

# A COURSE IN MIRACLES

## STUDY GROUP

### WITH RAJ

November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008

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THIS IS A ROUGH TRANSCRIPT.  
THIS COPY IS NOT IN ITS FINAL FORM  
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Good evening. And welcome to everyone who's joining us on the Internet.

I cannot emphasize enough what a valuable asset each of you has in Silence. Silence is the threshold to Home. Silence is where you shift gears from autonomy to Union. Silence is where you abandon what doesn't work in favor of what does work infilling you. Silence is the act of giving permission instead of giving orders.

Now we've talked about choosing for your peace. We've talked about moving into the Silence and we've just recently explored the fact that when you unequivocally allow yourself to be still without agendas, without willfulness, without the slightest inclination to assert yourself all by yourself, something happens . . . Atonement. Coming Home. Going Home. Being Home.

Now, when you dare to become silent in the way I just described, what happens? What is now absent that was before present, that before blocked the experience of Atonement—of going Home? What's absent is [chuckle] a self-assertive, declarative, authorizing presence. It can be called, "the ego." And so, when you go into the Silence, you're abandoning everything that the word, "ego" means, and more than the accepted psychological definition of ego.

We're going to be talking quite a bit about ego. It could seem quite complicated. But at the bottom line, the absence of the ego is the absence of thinking—the absence of assertive willfulness, the absence of an independent presence. That's all. It happens that that word, "ego," does stand for a generally very unpleasant experience. But what it will be helpful for you to remember is, that it doesn't represent anything actual.

If any of you dare to become still and you experience the Silence, you discover something: That although the awareness that you are is empty of driving

purpose, of willfulness, of the need to assert itself, awareness is still present, you haven't disappeared.

When the ego disappears, you, as conscious awareness, the presence of Mind that experiences Reality, is there. The ego that you thought was you, once it is absent, uncovers the actuality of you, the foreverness of you, the inviolability of you, the eternality of you, *because you are still present*. And in abiding in that place of Silence, conscious—in other words, attentive—there will always be the spontaneous influx of illumination, clarification, understanding. That which is nothing more than your right Mind begins to register with you when you're not there making so much static, so much noise, that you can't hear It. And you come back into your right Mind and you remember God and you remember who you Are, and you remember who your brothers and sisters Are.

So, to pull this together, there is, we'll say, you—the uninterrupted conscious experience of Being that is you—which is either filled with assertive willful acts of authorship, or which is filled with the invitation, the emptiness which wishes to be filled by that which is Real, that which is your right Mind, that which is the Presence of God being all there is to you. And these two apparently different things each use time differently and that's what we're going to read about, that's what we're going to discuss this evening.

And so, let's go into the *Book*.

*The ego teaches that hell is in the FUTURE, . . .<sup>1</sup>*

Of course, it teaches that everything is in the future, your good is in the future, your wealth is in the future and depending upon how well you do in the now you can bring it into your experience, you can bring your good into your experience in the future. And if you're patient long enough and the future arrives, you may well have what the ego has driven you to use as your goal.

So . . .

*The ego teaches that hell is in the FUTURE, for this is what all its teaching is directed to. Hell is its GOAL.*

Now, let's just be clear. When you said, "Father, I'd rather see it my way . . . Father, I want a divorce . . . Father I want to decide what everything is," you pulled back from Creation. You pulled back from your participation in Creation and attempted to stand separate, which you can't do. And as we have discussed endlessly, in that act you created dissonance for yourself. Your innate Sanity set off alarms, if you will, which you called discomfort and the

discomfort had a simple purpose, to say, “Stop doing what you’re trying to do. It won’t work.”

If you continued anyway, your existence became fraught with tension, fraught with problems, fraught with chaos and conflict. That’s what it means when it says . . .

*Hell is its GOAL.*

It means that when you are attempting to do what is impossible, you have only one potential experience and that is one of pain, one of discomfort, one of forever frustration and on and on.

