

Chapter 23.

THE WAR AGAINST YOURSELF

Introduction

T-23.in.1. Do you not see the opposite of frailty and weakness is sinlessness? 2 Innocence is strength, and nothing else is strong. 3 The sinless cannot fear, for sin of any kind is weakness. 4 The show of strength attack would use to cover frailty conceals **sin and weakness** not, for how can the unreal be hidden? 5 No one is strong who has an enemy, and no one can attack unless he thinks he has **an enemy**. 6 Belief in enemies is therefore the belief in weakness, and what is weak is not the Will of God. 7 Being opposed to **the Will of God, sin and weakness** is God's "enemy." 8 And God is feared as an opposing will **of those who believe they are sinful and weak**.

Note # 1: The belief in sin, guilt and fear form the basis for the egoic thought system This unholy trinity is the ego's proof that the separation is real and that we can oppose God's Will. There is nothing that can oppose a Oneness of Everything for there is nothing outside of It. What is there to fear? What could attack It or be attacked by It?

T-23.in.2. How strange indeed becomes this war against yourself! 2 You will believe that everything you use for sin can hurt you and become your enemy. 3 And you will fight against everything you use for sin, and try to weaken **everything you use for sin** because of this **belief that you have enemies**; and you will think that you succeeded **by fighting against your enemies**, and **will** attack again. 4 It is as certain you will fear what you attack as it is sure that you will love what you perceive as sinless. 5 He walks in peace who travels sinlessly along the way love shows him. 6 For love walks with him there, protecting him from fear. 7 And he **who walks in love, peace and sinlessness** will see only the sinless, who can not attack.

Note # 2: By following the thought system of the Holy Spirit, you will follow the path of love and forgiveness. Refusing to see error as sin, you will offer correction for any mistake that would witness for any limitation of God's Son. Seeing everything as a part of the sinless Oneness, you know that you are that One Self.

T-23.in.3. Walk you in glory, with your head held high, and fear no evil. 2 The innocent are safe because **the innocent** share their innocence. 3 Nothing **the innocent** see is harmful, for their awareness of the truth releases everything from the illusion of harmfulness. 4 And what seemed harmful now stands shining in their innocence, released from sin and fear and happily returned to love. 5 **The innocent** share the strength of love *<because>* they looked on innocence. 6 And every error disappeared because **the innocent** saw **the illusion of sin** not. 7 Who looks for glory finds **glory** where it is. 8 Where could **glory** be but in the innocent?

Note # 3: The innocent are unaware of that which does not exist. God, like our Big "S" Self, does not know what does not exist which is the false. Thus, the innocent are they who know not of sin. Being innocent, they have no concept of sin because it is not part of their thought system. For ACIM purposes, the only perception that the innocent would have is the observation that any part of the indivisible Oneness is perfect, whole and complete. The barriers to love, which are fear, sin and guilt, are unknown to the innocent. They are conduits for God's Will.

T-23.in.4. Let not the little interferers pull you to littleness. 2 There can be no attraction of guilt in innocence. 3 Think what a happy world you walk, with truth beside you! 4 Do not give up this world of freedom **and truth** for a little sigh of seeming sin, nor for a tiny stirring of guilt's attraction. 5 Would you, for all these meaningless distractions, lay Heaven aside? 6 Your destiny and purpose are far beyond **the attraction of sin and guilt's littleness. Your destiny and purpose are** in the clean place where littleness does not exist. p485 7 Your purpose is at variance with littleness of any kind. 8 And so **your purpose** is at variance with sin.

Note # 4: Littleness is the idea that God and His creation could be limited in some way and that the separation was real. Our egoic belief in sin birthed littleness. Specialness is the belief in inequality. Already being created as a holographic part of the Oneness of Everything, when we wanted to be special and different from the Oneness, the only playing field available was in the imagination of a deluded mind. In the non-real world of perception, time and space, the game of egoic littleness is played out. In the world of time and space our function is forgiveness, our purpose love and our destiny the peace of God.

T-23.in.5. Let us not let littleness lead God's Son into temptation. 2 **The Son of God's** glory is beyond **temptation's littleness. The Son of God's glory is** measureless and timeless as eternity. 3 Do not let time intrude upon your sight of him, **God's Son.** 4 Leave him not frightened and alone in his temptation, but help him rise above **the temptation of littleness** and perceive the light of which he is a part. 5 Your innocence will light the way to his **innocence**, and so is **your innocence** protected and kept in your awareness. 6 For who can know his **Big "S" Self's** glory, and perceive the little and the weak about him? 7 Who can walk trembling in a fearful world, and realize that Heaven's glory shines on him, **who perceives himself as little?**

Note # 5: By the acceptance of the Atonement for yourself, you accept your sinless and guiltless nature. You recognize the truth of the Oneness. You realize that to give is but to receive. Having accepted the Atonement for yourself, you now have the Atonement to give to all. You can only give what you have. In your granting forgiveness and sinlessness to your brother, you confirm the reality of the One shared Mind of God that is the One Self.

T-23.in.6. Nothing around you but is part of you. 2 Look on **everything around you** lovingly, and see the light of Heaven in **everything.** 3 So will you come to understand all that is given you **is everything.** 4 In kind forgiveness will the world sparkle and shine, and everything you once thought sinful now will be reinterpreted as part of Heaven. 5 How beautiful it is to walk, clean and redeemed and happy, through a world in bitter need of the redemption that your innocence bestows upon **the world in which you walk!** 6 What can you value more than **the redemption of the world in which you walk?** 7 For here **in the world in which you walk** is your salvation and your freedom. 8 And **your salvation and your freedom** must be complete if you would recognize **it in the world you walk.**

Note # 6: The world you walk in is the world of perception. This is your own provisional reality. It is how you view your world. Is your universe a loving, forgiving and supportive place? Or, is your world a competitive fearful place of limitation, pain and suffering? We, as decision-makers, always control how we will perceive our world. Will we choose to

look upon our world through the loving vision of Christ? Or, will we choose to look with our egoic eyes that focus only on sin, guilt and fear? The choice is always our choice alone and no one else's. We are not victims of the world we perceive. Instead, our perception makes or creates the world we choose to perceive.

I. The Irreconcilable Beliefs

T-23.I.1. The memory of God comes to the quiet mind. 2 **The memory of God** cannot come where there is conflict, for a mind at war against itself remembers not eternal gentleness. 3 The means of war are not the means of peace, and what the warlike would remember is not love. 4 War is impossible unless belief in victory is cherished. 5 Conflict within you must imply that you believe the ego has the power to be victorious **over the memory of God.** 6 Why else would you identify with **the ego?** 7 Surely you realize the ego is at war with God. 8 Certain is **the memory of God that** it has no enemy. 9 Yet just as certain is **the ego's** fixed belief **that the ego** has an enemy that it must overcome and will succeed.

Note # 7: The quiet mind rests in the truth of its own invulnerability. It understands the truth that its will is all-powerful since its will is the Will of God. The memory of God is this knowing. The ego's existence rests upon the denial of the Will of God. Since we are here in the world of perception, at some time in the distant past we must have desired the specialness of egoic littleness. The ego attacks anything that threatens its existence. Its existence arose from our belief in the reality of the separation. Since the belief of the separation from God's Will is not real, everything the ego perceives is considered a threat to the ego's existence. Enemies abound everywhere and the ego is constantly battling to prove its claim that an illusion can make the false real.

T-23.I.2. Do you not realize a war against yourself would be a war on God? 2 Is victory conceivable **against God or yourself?** 3 And if **victory** were **conceivable against God,** is this a victory that you would want? 4 The death of God, if it were possible, would be your death. 5 Is this **joint death of God and yourself** a victory? 6 The ego always marches to defeat, because **the ego** thinks that triumph over you, **the Christ,** is possible. 7 And God thinks otherwise **and knows that the ego cannot triumph over His Son, the Christ.** 8 This is no war; only the mad belief the Will of God can be attacked and overthrown. 9 You may identify with this **egoic** belief **that the Will of God can be attacked and overthrown,** but never will **this egoic belief** be more than madness. p486 10 And fear will reign in madness, and **fear** will seem to have replaced love there. 11 **The replacement of love with fear** is the conflict's purpose. 12 And to those who think that **the mad idea** is possible, the means seem real.

