

The Happy Dream

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Part IX

"The Dreamer of the Dream" (cont.)

Back to "The Dreamer of the Dream," paragraph 14:

(T-27.VII.14:3) Rest in the Holy Spirit, and allow His gentle dreams [the happy dreams] to take the place of those you dreamed in terror and in fear of death.

How do we rest in the Holy Spirit? We rest in the Holy Spirit by firing the ego, because it is one or the other. We do not choose the Holy Spirit until we first fire the ego. There are two lines in the text that I always like to bring together even though they occur several hundred pages apart: resign now as your own teacher, for you have been badly taught (T-12.V.8:3; T-28.I.7:1). We first have to resign as our own teacher recognizing we have taught ourselves badly before we can accept Jesus as our teacher. In this course, the way we say "yes" to the Holy Spirit is to say "no" to the ego. To say "yes" is to say "not no" (T-21.VII.12:3-4). Our task, Jesus tells us, is "*to deny the denial of truth*" (T-12.II.1:5). He does not say our task is to affirm truth.

The way we choose the true teacher is to look at the false teacher and say, I do not want to listen to you anymore. That is what it means to be in one's right mind, and that is what the happy dream is. It is looking at the nightmare and happily saying, I do not have to listen to you anymore. What could make us happier than to look at all of our nightmares, all of our tales of abuse, guilt, pain, anxiety, and terror; all of our concerns, preoccupations, and obsessions, and say we do not have to listen to them anymore, and *mean* it? That is how we rest in the Holy Spirit. We cannot rest in the Holy Spirit with our ego. Yet that is what everyone wants to do. That is the compromise game everyone plays with God, the Holy Spirit, Jesus, and, unfortunately, with this course.

It makes no sense and it is totally meaningless to talk about a happy dream unless we first talk about what it is intended to correct. It is intended to correct the ego's dreams of terror, cruelty, pain, suffering, guilt, and death, which means we must first get in touch with our ego's dreams. How do we do that? We pay attention to our world's dreams, to what our body is dreaming—not at night, necessarily, but what we are dreaming every day, all of our specialness thoughts. Asking Jesus for help in that context means asking him to help us look at them a different way, and the way he helps us look is by reminding us they are projections of what is in the mind. As he tells us in Chapter 21, they are "the outside picture of an inward condition" (T-21.in.1:5).

That is what asking Jesus for help in our relationships is about. It is not asking that he fix our relationships, not that he tell us what to say or what to do, or where to go to get a job, or what lottery number to choose, or what stock to invest in. He does not know about any of those things. As I always

like to tell people, Jesus cannot count past one. So don't ask him to tell you how much money you should make, where you should go, what lottery number you should pick, or what horse you should bet on (unless it is number one!). He does not know about specificity. He knows only about the oneness of God's Son, and so the oneness that his love represents automatically knits together all the fragments and makes them one. And what does that mean? It means realizing everyone here is the same: the abusers and the abused, the oppressors and the oppressed, the good guys and the bad guys. They all have the same split mind. They have the same ego, the same right mind—the Holy Spirit—and the same decision maker. *Everyone without exception*, that is the key. Learning that is the happy dream. But we first look at our ego's need and our investment in seeing separation, and in seeing special and separate interests.

(T-27.VII.14:4) He brings forgiving dreams, in which the choice is not who is the murderer and who shall be the victim.

That is the ego's dream. Who is going to win? Who is going to lose? Who is going to Heaven? Who is going to hell? Who is the real *Course in Miracles* student and who is not? Who is studying *A Course in Miracles* correctly and who is not? It is not either-or.

(T-27.VII.14:5) In the dreams He brings there is no murder and there is no death.

There is no winner, and there is no loser. There is only one; there is only oneness. How could there be a winner and a loser if there is only one? That means if I see you as a loser, I must be a loser too, because there is only one, which translates into sameness in this world of multiplicity. We are the same. If I make you the villain, if I make you the bad guy, if I make you "the home of evil, darkness and sin" and we are one, meaning we are the same here, then I am saying the same thing about myself.

If, on the other hand, I recognize that your ego is really a call for help, and that underlying all your hatred and your merciless cruelty is a little voice plaintively crying out, "Please show me I am wrong; please show me I do not have to do this in order to survive; please show me that I am loved despite the despicable person I have become," I will hear the same plaintive cry in myself. Whatever it is we see in another, we see in ourselves, because there is no *other*. But because we think there are others, we have to practice. So we practice in all of our relationships, beginning the process of learning that in the end we are all the same, and beyond our inherent sameness is our inherent oneness. As I was saying before, we are all fragments of the one split mind, and recognizing this helps us finally to awaken to the truth that we are all one as Christ. It is the forgiving dream, the happy dream of the Holy Spirit that leads us gently and surely down that path.

(T-27.VII.14:6) The dream of guilt is fading from your sight, although your eyes are closed.

We have not awakened yet, but we are on the journey to awakening. We still perceive separate bodies. We still believe we have separate relationships. We still believe there are situations in life, and that some are good and some are bad. We still believe the body changes and grows older. We still believe that one day our own body and the bodies of our loved ones will die. We are still asleep, but we are beginning to realize that all the figures in our dreams are the same. That is the key.

