

**Special Relationships:
The Home of Guilt**

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**Part V
"Guiltlessness and Invulnerability"**

(T-13.I.1:3) Peace and guilt are antithetical, and the Father can be remembered only in peace.

Herein of course lies the problem. I do not want to remember the Father, because if I remember the Father I will remember His Son. And I will remember that His Son is totally at one with his Father, which means the separation never happened, which means I never happened. I do not like that. And if peace is the only way that I can remember God—as the later section says, "The memory of God comes to the quiet mind" (T-23.I.1:1)—then I sure as hell will not be peaceful and will not be quiet. That is what the Course refers to as the raucous shrieking of the ego (W-pl.49.4:3). I would much rather be in a perpetual state of conflict. That is why the word "battleground" is in the ego box on the chart, as well as in the world box. We always live in a state of war. Why?—because we believe we are always at war within ourselves. We are always warring against this Atonement principle. Then as a defense against that war, we believe we are at war with God, because He "believes" He is at war with us. We project the whole thing out, and now we are born into this world and are at war with our own bodies because they always fail us. We always have to plan so that our body's needs will be taken care of. As helpless infants we cannot do this by ourselves, so we very quickly learn how to manipulate our parents or parental surrogates who will take care of us. These are the seeds of specialness that are obviously born in the mind originally.

Thus, we are always waging war, and the war is "how can I preserve this self?" Just as in an international war a country is trying to preserve its own identity and ideals as it sees them, we are always at war trying to preserve this bodily and psychological self. Then, as we begin to grow, we become conscious of why we were born. We were born so we could clearly win the war against all our enemies outside. What enables us to win the war? Not necessarily vanquishing the foe, but by being victimized. We win the war by being unfairly treated, because that will ensure that God will find the sinner, not in ourselves, but in all these terrible people who abused, abandoned, or rejected us; those who did not love us, who were insensitive to us, who were not there when we needed them, who invaded our space, who did this and that and the other thing. We relish, cherish, and adore our abuse. That is how we win the war. It is insane, very maladaptive, and most painful, but it works. Within the insanity of our perverse minds, it works. We actually believe God is watching all of this, even if we are atheists—it does not matter. We believe God is watching and that He will see our suffering and draw the conclusion we want Him to draw: How could this poor, poor suffering schlep be the sinner? This is not the one who destroyed Heaven—it is all these abusers, all these victimizers, etc. That is how we win the war. That is the purpose of all special relationships. We make the guilt real, preserve it in our mind, and then get rid of it by putting it onto someone else.

(T-13.I.1:4) Love and guilt cannot coexist, and to accept one is to deny the other.

It is one or the other, so that if I choose the Love of God, if I choose to say I am still a part of Him and the separation never happened, then this individual self will disappear. Obviously, then there is no guilt. Guilt comes from separation, but if I choose guilt, then I have to deny the love. That is the real secret, the secret guilt—that I am always denying the Love of God. I am always pushing the love of Jesus away. I am always pushing his message away. Why?—because if I accept it and I accept him, then I cannot accept this self.

(T-13.I.1:5) Guilt hides Christ from your sight ...

What we are going to see here, and in everything else we will be discussing in this class, is some expression of the principle that guilt is blind and is blinding. Guilt does not know about the Love of God, and it does not know about Christ. It will also ensure that we will never know about it. And to ensure that we will never know about the Love of Christ, the ego sees to it that we will never know about guilt, because we cannot get from our experience in this world back to our real Self without going through the guilt. You do not go back to the light without retracing the steps through the darkness.

(T-13.I.1:5) Guilt hides Christ from your sight, for it is the denial of the blamelessness of God's Son.

"Blamelessness" is just another word for "sinlessness," which is another word for "guiltlessness." I do not want God's Son to be blameless; I want him to be a sinner. If he is sinless and guiltless and blameless, the separation never happened. So we always come back to the same idea, because it is always the same idea: the separation never happened; I never happened.

