

I AM The Vine

[Neville Goddard 1963 lecture series]

We're told in the 40th chapter of the Book of Isaiah, "The grass withers, the flower fades...but the word of God stands forever (verses 7 and 8)." This Bible is the word of God in its entirety. No matter how far it may exceed the limits of our logic, it still stands forever, and you and I will experience everything in that book. If at the moment we can't grasp it, don't try to change it, and leave it just as it is, It will prove itself in the most marvelous series of mystical experiences that you ever conceived. In fact, you couldn't conceive them. So don't even attempt to change the book, leave it just as it is. It stands forever. Everything will fade and wither, but it will stand forever.

Now we are told in the 84th Psalm, "Blessed are the men in whose heart are the highways of Zion. They go from strength to strength; the God of gods is seen in Zion (verses 5 and 7)." If you have the highway in your heart that leads to Zion, you will see God. And everyone is destined to go to Zion. Now the word Zion appears first in the 2nd Book of Samuel, the 8th chapter. I have yet to find a book written by anyone that can throw any light upon it, I'm not being arrogant: I have experienced it. So here in this book, the fifth chapter, beginning with the sixth verse, beginning with the first, for that matter, and you go through, say, ten or twelve verses of 2 Samuel. The word Zion appears for the first time. Zion was Jerusalem before occupied by Israel. The Jebusites occupied it – they were the lame and the blind – and it was impregnable, you could not take it. And they said to David, "You cannot come in here." Then said they, "The lame and the blind will ward you off." It would only take the lame, and the blind to keep you out of Zion. That's how perfectly arranged it was, impervious to any attack. But David took the stronghold of Zion and named it the city of David, which is the city of God, the New Jerusalem.

Then said David, "Whoever would take the Jebusites let him go up the shaft, the water shaft." The water shaft was a perpendicular shaft that led from the rock below to the rock above on which Zion was built. I have read unnumbered attempted interpretations of this, and they all conclude it doesn't make sense. Maybe the script is distorted, maybe someone changed it, but it doesn't make sense, For, said they, David is attempting to build a circular city at the same time he is building an inward city. So, they conclude that no man can build in a circle and inward at one and the same time, unless of course he is attempting to construct this strange architectural feat in a spiral manner. For then you can build the circle and the inward at one and the same time if you are going to do it in a spiral manner.

Over the centuries, they have been trying to find just such a structure in the Near East where we call Jerusalem, and it isn't there at all. It's all in us – the whole vast Bible takes place in man, individual man. And this is true. My entire circular world that I am building, and I am building the inner world. Here we are told, I look at it and it's made up of the lame and the blind, and they are strong enough to stop me from getting in to take the citadel. Yet I am told I must make the effort to take the citadel. And David takes it, Then he makes the statement, "Whoever would take this citadel must go up the shaft." From the bottom to the top, that's how he goes up, This is a perpendicular shaft that rests below, and it goes through all the rocks, right up to the top where Zion is built. So let me show you how it's done. We turn now to the 15th chapter of the Book of John, which is related to the 18th chapter of the Book of Isaiah. Here we are told about a strange vine. He said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in my that bears no fruit, my Father takes away, and every branch that bears fruit he prunes, that it may bear more

fruit" (verse 1). And you'll find a parallel in Isaiah 18. I look at my world, and everything seems on the outside but everything. It seems completely independent of my perception of it, everything in this world; I don't care what it is. This, the nearest thing in my world seems so completely detached and independent of my perception of it, and this is my circular world, as I look at the world; to the extent that I can take everything in my world and change it and make it conform to my ideal of what I think it ought to be, always using love as a motivation. Let me use my imagination lovingly on behalf of every being in this world, and see then, as they ought to be seen were they now actually enjoying what they are doing. Let me persuade myself that it is true. As I bring about these changes in my outer world, this circular thing, I am producing that circular motion within me. I'm binding it. And when I'm completely convinced that nothing in this world truly exists independently of my perception of it, but nothing; I have completed that circular motion.