Note # 8: The means to overthrow God's Will seems possible under the logic of the egoic belief system. The ego supports the belief in the reality of the dream of separation. Without the doubt that arose when we questioned whether it was possible to not know ourselves, the Sonship, would never have identify itself with the body in the illusionary game of separation. This doubt allowed perception to replace knowledge within our decision-making mind. With the loss of knowledge, uncertainty arose and with uncertainty fear. Fear now replaced love as our dominant emotional state of mind. The separation took on a reality of its own when sin, guilt and fear became the controlling factors of our egoic thought system. With all the barriers that we have place in front of love, the idea that fear

could replace the truth about love seems possible to the ego. Fear is the world of illusion. Love is the world of truth. We must decide which we value. We cannot give our allegiance to both fear and love for they are mutually exclusive.

T-23.I.3. Be certain that it is impossible God and the ego, or yourself, **the Big "S" Self** and **the ego**, will ever meet. 2 You seem to meet, and make your strange alliances on grounds that have no meaning, **which is within an illusion of a body**. 3 For your beliefs converge upon the body, the ego's chosen home, which you **mistakenly** believe is **the home of your true Big "S" Self**. 4 You meet at a mistake; an error in your self-appraisal. 5 The ego joins with an illusion of yourself you share with **the ego**. 6 And yet illusions cannot join. 7 **Illusions** are the same, and **illusions** are nothing. 8 **Illusions'** joining lies in nothingness; two **illusions** are as meaningless as one or as a thousand **illusions**. 9 The ego joins with nothing, being nothing. 10 The victory **the ego** seeks is meaningless as is **the ego**, itself.

Note # 9: The Christ never meets the ego for the Christ, like God, only abides in truth. The split-minded however, appear to meet with the ego in the illusion of separation. They both believe that they reside in the body and that the body is the home of both. This is a case of mistaken identity for being unlimited spirit, we cannot be the egoic little "s" self. Their potential meeting is the result of the erroneous perception that we are the body. Correct this mistake in thinking and the illusion that the ego and our mind could be joined disappears. The truth of what we are can never change. The ego is a mistaken self-appraisal of what we are. The ego represents the mad idea that we could be something other than an extension of Our Creator.

T-23.I.4. Brother, the war against yourself is almost over. 2 The journey's end is at the place of peace. 3 Would you not now accept the peace offered you here **at the end of the journey into perception?** 4 This "enemy", **your erroneous self-appraisal of yourself and, therefore, also Your Creator**, that you fought as an intruder on your peace is here transformed, before your sight, into the giver of your peace. 5 Your "enemy" was God Himself, to Whom all conflict, triumph and attack of any kind are all unknown. 6 **God** loves you perfectly, completely and eternally. 7 The Son of God at war with his Creator is a condition as ridiculous as nature roaring at the wind in anger, proclaiming it is part of itself no more. 8 Could nature possibly establish this, and make it true? 9 Nor is it up to you to say what shall be part of you and what is kept apart.

Note # 10: We have no will but God's. To believe that an effect can change its source is a mistake. All power flows from its source. We have no power to pick and choose what we are since we are not self-created. The ego insanely believes that truth can be adjusted to conform to what the ego wishes to believe is the truth at any given moment. Our egoic illusions can deny the truth but they cannot change the truth.

T-23.I.5. The war against yourself was undertaken to teach the Son of God that he is not himself, and **that he is <not>** his Father's Son. 2 For this **erroneous self-appraisal of God's Son to be possible**, the memory of his Father must be forgotten. 3 **The memory of his Father <is>** forgotten in the body's life, and if you think you are a body, you will believe you have forgotten **the memory of God**. 4 Yet truth can never be forgotten by

itself, **the Christ**, and you have not forgotten what you are. 5 Only a strange **egoic** illusion of yourself, a wish to triumph over what you **truly** are, remembers not **His Father**.

Note # 11: The Christ always remembers the truth of what It is. It is only within a tiny split part of our mind that identifies itself with the separation that holds the erroneous belief that we could be a body. We call this tiny split part that believed there was something to fear from an illusion our egoic little “s” self. It was not the illusion of the separation that was the problem. It was our egoic self’s belief that there was something to fear that made an illusion appear real. We forgot to laugh.

T-23.I.6. The war against yourself is but the battle of two illusions, struggling to make **the two illusions appear** different from each other, in the belief the one that conquers will be true. 2 There *<is>* no conflict between **the two illusions** and the truth. 3 Nor are **the two illusions** different from each other. 4 Both **of the two illusions** are not true. 5 And so it matters not what form **the two illusions** take. 6 What made **the two illusions, the ego**, is insane, and **the two illusions** remain part of what made them, **the ego, and thus, all are insane delusions**. 7 Madness holds out no menace to reality, and **madness** has no influence upon **reality**. 8 Illusions cannot triumph over truth, nor can **illusions** threaten **the truth** in any way. 9 And the reality that **illusions deny, the truth**, is not a part of **the illusion**. p487

Note # 12: It does not matter what form an illusion may take. All illusions have the same content. They are an attempt to make the false, real. There is no substitute for the truth. Truth just is. We are the extension of our Creator. Our mistaken egoic self-appraisal for littleness cannot change the truth of what we are. The correction of any form of illusion is always the same. Bring the illusion to the light of truth and the false will disappear. This is why there is no order of difficulty in the performance of miracles. Miracles just bring the truth to the false. The correction of the false must be their result.

T-23.I.7. What *<you>* remember *<is>* a part of you. 2 For you must be as God created you. 3 Truth does not fight against illusions, nor do illusions fight against the truth. 4 Illusions battle only with themselves. 5 Being fragmented, **illusions** fragment. 6 But truth is indivisible, and far beyond illusions’ little reach. 7 You will remember what you know when you have learned you cannot be in conflict **with yourself**. 8 One illusion about yourself can battle with another **illusion about yourself**, yet the war of two illusions is a state where nothing happens. 9 There is no victor and there is no victory **between illusions**. 10 And truth stands radiant, apart from conflict, untouched and quiet in the peace of God.

Note # 13: Truth does not attack in illusion. To attack would be to give the illusion the appearance of being real. It is impossible to attack the “nothingness” of an illusion, except with another illusion. Truth stands alone because truth is all there is. Illusions hide from the truth, since in truth’s light all illusions fade away. Illusions do battle among themselves within the dream of separation. Within the dream, itself, illusions battle each other for the right to be the “truth for the day”. These dreams, being based on the instability of nothingness, constantly shift around with the changing goals of the ego.

T-23.I.8. Conflict must be between two forces. 2 **Conflict** cannot exist between one power and nothingness. 3 There is nothing you could attack that is not part of you. 4 And

<by> attacking **the nothingness of an illusion**, you make two illusions of yourself, in conflict with each other. 5 And this **conflict of two opposing illusions about yourself** occurs whenever you look on anything that God created with anything but love. 6 Conflict is fearful, for **conflict** is the birth of fear. 7 Yet what is born of nothing cannot win reality through battle. 8 Why would you fill your world with conflicts with yourself? 9 Let all this madness **about conflict with yourself** be undone for you, and turn in peace to the remembrance of God, still shining in your quiet mind.

Note # 14: The conflicting illusions about ourselves can be corrected by asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will take our misperception and correct them to reflect the truth. It is our denial of the use of our Christ Vision that generates all illusion. Egoic seeing focuses only on the illusion of the body-form. Content is ignored.

T-23.I.9. See how the conflict of illusions disappears when **the conflict of illusions** is brought to truth! 2 For **the conflict between illusions** seems real only as long as **the conflict** is seen as war between conflicting truths; the conqueror to be the truer, the more real, and the vanquisher of the illusion that was less real, made an illusion by defeat. 3 Thus, conflict is the choice between illusions, one to be crowned as real, the other vanquished and despised. 4 Here **within the conflict of an illusionary world** will the Father never be remembered. 5 Yet no illusion can invade **the Father's home, the Christ**, and drive **the Father** out of what **the Father** loves forever, **His Creation**. 6 And what **the Father** loves must be forever quiet and at peace <because> it is **the Father's home**.

