

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 214 ~ Review VI [194] I place the future in the Hands of God.

Sarah's Commentary:

Chapter 18 VI (ACIM OE VII) describes the ego strategy very clearly, telling us that the ego made up a story that we had sinned and that it was so horrific we had to flee into the body to try to escape from what we have done. **"And you have done a stranger thing than you yet realize. You have displaced your guilt to your body from your mind. Yet a body cannot be guilty, for it can do nothing of itself."** (T.18.VI.2.4-6) (ACIM OE T.18.VII.50) The guilt comes from the belief we have sinned. So now we try to protect the mind from this thought, which is why the guilt in the mind is projected onto the body and the world. It is all part of a carefully contrived strategy to confuse us about what we are, making us believe that we are a body and not an eternal Child of God. The ego does not want us to remember our identity as Christ because that would be its demise since we would no longer give it any power. We would then claim our true identity as the eternal, unlimited Self.

Presently, we think the body is the problem. It is not good enough, not smart enough, not healthy enough, and seems to make demands on us, gets sick, ages, and dies; but it is not what we are. It was made to put all our attention outside the mind and onto the body and the world, which now seems to be solid and real. The body was given senses to prove there is a world external to us and real and solid. Yet only mind has reality. What we experience in the body and the world is all a dream. We see ourselves as victims of events beyond our control, over which we have no power. The story of sin and guilt, which the ego made up, is kept hidden by our decision not to look at its source in the mind. We can exercise choice once we become aware of the ego's strategy.

In Chapter 18 VII (ACIM OE 18 VIII) **"I Need Do Nothing,"** we are told that we still have too much faith in the body as a source of strength. All our plans, in one way or another, involve the body, its comfort, its protection, and its enjoyment. Much time and attention goes into taking care of the body, washing it, feeding it, pampering it, exercising it, resting it, and pleasuring it. It becomes the focus of all our attention. In this way, the body becomes an end in itself and not the means to be in service to the process of awakening from this dream. It becomes the entire focus of our existence, instead of a useful tool for communicating love, peace, and joy. What is startling to remember is that the body does not exist at all in the present moment. It is always remembered or anticipated. It is why when we enter the present, the NOW, the body is forgotten. It is nothing and nowhere. In the experience of the holy instant, we have a glimpse of the eternal formless Self that is our reality.

In Chapter 18 VIII (ACIM OE T.18 IX), Jesus says that the body is a limit on love. The belief in limited love was the origin of the body. It was made to limit the unlimited. **"The body is a tiny fence around a little part of a glorious and complete idea."** (T.18.VIII.2.5) (ACIM OE

T.18.IX.72) In the experience of the holy instant, there is an experience of the expansive unlimited Self where the body is forgotten.

What keeps us from this experience? We say we want it, yet there is resistance, but Jesus says, **"Release is given you the instant you desire it."** (T.18.VII.4.3) (ACIM OE T.18.VIII.66) It is thus our desire that determines our release. **"Now you must learn that only infinite patience produces immediate effects."** (T.5.VI.12.1) (ACIM OE T.5.VIII.81) It is not something we need to strive for. The truth is that we are, at this very moment, in a state of infinite bliss and love, and the reason we need do nothing is that there is nothing we *can* do to change the truth about ourselves. Who we are is always with us as our reality. We have just forgotten, but we now prepare our minds to remember the truth about ourselves. We do so by bringing awareness to the blocks to love in the mind, taking responsibility for them without judging ourselves and being willing to release them to the Holy Spirit.

"In silence and in true humility I seek God's glory, to behold it in the Son whom He created as my Self." (W.211.1.2) Humility means we happily let go of our plans and our intentions on how to achieve the holy instant. We don't know, and that is a relief. We can leave it all in God's Hands. As Jesus reminds us, **"You have been wrong in thinking that it is needful to prepare yourself for Him. It is impossible to make arrogant preparations for holiness, and not believe that it is up to you to establish the conditions for peace."** (T.18.IV.4.3-4) (ACIM OE T.18.V.35) **"To do nothing is to rest, and make a place within you where the activity of the body ceases to demand attention."** (T.18.VII.7.7) (ACIM OE T.18.VIII.69) It is a **"quiet center of the storm."** (T.18.VII.8.2) (ACIM OE T.18.VIII.70) It is a place free of thoughts, free of guilt, and free of projection. It is where we simply rest in God. There is such sweet release, in that moment, from the demands we have placed on ourselves and such sweet release from the relentless, obsessive, and compulsive thoughts of the ego.

Think about what keeps you from peace. Isn't it the relentless, obsessive thoughts that go around and around, regurgitating past events, focusing on events that keep us feeling guilty, planning for future events, chewing on what has seemingly happened or should happen, and strategizing and fantasizing on how we want things to be. It is not a peaceful state. It produces stress as a result of the mind being obsessively occupied. To pray for peace of mind is not helpful in this kind of situation. What is most helpful is to leave the turmoil, withdraw attention from it and go to where the peace is already in the mind. It is to step away from the egoic thoughts and rest in God.

