

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 88 Review II ~ Lesson 75 and Lesson 76

Sarah's Commentary:

The common thread in these two Lessons is that the only reality is God/Love/Oneness. We recognize the light when we choose "**salvation** (healing, forgiveness) **rather than attack.**" (W.88.1.2) The light is always within, but when we block it with thoughts, concepts and beliefs we hold in the mind, we are not aware of its presence. We block the light from awareness when we choose the ego's darkness believing our own thoughts. When the blocks to love (our judgments and grievances) are released, we see what is already there and has always been there (the light in our right minds). That is all that is real and is available now if we choose. It is our divine Self. In choosing to forgive, we indicate our willingness and desire to know the truth that has always been in our minds. The pristine truth about ourselves is revealed to us through our decision to choose forgiveness rather than attack. Illusion is darkness and has no power in reality. For it to have any power it requires our investment in it.

When we choose illusions, we are choosing nothing of value. While we are free to choose illusions, they have no real effect. The only meaningful choice we can make in the dream is for the miracle. There is nothing in opposition to God; therefore, there is no real effect on our reality when we choose what we think we want in the dream. Nothing here has any power except the power we give it through our belief. There is no real alternative to light. When we choose the light, darkness simply must go because it is nothing. Darkness has no properties. When the light is turned on where does the darkness go?

Our salvation is already accomplished. We are only reviewing what has already gone by. We are with God now, having never left except in dreams. It is a dream where we believe we are exiled from God so we feel like He has abandoned us. In fact, we are the ones who chose to abandon our true Home. Like the Prodigal Son we wandered off into time and space in a world governed by thoughts and beliefs that has no reality. We are dreaming this whole journey of life in this world while safe at home. There is nowhere for us to arrive and it takes no time to get where we already are. The only thing needed is the recognition that we already are at the place we never left. We are already home. The light has come, but until we become aware that the Self we seek is right here right now and always has been, we will continue to believe in the reality of the dream we are dreaming lost in time and space. We will only know it is a dream when we willingly step out of it and rise above the battleground. With every temptation to fall back asleep we can choose again. We awaken when we recognize that the only meaningful choice available to us is the choice for salvation. Happiness is a choice which can be made in each moment. When we choose grievances, we choose against our happiness, but the choice we make for illusions is the choice for nothing at all.

We are motivated to forgive when we see no benefit in attack. As we see how attack brings guilt and suffering, which blocks the light, we become increasingly willing to let it go. When we truly

see we are only hurting ourselves, we recognize the insanity of our decision to attack. We are always choosing in each moment "**between truth and illusion; between what is there and what is not.**" (W.88.1.5) The ego, with all its dark motives and difficult emotions, is not a real option. In other words, while we may think we are attacking and our attacks have a real effect, the reality is that nothing is really happening. The end of this dream is certain and inevitable because it has already happened.

Today, we practice forgiveness by bringing attack thoughts of guilt, judgment, hate, worry, sickness, depression, anxiety, lack, doubt, unworthiness and fear to awareness. We can't heal what we don't acknowledge in ourselves. When we are committed to healing these self-attacking thoughts, we place them on the altar of truth where the Holy Spirit resides in our minds. As our dark thoughts are brought to the light, a shift is made from body identification to holiness and we see who our brother is in truth. He is innocent, and as we see this in him, we accept that same innocence within ourselves. We see that we are the same Self. "**The light in you is all that I would see, [name],**" (W.88.2.3) because in reality that is the only thing there is; but we won't see it without willingness to release our judgments.

For our afternoon practice, we focus on the laws of the world and remember that they only have an effect because we believe we are bodies, living in the world. In truth, "**I am under no laws but God's,**" (W.88.3.1) because there is only God's Will and no other. Having chosen separation, the laws of the world seem to have an effect on us because we believe in the reality of our bodily existence. However, outside of the illusion, the laws of the world have no effect. These laws seem to have control over us while we still believe in the body and the world. They are the rules and laws by which we live and expect others to live as well. We place our belief in these laws. We think that investing in these laws is where our salvation lies. We think that if we are exposed to germs, we will get sick. We think if we don't eat the right foods and don't take certain vitamins, we will not be healthy. We think that if another body leaves us, we will be lonely. We think it is the body that is sick rather than the mind. All our laws are focused on our body, personality, well-being, and safety, but the laws of this world are not immutable. When we question their hold on us, we loosen our investment in them until we see that they have no control over us because our reality is pure presence.

