



LESSON 78

Let miracles replace all grievance.

Sarah's Commentary:

This is another amazing Lesson with a classic forgiveness exercise, where grievances are identified as the problem and miracles are the solution. There is so much power and so much promise in this Lesson, while also eminently practical in its application. The entire Lesson is written in iambic pentameter. All Lessons from Lesson 98 on are written in this kind of blank verse, which reverberates like the beat of a heart in its rhythm of ten syllables per line with the accent on the second syllable. Thus, reading it resonates in a poetic and symphonic way in our minds. I think it is meant to bypass our conscious awareness, like listening to beautiful music. For me, it also illustrates how this dictation must have come from a mind far beyond this world although reminiscent of Shakespeare.

This Lesson gives us the key to our release from hell and darkness where we find ourselves when we hold grievances. The interesting thing is that we are not always aware of the grievances held in the mind. We have become so accustomed to judging that we easily dismiss the little annoyances, small irritations, and frustrations that cause us to lose our peace. Then we wonder why we are feeling so distressed or depressed. We see guilt all around us and experience a level of fear that we may also not be fully aware of.

Interestingly enough, the Course considers any grievance, no matter how small, as no different than murderous rage. However big or small annoyances seem to be, they nevertheless obscure our peace. When we are not at peace, the miracle can't reach us. We need to stay very aware of our thoughts and stay vigilant regarding the choice in the mind for the ego or the Holy Spirit. When we become aware that we have chosen the ego, which is always when we are not at peace, we need to bring our misguided perceptions to the Holy Spirit, for His interpretation. **"Today we go beyond the grievances, to look upon the miracle instead. We will reverse the way you see by not allowing sight to stop before it sees."** (W.78.2.1-2) But we can't do this without the help of the Holy Spirit to bring about a reversal of our conditioned way of seeing. When we turn to Him, we learn that we can be helped to see past **"the shield of hate,"** (W.78.2.3) which keeps us from seeing our brother as the Son of God.

The shield of hate constitutes our projections of guilt on our brothers. Instead of seeing their divinity, we see the difficulties we experience with them, the pain we believe they have caused us, their neglect of us, all the little hurts we have felt in their presence, any bodily flaws, and their mistakes or even sins, as we perceive them. All these things for which we condemn anyone constitute this shield of hate. It keeps us from seeing the Christ in them. It keeps us from seeing their innocence and thus from knowing our own. It keeps us from seeing how we all share the same nature, both that of the ego and of our divine Self. There are no victims nor perpetrators. When we side with the "victim," or judge the perpetrator we are refusing to see the sameness of

us all as the Christ Self. We are choosing to judge instead of hearing the call for love in our brothers and recognizing it as our own call to open up to the love we are.

"Perhaps it is not yet quite clear to you that each decision that you make is one between a grievance and a miracle." (W.78.1.1) Each and every decision we make reflects the ego mind which holds up the shield of hate or our right mind where the miracle shines forth in love and forgiveness. When I watch my mind, it is apparent I make constant judgments, hold expectations, make demands, and assign roles and ideals I think others should accept all based on beliefs I hold in the mind. When they don't live up to them, I get upset. Yes, bodies do things that seem to justify our anger, but the truth of them is not what the body does. When we only see what bodies do or say, we only see that which is described as the shield of hate. This shield hides the light and keeps us from seeing who our brother really is. It also keeps us in the dark. **"Each grievance made the darkness deeper, and you could not see."** (W.78.3.4)

If we truly want to heal and be happy we must allow the shield to be dissolved so we can see what has always been there—our brother's true nature, the Son of God shining in the light of his magnificence. **"We will not wait before the shield of hate, but lay it down and gently lift our eyes in silence to behold the Son of God."** (W.78.2.3) I am the one holding the unforgiving perception of this brother. Now it is up to me to lower this shield of hate by looking at my unforgiving thoughts and having the willingness to choose the miracle instead. That is why healing any relationship does not take two of us. It only takes healing my own unhealed perceptions by letting go of the interpretations given by the ego. **"Let miracles replace all grievances."** (W.78) As long as I hold grievances in my mind, which I project on my brother, I will never see who my brother really is or know my Self. **"The concept of the self stands like a shield, a silent barricade before the truth, and hides it from your sight."** (T.31.VII.7.1) (ACIM OE T.31.VII.74)

"We will not let ourselves be blind to him; we will not look upon our grievances." (W.78.4.2) When all we see are our grievances, we stay blind to the Christ in our brother and thus in ourselves that vision shows us. True vision is hidden by grievances, and when we hold grievances, we stay blind to the truth. Jesus tells us that in lowering our shield of hate and seeing who our brother is, we reverse the seeing of the world **"as we look out toward the truth, away from fear."** (W.78.4.3). All we see reflected back at us are our own projections of guilt, and when we project guilt we always fear retaliation. We think that by focusing on the guilt in others we are able to see their motivations and understand who they are. We think our insights into people hold great credibility and thus we trust our perceptions but Jesus says they are always wrong!

