

**Jesus:
The Manifestation of the Holy Spirit**

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Part III

(Paragraph 6 - Sentence 1) The Holy Spirit serves Christ's purpose in your mind, so that the aim of specialness can be corrected where the error lies.

The error lies within the dream, in the world of symbols. The Course teaches us that the ego has spoken first and is wrong (T-5.VI.3:4;4:2), and that the Holy Spirit is the Answer—we will come back to this point later. In our chart, the column with the ego at the top has a concept of a God Who has been sinned against. This leads to a belief in a God Who is vengeful, hateful, and insane, Who makes bargains with us, Who is angry and murderous, etc. This is a God Who has perceived that we have stolen from Him, killed Him, raped Him, abandoned Him, and made up a world as a substitute for His. And He does not like it one bit! This is the ego's God—and the ego's story.

All of the traits that we attribute to God, all the words and concepts that we use to think of God are all equally illusory. The Bible is a virtual encyclopedia of the ego's version of God, both the negative and the seemingly positive sides of God. This God is very much a person. He thinks like a human being, plans and plots like a human being, murders like a human being, and is jealous and loves like a human being. He does not love like God. He loves like a human being. It is special love: "I will love you when you do what I ask you to do, and Heaven help you if you do not." And of course Heaven is not going to help us if we do not. There is no way out.

The ego's concept of God and its group of symbols for God are the symbols that we understand, because these are the symbols that we have made into reality. We know we have made them into reality, whether we are conscious of it or not, by virtue of our being in this world. As the Course explains, this world was literally made to be a defense against God's wrath, and an attack on His sovereignty, His power, and His role as Creator. The body was then made as the individual fortress to keep God out. That we believe that we are housed and live within this fortress means that we believe in the need to have the body and the world as a defense. As a defense against what? As a defense against this sinned-against God Who has now become as insane as we are.

We all believe in this. This is our dream, our set of symbols that begins with the premise that God is angry because we have sinned against Him, and so He is going to retaliate. We made this set of symbols and so the correction will use the same symbols but turned upside down. So God is still seen as a body and we are still seen as separate from Him. But instead of God being sinned-against, God is Someone Who is totally loving, Who does not know about sin. Thus Jesus tells us in his version of the story, his myth as opposed to the ego's myth, that we have left our Father's house, because that is what the

dream is. He uses the symbols of the dream, because otherwise we would not know what he is talking about. If Jesus simply said, "God is," we would say, "God is what? There must be more to this."

So Jesus says more than that to us. He says, "Yes, you have left your Father's house. However, God is not angry. God misses you. God is lonely. God is weeping, because there is something missing in His house. God is incomplete without you." Now obviously, these three phrases—God is lonely, God weeps, He is incomplete—are heresy as far as the Course's metaphysics is concerned. Clearly, God does not have a body—He does not have tear ducts from which tears fall. These are symbols that express a concept that God is not angry and that God loves us. The concept of a God Who is not angry is not reality. The reality is that God has never ceased being Who He is. And the reality is that God does not even know about this. God's perfect Love that unites Him perfectly with Christ has never been broken. That is the reality, but it makes no sense to us. Since the ego speaks first—and the ego's symbol for God is that He is a sinned-against and angry God—then Jesus speaks to us using symbols on that level as well.

Jesus' version of the story still comes to us within the world of symbols, within the world of appearances, dreams, and illusions, not the world of reality. But this dream is what the Course refers to as a happy dream. So Jesus tells us that God is not angry. And yes, he tells us, God did send us the Holy Spirit. But He did not send the Holy Spirit after us to punish us and to drag us back to His house so He can beat us up and destroy us—that is only what we believe. And that is why we ran away from home and have stayed away. In fact, not only have we stayed away from home, but we have made our own home—this is still all within the world of symbols. We believe that we ran away from home, we felt terribly guilty, and then we became afraid of the extension of God into the dream—which in reality is just the memory of God's Love. But the ego has turned it upside down.

