

## Illusion 5

### VII. The Last Unanswered Question

1. Do you not see that all your misery comes from the strange belief that you are powerless? <sup>2</sup> Being helpless is the cost of sin. <sup>3</sup> Helplessness is sin's condition; the one requirement that it demands to be believed. <sup>4</sup> Only the helpless could believe in it. <sup>5</sup> Enormity has no appeal save to the little. <sup>6</sup> And only those who first believe that they are little could see attraction there. <sup>7</sup> Treachery to the Son of God is the defense of those who do not identify with him. <sup>8</sup> And you are for him or against him; either you love him or attack him, protect his unity or see him shattered and slain by your attack.
2. No one believes the Son of God is powerless. <sup>2</sup> And those who see themselves as helpless must believe that they are not the Son of God. <sup>3</sup> What can they be except his enemy? <sup>4</sup> And what can they do but envy him his power, and by their envy make themselves afraid of it? <sup>5</sup> These are the dark ones, silent and afraid, alone and not communicating, fearful the power of the Son of God will strike them dead, and raising up their helplessness against him. <sup>6</sup> They join the army of the powerless, to wage their war of vengeance, bitterness and spite on him, to make him one with them. <sup>7</sup> Because they do not know that they *are* one with him, they know not whom they hate. <sup>8</sup> They are indeed a sorry army, each one as likely to attack his brother or turn upon himself as to remember that they thought they had a common cause.
3. Frantic and loud and strong the dark ones seem to be. <sup>2</sup> Yet they know not their "enemy," except they hate him. <sup>3</sup> In hatred they have come together, but have not joined each other. <sup>4</sup> For had they done so hatred would be impossible. <sup>5</sup> The army of the powerless must be disbanded in the presence of strength. <sup>6</sup> Those who are strong are never treacherous, because they have no need to dream of power and to act out their dream. <sup>7</sup> How would an army act in dreams? <sup>8</sup> Any way at all. <sup>9</sup> It could be seen attacking anyone with anything. <sup>10</sup> Dreams have no reason in them. <sup>11</sup> A flower turns into a poisoned spear, a child becomes a giant and a mouse roars like a lion. <sup>12</sup> And love is turned to hate as easily. <sup>13</sup> This is no army, but a madhouse. <sup>14</sup> What seems to be a planned attack is bedlam.
4. The army of the powerless is weak indeed. <sup>2</sup> It has no weapons and it has no enemy. <sup>3</sup> Yes, it can overrun the world and *seek* an enemy. <sup>4</sup> But it can never find what is not there. <sup>5</sup> Yes, it can *dream* it found an enemy, but this will shift even as it attacks, so that it runs at once to find another, and never comes to rest in victory. <sup>6</sup> And as it runs it turns against itself, thinking it caught a glimpse of the great enemy who always eludes its murderous attack by turning into something else. <sup>7</sup> How treacherous does this enemy appear, who changes so it is impossible even to recognize him.
5. Yet hate must have a target. <sup>2</sup> There can be no faith in sin without an enemy. <sup>3</sup> Who that believes in sin would dare believe he has no enemy? <sup>4</sup> Could he admit that no one made him powerless? <sup>5</sup> Reason would surely bid him seek no longer what is not there to find. <sup>6</sup> Yet first he must be willing to perceive a world where it is not. <sup>7</sup> It is not necessary that he understand how he can see it. <sup>8</sup> Nor should he try. <sup>9</sup> For if he focuses on what he cannot understand, he will but emphasize his helplessness, and let sin tell him that his enemy must be himself. <sup>10</sup> But let him only ask himself these questions, which he must decide, to have it done for him:

<sup>11</sup> *Do I desire a world I rule instead of one that rules me?*

<sup>12</sup> *Do I desire a world where I am powerful instead of helpless?*

<sup>13</sup> *Do I desire a world in which I have no enemies and cannot sin?*

<sup>14</sup> *And do I want to see what I denied **because** it is the truth?*

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6. You may already have answered the first three questions, but not yet the last. <sup>2</sup> For this one still seems fearful, and unlike the others. <sup>3</sup> Yet reason would assure you they are all the same. <sup>4</sup> We said this year would emphasize the sameness of things that are the same. <sup>5</sup> This final question, which is indeed the last you need decide, still seems to hold a threat the rest have lost for you. <sup>6</sup> And this imagined difference attests to your belief that truth may be the enemy you yet may find. <sup>7</sup> Here, then, would seem to be the last remaining hope of finding sin, and not accepting power.
7. Forget not that the choice of sin or truth, helplessness or power, is the choice of whether to attack or heal. <sup>2</sup> For healing comes of power, and attack of helplessness. <sup>3</sup> Whom you attack you *cannot* want to heal. <sup>4</sup> And whom you would have healed must be the one you chose to be protected from attack. <sup>5</sup> And what is this decision but the choice whether to see him through the body's eyes, or let him be revealed to you through vision? <sup>6</sup> How this decision leads to its effects is not your problem. <sup>7</sup> But what you want to see must be your choice. <sup>8</sup> This is a course in cause and not effect.
8. Consider carefully your answer to the last question you have left unanswered still. <sup>2</sup> And let your reason tell you that it must be answered, and is answered in the other three. <sup>3</sup> And then it will be clear to you that, as you look on the effects of sin in any form, all you need do is simply ask yourself:
- <sup>4</sup> *Is this what I would see?* <sup>5</sup> *Do I want this?*
9. This is your one decision; this the condition for what occurs. <sup>2</sup> It is irrelevant to how it happens, but not to why. <sup>3</sup> You *have* control of this. <sup>4</sup> And if you choose to see a world without an enemy, in which you are not helpless, the means to see it will be given you.
10. Why is the final question so important? <sup>2</sup> Reason will tell you why. <sup>3</sup> It is the same as are the other three, except in time. <sup>4</sup> The others are decisions that can be made, and then unmade and made again. <sup>5</sup> But truth is constant, and implies a state where vacillations are impossible. <sup>6</sup> You can desire a world you rule that rules you not, and change your mind. <sup>7</sup> You can desire to exchange your helplessness for power, and lose this same desire as a little glint of sin attracts you. <sup>8</sup> And you can want to see a sinless world, and let an "enemy" tempt you to use the body's eyes and change what you desire.
11. In content all the questions are the same. <sup>2</sup> For each one asks if you are willing to exchange the world of sin for what the Holy Spirit sees, since it is this the world of sin denies. <sup>3</sup> And therefore those who look on sin are seeing the denial of the real world. <sup>4</sup> Yet the last question adds the wish for constancy in your desire to see the real world, so the desire becomes the only one you have. <sup>5</sup> By answering the final question "yes," you add sincerity to the decisions you have already made to all the rest. <sup>6</sup> For only then have you renounced the option to change your mind again. <sup>7</sup> When it is this you do not want, the rest are wholly answered.
12. Why do you think you are unsure the others have been answered? <sup>2</sup> Could it be necessary they be asked so often, if they had? <sup>3</sup> Until the last decision has been made, the answer is both "yes" and "no." <sup>4</sup> For you have answered "yes" without perceiving that "yes" must mean "not no." <sup>5</sup> No one

