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SPIRITUAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH THROUGH RESTITUTION FOR REAL GUILT

Greetings, my dearest friends. Divine blessings and love are with you tonight, and on this path all the way. I welcome also the new friends who are here tonight for the first time. This lecture may not be easy to follow, because the material is particularly directed to areas of the psyche that are accessible only after certain obstructions have been dissolved by this work. My friends on this path have done very intensive work and have reached these accessible areas. For them my words can bypass mere intellectual understanding and reach the underlying emotional layers. Nevertheless, it may be that the new friends who have come for the first time may feel an echo here or there in their souls, which may give them the incentive to start on a similar road of self-finding. Such a way is not as easy and painless as it may appear, yet it is really the only way that leads to fulfillment.

In my last lecture we discussed real guilt. Quite a long time ago I explained the difference between real guilt and false guilt, but at that time it was not possible to go into the subject in more detail, because you were not ready then, my friends. Many areas of your psychic life had to be explored and understood before it was possible to face and come to terms with the real guilt that always lies behind the false one.

However, not all of my old friends will immediately be able to go into this phase of the pathwork. Sooner or later you will come to this point, provided you proceed in your sincere endeavors. Once you have groped your way through the maze of your various images and misconceptions, you will be able to come face to face with your real guilt.

In all the time we have spent together, we have essentially worked through two major phases in which, of course, there are some subdivisions. When we first started I told you about the importance of self-purification. I said that this, indeed, is the real meaning of life and the way of self-fulfillment. Then came the next phase, in which we quite deliberately shied away from even using such a word as purification; we were concerned with looking at the self without the thought of "right" or "wrong." There was a good reason for this.

The most difficult thing for a human being is to face the lower self, and it is in connection with the lower self that real guilt exists. You go to any length to avoid facing the lower self. Perhaps you are capable and willing to face parts of it, yet certain other parts you are absolutely unwilling to accept. You are so frightened by the possible implications, and so eager to be better than you can possibly be at the moment, that you would rather produce much worse false guilt, than accept the tiniest real guilt belonging to the area of the lower self that you are unwilling to tolerate. This condition is quite general and very important to recognize. It is still vastly underestimated.

In order to become capable of facing your lower self in its entirety, you must first learn to accept and to forgive yourself. For that very reason we remained for a considerable time in what we might term the second major phase on our path together. Accepting and forgiving means to recognize and then stop the tendency to moralize with oneself, to understand the harm of perfectionism. This may seem quite paradoxical. For, on the one hand I invite you to face your lower self, your real guilts, to make restitution for them and to purify yourself, while, on the other hand, I emphasize how dangerous perfectionism, self-condemnation, moralizing, and false guilt feelings are.

You see, my dearest friends, to the degree that perfectionism and self-condemnation exist, to that degree you cannot accept your lower self. For in that perfectionism, as I said many times before, you will drive yourself into a false perfection that is superimposed and therefore destructive. Only when you have the courage and humility to be what you are, to calmly accept yourself as you are, will you have the resiliency to accept the lower self as it actually is. Only then can you accept the real guilt and make up for it. Accepting the real guilt makes it possible to accept your real values, even to become profoundly aware of them. This is why it is so important -- for as long as one deals with these personality levels -- to shy away from any implications of sinfulness, indeed from anything that might even remotely appear as condemnation, so as not to encourage the tendency of perfectionism in yourself.

On the whole, you are ready now to proceed a step further. Some people may be very near the phase in which they become organically ready to face their real guilt, while others may still be struggling to recognize their false guilt. They are still hindered by self-condemnation, by weaknesses and the paralysis of their faculties, by false impressions and concepts, and even by the opposite of self-condemnation, namely, self-justification. They are caught in their accusations of others, or in a kind of weakness that allows others to exploit and take advantage of them. Such inability to assert one's self by standing up for one's rights may appear to be the very opposite of evil. Even if you have recognized that such submissiveness is unhealthy, emotionally you cannot yet experience the strong connection of this paralysis with unrecognized facets of the lower self, about which you feel real guilt. Those friends who are not quite ready to come to this deeper core will get there too, if only they persevere. But to force the facing of real guilt before the readiness manifests naturally in your private work, would either find you completely closed up, or else it might crush you.