Note # 15: Our Christ consciousness never forgets the truth. The Christ is the home of the Creator. The peace of God cannot be found in an illusion but only in the truth.

T-23.I.10. You who are beloved of **by the Father** are no illusion, being as true and holy as **the Father**. 2 The stillness of your certainty of **the Father** and of yourself, **the Christ**, is home to Both of You, Who dwell as One and not apart. 3 Open the door of **the Father's** most holy home, and let forgiveness sweep away all trace of the belief in sin that keeps God homeless and His Son with Him. 4 You are not a stranger in the house of God. 5 Welcome your brother to the home where God has set **your brother** in serenity and peace, and **where God** dwells with **your brother**. 6 Illusions have no place where love abides. **The Christ, where love abides, protects** you from everything that is not true. 7 You dwell in peace as limitless as its Creator, and everything is given those who would remember **the Creator**. p488 8 Over **the Creator's** home the Holy Spirit watches, sure that its peace can never be disturbed.

Note # 16: The Christ is the home of our brother, the Sonship, the Father, the Holy Spirit and ourselves. This demonstrates that the Oneness is the joint mind of all that is. There is no separation in truth. There is just the Oneness that is the Mind of God. This is what we call the One Self.

T-23.I.11. How can the resting place of God, **the Christ**, turn on itself, and seek to overcome the One **Self** Who dwells there? 2 And think what happens when the house of God perceives itself divided. 3 The altar of **truth** disappears, the light grows dim, the temple of the Holy One becomes a house of sin. 4 And nothing is remembered except

illusions. 5 Illusions can conflict, because their forms are different. 6 And **illusions** do battle only to establish which form of **the illusion** is true.

Note # 17: Within the dream of the illusion of separation, our mind appears to be split. The Christ, which is the home of the Holy Trinity, remains within the truth. It is the One Self. The egoic part of the split mind however, has identified itself with the illusion of separation. This loss of knowledge within the egoic mind led to uncertainty and doubt that birthed perception. The ego is the part of our mind that doubts what it was. It is our egoic mind's identification with the dream that is the problem. While observing the game of separation, part of us forgot to laugh so fear arose. We forgot that we were just observing a game within the mind and that it was not real. When we took the game seriously, we made the dream real within our egoic mind. We became a player within the game. Yet, this player had forgotten that this was just a game of make believe. The egoic mind forgot that we were the dreamer. Thus, to the egoic mind there appeared to be something outside the One Self to fear. With this sense of fear, we no longer felt invulnerable and lost the peace and safety of the One Self.

T-23.I.12. Illusion meets illusion; truth **meets only** itself. 2 The meeting of illusions leads to war. 3 Peace, looking on itself, extends itself. 4 War is the condition in which fear is born, and grows and seeks to dominate. 5 Peace is the state where love abides, and seeks to share itself. 6 Conflict and peace are opposites. 7 Where **either conflict or peace** abides the other cannot be; where either **conflict or peace** goes the other disappears. 8 So is the memory of God obscured in minds that have become illusions' battleground. 9 Yet far beyond this senseless war **between illusions, the memory of God** shines, ready to be remembered when you side with peace.

Note # 18: Peace and conflict, like truth and illusions, are mutually exclusive. The Christ remains always at peace since It is only the Oneness of God. Peace is the state of Heaven, which is the real world. ACIM also states that the Christ is also the state of Heaven. Again we see the Oneness of the whole, which is the Christ

The world of perception is not the real world. It is a world of form in which change is possible and, therefore, time exists. Conflict does appear in time and space. This illusionary world of perception, our private world of provisional reality, becomes the battleground where the game of separation is played out. The outcome is never in doubt since ultimately we must decide for the return to truth, but until that decision is made the game is exciting and appears to be very dangerous. The world of perception is our playschool where we relearn about what we really are. It is where the rubber meets the road. In this world of perception, we can demonstrate that we have remembered that we are only love. We use the body to communicate and demonstrate love in form. By following only the thought system of the Holy Spirit, we become the expression of love in form. Our dream of separation and specialness is transformed into the happy dream of love and forgiveness. The body becomes a communication device the Holy Spirit utilizes to teach our brothers that they also are sinless and guiltless. Being love, we teach only love.

II. The Laws of Chaos

T-23.II.1. The "laws" of chaos can be brought to light, though never understood. 2 Chaotic laws are hardly meaningful, and therefore **the "laws" of chaos** are out of reason's sphere. 3 Yet **the "laws" of chaos** appear to be an obstacle to reason and to truth. 4 Let us,

then, look upon **the "laws" of chaos** calmly, that we may look beyond them, understanding what they are, not what **the "laws" of chaos** would maintain. 5 It is essential it be understood what **the "laws" of chaos** are for, because it is **the "laws" of chaos's** purpose to make meaningless, and to attack the truth. 6 Here are the laws that rule the world you made. 7 And yet **the "laws" of chaos** govern nothing, and need not be broken. **The "laws" of chaos need merely be** looked upon and gone beyond.

Note # 19: The egoic thought system is based on the “laws” of chaos. In the world of perception the “laws” of chaos appear to govern the world and our physical actions seem to be controlled by these laws. Our physical senses confirm the apparent validity of these laws. To the ego the “laws” of chaos are the rules that it believes apply to the game of separation. As long as we believe that the “laws” of chaos rule the game of separation, they will. Only when we ask the Holy Spirit to join in the game do we discover that the Laws of God trump the “laws” of chaos within the game of separation every time. ACIM asks that we be willing to examine the “laws” of chaos in the light of truth, which is a new paradigm for those who have previously chosen to follow the egoic belief that we are a separate ego-body.

T-23.II.2. The *<first>* chaotic law is that the truth is different for everyone. 2 Like all these principles, this **first law that the truth is different for everyone** maintains that each is separate and has a different set of thoughts that set him off from others. 3 This principle **that the truth is different for everyone** evolves from the belief there is a hierarchy of illusions; some are more valuable and therefore true. 4 Each one establishes this for himself, and makes **his hierarchy of illusions** true by his attack on what another values. 5 And this **attack on what another values** is justified because the values differ, and those who hold **different values** seem to be unlike, and therefore enemies. p489

Note # 20: This first law of chaos that the truth is different for everyone maintains our separateness. Since we are “separate,” we each have our own individual beliefs, thoughts and experiences. How we perceive our individual world is based on these underlying beliefs and desires. This allows each person to make a unique, private world, which forms his or her own provisional reality. Each person’s provisional reality is based on what they believe to be true within their own private belief system. Thus, each person establishes their own hierarchy of “truth” by which they live. No one else lives entirely within this unique illusionary world except the separate perceiver. Depending on our individual beliefs, these separate worlds may overlap in areas where we share common beliefs. In areas with conflicting and differing truths, we battle over whose “truth” is more powerful and thus, true. Truth is not fixed and is conditional at best. Truth is ever changing based on our constantly changing beliefs, goals and desires.

T-23.II.3. Think how this seems to interfere with the first principle of miracles, **which is that there is no order of difficulty in miracles**. 2 For this **first law of chaos that the truth is different for everyone** establishes degrees of truth among illusions, making it seem that some **illusions** are harder to overcome than **other illusions**. 3 If it were realized that **illusions** are all the same and equally untrue, it would be easy, then, to understand that miracles apply to all of them. 4 Errors of any kind can be corrected *<because>* **errors** are untrue. 5 When **an illusion is** brought to truth instead of to each other, **illusions** merely

disappear. 6 No part of nothing can be more resistant to the truth than can another **part of nothing**.

Note # 21: All illusions give way to truth. To the miracle worker, there is no difference between one illusion or another since he realizes all are equally false.

T-23.II.4. The *<second>* law of chaos, dear indeed to every worshipper of sin, is that each one *<must>* sin, and therefore **each sinner** deserves attack and death. 2 This principle, closely related to the first **law of chaos, which is that truth is different for everyone and** is the demand that errors call for punishment and not correction. 3 For the destruction of the one who makes the error places him beyond correction and beyond forgiveness. 4 What **error** he has done is thus interpreted as an irrevocable sentence upon himself, which God Himself is powerless to overcome. 5 Sin cannot be remitted, being the belief the Son of God can make mistakes for which his own destruction becomes inevitable.