*Hell is its GOAL.*

You could say hell is its consequence. And if the consequence of something is what is inevitable, it is its goal.

*For, although the ego aims at death and dissolution as an end, it does not BELIEVE it.*

You see, the goal of death, the suffering, the pain, the stress.

*The goal of death, which it craves for you, leaves it unsatisfied.*

Everything that you go for in your daily life without the Father, without joining with your Source, without being aware that you have a Source, is fraught with potential disappointment and even inevitable disappointment somewhere along the line. Because doing things by yourself, trying to do the impossible is something that will never embody fulfillment actually. That is the simple fact of it.

Be willing to look at it. The simpler it is and the clearer it is, the more quickly you will allow yourself to let go of a practice that isn’t benefiting you.

*No-one who follows the ego’s teaching is without the fear of death.*

And I would say is not without the fear of everything negative, the fear of loss. I won’t even go through the list.

*No-one who follows the ego’s teaching is without the fear of death.*

What is the ego’s teaching? The ego’s teaching is think, think, think. The ego’s teaching is, be actively independent, make your own decisions, learn

through trial and . . . what? . . . error, what works and what doesn't. And then employ the knowledge to more skillfully control your good into your experience, even though you won't be able to hold onto it because, why? it's not your Birthright. It's not built into the system of independence. It's not built into a state of being in which you're disconnected from Source. It's like a light bulb. It can't possibly become illuminated if it's not plugged in. As long as it's not plugged in it's bound not to fulfill its purpose. Simple.

*No-one who follows the ego's teaching . . .*

. . . which is think, think, think for yourself, act for yourself, do for yourself . . .

*. . . is without the fear of death. Yet if death were thought of merely as an end to pain, would it be FEARED? We have seen this strange paradox in the ego's thought system before, but never so clearly as here. For the ego must seem to KEEP fear from you to keep your allegiance. Yet it must ENGENDER fear in order to maintain ITSELF.*

Well, in order to maintain itself it must be that which originally said, "Father, I want a divorce, I would rather make decisions for myself." That act engendered fear and in order to maintain its independence, it must keep fear going. It's that simple.

*Again the ego tries, and all too frequently succeeds, in doing both, by using dissociation for holding its contradictory aims together so that they SEEM to be reconciled.*

You see. Think, think, think for yourself and be independent. Demonstrate your independence by thinking by yourself, thinking logically by yourself, coming to logical conclusions by yourself, making decisions based on those logical conclusions by yourself. You know when you do that, that you're uncomfortable, there is tension, there is fear, there is doubt, there is an ever-present, overriding absolutely clear sense of your mortality.

Now, the act of abandoning Silence, the act of thinking and engaging in all of this willful activity is to cause fear. So, that is the goal, that is the inevitable effect, the unavoidable effect. Well now, how to keep you doing something that has such an unavoidably disastrous ending? Ah-h! It does it by not telling you that you should stop thinking and acting independently. It tells you that because you can think, you have the capacity to overcome the fear. You see.

So it holds its contradictory aims together. The one aim is to keep you in a state of ongoing conflict. And the other is to keep you from abandoning it by suggesting to you that the very thing that is creating the conflict can be used to

overcome it. You see? It covers its “you know what” from both directions, seeming to make it all fit together for opposites to be reconciled, for what can’t work, to seem to be workable.

*The ego teaches thus: Death is the end as far as hope of Heaven goes. Yet because you and itself cannot be separated, and because it cannot conceive of its OWN death, it will pursue you still, . .*

. . . you see, it comes up with a very creative, imaginative story . . .

