

## **Raj/ACIM Study Group – December 5, 2002**

A Course In Miracles reference pages)  
Chapter 2 – THE SEPARATION AND THE ATONEMENT  
Section – THE ALTAR OF GOD  
First Edition – p. 18 / Second Edition – p. 21

**RAJ:** Good evening.

**AUDIENCE:** Good evening.

**RAJ:** And good evening to everyone on the Internet as well.

The chapter we're on is called "The Altar of God."

And the last time we were discussing this chapter, we discussed the tendency when one has attempted to function independent of the Father, to become preoccupied with the beauty of the temple that the Altar is in. And that in so doing, one causes the Altar to recede in one's mind until it becomes forgotten.

But there is another thing you all do with the temple that isn't so beautiful, and that is that because you have your back turned to the Altar, and because you are experiencing separateness, aloneness, which isn't natural to you to be feeling, the *unnaturalness* that you *feel*, you identify as fear. *And* then, out of fear, you transform the temple into a fortress, a defense, a defense against whatever's out there that is responsible for your being afraid. You see? And if you find the fortress not protecting you well, you strengthen it. You develop it. You find a bigger and better way to be safe. And all the time, your back is turned to the Altar.

Now, you must understand that the Altar is the Presence of God that is the very Presence of You. And there is an Effulgence to it, an Illumination to it. A Glow, if you will. And the Glow is what you might call the temple that surrounds the Illumination of the Presence of God that is the actual center *and* circumference of you.

When you *imagine* that you can step back from the Light that is you and observe it, you find that you can also imagine a capacity to turn your back on it and notice the Glow without seeing the Altar, without seeing the Source of the Glow. And then you can become preoccupied with it, because it is the only thing in your view. And so you can beautify it, or you can strengthen it, or you can do whatever your imagination can come up with, *except* that because your back is turned on your Essential Being, and you cannot avoid but feel the unnaturalness of that stance, everything you do,

whether it's beautifying the temple or creating a fortress out of it, will be done out of fear, and as a defense.

Now, your body is the Visibility and Tangibility of your Individuality. Your Individuality is Spirit; not matter; not solid form. Therefore, the Visibility and Tangibility of you has to also be utter Spirit; not tangible matter.

*But* the moment you begin to use the temple as a *means of defense*, you *densify* it, as I've said before. You *tighten* it up. Indeed, I know that almost all of you, at this particular time, with all of the invitations you have through the media to feel fear, are experiencing physical tension, are experiencing queasiness in the pit of your stomach, are generally not feeling at ease in your body. And the reason is *because* you are preparing it to defend yourself.

Now, I'm going to ask you a trick question. Which came first, the invitation to fear, *or*, the physical sensation of fear? I'm not going to have you answer that question. Some of you are likely to say, "I was feeling uneasy before I got any indication from my world that there was a need for it." And others of you will say, "I wasn't feeling anything until I started watching the news." Well, what came first *wasn't* the call for fear, *or*, the uneasy feeling within you. *What came first was turning your back on the Altar.* If this is clear to you, then you will be able to understand easily and clearly that the answer to the call for fear *and* the physical sensation of uneasiness, is to give your attention back to the Altar, so that you don't engage in defense beautifully, *or* by having a strong fortress.

"Oh, let's defend ourselves through reason and compassion. Let's defend ourselves through prayer. Let's defend ourselves through a positive attitude. Let's defend ourselves by consciously embracing our enemy with love." You see, that's a beautiful way of defending yourself, but it's still defense.

You've got to stop keeping your back to the Altar. You've got to abandon looking at effects, and turn within to the place where your Peace is available to you. And you must choose for your Peace first, before you look out there, so that when you access your Peace, you may *feel* the Presence of God's Love that is there growing brighter and illuminating you with the *Gift* of Love, so that all you are impelled to do, *or be, is* the uncomplicated Presence of Love that *sees* What God Would Have You See where you had seen an enemy that you needed to defend yourself against. And *that* is the only thing that is going to transform whatever situation you're confronted by that seems to be a justifiable call for fear.

Now I want you to understand also that as long as you engage in the habit of using your body as a shield, as a fortress, as a presence of that which has the capacity to exert force, you will find yourself experiencing your body trying to accommodate your intent to use it as a defense. And you will be uncomfortable. You will become ill. You will find dis-eases, simply because your decision to *act* and be a forceful presence for your defense causes you to use the Glow of the Altar as a means of being unconscious of the Altar. *And* your ever-present *Sanity*, with a capital “S”, does not allow you to become more powerful as an independent agent for change without your experiencing an *equal* amount of distress.