Note # 22: The second law of chaos states that the dream of separation was a sin, not a mistake. Mistakes only require correction. Sin demands punishment and cannot be forgiven. This second law of chaos lays the groundwork for the egoic god of fear: for sin calls for eternal damnation. Anyone who has sinned, which is everyone, deserves attack and death.

T-23.II.5. Think what this **second law of chaos, which states that each one *<must>* sin, and therefore each sinner deserves attack and death** seems to do to the relationship between the Father and the Son. 2 Now it appears that **the Father and the Son** can never be One again. 3 For One, **either the Father or the Son**, must always be condemned, and by the Other. 4 Now are **the Father and the Son** different, and enemies. 5 And **the Father and the Son's** relationship is one of opposition, just as the separate aspects of the Son meet only to conflict but not to join. 6 One becomes weak, the other strong by his defeat. 7 And fear of God and of each other now appears as sensible, made real by what the Son of God has done both to himself and his Creator.

Note # 23: The second law of chaos identifies the error of separation to be reality and, therefore, a real sin deserving and demanding punishment. Being a sinner, our self-preservation requires that we battle against God and our brother who both wish to extract a pound of flesh, preferably from our heart. The world of sin, if it existed in reality, would be a fearful place. Even if we were sinless, we would need to be constantly looking over our shoulder to guard against the next attack from our sinful brothers. Peace cannot be found in a world based on sin.

T-23.II.6. The arrogance on which the laws of chaos stand could not be more apparent than emerges here **in this second law of chaos, which states that each one *<must>* sin, and therefore each sinner deserves attack and death.** 2 Here **in this second law of chaos** is a principle that would define what the Creator of reality must be; what **the Creator of reality** must think and what **the Creator of reality** must believe; and how **the Creator of reality** must respond, believing **that the second law of chaos must apply to our perceived world.** 3 It is not seen as even necessary that **the Creator of reality** be asked about the truth of what has been established for **the Creator's** belief. 4 His Son can tell **the Creator of reality what has been established by the son as "truth," and the**

Creator has but the choice whether to take **the Son's** word for it or **the Creator must** be mistaken. 5 This leads directly to the *<third>* preposterous belief that seems to make chaos eternal. 6 For if God cannot be mistaken, **God** must accept His Son's belief in what **the son believes himself to be**, and **God must now** hate His **“sinful” son** for **what the son believes himself to be**.

Note # 24: This third law of chaos basically says that an illusion can change the truth. Here we have an effect, the Sonship, forcing Its Source, God, Who is the Creator of reality to change what the Creator knows reality to be. With this third law of chaos, we can force God to change His Will by what we think. Our will becomes more powerful than the Will of God.

T-23.II.7. See how the fear of God is reinforced by this third principle. **This third law of chaos states that since God cannot be mistaken, God must accept His Son's belief in what the son believes himself to be, and God must now hate His “sinful” son for what the son believes himself to be.** 2 Now due to this third principle of chaos, it becomes impossible to turn to **God** for help in misery. p490 3 For now **God** has become the "enemy" Who caused **the son's misery**, to Whom appeal is useless. 4 Nor can salvation lie within the Son, whose every aspect seems to be at war with **God**, and justified in its attack. 5 And now is conflict made inevitable. **This conflict is** beyond the help of God. 6 For now salvation must remain impossible, because the Savior has become the enemy.

Note # 25: The third principal states that we have the power to usurp the Will of God. God must obey what we say we are. We claimed to be a separate sinner apart from God. We have taken away God's power to tell us that what we believe we did was not a sin and thus, no punishment is required. We now have converted a God of Love into a revengeful God, Who must be feared. This third “law” of chaos states that God has accepted His Son's mistaken belief that the Son has sinned and, therefore, God see us as sinners.

T-23.II.8. Due to this third principal that **God has accepted His Son's mistaken belief that the Son has sinned and, therefore, God see us as sinners**, there can be no release and no escape **from the son's misery**. 2 Atonement thus becomes a myth, and vengeance, not forgiveness, is the Will of God. 3 From where all this begins, there is no sight of help that can succeed. 4 Only destruction can be the outcome. 5 And God Himself seems to be siding with **the myth that vengeance must be God's Will** to overcome His **sinful** Son. 6 Think not the ego will enable you to find escape from what **the ego** wants. 7 **The escape from what the ego wants, which is the belief in a sinful son**, is the function of **ACIM**. **ACIM** does not value what the ego cherishes, **which is the illusion of sin**.

Note # 26: According to the ego, the egoic god of revenge could never forgive a “sinful” son. Since the maintenance of sin is the ego's goal, it is useless to ask the ego for advice on how we could become sinless. Salvation cannot be found by following the insane advice of the ego. The ego's thought system will only keep us in the madness of victim consciousness. **ACIM** purpose is the return to right-mindedness of God's temporarily insane son.

T-23.II.9. The ego values only what **the ego** takes. 2 This leads to the *<fourth>* law of chaos, which, if the **other three laws** are accepted, must be true. 3 This seeming law is the

belief you have what you have taken. 4 By this **forth law of chaos, which is that you have what you have taken**, another's loss becomes your gain, and thus **the forth law of chaos** fails to recognize that you can never take away save from yourself. 5 Yet all the other laws must lead to this **forth law of chaos**. 6 For enemies do not give willingly to one another, nor would **enemies** seek to share the things they value. 7 And what your enemies would keep from you must be worth having, because **the enemies** keep **what they value** hidden from your sight.

Note # 27: This fourth law of chaos, which is that you have what you have taken, means that the world is a zero-sum game. If I'm to win, you must lose. What you have, you must take from others. You also need to be on constant alert since you are vulnerable to attack by outside forces that want to take the little you have. Treachery rules this world of fear and limitation.

T-23.II.10. From this fourth law of chaos, which is that you have what you have taken, all of the mechanisms of madness are seen emerging here: the "enemy" made strong by keeping hidden the valuable inheritance that should be yours; your justified position and attack for what has been withheld; and the inevitable loss the enemy must suffer to save yourself. 2 Thus do the guilty ones protest their "innocence." 3 Were they, **the ones that appear to be guilty of attack** not forced into this foul attack by the unscrupulous behavior of the enemy? **If not for the action of the unscrupulous enemy, the attacker** would respond with only kindness. 4 But in a savage world the kind cannot survive, so they must take or else be taken from.

Note # 28: Since the ego comes from lack, it is a dog eat dog world out there. Even when we attack, the ego claims that we are innocent victims. Our brother caused us to attack him because he withheld from us what we need for our survival. Our self-preservation caused us to attack. We had no choice in the matter. This belief that attack is justified keeps our decision-maker asleep at the wheel of our life's experiences.

T-23.II.11. And now there is a vague unanswered question, not yet "explained." 2 What is this precious thing, this priceless pearl, this hidden secret treasure, to be wrested in righteous wrath from this most treacherous and cunning enemy? 3 **This hidden secret treasure** must be what you want but never found. 4 And now you "understand" the reason why you **never** found **this hidden secret treasure**. 5 For **this hidden secret treasure** was taken from you by this enemy, and hidden where you would not think to look. 6 **This enemy** hid **this secret treasure** in his body, making **his body** the cover for his guilt, **making his body** the hiding place for what belongs to you, **this secret treasure**. 7 Now must **this enemy's** body be destroyed and sacrificed, that you may have **this secret treasure**, which belongs to you. p491 8 **This enemy's** treachery demands his death, that you may live. 9 And you attack **this enemy** only in self-defense.

Note # 29: The ego tells us that we attack only due to our brother's treachery. We are seeking a hidden treasure that rightfully belongs to us but was stolen long ago. Our enemy has denied us our birthright and, therefore, we have been forced by our brother's actions to attack him. What we seek is a secret. The ego tells us that this secret holds our escape from misery but the ego never tells us how we will know we have obtained this secret or when we will achieve happiness. This allows the ego to modify the ego's plan for our happiness

whenever we seem to have obtained the goal that the ego told us would bring happiness. The ego's motto is, "Seek and never find." If we don't know what we are looking for, we won't know when we have found it. We remain in victim consciousness. The ego has made our mind into an effect of the cruel world that surrounds us.