And then will come that moment in time when I will have all these rocks, as told us in the 5th chapter of 2nd Samuel, they'll be split right down the middle, that which divided the land, and I will go up in circular motion to Zion. For we are told in the 84th Psalm that crowds of people are eagerly waiting to mount into Zion to display themselves before God, eagerly waiting. That whole vast world is waiting, but they don't know how to get there. You get there in the same way that David builds the city. Said the critics, no man can build in a circle and inward at one and the same time, unless, of course, he proposes to build in a spiral manner. How else could he do it? And they can't quite understand it. They have maps, all kinds of maps of the Near East, trying to in some way interpret this is where David did it. It hasn't a thing to do with modern Jerusalem or any Jerusalem. This is Jerusalem; this is Zion; this is Jerusalem. And I start from generation at the base of my skull. I go down into the base of my spine – that's where we generate in this world – and then I reverse the process. Someone told them, where I don't remember, but someone told them that nothing in this world truly exists independently of my perception of it. I may, at that very moment, have doubted it and then taken it under consideration. But maybe I experimented, and I proved at least to my own satisfaction that something worked. It seemed so completely independent of me.

And then I am told there are all the lame and the blind. Someone couldn't see his way toward a job, couldn't see his way toward something – he was lame, he was halt. And then I was told, he really is not independent of you, you know, that's your lameness, that's your blindness. He's in your world; that being is in your world, and that whole thing is in your world. He is unemployed, and yet he should be, because he has an obligation to life. He's unemployed? Well then, bring him into your mind's eye, because you are blind, you are the lame, and then do it. And you do it without his or her or their knowledge or consent, and it works. And up you begin to make this circular motion. As you change this fabulous circular world on the outside, you are moving up this way on the inside. As you move up by changing your world and making it conform to your dream, the ideal, ad it ought to be, you move up. One day, you hit the last point and then comes that enormous power of creativity, which was resting at the base of the spine. It was enormous power, and you were it. It was God all along, God is decent. And there you saw it, and you can say to yourself, "I know it is myself, O my Divine Creator and Redeemer." And you, as it, moved up in a circular manner, in the most perfect manner, just like a serpent. But you went in a circular manner right into Zion to present yourself before the Lord of hosts, the God of gods, and you are he. Everyone has to make the motion.

So, I tell you, you started by seeing your world. And if you look at the world, everything seems in a circle. Everything really is blind. Who can see tomorrow? They're speculating; they're all plotting and planning tomorrow. All the great leaders of the world are plotting and planning for us. Our political leaders are plotting not tomorrow; they're plotting next year's elections. Not this November, but a year from November. They're more concerned about a year from this coming

November than they are about any crisis tomorrow, as far as they are concerned. They aren't concerned about that; they're thinking of a year from November. That's a year and a half away. They're more concerned about the results than they are about things here and now, all plotting and planning and scheming. I tell you, forget it. Look upon your world, and you start doing it. Take a simple one in your world, maybe your servant, and maybe you have because of changes in your life you must let the servant go, let the employee go. But don't let him go or her go into the vacuum; see them gainfully employed before you let them go. When you give them, their severance pay, bring them into your mind's eye and see them more gainfully employed than you employed them. As you do that, you are moving up this way on the inside. Let the whole vast world deride you; I don't care what it does. They will still be plotting for tomorrow's election unnumbered centuries from now. But you will be in Zion.

Everyone must move into Zion, and you move into Zion in a definite technique. Listen to the words, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that bears fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit." And may I tell you, the true vine of eternity is the human imagination; that's Christ. Christ is really your own wonderful human imagination. It is he that is doing the work that must move up, and that's how he moves up. He moves up by transforming every being through the medium of love in this world, but every being, no matter who he is. And when I tell you the story, you may at this moment find this vine a wild tree. I found it a wild tree. Whenever I heard the story – whenever you hear it – at that moment it's a wild tree. And so, the poet said, "I found it a wild tree, whose wanton strength had a swollen into irregular twigs, But I pruned the plant and then it grew temperate in its vein expense of useless leaves and knotted as you see into these full clean clusters to repay the hand that wisely wounded it" (Browning).