Resiliency in accepting all the aspects of your lower self can be cultivated even before your personal pathwork leads you to them. It is not as difficult to achieve as my earlier words may indicate. Self-exploration and facing lesser "evils" make the psyche strong enough to face very unflattering truths. Such strength can be cultivated by the right kind of meditation and thought process, and the proper observation of your reaction whenever you come close to this phase. When you observe your oversensitivity and see how easily hurt you are, and how you give in to the temptation to pamper yourself by the very strong reaction of hurt you produce, then you have an indication of how you, too, shy away from fully facing your lower self.

Question yourself: "Do I wish to pamper myself? Do I wish to be in self-pity? Or can I just calmly look at myself with the negative tendencies that exist side by side with the constructive ones?" If you cultivate your wish for self-knowledge daily and mean it sincerely, your extreme reaction to certain destructive tendencies, which you have so far only vaguely sensed, will yield to a calm observation of yourself. This very attitude is the prerequisite to creating the resiliency needed

to face yourself in utter truthfulness. It requires you to maintain a sense of proportion, or even better, the honest acknowledgement that you do tend to lose your sense of proportion.

When you approach certain trends you are not ready to accept in yourself, you produce, almost artificially, an overreaction of despair, hurt, self-abasement, or a feeling of injustice. You forget, at least emotionally, that it is very possible for one to be a decent and good person and simultaneously the opposite in some respects. You fluctuate between the extremes of either being good or bad, rather than seeing both the good and the bad. It is this "and" instead of the "or" that you have to keep in mind. If you thus continue facing areas of yourself you have never faced before, the experience will not be a crushing one at all. You need to come to that, my friends, if you really want to become healthy and strong.

Let us now for a moment consider the corroding effect that not facing the lower self and real guilt has upon your personality, your life, and upon those around you. What traditional psychiatry or psychology today terms neurosis or a psychological problem is nothing more than the evasion of the lower self. Or, to put it in different words, it is the non-facing of those areas of your being where your integrity is impaired. Unfortunately, this fact is not sufficiently recognized, but in time it will be. Psychology has already recognized the phenomenon of false guilt accompanied by weakness and paralysis and the subsequent impairment of inherent productive faculties. It has not yet, or not fully, understood the underlying cause, which basically is always the refusal to face the lower self, and its consequence: carrying the burden of unrestituted real guilt.

Certain people tend to compensate for their real guilts by letting themselves be exploited. It is true that if this compensation takes place on a superficial level, more harm occurs than good, because the mask self, the idealized self, and the tendency to self-deception all have to be eliminated before one can face real guilt productively, with a sense of proportion. Therefore, one has to proceed with caution, use proper timing in approaching this deepest cause of human unhappiness and disease of soul. As long as worldly psychology seeks for other causes than impaired integrity, real cures will not take place, only occasional alleviation of symptoms.

The first necessary step is a thorough understanding of what disregarding your lower-self trends does to you. Not facing these afflicted areas will render you helpless when it comes to dealing with the creations of your lower self-trends. Thus you load a double guilt upon yourself: the first caused by actual selfishness and lack of love, manifesting in deed, thought, or feeling, and the second by the self-deception and hypocrisy of pretending the opposite, and not making restitution for the original fault.

Such double-edged guilt produces false guilt, accompanied by a sense of weakness and ineffectiveness, and a lack of self-respect that causes feelings of insecurity and inferiority. Consequently you make your damaged self-respect depend upon others. This dependency has a weakening effect, since it leads to submissiveness and allows one to be exploited. You know of course that all of these tendencies are not out in the open. They have to be explored and understood in the second major phase. It often takes considerable time to even become aware of the false guilt, let alone the real one.