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decides against his happiness, but he may do so if he does not see he does it. <sup>6</sup> And if he sees his happiness as ever changing, now this, now that, and now an elusive shadow attached to nothing, he does decide against it.

13. Elusive happiness, or happiness in changing form that shifts with time and place, is an illusion that has no meaning. <sup>2</sup> Happiness must be constant, because it is attained by giving up the wish for the *inconstant*. <sup>3</sup> Joy cannot be perceived except through constant vision. <sup>4</sup> And constant vision can be given only those who wish for constancy. <sup>5</sup> The power of the Son of God's desire remains the proof that he is wrong who sees himself as helpless. <sup>6</sup> Desire what you want, and you will look on it and think it real. <sup>7</sup> No thought but has the power to release or kill. <sup>8</sup> And none can leave the thinker's mind, or leave him unaffected.

### Introduction

1. Take pity on yourself, so long enslaved. <sup>2</sup> Rejoice whom God hath joined have come together and need no longer look on sin apart. <sup>3</sup> No two can look on sin together, for they could never see it in the same place and time. <sup>4</sup> Sin is a strictly individual perception, seen in the other yet believed by each to be within himself. <sup>5</sup> And each one seems to make a different error, and one the other cannot understand. <sup>6</sup> Brother, it is the same, made by the same, and forgiven for its maker in the same way. <sup>7</sup> The holiness of your relationship forgives you and your brother, undoing the effects of what you both believed and saw. <sup>8</sup> And with their going is the need for sin gone with them.
2. Who has need for sin? <sup>2</sup> Only the lonely and alone, who see their brothers different from themselves. <sup>3</sup> It is this difference, seen but not real, that makes the need for sin, not real but seen, seem justified. <sup>4</sup> And all this would be real if sin were so. <sup>5</sup> For an unholy relationship is based on differences, where each one thinks the other has what he has not. <sup>6</sup> They come together, each to complete himself and rob the other. <sup>7</sup> They stay until they think that there is nothing left to steal, and then move on. <sup>8</sup> And so they wander through a world of strangers, unlike themselves, living with their bodies perhaps under a common roof that shelters neither; in the same room and yet a world apart.
3. A holy relationship starts from a different premise. <sup>2</sup> Each one has looked within and seen no lack. <sup>3</sup> Accepting his completion, he would extend it by joining with another, whole as himself. <sup>4</sup> He sees no difference between these selves, for differences are only of the body. <sup>5</sup> Therefore, he looks on nothing he would take. <sup>6</sup> He denies not his own reality *because* it is the truth. <sup>7</sup> Just under Heaven does he stand, but close enough not to return to earth. <sup>8</sup> For this relationship has Heaven's Holiness. <sup>9</sup> How far from home can a relationship so like to Heaven be?
4. Think what a holy relationship can teach! <sup>2</sup> Here is belief in differences undone. <sup>3</sup> Here is the faith in differences shifted to sameness. <sup>4</sup> And here is sight of differences transformed to vision. <sup>5</sup> Reason now can lead you and your brother to the logical conclusion of your union. <sup>6</sup> It must extend, as you extended when you and he joined. <sup>7</sup> It must reach out beyond itself, as you reached out beyond the body, to let you and your brother be joined. <sup>8</sup> And now the sameness that you saw extends and finally removes all sense of differences, so that the sameness that lies beneath them all becomes apparent. <sup>9</sup> Here is the golden circle where you recognize the Son of God. <sup>10</sup> For what is born into a holy relationship can never end.

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### I. The Message of the Holy Relationship

1. Let reason take another step. <sup>2</sup> If you attack whom God would heal and hate the one He loves, then you and your Creator have a different will. <sup>3</sup> Yet if you *are* His Will, what you must then believe is that you are not yourself. <sup>4</sup> You can indeed believe this, and you do. <sup>5</sup> And you have faith in this and see much evidence on its behalf. <sup>6</sup> And where, you wonder, does your strange uneasiness, your sense of being disconnected, and your haunting fear of lack of meaning in yourself arise? <sup>7</sup> It is as though you wandered in without a plan of any kind except to wander off, for only that seems certain.
2. Yet we have heard a very similar description earlier, but it was not of you. <sup>2</sup> But still this strange idea which it does accurately describe, you *think* is you. <sup>3</sup> Reason would tell you that the world you see through eyes that are not yours must make no sense to you. <sup>4</sup> To whom would seeing such as this send back its messages? <sup>5</sup> Surely not you, whose sight is wholly independent of the eyes that look upon the world. <sup>6</sup> If this is not your vision, what can it show to you? <sup>7</sup> The brain cannot interpret what your vision sees. <sup>8</sup> This *you* would understand. <sup>9</sup> The brain interprets to the body, of which it is a part. <sup>10</sup> But what it says you cannot understand. <sup>11</sup> Yet you have listened to it. <sup>12</sup> And long and hard you tried to understand its messages.
3. You have not realized it is impossible to understand what fails entirely to reach you. <sup>2</sup> You have received no messages at all you understand. <sup>3</sup> For you have listened to what can never communicate at all. <sup>4</sup> Think, then, what happens. <sup>5</sup> Denying what you are, and firm in faith that you are something else, this "something else" that you have made to be yourself becomes your sight. <sup>6</sup> Yet it must be the "something else" that sees, and as *not* you, explains its sight *to* you. <sup>7</sup> Your vision would, of course, render this quite unnecessary. <sup>8</sup> Yet if your eyes are closed and you have called upon this thing to lead you, asking it to explain to you the world it sees, you have no reason not to listen, nor to suspect that what it tells you is not true. <sup>9</sup> Reason would tell you it cannot be true *because* you do not understand it. <sup>10</sup> God has no secrets. <sup>11</sup> He does not lead you through a world of misery, waiting to tell you, at the journey's end, why He did this to you.
4. What could be secret from God's Will? <sup>2</sup> Yet you believe that you have secrets. <sup>3</sup> What could your secrets be except another "will" that is your own, apart from His? <sup>4</sup> Reason would tell you that this is no secret that need be hidden as a sin. <sup>5</sup> But a mistake indeed! <sup>6</sup> Let not your fear of sin protect it from correction, for the attraction of guilt is only fear. <sup>7</sup> Here is the one emotion that you made, whatever it may seem to be. <sup>8</sup> This is the emotion of secrecy, of private thoughts and of the body. <sup>9</sup> This is the one emotion that opposes love, and always leads to sight of differences and loss of sameness. <sup>10</sup> Here is the one emotion that keeps you blind, dependent on the self you think you made to lead you through the world it made for you.
5. Your sight was given you, along with everything that you can understand. <sup>2</sup> You will perceive no difficulty in understanding what this vision tells you, for everyone sees only what he thinks he is. <sup>3</sup> And what your sight would show you, you will understand *because* it is the truth. <sup>4</sup> Only your vision can convey to you what you can see. <sup>5</sup> It reaches you directly, without a need to be interpreted to you. <sup>6</sup> What needs interpretation must be alien. <sup>7</sup> Nor will it ever be made understandable by an interpreter you cannot understand.
6. Of all the messages you have received and failed to understand, this course alone is open to your