Now we are called to reverse our way of seeing and release our misperceptions to the Holy Spirit, Who reveals to us who our brother really is when we become willing to be wrong. We have become totally blinded by our own assessment of people. We may have thought of someone as kind, and now with new information we profess to see them for who they really are, as if we had been led astray by our earlier perceptions. Yet none of our perceptions are the truth. We are always just projecting our own misperceptions onto others, believing if we make them the guilty ones, somehow, we can be free of our own guilt.

When they seem to upset us, it is an opportunity to look at the roles and expectations we have assigned to them. **"Then let us ask of Him Who knows this Son of God in his reality and truth, that we may look on him a different way, and see our savior shining in the light of true forgiveness, given unto us."** (W.78.7.1) When we ask with deep sincerity to see the truth of our brother instead of our perceptions of him, we are given a new interpretation. In some situations, it may seem like it takes a lot of time to give up our carefully cherished grievances,

but Jesus reminds us that it does not matter because that is what time is for. As long as we are using time for this purpose, we need not get discouraged. It need not take long at all, but some long-held grievances may indeed be stubbornly held and nurtured, in spite of what seem to be our best efforts to forgive. When we truly ask the Holy Spirit to help us take our projections off our brother and take responsibility for them and recognize that they are all just coming from our own minds, the miracle shifts our wrong minded perceptions. It takes willingness and readiness on our part to admit we are wrong in how we see our brother, so where once we held judgments, we can now experience peace. Our motivation to **"Let miracles replace all grievances"** (W.78) is enhanced with each miracle, as we experience more peace.

There are people in our lives whom we are asked to select for this exercise. It may be someone we fear, hate, or think we love who has angered us, a friend who is difficult to please, or someone who doesn't meet our expectations and the role we have assigned to them. Our hurt, disappointment, and anger point to the places in us where we are projecting guilt onto a brother. The first step in this process is to take responsibility for the guilt we have projected and recognize it is our own. By bringing the projection back into our mind, asking for help of the Holy Spirit and taking responsibility for our upsets, judgments, and grievances, the miracle will shift our wrong-minded perceptions.

As we pick a person to focus on, we recognize some form of the same darkness we see in them is in ourselves. Thus, we see how we have picked convenient targets onto whom to project the guilt in our own minds. As we consider the target of our projected grievances, we then ask the Holy Spirit to help us see this person as our savior. Isn't that an amazing thought? These very people that we believe we can't stand have been called into our lives precisely to be our saviors! Jesus reminds us of their importance in our lives, in that they actually hold the key to our salvation so we can be healed of our guilt.

That may seem like quite a stretch for our "I know" conditioned minds; but how would we ever access our anger if they were not in our lives and triggering in us a place where we attack ourselves? It is the people who we hold in special love and special hate who offer us these forgiveness opportunities. As the darkness in the mind is brought to the light, it is dissolved when given over to Holy Spirit. As our minds are healed, we see the radiant light shining forth in our brothers. Again, the practice is with specific people, but ultimately, it is generalized to everyone. We come to see all our brothers as either giving love or calling for love, because the love we see in ourselves is the love we now see in everyone. The behaviors of others may not change, but the interpretations we give their behaviors change.

We may be reluctant to take certain people off the cross we have nailed them to with our judgments and grievances. The ego claims we are justified in our anger against them. However, we read in Chapter 30 VI (ACIM OE CH 30 VII), **"The Justification for Forgiveness,"** anger is never justified because **"attack has no foundation."** (T.30.VI.1.2) (ACIM OE T.30.VII.70) The source of attack is always the ego thought system, but the ego is nothing, so it has no foundation. Yet we try to justify attack with our stories of why we need to attack in order to defend ourselves. Jesus reminds us, while attack has no foundation, pardon is always justified because it has a sure foundation. Attack is never real with no real effects because nothing real has occurred. It is a dream of separation where what we think has happened has no reality. **"But you are merely asked to see forgiveness as the natural reaction to distress that rests on error, and thus calls for help. Forgiveness is the only sane response."** (T.30.VI.2.7-8) (ACIM OE T.30.VII.71)

