

Raj/ACIM Study Group – September 12, 2004

A Course In Miracles (reference pages)
Chapter 8 – THE JOURNEY BACK
Section – THE HOLY ENCOUNTER
First Edition – p. 132 / Second Edition – p. 142
Sparkly Book – p. 178

RAJ: Good afternoon.

AUDIENCE: Good afternoon.

RAJ: And welcome to everyone who's joining us on the Internet.

Last week we talked about the importance and the necessity of not joining with institutionalized mutual definitions, mutual agreements, mutual concepts, because that's the only way the pattern of the habit of misperception can be effectively broken. And it requires definite self-discipline. It requires conscious attentiveness to what? To what *you're* thinking, to what you're choosing to occupy *your* mind with.

You know, there's a commandment that says, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," and ordinarily you think that means don't tell lies about your Brother. Don't misrepresent your Brother. Don't tell others that he's done something that he hasn't done, or that he's thought something he hasn't thought. But, you know, there's a more significant means of bearing false witness that actually has more impact. It's what you're *thinking* about your Brother or your Sister.

I've talked before about the fact that there are two ways to utilize the sense of sight. You use vision for one of two reasons: to gather information *or* to give acknowledgement. When you use your vision to gather information, you can count on it you're in an independent, self-protective mode. You are assessing the situation to find out whether you're safe, and to decide how to handle yourself depending upon the circumstances. When you look at your Brother, you look to either gather information about him or her, *or* to acknowledge something, to *give* something.

You notice that he or she's cranky or unfriendly today, or whatever it might be, and you assess the situation. "Mmm. I'd better watch myself with this person." And you have added to your current definition of that person. In that process, you've never checked with God to find out What's True about that Individual. You've worked entirely in the ego realm, you might say. And so your assessment and the added definition that you've given to yesterday's definition of that one is a misrepresentation. It is a bearing of

false witness. Your *behavior* then will be governed by the assessment you have made. You will embody or share your assessment; an assessment that is incapable of being part of a healing, whollizing, clarifying encounter.

Now, all of you can see that intellectually. And basically all of you know when you're being unkind, when you're thinking unkind thoughts. But since you think it's private, there's no call for you to change. It's not hurting you. But the point is that whatever gift you make is the gift that becomes yours. And if it's an act of lovelessness, lovelessness becomes your experience. *If* you are bearing false witness against your neighbor, you're bearing false witness against yourself *and* you are keeping yourself from the experience of your joy, of the fact that your presence is itself truly the Presence of Love. And you cannot stand in receipt of the real purpose for your having an encounter with anyone else, which is to find and experience your Unity in the context of What The Two Of You *Divinely* Are.

Is that really the experience you all want? No. But you have to look at it squarely. And then dare to treat it honestly, so that you can become grounded in what counts, so that you can become grounded in what gives impetus to transformation.

Now there's another aspect of bearing false witness that is especially important if someone else that you're encountering is ill. And that is that when you assess their health and you come to the conclusion that they look terrible, that you had better steer clear of them because you don't want to catch what they have. You notice that their skin is sallow, and that they're perspiring, and their hair is a mess, and they should've stayed home in bed. And you add this, as I said, to your definition of them. You modify their definition to a worse status than it was yesterday. You are, in effect, embodying the voice of the other teacher. And you are making it more difficult for healing to occur. And you are making it impossible for you to be a part of healing. It is very important not to rehearse, in other words, to repetitively mull over or speak, the appearance of illness, or the processes of disease.

I'm sure every one of you at one time or another has gotten together at a family gathering where someone is describing their last illness, or their last operation, and goes through all of the details of it. Every time you give your attention to the details of the misperception of a Child of God, a Divine Idea the Father expressed, you incarcerate yourself more firmly *in* what I referred to last week as the institutionalized mutual agreements about health, health care, and, we'll say, health problems and what their impact is. And you *densify* the human condition, so to speak, thereby. You are *not* making it easier for anyone to wake up. And you are acting at odds with the

very thing you are professing to love and to be interested in by virtue of your studying the *Course*, or the *Bible*, or any religious or spiritual teaching, aimed at quote “overcoming the human condition” unquote.