So, again, Jesus talks to us at our level and says, "No, God is not angry. Yes, God did send the Holy Spirit after you, but not to beat you up. He sent the Holy Spirit to awaken you from the dream and to teach you to be glad that it is a dream." Near the beginning of the text Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as "the Call to awaken and be glad" (T-5.II.10:5). Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit as Someone Whom God has created in response to the separation and has sent into the dream, because the ego spoke first. The ego said, "God is angry at you for what you have done. He created the Holy Spirit and sent Him into your mind to bring you back home so God can destroy you." Since that is the concept of God that we have believed in, Jesus gives us the correction for it in similar terms.

The correction is as much an illusion as the ego's thought system is. The difference is that the illusion of the ego leads to further guilt and fear, and deepens our identification with the dream. The illusion that Jesus gives us will awaken us from our guilt and fear, so that the dream will end. But we need a steppingstone. The Course explains that we do not go from the nightmares of the ego to the reality of God, because that would be too terrifying for us. Instead, we go from the nightmares of the ego to the happy dreams of the Holy Spirit. And from the happy dreams, we then awaken. (T-27.VII.13)

So the Course is talking on the level of symbol. It is extremely important as we read through the Course not to confuse reality and illusion, not to confuse symbol for the reality beyond the symbol. The reality beyond the symbol can neither be expressed in words nor taught. So we need a set of symbols. But we do not want to make the symbols reality. That is what the churches have done for two thousand years. We do not want to make the symbols the reality and worship the symbol—then we get caught in the symbol. Later we will look at the "Song of Prayer" passage I referred to earlier that makes all of this very clear.

Returning to the text:

(Paragraph 6 - Sentences 2-3) Because His [the Holy Spirit's] purpose still is one with both the Father and the Son, He knows the Will of God and what you really will. But this is understood by mind perceived as one, aware that it is one, and so experienced.

That is the real world. The unity of God, or the Oneness of God and Christ, is not perceived in Heaven. If we talk about perception, we are talking about someone who perceives and an object that is perceived. The Course repeatedly contrasts knowledge and perception. *Knowledge* is used almost exclusively to denote the state of Heaven. It is not knowledge *of* something. It is knowledge that is the awareness of the unity of God and Christ—there is no "I" that is aware of another.

The formulation of the I-Thou relationship by Martin Buber, the great Jewish theologian and philosopher, would still be part of the illusion. It would be a concept of a God: There is a God out there and there is a person here who relates to Him. In reality (above the purple line), in Heaven, the "I" and the "Thou" are one and the same—there is no difference. The only way we can understand that the Will of God is the same as what we really will, is to be in the real world. Someone like Jesus is perfectly in touch with the love and the oneness of Heaven. At the same time he is aware that his brothers are still asleep. That is the state known as the real world—I am still within the dream. I am still a thought within the separated mind of the Sonship, but I am totally aware that it is a dream. And I am totally aware that I am a part of Christ, along with everyone else, and that Christ is part of God.

But that cannot be understood from this level. Here we can understand that we all share a common purpose—that we can be taught, that we can learn, and that we can understand. Again, the goal of the Course is that we recognize that we all share a common purpose. Our common purpose is that, as we are all part of this mistaken dream, we all yearn to go back home. The end of the journey and the goal of the Course is for us to be in the real world, where we recognize that we all are part of the same mind.

(Paragraph 6 - Sentence 4) It is the Holy Spirit's function to teach you how this oneness is experienced, what you must do that it can be experienced, and where you should go to do it.

These basically constitute our learning lessons. And the classroom where we learn them is each of the relationships in which we find ourselves—all of our special relationships. The Holy Spirit teaches us how to look at them differently. That is the Course—that is the Course's method. I am an illusion, joining with you as an illusion. I am an illusion letting go of my grievances against you who are an illusion of a person out there, separate from me. But because I believe this is real, this is where I must start.

