

**Special Relationships:  
The Home of Guilt**

Excerpts from the Workshop held at the  
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**Part IV  
Introduction (concluded)**

What keeps the guilt in place, what keeps the ego going and going, is our not looking at it. This is because right at the beginning the ego told us not to look because, to quote another line in the text, if you look within "your eyes will light on sin, and God will strike you blind" (T-21.IV.2:3), which is a euphemistic way of saying God will destroy you. The ego says not to look within, and so we do not. Remember, at this point in our story we have already banished the Holy Spirit, so we are not hearing His Voice. The only voice we hear is the ego, and since it is the only voice, we think it is God. It is the only authoritative voice; in fact it is the only voice that we hear—just as little children tend to believe everything their parents tell them because they are their parents and do not know anything else; and just as when we grow up, we are still little children in big boy and big girl bodies believing everything our president tells us. Recent history should show us that is not the case.

The need to believe in the authority is the same need we have to listen to the ego: The ego will keep me safe; the ego will help me keep my identity. That is why we chose the ego in the first place. We all want our security and our identity, whether it is identity as Jews, Christians, Muslims; as white or black; as Americans, Pakistanis, Afghans—it does not matter. We all want our identity to be kept intact. Of course, the external group that we identify with is just an expression, a projection, of this inner identity, and so we want the authority to tell us the truth; and even if we know the authority lies to us, we believe it anyway.

All this has its basis in what happened right at the beginning. But at the beginning there were no other voices, which is not quite true. There was another Voice, but we chose not to listen to that Voice, because that Voice of the Holy Spirit would rob us of our identity. It is so hard for many Americans to hear a voice critical of the United States because our nationalistic identity is nothing more than an expression in a larger form of our individual identity. I do not want to know that I am just part of one Son, the one Son of God. I want to know that I am an American, and that I am on the good side, or any other side—it does not matter. But since we are Americans, I use that as an example. That is where that nationalistic fervor comes from. It is the need to protect one's identity.

That is why right at the beginning we did not choose to hear the Voice of sanity, the Voice that said, "You do not have an individual identity; you are all one with God." That was not enough for us, so we banished that Voice, and from that moment on chose not to hear It. The only voice left was the voice that spoke of the reality of guilt. We never ever questioned it. That voice said guilt is real, but it will destroy you, so get out fast. And so we did. Remember, time is an illusion. There is that wonderful line in "The Little Hindrance" section that says, "Each day, and every minute in each day, and every instant that

each minute holds, you but relive the single instant when the time of terror took the place of love" (T-26.V.13:1).

Every moment of our waking life we are simply re-enacting, choosing again, but it is always the same choice: the choice to make the ego real and true, and the Holy Spirit illusory and untrue. Once we make that choice, we are bound by it. Until we change our mind we are bound by it, which means we make guilt real, heavy, opaque, solid, and fearful. Then we have to run away from it and make up a world and hide in it. From that moment on, we do not have the opportunity of saying, "maybe there is something wrong with this," because there is no mind in our awareness. Nothing will ever change on the personal or the collective level until we go back and look within and say, "You know, there is a mind, and that mind made a mistake. It did not commit a sin; it made a mistake. And all the awful, awful things that bodies have done ever since then, were nothing more than fragmentary shadows of that original mistake. But it is a mistake, thank God, that I could change, now that I know I made it. And there is a mind, an instrument, within me that can effect meaningful change." Of course, that is the only purpose and the only role that Jesus or the Holy Spirit have for us—not as external figures, not as bodies, but as a living Thought and Presence of Love in our mind that says: "You can make another choice. There is a mind; that is where I exist; that is where you exist; and that is where the mistake was made. Therefore that is where the mistake can be undone." Then we begin to see that guilt is not God's gift to us. Guilt is not anything. Guilt is something we made up, and the Course helps us understand why we made it up.

Then we begin to look at our everyday life and realize that we are really addicted to guilt, and because of that we are addicted to hate, judgment, specialness, and *one or the other*. We begin to see how these abstract principles play out very specifically in our lives. We look around us—in the newspapers or at the news, and say, "My God, everyone does the same thing. We are all addicted to guilt. We are all addicted to that awful phenomenon of needing to be right rather than happy, and being right means guilt is alive and well and is not in me." That is what we are all dedicated to: proving that guilt is real and it is in "them." That is why there always has to be a "them." We live in a "we-they" world. There always has to be someone outside us who is the repository of this guilt. Thus, the home away from the home of guilt is in the special relationship—that person or group we choose to make the evil one. The sin is not in me, it is in them.

### **"Guiltlessness and Invulnerability"**

Let us turn now to Chapter 13 in the text, and for the rest of this class we will be looking at this chapter. Chapter 13 is the first major place in *A Course in Miracles* where you find the discussion of guilt. There is a very important section in Chapter 5 called "The Ego's Use of Guilt" (T-5.V), which is helpful, but it is really in this chapter that we get the first detailed presentation of guilt. Also, it is the longest chapter in the text. We are going to start with Section I, "Guiltlessness and Invulnerability."