*. . . because it cannot conceive of its OWN death, it will pursue you still, because guilt is eternal. Such is the ego’s version of immortality. And it is this the ego’s version of time supports.*

Again, time doesn’t support or not support anything. But it is this the ego’s version of time supports, the ego’s definition of time, the meaning the ego gives to time supports this fantasy. And when you don’t realize that the solution is so simple, that all you have to do is stop thinking, that all you have to do is to go into the Silence, when you don’t realize that, you’re caught. And the fear keeps the engine going. The fear makes you think harder. The fear makes you try to be more creative in your thinking, more creative in your independence. And the engine keeps the illusion going, when the solution is to *shut up!* It’s so simple. The solution is to go into the Silence.

*The ego teaches that Heaven is here and now because the FUTURE is hell. Even when it attacks so savagely that it tries to take the life of someone who hears it temporarily as the ONLY voice, it speaks of hell even to him. For it tells him hell is HERE, and bids him leap from hell into oblivion.*

You see, the ego will say anything that can be used to motivate you to do what it wants, which is to stay in fear but think that you can get out of it, and that by depending upon the ego, you will experience salvation. You see.

*[Gong back to the 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph] The ego teaches that hell is in the FUTURE, . .*

And the ego tells him . . .

*. . . hell is HERE, and bids him leap from hell into oblivion.*

You see. And to those who are caught up in the need to be actors, those taking action, those being authoritative and exercising authority, it’s very hard not to take the direction when the ego says that . . .

*. . . hell is HERE, and bids him leap from hell into oblivion.*

“Yes! Yes! Do anything to get out of the dire straights that I’m in, to get out of the hell that I’m in. I’ve got to do something. I have to take action,” . . when the exact opposite is the answer.

Value your peace. Value this incredible asset which is yours, which is Silence, stillness. No matter how rugged things become, the answer is still going to arise out of the peace you choose for and move into.

*The only time the ego allows anyone to look upon with some amount of equanimity is the past.*

The ego uses time—the present and the future—to scare you to death and manipulate you. But the past . . . it will allow you to look upon with some amount of equanimity.

*And even there, its only value is that it is no more.*

Now again, we are talking about, the ego does this and the ego does that. What that means is, that the thinking processes that you identify as a self—that which disappears when you genuinely let yourself into the Silence—has these effects. That’s all it means. So don’t keep thinking of the ego as a self-directed, intelligent presence which simply is negative in it’s approach to life. That’s giving it too much credit. It’s not a presence at all. It’s just a habit of a poor use of mind. That’s all it is. And that’s why when you choose to value Silence, and to the best of your ability throughout your day, you try to attend to your affairs from that place of peace instead of the habitual place of reaction, that is what will move you into the experience of Atonement.

Again, it’s that simple.

*How bleak and despairing is the ego’s use of time! And how terrifying!*

How bleak and despairing is the experience of being a self-created thinker, that’s what it means. Bring it into these terms so that it will begin to be easier for you to lay down that use of your mind. And lay it down in the middle of your daily activities, in your so-called secular life.

*How bleak and despairing is the ego’s use of time! And how terrifying! For underneath its fanatical insistence that the past and future be the same is hidden a far more insidious threat to peace.*

And I’m going to add . . . which it won’t divulge to you.

*The ego does not advertise its final threat, for it would have its worshippers still believe that it can offer the ESCAPE from it.*

In other words, the thinking mind would offer that it can provide you escape from your problem, the ultimate threat, through the use of your thinking—your capacity to think.

*But the belief in guilt . . .*

. . . and here's the secret that the ego would keep from you . . .

*. . . the belief in guilt MUST lead to the belief in hell, AND ALWAYS DOES.*

The choice to be an independent authorizer—"But Father, I'd rather do it myself"—will always and can only (and I'm using this word very loosely) generate an experience of utter futility, of forever failure and for uninterrupted suffering of one form or another. Suffering . . . because there's this tension brought on by your innate divine sanity that is telling you that you're trying to do something impossible. And the answer is . . . the simple answer is, to just stop it.

*The only way in which the ego allows the fear of hell to be experienced . . .*

The fear of hell, not hell itself.