The various means you employ to gain acceptance from others -- many of which have been found in the course of this work -- are always the result of not accepting yourself. It is impossible to

accept yourself until you have come to the very worst in yourself. Only then can you accept your whole being; only then will you truly be convinced of the good in you -- and you will therefore no longer need from others what no one can give you but yourself. The desperate struggle to be accepted by others in lieu of self-acceptance impairs your integrity even further. In some subtle way it always causes you to betray yourself and others, to sell your soul.

Needless to say, this self-betrayal is bound to make you more egocentric and more closed up toward others, to yourself, and to the universal forces. It decreases your awareness of life and reality. It causes you to go through life with closed eyes, and bound hands and feet. In short, it cripples the best in you that could only begin to truly unfold if you stopped the self-evasion. It prohibits, impairs, or dilutes your capacity to communicate and to love. This capacity is there by nature, and your evasion cripples its unfoldment. Therefore, you are inwardly torn. The inner conflict confuses you because you are not aware of its real cause. The result is imbalance: either you lean over backwards to allow others to take advantage of you, which is a false way to atone for the real guilt, or you become defensive and defiant because you vaguely feel guilty, without being able to put your finger on it. You do not know why you should feel that way and you become angry at yourself and the world for these vague pangs of conscience.

Take any of the aspects we have worked through in the last few years and try to link them up with what I am saying tonight. In doing so you will gain a more profound understanding of the psychological aspects of your real and false guilt. Self-respect and self-assurance can not exist when you hide from seeing your impaired integrity. When, however, you courageously face the impaired part in yourself, you will repair damage that cannot otherwise be repaired. In order to muster the necessary courage and concentration, you have to understand fully its corroding effect on your life, on the best that is in you. Seeing this will give you the incentive to look at the hidden guilt in yourself.

When I say incentive, what do I mean? You hear a lecture and you wait vaguely for something to happen, never realizing that you are in the driver's seat, if only you took the wheel. And you can do this when you look at your reactions. You can make the effort to use will, concentration, and acute self-observation to detect the subtle -- and sometimes not so subtle -- reaction of shying away from facing yourself in this touchy area. Observation will enable you to remove your blindfolds, which are not at all unconscious. They manifest in many ways, every day. If you will just point your finger at them, you will, by that very action, remove them.

By following the incentive, I mean the attitude of discovering your disproportionate hurt at any suggestion of certain negative trends, and your disproportionate fear and rebellion against such implications whether coming from others or from yourself, or simply through certain events of your daily living. Also, look at your disproportionate reaction that says, "Now I am no good," which might not be thought of in these exact terms, but when you translate your emotions, this is what it amounts to.

Now let us consider the next step. Once you have arrived at the healthy self-acceptance in which you fully face your real guilt and certain hitherto hidden aspects of your lower self, what then? It is not sufficient merely to recognize it, although that comes first. To enable you to go through this first step you have to remember again and again that you are not forced to take any action, or to make any change that you are not wholeheartedly willing to undertake, and not because I say so, or

because some spiritual law prohibits forcing. Obeying an authority or a law is not a free action that can possibly produce any constructive effects. But the time will come when you will truly want to make good, even though it may mean overcoming a resistance. So begin to penetrate the wall of evasion by realizing that you are a free agent; that you should act only if such action is freely chosen; and that it is better to see and refrain than not to see and refrain from good action. It is very important for you to know that you will not be punished for knowing and yet not acting on the knowledge. Sufficient awareness will eventually make you wish to go through the action that makes restitution for past guilt.

What I will say now is applicable to the time when you will have arrived, in full independent freedom, at the stage of wishing to make restitution. In fact, when this stage is reached through organic growth and development, such a possibility will be welcomed by you. Without such a possibility you may remain in despair, falsely believing that wrongs cannot be made good, that you cannot atone for them. Your belief is often an unconscious reason for not facing the guilt. One can make restitution when one really wants to.