(Paragraph 7 - Sentence 1) All this takes note of time and place as if they were discrete, for while you think that part of you is separate, the concept of a Oneness joined as One is meaningless.

As long as we believe we are bodies—which means we believe we are separate—the idea of the Oneness of Christ that all of us share makes absolutely no sense to us. How could I experience our all being one if I am a body that has needs and I see your body out there and you have needs? And we have to make a bargain with each other so that our needs can somehow be met without killing each other. So there is no way of understanding oneness. That is why in the Course Jesus speaks about time and space as if they were discrete. There is a space where I stand and there is a space where you stand. There is a

space where I stood yesterday, a space where I will stand tomorrow. And there is a space where I stand now. There is a yesterday, a tomorrow, and a today.

Throughout the Course, Jesus talks about time and space as if they were real. He speaks of a place within the mind where the Holy Spirit is—or where he is, as if there *were* a place. Heaven is often described as if it were a place, even though it obviously is not. And the Course talks about our joining with each other, each of us perceiving others as separate from ourselves. This passage is Jesus' way of explaining why he talks like this—not that it is real. Nothing here is real. Nothing here in the world of form is real. Nothing is real within the separated mind of the Sonship.

In a passage near the beginning of the text, Jesus basically apologizes for speaking about the ego as if it were separate (the only place in the Course where he does that, incidentally). He explains, "I have spoken of the ego as if it were a separate thing, acting on its own. This was necessary to persuade you that you cannot dismiss it lightly" (T-4.VI.1:3-4). Jesus also speaks of the Holy Spirit as Someone Who is separate. In reality each (the ego and the Holy Spirit) represents a voice or a thought within our minds. They are not separate from us, any more than we are separate from each other, or separate from God. But because we have made up a world of separation, then we have the illusion of separation.

So we have the illusion of choosing between the ego and the Holy Spirit, because that is extremely meaningful to us. We have made up a world of separation and a world of choices—a world of good choices and bad choices. So Jesus speaks to us in this way, not because it is true—truth is only the perfect Oneness of God and Christ—but because he must speak to us in the language that we understand. And that is the language of the world of illusion and symbols—where we believe we are.

(Paragraph 7 - Sentence 2) It is apparent that a mind so split could never be the Teacher of a Oneness which unites all things within itself.

And each of us is a part of that mind that is so split, because we believe that we are split between God and the ego, between the ego and the Holy Spirit, and we believe that we are split off from everything else. Obviously, as long as the mind is split, we can never understand and we can never teach ourselves that we are all one. The split mind—and the body that arose from the split mind—was specifically made to hide the Oneness of God and Christ from us. The ego knows—we are talking again within a world of symbols—that if we listen to the Voice of Oneness, the Holy Spirit, we will awaken from the dream and there will be no more ego. So the ego made up a split mind—split off from the Love of the Holy Spirit—which became a symbol of being split off from the Love of God. The ego then made a split body—a body filled with thoughts of being separate—and a world in which everyone and everything appear to be separate from each other. And the body and the world are a smokescreen that camouflages the presence of love, light, and unity in the mind. So it is impossible that the split mind could ever be the teacher. We need a symbol for the oneness that can speak to us within our minds, yet is not limited by the split mind. And that symbol is the Holy Spirit.

(Paragraph 7 - Sentence 3) And so What is within this mind, and does unite all things together, must be its [the mind's] Teacher.

"What" is capitalized, so we know it refers to the Oneness of Christ or God, which the Holy Spirit represents. Since we have the illusion of being split off and of having listened to the ego's voice—which basically means we have the illusion that the ego is our teacher—we need the correction or the undoing

of that illusion. And again, that is the role of the Holy Spirit. Here is probably the most important sentence in this passage:

(Paragraph 7 - Sentence 4) Yet must It [Oneness, or the Holy Spirit] use the language that this mind can understand, in the condition in which it thinks it is.