And so, if you look, it's a wild, wild tree. I had brought in everything in this world based upon the bling and the lame on the outside. They're all blind. They couldn't see where they're going. They're all complaining, doing all kinds of things, criticizing, and they were lame, They were in need of help, and I allowed it because to me that was fact. Then I was told it doesn't exist independently of your perception of it, all this blindness and this lameness; it's all you pushed out. And so, when I found it, it was a wild tree. I hadn't pruned it, and I had allowed it over the unnumbered years of time to go into useless leaves. Then I became the vinedresser, and then I would prune it. So, it would start to bud, and then the bud became the blossom, and the blossom became the grape. As it ripened into the grape, then every branch that didn't have blossoms and grapes you cut it off. It isn't bearing. Well then, cut it off that it may not use the enormous power and sap these lovely clusters that could become bigger and bigger, and you cut it off. And so, everything in this world becomes now something out of your own wonderful mind. There's nothing in this world but God, nothing. God is taking everyone here individualizing himself and each becomes God, with the same power; and so, he has to do the same thing because my Father is the vinedresser. He is the vinedresser and every branch that bears no fruit he takes it away, and every branch that bears fruit he prunes it that it may bear more fruit.

So, someone will reach a certain level – there's no limit in this world – he's reached that. You can't coast in this world; there's no status quo. All right, push it up higher, something lovelier. And all of a sudden, this thing is moving, and it's moving in a peculiar way, up your entire spine. And when you've done it, so that no power in the world could change it, there's no one who could convince you that this isn't true. You've proven it. You've had the experience. And you can say with Cathy of Wuthering Heights – which undoubtedly are the words of Emily Bronte, but she puts her own experience into the words of a character – and she said, "I have dreamt in my life dreams that have stayed with me ever after and changed me ideas. They've gone through and through me, just like wine through water, and altered the color of my mind."

Emily Bronte undoubtedly awoke in a dream one day. It could have been a daydream or a night dream, but she awoke in the dream; and from that moment on, Emily Bronte never could be the same. When one awakes in a dream to find the dream not a dream, where you say of it, "I'm dreaming. No, I'm not, I am awake. It is really so," and the dream becomes as objective as this room is objective, then you can't think of anything in this world thereafter as you thought of it prior to that experience; you can't do it. So, you think of a person, and you see the person as they would like to be seen by the whole vast world. You may not succeed in awakening in that dream, but that's a dream. That's a daydream. You may not succeed. But you can't deny the experience that once you were dreaming in a similar way and you awoke in it and there he was, the embodiment of what you imagined him to be. You can't deny that. So, whether you fail a thousand times, you can't deny that there is such a possibility of thinking of a friend, seeing him as you would like to see him, as he would like to see himself, and awakening in that state to see that he's actually in that state – and then it comes through this world. Well, whether you succeed or not, you can't deny the experience. So, she said, "I have dreamt in my life dreams that stayed with me ever after and changed my ideas. They've gone through and through me like wine through water and altered the color of my mind." Like turning wine into water, you can't change it it's colored, and the whole thing remains colored. My life is colored, the pigment of my imagination, having had these experiences, and I can't change it.

So, I can tell you today, although the scholars will say it doesn't make sense...I was reading this day and I went to my Bible. Here, these are the so-called greatest scholars on the biblical score in this world today, a hundred-odd. The books are only a few years old. So, I opened up the book, and this is actually what he said, "Someone must have in some way disturbed the script, because one thing is certain" – and this is the word he used – "one thing is certain, this does not make sense." And there's no way they can rearrange it to give it sense, It makes all the sense in the world. For, said he, David is building in a circle and accepted architectural feat, this unusual architectural feat, of building spirally, building a spiral. That's exactly what he's doing, But the scholar did not have the experience of moving up in a spiral. And you move up in a spiral after you've been building and rearranging the circle. So, you take every person in your world; I don't care who he is, who she is, and you represent them to yourself as yourself that they are, and then they become it. And you are rearranging and building your circle. As you're doing it, you are actually performing an inner action, and you're moving up. Then comes that moment in time when there is a terrific severance of the stones. Bear in mind, David said, "Whoever will subdue the Jebusites, all these blind and the lame, let him go up the water shaft" (2nd Samuel 5:08). We must go up the water shaft, and that water shaft is in you. It's your own wonderful spinal column.