Your Sanity, the ever-present Balance of *Being*, causes every single one of you, when you are attempting to act *at odds* with Being, to be met with an equal force in the opposite direction, you might say. In other words, if you tried to stretch into a position, or a shape, that God didn’t give you the ability to move into, your attempt will be met with an awareness that you can’t do it. And it will also be met with an awareness of the *unnaturalness* of it, because even though you tried to *act* and think insanely, you haven’t been given the capacity to do it.

And so you say, “I am going to protect myself against my enemy. And I am going to use my body, because it’s the only thing I have to use, as the fortress and the weapon. And I am going to do whatever I have to do to protect myself, no matter how aggressive my enemy gets.” And the more intense you become, the more at odds with the nature of the temple of the Glow of the Altar, you become. *And* you squeeze the Life, you squeeze the Glow, you squeeze the Light out of it. Not that you can *actually* do that, but *you squeeze it out of your range of vision*. And ultimately, you may find that your so-called “enemy” has killed you, when actually *you* have turned the Light out by insisting on attempting to solve the problem that you have misperceived as existing by getting rid of it, and using the Glow of your Being as the means of doing it. *And the only result you can seem to have is to find yourself snuffed out.*

So when you attack your enemy, you’re attacking yourself, because the whole scenario has arisen out of a fantastic imagination that you could actually turn your back on the Light of your Being, the Altar that is in the very center of you, and engage in anything, beautiful or ugly, *loving* or hateful, *healing* or killing, without being connected with your Source. And so the enemy you see, because you have your back to the Altar, seems to kill you because that is the scenario you have set in place by becoming *defended against* this imaginary entity.

Now it doesn't have to be Saddam Hussein. It can be your child. It can be your lover. It can be your mate. It can be an employer, or an employee. You're getting constant invitations to feel vulnerable these days. And it's very easy for whatever vulnerability you activate within yourself to rub off, or color, your experience of everyone else. And anyone and everyone can become the object of your suspicion and very creative, imaginative ideas about just how they are being terrible and operating to your detriment.

So this is really a time to remember what your Function is, which is to be the Presence of Love. And to remember that the Atonement *Principle*, because Atonement is what this is all about, the Atonement Principle is Love, and the Atonement is an *Act* of Love.

And as long as your attention is on the temple, I'll put it this way, as long as your attention is on the *Glow* from the Altar, and whether you make it into a temple or a fortress, you're ultimately going to have to realize that the answer to any form of defense is to turn around so that your back isn't to the Altar. And so that you can see the Altar, and in your imagined distance from it, *feel* yourself being loved by the Love That Is Really You, That Is Really *God* Being The Presence That Is You, so that your decision to stand apart from It and observe It might melt in the Presence Of That Love. And you will find yourself slipping back into *being* It, rather than standing apart from It and observing It, and apparently giving yourself a vantage point where you can turn your back on It and look *out there* and see a world that you must be defended against.

Maybe it isn't another country. Maybe it isn't a mate, or a child, or a parent, or an employer, or an employee. Maybe it's your body that you are finding yourself needing to defend yourself against, because *it* is not behaving properly and threatening your life. You see? Maybe *it* is what is causing you to be vulnerable to the worst.

You see, even the Glow from the Altar that you look at, which is really the temple, but which you *look at* with your back turned to the Altar, can become that which you have to defend yourself against. And so, here you are, using your body as a defense *against It*, further *compounding* the densifying of Pure Light, Pure Glow, the Pure Energy of Spirit that *never was* matter, and never was governed by the laws of matter, the laws of physics.

So, with that in mind, let's begin. Again, it's the second paragraph on page 21, for those who are in the second edition. And for those who are in the first edition, it's page 18, the second paragraph.

Okay.

**READER:** *For perfect effectiveness the Atonement belongs at the center of the inner altar, where it undoes the separation and restores the wholeness of the mind.*

**RAJ:** Now, it is already there. For perfect effectiveness, it is already there. The point is that that's where you need to bring your attention. Your attention needs to be *brought to* the center of your Being, the inner quietness.

Continue.

**READER:** *Before the separation the mind was invulnerable to fear, because fear did not exist.*

**RAJ:** And after the separation, the mind is invulnerable to fear, because fear *does not* exist.

So, it's not like the separation happened a long time ago and now you're stuck in it. All you have to do is be willing to not be separate any more. And the moment you make that joining with the Presence of God in the middle of you, then you will find you're invulnerable, and that there is no fear, and that there never was. So again, it's not something that happened in the past. It's a change of mind that occurred which can be unchanged at any moment.

Continue.

**READER:** *Both the separation and the fear are miscreations that must be undone for the restoration of the temple, and for the opening of the altar to receive the Atonement. This heals the separation by placing within you the one effective defense against all separation thoughts and making you perfectly invulnerable.*

**RAJ:** The one effective defense against all separation thoughts is to abandon your imagined capacity to *stand separate* and objectively view the Subjective Experience of *Being Love Itself*. The only effective defense against an illusion is to stop indulging in the illusion. And because you can't actually become something you are not, you *never did* become something that had that capacity. And so that fact that you have never changed one iota for one second from What God Created You To Be *is* the answer that's already in place in the middle of you because it was *never* undone.

