a selfish one.

You will
know
how to evaluate it [i.e., evaluate your motive, dilemma, or situation].

The mere
• discovery and
• knowledge
of the possible
hidden
selfish
motive
will show you
what course to take.

About this [dilemma or situation you face and your motives for action],
no generalization
can be made.

The discovery
of the
selfish motive
will show you
that
the outer
selfless ones
are no longer valid.

In other instances,
you will
consider
the outer selfless motives
in spite of the fact
that you have discovered
selfish motives;

you will see
that
although there is
an advantage for yourself
in considering others,
this [action] is still
to the good all around.

Only
you will not
deceive yourself any longer [by thinking your motives and actions
are all selfless].

Even
the good course
would be harmful to you
if you
were unaware
of your own truth.

Again and again
I have to say,
the right conduct
we are all searching for
does not lie
in the

- action itself,

it lies
in the

- self-awareness and
- honesty.

That [i.e., self-awareness and honesty]
is the key
to all conflicts,
be it

- lying or
- anything else.

40

QUESTIONER:

Does that mean in essence
the change

from

- **"thou must not"**

to

- **"thou canst not"?**

ANSWER:

That [i.e., the change you suggest here]
would be included in it;

all right conduct

is always

done freely.

But it [i.e., But the change you suggest here]

is not exactly

what I said here.

What I discussed is

the importance

of realizing

- **possible hidden motives**

which may be

selfish,

while

- **the outer conscious motive**

may be

unselfish.

41

QUESTION:

This question was asked by someone who is absent.

What is the connection
between
the interplay
on the human plane
of

- action and
- reaction

and

- God's will,
- the higher self will,
- free will, and
- self-will?

ANSWER:

The higher self will

is

God's will.

There is

no difference [between the higher self will and God's will].

Since it [i.e., Since free will]

is

free,

- free will

may either be

- God's will

or

- self-will.

Even

- self-will

may correspond to

- God's will,

only the motive varies [between self-will and God's will].

In other words,

the goal [in self-will]

may be right [even though the motive is not right in self-will].

	<p><u>God's will</u> <u>is</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>relaxed,</u>• <u>patient,</u>• <u>unconcerned with one's ego.</u> <p><u>God's will</u> <u>is</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>flexible,</u> <p><u>while</u> <u>self-will</u> <u>may want to attain</u> <u>the same results</u> <u>but is</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>rigid,</u>• <u>impatient,</u>• <u>self-concerned.</u>
42	<p><u>The interaction –</u> <u>action and reaction</u> <u>between people –</u></p> <p><u>is a</u> <u>much more complicated</u> <u>problem.</u></p> <p><u>I suspect that</u> <u>the underlying question was –</u> <u>perhaps not entirely consciously –</u> <u>whether</u> <u>one</u> <u>is dependent on</u> <u>what</u> <u>another person</u> <u>creates</u> <u>with his own free will.</u></p>

In other words:

"If my neighbor chooses
with his free will
to commit a wrong,
and I am affected by it [i.e., if I am affected or hurt by
my neighbor's wrong action],

• how do I
come by it [i.e., how come I am affected or hurt by
my neighbor's wrong action]?

• How do I
deserve it [i.e., how do I deserve being hurt
by my neighbor's wrong action]?

• Am I
or am I not
a victim
of the arbitrary choice
of my fellow-creature's
• free will or
• self-will?"

The deeply hidden
fear of dependence
on other people's
• actions and
• motives

is a very important
problem of humanity,
which colors one's attitude to life.

I realize
it is very difficult
for you to
• grasp and
• understand
that you are
never,
never
dependent on
another person,
even if it seems that way.

That [i.e., that you are dependent on another person]
is the illusion of
the world of manifestation.

- The teachings and
- the path

I show you
must prove to you
forever more
that it is
you yourself
who inflicts

- difficulties,
- conflicts and
- hurts

on you,
no matter
how much
the other person
may be at fault.

If you are
free of

- images,
- illusions,
- wrong conclusions and
- wrong concepts,

the wrong deeds
of others
can
never
affect you.

You will then [i.e., You will, when you are free of images,
illusions, and wrong conclusions and concepts,]
learn to
adjust
to the world.

• Happy
or
• unhappy
incidents in your life,
• favorable
or
• unfavorable
happenings,
will have
exactly the same
effect on you.

Of course,
you are not that far yet.

But
by slow degrees
you approach it.

And some of my friends,
be it only
for a short instant,
have already
experienced
this great truth,
although
afterward
it may evaporate again.

Once experienced,
it is easier to
recapture the knowledge
and then
you can build on it.

43

If what I just said
is not entirely clear,
you can ask me to clarify it [i.e., to clarify what I have just said in this lecture]
in the next session.

Think about it [i.e., think about what I have just said in this lecture]
in the meantime.

44

My dearest friends,
may the words I gave you tonight
bring light
into your

- soul,

into your

- life.

Let them [i.e., let the words I gave you in this lecture]
fill your
heart.

Let them [i.e., let the words I gave you in this lecture]
be an instrument
to liberate you
from illusions,
my dearest friends.

I bless
each one of you,

- individually and
- as a whole.

God's world
is a wonderful world, and
there is
only
reason to rejoice

- on whatever plane
you live,
- whatever
 - illusions or
 - hardships

you
temporarily
endure.

Let them [i.e., let whatever illusions or hardships you temporarily endure]
be a medicine for you, and
grow

- strong and
- happy
with whatever
comes your way.

	<p><u>Be blessed.</u></p> <p><u>Be in peace.</u></p> <p><u>Be in God!</u></p>
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