As we brought out last Friday night, Moses discovered the dwelling place of Jehovah, in a tree that was aflame. And yet though aflame it didn't consume him. A flaming tree – well, I am the flaming tree; you are the flaming tree. It's an actual flaming tree, and yet it doesn't consume. Like that little poem – only in that case it consumed – two little moths were sent by their king to investigate the nature of a flame because the flame is to a moth it's god. After a little while they returned with uncertain intelligence; one thought it was warm, and the other thought it was bright, but they didn't quite understand the nature of the flame. The third moth went and moved by true desire, he folded his wings beneath him and plunged headlong into the sacred fire, until he became one color and one substance with the flame. "He only knew the flame who in it burned and only he could tell who n'er to tell returned." But unlike this flame, you do return; I return. I have plunged headlong into the sacred flame when I saw it, and I knew it to be myself as I saw it. I didn't hesitate for one nth part of the nth part of a second; I plunged headlong into the sacred flame and went right up in a serpentine form into Zion, into my skull. I have returned to tell it, So I can tell you exactly what's going to happen to you. Every being in this world is going to have the identical experience. And so, we take the blind, and we take the lame, and we take the halt; we

take all these things, we change them and make them conform to it. As they conform to it, you, unknown to yourself, you are really building inward. Building inward. And finally, after unnumbered – how long I don't know – but there comes that moment when you least expect it – when these stones through which the shaft came are suddenly split from top to bottom. The temple is split from top to bottom, and you, plunging into the sacred flame, move up in this most marvelous way.

Then we are told there will come before you a tall, smooth-skinned lad. Again, reading that, they said Seraphin, for they are tall and majestic creatures. They can't get away from the outer flesh and blood. Hasn't a thing to do with the Ethiopian or any other majestic creature that he is. He is a majestic creature, no question about it, tall and majestic, but that's not the being. You are serpentine; you are seraphim, a being that is a flaming being. Yet you can't quite describe it; human face, yes; human hands, yes; human feet, but the form you can't describe. The best you can do when you come to it, it is serpentine, and it is smooth, and it is tall, and it is godlike; it is God. So that's the being we become as we move up. You remain in this world, clothed once more in this little garment, to tell it to everyone who will listen to it, until you leave and take off the garment for the last time. For as you move into Zion, you inherit the kingdom of God. That's the kingdom of God. But the glory of your inheritance cannot be fully realized while still wearing this garment. But the day will come in the not distant future because what is life but three score and ten. And remember David in the story he started to reign at thirty; he reigned for seven and a half years, and then reigned for thirty-three years and made his exit at seventy. You ask yourself, who is this, David? Who is this creature that conquered Zion, which is called God's living place? Whenever you see him, you will see him in Zion, for that is where God dwells. And David conquered it for him, and when David conquered it, then he sets the Father free. So, everyone who finds David and sees him as his son has been set free. For he, as David, conquered. So, he conquers by setting free the blind and the lame and the halt.

May I tell you, you will have an experience before the serpentine motion takes place, where you will anticipate the glory of that state. You will come upon a scene, but it will be preceded by a similar motion in you, a spiral motion, and a heavenly chorus will sing out. They will sing out, calling you by your name, "(You) are risen." And then you will see the blind, and the lame and the halt and the withered, and as you walk by everyone will be transformed into the most glorious creature you have ever seen. There will be no blind, no halt, and no withered, and you see them all and everyone will be made perfect. When the very last is made perfect, the chorus will exult, calling you again by name, and say, "It is finished!" And then, you will be encouraged to go on doing what you've been doing, telling everything you've seen. But you will do it, and you'll still do it. You may never hear from the unnumbered hundreds whose good news you heard, because only one in ten ever returns to ever say thank you. So don't expect two; they won't come. One will always say thank you, and the nine will go their way, saying it would have happened anyway. They could always justify the good fortune and never turn back. But one percent will always come back, one of ten, I should say, so ten percent. Ten will come back out of a hundred. You will hear it for hundreds, and they'll take it for granted and go their way. Because they think if they came back and thanked you, they should accompany the thanks with a bill, and you don't need their bill. They don't know you've inherited the kingdom of God. They're afraid to come back because they are attached to their thanks; some expression of thanks in the form of a gift, and you don't need their gifts.