You know, if you run into someone who has been through a health trauma, we’ll say, and they start to tell you all the gory details of their encounter with it, you *can* and should interrupt them and say, “You know what? I really don’t want to hear all the details because whatever you tell me is drawing a picture, painting a picture, in my mind of you in an unhealthy state. And because I don’t want that to occupy my time, I am going to have to take time, because I don’t want that to occupy my mind, I’m going to have to take the time to reintroduce the awareness of the Truth About You. I’m going to have to clear my mind of those images so that when I think of you I am sending forth thoughts and meanings that embrace you in health, so that I’m not burdened by a sad and awful picture of you, but might have in my mind a spontaneous capacity to acknowledge you and embrace you in the Perfection that God made you with.”

Now, you don’t have to use the words “God” and so on. But you can convey the idea that you believe that your thoughts about them have impact on them. And that therefore, the thoughts you want to have in your mind you want to be as close to the perfection of them as they can be. You don’t tell them this, but you let this be the basis for your encounter, or the basis for the remark I’m going to make. You don’t have time to be distracted from your clear perception of them as What They Divinely Are. Because anything other than that will only compound the problem, lengthen its disturbing energy in their experience, *and* deprive you of the peace and joy of your Clarity, because you’re staying in alignment with the Truth About Them, the Father’s *Being* Of Them right there and then when they think something else is true about them.

Now this may sound like I’m saying that by your clear correct thoughts you can make change happen. No. *But* the closer your *thinking* is to the Truth About Them, the more parallel your mind comes to the Mind of God, the less blocked you are to the [snap of the fingers] flash of insight when the Father takes the other step and reveals to you, as an influx of insight, the Truth, with a capital “T”, about them that will be healing.

Watch your thoughts because they bind you and they bind others. And then if you’re going to think, let the thoughts be as close to the Truth as you are aware of the Truth as they can be. And they will *deny* the evidence of illness. They will deny your friend’s perception of himself or herself. And that’s okay. You’re not there to agree with their ego’s perceptions of themselves. And it will bring your thought into close enough alignment so

that the little gap can be crossed/bridged and *you* can have an “Aha!” experience, a Direct Knowing of the Truth as supplied to you by the Father, an influx of you in your Right Mind, you might say, that will be an agent for change and *will* lessen the density of the dream of the human condition.

Watch yourself and *stop* yourself when you find yourself rehearsing misperceptions. You make the gift of a misperception, and you *get* the gift of misperception, and you’ve *increased* the misperception. And just like any grapevine works, your misperception will get passed on. And it will become the misperception of the one who passed it on. And the one they’ve passed it on to stands in receipt of something that they’ve either got to challenge *or* they will embrace and pass on as well. So be alert.

As we’ve been saying, you’re teaching all the time. And your teaching has far-reaching effects. And even if you don’t repeat in words what you would teach if you did speak, the teaching you are embracing will govern *your* attitude, thoughts and actions. And you will not behave in the way an agent for change would behave. And thus you will reinforce the status quo.

Okay. Let’s go into the book.

RAJ READING: *The goal of the curriculum, regardless of the teacher you choose, is KNOW THYSELF.*

RAJ: Now, mind you, when you read the word “curriculum” here, you generally think it means the curriculum of the *Course*, the curriculum that’s set forth in printed words on pages in a book. But remember the *Course* is the retracing of the steps you took away from Home. It’s the undoing of the very specific addition of misperceptions upon misperceptions that got you further into the dark about your Birthright. So the curriculum was established by you by each step you took away from Home, each step you took into ignorance, each step you took into ignoring the Truth more and more.

RAJ READING: *The goal of the curriculum, regardless of the teacher you choose, is KNOW THYSELF. There is nothing else to learn.*

RAJ: You could say that waking up is remembering Who You Are. And you remember Who You Are *only* by remembering Who Your Father Is. Because as long as you are fatherless, you are without a clear experience of Real Identity.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *Everyone is looking for himself, and for the power and glory he thinks he has lost. Whenever you are with anyone you have another opportunity to find them.*

RAJ: [small laugh] As opposed to the definition you've created about them.

RAJ READING: *Whenever you are with anyone you have another opportunity to find them. Your power and glory are in him BECAUSE they are yours.*

RAJ: You see they can't have something you don't have. And you can't have something they don't have. Remember we said last week that "we" is characteristic of abandoning the right you think you have to express free will independent of anyone or anything else. And so throughout the *Course* you find statements like this.

RAJ READING: *Your power and glory are in him BECAUSE they are yours.*

RAJ: It's a reminder that the Eternal Constant of Being is *WE*, equality, inseparable Wholeness in Union. So...