Now, how can this be done? There is no ready-made formula: there never can be for a reality which is dynamic and knows infinite varieties. Restitution is comparatively easy for obvious wrongs one has inflicted, but it is not so easy to make restitution for subtle attitudes and emotional reactions. In the former case atonement can take place, for example, by talking to the wronged person in candor. This in itself may take away the wrong, because the other person will no longer feel unjustly treated, and confused. In other instances, in addition to talking it out, certain productive actions on your part may be indicated. What those should be will come to your mind when you search for inspiration in a spirit of sincerity. Do not do it in a spirit of superficiality, glibly disposing of a duty done. In both cases -- only talking it out, or talking it out with subsequent action -- it will relieve a hurting heart, heal a festering sore. Beware of undertaking any action before you are fully convinced of your desire of doing so. Ask about the how in prayer and open yourself. When you are fully aware of the pain you may have inflicted on others, your desire will be strong enough to remove that pain, and then you will also find the right way. But as long as you do not want to face the pain you have inflicted, you cannot truly want to make good for it. Moreover, because you do not want to become aware of the pain you have inflicted, you do not want to face your lower self in its entirety.

When the issues are not clear-cut, when it is a question of subtle emotions or indirect results, such as when, for instance, you are withholding and withdrawing, you will still find ways to make up for the wrongs committed. You can inflict pain by not daring to give your best, be it due to fear, cowardice, pride, betrayal, and other misconceptions, all of which would leave others in need, and increase their sense of unworthiness. These subtle effects of your behavior are more difficult to determine and are also not so simple to retribute. But if your heart is sincere, and if, after working through all the stages that lead to this point, you do have a deep desire to make restitution, then that very desire, uttered in prayer and meditation, will make you find the way. Even if you no longer have the opportunity to make good with the person you have shortchanged, the cultivation of the ability of giving your best -- rather than deliberately hampering it as before -- will make for restitution. If others now profit from this new-found ability that, too, is restitution! You will deeply feel the truth of this. If you voluntarily give up your wall of isolation, and thus let the richness of your inherent being stream onto others, that is restitution.

In short, my friends, two major steps are necessary for you to free yourselves of the crippling effects of real guilt and unrecognized aspects of the lower self. The first is finding and facing these aspects, calmly and proportionately, without self-condemnation or self-justification, yet fully taking responsibility for any wrong you have done inadvertently, directly or indirectly, by commission or omission. It is necessary to penetrate through all the false guilts going through the paralysis and the weakness as well as searching in the areas where you are exploited by others. You will then come to face what you have kept "private" so far. The second step is restitution, which is often subdivided into first expressing the real guilt to another human being so that you cease to carry it alone, and then finding a way to make good and atone.

If you keep doing this, my dearest friends, not just in one single act, but in a constant process of increased awareness, the result must be a growing selfhood and a sense of integrity that leads inevitably to self-respect. The process will give you a power you have never known to exist. It will enable you to become independent of the dire need for recognition by others which makes you sell your soul. It will give you the ability to freely express yourself without inhibition, with your best faculties right at your disposal. You will communicate and relate, and assert your rights without the gnawing feeling that you have not really conveyed what you wished to be understood. This will give you a new energy and vitality in your daily life, making you capable of fully living. It will also provide you with the stamina, flexibility, and resiliency to meet life in all its aspects -- making the best of the difficulties and fully enjoying life's offerings. In other words, my dear ones, this is the final cure of the soul. Needless to say, it is not easy to come by. It will take considerable time to get you all through the temptation of deviating from this course. But I am here to help. The guidance is here. Knowing this, you can indeed rejoice, for this brings you closer to the threshold.

QUESTION: We had a discussion about blessings. We need your help to understand. What are blessings?