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understanding and can be understood. <sup>2</sup> This is *your* language. <sup>3</sup> You do not understand it yet only because your whole communication is like a baby's. <sup>4</sup> The sounds a baby makes and what he hears are highly unreliable, meaning different things to him at different times. <sup>5</sup> Neither the sounds he hears nor sights he sees are stable yet. <sup>6</sup> But what he hears and does not understand will be his native tongue, through which he will communicate with those around him, and they with him. <sup>7</sup> And the strange, shifting ones he sees about him will become to him his comforters, and he will recognize his home and see them there with him.

7. So in each holy relationship is the ability to communicate instead of separate reborn. <sup>2</sup> Yet a holy relationship, so recently reborn itself from an unholy relationship, and yet more ancient than the old illusion it has replaced, is like a baby now in its rebirth. <sup>3</sup> Still in this infant is your vision returned to you, and he will speak the language you can understand. <sup>4</sup> He is not nurtured by the "something else" you thought was you. <sup>5</sup> He was not given there, nor was received by anything except yourself. <sup>6</sup> For no two brothers can unite except through Christ, Whose vision sees them one.
8. Think what is given you, my holy brother. <sup>2</sup> This child will teach you what you do not understand, and make it plain. <sup>3</sup> For his will be no alien tongue. <sup>4</sup> He will need no interpreter to you, for it was you who taught him what he knows *because* you knew it. <sup>5</sup> He could not come to anyone but you, never to "something else." <sup>6</sup> Where Christ has entered no one is alone, for never could He find a home in separate ones. <sup>7</sup> Yet must He be reborn into His ancient home, so seeming new and yet as old as He, a tiny newcomer, dependent on the holiness of your relationship to let Him live.
9. Be certain God did not entrust His Son to the unworthy. <sup>2</sup> Nothing but what is part of Him is worthy of being joined. <sup>3</sup> Nor is it possible that anything not part of Him *can* join. <sup>4</sup> Communication must have been restored to those who join, for this they could not do through bodies. <sup>5</sup> What, then, has joined them? <sup>6</sup> Reason will tell you that they must have seen each other through a vision not of the body, and communicated in a language the body does not speak. <sup>7</sup> Nor could it be a fearful sight or sound that drew them gently into one. <sup>8</sup> Rather, in each the other saw a perfect shelter where his Self could be reborn in safety and in peace. <sup>9</sup> Such did his reason tell him; such he believed *because* it was the truth.
10. Here is the first direct perception that you can make. <sup>2</sup> You make it through awareness older than perception, and yet reborn in just an instant. <sup>3</sup> For what is time to what was always so? <sup>4</sup> Think what that instant brought; the recognition that the "something else" you thought was you is an illusion. <sup>5</sup> And truth came instantly, to show you where your Self must be. <sup>6</sup> It is denial of illusions that calls on truth, for to deny illusions is to recognize that fear is meaningless. <sup>7</sup> Into the holy home where fear is powerless love enters thankfully, grateful that it is one with you who joined to let it enter.
11. Christ comes to what is like Himself; the same, not different. <sup>2</sup> For He is always drawn unto Himself. <sup>3</sup> What is as like Him as a holy relationship? <sup>4</sup> And what draws you and your brother together draws Him to you. <sup>5</sup> Here are His sweetness and His gentle innocence protected from attack. <sup>6</sup> And here can He return in confidence, for faith in another is always faith in Him. <sup>7</sup> You are indeed correct in looking on your brother as His chosen home, for here you will with Him and with His Father. <sup>8</sup> This is your Father's Will for you, and yours with His. <sup>9</sup> And who is drawn to Christ is drawn to God as surely as Both are drawn to every holy relationship, the home prepared for Them as earth is turned to Heaven.

