

Daily Meditation 12/31/21

A New Year's Meditation on the Christmas Launching into Father Sky

Good morning.

We are honoring today the event on Christmas Day 2021 of our species, represented by over 29 countries and thousands of scientists, engineers and others, launching a special telescope, to go one million miles from Earth, to look into the origins of our universe, to go more deeply than the Hubble Telescope has been able to do.

Howard Thurman -- a great soul, and the spiritual genius behind the civil rights movement, who with his wife visited Gandhi in the 1930s and brought home the whole concept of civil disobedience from Gandhi -- he says this about the importance of cosmology, the importance of learning where we come from. He says,

"It is natural that humans should concern themselves with beginnings --"

it is natural to be curious about beginnings.

"This is a part of the curiosity of the mind--"

it was baked into our consciousness and into our minds.

"Without it, there would be no exploration of the world, and there would be no growth."

So the growing of our souls, part of it is done when we go searching for something true and something that touches us deeply, such as the origins of our home, the universe.

Thomas Aquinas says that joy also grows the soul and expands the soul. So that combination of truth and joy excite us and grow us.

Thurman goes on:

"This is an inherent characteristic of mind. It is not unique to any particular age of man, culture or society."

But we've always been searching, we've always been wondering, and in awe about the sky, and about what's up there, and how far away "there" is, and how far "there" extends. All these deep questions may get some very fresh answers if this new telescope, the Webb telescope, is successful.

And then, says Howard Thurman,

"Contemplation concerning origins is a part of the curiosity of the race."

Notice "of the race," not of any particular country, or any particular culture, or any particular religion, or any particular ideology: that to be human is to be curious about our universe, about our home, about where we come from; therefore, about our ancestors, whom we are connected to, and how we got here.

And again, if the Webb telescope is successful, we may have some very exciting and fresh perspective on all these deep questions, as the years unfold.

And so a rebirth is possible here, and it is related to the wonder and the hope that the Christmas season is about because this, too, is a question of curiosity.

Where do we find the divine in everyday things? Where do we find it in ourselves, and in our interacting with one another? All these questions arise in the context of the Christmas story, but also in the context of the Hanukkah story, and of the Kwanzaa story, which we also celebrate at this time of year: a festivity, several festivities of light. And here we go, seeking light in this new adventure of the Webb telescope, launched by accident, really, not intentionally, but by accident on Christmas Day.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.