

## ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



### **LESSON 241** **This holy instant is salvation come.**

#### **Sarah's Commentary:**

We are now looking at the question **"What is the World?"** (W.PII.Q3) It is so important to reflect on this question because our current perceptions are based on the belief that the world is real and what is outside of our own minds is the cause of our difficulties. If this were true, we would indeed be at the mercy of the world. But the world is illusory. Its origin is the ego's thought system of separation, based on a belief in sin, guilt, and fear. Sin, guilt, and fear projected out from the wrong mind make a world of time and space. Sin reflects the belief that we have done something wrong in the past. Now we feel guilt in the present, and we fear retribution in the future. We hold the belief that we have done something terribly wrong and therefore there is something inherently wrong with us. Jesus says that we live in a state of uneasiness as a result. **"And where, you wonder, does your strange uneasiness, your sense of being disconnected, and your haunting fear of lack of meaning in yourself arise? It is as though you wandered in without a plan of any kind except to wander off, for only that seems certain."** (T.22.I.1.6-7) (ACIM OE T.22.II.5)

It is important to see how we have been caught up in this dream that has no reality in truth. Jesus tells us emphatically, "There is no world." Yet, he says that our experience in the world can be very helpful by serving a different purpose than the one we gave it. We can use it as a classroom for undoing our false perceptions. Now everything in the world has an important purpose for undoing our misperceptions, instead of reinforcing our wrong-minded beliefs about ourselves. All the events of our lives become the curriculum for healing our misperceptions about ourselves and the world.

**"The world is false perception. It is born of error and it has not left its source."** (W.PII.Q3.1.1-2) Jesus teaches that ideas have not left their source in the mind. So the source of this world is the false idea we hold that we have left our home in Heaven and are now separate from God, wandering lost and alone in an illusory world of time and space. It is a mistaken thought because we cannot leave the Mind of God since ideas leave not their source. As an idea in the Mind of God, we cannot leave our Source (God) except in dreams. Believing that we have left our Source, we have become lost in our dream, forgetting that we are the dreamer. Everything that arises in the wrong mind of the ego is no longer true, as it all comes from the false self. Thus, the world projected from a belief in a separated state has no foundation in what is real. It is nothing but a projection of the thought system of the ego.

In reality, the separation never happened. We are still at home in God, dreaming that there is a world outside of us. We appear as dream figures, playing parts that are make-believe with others who are also playing parts in our drama. The source of this dream is our own mind, and thus it is an illusion that will not last past the thought that gave rise to it. It reflects our unconscious belief that we have sinned against God and are now unworthy of His Love. **"When the thought of**

**separation has been changed to one of true forgiveness, will the world be seen in quite another light; and one which leads to truth, where all the world must disappear and all its errors vanish." (W.PII.Q3.1.4)**

It is not unlike a nighttime dream in which we wake up and realize that nothing that seemed to have happened in the dream was true. Everything in the dream came from our own minds. When we wake up, we see everything from another perspective. We see that nothing real has happened. We are still as we were before we fell into this dream state. And this is a good analogy for how we can look at the dream of this separated world in which we think we are bodies with unique characteristics as individuals, all different and separate from each other and separate from God. When we completely step out of this dream that we have taken so very seriously, the world will vanish. It will then be the happy dream of the awakened mind. Until we come to the happy dream in which the ego thought system is undone, the world can serve a mighty purpose.

The Lesson today is all about our responsibility, should we choose to accept it, to set ourselves and the world free through forgiveness. It takes faith to accept that through forgiveness we can change our experience of the world. In fact, that is the only change possible. That is why Jesus tells us, **"This is the time of hope for countless millions."** (W.241.1.6) The result of our decision to forgive our false perceptions is beyond our ability to perceive. It only makes sense from the perspective that there is only One Mind. As miracle workers, we must accept the Atonement for ourselves. When we accept the Atonement, (Correction) in our own minds we accept it for everyone. This is how healing happens.

In the state of the happy dream, we are still in the world but experience it from outside of the dream. As we increasingly withdraw meaning from the events of the world, we see it as the illusion that it is. We now become the witness of the events of our lives, rather than identifying with the dream figures. As a witness, we can go through experiences that can be painful, disturbing, and distressing and not engage in them. We are removed from them, as we watch the experience from above the battleground. We witness them without judging them or ourselves. As Ken Wapnick says, we might see ourselves sitting with Jesus next to us in the theater, watching our lives on the screen as we might watch a movie. The activity on the screen is not our concern. The important thing is to watch the movie of our lives without judgment.