T-23.II.12. But what is **this secret treasure** you want that needs his death? 2 Can you be sure your murderous attack is justified unless you know what **your attack** is for? 3 And here a *<final>* principle of chaos comes to the "rescue." 4 **The <final> principle of chaos** holds there is a substitute for love. 5 This **substitute for love** is the magic that will cure all of your pain; the missing factor in your madness that makes **your madness** "sane." 6 This **substitute for love** is the reason why you must attack. 7 Here **in this substitute for love** is what makes your vengeance justified. 8 Behold, unveiled, the ego's secret gift, **which is this substitute for love**, torn from your brother's body, hidden there in malice and in hatred for the one to whom the gift belongs. 9 **Your brother** would deprive you of the secret ingredient that would give meaning to your life. 10 The substitute for love, born of your enmity **or hostility** to your brother, must be salvation. 11 **This substitute for love** has no substitute, and there is only one **of them**. 12 And all your relationships have but the purpose of seizing **this substitute for love** and making it your own.

Note # 30: This substitute for love is what is needed to make you happy and whole. The ego's price for the specialness of separation was that you must become imperfect, not whole and therefore, incomplete. You exchanged the truth, which your happiness rested upon, for the ego's need to be right. The ego has been claiming since the loss of knowledge that it has a plan to return you to wholeness. This egoic plan attempts to recapture your wholeness by stealing something outside of you that you perceive is missing. Thus, the ego tells us that something outside ourselves took away our happiness and that something outside ourselves can make us whole again. This looking outside ourselves for our happiness insures that we will never find it. The Holy Spirit knows that we have hidden the secret deep within ourselves and that if we follow the ego's advice we will continue to always "seek and never find." The Holy Spirit tells us that there was never anything wrong with us but we do need to adopt a new plan for our happiness and salvation.

This substitute for love can take many forms. It is anything that we perceive we need in order to be happy. One form of this substitute for love is conditional love. Basically, conditional love states that another must do what you wish because you have demanded it. This is not real love but only a device for getting. The focus of conditional love is on what's in it for me. What you receive is more important than what you give. Your partner's best interest is secondary to your own. In its best form, conditional love is a bartering system. I will love you if you do this for me. God love is real and cannot be earned since it flows freely and abundantly from Its Source. God's love allows His Creation perfect safety yet they remain free to be whatever they want. God's love does not judge, instead It allows.

T-23.II.13. Never is your possession made complete. 2 And never will your brother cease his attack on you for what you stole. 3 Nor will God end His vengeance upon both **you and your brother**, for in **God's** madness **God, Himself**, must have this substitute for love, and kill you both. 4 You who believe you walk in sanity with feet on solid ground, and through a world where meaning can be found, consider this: These **five principles of chaos** *<are>* the laws on which your "sanity" appears to rest. 5 These *<are>* the **five**

principles which make the ground beneath your feet seem solid. 6 And it *<is>* here **in these laws of chaos that** you look for meaning. 7 These are the laws you made for your salvation. 8 **These laws of chaos** hold in place the substitute for Heaven, **which is your world of perception**, which you prefer **over the truth, which is Heaven**. 9 This is **the laws of chaos'** purpose; they were made for **illusions to hide the truth**. 10 There is no point in asking what **the laws of chaos** mean. 11 **What these laws of chaos mean** is apparent. 12 The means of madness must be insane. 13 Are you as certain that you realize the **laws of chaos'** goal is madness?

Note # 31: The laws of chaos' only purpose are to mislead us from the truth. By establishing the egoic physical world that we perceive based on these laws of chaos, the ego has built a very strong case that the separation must be real. Unless we listen to the thought system of the Holy Spirit, it will be impossible for us to rediscover the truth. By identifying ourselves as a body form, we have no reason to question the validity of the egoic belief system. Only someone not caught up within the madness could tell us the truth.

T-23.II.14. No one wants madness, nor does anyone cling to his madness if he sees that this is what **madness** is. 2 What protects madness is the belief that **madness** is true. 3 It is the function of insanity to take the place of truth. 4 **Insanity** must be seen as truth to be believed. 5 And if **insanity** is the truth, then must **insanity's** opposite, which was the truth before, be madness now. 6 Such a reversal, completely turned around, with madness sanity, illusions true, attack a kindness, hatred love, and murder benediction, is the goal the laws of chaos serve. 7 **These laws of chaos** are the means by which the laws of God appear to be reversed. 8 Here **in the world of perception, which is based on the laws of chaos**, do the laws of sin appear to hold love captive, and let sin go free. p492

Note # 32: The laws of chaos reverse the laws of God. Within the mind of the followers of egoic thought, the laws of chaos form the basis for their individual perception of how they view their private world of provisional reality. Perception is based on beliefs not facts. Insane beliefs make an insane world. The false has been substituted for the truth.

T-23.II.15. **This replacement of truth by illusion does** not seem to be the goals of chaos, for by the great reversal **the laws of chaos** appear to be the laws of order **that rule the world of egoic perception.** 2 How could it not be so? 3 Chaos is lawlessness, and has no laws. 4 To be believed, **the seeming laws of chaos** must be perceived as real. 5 **The laws of chaos'** goal of madness must be seen as sanity. 6 And fear, with ashen lips and sightless eyes, blinded and terrible to look upon, is lifted to the throne of love. **Love's dying conqueror is fear. Love's substitute is fear. And fear becomes** the savior from salvation. 7 How lovely do the laws of fear make death appear. 8 Give thanks unto **fear**, the hero on love's throne, who saved the Son of God for fear and death!

Note # 33: Sin, guilt and fear are the natural outcome of the laws of chaos. Truth has been replaced by the illusion of limitation. The truth of the Oneness has been replaced by the illusion of separation.

T-23.II.16. And yet, how can it be that laws like **the laws of chaos** can be believed? 2 There is a strange device that makes it possible **to believe the laws of chaos**. 3 Nor is **this device** unfamiliar; we have seen how **this device** appears to function many times before. 4

In truth **this device** does not function, yet in dreams, where only shadows play the major roles, **this device** seems most powerful. 5 No law of chaos could compel belief but for the emphasis on form and disregard of content. 6 No one who thinks that one of these laws of **chaos** is true sees what **the laws of chaos** says. 7 Some forms **the laws of chaos** takes seem to have meaning, and that is all.

Note # 34: Following the ego, we focus on form not content. We fail to look at the source to discover whether the source is truth or illusion. Is the source's content arising from love or fear? By using egoic seeing, we only see the form and ignore the content. The vision of the Holy Spirit looks past form and focuses only on content. It looks upon everything as either love or a cry for love. The question the Holy Spirit's thought system always asks is, "What would love have me do?"

The term content relates to substance or purpose. According to the Holy Spirit, the underlying content of all we perceive as our experience is either an expression of love or a cry for love. The proper response to a cry for love is love. The form that the cry for love appears in is irrelevant and is disregarded. An attack now becomes an attacker's cry for the love. The attacker has perceived himself as lacking love and has struck out from fear. It is this fear that is actually a cry for love. To the ego, the form in which the cry for love appears is critical. The ego will perceive and judge the cry for love based on form. The ego will view the form as an attack and thus, respond by either "counter-attacking" or launching a "preemptive strike" upon the other party.

T-23.II.17. How can some forms of murder not mean death? 2 Can an attack in any form be love? 3 What form of condemnation is a blessing? 4 Who makes his savior powerless and finds salvation? 5 Let not the form of the attack on **your savoir** deceive you. 6 You cannot seek to harm **your savoir** and be saved. 7 Who can find safety from attack by turning on himself? 8 How can it matter what the form this madness takes? 9 **This madness** is a judgment that defeats itself, condemning what it says it wants to save. 10 Be not deceived when madness takes a form you think is lovely. 11 What is intent on your destruction is not your friend.

Note # 35: We must reject the thought system of the ego if we are to become free from the madness of the laws of chaos. We only need to ask for the guidance of the One Who is sane. Ask for the Holy Spirit's guidance and our return to right-mindedness is insured.