The Holy Spirit must speak the language of separation, using concepts and symbols, because that is what we understand since we believe we are separate from God. We have taught ourselves, by choosing the ego as our guide, that God is angry and vicious and vengeful and therefore has to be defended against. So we need an opposite set of symbols to undo that, represented by the symbols of the Holy Spirit's Atonement story—God is not angry, God is forgiving, and He loves us. Not that God loves us or Jesus loves us in the way we experience it. But this is the only way we can accept a love that is beyond our split minds. So the Holy Spirit must speak to us—and *A Course in Miracles*, as an expression of the Holy Spirit's Word, must speak to us—on a level that we can accept and understand.

(Paragraph 7 - Sentence 5) And It [Oneness] must use all learning to transfer illusions to the truth, taking all false ideas of what you are, and leading you beyond them to the truth that is beyond them.

That is the Holy Spirit's purpose, that is the purpose of Jesus and his Course—to lead us beyond all the false ideas. So we first take the false idea—that we are separate, and that attack and specialness are justified—and we correct it. We have one illusion—the illusion of forgiveness—that corrects and undoes the illusion of separation and attack. When all of the illusions of separation and attack have been undone by the illusion of forgiveness, both disappear. What remains is the truth. The Course is unique as a spiritual system because it is so clear about the absolute purity of God and His Love—God has nothing to do with anything unreal or illusory. At the same time, the Course gives us a very practical thought system and a very practical spiritual path that meet us where we believe we are—in the world of form.

The idea is to lead us beyond the world of form to a thought that, although it is still a thought of separation, has no concepts of attack or murder or specialness associated with it. So we still have an experience of a Jesus or a Holy Spirit in our minds to Whom we go. When we become that perfect thought of the Atonement, we become like Jesus. Jesus disappears, we disappear, and all that is left is the Holy Spirit's Love, which at that point disappears too.

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Within the ego framework in which the Course comes to us, there are a couple of points worth commenting on further. First, although the ego is really a part of our one split mind, there is value in speaking of it as if it were separate from us. It is helpful to think that there are two voices within the mind. At times I have spoken about the split mind as having three parts—the ego, the Holy Spirit, and the part of our minds that chooses between them. In reality it is all one, because there is no time—no linear past, present, or future—and nothing really separate. But because we believe we are separate, and we believe there is a past, present, and future, it is helpful to think of the mind as a classroom in which we choose which teacher we are going to listen to.

Since we have all grown up, whether we have been conscious of it or not, believing only in the ego and believing that is who we are—a separated, sinful, guilty, angry, vicious, depressed, lonely person, it is helpful to have the illusion of another thought or another person within us that represents something

else. So long as we believe we are within the world of illusion, dreams and symbols, we have to work with that—but not because they are real. In the end we will recognize that it is all one.

The second point is to understand that the Course's use of the word *God*, rather than only impersonal words like truth, reality, oneness, knowledge, etc., is deliberate. The whole point of the Course is to raise to our consciousness all the negative associations we have of God—God as a punitive male, as a punitive father, and the like, so that we can forgive them. That is why the Course comes in Judaeo—Christian language, where God is very much seen as a masculine father. And the identity of Jesus is central to the Course, because of all the unforgiveness people—both Jews and Christians—have with him. So the Course brings up all the prejudices and biases, all the all the hurts and all the fears, so that we can look at them.

I might add that the concept of God we are talking about is not what the real God is—we are talking about what the ego has made of the real God. And so the Course uses names that everyone in the Western world—whether Jew or Christian—has grown up with. Basically it is the false God that we have to forgive. In the Course, Jesus, referring to himself at one point, speaks of the bitter idols that were made of him (C-5.5:7). When we think about Jesus, all the bitter idols come up—the Jesus who believed in persecution, sacrifice and death, exclusion and specialness, etc. A wonderful line, closing a section on specialness, says, "Forgive your Father it was not His will that you be crucified" (T-24.III.8:13). Basically, we could say the same thing about Jesus—forgive Jesus it was not his will that we be crucified.