Okay.

**SEEKER (reader):** I have a question about when you were talking about turning our backs to the Altar. Every time we do that, is that always an attack on the body?

**RAJ:** It's always an attack on God, you might say. It's always an attack on your Essential Being. And because you are using your body in order to... ummm...

**SEEKER:** Wake up.

**RAJ:** No.

Because you are using your body as the *means* of attacking God, you are causing it to try to do something that it cannot actually do. When you do that, it doesn't change your body. Your body doesn't actually become diseased. And your body cannot ultimately die, because the Glow will always be there. And it will forever be the Illumination of Light, and not matter. But you can *seem* to create an experience of density in your body that you could call an attack on your body. *But* remember that in order to become preoccupied with the Glow, you must *already* have turned your back to the Altar.

**SEEKER:** Hence my question. And it's not valuable to look at it that way. That it is an attack on the body, but it kind of... that's what I thought when you said that.

**RAJ:** Well, let me put it this way. When you take your fist and attack the wall by punching it, which one do you think hurts?

**SEEKER:** Your hand. [laughing]

**RAJ:** Yeah. Not the wall.

So when you use your body as a means of attack, you find it suffering. *But* the moment you turn around and give your attention to the Altar, and you abandon the attack-mode so that you might be infilled with the Father's Love that illuminates that It, the Father's Love, is the very Presence of your Being, then all injury that seemed to occur in your little fantasy disappears.

You see?

**SEEKER:** I see.

**RAJ:** And the Glow doesn't go away, but it isn't the center of your attention any more.

Okay.

**SEEKER:** Thank you.

**RAJ:** Continue.

**READER:** *The acceptance of the Atonement by everyone is only a matter of time. This may appear to contradict free will because of the inevitability*

*of the final decision, but this is not so. You can temporize and you are capable of enormous procrastination, but you cannot depart entirely from your Creator, Who set the limits on your ability to miscreate.*

**RAJ:** Yes. Now...

**ANOTHER SEEKER:** [in the background] You can't avoid it. [audience laughter]

**ANOTHER SEEKER:** [inaudible] [more audience laughter] [Raj laughing]

**ANOTHER SEEKER:** That horrible word. [audience laughter]

**RAJ:** You see, in order to act at odds with the Father, you must attempt to stretch the Father, or compress the Father, or in some way twist What The Father Is, because you are given no other material to work with but What God Is Being.

And so you might imagine that God is a giant rubber band that is Eternal and Inviolable, and therefore cannot be damaged or broken, but which, because it is a rubber band, can be stretched. And so, you attach one end of it to an immovable rock, and you start stretching it. Well, you can't stop it from being What It Is, and you can't make it become something else, but what you find *happening* is that as you walk further and further away from the rock, it becomes more and more difficult because you are trying with more and more force to accomplish something that is impossible—to stretch God out of shape.

So, you could say that you have free will to try to stretch God, or twist Him into something He isn't, but because He can't be twisted into something He isn't, you will inevitably come to the realization that what you're attempting to do is impossible. *And with understanding, and with comprehension, and with willingness, you'll stop trying to do the impossible.*

So, the end is inevitable. Free will means that you have the *right* to cooperate with The Way Things Work. But it also means that you have to cooperate with The Way Things Work because it's your choice. The ultimate choice that you're faced with is that you have decided to co-operate with The Way Things Work. And the word "co-operate" is very close in meaning to the word "co-creation."

Continue.

**READER:** *An imprisoned will engenders a situation which, in the extreme, becomes altogether intolerable.*

**RAJ:** That's the really stretched rubber band.

**READER:** *Tolerance for pain may be high, but it is not without limit.*

**RAJ:** You see, you never totally lose your Sanity, and so when something becomes *obviously* unreasonable, you *have* the capacity to *recognize* it.

Continue.

**READER:** *Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however dimly, that there **must** be a better way. As this recognition becomes more firmly established, it becomes a turning-point.*

**RAJ:** Yes.

**READER:** *This ultimately reawakens spiritual vision, simultaneously weakening the investment in physical sight.*

**RAJ:** And I'm going to put it this way. Spiritual Vision arises out of the decision to turn toward the Altar. *Physical* vision results from the decision to turn your back on the Altar. The *decision* to turn your back to the Altar is an abandonment of Wisdom. And the *decision* to turn back toward the Altar is an Expression of Wisdom.

**READER:** *The alternating investment in the two levels of perception is usually experienced as conflict, which can become very acute. But the outcome is as certain as God.*

**RAJ:** And the more acute a situation gets, the closer you are, I'm going to put it this way, to having your will broken—your *will* to operate at odds with God. And so the more *acute* the situation is, you might say the more miracle-ready you are. Because the Sanity in you that you cannot get rid of, even though you can try to ignore it, stands ready in that state of acuteness to register with you.