T-23.II.18. You would maintain, and think it true, that you do not believe these senseless laws, nor act upon **these senseless laws of chaos**. 2 And when you look at what **these senseless laws of chaos** say, they cannot be believed. 3 Brother, you *<do>* believe **these senseless laws of chaos**. 4 For how else could you perceive the form **these senseless laws of chaos** take, with content such as this? 5 Can any form of **these senseless laws of chaos** be tenable? 6 Yet you believe **these senseless laws of chaos** *<for>* the form they take, and do not recognize the content. 7 **The content** never changes. 8 Can you paint rosy lips upon a skeleton, dress **a skeleton** in loveliness, pet it and pamper it, and make **a skeleton** live? 9 And can you be content with an illusion that you are living?

Note # 36: The content of the laws of chaos is always the falseness of illusion. The form shifts from one illusion to another but they all are false and all must be dismissed as nothing that could change the truth. These illusions of nothingness can hold no value when

compare to your true reality. God, being all, has given everything to His Son. We can want for nothing. Unfortunately, this is exactly what we do when we choose to follow the thought system of the ego.

T-23.II.19. There is no life outside of Heaven. 2 Where God created life, **which is the truth of Heaven**, there life must be. 3 In any state apart from Heaven life is illusion. p493
4 At best **the illusion** seems like life; at worst, like death. 5 Yet both are judgments on what is not life, equal in their inaccuracy and lack of meaning. 6 Life not in Heaven is impossible, and what is not in Heaven is not anywhere. 7 Outside of Heaven, only the conflict of illusion stands. **These illusionary conflicts are** senseless, impossible and beyond all reason, and yet perceived as an eternal barrier to Heaven. 8 Illusions are but forms. 9 **The illusions'** content is never true.

Note # 37: Illusions have no reality because they are not of the Mind of God. Illusions only appear to have reality in the world of perception, which is the world of time and space. Illusions appear to follow the laws of chaos and it is these laws that give the illusion its apparent reality. An illusion's content is always the false. The goal of illusion's form is to deceive. This is why the ego deals on the level of form, not the content of the perceived experience.

T-23.II.20. The laws of chaos govern all illusions. 2 The forms **of illusions** conflict, making it seem quite possible to value some **illusions** above the **other illusions**. 3 Yet each **illusion** rests as surely on the belief the laws of chaos are the laws of order as do the other **illusions**. 4 Each **illusion** upholds these laws **of chaos** completely, offering a certain witness that these laws **of chaos** are true. 5 The seeming gentler forms of the attack are no less certain in their witnessing **for the truth of the laws of chaos**, or their results. 6 Certain it is illusions will bring fear because of the beliefs that **the illusions** imply, not for their form **in which the illusions appears**. 7 And lack of faith in love, in any form, attests to chaos as reality.

Note # 38: All illusions, no matter what the form, support the belief in limitation and fear. An illusion always sees something as different from itself. Only difference can be in conflict. Love understands that our brother and we lack nothing and, therefore, we can give everything. If we see form, we are seeing separation.

T-23.II.21. From the belief in sin, the faith in chaos must follow. 2 It is because **the belief in sin leads to faith in the laws of chaos** that it follows that **the laws of chaos** seems to be a logical conclusion; a valid step in ordered thought. 3 The steps to chaos do follow neatly from their starting point, **which is the belief in sin and that truth is changeable**. 4 Each **of the laws of chaos** is a different form in the progression of truth's reversal, leading still deeper into terror and away from truth. 5 Think not one step **in truth's reversal** is smaller than another **step**, nor that return from one **principal of chaos** is easier **than return from another principle of chaos**. 6 The whole descent from Heaven lies in each **of the five laws of chaos**. 7 And where your thinking starts, there must **your thinking** end **in the reversal of truth into the illusion of the false**.

Note # 39: Place your faith in any of the five laws of chaos and you inevitably follow the thought system of the ego. Truth and illusion are opposites and cannot co-exist. Put your

faith in one illusion and you deny the truth of the Oneness of the Mind of God. We cannot pick and choose what and when truth will be truth for us. Truth is not arbitrary or something that we bargain with. Truth just is. Any denial of truth is the confirmation that our will is different from God's Will and that we are still clinging to the littleness of specialness.

T-23.II.22. Brother, take not one step in the descent to hell **by following the laws of chaos**. 2 For having taken one **step into hell by following the laws of chaos**, you will not recognize the rest **of the laws of chaos** for what they are, **which is the witness for sin and the replacement of truth by illusion**. 3 And **the other laws of chaos** <will> follow **from the acceptance of the first law**. 4 Attack in any form has placed your foot upon the twisted stairway that leads from Heaven. 5 Yet any instant it is possible to have all this **belief in the illusion of sin** undone. 6 How can you know whether you chose the stairs to Heaven or the way to hell? 7 Quite easily. 8 How do you feel? 9 Is peace in your awareness? 10 Are you certain which way you go? 11 And are you sure the goal of Heaven can be reached? 12 **If you have lost your peace and certainty**, you walk alone. 13 Ask, then, your Friend, **the Holy Spirit**, to join with you, and give you certainty of where you go. p494

Note # 40: The litmus test to determine which thought system you are following at any given moment is always a question of inner peace. You need to check with your feelings, not your egoic thinking. It is your feelings that are your link to your Christ consciousness. Your Christ uses your feelings to inform you if your perceptions are in alignment with the truth of what you are. If you are not in the state of true peace and joy, you are coming from fear, not love. If you are without inner peace, you are following the laws of chaos and the thought system of the ego. You need only realize this lack of peace and ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Who will restore you to the inner peace you seek.

Our world of perception is based on the "laws" of chaos. These laws are summarized below.

- 1) Truth is different for everyone.
- 2) Each one has sinned and, therefore, deserves attack.
- 3) God has accepted His Son's fallen belief about himself. Therefore, God see us as sinners.
- 4) You believe that what you have, you have taken from another. Life in the world of perception is a "zero sum" game. If I win, someone must lose.
- 5) There is a substitute for love.

III. Salvation without Compromise

T-23.III.1. Is it not true you do not recognize some of the forms attack can take? 2 If it is true attack in any form will hurt you, **then any unrecognized form of attack will hurt you** and will do so just as much as in another form **of attack** that you <do> recognize, then it must follow that you do not always recognize the source of pain. 3 Attack in any form, **recognized or unrecognized**, is equally destructive. 4 **Attack's** purpose does not change. 5 **Attack's** sole intent is murder, and what form of murder serves to cover the massive guilt and frantic fear of punishment the murderer must feel? 6 **The attacker** may deny he is a murderer and justify his savagery with smiles as he attacks. 7 Yet **the attacker** will suffer **the massive guilt and fear of punishment**, and will look on his intent **to murder** in nightmares where the smiles are gone, and where the purpose rises to meet his horrified

awareness and pursue **the attacker** still. 8 For no one thinks of murder and escapes the guilt the thought **of murder** entails. 9 If the intent is death, what matter the form **the intent to kill** takes?

Note # 41: Like illusion, there is no such thing as a little attack and, therefore, no attack could be truly judged as harmless. Anytime we fail to see the oneness of the whole in all we perceive, we are in attack mode. In the special relationship, our failing to see both parties as perfect, whole and complete is an attack. We may disguise the attack as some warped sense of “love”, but we are only bartering with the other party out of a sense of lack and limitation. Anytime we are not coming out of the emotion of love, we are coming from fear and this is an attack. Due to our faith in the laws of chaos, we are often unaware that our actions are an attack on another party. Anytime we do someone a “favor” with the expectation that we will get a payback, we are confirming that we believe we lack something. Any belief in lack is an attack on our brother and upon ourselves. Attack, whether recognized (intentional) or unrecognized (unintentional), is an attack upon the truth. Since we believe that the laws of chaos are the correct laws for ordering our universe, most of our “attacks” are unrecognized by our conscious mind. When we see someone as a “body,” we don’t think we are attacking that person’s truth, yet, this is exactly what we are doing. We have judged something as different and, therefore, something in our perception must be not whole, not perfect, and not complete. This misperception is an attack for we are attempting to conceal and steal the truth of someone’s identity as the Christ.