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### II. Your Brother's Sinlessness

1. The opposite of illusions is not disillusionment but truth. <sup>2</sup> Only to the ego, to which truth is meaningless, do they appear to be the only alternatives, and different from each other. <sup>3</sup> In truth they are the same. <sup>4</sup> Both bring the same amount of misery, though each one seems to be the way to lose the misery the other brings. <sup>5</sup> Every illusion carries pain and suffering in the dark folds of the heavy garments in which it hides its nothingness. <sup>6</sup> Yet by these dark and heavy garments are those who seek illusions covered, and hidden from the joy of truth.
2. Truth is the opposite of illusions because it offers joy. <sup>2</sup> What else but joy could be the opposite of misery? <sup>3</sup> To leave one kind of misery and seek another is hardly an escape. <sup>4</sup> To change illusions is to make no change. <sup>5</sup> The search for joy in misery is senseless, for how could joy be found in misery? <sup>6</sup> All that is possible in the dark world of misery is to select some aspects out of it, see them as different, and define the difference as joy. <sup>7</sup> Yet to perceive a difference where none exists will surely fail to make a difference.
3. Illusions carry only guilt and suffering, sickness and death, to their believers. <sup>2</sup> The form in which they are accepted is irrelevant. <sup>3</sup> No form of misery in reason's eyes can be confused with joy. <sup>4</sup> Joy is eternal. <sup>5</sup> You can be sure indeed that any seeming happiness that does not last is really fear. <sup>6</sup> Joy does not turn to sorrow, for the eternal cannot change. <sup>7</sup> But sorrow can be turned to joy, for time gives way to the eternal. <sup>8</sup> Only the timeless must remain unchanged, but everything in time can change with time. <sup>9</sup> Yet if the change be real and not imagined, illusions must give way to truth, and not to other dreams that are but equally unreal. <sup>10</sup> This is no difference.
4. Reason will tell you that the only way to escape from misery is to recognize it *and go the other way*. <sup>2</sup> Truth is the same and misery the same, but they are different from each other in every way, in every instance and without exception. <sup>3</sup> To believe that one exception can exist is to confuse what is the same with what is different. <sup>4</sup> One illusion cherished and defended against the truth makes all truth meaningless, and all illusions real. <sup>5</sup> Such is the power of belief. <sup>6</sup> It cannot compromise. <sup>7</sup> And faith in innocence is faith in sin, if the belief excludes one living thing and holds it out, apart from its forgiveness.
5. Both reason and the ego will tell you this, but what they make of it is not the same. <sup>2</sup> The ego will assure you now that it is impossible for you to see no guilt in anyone. <sup>3</sup> And if this seeing is the only means by which escape from guilt can be attained, then the belief in sin must be eternal. <sup>4</sup> Yet reason looks on this another way, for reason sees the source of an idea as what will make it either true or false. <sup>5</sup> This must be so, if the idea is like its source. <sup>6</sup> Therefore, says reason, if escape from guilt was given to the Holy Spirit as His purpose, and by One to Whom nothing He wills can be impossible, the means for its attainment are more than possible. <sup>7</sup> They must be there, and you must have them.
6. This is a crucial period in this course, for here the separation of you and the ego must be made complete. <sup>2</sup> For if you have the means to let the Holy Spirit's purpose be accomplished, they can be used. <sup>3</sup> And through their use will you gain faith in them. <sup>4</sup> Yet to the ego this must be impossible, and no one undertakes to do what holds no hope of ever being done. <sup>5</sup> *You* know what your Creator wills is possible, but what you made believes it is not so. <sup>6</sup> Now must you choose between yourself and an illusion of yourself. <sup>7</sup> Not both, but one. <sup>8</sup> There is no point in trying to avoid this one

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- decision. <sup>9</sup> It must be made. <sup>10</sup> Faith and belief can fall to either side, but reason tells you misery lies only on one side and joy upon the other.
7. Forsake not now your brother. <sup>2</sup> For you who are the same will not decide alone nor differently. <sup>3</sup> Either you give each other life or death; either you are each other's savior or his judge, offering him sanctuary or condemnation. <sup>4</sup> This course will be believed entirely or not at all. <sup>5</sup> For it is wholly true or wholly false, and cannot be but partially believed. <sup>6</sup> And you will either escape from misery entirely or not at all. <sup>7</sup> Reason will tell you that there is no middle ground where you can pause uncertainly, waiting to choose between the joy of Heaven and the misery of hell. <sup>8</sup> Until you choose Heaven, you *are* in hell and misery.
  8. There is no part of Heaven you can take and weave into illusions. <sup>2</sup> Nor is there one illusion you can enter Heaven with. <sup>3</sup> A savior cannot be a judge, nor mercy condemnation. <sup>4</sup> And vision cannot damn, but only bless. <sup>5</sup> Whose function is to save, will save. <sup>6</sup> *How* He will do it is beyond your understanding, but *when* must be your choice. <sup>7</sup> For time you made, and time you can command. <sup>8</sup> You are no more a slave to time than to the world you made.
  9. Let us look closer at the whole illusion that what you made has power to enslave its maker. <sup>2</sup> This is the same belief that caused the separation. <sup>3</sup> It is the meaningless idea that thoughts can leave the thinker's mind, be different from it and in opposition to it. <sup>4</sup> If this were true, thoughts would not be the mind's extensions, but its enemies. <sup>5</sup> And here we see again another form of the same fundamental illusion we have seen many times before. <sup>6</sup> Only if it were possible the Son of God could leave his Father's Mind, make himself different and oppose His Will, would it be possible that the self he made, and all it made, should be his master.
  10. Behold the great projection, but look on it with the decision that it must be healed, and not with fear. <sup>2</sup> Nothing you made has any power over you unless you still would be apart from your Creator, and with a will opposed to His. <sup>3</sup> For only if you would believe His Son could be His enemy does it seem possible that what you made is yours. <sup>4</sup> You would condemn His joy to misery, and make Him different. <sup>5</sup> And all the misery you made has been your own. <sup>6</sup> Are you not glad to learn it is not true? <sup>7</sup> Is it not welcome news to hear not one of the illusions that you made replaced the truth?
  11. Only *your* thoughts have been impossible. <sup>2</sup> Salvation cannot be. <sup>3</sup> It *is* impossible to look upon your savior as your enemy and recognize him. <sup>4</sup> Yet it is possible to recognize him for what he is, if God would have it so. <sup>5</sup> What God has given to your holy relationship is there. <sup>6</sup> For what He gave the Holy Spirit to give to you *He gave*. <sup>7</sup> Would you not look upon the savior that has been given you? <sup>8</sup> And would you not exchange, in gratitude, the function of an executioner you gave him for the one he has in truth? <sup>9</sup> Receive of him what God has given him for you, not what you tried to give yourself.
  12. Beyond the body that you interposed between you and your brother, and shining in the golden light that reaches it from the bright, endless circle that extends forever, is your holy relationship, beloved of God Himself. <sup>2</sup> How still it rests, in time and yet beyond, immortal yet on earth. <sup>3</sup> How great the power that lies in it. <sup>4</sup> Time waits upon its will, and earth will be as it would have it be. <sup>5</sup> Here is no separate will, nor the desire that anything be separate. <sup>6</sup> Its will has no exceptions, and what it wills is true. <sup>7</sup> Every illusion brought to its forgiveness is gently overlooked and disappears. <sup>8</sup> For at its center Christ has been reborn, to light His home with vision that overlooks the world. <sup>9</sup> Would you not have this holy home be yours as well? <sup>10</sup> No misery is here, but only joy.