It stands ready for you to *recognize* once again, so that you say, "Ah! I get it! I've been making it difficult for myself by doing it the way *I* wanted to do it without being curious to know What *Really* Works. And so I'm going to ask for Help. I'm going to turn *around* where I *can see* the Altar. I am going to re-embrace that in me which holds the answer which I rejected at some point."

You see, Wisdom is something more than just an intellectual "Aha!" It's something that comes from very deep within you, because it's part of your innate Sanity. And so you *feel* it.

Continue.

**READER:** *Spiritual vision literally cannot see error, and merely looks for Atonement. All solutions the physical eye seeks dissolve. Spiritual vision*

*looks within and recognizes immediately that the altar has been defiled and needs to be repaired and protected. Perfectly aware of the right defense it passes over all others, looking past error to truth.*

**RAJ:** Yes.

You see, the whole reason that one doesn't turn toward the Altar is because one is preoccupied with the error, *and* defense against it, out of *self-righteousness*. You see? And so one is *committed* to exposing the error, and demonstrating its horribleness, and proving that it must be annihilated—instead of stopping a moment, and going within, and becoming still, which is the equivalent of turning *around* so that your back isn't to the Altar, and letting in the Perspective that is *naturally* and eternally yours, so that you *can* with Love reassess your choice of how to perceive what you're seeing. And make a new choice colored by, supported by, and illuminated by, the Love That You Are, that you have become reacquainted with once again, by virtue of abandoning your commitment to the *error* and *its eradication*, and instead yielding into the Love in the center of your Being that is the Presence of God *and His* Perspective. And *that's* what heals.

Continue.

**READER:** *Because of the strength of its vision, it brings the mind into its service.*

**RAJ:** Ah, yes! You thought, you *all* have thought that your mind is the authorizer. That it's not there to be in service to anything. It is something for everyone else and everything else to be in service to.

“Let's move this mountain. Let's clear this forest. Let's transform the land. Let's do what will damage the ozone layer, just because we want to do it. After all, we won't be here to suffer the consequences. Let's make our mark on the earth. Let's make our mark on each other. Let's coerce each other into being what we want them to be, or stop them from being what we don't want them to be.”

And so everything must become subject and in service to the *mind* that has conceived the idea of how things ought to be. But that's *not* the Function of the Mind. And as long as one insists upon employing it that way, *one is at odds with The Way Things Work*. And you are going to exist in an ongoing state of suffering, which will be more, or less, intense depending upon whether *you* are more, or less, in harmony with The Way Things Work.

It is insulting to the ego to let the *Mind* be in service to the Atonement, to be in service to the Father's Will, to be in service to Love.

Continue.

**SEEKER:** May I ask a question with regards to what you said just now?

**RAJ:** Yes.

**SEEKER:** When you said, you know, the mind says, “let’s move the mountain, and make people do this,” or whatever, it seems to me that the underlying driving force in this world seems to be seeking money, the accumulation of wealth.

**RAJ:** No. Let’s be clearer than that.

**SEEKER:** Okay.

**RAJ:** The driving force in the world isn’t that. The driving force in *those* who are *conceptualizing* how things are to be in the world is that.

**SEEKER:** Yes. Yes.

**RAJ:** The world is the Manifestation of God. Never more. Never less. So be careful how you use your words.

Because, likewise, the body can’t function at odds with you, because it doesn’t have a capacity to act on its own. But when you say, “My body is killing me,” or “My body is letting me down,” you create an image that simply isn’t true. And if you *believe* that image, then *undoing* that belief becomes the first step before you can actually get down to the realization that *you* are using your body as a defense, trying to make *it* function in a way it wasn’t meant to, by following instructions *you* are giving to it that *you* weren’t meant to give to it. You see? And once that realization occurs, you can address the problem by changing your mind.

Continue, though.

**SEEKER:** The... it... would it be...

**RAJ:** The current mindset in the world is.

**SEEKER:** The current mindset in the world is to accumulate wealth. This to me seems like...

**RAJ:** The current mindset in the world is to accumulate power.

**SEEKER:** Power.

**RAJ:** And wealth seems to be one of the most effective... ummm... one of the most effective means of *influencing others* to *allow* power to be exercised over them.

Continue.

**SEEKER:** Even people who have great wealth still seem to be motivated to—not all, but many—to accumulate more power, and more power, and more power, and more power. So, is this another way of saying defense? Having power, therefore you can defend against whatever you perceive to be a threat?