But they will do it and they'll go their way and the ten percent, only ten out of a hundred, will return. But as they return, it only confirms this wonderful – that you can set free the blind and set free the lame. And as you do it, years later in my own case, because that happened to me in 1946, and it was in 1960 that this temple of mine was split from top to bottom, and I was moved up in a serpentine form into Zion, on the morning of April 8, 1960. So, from 1946 to 1960, yet I

went blindly on believing that I could transform people by simply believing in the reality of my imaginal act. And so, I believed it. I imagined that you were so and so, convinced myself that it was true, went about my business, and ten percent wrote me letters or saw me in person or called me on the wire to tell me that it worked. The other ninety percent went their way justifying and thought that they had saved a dollar. That's the world. But there was no charge attached to it in the first place. However, that's the picture of the world.

So here, we are told it doesn't make sense – somebody in some strange way has changed the script. The script hasn't changed. They can't find any older manuscript or any other manuscript that doesn't say the same thing. But scholars can't understand it, so they conclude, "One thing for sure of which we are certain, this doesn't make sense." So, they're sure. Because you cannot build in a circle and inward at once and the same time, unless, of course, said he, you're performing the most unusual architectural feat of building in, spirally. Well, you are building in spirally, of which you are totally unaware. But the spiral only begins when you're going to conquer a land where there are the blind and the lame. And that blind and the lame, it's Zion, ruled by the Jebusites. It is said it is so impervious of attack, it's so impregnable, you could never attack it. There's the smallest little garrison on the blind and lame to ward off the blows of David. But David conquered Zion. Then he said, "Whoever would conquer Zion, let him move up this shaft, "the only way to do it. They think of a huge, big place, that is an enormous city, and down below where the water came that David and his men got under the ground, came down by the water's edge; and in some strange way came up the shaft and conquered it from within. Well, he did, but not as they planned it. Because the Zion that he conquers is his own skull, where "All that you behold, though it appears without, is within, in your imagination, of which this world of mortality is but a shadow." There's nothing on the outside, even though everything tells you that it is. And so, at that moment, when everything is screaming how real it is, independent of your perception of it, it is then that you've got to start applying this principle.

And someone who would not listen to you, but you love him. You're going to tell everyone, he will not listen to you; nevertheless, without his consent you see him, as he would like to see himself. And maybe he will be one of the nine who never return. Because it's going to happen so naturally to him, he will never think that you in any way had any part in the doing. So, leave him alone, perfectly alright. But to your own satisfaction, you saw a transformation: the blind is not blind any more. And he wasn't lame anymore. He didn't come home bringing excuses to his wife that things are bad, competition is horrible, and so he isn't lame anymore. He comes home with his head up and it's marvelous. And so, you heard off it; it doesn't matter, you heard it. And so, the lame is no more the lame, and you are conquering. As you conquer all the lame is no more the lame, and you are conquering. As you conquer all the lame and all the blind in your world, suddenly up you go into Zion. And may I tell you, I can't tell you the thrill and the joy that comes to the individual who moves up in that serpentine form right into Zion and becomes a member of the hierarchy. He knows in the depth of his soul that if he remains for another ten years or twenty years or whatever the interval, I tell you, it's only until the garment for the last time comes off; for he has gone up. But he's hoped that he has told it so that they understood it to the point where they would believe it and practice it, that they too may start the process of building the city, starting, yes, in a circle but also inward at the same time. And so, it is inward; it's all done in silence, and up they go one day when they least expect it. Now let us go into the silence.

Q: But what about the other holy scriptures of denominations?

A: What about other books other than the Bible? Well, first of all, the Torah is the first five books of our Bible, Genesis through Deuteronomy. When it comes to the others, I am not qualified to really pass a serious judgement on it. I firmly believe that God's greatest revelation is given to us

in what we call our Bible; I firmly believe it. I am not denying that he reveals himself in other ways at certain times, but I am convinced that what we call the Old and the New Testament are God's greatest revelation to man. And to me the final revelation would be that of a son, as told us in the Book of Hebrews: that "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets" – in the Old Testament – "but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son" (Hebrews 1:1). And that is this fabulous revelation. No one understood it – the great vision of the prophets – until finally it happened. And it didn't happen as people thought it should happen. He didn't come as some conquering hero, enslaving others to set Israel free. Israel is not a race or a nation; Israel was the pure in heart. Every person, regardless of nation, regardless of race, regardless of everyone, an Israelite is pure in heart.

