

Shadows of the Past

(January 15, 1967)

¹⁴ To forgive is merely to remember ONLY the LOVING thoughts you gave in the past, and those that were given you. ALL the rest, must be forgotten. Forgiveness is a selective remembering, based NOT on YOUR selection. For the shadow figures YOU would make immortal, ARE "enemies" of reality. Be willing to forgive the Son of God for what he did NOT do. The shadow figures are the witnesses you bring WITH you, to demonstrate he DID what he DID NOT. BECAUSE you brought them, YOU WILL HEAR THEM. And you who KEPT them BY YOUR OWN SELECTION, do NOT understand how they came into your minds, and what their purpose is.

¹⁵ THEY REPRESENT THE EVIL THAT YOU THINK WAS DONE TO YOU. You bring them with you ONLY that you may "return" evil FOR evil, hoping that THEIR witness will enable you to think guiltily of another, and NOT harm yourself. They speak so clearly for the separation, that no-one NOT obsessed with KEEPING separation, COULD hear them otherwise. They offer you the "reasons" why you should enter into unholy alliances, which support the ego's goals, and make your relationships the witness to ITS power. It is these shadow figures which would MAKE THE EGO HOLY in your sight, and teach you what you do to keep IT safe, is really LOVE.

¹⁶ The shadow figures ALWAYS speak for vengeance, and ALL relationships into which they enter, are totally insane. WITHOUT EXCEPTION, these relationships have, AS THEIR PURPOSE, the EXCLUSION of the truth about the other, AND OF YOURSELF. That is why you see IN BOTH, what is not there, and MAKE of both the slaves of vengeance. And why whatever reminds you of your PAST grievances, no matter how distorted the associations by which you ARRIVE at the remembrance may be, ATTRACTS you, and seems to you to go by the name of love. And, finally, why all such relationships become the attempt at union THROUGH THE BODY, for ONLY bodies CAN be seen as means for vengeance. That bodies are central to all unholy relationships is evident. Your OWN experience has taught you this. But what you do NOT realize, are ALL the reasons that go to MAKE the relationship unholy. For UN-holiness seeks to REINFORCE itself, by gathering TO itself, what it perceives as LIKE itself, as holiness does, by gathering to itself what it perceives as like itself.

¹⁷ In the unholy relationship, it is NOT the body of the OTHER with which union is attempted, but the bodies of those WHO ARE NOT THERE. Even the BODY of the other, ALREADY a severely limited perception of him, is NOT the central focus as it is, or in entirety. What can be used for fantasies of vengeance, and what can be most readily associated with those on whom vengeance is REALLY sought, are centered on, and SEPARATED OFF, as being the only parts OF VALUE. Every step taken in the making, the maintaining, and the breaking off of the unholy relationship, is a move toward further fragmentation and unreality. The shadow figures enter more and more, and the one in whom they SEEM to be, DECREASES in importance.

¹⁸ Time is indeed unkind to the unholy relationship. For time IS cruel in the ego's hands, as it is kind when used for gentleness. The attraction of the unholy relationship begins to fade and to be questioned, almost at once. Once it is formed, doubt MUST enter in, because its purpose IS impossible. The only such relationships which RETAIN the fantasies which center on them, are the ones which have been DREAMED of, but have NOT been made at all. Where NO reality has entered, there is NOTHING to intrude upon the DREAM of happiness. But consider what this means; the more REALITY that enters into the unholy relationship, the LESS SATISFYING it becomes. And the more the FANTASIES can encompass, the greater the satisfaction seems to be.

¹⁹ The "ideal" of the unholy relationship thus becomes one in which the REALITY of the other does not ENTER AT ALL, to "spoil" the dream. And the LESS the other REALLY brings to it, the "better" it becomes. Thus, the attempt at union becomes a way of EXCLUDING even the one with whom the union was sought. For it was FORMED to GET HIM OUT OF IT, and join with fantasies in uninterrupted "bliss." How can the Holy Spirit bring HIS interpretation of the body, as a means of communicating, into relationships whose ONLY purpose is SEPARATION from reality? What forgiveness IS, enables Him to do so.