The content of this world is fear, no matter how pretty the illusion can seem to us at times. The ground beneath our feet seems solid, but there is nothing solid about the world. It is a place of decay and destruction, where death prevails and all things ultimately rot and disappear. It is a world where we believe we need protection, and thus we erect defenses. It is a world of attack. **"The world was made as an attack on God. It symbolizes fear. And what is fear except love's absence."** (W.PII.Q3.2.1-3) It is not real. Jesus says, **"There is no life outside of Heaven."** (T.23.II.19.1) (ACIM OE T.23.III.37) If we accept this, then there must be no life in this world! **"Life not in Heaven is impossible, and what is not in Heaven is not anywhere. Outside of Heaven, only the conflict of illusion stands; senseless, impossible and beyond all reason, and yet perceived as an eternal barrier to Heaven."** (T.23.II.19.6-7) (ACIM OE T.23.III.37)

We take the forms in the world as reality and do not recognize the content of guilt and hate that they contain. If we did, would we still want them? Jesus asks us, **"Can you paint rosy lips upon a skeleton, dress it in loveliness, pet it and pamper it, and make it live?"** (T.23.II.18.8) (ACIM OE T.23.III.36) This is what we apparently do, being fooled by the appearance and losing sight of the content of hate. We try to make believe that it is a beautiful world with lovely sentiments as expressed in the song, "It's a Wonderful World." Instead, we are being told that it is a world born of error. The cause of the world is the error in the mind. It is therefore not a

creation of God. The world will simply remain no longer than the thought that gave birth to it. When the thought of separation is no longer cherished, the world will be no more. It must then vanish. Healing the guilt in the mind brings about the end of the world.

Instead of the Oneness of Heaven where there is nothing to perceive, we have a world of duality instead where **"The mechanisms of illusion have been born instead."** (W.PII.Q3.3.1) These mechanisms are our senses, which report the world as real. God did not create our bodies nor our bodily senses. **"But eyes deceive, and ears hear falsely. Now mistakes become quite possible, for certainty has gone."** (W.PII.Q3.2.6-7) The purpose is to deceive us by witnessing to something not real. It seems real to us because the eyes and ears bring back information to the brain, convincing us that what we see is "out there," rather than a projection or hallucination of our own minds. **"They see in its illusions but a solid base where truth exists, upheld apart from lies."** (W.PII.Q3.3.4) The truth now seems like a lie, and the illusion feels real and solid.

The choice for the thought system of the ego has resulted in guilt. This guilt is unbearable so the world of specifics was made where differences are seen. We see a world of victims and perpetrators. The guilt in the mind is projected onto the forms of the world and seen outside of our own minds. This becomes the ego's solution to get rid of the guilt. Though it is very convenient for the ego, it is disastrous for our minds. What the ego has not conveyed to us is that projecting guilt is how we keep it! We have been deceived into thinking that by seeing others guilty, we can "buy" our innocence at their expense. It is a brilliant plan by the ego. The only problem is that it does not work. We can never achieve innocence by blaming others and seeing ourselves victimized and unfairly treated. All this does is to keep us invested in the identification with the false self. The world is now seen as reality, and God's Love is seen as illusory.

When Jesus says, **"For I will be forgiven by you today,"** (W.241.1.8) my first reaction is to wonder what we are to forgive him for? In effect, with each brother we forgive, Jesus, as part of the One Mind, is also being forgiven, as we all are. Every act of forgiveness with anyone brings forgiveness to all. Our function is to overcome the world as Jesus did, not to try to change it. As David Hawkins says, the world is a place of maximum karmic opportunity where we can go all the way to enlightenment. The opportunity we have in the world is maximum for our awakening, which means that in every event and every circumstance in our lives, no matter how challenging it seems, there is maximum potential for healing.

The Lesson today is of hope and of release from the belief in victimhood and karma. We can wake up from this dream. Everything we need for healing is being provided. When we apply them, the means given us in the Course assure our awakening. There is no need to delay, as it only causes more suffering. This is a day where we can choose to bring release to this darkened world, so sorrows can indeed pass away and pain be gone. Our healing can thus make a tremendous difference in the world.

It is up to us to accept the gift of healing and to be an example of healing by extending His Love and Light to everyone we encounter. This is how we come back to God. **"We have forgiven one another now, and so we come at last to You again."** (W.241.2.1) That is our way back home. And yes, we need not wait. Everything changes when our entire purpose is focused on healing through forgiveness. We choose Heaven or hell in every moment and in every decision. The way out is to forgive. When we forgive, we deny the power of the illusion, we release grievances, and we choose joy. We forgive every confusion, every sense of failure, every projection, every time we need to be right, every time we try to get others to do it our way, every fear, every sense of self-righteousness, every judgment we have against anyone, every instance of intolerance, every failure to love, every lie, every involvement in issues not our affair, every lack of compassion,

every time we feel separate and alone, every time we get invested in gossip, any judgment we hold against ourselves, and any moment we are seeing ourselves as superior to anyone. It is a decision for peace instead of war. It offers us a profound leap forward.

Accept the gift of healing today. This is the gift we accept for the world. This is the hope for us all. Let us focus on this deep desire for reconciliation today. Who are you having a struggle with? Who do you have grievances with today? Remind yourself, "**This holy instant is salvation come**" (W.241) because I have chosen forgiveness instead of attack. We remind ourselves today that we hold the desire for peace as more important than any conflict. Each time we choose forgiveness, we bring more illumination to this tired world. We recognize the love we are when we leave the hell made by our belief in the ego story.

Love and blessings, Sarah  
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