**CLIMBING THE GREAT MOUNTAIN**

*Beloved Maha Chohan speaks*

*March 7, 1954 (Bulletin 1:213-14)*

Beloved Children,

A question that is often asked is, “What is consciousness?”

A man's consciousness is comprised of that of which he is aware, or has been acquainted with through the experiences of life. The outer world divides the consciousness into the SUB-CONSCIOUS, wherein is contained the experiences of the past, and which is sometimes buried deep within the nature, the CONSCIOUS, which comprises the experiences of the present, and the SUPER-CONSCIOUSNESS, or higher unfoldment, toward which man is striving.

The students, as well as the average man, are constantly enlarging their sphere of conscious knowledge through every-day experience, from the time of birth until the end of their embodiment. A child of two has not the consciousness of the grown man, and the experiences, education, and instruction of childhood make him aware of a great deal more in the universe than his infant mind could comprehend.

For illustration, we shall take an individual at the foot of a great mountain. He is conscious, through the medium of his sight and hearing faculties, of his surroundings, of the ledge from which the climb would begin, of his fellow-travelers, of the plain, the shrubbery, and other things. If it happens to be his initial journey or ascent, he will not be conscious of what is at the apex of the mountain until, through his own life energy, he has made the grade.

He may have, implanted into this consciousness, a vague picture of the top, through the description given by others, through photographs, and so on, but, although the top of the mountain, the surrounding scenery, the snow-capped summit shining in the sun, is even now presented to him, it is a view—or a consciousness—into which he can enter only through personal effort. Now once he has climbed the mountain by the energy of his life, that experience will record the fullness of the beauty that is at the top, and that consciousness will be his forever.

You will see, then, that many men and many women will never make that climb, and for them, the consciousness of the mountain top will ever remain in the super-consciousness, because they are not aware of it, except by the tales, descriptions or photographs of others, and the effort daunts them.

It is exactly the same with the human and the Ascended Master Consciousness. The Ascended Master Consciousness (like the summit of the mountain) is ever present. The mass of mankind live beneath it—the few hear of it through description or allegory—but in order to make it your own, the ascent must take place through the energy of your own lifestream. However, once you have achieved that summit of mastery, although you return again to the affairs of the outer world, it is a part of your nature and experience which no one can erase.

No one can take from a man, ascended or unascended, any experience that widens the consciousness—whether it be a sight of exquisite beauty in nature's cathedral, or whether it be the entrance of the soul into the realms of spirit, for consciousness is the sole property of each individual lifestream, and is one activity that cannot be stolen or destroyed. Therefore, what a man builds into his consciousness by contemplation and effort, is his for eternity. The path leading to the summit is reached through contemplation, initiation, invocation, and perseverance. Why stand ye at the foot looking upward? Ask your own Holy Christ Self to lead you to the apex and be FREE!”