

## The Meaning of Judgment

Excerpts from the Workshop held at the  
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### Part II

#### "The Forgiving Dream" (T-29.IX)

Let us turn now to "The Forgiving Dream" (T-29.IX).

##### **(1:1) The slave of idols is a willing slave.**

This part of the text speaks a great deal about idols. In *A Course in Miracles*, an idol is simply another term for the ego and its objects of specialness. In other words, it is something that is not true to which we grant value and reality.

##### **(1:2) For willing he must be to let himself bow down in worship to what has no life, and seek for power in the powerless.**

Clearly this is speaking about the thought system of the ego. The thought system of the ego has no life because it stands outside the Life of God, and it has no power because it stands outside the power of God. Of course, the ego within its dream believes that it has stolen life from God, so that now the ego (the separated Son of God) has life and God has none. The ego also believes it has stolen the power of God to create, and so now it has that power and God does not. This is what Jesus is referring to here as the idol.

##### **(1:3) What happened to the holy Son of God that this could be his wish; to let himself fall lower than the stones upon the ground, and look to idols that they raise him up?**

Jesus basically is asking how all of this started: how could we possibly end up in the situation we are in where we deny our reality as Christ, deny our power, and deny the Love of God? In our sinfulness and guilt, we have fallen "lower than the low" because of this terrible belief about ourselves. And then we look to something outside ourselves to help us, to make us feel better. That is the purpose of the idols of specialness: I believe God cannot help me but this special person, this special trait, this special event, or this special object in the world can make me feel good by lifting me above the lowly state I have fallen into.

**(1:4) Hear, then, your story in the dream you made, and ask yourself if it be not the truth that you believe that it is not a dream.**

Jesus is speaking to us as individuals, but he is also speaking to us as one collective ego mind that made up this story. He is saying (once you sort through all the negatives) that we should ask ourselves in an honest way if this is what we really believe. We really believe this world is reality. There is a strong part of us, no matter how much we have studied this Course and claim we believe it, that does not believe this world is a dream. And we can recognize this to the extent that we watch our minds fill with judgments; all the little things of the world that we are attracted to; all the petty hates and grievances that we hold on to; all the petty things we hold up as symbols of injustice; all the specialness things that we want for ourselves and others, etc. All of these thoughts make it very clear how much we do identify with this dream and make it reality. He says this over and over again in many different places. It is extremely important to pay attention to it, because he is telling us that, yes, we *do* believe that this world is reality, and, yes, we *do* believe we killed off God and that specialness will give us what we want. "The Laws of Chaos" (T-23.II) constitutes probably the strongest statement in *A Course in Miracles* on the ego thought system in all its insanity. And in that section, after describing the five laws of chaos, Jesus says that we may insist that we do not believe them, but "Brother, you do believe them," he states (T-23.II.18:3). We do believe that these laws actually hold. And we believe that the world that rests on these five laws of chaos is actually there. So it is extremely important not to fall into the trap of insisting that we are free from all judgments just because we have done the workbook, or we have studied the Course for five, ten, or fifteen years. The ego's thought system is not an easy one simply to overturn, because it not only *contains* all the thoughts of judgment, it *is* the thought of judgment. And as long as we identify ourselves as a separated being with our own personality and body that is separate from other bodies, then we are believing the entirety of the ego thought system. Again, it is not only that we *believe* in a dream of judgment, we believe we *are* this dream of judgment. And we know we are a dream of judgment because we identify ourselves as one of the figures in that dream of judgment.

Now Jesus is going to tell us a story, like an older brother telling his little brother and sister a story of the world.

**(2:1-2) A dream of judgment came into the mind that God created perfect as Himself. [This is when the "tiny, mad idea" seemed to arise.] And in that dream was Heaven changed to hell, and God made enemy unto His Son.**

In that dream, we really believed we were different from God, that we had a consciousness that could experience itself in relationship to God and in opposition to Him. At that point Heaven and God disappeared. If Heaven and God are the state of perfect Unity and perfect Oneness, and I now begin to experience myself as different and that difference is real, then

Heaven must disappear because I have denied the basic reality of Heaven. That is what "Heaven now has turned into hell" means, and why God is made into the enemy. Before that thought of differences, God and Christ were perfectly unified. Once the thought of separation arises, we believe we have separated from God. We have stolen our identity from Him, and now God is on the warpath and wants to steal it back from us. Now the God of Love is turned into a God of vengeance. This is the beginning of the dream of judgment.