RAJ READING: *Your power and glory are in him BECAUSE they are yours. The ego tries to find them in YOURSELF because it does not know where to look. The Holy Spirit...*

RAJ: The other Teacher.

RAJ READING: *...teaches you that, if you look ONLY at yourself, you CANNOT find yourself because that is not what you ARE.*

RAJ: Interesting. It didn't say that is not *where* you are. It says that is not *what* you are.

What does that mean? Well, it means you aren't a body. It means you aren't a localized spec of life. What You Are is *Mind*, the Conscious Experience Of Being, including and inseparable from everything you are conscious of. This means that everything you are conscious of is also the Conscious Experience Of Being in which is embraced all there is to be conscious of, which includes you. Which means that everything shares wholly and equally because all is Mind. All is one thing. The Infinite Conscious Experience Of Being.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *Whenever you are with a brother, you are learning what you are because you are TEACHING what you are. He will respond either with pain or with joy, depending on which teacher YOU are following.*

RAJ: And depending upon which teacher you are following, you will either be bearing false witness, or you will be bearing witness to the Truth about them *and* yourself.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *HE...*

RAJ: Your Brother.

RAJ READING: *...will be imprisoned or released according to your decision, AND SO WILL YOU. Never forget your responsibility to him because it is your responsibility to YOURSELF.*

RAJ: You don't really believe this. But I promise you that if you will take this as your practice for the coming week to remember that what you are giving you are getting, what you share you get to keep, and you take responsibility for which teacher you're going to look at your Brother with and choose for the Holy Spirit, you're going to be able to report back to me next week, even though I will not ask you to, quite a transformation in you and in your experience with your Brothers, because it's the Truth.

Again.

RAJ READING: *Never forget your responsibility to him because it is your responsibility to YOURSELF. Give him HIS place in the Kingdom, and you will have YOURS.*

RAJ: On the other hand if you give him his place in the human condition, you will give yourself your place in the human condition. And I ask again, is that what you want?

Now here's the key.

RAJ READING: *The Kingdom CANNOT be found alone, and you who ARE the Kingdom cannot find YOURSELVES alone.*

RAJ: Again, the word "we" comes to mind.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *To achieve the goal of the curriculum, then, you CANNOT listen to the ego. ITS purpose is to DEFEAT its own goal. The ego does not know this because it does not know anything. But YOU can know this, and you WILL know it if you are willing to look at what the ego has made of YOU.*

RAJ: Well, what has the ego made of you? Well, it's made an orphan of you. It's made a miserable son of a bitch out of you who struggles through life in a world that is at odds with it, a world that is constantly threatening. And it does all of this right in the middle of the Kingdom of Heaven because the Kingdom of Heaven is the only thing the ego has to teach you anything

about. And it's convinced you, the Christ, that you're just a puny, little, insignificant, separate mortal in the human condition. And you believe it.

But now you would say, "Well, I don't believe it completely anymore."

This is kick-ass week. [some audience laughter] And I'm saying to you that you're too complacent. You're not as ignorant as you were, but you're not as aggressive as you could be in disciplining your thoughts more, so that you *are* bringing your thoughts into alignment with the truth intellectually speaking as best you can. So that the intent of the way you are using your mind is more in harmony with God's Purpose, which makes it possible for you to slip into clarity at least momentarily now and then enough to supply you with Vision, with a capital "V", that spurs you on to be even more aggressive, more committed in abandoning what doesn't work.

So you can know that the ego's purpose is to defeat its own goal. And you will know it if you are willing to look at what the ego has made of you.

RAJ READING: *This IS your responsibility because, once you have really done this, you WILL accept the Atonement for yourself.*

RAJ: It's what I said in different words. You will find more commitment, more resolve. And you will accept what is your Birthright for yourself more willingly, because you just don't find it valuable to play with things that sting you. To play with things that may be curious and interesting, but which never give you a moments peace. What would it be like to stand on an ant hill? Or what would happen if I hit that hornet's nest with a stick? It's interesting, but unpleasant. Why do it?

Again.

RAJ READING: *This IS your responsibility because, once you have really done this, you WILL accept the Atonement for yourself. What other choice could you make? Having made this choice, you will begin to learn and understand why you have believed that, when you met someone else, you had thought that he WAS someone else.*

RAJ: You know, someone really different from you. And because he's really different from you, his motives, his attitudes, his goals may be different from yours, incompatible with yours. And so because he is truly totally different, you better be careful. You better be constantly on guard. You haven't said a word to that person but your behavior will bear out your quote "on-guard-ness" unquote.

