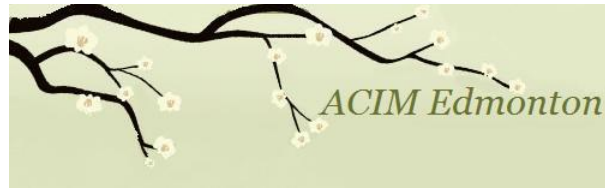


ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 86 Review II ~ Lesson 71 and Lesson 72

Sarah's Commentary:

I came across the Lord's Prayer translated from the Aramaic, which struck me as to how different this version is from our current version. It speaks to the issue of how much is lost in translation over time. It makes me grateful we have such a pure form of teaching from Jesus through the words of the Course.

*O Birther! Father—Mother of the Cosmos
Focus your light within us—make it useful
Create your reign of unity now
Your one desire then acts with ours, as in all light, so in all forms
Grant what we need each day in bread and insight
Loose the chords of mistakes binding us as we release the strands we hold of others' guilt
Don't let surface things delude us*

*But free us from what holds us back
From you is born all ruling will,
the power and the life to do,
The song that beautifies all, from age to age it renews
Truly power to these statements
May they be the ground from which all my actions grow.
Amen*

In relation to the Lesson today of particular note are the lines, "Loose the chords of mistakes binding us as we release the strands we hold of others' guilt," and "Don't let surface things delude us." It is so interesting to me that, in this Lesson, we are looking at how "surface things," the things of this world and the expectations we have of others, is where we look for our salvation. We think if only others would behave differently, we would be happy. When these expectations are not met, we have grievances against those who did not act to meet our perceived needs. Our specialness dictates how others should be. How dare you treat me this way, we protest? It is all about my needs. We see the role of others to serve our needs. We enslave them with our requirements.

I noticed this last night when I was shopping and had the occasion to deal with the store manager to try to get a discount on a damaged article. Her attitude disturbed me because she was not acting according to the role I had assigned to her. Jesus reminds us, "**Forgiveness recognizes what you thought your brother did to you has not occurred.**" (W.PII.Q1.1.1) In other words, it is not to deny an event has happened or that someone has done something in our experience but to recognize it is all our dream, all an illusion. Whatever seems to happen in a dream has not

happened at all. Dreams are all the same in that they are all unreal. There are not different forms of unreality.

We are only upset because of the meaning we have given a meaningless event. In other words, the interpretation we give to the event is the problem. That meaning comes from what we have chosen to believe about ourselves. I thought I was affected by the store clerk's behavior, but only my thoughts about her affected me. The role I had established for her was to serve my specialness. I saw her simply as the means to my ends. Clearly, I wanted to win. Now I could look at how I set it all up. The power is in me to heal my interpretations. I could choose not to listen to the ego's interpretation, which is always false. The ego's interpretation blinds me to who my brother really is in truth. When I justify my grievances, I tell a story based on my perceptions, which are a lie. Another choice is available to me. I have the Holy Spirit in my mind, Who will remind me that when I look at the world through the eyes of innocence, I cannot see sin in my brother or in myself. The power of decision is in my mind. **"Therefore, seek not to change the world, but choose to change your mind about the world."** (T.21.IN.1.7) (ACIM OE T.21.IN.1) The motivation to change our minds is on behalf of our own peace and joy. How much do we desire this?

Our lives are focused on finding our happiness/salvation in people and events. It is all about having our specialness supported. We spend our time in the world looking to people and things we think will bring us happiness, but Jesus tells us we are mistaken in this. We are idly seeking for a treasure where it does not exist, and so our search is erratic and unproductive. Even when we get what we think we want, our happiness is transitory. Our lives are all about the hope that the next thing or the next relationship will fulfill all our needs and lacks, but that is just a fantasy.

Clearly, we are told we have been mistaken by where we think our salvation lies. **"I was mistaken about where it is. I was mistaken about what it is."** (W.86.1.4-5) Our plan has not worked and we might as well accept that it will never work. To keep working something that has no hope of bringing us a deep sense of joy, peace, and happiness is the definition of insanity. Because of our authority problem we resist dependency on God and put ourselves in charge of our lives. We carry a deep suspicion of His plan for us. We think we know better. We think we know our own best interests. We are deluded about where our joy is. If we look at our lives, we increasingly see that Jesus is telling it like it is. He is clearly asking us to be very honest and to sincerely question if our way has ever really worked for us. How many useless journeys do we want to take before we accept that there is a better way? So let's commit to no longer defeat our own best interests in this insane way, but rather accept God's plan for salvation, and be happy.