ANSWER: The easiest way to explain this in human terms would be to choose the word "wish" -- a strong, sincere wish. This is much more than you can, at the moment, see. Imagine that you have a very strong wish that is absolutely unhampered by selfish motives, by ambiguous, confused, contradictory emotions, by uncertainty or fear, or the slightest gnawing feeling of real or false guilt. The wish is a clear stream without the slightest selfishness. Such a wish is a blessing. Such a crystal-clear strength, undiluted, unconfused, unsplit: that is a blessing. If a human being were capable of expressing a wish for someone else in that way, the power and strength this wish would have for a person who is only remotely open to receive it is something that defies your imagination. Human beings can have such wishes, and therefore give blessings, only by degrees. The receiver, too, may only be able to accept the blessing in parts of his or her being, while other areas are blocked off. Obstructions and misconceptions create a wall. But wherever walls do not exist, such a wish affects the person and works in the psyche. Extending such wishes, as much as one can, is, as you know, one form of prayer. But with beings who are no longer involved with the heaviness of earth matter, the wishes are more likely to have pure strength and, if accepted, if they reach their destination, they can be utilized for further propagation of love.

QUESTION: Isn't a wish self-will?

ANSWER: Not necessarily.

QUESTION: How does this combine with giving up your wish to the will of God?

ANSWER: If you wish something purely loving and unselfish, it is the will of God. To want to do the will of God must be your wish. Like with so much else it depends on the how, why, and what of the motives. This alone determines its value or lack of it. Nothing in itself is good or bad, as I have said so often. Why should a wish in itself be something bad? You must wish to be truthful with yourself. You must wish to love. Or, you might wish something destructive. People often stumble over terminology. There may be a certain group of people who take a word and claim it means just a certain thing. And then, of course, if this word is used in another way, misunderstanding occurs. We are not concerned with that. Think rather of the essence and meaning of the term. Think of wishing in its constructive manifestations, then you will see that it is not necessarily self-will.

QUESTION: Do you mean, if the wish is fulfilled, it is a blessing?

ANSWER: No. I said that if you have a crystal-clear wish for someone else, that is a blessing. Whether or not it is fulfilled is another matter.

QUESTION: And if there is fear behind the wish that it will not be fulfilled?

ANSWER: Then it is not a blessing. A blessing is a pure wish. It is an active current of energy. Fear denotes selfishness. Wishes are energy currents. The wish of a human being in a state of conflict is counteracted by a contrary feeling which makes the energy current weak. But if the energy current goes in one direction, or predominantly in one direction, then the wish is strong.

QUESTION: In our discussion the question came up about the blessing given to Jacob and not Esau. Is it possible to convey a blessing to someone who is not ready to receive it?

ANSWER: It depends on the strength. There are different kinds of blessings. Occasionally the blessings of high beings with a corresponding spiritual development have such a tremendous vibration that they may be able to penetrate walls, psychological walls. Such a penetration may then have the effect that the person will pull himself together and do that which is necessary to diminish these walls. Blessings of lesser strength and lesser vibration may not be capable of penetrating a fort, but might be able to penetrate paper-thin walls. Then it is a question of what the individual does with this impact of strength, with the result of the blessings. It may happen quite often that a person indeed receives the blessings which he experiences as a wonderful feeling of peace, of hope, and of joy. But after the impact is over and the effect has worn off, he goes right back into his rut. He does not use the blessings in the right way. The world is filled with the thoughts and wishes of others. Cross-currents go on constantly, not only among people, but also between them and beings of other worlds. When you have a day in which you are in a wonderful mood, you may then have received, unbeknownst, such currents of love, such blessings or pure wishes. It is up to you whether you will use this influx or go back and again find yourself in bleakness, waiting for life or for blessings to carry you. Blessings can be given occasionally. All this goes according to certain rhythmic laws in the universe. But in the final analysis, it is you who have to pull yourself out of the darkness.

Be blessed, be open, my dearest ones, to the warmth, the strength, the love that is coming to you and through you. May you, indeed, use this strength for the purpose of bringing your life into the state of health that the pathwork of this lecture suggests. What this means is impossible to visualize. Unfortunately, most human beings do not know how to cope with the difficulty, actual or seeming, of facing oneself. Yet this is the very key to the happiness that can be yours, regardless of who you are, regardless of how difficult your life may be. With this, I bless you again with love. Be in peace. Be in God.

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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