

I Can Now See the Sun

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“Nothing, I believe, can really teach us the nature and meaning of inspiration but personal experience of it. That we may all have such experience if we will but attend to the Divine influences in our own hearts, is the cardinal doctrine of Quakerism.”

—Caroline Stephen

Peace and Greetings to All,

As I sit here contemplating my future, I think of you and what you have brought into my life. I now look forward to tomorrow. Before now, I was filled with a weary sense of being, trying to understand how I came to be in the situation I find myself in. It is strange how, when a person is young, one can become so self-assured and -centered and content with what life seems to offer. Yet, little does one know that there are so many different roads and paths that inter-change with others, and the more we move forward, the greater the distance to be travelled becomes. One is not aware of what lies ahead until one gets there and then at times we may ask, “How did I get here?”

These were times when I found myself at these crossroads, wondering, “Where do I go now...what shall I do now?” In the meantime, everyone in the world finds themselves on the same route, establishing themselves and paving their way into tomorrow.

It seems as if I have been searching for my entire life to find myself, not so much as an individual but as a person who is a part of the whole. I have travelled and witnessed much of the “blind view” in the “ocean of darkness” which has led me to experience a not-too-enjoyable life.

But the Sun came out, bringing Light and Life to my weary Soul; engulfing me in its warmth and tender embrace. I don’t know when it happened but once I took that step I knew I was on a path that would lead me to the sense of comfort I sought. So now I am coming into knowing how to live; that what I do now is only a small but significant part of a larger role in the scheme of things to come towards a greater glory. I recognize that I have been placed here as an example to others so they may know the path I walked is not the road to take. I allowed myself to become one with what was around me instead

of blazing my own individual path. And that now it is to be understood that our life, like all other lives, is a gift we should not take lightly, not to be wasted or put on the shelf for some future usage. That our collective future is now to be embraced, to be grabbed with both hands and lived for today, as today is only our preparation for tomorrow. One should learn from the past, not dwell in it. And so life goes on.

I am a part of the bigger picture and must realize that I have a strong sense of self-worth, if I would only look inside me to see who I really am. I now recognize that what I do today can hurt or help another in life—and I am tired of the hurt I have caused in the past. I have carried this burden since I have begun to hurt others, not knowing what it was nor its cause. But now I have come to realize that I, too, have the power to heal and I feel good about it. I've learned that knowing I had the fortitude to endure this experience has built my character and has helped make me a better person. And for that, I am thankful!

I can now see the Sun and enjoy its warmth and life-giving rays to help me better navigate my way through dark days that may lie ahead. Yes, I even have a sense of understanding the parable “I was blind but now I see....”

Thank you for allowing me to share this with you. It is not often I am able to speak to such an attentive audience who express appreciation for what I may have to say. I shall always work to make you proud. In The Spirit! Peace.

Knowledge

Yohannes “Knowledge” Johnson (82A1913) is currently imprisoned at Green Haven Correctional Facility, located in Stormville, New York. A member of the Green Haven Prison Worship Group (Clerk), he was introduced to the Quakers in the mid-1980's, participated in AVP training (basic and advance) and first became Clerk around 1993-5. Transferred in 1997, he returned in 2014. In 2016 he was accepted as a member of the Bulls Head Oswego Monthly Meeting and is active as a member.