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13. All you need do to dwell in quiet here with Christ is share His vision.<sup>2</sup> Quickly and gladly is His vision given anyone who is but willing to see his brother sinless.<sup>3</sup> And no one can remain beyond this willingness, if you would be released entirely from all effects of sin.<sup>4</sup> Would you have partial forgiveness for yourself?<sup>5</sup> Can you reach Heaven while a single sin still tempts you to remain in misery?<sup>6</sup> Heaven is the home of perfect purity, and God created it for you.<sup>7</sup> Look on your holy brother, sinless as yourself, and let him lead you there.

### III. Reason and the Forms of Error

1. The introduction of reason into the ego's thought system is the beginning of its undoing, for reason and the ego are contradictory.<sup>2</sup> Nor is it possible for them to coexist in your awareness.<sup>3</sup> For reason's goal is to make plain, and therefore obvious.<sup>4</sup> You can *see* reason.<sup>5</sup> This is not a play on words, for here is the beginning of a vision that has meaning.<sup>6</sup> Vision is sense, quite literally.<sup>7</sup> If it is not the body's sight, it *must* be understood.<sup>8</sup> For it is plain, and what is obvious is not ambiguous.<sup>9</sup> It can be understood.<sup>10</sup> And here do reason and the ego separate, to go their separate ways.
2. The ego's whole continuance depends on its belief you cannot learn this course.<sup>2</sup> Share this belief, and reason will be unable to see your errors and make way for their correction.<sup>3</sup> For reason sees through errors, telling you what you thought was real is not.<sup>4</sup> Reason can see the difference between sin and mistakes, because it wants correction.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it tells you what you thought was uncorrectable can be corrected, and thus it must have been an error.<sup>6</sup> The ego's opposition to correction leads to its fixed belief in sin and disregard of errors.<sup>7</sup> It looks on nothing that can be corrected.<sup>8</sup> Thus does the ego damn, and reason save.
3. Reason is not salvation in itself, but it makes way for peace and brings you to a state of mind in which salvation can be given you.<sup>2</sup> Sin is a block, set like a heavy gate, locked and without a key, across the road to peace.<sup>3</sup> No one who looks on it without the help of reason would try to pass it.<sup>4</sup> The body's eyes behold it as solid granite, so thick it would be madness to attempt to pass it.<sup>5</sup> Yet reason sees through it easily, because it is an error.<sup>6</sup> The form it takes cannot conceal its emptiness from reason's eyes.
4. Only the form of error attracts the ego.<sup>2</sup> Meaning it does not recognize, and does not see if it is there or not.<sup>3</sup> Everything the body's eyes can see is a mistake, an error in perception, a distorted fragment of the whole without the meaning that the whole would give.<sup>4</sup> And yet mistakes, regardless of their form, can be corrected.<sup>5</sup> Sin is but error in a special form the ego venerates.<sup>6</sup> It would preserve all errors and make them sins.<sup>7</sup> For here is its own stability, its heavy anchor in the shifting world it made; the rock on which its church is built, and where its worshippers are bound to bodies, believing the body's freedom is their own.
5. Reason will tell you that the form of error is not what makes it a mistake.<sup>2</sup> If what the form conceals is a mistake, the form cannot prevent correction.<sup>3</sup> The body's eyes see only form.<sup>4</sup> They cannot see beyond what they were made to see.<sup>5</sup> And they were made to look on error and not see past it.<sup>6</sup> Theirs is indeed a strange perception, for they can see only illusions, unable to look beyond the granite block of sin, and stopping at the outside form of nothing.<sup>7</sup> To this distorted form of vision the outside of everything, the wall that stands between you and the truth, is wholly true.<sup>8</sup> Yet how can sight that stops at nothingness, as if it were a solid wall, see truly?<sup>9</sup> It is held back by form,

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having been made to guarantee that nothing else but form will be perceived.

6. These eyes, made not to see, will never see. <sup>2</sup> For the idea they represent left not its maker, and it is their maker that sees through them. <sup>3</sup> What was its maker's goal but not to see? <sup>4</sup> For this the body's eyes are perfect means, but not for seeing. <sup>5</sup> See how the body's eyes rest on externals and cannot go beyond. <sup>6</sup> Watch how they stop at nothingness, unable to go beyond the form to meaning. <sup>7</sup> Nothing so blinding as perception of form. <sup>8</sup> For sight of form means understanding has been obscured.
7. Only mistakes have different forms, and so they can deceive. <sup>2</sup> You can change form *because* it is not true. <sup>3</sup> It could not be reality *because* it can be changed. <sup>4</sup> Reason will tell you that if form is not reality it must be an illusion, and is not there to see. <sup>5</sup> And if you see it you must be mistaken, for you are seeing what can *not* be real as if it were. <sup>6</sup> What cannot see beyond what is not there must be distorted perception, and must perceive illusions as the truth. <sup>7</sup> Could it, then, recognize the truth?
8. Let not the form of his mistakes keep you from him whose holiness is yours. <sup>2</sup> Let not the vision of his holiness, the sight of which would show you your forgiveness, be kept from you by what the body's eyes can see. <sup>3</sup> Let your awareness of your brother not be blocked by your perception of his sins and of his body. <sup>4</sup> What is there in him that you would attack except what you associate with his body, which you believe can sin? <sup>5</sup> Beyond his errors is his holiness and your salvation. <sup>6</sup> You gave him not his holiness, but tried to see your sins in him to save yourself. <sup>7</sup> And yet, his holiness *is* your forgiveness. <sup>8</sup> Can you be saved by making sinful the one whose holiness is your salvation?
9. A holy relationship, however newly born, must value holiness above all else. <sup>2</sup> Unholy values will produce confusion, and in awareness. <sup>3</sup> In an unholy relationship, each one is valued because he seems to justify the other's sin. <sup>4</sup> Each sees within the other what impels him to sin against his will. <sup>5</sup> And thus he lays his sins upon the other, and is attracted to him to perpetuate his sins. <sup>6</sup> And so it must become impossible for each to see himself as causing sin by his desire to have sin real. <sup>7</sup> Yet reason sees a holy relationship as what it is; a common state of mind, where both give errors gladly to correction, that both may happily be healed as one.