Perhaps we can see our way is not working, yet we continue to make exceptions. We still have not fully embraced His way. We are still straddling two thought systems. In other words, while we embrace God's plan for salvation, we still holding onto our own plans as well. We still continue to believe there is something to pursue in the dream that will make us happy. **"Holding grievances is an attempt to prove that God's plan for salvation will not work."** (W.86.3.2) Look at where you are making exceptions today and know, only **"God's plan for salvation will save me from my perception of this."** (W.86.2.2) Whatever I perceive in any situation that brings me pain, can only be healed by looking to God's plan, and not my own for resolution.

Salvation does not save us from any calamity. We are not in any danger. The moment we seemed to separate, the Answer was given to us immediately. **"So very long ago, for such a tiny interval of time, that not one note in Heaven's song was missed."** (T.26.V.5.4) (ACIM OE T.26.VI.34) The Holy Spirit is waiting quietly and patiently for us to replace our thoughts of conflict, whether they are of anger, bitterness, despair, depression, frustration, or death, with a thought of peace. While we have many thoughts of conflict, the thought of peace is

only one. The Thought of God heals them all. When we bring our illusions to the truth, the Holy Spirit brings us the experience of the miracle.

Recently, one of our Course students tragically lost her little dog whom she cherished as a member of the family. She felt intense pain but recognized how Holy Spirit had already prepared her for this event by bringing her to read Eckhart Tolle's book on the pain body. When the pain showed up, she followed his teachings and stayed with it. As she went walking where she had always walked with her little companion, she prayed that his presence would assist her to heal. All of a sudden, she felt him everywhere, giving her permission to pet other dogs without his interference. She thought the tears would come as she walked, but instead she felt the peace of recognizing that nothing real was lost. She still had her friend with her, but now he was all around her. He came to teach her the simplicity of salvation: by not distracting from her pain, she was able to receive the help she asked for and learned an immense lesson.

When we awaken from this dream, we will see that we have never left Heaven. This journey that seems to be taking a long time is already over. That is why the Course calls it a journey without distance. The same thought of peace is in every mind. When we take responsibility for the guilt we have projected onto others whom we believe have wronged us and look to the light within us, we need not interfere any further. The Holy Spirit does the healing. The peace obscured by our grievances can now shine forth. We all share the same One Mind. We don't need to correct or fix others. All we need do is release any grievances we hold against them. The function of the body is just a tool for the mind to be used by Spirit to let God's Love speak through it. It need not be with words. Even if it is, we are given the words to speak. What is important is that we recognize it is our own guilt and self-condemnation that we project onto the events of the world. The events are neutral. We give them all the meaning they have for us. The good news is that our happiness can come by doing our own internal work. It does not depend on any person, situation, or circumstance "out there."

It is not helpful to feel guilty about our grievances and judgments. They simply show us what is in our own minds and where healing is needed. The correction is available to us when we give up our ego and choose the Holy Spirit's interpretation. The purpose of the people, situations, and events in our lives is to help us see the unhealed places in our minds. We can't heal what we don't see. The important thing is not to judge yourself when you see the unhealed places in your mind. Judgment of yourself or others is the same; it will keep you in the ego's game. Be happy that you are able to see your mind mirrored in the world you perceive. It is a reflection of what is in your mind that you can happily bring for His correction.

Today, we "**will rejoice because His plan can never fail**" (W.86.1.8) and "**accept God's plan for salvation, and be happy.**" (W.86.3.6) We choose today to take responsibility for our misperceptions and to be willing to release our grievances, which work against our own best interests. Be glad that all circumstances in your life, whether past or present, provide you with an opportunity to choose differently. In your choice to be happy, you will be motivated to forgive your perceptual errors. It is all about changing our minds by being willing to see how wrong we have been about everything we think.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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