



LESSON 78

Let miracles replace all grievance.

Sarah's Commentary:

This is another amazing Lesson and a classic forgiveness exercise, where we see that grievances are the problem and miracles are the solution. There is so much power and so much promise in this Lesson, and it is also eminently practical. The entire Lesson is written in the prose of iambic pentameter. All Lessons from Lesson 98 on are written in this kind of blank verse, which reverberates like the beat of a heart by 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.

This Lesson provides us with the key to our release from the hell and darkness we find ourselves in when we hold grievances. Our grievances may not even be all that apparent to us. 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 when all around us we see guilt and experience fear.

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, we are not able to experience the miracle. We need to stay very aware of our thoughts and stay very vigilant as to whether we are choosing the ego or the Holy Spirit. When we become aware that we have chosen the ego, 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) We need 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 onto 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 innocence. 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," 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 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. 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)

Our task, on behalf of our own healing and happiness, is to 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 where he has always been. **"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 ego's interpretations. **"Let miracles replace all grievances."** (W.78) As long as I hold grievances in my mind, which I project onto my brother, I will never see who my brother really is or know my Self. Based on the choice for the ego, **"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 that vision shows us in our brother and thus in ourselves. 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 now we 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 give our insights into people great credibility and trust our perceptions but Jesus says they are always wrong!

Now we are called to release our misperceptions to the Holy Spirit, Who will reveal to us who our brother really is. We are totally blinded by our own assessment of people. We may have thought of someone as kind, and now we 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, our responsibility is 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) Ask with deep sincerity to see the truth. In some situations, it may seem like it takes a lot of time to really 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 you are using time for this purpose, do not get discouraged if the process seems to go on for a seemingly long time. 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 as coming from our own minds, with willingness and readiness on our part, the miracle comes and shifts our perception; so where once we held judgments, we now experience peace. Our motivation to **"Let miracles replace all grievances"** (W.78) increases with each miracle, as more and more peace is experienced.

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 project and recognize it as our own. By asking for the help of the Holy Spirit and doing our part in 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 darkness we see in them is in ourselves. Thus, we see how we have picked convenient targets onto whom we project our guilt. 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 when we think about it; but how would we ever access our anger if they were not in our lives and pushing our buttons? The anger is already in our own minds. We are helped to see this is the case through our special love and special hate relationships. As our darkness is brought to the light, it will dissolve when given over to Holy Spirit. As our minds are healed, we will see this light in our brothers. Again, the practice is with specific people, but ultimately, it is generalized to everyone. We will come to see all our brothers as either giving love or calling for love, because the love we will come to see in ourselves is the love we will now see all around us. The behaviors of others may not change, but the interpretations we give their behaviors will change.

We may be reluctant to take certain people off the cross to which we have nailed them 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 tells us there is no foundation to attack. However, pardon is always justified because it does have a sure foundation. There can be no real attack 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)

If we hold onto our grievances, we miss the opportunity 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 own 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.

Yes, we can resist and continue to hold onto our 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 tells 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 thought. Basically, it is our own thanks we receive, but it is a beautiful metaphor nevertheless. Why would we not go there? How stubborn do we want to be? The ego urges us to keep our grievances, but the ego does not love us. 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 conditions.

With practice and true willingness, we can 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 some people. 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 found there was nothing to forgive. I had released any grievances I held against him a long time ago, prior to hearing from him. Ultimately, we are not forgiving anyone out there, as it is only our interpretation of what we believe about anyone that is being released. Hearing from him was a beautiful demonstration of not getting attached to any outcomes or expectations in our forgiveness work. This process is only for our own healing and does not depend on anyone doing anything.

Remember, we are asked to apply this Lesson to everyone we meet. Every encounter is a holy encounter. As I see my brother, I will 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 done to us. Yet with forgiveness comes the peace, the joining, and the love that embraces 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 can be grateful that the images hiding the truth from my mind have been laid aside, and in their place, is the miracle. (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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