What does it mean to place the future in the Hands of God? What is fundamental to this is trust. In the Manual for Teachers, we are told that trust is the foundation on which our ability to fulfill our function rests. We are told not to trust in the laws the world made up, but to be governed by the power of God's laws. However, we need an experience of that power to develop the trust. Once we do, we no longer rely as readily on our own petty strength. **"Who would attempt to fly with the tiny wings of the sparrow when the mighty power of an eagle has been given him?"** (M.4.I.2.2) No matter how impressed we get with our power to manifest, which reflects a strong desire to attract what we think we want, it can never match the power available to us when we join with God's Will.

How do we develop this kind of trust? The process that we go through is one of undoing and sorting the valuable from the valueless. Ultimately, **"It takes great learning to understand that all things, events, encounters and circumstances are helpful."** (M.4.I.A.4.5) Does it feel to you in your life that all events, encounters, and circumstances are helpful? Probably not. Some things seem bad and some we label as good. Yet in the Lesson yesterday, we learned that

"All things are lessons God would have me learn." (W.193) Nothing is bad or good. It is only the judgments we make about the events of our lives that hurt us. When we turn the judgments over and learn forgiveness is the answer to all trials and tribulations, we experience the miracle. All experiences provide us with an opportunity to heal our thoughts and see the miracle in *every* situation, no matter how it might appear.

In the section called, "**The Test of Truth**", Chapter 14 XI (ACIM OE T.14.VII), Jesus shows us how we can tell the difference between the ego and the Holy Spirit. **"You have one test, as sure as God, by which to recognize if what you learned is true. If you are wholly free of fear of any kind, and if all those who meet or even think of you share in your perfect peace, then you can be sure that you have learned God's lesson, and not your own."** (T.14.XI.5.1-2) (ACIM OE T.14.VII.63) Sometimes we spend hours trying to figure out what some event or circumstance in our lives means. We look for answers for our lives in every corner of the mind. Yet the only problem is separation and the only answer is peace. The only answer is to surrender into God. Every problem will dissipate, or if not, it will look very different to us from this place of peace and deep release. **"Perhaps it will be helpful to remember that no one can be angry at a fact. It is always an interpretation that gives rise to negative emotions, regardless of their seeming justification by what appears as facts."** (M.17.4.1-2) Now, whatever situation is there in front of us, if there is something to be said or done, we will be guided and will proceed from a place of peace.

As Jesus reminds us, **"Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all of the barriers within yourself that you have built against it. It is not necessary to seek for what is true, but it is necessary to seek for what is false."** (T.16.IV.6.1-2) (ACIM OE T.16.V.32) It is all about undoing the guilt in the mind. It is all about clearing the dark clouds that obscure the truth about us. We must refuse to teach ourselves, and instead, we must release ourselves from the belief that we know the answers for our awakening. **"You are still convinced that your understanding is a powerful contribution to the truth, and makes it what it is."** (T.18.IV.7.5) (ACIM OE T.18.V.39) We must become as little children who don't know and agree to release our own ideas and to be taught. Whenever our peace is threatened, it is helpful to remember, **"I do not know what anything, including this, means. And so I do not know how to respond to it. And I will not use my own past learning as the light to guide me now."** (T.14.XI.6.7-9) (ACIM OE T.14.VII.65)

We need help to set aside our ego thought system and be willing to ask. In T.18.IV (ACIM OE T.18.V) "**The Little Willingness**," Jesus talks about preparing our minds for the Holy Instant. **"You prepare your mind for it only to the extent of recognizing that you want it above all else. It is not necessary that you do more; indeed, it is necessary that you realize that you cannot do more. Do not attempt to give the Holy Spirit what He does not ask, or you will add the ego to Him and confuse the two."** (T.18.IV.1.4-6) (ACIM OE T.V.32) We think we need to do more, yet to do more is only to add the ego into the mix.

Today, we look at our insane thought system again, where we believe our sins of the past deserve punishment. Our belief that we deserve to suffer is now put to question. As we do the forgiveness work, we are told, **"And you will see by your experience that you have laid the past and present in His Hands as well, because the past will punish you no more, and future dread will now be meaningless."** (W.194.4-6) Our experience will be one of acceptance of whatever shows up in our lives. We accept this world as a classroom and the events as opportunities for healing. We welcome these opportunities; if not in the moment, then when we eventually come to see their perfection in supporting our goal for healing and peace.

Today, we step back from our beliefs and look at them from outside of this dream and see that they make no sense. If God is love, He gives only love and brings no punishment, nor can death be true. Whenever we are miserable and unhappy, the ego uses that as proof that God is behind it all. The truth is that holding onto misery or despair is simply a defense we use to prove that God is wrong about us. The cause of my upset is always in my own mind. I have given attention to an ego thought. Now I can look at this with the Holy Spirit, question its reality and make another choice. This need not be. I am willing to be wrong about the way I see it and what I am believing. I am willing to be corrected. I am not guilty but only mistaken in my perception. I can actively make a choice for peace.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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