T-23.III.2. Is death in any form, however lovely and charitable **death** may seem to be, a blessing and a sign the Voice for God speaks through you to your brother? 2 The **gift-wrapping paper** does not make the gift you give. 3 An empty box, however beautiful and gently given, still contains nothing. 4 And neither the receiver nor the giver is long deceived. 5 Withhold forgiveness from your brother and you attack him. 6 You give him nothing, and receive of him but what you gave, **which is nothing**.

Note # 42: The only gift that we can give a brother is the truth that he is sinless and guiltless. We do this out of love by the act of forgiveness. Anytime we do not come from the emotion of love, we are coming from fear, which means we are in attack mode. Often attack mode may appear as only self-defense, but this is still an attack. If you had not identified yourself as a body, you would have realized that you are unlimited spirit that could not be attacked. You would have become invulnerable; someone who fears nothing and attacks nothing. Being a Oneness of everything, what would there be to attack?

T-23.III.3. Salvation is no compromise of any kind. 2 To compromise is to accept but part of what you want; to take a little and give up the rest **of what you wanted**. 3 Salvation gives up nothing. 4 **Salvation** is complete for everyone. 5 Let the idea of compromise but enter **into the plan of salvation**, and the awareness of salvation's purpose is lost because **salvation’s purpose** is not recognized. 6 **Salvation** is denied where compromise has been accepted, for compromise is the belief salvation is impossible. 7 **Compromise** would maintain you can attack a little, love a little, and know the difference. 8 Thus **compromise** would teach a little of the same can still be different, and yet the same remain intact, as one. 9 Does this make sense? 10 Can **the idea that the same are different** be understood?

Note # 43: Content, not form, is what we need to be aware of. Content is either truth or false. When we focus on form, all we see is differences. Look past the myriad of forms and we can envision the sameness in content. Only the truth is real. All illusions fade before the light of truth. The ego is interested in form, the Holy Spirit focuses on the content. The question is always, “Am I expressing love or fear?” If you are not at peace, you are expressing fear.

T-23.III.4. This course is easy just because **ACIM** makes no compromise. 2 Yet **ACIM** seems difficult to those who still believe that compromise is possible. 3 **Those who believe compromise is possible** do not see that, if **compromise is possible**, salvation is attack. 4 Yet it is certain the belief that salvation is impossible cannot uphold a quiet, calm assurance **that salvation** has come. 5 Forgiveness cannot be withheld a little. 6 Nor is it possible to attack for this and love for that and understand forgiveness. p495 7 Would you not want to recognize assault upon your peace in any form, if only thus **by recognizing assault in all forms** does it become impossible that you lose sight of **your peace**? 8 **Your peace and salvation** can be kept shining before your vision, forever clear and never out of sight, if you **do not defend compromise**.

Note # 44: Compromise allows for sometimes or half-truths. **ACIM** is a course in black and white; the true and the false. There can be no conditional truths that change from being true to false based on the perceiver’s whim. Compromise requires sacrifice. You must give up something to get something else that you value. Being a Oneness of everything, what could you give up and to whom? Who could give you something if you already have everything? Salvation is the return to the truth. Being everything, salvation restores this knowledge of the truth to you. It would be impossible for salvation to deny you something that is yours by divine birthright.

T-23.III.5. Those who believe that peace can be defended, and that attack is justified on **peace’s** behalf, cannot perceive **peace** lies within them. 2 How could they know **peace lies within them when they attack**? 3 Could they **who believe that attack is justified on peace’s behalf** accept forgiveness side by side with the belief that murder takes some forms by which their peace is saved? 4 Would they, **who believe that attack is justified on peace’s behalf**, be willing to accept the fact their savage purpose is directed against themselves? 5 No one unites with enemies, nor is at one with **the enemy** in purpose. 6 And no one compromises with an enemy but hates **the enemy** still, for what **the enemy** kept from him.

Note # 45: As long as we believe that we are separate, we will continue to see ourselves as a limited ego-body in competition with other ego-bodies. When we negotiate a cease-fire, we continue to build up our armies for our defense against a pending attack that we are sure must follow. We believe we must defend our homeland. Inner peace cannot arrive as long as we believe that some form of attack may be justified. Any belief that attack is possible implies that we believe there is something outside ourselves that we could attack or be attacked by. Inner peace arises only out of the knowledge that we, as unlimited spirit, are invulnerable.

T-23.III.6. Mistake not truce for peace, nor compromise for the escape from conflict. 2 To be released from conflict means that **conflict** is over. 3 The door is open; you have left

the battleground. 4 You have not lingered there **on the battleground** in cowering hope that **conflict** will not return because the guns are stilled an instant, and the fear that haunts the place of death is not apparent. 5 There <is> no safety in a battleground. 6 You can look down on **the battleground** in safety from above and not be touched. 7 But from within **the battleground** you can find no safety. 8 Not one tree left still standing will shelter you. 9 Not one illusion of protection stands against the faith in murder. 10 Here stands the body, torn between the natural desire to communicate and the unnatural intent to murder and to die. 11 Think you the form that murder takes can offer safety? 12 Can guilt be absent from a battlefield?

Note # 46: A truce does not end a war as long as you perceive there is still an enemy to fear. If you withhold forgiveness from anyone, you still believe that you have an enemy to attack. Inner peace only comes from the awareness that there is just the One Self. It is this shared Oneness with everything that makes you invulnerable.

IV. Above the Battleground

T-23.IV.1. Do not remain in conflict, for there <is> no war without attack. 2 The fear of God is fear of life, and not of death. 3 Yet **God** remains the only place of safety. 4 In **God there** is no attack, and no illusion in any form stalks Heaven. 5 Heaven is wholly true. 6 No difference enters **Heaven**, and what is all the same cannot conflict. 7 You are not asked to fight against your wish to murder. 8 But you are asked to realize the form **your wish for murder** takes conceals the same intent, **which is the attack upon the truth**. 9 And it is this **intent** you fear, and not the form. 10 What is not love is murder. 11 What is not loving must be an attack. 12 Every illusion is an assault on truth, and every **assault on truth** does violence to the idea of love because **the illusion** seems to be of equal truth.
p496

Note # 47: There is no compromise between truth and illusion. They are both mutually exclusive. Accept any form of illusion as your reality and you deny the truth of Heaven. The return to truth is to be found only by complete vigilance for God's Will. We must be willing to give all our perceptions over to the Holy Spirit's guidance. Withhold one perception from the guidance of the Holy Spirit and we get to keep our little "s" self and specialness.

T-23.IV.2. What can be equal to the truth, yet different **to the truth**? 2 Murder and love are incompatible. 3 Yet if **murder and love** both are true, then must **murder and love** be the same, and indistinguishable from one another. 4 So will **murder and love** be **perceived to be the same** to those who see God's Son **as** a body. 5 For it is not the body that is like the Son's Creator. 6 And what is lifeless, **which is the body**, cannot be the Son of Life. 7 How can a body be extended to hold the universe? 8 Can **a body** create, and be what it creates? 9 And can **a body** offer its creations all that it is and never suffer loss?

Note # 48: ACIM states we cannot believe that we are an extension of God and also believe that we are a body. The body is a symbol for the illusion of separation and limitation. God, like His creation cannot be limited. The body is powerless and only obeys the mind. The Son of God must be the shared holographic Mind of God. He cannot be the lifeless egoic illusion that we call the body.

T-23.IV.3. God does not share His function, **which is to create**, with a body. 2 **God** gave the function to create unto His Son because it is **God's Own Function**. 3 It is not sinful to believe the function of the Son is murder, but it *<is>* insanity **to believe the function of the Son is murder**. 4 What is the same, **God and the His Son, the Christ**, can have no different function. 5 Creation is the means for God's extension, and what is **God's means for extension** must be His Son's **means for extension** as well. 6 Either the Father and the Son are murderers, or neither is. 7 Life makes not death, creating like itself.

Note # 49: Creation is different than making. Creation is based on extension by giving all that one is. Nothing is withheld as everything is given to the creation. In creation, God gives everything to us because He is everything. Creation comes out of love and unlimitedness. Creation is life because it is real and eternal. Creation is the function of the Mind of God, which we, the Christ, share.