We are not asked to open our eyes because the light, the ego tells us, would blind us. The ego tells us not to look within because if we do, our eyes will light on sin and God will strike us blind (T-21.IV.2:3), which is a nice way of saying God will destroy us. We do not open our eyes yet because we have to learn

first that the light is our friend. Indeed, the light is our Self, which means we have to learn to gradually de-invest in this self, because as long as we value this self, disappearing into the one Self of God is too terrifying. So we still keep our eyes closed, but we begin to open them just a little so that some light filters through. That is the light that teaches us we are all the same. Our closed eyes and our dreams still perceive differences because bodies are different. But our healing mind begins to understand that the differences do not make a difference, and that despite all of the perceptual differences our eyes show us, it is our mind's perception that says we are all the same.

We do not deny what the body says. We do not deny what our body sees, hears, smells, or tastes. We deny only the ego's interpretation. The Holy Spirit does not take away our dreams. He does not take away the figures in our dreams or our relationships with these figures. He gives us a different way of looking at them. That is the transformation. Thus, I am still in relationship with you, but now I am beginning to see that we are alike. My ego is your ego, the same ego. The correction of the Holy Spirit in me is the same as in you, and we both have the power to choose. We both are terrified of exercising that power to choose because of the little hateful voice that continually whispers, "If you get back to that power to choose, guess what? You are going to misuse it again. You are going to attack; you are going to indulge your selfish, self-centered needs and appropriate someone else's love and someone else's self and make it your own. Therefore, do not go anywhere near the power of your mind, because if you do, you will sin again."

And so we continue to make ourselves mindless, and we begin to see that is what everyone does. What's the big deal? After a while, all these dreams become boring because they are all the same. You know, you get some artists or writers who are not very inspired, and every painting, story, play, and movie is the same. You get hack composers and every composition is the same—boring. Well, in a right-minded sense, that is how we should begin to see our lives. Everything is the same. It will not be boring, however, because we will recognize that seeing everyone as the same is the stepping-stone toward helping us awaken from the dream. That is not boring, because now the purpose of our life here has changed markedly. It is not to get what we can or to maximize pleasure and minimize pain. It is to choose these happy dreams of forgiveness that will lead us further and further along, until one day we will not be afraid of the light, and we can open our eyes and realize we are not in our beds. We are at home in God. We were only dreaming of exile, and the dream is over.

(T-27.VII.14:6-8) The dream of guilt is fading from your sight, although your eyes are closed. A smile has come to lighten up your sleeping face. The sleep is peaceful now, for these are happy dreams.

We are still asleep; we are still in a body. Jesus is not saying we have to suddenly leave everything. He is not taking anything away from us. He is not taking our family, our pleasures, or our preferences away from us. He is just helping us recognize that everything and everyone here is the same. We are still asleep, but "a smile has come to lighten up your sleeping face." We can understand "lighten" in two ways: "lighten" in the sense of light or illumination, which ends the darkness, or in the sense of no longer carrying this heavy burden of guilt around with us. We are still asleep, but it is peaceful now. Nothing has changed except our recognition that we are the dreamer. Again, "The miracle establishes you dream a dream, and that its content is not true" (T-28.II.7:1).

This would seem boring only if we think peace and love are boring. To the ego this would be boring because the ego thrives on drama. Just think of the original separation thought. That is high drama. That is the stuff that mini-series are made of, right? We destroyed God and now God is coming after us. That

is big-time stuff. The Bible is heavy drama, which is why it is such a popular book. It is a tremendous myth, and from the ego's point of view, anything other than that is boring. But from the right-minded point of view, this is tremendously joyful because this is what is going to lead us out of here, and at a pace that is gentle, kind, and patient, a pace that we are comfortable with. That is what is lovely and loving about this course.

Jesus is authoritative about what the truth is and what it is not; there is no room for discussion, but he is gentle, kind, and patient. He is saying that all of this is a dream, all of it is made up, but he is going to teach us to rest and sleep more comfortably until we are ready to open our eyes, and then everything will be over. So this peaceful sleep in which we dream that everyone is the same is not boring. It becomes wonderfully joyful because there is no longer any guilt. But to the ego looking in on it, of course it is boring because it is all even. We all thrive on the ups and downs, the highs and the lows. That is what makes for great drama, right? That is what captures our interest.

If we discover we actually do thrive on such chaos, we can get out of it by recognizing that it has not made us happy—that has to come first. Early in the text Jesus says (which is reminiscent of what happened with Helen and Bill originally), "Tolerance for pain may be high, but it is not without limit. Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however dimly, that there *must* be a better way" (T-2.III.3:5-6). Everyone has a threshold of pain, and when we cross that threshold, we recognize that this does not pay us anymore; nothing works. The highs are great, but the lows are awful, and we begin to see we cannot have the highs without the lows. "What goes up must come down," so we need to recognize that our lives do not work. In Chapter 14, there is a somewhat parallel section called "The Happy Learner," which begins by Jesus saying the Holy Spirit needs us to recognize how miserable we are:

"The Holy Spirit needs a happy learner, in whom His mission can be happily accomplished. You who are steadfastly devoted to misery must first recognize that you are miserable and not happy. The Holy Spirit cannot teach without this contrast, for you believe that misery is happiness" (T-14.II.1:1-3).

Until we recognize how miserable we are and that our lives of special relationships have not worked for us, we will not be motivated to let them go and ask him for help. Therefore, what Jesus has to do is wait patiently in the wings until we get tired of the theater and the drama, and finally go to him and say: "You know, there must be another play. There must be another set of actors. There must be another playwright, because this is not working anymore. It is too painful." What he tries to do in this course is convince us of how miserably unhappy we are. That is why if you think your life is working for you, don't study this course. Save your money, because this course is for people who believe their lives are *not* working, who are fed up with their dream and want to be taught something else. And, of course, what we are taught is that our dream—the world's dream—is a mirror of the secret dream, which is a defense against our choosing the Atonement.