Again, repeating.

RAJ READING: *Having made this choice, you will begin to learn and understand why you have believed that, when you met someone else, you had thought that he WAS someone else. And every holy encounter in which YOU enter fully will teach you THIS IS NOT SO.*

RAJ: So, do you want to have an encounter that teaches you that it isn't so? Or do you want you to have an encounter that teaches you that it is so? If you want to have an encounter that teaches you that it is so, then look with your eyes to get. And make an assessment based upon your defensive attitude which was expressed in looking to get. And be miserable.

On the other hand, if you look with the intent to give, when you're looking at anything with an intent to give by virtue of your attention an acknowledgement of God, an acknowledgement that if anything is there to experience at all, it must be part of the Kingdom of Heaven, it must be more than you're presently seeing, and you wish to acknowledge as much as you are able to of God there, and you are interested in seeing the more of God that is there in the branch, or the pine needle, or the trunk of the tree, or the clouds behind the tree, there you're looking to give, not to get. There you are looking to acknowledge and be curious about What Is True, which constitutes a desire for illumination. Where? In *your mind*. What? A sudden shift of perception, a miracle.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *You can encounter ONLY part of yourself...*

RAJ: Emphasize the word "yourself." Don't emphasize the word "part."

RAJ READING: *You can encounter ONLY part of yourself because you are part of God, Who IS everything. His power and glory are everywhere,...*

RAJ: Why? Because everywhere and everything is God expressed, is the Visibility and Tangibility of God expressing, making the Gift of His Attention upon His Own Infinitude and *recognizing* Himself in it.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *His power and glory are everywhere, and you CANNOT be excluded from them. The ego teaches that your strength is in you ALONE. The Holy Spirit teaches that ALL strength is in God and THEREFORE in you.*

RAJ: Ah. There you go. You've got to remember Who your Father is. You've got to abandon the pleasure and the satisfaction you're getting out of being an orphan who is overcoming the odds that stand always in the way of an orphan.

RAJ READING: *The Holy Spirit teaches that ALL strength is in God and THEREFORE in you. God wills NO-ONE suffer. He does not will anyone to suffer for a wrong decision, INCLUDING YOU.*

RAJ: Now, that statement needs to be written down and posted on each of your refrigerators. It is essential for you to know that God is Love, that no matter how ignorantly and stupidly the Christ That You Are has behaved once having decided to look at everything privately and independently, God does not will you to suffer for a wrong decision. Therefore, you have no penalty to pay. You will not be sentenced for your stupidity, having to serve time as it were before you can receive the Father's Love once again.

God does not will anyone to suffer for a wrong decision, including you. Therefore, no matter what suffering you might be going through right now, it is *not* at the Hand of God. It's at your own hand. It's the result of the poor use of your mind, which just now you are beginning to understand can be put to a better use. And you're being called upon to make the change where it will be effective, which is in your own mind, and which amounts to your neglecting to bear false witness against your Brother *or* yourself by rehearsing the misperceptions about your Brother *or* yourself. And also being able to disregard the expressions of other's misperceptions about you.

Again.

RAJ READING: *He...*

RAJ: God.

RAJ READING: *...does not will anyone to suffer for a wrong decision, INCLUDING YOU. That is why He has given you the means for UNDOING it.*

RAJ: You see, instead of punishing you, the Father gave you the means of undoing the stupidity. And what was the means? This is where the sheer beauty of Reality and God comes into play. Your means for undoing it is the Holy Spirit, which is nothing more than your Right Mind, which has been held in trust, because it couldn't go anywhere, while you chose to dally with and identify yourself as an ego. The beauty of it and the integrity of it is that the answer to your problems is your Self, with a capital "S".

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *Through His power...*

RAJ: God's Power.

RAJ READING: *...and glory all your wrong decisions are undone COMPLETELY releasing you AND your brothers...*

RAJ: There's the "we" again.

RAJ READING: *...releasing you AND your brothers from EVERY imprisoning thought ANY part of the Sonship has accepted. Wrong decisions have no power BECAUSE they are not true. The imprisonment which they SEEM to produce is no more true than THEY are.*

RAJ: You see? How could you possibly be punished for something that hasn't happened? Or punished for something that you never did because what you *thought* you did was impossible and was never accomplished? You see? That's part of the Joy of Awakening is discovering that everything you thought you ever did that was opposed to God you never did and it never was accomplished. And that's why it doesn't take time for it to be undone. That's why there can be instantaneous healing. That's why there can be [snap of the fingers] light bulbs going on, an "Aha!" and sudden perception of the Truth. Because that which blocked it isn't Real.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *Power and glory belong to God alone. So do YOU.*

RAJ: There's "we" transformed into "us" which is more of a oneness.

