

Daily Meditation 1/1/2022

Webb Telescope: Chasing Light, Chasing the Truth of Our Origins

Good morning. A blessed and happy New Year to you all.

So in my meditation this morning, I'm talking about the role of light, of chasing light. That's how I see the Webb telescope, as giving us an opportunity to chase light. And of course with it, the birth of the universe, way back, very, very close to its origins, further back than Hubble was able to do.

And I share with you a passage that I've written in *One River, Many Wells*, that I've borrowed really from Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme. Brian, being course a cosmologist, and Thomas being a great eco-prophet, because as he says, ecology is functional cosmology. And this is their creation story, based on science before the Webb telescope:

"Fifteen billion years ago in a great flash--"

Notice the role that light plays in this entire story. And this is in my chapter on light. And in *One River, Many Wells*, light is a synonym for divinity, I find all around the world in all the world traditions.

"...Fifteen billion years ago, in a great flash, the universe flared forth into being. In each drop of existence, a primordial energy blazed with an intensity never to be equaled again. In the beginning, the universe is a great shining--"

...the universe is a great shining...

"...that expands rapidly, and then explodes into hundreds of billions of dark clouds. Later, a hundred billion galaxies light up with a splendor new to the universe. The beginning of the universe is a smooth, intense flame --"

...a smooth, intense flame.

"A few billion years later, the large-scale structure of the universe glows in great sheets of galaxies --"

...it glows in great sheets of galaxies...

"...and in their intersections, and long spidery filaments of sparkling worlds."

...sparkling worlds. The Kabbalah, the great Jewish mystical medieval text, says that we all sparks, all creatures are sparks of the Divine, we are all sparkling. And I think this is not unlike what Jesus was saying, when he said, "Don't hide your light under a bushel," and that the Christ is the light of the world. This Christ is not just Jesus, the Christ is all of us and me, all beings are other Christs.

Now a few people have complained that my daily meditation yesterday was too anthropocentric or that I was talking about humans fleeing the earth or something. It's nothing of the sort, I'm talking about how the Webb telescope can bring light alive again, and can wake us up, maybe, if we're willing to be awakened.

But overall, hunkered down in our politically correct silos, whether you're on the left or on the right, nothing is going to happen, we are going to go extinct, with so much else in creation if we cannot change our ways, and wake up to our responsibilities.

But I see, in poetry like this from scientists and mystics, and in the potential of the Webb telescope, this great awakening, and arising to light and the fact that we are light, that we are frozen light.

That's what matter is, all this is such an important part of our transformation. It's called the via positiva. And if we are so wrought, overwrought in the VA transformativa, we all have to be saving the world all the time, that's not going to cut the mustard.

Humility means that we travel all four paths, via positiva, and negativa, of the suffering and the fear and angst, and the creativa, moving our creativity to make a difference, and the via transformativa, making the difference. We need all of them, we cannot cheat on the via positiva.

And I see the Webb telescope as potentially doing for us what Hubble and other scientists have done before Hubble, such as Brian Swimme, and Thomas Berry and many others, and that is to awaken us to the glory of our existence, to the wonder of our existence, to the miracle of our existence. And that is what inspires us to work hard and to let go.

Because we do have to let go at this time, so many ways in which we're operating as a species, if we are going to move beyond the challenges of climate change.

And I do think that there are many ways in which science assists. And this way, recovery of wonder and awe, is the beginning of wisdom, as Jewish tradition says, and we need wisdom, not just knowledge, at this time in history, and not just our politically correct positions, no matter what side of the spectrum we're on.

We all need an awakening of our hearts and our minds, and awe is what does that, wonder is what does that, and all this talk of a great flash, and of blazing primordial energy, and a great shining, that the universe is, and the splendor, the intense flame, the glows and great sheets of galaxies, the sparkling worlds -- all this reality, all these truths, are integral to our waking up.

And I expect more to flow from the Webb telescope, when it accomplishes what it can accomplish. And the Webb telescope, remember, is an act of Earth, because it is nature, it is human nature, that has had the curiosity so deep in our souls, and the craft, the technology, the know-how, the knowledge, to create a special instrument, an extension of ourselves, that can be launched a million miles, a hundred million miles from Earth, and instruct us on our origins.

Recovering our origins is basic to recovering a different way of living on the planet.

Thank you. Happy New Year. See you tomorrow.