**RAJ:** Absolutely. Now that doesn't have to be the only motivation for wealth.

**SEEKER:** The reason I'm delving into this is because it seems that while the majority of people in the world are in the mode of thinking that we need to accumulate more power to protect ourselves, or whatever, then it really slows down any way of shifting into another way of being.

**RAJ:** Absolutely.

**SEEKER:** Here's an example. For instance, we know that governments are basically corrupt in the world, but yet, but yet we... it's not like we're incensed by it any longer, or we say, "Well, let's get rid of those guys and bring in some honest people." It's almost we accept it because we're trying to do the same thing, or the majority of people are trying to do the same thing, and that is accumulate power. So how can I fault those who are accumulating power more successfully, apparently, than I am, because I'm trying to do the same thing? So therefore, I'm going to *accept* the way things are and just get the money and run, so to speak, which seems like that's where the world would... the world in... I mean in terms of the illusion, is stuck right now.

**RAJ:** That's where the current mindset is. Exactly.

**SEEKER:** Exactly.

**RAJ:** Yes.

**SEEKER:** Exactly.

**RAJ:** Ah.

**SEEKER:** So...

**RAJ:** But so what. It may be currently immobilized, but not incapable of movement. And so, someone, somewhere, like maybe you, or anyone else in this room, can abandon that game, abandon that mindset, and start *being* the Presence of Love, the gifter, instead of the getter. And let everything that is done with money be done for reasons other than self-protection. Let what is done with money embrace and *gift* with no strings. Let everything that is done with money *bless*, not *you*, but those to whom you would extend your Love. Not *your* Love, but the Love that arises in you when you

have turned your... when you have turned *around* toward the Altar and been *filled* by the Love that is in It.

Now, you might say, “Well, that’s going to be a hard row to hoe, because I’m going against the whole world!”

Well, you’ve got to remember the only one whose misperceptions are distressing you are yours. And when *you* turn around, your distress will dissolve. And you’ll see that you’re not going against the stream, you’re not going against the world’s mindset, because you don’t need them to change in order for your distress to dissolve. And you don’t need them to see it your way in order for your Wholeness to be experienced by you. *But by being* Love, you will be part of the leaven that leavens the whole lump, and allows someone else to say (who still thinks they’re caught in the world), “Ah! Well, he did it. And she did it. And I understand that over in Idaho there’s a whole group of people who did it. It’s not as hard as... it is not as hard. I don’t think it’s going to be as hard as Michael did, when he did it.” You start the domino falling.

**SEEKER:** So it’s like when you’re filled up by turning around the other way and being filled by the Love that’s coming from the Altar, then when you’re filled up, you cannot but give.

**RAJ:** That is correct.

**SEEKER:** Which is the only legitimate reason for giving—because you are filled.

**RAJ:** Exactly! Because you *can’t hold it all!*

**SEEKER:** And there’s no reason to want to hold it all.

**RAJ:** That’s correct.

Continue.

**READER:** *This re-establishes the power of the mind and makes it increasingly unable to tolerate delay, realizing that it only adds unnecessary pain. As a result, the mind becomes increasingly sensitive to what it would once have regarded as very minor intrusions of discomfort.*

**RAJ:** Yes. Oh, and that increased sensitivity. [reader laughs] It makes it so easy to get pissed off at everyone else’s ignorance, which makes it very easy for you to become defended again, and turn your back on the Altar.

“My God, these are my friends. I had no idea they didn’t grasp what they said they were grasping. I had no idea how far back in the dark ages they actually were!” You see? As you see more clearly, things that hadn’t

bothered you before, didn't *register* with you before. And as you become clearer, it's easier to see how unclear others still are, which means that you didn't assess them well before you became enlightened. And you were really associating with, oh, people you shouldn't have been associating with. And you also find yourself with the feeling that, because you thought they knew better, and now you see that they don't know better, they must have been misrepresenting themselves, and therefore are not worthy of your putting up with their ignorance.

There are many ways the ego can come in, in the face of greater Clarity and a greater willingness to Love, to show you just how unworthy those who you liked, are of the Pure Love that you now have to give, because they had misled you. So you must be very careful that as your greater capacity to be the Presence of Love because you've opened yourself up to it...

**PAUL:** I'm sorry. I lost it.

**RAJ:** You must be very careful that because of your increased capacity to be the Presence of Love because you opened up to it, does not become sidetracked by judgments resulting from seeing that your buddies, your friends, your kindred spirits, are more ignorant than you thought they were.

Hey, if they're more ignorant than you thought they were, and you see that they're really committed to their ignorances, my God, here they were ones you thought were on their spiritual path and more enlightened, and they're less enlightened than you thought, what must this mean about the whole world? The whole world must be in a bigger mess than I thought, and it's going to be impossible to be an agent for change.