### IV. The Branching of the Road

1. When you come to the place where the branch in the road is quite apparent, you cannot go ahead. <sup>2</sup> You must go either one way or the other. <sup>3</sup> For now if you go straight ahead, the way you went before you reached the branch, you will go nowhere. <sup>4</sup> The whole purpose of coming this far was to decide which branch you will take now. <sup>5</sup> The way you came no longer matters. <sup>6</sup> It can no longer serve. <sup>7</sup> No one who reaches this far can make the wrong decision, although he can delay. <sup>8</sup> And there is no part of the journey that seems more hopeless and futile than standing where the road branches, and not deciding on which way to go.
2. It is but the first few steps along the right way that seem hard, for you have chosen, although you still may think you can go back and make the other choice. <sup>2</sup> This is not so. <sup>3</sup> A choice made with the power of Heaven to uphold it cannot be undone. <sup>4</sup> Your way is decided. <sup>5</sup> There will be nothing you will not be told, if you acknowledge this.
3. And so you and your brother stand, here in this holy place, before the veil of sin that hangs

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between you and the face of Christ. <sup>2</sup> Let it be lifted! <sup>3</sup> Raise it together with your brother, for it is but a veil that stands between you. <sup>4</sup> Either you or your brother alone will see it as a solid block, nor realize how thin the drapery that separates you now. <sup>5</sup> Yet it is almost over in your awareness, and peace has reached you even here, before the veil. <sup>6</sup> Think what will happen after. <sup>7</sup> The Love of Christ will light your face, and shine from it into a darkened world that needs the light. <sup>8</sup> And from this holy place He will return with you, not leaving it nor you. <sup>9</sup> You will become His messenger, returning Him unto Himself.

4. Think of the loveliness that you will see, who walk with Him! <sup>2</sup> And think how beautiful will you and your brother look to the other! <sup>3</sup> How happy you will be to be together, after such a long and lonely journey where you walked alone. <sup>4</sup> The gates of Heaven, open now for you, will you now open to the sorrowful. <sup>5</sup> And none who looks upon the Christ in you but will rejoice. <sup>6</sup> How beautiful the sight you saw beyond the veil, which you will bring to light the tired eyes of those as weary now as once you were. <sup>7</sup> How thankful will they be to see you come among them, offering Christ's forgiveness to dispel their faith in sin.
5. Every mistake you and your brother make, the other will gently have corrected for you. <sup>2</sup> For in his sight your loveliness is his salvation, which he would protect from harm. <sup>3</sup> And you will be your brother's strong protector from everything that seems to rise between you both. <sup>4</sup> So shall you walk the world with me, whose message has not yet been given everyone. <sup>5</sup> For you are here to let it be received. <sup>6</sup> God's offer still is open, yet it waits acceptance. <sup>7</sup> From you who have accepted it is it received. <sup>8</sup> Into your hand, joined with your brother's, is it safely given, for you who share it have become its willing guardian and protector.
6. To all who share the Love of God the grace is given to be the givers of what they have received. <sup>2</sup> And so they learn that it is theirs forever. <sup>3</sup> All barriers disappear before their coming, as every obstacle was finally surmounted that seemed to rise and block their way before. <sup>4</sup> This veil you and your brother lift together opens the way to truth to more than you. <sup>5</sup> Those who would let illusions be lifted from their minds are this world's saviors, walking the world with their Redeemer, and carrying His message of hope and freedom and release from suffering to everyone who needs a miracle to save him.
7. How easy is it to offer this miracle to everyone! <sup>2</sup> No one who has received it for himself could find it difficult. <sup>3</sup> For by receiving it, he learned it was not given him alone. <sup>4</sup> Such is the function of a holy relationship; to receive together and give as you received. <sup>5</sup> Standing before the veil, it still seems difficult. <sup>6</sup> But hold out your hand, joined with your brother's, and touch this heavy-seeming block, and you will learn how easily your fingers slip through its nothingness. <sup>7</sup> It is no solid wall. <sup>8</sup> And only an illusion stands between you and your brother, and the holy Self you share together.

### V. Weakness and Defensiveness

1. How does one overcome illusions? <sup>2</sup> Surely not by force or anger, nor by opposing them in any way. <sup>3</sup> Merely by letting reason tell you that they contradict reality. <sup>4</sup> They go against what must be true. <sup>5</sup> The opposition comes from them, and not reality. <sup>6</sup> Reality opposes nothing. <sup>7</sup> What merely is needs no defense, and offers none. <sup>8</sup> Only illusions need defense because of weakness. <sup>9</sup> And how can it be difficult to walk the way of truth when only weakness interferes? <sup>10</sup> *You* are the strong one in this seeming conflict. <sup>11</sup> And you need no defense. <sup>12</sup> Everything that needs defense you do not

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want, for anything that needs defense will weaken you.