And so, he's come to us that in all these years, eons of time, to produce the pure in heart, where man could really see that it was not independent of his own perception of it, and therefore started to work on himself. And forgive and forgive. Regardless of what happens, you forgive him, because he's yourself pushed out, and transform him that he himself is set free; for he has conquered. And so, when David conquers, he sets the Father free. You look and it's yourself, my Divine Creator and Redeemer, and I know it's myself and then go up. So, you are he, the Father set free by your own conquering as David, for David is humanity, and he has to overcome and overcome and overcome. But as far as the other books....

Q: ___(??) in Acts, where Christ was speaking through the Holy Ghost...

A: The Book of Acts? The Book of Acts is but an extension of the Book of Luke, written by the same author, and it introduces the truly great character outside of Jesus Christ; it introduces the truly great character in the New Testament that is Paul. Paul ___(??) and then Paul begins with "the people of the way," for Christians were called at the beginning "the people of the way." Well, Christ was made to say, "I am the way." People thought before it meant an individual. There were only the people of the way. What is the way? This is the way. The way to what? The way to the Father. He said, "I am the way. No man comes unto the Father except by me." So, the Acts introduces the people of the way – those who will ___(??) as the way to follow. For Fatherhood implies sonship, and so he brings in the picture of Father and Son.

Q: What is the psychological significance of...

A: Well, Mary is the Anglicized form of Maria. Maria is really the great sea, the great water. It can take any form. Water can take any form that you give it. We are told in the 2nd chapter of Luke, "Fear not; for I bring you glad tidings of great a joy to all the people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." They city of David is Zion; Zion is your skull; that's where he is born. "Now this will be a sign unto you; you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying on the floor" (verse 10). And they go and they find exactly what the messenger of the Lord had told them. They found exactly the child, as a sign. The churches have completely confused the issue, and they say a little child was born in a normal way of a holy woman who didn't know a man. You are the holy woman, I am that holy woman, and the womb in us is our skull. That is the skull, that's the womb-skull that was in the beginning a tomb.

Out of that womb, we are born, but our birth is symbolized in that of a little babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying on the floor. The night it happens to you or the day it happens to you, wise men will be present to witness the event because there must be witnesses to the event. In my own case, I had the witnesses, three but even if I didn't have one, I would still have two – the inward testimony of the Spirit, for I can't forget it, and the outward testimony of scripture, for scripture records it. But I did have in my own mystical vision three who were present to witness

the finding of the babe. So, Mary is no more than every child born of woman in this world. I am Mary, you are Mary, every person is Mary, and this birth comes not from the womb of woman; it comes from the skull of man. As told us in the first chapter of John, "Born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" (verse 13). It comes from above, this birth; it doesn't come from the womb. This body came from the womb, but my experience of the birth from above came from God. So, everyone will be born from above, and from above out of your own wonderful skull. That's the actual birth. I mean it literally.

As we told you earlier this night, the Bible in its entirety is the Word of God, even if it goes so far as to completely go beyond the limit of our login. Who can say yes to the question asked in the Book of Jeremiah, "Can a man bear a child?" And the one who asked the question is the Lord God of hosts. He doesn't wait for the response; he completes it, "Why then do I see every man drawing himself out of himself just like a woman in labor? Why does every face turn pale? That's the 30th chapter of the Book of Jeremiah (verse 6). So, he asks the question. Well, one could not answer yes to the question "Can a man bear a child?" They'd have to say no. And yet, here is a prophecy that every man in this world is going to bear a child. It's going to be only a symbol of his own birth from above. He himself will be born out of his own wonderful skull, and he will be born in the city of David which is Zion. And this is a sign of his birth; for what was born is the Savior, and the Savior is Jehovah. The word Savior is Joshua, and Joshua is Jehovah, is Jesus. Everyone who is born that way is Jesus the Savior. And so, he'll find what? – the symbol of his birth. A symbol of his birth? A babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying on the floor. Who said lying in a manger? I am giving you the actual fact: lying on the floor. But the churches over the centuries have dressed it up to give reason to it. You don't give reason to it; it's lying on the floor. Goodnight.