That's what the ego does when you are infilled with the willingness to be the Presence of Love more fully. And so, *you find* yourself faced with the requirement to examine your commitment to be the Presence of Love, to find out if *this* is now the new level of what it will take to cause you to abandon being the Presence of Love, because it's either hopeless, or it's not worth it, or they're not worth it. You see? Greater clarity and the willingness to be the fuller Presence of Love *will* uncover to you just how much Love is needed.

And the temptation will be to turn your back on the Altar, and be bothered, disgusted, depressed, by how great the ignorance is. And then, once again, all by yourself, unconnected from your Source, *feel* like giving up and *forgetting* that all you have to do is turn around again and *make commitment* to the Light in the middle of the Altar, which ultimately you're going to find out is You yourself.

Okay. Continue.

**READER:** *The children of God are entitled to the perfect comfort that comes from perfect trust.*

**RAJ:** You're entitled to it. It's a Birthright. It doesn't have to be earned. It's yours.

Continue.

**READER:** *Until they achieve this, they waste themselves and their true creative powers on useless attempts to make themselves more comfortable by inappropriate means.*

**RAJ:** Yes. By creating a better, more beautiful temple, or creating a better, bigger, stronger fortress, or trying as a separate private force to make good happen. These are all attempts to make themselves more comfortable by inappropriate means.

Continue.

**READER:** *But the real means are already provided, and do not involve any effort at all on their part.*

**RAJ:** "Oh, no!" the ego says. [some audience laughter] "It doesn't involve any effort? Well, where can willfulness come into play? When can intent come into play? Where can purposefulness come into play?" You see? Well, purposefulness can't come into play, but Purpose can. And it's already present. And it's already the very Presence of You. You see?

Continue.

**READER:** *The Atonement is the only gift that is worthy of being offered at the altar of God, because of the value of the altar itself. It was created perfect and is entirely worthy of receiving perfection.*

**RAJ:** Yes.

**READER:** *God and His creations are completely dependent on each other. He depends on them **because** He created them perfect.*

**RAJ:** You see? [laughing] If He hadn't created them perfect, He wouldn't dare depend on them. [mild audience laughter]

**RAJ READING:** *He depends on them **because** He created them perfect.*

**RAJ:** Continue.

**SEEKER:** Can I make a comment?

**RAJ:** Yes.

**SEEKER:** A few years ago at a Gathering, someone asked you how you awakened, and you said, “By getting in touch with my innermost feelings.” And, it seems to me that you were looking at the Altar. And correct me if I’m wrong. I certainly don’t want to lapse into an intellectual, you know, discourse. I want to try and stay with what we’re seeing tonight.

**RAJ:** Indeed. You’re correct.

**SEEKER:** So you were being honest with yourself?

**RAJ:** I was being honest with my capital “S” Self.

**SEEKER:** And you just...

**RAJ:** Not honest with my ego. That’s for sure.

**SEEKER:** What did you do next? In other words, how did you stay with what you saw without turning your back? Is that a question that’s a little bit, you know, misleading to, you know,... umm... in denial?

**RAJ:** I made commitment to it. And nothing less. Nothing else.

**SEEKER:** Just simply that.

**RAJ:** Yes. That is the only option you have available to you.

**SEEKER:** And you maintained your integrity all through that?

**RAJ:** Well, my Integrity maintained me. [seeker laughs] *Your* Integrity will maintain you. You don’t have any private integrity to keep you on an even keel through this process. You see? You have... you have an *inherent* Integrity that is the Flame, the Light, the Illuminate Love, that’s in the center of the Altar. That’s your Integrity. And it will see you through as long as you keep your vision there; as long as that is where you give your attention.

**SEEKER:** My ego says that’s impossible.

**RAJ:** Of course, it does. But it always lies. So just because your ego says, “It’s impossible,” hey, consider the source. And, if your ego is incapable of anything except lies, then it must be telling you that it is utterly possible.

**SEEKER:** It’s not telling me Who and What I Am.

**RAJ:** Never.

**SEEKER:** And what everyone in this room is.

**RAJ:** Never.

[to another seeker] Yes.

**ANOTHER SEEKER:** This past couple of weeks have been very intense, and very much what this whole night has been about. And I just, I want to ask you, is that what's happening to me?

**RAJ:** Yes.

**SEEKER:** I'm not imagining, or making something out of something. I've been extremely peaceful, and been able to walk into situations that I joined the other person in arguments and long-standing years and years of fighting, and I was able to sit there and be completely in my Peace, and not feel overwhelmed by what was going on, and still love that other person, and walk away still in my Peace. Is that... was that *this* experience?

**RAJ:** Exactly.

**SEEKER:** It was.

**RAJ:** Yes. It was not you experiencing being irresponsible or being insane.

**SEEKER:** And it *did* make a huge difference in that situation.

**RAJ:** Absolutely.

**SEEKER:** It really did move some other people, too.

**RAJ:** It did indeed.

**SEEKER:** Okay.

And I've kept... that feeling didn't go away. And I don't ever want it to go away. I really, I understand this. That's the first time I've ever understood anything at one of these things. That's just so cool.