2. Consider what the ego wants defenses for. <sup>2</sup> Always to justify what goes against the truth, flies in the face of reason and makes no sense. <sup>3</sup> Can this *be* justified? <sup>4</sup> What can this be except an invitation to insanity, to save you from the truth? <sup>5</sup> And what would you be saved from but what you fear? <sup>6</sup> Belief in sin needs great defense, and at enormous cost. <sup>7</sup> All that the Holy Spirit offers must be defended against and sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> For sin is carved into a block out of your peace, and laid between you and its return.
3. Yet how can peace be so fragmented? <sup>2</sup> It is still whole, and nothing has been taken from it. <sup>3</sup> See how the means and the material of evil dreams are nothing. <sup>4</sup> In truth you and your brother stand together, with nothing in between. <sup>5</sup> God holds your hands, and what can separate whom He has joined as one with Him? <sup>6</sup> It is your Father Whom you would defend against. <sup>7</sup> Yet it remains impossible to keep love out. <sup>8</sup> God rests with you in quiet, undefended and wholly undefending, for in this quiet state alone is strength and power. <sup>9</sup> Here can no weakness enter, for here is no attack and therefore no illusions. <sup>10</sup> Love rests in certainty. <sup>11</sup> Only uncertainty can be defensive. <sup>12</sup> And all uncertainty is doubt about yourself.
4. How weak is fear; how little and how meaningless. <sup>2</sup> How insignificant before the quiet strength of those whom love has joined! <sup>3</sup> This is your "enemy,"—a frightened mouse that would attack the universe. <sup>4</sup> How likely is it that it will succeed? <sup>5</sup> Can it be difficult to disregard its feeble squeaks that tell of its omnipotence, and would drown out the hymn of praise to its Creator that every heart throughout the universe forever sings as one? <sup>6</sup> Which is the stronger? <sup>7</sup> Is it this tiny mouse or everything that God created? <sup>8</sup> You and your brother are not joined together by this mouse, but by the Will of God. <sup>9</sup> And can a mouse betray whom God has joined?
5. If you but recognized how little stands between you and your awareness of your union with your brother! <sup>2</sup> Be not deceived by the illusions it presents of size and thickness, weight, solidity and firmness of foundation. <sup>3</sup> Yes, to the body's eyes it looks like an enormous solid body, immovable as is a mountain. <sup>4</sup> Yet within you is a Force that no illusions can resist. <sup>5</sup> This body only seems to be immovable; this Force is irresistible in truth. <sup>6</sup> What, then, must happen when they come together? <sup>7</sup> Can the illusion of immovability be long defended from what is quietly passed through and gone beyond?
6. Forget not, when you feel the need arise to be defensive about anything, you have identified yourself with an illusion. <sup>2</sup> And therefore feel that you are weak because you are alone. <sup>3</sup> This is the cost of all illusions. <sup>4</sup> Not one but rests on the belief that you are separate. <sup>5</sup> Not one that does not seem to stand, heavy and solid and immovable, between you and your brother. <sup>6</sup> And not one that truth cannot pass over lightly, and so easily that you must be convinced, in spite of what you thought it was, that it is nothing. <sup>7</sup> If you forgive your brother, this *must* happen. <sup>8</sup> For it is your unwillingness to overlook what seems to stand between you and your brother that makes it look impenetrable, and defends the illusion of its immovability.

## VI. The Light of the Holy Relationship

1. Do you want freedom of the body or of the mind? <sup>2</sup> For both you cannot have. <sup>3</sup> Which do you value? <sup>4</sup> Which is your goal? <sup>5</sup> For one you see as means; the other, end. <sup>6</sup> And one must serve the

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- other and lead to its predominance, increasing its importance by diminishing its own. <sup>7</sup> Means serve the end, and as the end is reached the value of the means decreases, eclipsed entirely when they are recognized as functionless. <sup>8</sup> No one but yearns for freedom and tries to find it. <sup>9</sup> Yet he will seek for it where he believes it is and can be found. <sup>10</sup> He will believe it possible of mind or body, and he will make the other serve his choice as means to find it.
2. Where freedom of the body has been chosen, the mind is used as means whose value lies in its ability to contrive ways to achieve the body's freedom. <sup>2</sup> Yet freedom of the body has no meaning, and so the mind is dedicated to serve illusions. <sup>3</sup> This is a situation so contradictory and so impossible that anyone who chooses this has no idea of what is valuable. <sup>4</sup> Yet even in this confusion, so profound it cannot be described, the Holy Spirit waits in gentle patience, as certain of the outcome as He is sure of His Creator's Love. <sup>5</sup> He knows this mad decision was made by one as dear to His Creator as love is to itself.
  3. Be not disturbed at all to think how He can change the role of means and end so easily in what God loves, and would have free forever. <sup>2</sup> But be you rather grateful that you can be the means to serve His end. <sup>3</sup> This is the only service that leads to freedom. <sup>4</sup> To serve this end the body must be perceived as sinless, because the goal is sinlessness. <sup>5</sup> The lack of contradiction makes the soft transition from means to end as easy as is the shift from hate to gratitude before forgiving eyes. <sup>6</sup> You will be sanctified by your brother, using your body only to serve the sinless. <sup>7</sup> And it will be impossible for you to hate what serves whom you would heal.
  4. This holy relationship, lovely in its innocence, mighty in strength, and blazing with a light far brighter than the sun that lights the sky you see, is chosen of your Father as a means for His Own plan. <sup>2</sup> Be thankful that it serves yours not at all. <sup>3</sup> Nothing entrusted to it can be misused, and nothing given it but will be used. <sup>4</sup> This holy relationship has the power to heal all pain, regardless of its form. <sup>5</sup> Neither you nor your brother alone can serve at all. <sup>6</sup> Only in your joint will does healing lie. <sup>7</sup> For here your healing is, and here will you accept Atonement. <sup>8</sup> And in your healing is the Sonship healed *because* your will and your brother's are joined.
  5. Before a holy relationship there is no sin. <sup>2</sup> The form of error is no longer seen, and reason, joined with love, looks quietly on all confusion, observing merely, "This was a mistake." <sup>3</sup> And then the same Atonement you accepted in your relationship corrects the error, and lays a part of Heaven in its place. <sup>4</sup> How blessed are you who let this gift be given! <sup>5</sup> Each part of Heaven that you bring is given you. <sup>6</sup> And every empty place in Heaven that you fill again with the eternal light you bring, shines now on you. <sup>7</sup> The means of sinlessness can know no fear because they carry only love with them.
  6. Child of peace, the light *has* come to you. <sup>2</sup> The light you bring you do not recognize, and yet you will remember. <sup>3</sup> Who can deny himself the vision that he brings to others? <sup>4</sup> And who would fail to recognize a gift he let be laid in Heaven through himself? <sup>5</sup> The gentle service that you give the Holy Spirit is service to yourself. <sup>6</sup> You who are now His means must love all that He loves. <sup>7</sup> And what you bring is your remembrance of everything that is eternal. <sup>8</sup> No trace of anything in time can long remain in a mind that serves the timeless. <sup>9</sup> And no illusion can disturb the peace of a relationship that has become the means of peace.
  7. When you have looked upon your brother with complete forgiveness, from which no error is excluded and nothing kept hidden, what mistake can there be anywhere you cannot overlook? <sup>2</sup> What form of suffering could block your sight, preventing you from seeing past it? <sup>3</sup> And what

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illusion could there be you will not recognize as a mistake; a shadow through which you walk completely undismayed? <sup>4</sup> God would let nothing interfere with those whose wills are His, and they will recognize their wills are His, *because* they serve His Will. <sup>5</sup> And serve it willingly. <sup>6</sup> And could remembrance of what they are be long delayed?

