

Daily Meditation 09/26/2021

Thomas Merton on the Divine Feminine

Good morning.

We are meditating on the Divine Feminine as appreciated by Catholic monk, Thomas Merton. And he tells us that in his great poem, the Hagia Sophia poem, Holy Wisdom.

He says, writing about the poem, "Now the Blessed Virgin is the one created being who, in herself, realizes perfectly all that is hidden in Sophia. She's a kind of personal manifestation of Sophia."

And he talks about, "Wisdom is waking a person up in the morning, touching our spirit. I am indeed this man, lying asleep. I am like all humankind, awakening from all the dreams that ever were dreamed, in all the nights of the world.

"It is like being awakened by Eve. It is like being awakened by the Blessed Virgin. It is like coming forth from primordial nothingness and standing in clarity in paradise."

And it talks about a sick person in a hospital being awakened by a gentle and merciful nurse.

He says, "All that is sweet in her tenderness will speak to him on all sides in everything, without ceasing, and he will never be the same again. You will have awakened, not to conquest and dark pleasure, but to the impeccable pure simplicity of one consciousness in all and through all." One consciousness in all, through all.

"One wisdom. One child. One meaning. One sister."

He repeats the medieval teaching that Jesus is our mother.

"There, too," he says, "Sophia had awakened in people's childlike hearts."

So, he's playing with this metaphor of wisdom: the Lady Wisdom of the Divine Feminine. And he's applying it in so many ways.

He had a good friend named Sister Lentfoehr, a Catholic sister, who was a poet. And they often went on picnics together to discuss their work. And she commented this way about his work.

She said, "The theological substrata of the prose poem is rooted in an ancient intuition of reality, which goes back to the oldest oriental thought, the masculine/feminine relationship basic to all being, since all being mirrors God."

So, this is how the Goddess was beginning to penetrate Merton's consciousness in the 1960s. He died in 1968, but he was very alert and interested in the new feminist movement of the 60s. In fact, he entered into an extended correspondence with Rosemary Ruether, who was still in her 20s at that time, but very clear about the need to bring the feminine back. So, they had considerable dialogue and debate. But Merton rendered himself very vulnerable to her teachings, and really took in her teachings on the return of the Divine Feminine.

So, this is all, I think, played out in his poem to the Sacred Wisdom.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.