Thank you.

**RAJ:** You are welcome.

**SEEKER (reader):** Where was I?

[Raj started reading about 5 sentences back.]

**RAJ READING:** *...and do not involve any effort at all on their part.*

[Raj then started at the beginning of the sentence.]

**RAJ READING:** *But the real means are already provided, and do not involve any effort at all on their part.*

**SEEKER (reader):** Is that from the first edition?

**RAJ:** Just a moment. [pause] I'm sorry.

You were at:

**RAJ READING:** *He depends on them **because** He created them perfect.*

**READER:** *He gave them His peace so they could not be shaken and could not be deceived. Whenever you are afraid you **are** deceived, and your mind cannot serve the Holy Spirit.*

**RAJ:** And last week, the last meeting, Paul demonstrated his willingness, in the presence of fear, of continuing to give his attention to the Altar, and *persisting*, no matter how much his ego was clamoring for his attention and his allegiance. And that is what each one of you must do, because it's the answer.

Continue.

**READER:** *This starves you by denying you your daily bread. God is lonely without His Sons, and they are lonely without Him.*

**RAJ:** What on earth could that mean? How could God be lonely?

**SEEKER (reader):** Because of the separation.

**RAJ:** I have used the word that... the word "sad." I have indicated that those of Us Who Are Awake are *sad* at not being in full communion with all of you. And yet, you might say, that's inconsistent for One Who Is "supposedly" Awake.

If you have a 100-watt light bulb, and you have a dimmer switch, and you have it turned down so that only 50 watts is being used, the light is less full. It is dimmer. And because the light was *created* to function at 100 watts at full illumination, when its full potential isn't being used, something is missing. And there's an experience of the something-ness missing.

And so when so many are caught in a fantasy-dream and are blocking themselves from full communion with all of Us Who Are Awake, the difference between Fullness and the degree of communion that exists now *is felt*. It feels like something. *And* it is clear to those of Us Who Are Awake that the feeling represents something not natural. And so, there is an involuntary and spontaneous desire to help dissolve, to get rid of, this inequity, this imbalance, so that the *Feeling* of Wholeness which is our Birthright—*ours*—those of Us Who Are Awake *and yours*—it is our Birthright to be all together experiencing that Fullness and Wholeness.

And so to say that "God is lonely," or for me to say that "we are sad," is simply a means of conveying that we can feel your absence. We can *feel*

your *unconsciousness* of us. And so it is as though there is a hole, even though *you* are totally available to us. If *you* are not totally available, even though we are totally available to you, until you are totally available to us and experiencing yourselves *and us* fully, the experience of the Meaning of the word “Natural” is missing. You see? And so, we long to be with you fully, as your Essential Being longs to be with us fully. You see?

**ANOTHER SEEKER:** Could you tell us what “daily bread” is? It says, “daily bread,” in this paragraph.

**RAJ:** [laughing] Your daily bread is the Gift of God that God makes of Himself called Creation, called Mind being aware of Its Infinity, and experiencing every subtle nuance of What It Is Infinitely *in* every Aspect of What It Is Being Infinitely, including You. Your daily bread is the unending Gift of Being that God gives You by *being* You, anew, forever.

And that daily bread, that Eternal Sustenance, if you will, that is God expressing Himself forever fully as You, is what you find will *infill you* when you stop having your back to the Altar, and turn around to give your attention and interest to, so that you might be infilled with It. And, then, as I said, find that your vantage point apart from the Altar is something you don’t want to energize any more. So that you are, like a *back-in-the-body* experience, it’s like a *back-into-the-Spirit* experience where you are snapped back in, and the Light is *You*, and You are the Light. And You are the Light That *God Is Being* right there. You see?

**SEEKER:** In certain cultures there is a word, like in Hawaiian, “Mana;” in Chinese, “chi;” in Vedic or Indian philosophy, “Prana;” which is considered an ambient energy that’s everywhere, that we can absorb, and we feed on it. It’s very subtle energy. Is this an interpretation of that same concept?

**RAJ:** Those are interpretations of what I am saying. The problem is that in many ways Prana, and Mana, and so on, nurture the physical body that is still seen as matter. And that is not what we are talking about.

Okay.

So...

**RAJ READING:** *God is lonely without His Sons, and they are lonely without Him.*

**RAJ:** And, of course, you all know that you’re lonely. You’re miserable. [some audience laughter] I mean, you’re not... *you know* you’re not experiencing your Joy, even though you’re generally happy.

Okay. Continue.