*. . . is to bring hell HERE, but always as a foretaste of the future. For no-one who considers himself as deserving hell can believe that punishment will end in peace.*

If you're not going to Wake up, this is all you're faced with. If you're not going to break the habit, if you're not going to get off the merry-go-round, then put this book away, leave God outside and live this thrilling life from which you manage to get a few thrills, a little bit of excitement, an occasional pleasure. Or, do the simple thing—just do the simple thing: Choose for your peace. Actually recognize what a great asset your peace is and then value it enough to take hold of it, to do what brings it into your conscious experience. And then consistently and persistently be "in the world" from there, because it's only in this way that "the world" will become revealed to you as Heaven, misperceived by you as "the world," not heaven when you were defining everything yourself and being an independent, sourceless thinker.

Now, on the other hand . . .

*The Holy Spirit teaches thus: There IS no hell. Hell is only what the ego . . .*

. . . what? The horrible ego? No. The act of thinking. Just simply the act of thinking on your own.

*Hell is only what the ego has made of the PRESENT.*

Hell is only what the process of independent thinking has made out of the Kingdom of Heaven . . .

*. . . the PRESENT. The belief in hell . . .*

. . . the belief in all the definitions that you have come up with and that your ancestors came up with and passed on down to you . . .

*. . . is what prevents you from UNDERSTANDING the present, . .*

. . . meaning the Kingdom of Heaven . . .

*. . . because you are AFRAID of it.*

Why are you afraid of understanding the present? Well, it's not so much that you're afraid of understanding the present as it is that you're afraid to let go of the control you're exercising to save your ass, because you are convinced that you are a mortal doomed to failure, who however, through the excellent use of thinking, can make a halfway decent experience of life for yourself. And you are afraid to embrace the sense of vulnerability that you are sure you'll be faced with if you abandon the control, if you go into the Silence without an agenda. *Without an agenda?* You can't afford to be without an agenda! Everyone else with their agendas will override you in your weakness, in the absence of your strength and the strength of your agenda for yourself to survive.

*The Holy Spirit leads as steadily to Heaven as the ego drives to hell. For the Holy Spirit, Who knows ONLY the present, uses it to undo the fear by which the ego would make the present useless.*

[chuckling] More than making the present useless, it makes the present/Kingdom of Heaven useless/just the world . . . just the world.

*There is NO escape from fear in the ego's use of time.*

There is no escape from fear in the thinking mind's use of time.



*For time, according to its teaching, is nothing but a teaching device for COMPOUNDING guilt until it becomes all-encompassing, and demands vengeance forever.*

Now there is a God. And the Father would not leave you comfortless. And the Father would not leave you trapped, caught in a self-perpetuating movement of self-destruction, whose whole purpose and function is to accomplish its goal.

And so there is the Holy Spirit. And there are those Teachers who have been willing to be touched by the Holy Spirit, touched by God, who were willing to abandon their thinking and to succumb to, yield completely to that which was beyond their thinking. Those who valued peace enough to get past the thinking and be a window, you might say, into the dream so that the truth might be presented and register with you so that you will not be caught in a self-defeating movement with an inevitable and unavoidable ending.

But do be aware that there are two paths and the end results are unavoidable. What do I mean by that? Do I mean that the ego, or do I mean that evil is as powerful as God and could in the end be victorious, accomplish absolute self-destruction? No, I don't mean that, because it couldn't. Because it isn't Real. And that's one of the reasons that you need to hear and know that there is an answer to it. That it isn't inevitable, that it is not actual as in an actually created presence. And that you do not have to be bound to it. And that you have a choice and can make a choice for that which is inevitable and will succeed, if I may put it that way, . . . will bear witness to the truth, uncovering it completely.

*The Holy Spirit would undo all of this NOW.*

All of the compounding of guilt for the purpose of building it into an all-encompassing demand for vengeance forever.

*The Holy Spirit would undo all of this NOW. Fear is NOT of the present, but only of the past and future, which do not exist.*

And of course the past and the future are one of the concoctions of the thinking mind—the independent, self-affirmed authorities.