Making is contraction and exclusion based upon the belief in fear and limitation. Making's goal is not extension, but rather an attempt to separate and split the indivisible whole into parts that are less than the whole. Being an illusionary mad idea, making is not shared within the Mind of God and has no reality. Making has no existence outside the mind of the dreamer and thus, is not life but the absence of life, which we call death. Within the dream of separation, making is the attempt to substitute the false for the truth; an illusion for the reality of Heaven. Making takes place in the illusionary dream world of individual perception. The world of perception embodies the belief that the separation was real and that the separation appears temporarily to exist in time and space within the dream, itself.

Because creation is extension, the Sonship, which is all God created, as God created it, must also be the everything that God is. God is a Oneness and we must share that same Oneness of everything with God. There is one mind and that is the indivisible Mind of God. Our will must be God's Will for we are one and the same. The Son cannot be different than Its Creator since that is not the Creator's Will. The Sonship, an effect of God, cannot change God, Its Source. We can deny the truth but we cannot change the truth. When we make, we deny the reality that we are the unlimited extension of the Mind of God. This denial of our divine birthright cannot change the truth of the real world of Heaven. Nor can our denial change the truth about our real nature; we continue to be God's Child, perfect, whole and complete. Our illusionary dream cannot change the Will of God. Our dreaming that we sinned does not make God or ourselves a sinner. The dreamer only needs to awaken and the dream will disappear into the nothingness from which it arose.

T-23.IV.4. The lovely light of your relationship is like the Love of God. 2 **Your relationship** cannot yet assume the holy function God gave His Son, for your forgiveness of your brother is not complete as yet, and so **your relationship and forgiveness** cannot be extended to all creation. 3 Each form of murder and attack that still attracts you and that you do not recognize for what it is, **which is a fear-based attack against the truth**, limits the healing and the miracles you have the power to extend to all. 4 Yet does the Holy Spirit understand how to increase your little gifts and make **your little gifts** mighty. 5 Also **the Holy Spirit** understands how your relationship is raised above the battleground, in **the battleground the relationship is no more to be found**. 6 This is your part; to realize that murder in any form is not your will. 7 The overlooking of the battleground is now your purpose.

Note # 50: The battleground is the world of perception and form. When we ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are lifted above seeing the egoic form and instead, look upon our perception with the vision of Christ. The form that our egoic senses had once perceived will give way to the underlying content and we will ask only, “What would love have me do?” We cannot exchange misperception for correct perception without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, Who will raise us above and beyond the thought system of the ego. Content is the expression of the emotion of either fear or love. With vision, the Holy Spirit understands fear-based emotions are only a cry for love and thus, responds only with love and forgiveness.

T-23.IV.5. Be lifted up, and from a higher place look down upon **the battleground**. 2 From there will your perspective be quite different. 3 Here in the midst of **the battleground, the battle** does seem real. 4 Here you have chosen to be part of **the battle**. 5 Here murder is your choice. 6 Yet from above **the battleground**, the choice is miracles instead of murder. 7 And the perspective coming from this choice **for miracles** shows you the battle is not real, and easily escaped. 8 Bodies may battle, but the clash of forms is meaningless. 9 And **the battle** is over when you realize **the battle over meaningless bodies** never was begun. 10 How can a battle be perceived as nothingness when you engage in **the battle**? 11 How can the truth of miracles be recognized if murder is your choice?

Note # 51: We will perceive attack as necessary as long as we perceive ourselves to be a body. As long as we follow the egoic thought system, we will battle to overcome our perceived sense of lack. The thought system of the Holy Spirit reinterprets our misperception of separation and lack and reawakens us to the truth of the Oneness. When we reawaken, we realize that the dream of separation was not real since it is not the shared Will of God. Since we have forgotten that we are the dreamer, we cannot expect the ego to know the truth. We need the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Who is above the dream to tell us the truth.

T-23.IV.6. When the temptation to attack rises to make your mind darkened and murderous, remember you *<can>* see the battle from above. 2 Even in forms you do not recognize, the signs of **attack** you **do** know. 3 There is a stab of pain, a twinge of guilt, and above all, a loss of peace. p497 4 This **loss of peace that comes from attack**, you know well. 5 When **the signs of attack** occur, leave not your place on high, but quickly choose a miracle instead of murder. 6 And God Himself and all the lights of Heaven will gently lean to you, and hold you up. 7 For you have chosen to remain where **God** would have you, and no illusion can attack the peace of God together with His Son.

Note # 52: When we suffer from a loss of inner peace, we are following the egoic thought system. Our feelings inform us what thought system we have chosen to follow. If we have lost our inner peace, we have pledged our allegiance to the ego. We need to ask for the Holy Spirit’s guidance and choose again.

T-23.IV.7. See no one from the battleground of **egoic form and thinking**, for there you look on him from nowhere. 2 **From the battleground of egoic form and thinking**, you have no reference point from where to look, where meaning can be given what you see. 3

For only bodies could attack and murder, and if **attack** is your purpose, then you must be one of **the bodies** with them. 4 Only a purpose unifies, and those who share a purpose have a mind as one. 5 The body has no purpose of itself, and must be solitary. 6 From below **by utilizing the egoic thought system, the body** cannot be surmounted. 7 From above **by utilizing the thought system of the Holy Spirit**, the limits **the body** exerts on those in battle still are gone, and not perceived. 8 The body stands between the Father and the Heaven **the Father** created for His Son *<because>* **the body** has no purpose.

Note # 53: God did not create the body: We did. The body was made, not created, by us to be a place where we could keep out God and God's Love. Since God is one with His Creation, this separation is impossible. Separation of Cause from Its Effect could only appear to be real in an illusion. The bodily form is one of the means to make the illusion of separation appear real. When we give up the egoic thought system, we give up all illusions.

T-23.IV.8. Think what is given those who share their Father's purpose of creation, and who know that **their Father's purpose of creation** is their purpose. 2 They who share **their Father's purpose of creation** want for nothing. 3 Sorrow of any kind is inconceivable. 4 Only the light they love is in awareness, and only love shines upon them forever. 5 It is their past, their present and their future; always the same, eternally complete and wholly shared. 6 They, **who share their Father's purpose of creation**, know it is impossible their happiness could ever suffer change of any kind. 7 Perhaps you think the battleground can offer something you can win. 8 Can **what you might win on the battleground of egoic form** be anything that offers you a perfect calmness, and a sense of love so deep and quiet that no touch of doubt can ever mar your certainty? 9 And will **what you might win on the battleground of egoic form** last forever?

Note # 54: Being everything, we cannot be happy with littleness. When we identify ourselves with form and the body, we imprison ourselves within the illusion of separation, time and space. Believing that we are not whole, we can only make out of limitation. The egoic mind makes. The Christ creates. We cannot share form or a body since that would require sacrifice by at least one party. Only mind or spirit can share without diminishment. Being an extension of God, we cannot be happy unless we fulfill our divine birthright, which is the creative process of love. We are happy only when we come from love and fulfill our purpose, which is the creative extension of the Mind of God. In Heaven, the Sonship's purpose is co-creation with the Father.

T-23.IV.9. Those with the strength of God in their awareness could never think of battle. 2 What could they **who are aware of their strength with God** gain in battle but **the** loss of their perfection? 3 For everything fought for on the battleground is of the body; something **the body** seems to offer or to own. 4 No one who knows that he has everything could seek for limitation, nor could he **who knows he has everything** value the body's offerings. 5 The senselessness of conquest is quite apparent from the quiet sphere above the battleground, **which is the correct perception of the Holy Spirit's thought system.** 6 What can conflict with everything? 7 And what is there that offers less **than everything**, yet could be wanted more **than everything**? 8 Who with the Love of God upholding him could find the choice of miracles or murder hard to make? p498

Note # 55: ACIM points out that anyone who is sane would choose for the thought system of the Holy Spirit over the ego's. Unfortunately, we are not sane. Reasons can and will bring us back to questioning the logic of the ego's thought system. Our threshold for pain is high but not unlimited. Eventually, we will say, "There must be a better way." When we do this, we start to reclaim the sleeping decision-maker within us. We will choose again. The littleness of egoic specialness cannot make the Big "S" Self, the Christ, happy. We will choose the miracle over fear and attack.