8. You will see your value through your brother's eyes, and each one is released as he beholds his savior in place of the attacker who he thought was there. <sup>2</sup> Through this releasing is the world released. <sup>3</sup> This is your part in bringing peace. <sup>4</sup> For you have asked what is your function here, and have been answered. <sup>5</sup> Seek not to change it, nor to substitute another goal. <sup>6</sup> This one was given you, and only this. <sup>7</sup> Accept this one and serve it willingly, for what the Holy Spirit does with gifts you give your brother, to whom He offers them, and where and when, is up to Him. <sup>8</sup> He will bestow them where they are received and welcomed. <sup>9</sup> He will use every one of them for peace. <sup>10</sup> Nor will one little smile or willingness to overlook the tiniest mistake be lost to anyone.
9. What can it be but universal blessing to look on what your Father loves with charity? <sup>2</sup> Extension of forgiveness is the Holy Spirit's function. <sup>3</sup> Leave this to Him. <sup>4</sup> Let your concern be only that you give to Him that which can be extended. <sup>5</sup> Save no dark secrets that He cannot use, but offer Him the tiny gifts He can extend forever. <sup>6</sup> He will take each one and make of it a potent force for peace. <sup>7</sup> He will withhold no blessing from it, nor limit it in any way. <sup>8</sup> He will join to it all the power that God has given Him, to make each little gift of love a source of healing for everyone. <sup>9</sup> Each little gift you offer to your brother lights up the world. <sup>10</sup> Be not concerned with darkness; look away from it and toward your brother. <sup>11</sup> And let the darkness be dispelled by Him Who knows the light, and lays it gently in each quiet smile of faith and confidence with which you bless your brother.
10. On your learning depends the welfare of the world. <sup>2</sup> And it is only arrogance that would deny the power of your will. <sup>3</sup> Think you the Will of God is powerless? <sup>4</sup> Is this humility? <sup>5</sup> You do not see what this belief has done. <sup>6</sup> You see yourself as vulnerable, frail and easily destroyed, and at the mercy of countless attackers more powerful than you. <sup>7</sup> Let us look straight at how this error came about, for here lies buried the heavy anchor that seems to keep the fear of God in place, immovable and solid as a rock. <sup>8</sup> While this remains, so will it seem to be.
11. Who can attack the Son of God and not attack his Father? <sup>2</sup> How can God's Son be weak and frail and easily destroyed unless his Father is? <sup>3</sup> You do not see that every sin and every condemnation that you perceive and justify *is* an attack upon your Father. <sup>4</sup> And that is why it has not happened, nor could be real. <sup>5</sup> You do not see that this is your attempt because you think the Father and the Son are separate. <sup>6</sup> And you must think that They are separate, because of fear. <sup>7</sup> For it seems safer to attack another or yourself than to attack the great Creator of the universe, Whose power you know.
12. If you were one with God and recognized this oneness, you would know His power is yours. <sup>2</sup> But you will not remember this while you believe attack of any kind means anything. <sup>3</sup> It is unjustified in any form, because it has no meaning. <sup>4</sup> The only way it could be justified is if you and your brother were separate from the other, and all were separate from your Creator. <sup>5</sup> For only then would it be possible to attack a part of the creation without the whole, the Son without the Father; and to attack another without yourself, or hurt yourself without the other feeling pain. <sup>6</sup> And this belief you want. <sup>7</sup> Yet wherein lies its value, except in the desire to attack in safety? <sup>8</sup> Attack is neither safe nor dangerous. <sup>9</sup> It is impossible. <sup>10</sup> And this is so because the universe is one. <sup>11</sup> You would not choose attack on its reality if it were not essential to attack to see it separated from its maker. <sup>12</sup> And thus it seems as if love could attack and become fearful.

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13. Only the different can attack. <sup>2</sup> So you conclude *because* you can attack, you and your brother must be different. <sup>3</sup> Yet does the Holy Spirit explain this differently. <sup>4</sup> *Because* you and your brother are not different, you cannot attack. <sup>5</sup> Either position is a logical conclusion. <sup>6</sup> Either could be maintained, but never both. <sup>7</sup> The only question to be answered in order to decide which must be true is whether you and your brother are different. <sup>8</sup> From the position of what you understand you seem to be, and therefore can attack. <sup>9</sup> Of the alternatives, this seems more natural and more in line with your experience. <sup>10</sup> And therefore it is necessary that you have other experiences, more in line with truth, to teach you what *is* natural and true.
14. This is the function of your holy relationship. <sup>2</sup> For what one thinks, the other will experience with him. <sup>3</sup> What can this mean except your mind and your brother's are one? <sup>4</sup> Look not with fear upon this happy fact, and think not that it lays a heavy burden on you. <sup>5</sup> For when you have accepted it with gladness, you will realize that your relationship is a reflection of the union of the Creator and His Son. <sup>6</sup> From loving minds there *is* no separation. <sup>7</sup> And every thought in one brings gladness to the other because they are the same. <sup>8</sup> Joy is unlimited, because each shining thought of love extends its being and creates more of itself. <sup>9</sup> There is no difference anywhere in it, for every thought is like itself.
15. The light that joins you and your brother shines throughout the universe, and because it joins you and him, so it makes you and him one with your Creator. <sup>2</sup> And in Him is all creation joined. <sup>3</sup> Would you regret you cannot fear alone, when your relationship can also teach the power of love is there, which makes all fear impossible? <sup>4</sup> Do not attempt to keep a little of the ego with this gift. <sup>5</sup> For it was given you to be used, and not obscured. <sup>6</sup> What teaches you that you cannot separate denies the ego. <sup>7</sup> Let truth decide if you and your brother be different or the same, and teach you which is true.