*There is no fear in the present when each instant stands clear and separated from the past, . . .*

Now I know that makes it sound as though it stands clear and separated from the past and so there are two things. But I promise you that when you allow yourself to be still—present in the moment without memory—then your full conscious awareness of the moment is just that . . . full conscious awareness of

the moment. It's pure. It's flawless. It's Heaven not encumbered, not colored by, not biased by memory. It's you being in the moment with God. Let's say, it's you being in the Movement with God—co-creators, if you will.

*There is no fear in the present when each instant stands clear and separated from the past, without its shadow reaching out into the future. Each instant is a clean, untarnished birth, in which the Son of God emerges from the past into the present. And the present extends forever. It is so beautiful and so clean and free of guilt that nothing but happiness is there.*

Now why is it clean and free of guilt so that nothing but happiness is there? Because one simple thing has happened: Thinking has ceased. Silence desired and embraced prevails. You see?

*No darkness is remembered, and immortality and joy are NOW.*

Why? Because Silence has been valued and embraced right in the middle of your day. You don't have to go to a Synagogue, you don't have to be in a church or a temple or a hovel or a cave. You can be in any one of those places and any of all of the rest of the places in the universe that you can get to. The point is to be present in the now, thoughtlessly in the Silence. Why? Because you want to experience more than you presently know.

Remember we talked about the fact that the only thing that limits the Holy Spirit in His function of bringing the remembrance of who you Are to your awareness, is the degree to which you think you know. And to the degree that you think you know, you're not receptive and the Holy Spirit cannot address you.

So the key is to value *not knowing*. The key is—let's turn it a little bit to make it more inviting—the key is to want to know more than you presently know. As I've said before, "What is the more of God that is here in what I see? What is it of actual Creation that is here for me to see, in everything that I thought was just the world?" That curiosity constitutes opening the door of your mind to go beyond what you presently know.

*This lesson takes NO time. For what is time without a past and future? It HAS taken time to misguide you so completely, but it takes no time at all to be what you ARE.*

[chuckling] It takes no time to be what you Are. If there's anything that will take time, it is how long it takes you to stop being what you aren't. And you can do that by choosing for your peace and meditating and going into the Silence and valuing the Silence more than just a means of lowering high blood pressure or having a moment of transcendence of escape from this place,

where you can come back to this place and tolerate it a little bit better because of the bliss you experienced. It's more than that. It's not a temporary salve—Silence isn't. It is the threshold of Atonement. It is the threshold of understanding. It is the threshold of discovering the Kingdom of Heaven all around you now, today, here "in the world."

*Begin to practice the Holy Spirit's use of time as a teaching aid to happiness and peace. Take this very instant, NOW, and think of it as ALL THERE IS of time. Nothing can reach you here out of the past, and it is here that you are COMPLETELY absolved, COMPLETELY free, and WHOLLY without condemnation.*

You see. It is here that Atonement occurs. It is here in the moment in the Silence that you Wake up. Value it.

*From this holy instant wherein holiness was born again you will go forth in time without fear, and with no sense of change WITH time.*

Threshold . . . threshold . . . threshold . . . the threshold of Awakening goes with you wherever you go because it's in where? Your choice between autonomous authority and the static of it, and the Silence in which Awakening and Atonement can occur.

I love you. I love you. I love all of you including all of you who are joining us on the internet, and I look forward to being with you next week.

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A Course In Miracles (reference pages)  
Chapter 15 – Section – THE USES OF TIME  
<sup>1</sup> Sparkly Book – p.348, 1<sup>st</sup> Full Par. / JCIM – p.146, Par. 4 / CIMS – p. 292, Last Line  
Chapter 15 – Section – THE TWO USES OF TIME  
First Edition – p. 280, Par. 4, Line 3 / Second Edition – p. 301, Par. 4, Line 3

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