**(T-13.I.1:1) Earlier, I said that the Holy Spirit shares the goal of all good teachers, whose ultimate aim is to make themselves unnecessary by teaching their pupils all they know.**

This is a point that Jesus makes earlier of himself as well as the Holy Spirit, that the purpose of any teacher is not to have himself or herself be glorified and exalted and "gurufied," but to basically teach whatever he or she has to teach, and then no longer to be needed as the external teacher. The whole purpose of this course is to have all the students get in touch with their inner teacher. Any external teacher should be temporary, someone who simply points you in the direction of the Holy Spirit within,

and may or may not help you overcome the various obstacles and interferences that are within you that would prevent you from beginning to get in touch with the Holy Spirit or with Jesus. That is the idea of a teacher.

**(T-13.I.1:2) The Holy Spirit wants only this, for sharing the Father's Love for His Son, He seeks to remove all guilt from his mind that he may remember his Father in peace.**

That is the purpose of any teacher. And so at times there may be external figures who then represent that function of the Holy Spirit. One specific form would be that of the psychotherapist, which is why there is a specific pamphlet that was dictated to Helen for psychotherapists. Obviously, this has nothing to do with profession or with form. This means that as we learn this course; as we begin to embrace the Atonement more than guilt, as we begin to embrace Jesus as our teacher rather than the ego, the very process by which we do this ensures that that presence of love will come through us. It is that presence of love coming through us that teaches there is a thought system in our mind beyond guilt.

**(T-13.I.1:3) Peace and guilt are antithetical ...**

It is one or the other. You cannot have light and darkness coexist unless, as I mentioned earlier, you employ the dynamic of dissociation, which is what we all have done—this is what the split mind is. The split mind not only represents splitting off from Heaven, it also means splitting within itself. Just as God's Love simply loves and loves, constantly extending Itself, so does the separated or split mind do what it is. Its essence is not love; it is separation; so it just keeps separating and separating and separating, splitting and splitting and splitting. Its first split after it seems to have split from God is to split within itself. There is the wrong mind and the right mind. Now what enables both parts of the split mind to coexist is that we dissociate them. We split off the ego from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit then gets buried but is still present, although we are not aware of Him.

What happens is that we continually have to expend what Freud referred to as "psychic energy." We continually have to expend energy to keep the Holy Spirit down. To keep the Holy Spirit down, we first make guilt, and then we make the world, so it is like two tons. It is not one ton of steel to keep the Holy Spirit buried; there are now two tons: guilt and the world of guilt. But it requires tremendous energy. The Course says at different times that you have no idea how much energy and time you are wasting doing this (e.g., T-9.I.11). This is why you are always tired. That is in one sense why bodies have to sleep. We are always tired not because of what the body does—bodies do not get tired; bodies are nothing. Nothing does not get tired. The reason the body seems to get tired and we experience fatigue is that all the energy we are expending in our mind to keep God away requires a tremendous amount of work—it takes a lot of work to tell a lie.

To tell the truth is very easy: you just tell the truth. Once you tell a lie, as every president knows, you have to expend tremendous energy to cover it up. If you simply tell the truth right at the beginning, everything is over, it is finished, and nothing terrible happens. Terrible things happen because of the cover-up, as Nixon found, as Clinton found, as everyone finds. But that is why our whole life is a cover-up. It is all an attempt to maintain the lie. That requires tremendous ingenuity and effort. Again, just imagine what we have to do in our everyday lives if we are going to keep a lie going. Look what public figures have to do. It is incredible. Everyone has to do this. The bottom line is what we all did at the beginning. We had to invent the lie, and then cover it up with the world.

The big lie that we all have to work so hard at, and we unfortunately are all experts at, is pointing the accusing finger at people and saying, "You are the guilty one. You are the evildoer. You are the one who has to be brought to justice and punished." The reason it requires so much effort is that somewhere inside we know we are lying. Deep down we know we are the evildoer, the guilty party, the wicked sinner. This is because we are the ones who chose, and still choose, to deny God and destroy His Love. That is the guilt. We have to expend enormous effort to project it out and justify the projection. That is why we love war. We love justified wars. And of course every war is justified—it does not matter which side you are on. War makes it so easy to point a finger at an Adolf Hitler—he is the bad guy. That eases the burden of denying the lie and the cover-up. When you find an evil person, and everyone agrees this is the evil person, then your ego rests much easier. The whole world is like this.

Again, what we are doing is expending all this effort to maintain the dissociation, splitting off what we do not want, which is the Love of God, because in the Love of God this self does not exist anymore, and then maintaining the defense that the ego's thought system is the true one. As we have seen, to ensure that that thought system never gets changed, we make up a world. That is one of the concepts in the Course that is so, so difficult. There are people who fight against it intellectually, and would try standing the Course on its head, trying to prove that the Course does not say the world is an illusion.

As if the intellectual acceptance of this is not hard enough to accept, the *experience* of that illusion is much more difficult, because we could split off the intellect and say, "Sure, the world is an illusion; it was made as an attack on God; we are not even here," and then we could go about our business because we split it off. It is much more difficult to take that intellectual understanding and integrate it, because what that integration means is we could walk through our everyday world and not be affected by anything—not because we are good at denying, which is what most people do to get through something, but because we *really know that this is not happening*. And this is not just because a book tells us, but because we really know within ourselves that the peace and the Love of God that we feel within cannot be changed by anything that seems to happen outside. That is what Jesus means at the beginning of Lesson 155 when he says that when you do this right, you look like everyone else, but you smile more frequently and your forehead is serene—there is a peace and a gentleness about you because you know that nothing in this world has the power to take away the Love of God. But that takes a lot of hard work, especially with recent events, as well as all the events that happen in our everyday life.