RAJ READING: *Power and glory belong to God alone. So do YOU. God gives WHATEVER belongs to Him because He gives of Himself, and EVERYTHING belongs to Him. Giving of YOUR self is the function He gave you.*

RAJ: You see? Your Being is not different from God's Being. That is the State of Being—giving of your Self—that is What *Being* Is. And that's why the art of getting, if I may put it that way, the goal of getting is so out of place, even though it's almost the entire bottom line of your present sense of existence.

Again.

RAJ READING: *Giving of YOUR self is the function He gave you. Fulfilling it perfectly will teach you what you HAVE of Him, and this will teach you what you ARE in Him.*

RAJ: There, you see, you've got to annul the divorce. [You've] got to say, got to be willing to look like a fool, "In a way I've recognized my mistake. I want an annulment. I'm going to annul the divorce I imagined I got. And I am not going to behave stupidly anymore. It was an interesting experiment in the impossible. And I'm finally willing to acknowledge that it was something that could never be done. And, you know what? I've got better things to do. I'm no longer interested in pursuing the impossible."

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *You CANNOT be powerless to do this because this IS your power. Glory is God's gift to you because that is what HE is. See this glory everywhere to learn what YOU are.*

RAJ: This week, if you choose, I invite you to use your eyes as consistently as possible for the purpose of making a gift—a Gift of Recognition of the Divinity of the One you're with or the thing you're looking at, a gift of willingness to see more of God there than you've seen so far.

What you sow, so also shall you reap. What you give, you will be able to keep. No. What you give, you will unavoidably have. So be careful what you give. Be care full, be full of care in what you give.

You know, practicing a little self-discipline is like cleaning your glasses. It gets rid of everything extraneous to what's essential. Yes. It's going to be more work than the sloppy way you had been using your mind so far. It's like saying, "Well, [sigh] I never washed my glasses before! You know, I'm going to have to go all the way into the bathroom. And turn on the water and dry them off and make sure I get them totally dry so they don't rust. What a pain!"

You'd better start doing something different from what you've done before if you want to have a different experience, and if the experience you're having now is specifically due to the way you're using your mind right now. And you'd better make a choice for a different teacher if the experience you're having right now is a result of the teacher that you're currently employing.

You know what? No matter how aggressively bad news presents itself to you, no matter how aggressively bad health presents itself to you, *be diligent*. Refuse to entertain the presentation, the gift, that's being given to you. Contradict it. And contradict it with the Truth that you know; the best Truth that you know at the moment. Why? So that your thinking is more parallel, your mind is more parallel to the Mind of God. So that the bridging can occur more easily. And it will occur if you persist.

Ye shall know the Truth. Okay? Meaning you employing your mind to be conscious of the Truth, the highest and most true Truth that you are aware of. Ye shall know the Truth *and* in that parallel alignment with the Father, it allows the Truth, with a capital "T", to bridge the gap and make you free. It isn't a matter of ye shall know the Truth and the Truth that you know will make you free. You shall know the Truth because you've made a choice for God. And the harmony of your mind will allow the penetration of Truth, with a capital "T", to occur that illumines Truth *to you*, setting you free.

So, let this be a week of discovery. Discovery of the benefit of not bearing false witness against your neighbor, or yourself; of not rehearsing the misperceptions, the illusions, and painting pictures for yourself, or allowing other people to paint pictures for you, that you must immediately sit down to purge, to correct, to replace with the Consciousness of Truth. And realize that in order for the Consciousness of Unity to replace the consciousness of confusion that you're experiencing, you must include and embrace your Brother *as yourself*, as not different in any way from you. Meaning that What Is True of him is in no way different from What Is True of you. And therefore, there is no reason, no justification, for standing away in an attitude of defense from him.

You may have to disagree with his misperceptions. But you will do it knowing that he is the Christ just as you are, and that in your disagreeing with his misperception, you are not joining with it, confirming it, and keeping him in the dark. But you are joining in Brotherly Alliance with What Is Divinely True About Him from What Is Divinely True About You, confirming It.

I love you all. And I look forward to being with you next week. Next week is going to be fun, too. [audience laughter]

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