**READER:** *God is lonely without His Sons, and they are lonely without Him. They must learn to look upon the world as a means of healing the separation. The Atonement is the guarantee that they will ultimately succeed.*

**RAJ READING:** *They must learn to look upon the world as a means of healing the separation.*

**RAJ:** Let that statement ring in your mind. I encourage you to write it down and put it on your refrigerator to see for this coming week. *The world that you are living in is the means of healing the separation.* It is the place where you must bring your willingness to see God.

And it is a step that cannot be sidestepped. You *cannot* wake up without blessing *this* world first. So stop calling it an illusion. Stop thinking that there's some way to jump ahead, you know, and avoid looking at anything and everything that you're experiencing with the desire to see it through God's Eyes, so that it becomes blessed by *your willingness* to return to your Original Function of being the Presence of Love without ever again holding out for another option; a backup.

**SEEKER (reader):** Raj.

**RAJ:** Yes.

**SEEKER:** Is this what the *Course* means when it says that when... somewhere in the *Course* I think I remember reading it said, "when you look into the eyes of your brother, you're looking into the eyes of your savior"?

**RAJ:** Looking into the eyes of your Brother and remembering God. Yes.

**SEEKER:** Thank you very much.

**RAJ:** You're welcome.

As I said earlier, the only thing that you are provided with that you can attempt to distort into something else is the Presence of God. The *only material given to you* to imagine that you can manipulate is the Infinite Presence of God. So look at your brother; look at the leaf; look at the tree; look at the water; look at the carpet; the glass, whatever; the burned candle wick—with an interest and curiosity to see God there, *to have God revealed.*

You know, you don't have an ugly material world to overcome. You have a perception of the world that you need to abandon. You have a perception of the Kingdom of Heaven that you need to abandon. And I will keep saying that so that you will grasp that we're not talking about a project of major proportions. It all lies in a change of mind; a sudden shift of perception; a

miracle. And the miracle isn't complicated or difficult. It's as simple as a *shift* of attention. Whether it happens to you tonight, or this week, or a month from now, it doesn't change the fact that all we're talking about is [snap of the fingers] a light bulb going on, an "Aha!" A *shift* of perspective. Not an overcoming of a lie, of an illusion.

**SEEKER:** Does forgiveness aid us in this?

**RAJ:** Well, what do you think?

**SEEKER:** Duhhhh. [laughing] [audience laughter]

**RAJ:** What are you doing when you look at the candle wick that is black because it's already been lit before, and you're curious to see God there, you're curious to see the Divinity that has to be there? Aren't you abandoning whatever thoughts you have about it being a material candle that probably was made for celebration of Christmas; and the flame, you know, burns the wick but the wax makes the wick last longer; and it's pretty; and but, you know, eventually it's all going to burn down and disappear, deteriorate, and so on? Aren't you forgiving *it your* perception that you're casting upon it when you look at it and say, "Wow. Maybe there's actual Divine Meaning there; an experience, an inner Experience of Pure Love. And I want to be undefended enough to feel the Love and to feel what the *Meaning* of Love is right there in that particular configuration." That is forgiving it your misperceptions, or whatever your... whatever you think your current, *correct* perceptions are. You see?

That's forgiveness. Being willing to abandon the perceptions you would hold it to based upon your education, and all the peculiar little beliefs that you have made commitment to that surround it. Yes. Forgiveness is involved. And forgiveness is simply saying, "I'd like to see What's *Really* There." That's not hard. That's a pleasant occupation.

**SEEKER:** Just a little willingness.

**RAJ:** Yes. Not only a willingness to open up, but a willingness to conceive the possibility that there's more there than matter, more there than an illusion, and that What's There will speak of Wholeness, and Bliss, and Fullness. Not just of Its Wholeness and Fullness and Bliss, but yours as well. Yes.

Okay. This is a wonderful place to stop for the evening.

And it's good to be back together.

**SEEKER:** It certainly is.

**AUDIENCE:** [in the background] [inaudible]

**RAJ: You are welcome.**

\*\*\*\*\*

*All of the activities of the Northwest Foundation for "A Course In Miracles" are provided without charge or obligation. This is possible because of thoughtfulness, love extended without conditions. Such is the nature of Gift. As a result these materials are available to you, because someone like you has already gifted you with them.*

*And, at Raj's instruction, these materials will never be sold.*

*If you would like to add your thoughtfulness and love, to gift others with the availability of these materials, you're invited to make a tax-deductible contribution at our website, or send it to our address, both of which are shown below.*

A Course in Miracles Study Group with Raj, December 5<sup>th</sup> 2002  
© by The Northwest Foundation for "A Course in Miracles" a non-profit corporation.  
All rights reserved  
PO Box 1490 / Kingston, WA 98346-1490 / USA  
Phone: 360-638-0530 Fax: 360-881-0071  
Website: <http://www.nwffacim.org>  
E-Mail: [paul@nwffacim.org](mailto:paul@nwffacim.org)