²⁰ If all BUT loving thoughts have been forgotten, what remains IS eternal, and the TRANSFORMED past is made LIKE THE PRESENT. No longer does the past CONFLICT with now. THIS continuity EXTENDS the present, by increasing its reality, AND ITS VALUE, in your perception of it. In these loving thoughts is the spark of beauty hidden in the ugliness of the unholy relationship in which the HATRED is remembered, yet there to COME ALIVE as the relationship is given to Him Who GIVES it life and beauty. That is why Atonement centers ON THE PAST, which is the SOURCE of separation, and where it must be undone. For separation must be corrected WHERE IT WAS MADE. The EGO seeks to "resolve" ITS problems, NOT at their source, but where they were NOT made. And thus it seeks to guarantee there WILL be no solution.

²¹ The Holy Spirit wills only to make HIS resolutions complete and perfect. And so He seeks and FINDS the source of problems WHERE IT IS, and there UNDOES it. And, with each step in HIS undoing, is the SEPARATION more and more undone, and UNION brought closer. HE is not at all confused by ANY "reasons" for separation. ALL He perceives in it is that it MUST BE UNDONE. Let Him uncover the hidden spark of beauty in your relationships, and SHOW it to you. Its loveliness will so attract you, that you will be unwilling ever to lose the sight of it again. And you will LET it transform the relationship, so you can see it more and more. For you will want it more and more, and become increasingly unwilling to LET it be hidden from you. And you will learn to seek for, and ESTABLISH, conditions in which this beauty CAN be seen.

²² All this, you will do gladly, if you but let Him hold the spark before you, to light your way, and make it CLEAR to you. God's Son is one. And whom God has JOINED as one, the ego CANNOT break apart.

The spark of holiness MUST be safe, however hidden it may be, in EVERY relationship. For the Creator of the one relationship, has LEFT no part of it without HIMSELF.

²³ THIS is the only part of the relationship the Holy Spirit sees, because He knows that ONLY this is true. YOU have made the relationship unreal, and THEREFORE unholy, by seeing it WHERE it is not, and as it IS not. Give the past to Him Who can change YOUR mind about it, FOR you. But first, be SURE you fully realize what YOU have made the past to REPRESENT, and why.

²⁴ In brief, the past is NOW your justification for entering into a continuing, unholy alliance with the ego, AGAINST THE PRESENT. For the present IS forgiveness. Therefore, the relationships which the unholy alliance dictates, are not perceived NOR FELT as now. Yet the frame of reference to which the present is REFERRED for meaning, is an ILLUSION of the past, in which those elements which FIT the purpose of the unholy alliance are retained, AND ALL THE REST LET GO. And what is thus let go, is all the truth the past could ever OFFER to the present, as witnesses for ITS reality, while what is KEPT, but witnesses to the reality of dreams.

²⁵ It is still up to you to choose to be willing to join with truth or illusion. But remember that to choose ONE, is to LET THE OTHER GO. Which one you choose, YOU will endow with beauty and reality, because the choice DEPENDS on which you value more. The spark of beauty, or the veil of ugliness; the real world, or the world of guilt and fear; truth or illusion; freedom or slavery; - it is all the same. For you can NEVER choose EXCEPT between God and the ego. Thought-systems are but true or false, and all their ATTRIBUTES come simply from what they ARE. Only the Thoughts of God ARE true. And all that follows FROM them, COMES FROM what they are, and is as true as is the holy Source from which they come.

²⁶ My holy brothers, I would enter into all your relationships, and step between you and your fantasies. Let MY relationship to you be REAL to you, and let me bring REALITY to your perception of your brothers. They were NOT created to enable you to HURT yourselves through them. They were created to CREATE with you. This is the truth that I would interpose, between you and your goal of madness. Be not separate from me, and let not the holy purpose of Atonement be lost to you, in dreams of vengeance. Relationships in which such dreams are cherished have EXCLUDED me. Let me enter, in the Name of God, and bring YOU peace, that YOU may offer peace to me.