**(2:3-5) How can God's Son awaken from the dream? It is a dream of judgment. So must he judge not, and he will waken.**

This sounds very nice and easy. But as you know from your work with the Course, it is hardly that easy. If this is a dream of judgment based upon differences, then to awaken from this dream and return to the home that we never left, we obviously must give up judgment. The problem is that we are not aware that we are judging. We are not aware because of the power of our defenses. That is the key to understanding forgiveness. It is very easy to say that we will give up judgment; but we do not know what we are really saying because we do not know how much we judge. We do not know how much we really are the children of specialness, and how much our specialness keeps us going, day in and day out. Specialness is the air we breathe, the principle that nourishes all of our relationships. Specialness governs every single thing we do in this world. The problem is that we are not aware of it because we do not see it in ourselves; we see it outside ourselves.

Whenever we find ourselves getting defensive about anything or experiencing a resistance to doing or saying anything or being with anyone, there is some hidden specialness, some hidden judgment we do not want to see. All defensiveness—any time we feel our physical or psychological body tighten—says we feel endangered by an external threat to our specialness. There is a thought of judgment in our minds we do not want to look at. The problem is not the thought of judgment; the truth is there is no thought of judgment. The whole thing is made up. The problem is we *believe* there is a thought of judgment. And once we believe there is a thought of judgment, we will feel guilty because of it. And once we feel guilty because of it, we must deny it and project it out so we can see it outside. This is extremely important. The problem is not the ego thought system. The problem is not all the specialness. The problem is not all the judgments that we make. There *is* no ego thought system. There *is* no thought of specialness. There *is* no judgment. The problem is we *believed* there is. And once we believed it, we never looked within our minds again. Instead we made up the body and the world so that we could focus all our attention outside the mind on the body, on the other bodies that seem to exist outside us, and on the world in which all of the bodies seem to exist.

The truth is there is no world out there; the world is a made-up thought to conceal another made-up thought. But if we do not look at the original made-up thought, then we will never

know it is not there. This does not mean that we have to look at the original thought to attack God. All we have to do is look at the thought within our minds that says, "I exist as a separated person; I am important, and everyone else is my enemy." But no one wants to look at that. That is why we try to convince ourselves that this is a lovely, loving world, with all these lovely people around, and the most lovely people of all are *A Course in Miracles* students. Attend one meeting of *A Course in Miracles* group and you will know the illusion in that statement. The problem is *denial*. We believe that because we study a book about love then we are creatures of love, and because we join with other people who are studying this book about love then we are all children of love. All that we are doing is pushing down all the thoughts of hatred, specialness, competition, jealousy, and murder that we do not want to look at. But if we do not look at them, we will continue to believe they are real. Again, the problem is not the specialness thoughts. There *are* no specialness thoughts, but there is the *belief* that there are. And once we accept the belief, we have to protect it. That is when the defensive system begins. And the world was literally made as a way to defend against looking within, at our own minds.

The most difficult thing to do is to look within. Jesus makes that clear in many passages in the Course. Two specific sections—"Looking Within" (T-12.VII) and "The Fear to Look Within" (T-21.IV)—enunciate that clearly, but the point is made all the way through the Course. For if we looked within we would realize nothing is there—except the Love of God. There is nothing of the ego because there is no ego. The problem is not the ego thought system. The problem is the part of the split mind that I usually refer to as the decision maker, which *believes* there is an ego thought system and therefore believes it has to be defended against.

