

Daily Meditation 12/29/2021

The Kwanzaa Celebration amidst other December Remembrances

Good morning.

We're celebrating again the Festival of Lights, that has traveled through all of December in so many different festivities and feast days for different traditions.

And so in the African tradition, we read an old hymn to Aten:

Power of the Sun, beautifully arise on heaven's horizon, O eternal living Creator. You are lovely, great, radiant, high over every land. Your rays embrace the lands to the limit of your creations. Though you are far, your rays are on Earth. When you set on the western horizon, Earth is in darkness as if in death. Earth brightens when you rise in the eastern horizon, when you shine as Aten of daytime, as you dispel the dark, as you cast your rays, the two lands are in festivity.

So that's an ancient African prayer. In the Celtic tradition, we read the poem, "The Deer's Cry," an ancient Celtic poem: "Strength of heaven, light of sun, radiance of moon, splendor of fire."

John O'Donoghue, a Celtic scholar, says,

"Light is the mother of life. The sun brings light or color. It causes grasses, crops, leaves, and flowers to grow. The sun brings forth the erotic charge of the curved earth that awakens her wild sensuousness."

An ancient Gaelic poem says, "Glory to thee, thou glorious sun, glory to thee, thou sun, face of the god of life."

Says O'Donoghue, "In the Celtic tradition, thought has often been compared to light. In its luminosity, the intellect was deemed to be the place of the divine within us."

And Native American teachings: Onandaga Chief Powless says,

The Creator gives us the Sun, our elder brother. It's his duty to give us warmth to nourish the life-giving foods that were planted on Earth. And as we see, the sun came up this morning and shines on us, keeping us warm. He's doing his duty. And for this, we are very grateful. So let us put our minds together as one and thank the sun for still performing his duty and let our minds be that way.

So it is often my book, One River, Many Wells, beginning page 50, where I go through the theme -- and it's such a common theme in all the spiritual traditions -- the theme of light. And so December, culminating with Kwanzaa, is a celebration of the gift of light in the darkest time of the year.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.