That is why we always cling to nationalism, and to our identification with certain groups—racial, political, social, religious, ethnic; it does not matter. We always cling to them because these become a symbol of who we are. It is very difficult to imagine a world without boundaries, without specific identities. The European Union is such a difficult concept because eventually people will understand that what the various nation states in Europe are going to have to do is give up their identity. First they have to give up their currency. That is very difficult. And eventually the idea would be to have all the borders go away. I do not think we will live to see that. The danger from the ego's point of view is that if I lose my cultural and my national identity, I will lose this self. This self is tied up with who I am as an American, as a white, as a black, as an Indian, as a Frenchman, as a Jew, as a Christian, as a Moslem, as a Catholic, as a Protestant. That is who we are. That is why we all cling to these, and why everyone is willing to go to war to protect it. Our going to war to protect our national sovereignty, racial purity, or religious identity, is nothing more—*literally* nothing more—than a fragmentary shadow of our original choice to go with war with God to protect this individual self. Remember once again, there is no linear time. In every moment we are simply re-enacting and choosing to re-experience that original moment when we chose terror instead of love, when we chose war instead of peace. Our decision to go to war with God and the Holy Spirit to maintain our individual purity and identity is the germ, the seed, from which all the wars come, both on the international scale and the personal scale. We are always striving to protect this self and the symbols of this self. Thus, we say to a neighbor, "Your tree is growing in my yard. Your roots are under my fence." Why does it arouse such emotion in us? Because our individual identity is being threatened by the symbols we have made to express that individual identity. That is why nothing will ever be solved, whether we are talking about a neighborly squabble or a world war. Nothing will ever be solved unless people go back to the original thought that gave rise to this.

Remember, this world arose to keep the guilt hidden and protected. And it is the guilt that says I have sinned against God, I have made war against Him, but I do not want to be seen as the guilty one. I want someone else to pay the price.

(T-13.I.2:1-3) In the strange world that you have made the Son of God *has* sinned. How could you see him, then? By making him invisible, the world of retribution rose in the black cloud of guilt that you accepted, and you hold it dear.

Making the Son of God invisible is what we did when we chose the ego over the Holy Spirit right at the beginning, because the Holy Spirit is that memory of Who we are as God's true Son, as Christ and as spirit. "By making him invisible"—that is what sin and guilt do. "The world of retribution rose in the black cloud of guilt that you accepted, and you hold it dear." That is exactly what we saw at the end of Chapter 18 that we read at the beginning of this class [Part II in this series]. This is exactly the same idea, and this is five chapters earlier. The "world of retribution" is the world of punishment, the world of vengeance. Why do I have to make a world of retribution and punishment? Because the bad ones, the evildoers, have to be punished so that I am off the hook. It is always *one or the other*. There is love and there is guilt. Both cannot coexist. It is *one or the other*. If the guilt is in you then the innocence is in me, and then I will want you punished, which means I will take God's punishment into my own hands. I will become the symbol of God's wrath. That is what Christians have done for two thousand years. They become the agents of God's wrath and they punish people in His Name. We hold, we accept, and we cherish that black cloud of guilt.

(T-13.I.2:4-5) For the blamelessness of Christ is the proof that the ego never was, and can never be. Without guilt the ego has no life, and God's Son *is* without guilt.

Since many of you have read these lines very, very often, what do you think about when you read them? What Jesus is telling you is that you do not exist. That is what he is telling you. Your not wanting to hear it is the reason you do not realize that *is* what he is telling you. This entire world rose because of guilt. Well, we are all an integral part of this world. We are born into this world as bodies, an intrinsic part of what this world is. If there were no guilt there would be no world. This is a world of guilt.

The second paragraph in the Introduction to this chapter, which I did not read, is all about that. It is a very powerful statement. That is where Jesus says, "The world you see is a delusional system of those made mad by guilt. Look carefully at this world, and you will realize that this is so" (T-13.in.2:2-3). Without guilt there would not be a world, which means without guilt there would be no me. Well, Jesus is just telling me there is no guilt, which means there is no me as I identify myself—this psychological, physical self that has a name, a history, etc. That is why there is so much resistance to what this course says. That is why there is such a strong need to change what this course is saying.

We all want to bring the light of the Atonement into the dream of darkness, rather than bring the dream of darkness to the light of the Atonement, at which point the dream would disappear. We all want love and guilt to coexist side by side, and in the ego's world it does. But it is not God's Love; it is special love. That is why we make such incredible ideals about love—romantic love, parental love, national love, all kinds of love. We do it because this is all special love, and this is love that is the home of guilt. In this sense, love and guilt exist very happily side-by-side until, as Jesus explains in another passage, the hate breaks through the barricades and then we suddenly realize that the love was not what we thought—it was really hate all along (T-16.IV.4:10).