So the judgments I make against you, making differences important and real, are really a projection of the judgment I have made against myself for making the difference between myself and God real. And I persist in holding judgments against you because that protects me from really looking at the judgment I have made against myself. All that has happened is that I have fallen asleep, dreamt a dream in which I am different from God, and judged that dream of judgment as sinful. And then I said I need another dream—the world—to defend myself against the first dream. Once I have made the dream of the world, I believe I need more dreams to protect myself from all of the preceding dreams of judgment. And so I never get back to the original dream of judgment against God.

Therefore the most difficult thing in the world to do is to stop judging: "So must he judge not, and he will awaken." The problem, again, is that we are not aware that we are judging. You are misunderstanding this course if you think it is a course on anything other than looking at your ego and smiling at it: looking at the ego with the love of Jesus or the Holy Spirit beside you and realizing there is nothing there. But you must look, which means you must get in touch with the part of your mind that is so resistant and terrified to look at all the specialness. This is not a course on love. Those of you who are relatively new to the Course may be able to

avoid making that mistake and falling into the trap of thinking this is a course on love—it is not. It is a course on looking at specialness with this Person of love—Jesus or the Holy Spirit—next to us. Once we can do that, the specialness disappears, the defense goes, the need to defend against specialness goes, and all that is left is love, which automatically extends through us. All we have to do is look at the specialness without judgment. But that is very difficult, because our entire existence as individuals is based upon the notion that there is a thought of judgment in our minds that is so terrifying that if we ever look at it we will be destroyed. And so we will do anything except look at it.

**(2:6) For the dream will seem to last while he is part of it.**

As long as we believe that we are creatures of judgment, as long as we believe that we are a part of this thought of being separate from God, then the dream will seem to exist, because the dream is nothing more than a projection of that thought.

**(2:7) Judge not, for he who judges will have need of idols, which will hold the judgment off from resting on himself.**

This basically is what I have been speaking about. In summary, Jesus is telling us not to judge. When we judge, we are first judging ourselves. Our guilt over that is so enormous that we have to project it out and make up an idol, so we can see the sin and the guilt rest on the idol rather than on ourselves. But it is nothing more than a projection of our own ego. In popular speech, an idol is usually an image of God. Well, the ego makes itself God, as a thought, then projects it out, gives it a body, a form, and worships it. Basically, that is the idol of specialness or judgment.

Each of us has a need of idols "which will hold the judgment off from resting on himself." So rather than look at our own guilt, which is our judgment of ourselves, our guilt now rests on another. That is why we had to make up a world in the first place. As the workbook says at one point, hatred must be specific (W-pl.161.7:1) and "thus were specifics made" (W-pl.161.3:1). We had to have something outside us that we believed was reality that we could project our guilt onto. That is why we made up a wrathful, vengeful God, a God of specialness. That is why we made up a world filled with people, so that we could find someone to blame. But the judgment is not really on the world outside us, because in the end there is no world outside us. The judgment I make on you is really the projection of the judgment I make on myself. But I have to look at my *need* to have this judgment.

**(2:8) Nor can he know the Self he has condemned.**

So not only do I not know who *you* are, but I certainly do not know the Christ that I am, because I have said that the Son of God as I truly am no longer exists. When I separated from God and I made duality into truth, I made the unity of God and Christ into an illusion, which means God and Christ both disappeared. So I believe I attacked God and Christ, and

condemned Them. But I will never remember that I made this all up, because I believe that this reality is so threatening that I must never look at it again. So I keep protecting myself repeatedly by never looking at the guilt in my mind. And the answer to all this is to really look at the fact that I am making it all up. But I will not know that I am making it all up until I look at it.

**(2:9) Judge not, because you make yourself a part of evil dreams, where idols are your "true" identity [true is in quotation marks, because obviously it is not who we are], and your salvation from the judgment laid in terror and in guilt upon yourself.**

Again, we begin with that basic thought of judgment: I have betrayed and abandoned the Love of God. I have turned my back on it, usurped it, stolen it. And the guilt is so overwhelming over what I've done that it automatically leads to the terror that God or Love is going to attack me back. So to escape, I take all the guilt and terror and project it outside me, and make up an idol. I say something outside me has attacked. I am not the one who did it; someone else did; someone else is the murderer.

And all we have to do is look at this whole scenario for what it is.