These laws literally include everything we do in the world such as: what we eat, how much sleep we say we need, what our rules are for relationships, what we demand and require of family members and friends, how holidays should be celebrated, how the dishes should be washed, which way the toilet paper should hang, and simply a myriad of laws that rule our lives. They are not bad. We are not guilty because we invest in them. They are simply laws we live by. What is important are not the laws, but our investment in them for our happiness and safety based on a false premise of what we are. Jesus is not saying we should feel guilty because we choose to eat foods we consider good for our health. He is only saying that when we don't feel well, we must recognize the source of our suffering is not the food we have or have not eaten. He simply reminds us that all suffering originates in our minds.

Think about what happens to your peace of mind when someone is in the express line at the grocery store with a full basket. "They aren't following the rules," the ego screams. Crucify! We have just given ourselves a reason for anger and attack. Yet we are reminded in the Course that anger is *never* justified. It is not that we will not get angry, but the story we tell ourselves about why we are angry is not the truth. We attack because we want to maintain our individuality and our differences. We want to make others responsible for our lack of peace. In other words, the reason we attack is because we want to. We actually want others to betray us; but while we justify our anger, Jesus does not want us to see our experience of anger as a reason for guilt. He is only

saying there is never a reason to be angry. It is always a choice made by the wrong mind to see the cause for anger as outside of ourselves because we want to see it that way.

If our laws are broken, we believe our happiness is sacrificed. We get upset when our laws are not "revered," or at least respected and maintained. The ego is summarized in these two thoughts: "I am me and you are not," (my needs are important) and "I am end and you are means" (your function is the means for the fulfillment of my needs or my laws).

Because we carry this dual thought system, it is natural that conflict will happen, especially since everyone carries the same thought system of "one or the other." We are always vying for ways to have our needs met at someone's expense, and this is the reason spouses, nations, religions, and various groups don't get along. What is the answer? We need to give up this entire thought system. We need to bring our awareness to all the laws we hold sacred and recognize that they are there to serve the body, but we are not our bodies. The basis for our real pain is the choice for the ego and with it, individuality and specialness, which will always have us looking outside of ourselves for happiness and completion.

"Here is the perfect statement of my freedom. I am under no laws but God's." (W.88.3.2) I commit today to join with God's Will so it may prevail in every situation, rather than my own. I can give up my belief in laws that I have made. I do not have to give them power over me. **"I suffer only because of my belief in them."** (W.88.3.5) Our true source of pain has nothing to do with the world and its laws. Our true source of pain comes from separation and the guilt in our minds. The only happiness we can experience is in letting go the guilt in the mind.

Imagine making up our own laws and submitting to the power they exert on us! We are now enslaved by them. We suffer as a result of our belief in them. Does this sound like insanity? Our belief in the Laws of Chaos, (T.23.II) (ACIM OE T.23.III) based on guilt, fear, punishment, and separation, can all be healed by bringing our grievances to the truth. Healing is inevitable because God's laws assure our freedom, and freedom assures our Oneness.

What are God's laws? They are love, extension, sharing, giving, and joining while the ego's laws are about taking, bargaining, attacking, defending, and separation. In fact, the belief in separation leads to all the laws of the ego, which are based on differences and thus place us in competition with each other. As Ken Wapnick says "we are the ones who have set up the rules by which the game of life is played, so that in the end suffering and loss and death are inevitably our lot. Fortunately there is another way of looking at and being in the world, as we increasingly learn that the only way we can find genuine peace and happiness is to bring our minds and thoughts under the laws of God." His laws transcend the world's laws and limitations.

The healing of every relationship is inevitable because God assures us of this happy fact, and what God assures is inevitable because we have the same will. It is just a matter of time before we agree to choose for God and give up our suffering. The end is certain. **"Salvation is a decision made already."** (W.88.1.3) It was made the moment the separation came about. However, the Atonement Principle established that the separation is not real and could never be accomplished because it is impossible to leave God.

Today, ***"The light in you is all that I would see, [name]"*** (W.88.2.3) and ***"Let me allow God's laws to work in this, and not my own."*** (W.88.4.4)

Love and blessings, Sarah
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