When we hold grievances, we miss the opportunities constantly available to us to see this person as **"more than a friend"** (W.78.5.4) and actually as our savior. In fact, this Lesson says—that is his role in God's plan. It does not mean God has planned any of this, but it is part of the plan we have set up as the script for our healing. We have cast the characters who appear in our dream exactly for this purpose, and they play out the role we have assigned to them. Our script facilitates our awakening when we decide to use every difficult situation for healing and forgiveness. Yes, we can resist and continue to hold onto grievances, but in our resistance, we chain ourselves to those against whom we hold grievances. As we forgive, we free them and make their freedom our own. (W.78.8.3) Why would we want to keep ourselves chained? **"His innocence will light your way, offering you its guiding light and sure protection, and shining from the holy altar within him where you laid the lilies of forgiveness."** (T.20.II.9.2) (ACIM OE T.20.III.13)

Only with the help of the Holy Spirit is our release possible. Jesus assures us, **"What you have asked for cannot be denied."** (W.78.8.1) **"And let the darkness be dispelled by Him Who knows the light, and lays it gently in each quiet smile of faith and confidence with which you bless your brother."** (T.22.VI.9.11) (ACIM OE T.22.VII.59) All of Heaven rejoices and God thanks us! What a beautiful thought! Basically, it is our own thanks we receive, but it is beautiful to actually think of God thanking us. Why would we not willingly go there? How stubborn do we want to be? When we listen to the ego it urges us to hold onto grievances, because the ego does not love us and its existence is threatened by our healing. The ego's existence depends on our holding grievances and seeing others as responsible for our pain. The ego's plan is for us to see ourselves as victims of others and at the mercy of outside events.

With practice and willingness, we become motivated to release our thoughts of anger and attack to the Holy Spirit for healing. I have had experiences of working on this practice over several years with many people in my life. One of them recently sent me an email asking *me* for *my* forgiveness! I had not heard from him for five years and when I finally did, I realized there was nothing to forgive. I had released any grievances I held against him a long time prior to hearing from him. Ultimately, we are not forgiving anyone, as it is only our interpretation of what we believe about anyone that is being released. Hearing from him was a beautiful demonstration for me of not getting attached to any outcomes or expectations in my forgiveness. This process is only for my own healing and does not depend on anyone doing anything. However he was still holding this situation against himself so I was grateful that he was able to let it go as I had.

Remember, we are asked to apply this Lesson to everyone we meet. Every encounter is a holy encounter. As I see my brother, I see myself. As I treat him, I treat myself. Jesus reminds us, **"Never forget this, for in him you will find yourself or lose yourself."** (T.8.III.4.5) (ACIM OE T.8.IV.19) Anyone we meet gives us another chance at salvation. There are no accidents in salvation. Those we are meant to meet, we have met and will meet. We can apply this practice to ones we remember from the past, those currently in our lives, and anyone we think about.

"The Holy Spirit leans from him to you, seeing no separation in God's Son. And what you see through Him will free you both." (W.78.8.4-5) He sees no separation because there is none. We see differences with the body's eyes, but the Son of God is One Self, and we are joined in Oneness with all that is. We seem to be fragmented into many forms, but that is not the way the Holy Spirit sees us. He sees no separation.

"Be very quiet now, and look upon your shining savior. No dark grievances obscure the sight of him. You have allowed the Holy Spirit to express through him the role God gave Him that you might be saved." (W.78.8.6-8) Our grievances can

become very loud in our minds. The ego harangues us with its raucous shrieks, demanding that we condemn someone for what he has seemingly done to us. Yet with forgiveness comes peace, joining, and love that embraces us all in the truth of who we are as One Son. Thus, the very person I chose to exclude from my love becomes my savior, showing me back to the Self I am. I am grateful that the images that hide the truth from my mind have been laid aside, and in their place I can experience the miracle instead. (W.78.9.1)

"We will remember this throughout the day, and take the role assigned to us as part of God's salvation plan, and not our own. Temptation falls away when we allow each one we meet to save us, and refuse to hide his light behind our grievances. To everyone you meet, and to the ones you think of or remember from the past, allow the role of savior to be given, that you may share it with him. For you both, and all the sightless ones as well, we pray:

"Let miracles replace all grievances." (W.78.10.1-5)

Love and blessings, Sarah
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