

Daily Meditations 01/18/22

King, Howard Thurman and the Return of the Sacred Masculine

Good morning.

We're continuing our meditations on the return of the sacred masculine in the context of the feast day of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and I'd like to remember his mentor, Howard Thurman, as well.

So we're talking about how they represent a new version, at least new to patriarchy, of healthy masculinity. And, of course, King is nothing if he's not a spiritual warrior. And we talked about that yesterday when we talked about his courage, and his invocation of love, that can overcome the fear of death.

And also, Howard Thurman is very much a Green Man, the archetype of the Green Man, because he very much spoke out on behalf of the environment, long before many others were talking about it. And he has a deep analysis of it. We've spoken about this, written about it in previous daily meditations.

The same is true with Father Sky, his deep connection to cosmology. And as he says that it's altogether natural and important that humans ask questions about where we come from.

We can also talk about the archetype of a hunter gatherer. Thurman and his wife went to India in the 1930s, 1935 I think it was, and met with many Indian wise people, including Mahatma Gandhi. And his meeting with Gandhi was very powerful for him and his wife. And they brought back Gandhi's teachings, including the teaching of non violence, to the black community in America.

And also, the archetype of the Blue Man is found in both King and Thurman, because the blue man represents the healer, in all of us. Hildegard's mandala and painting and vision of the Blue Man is all about "the healing power of Christ," she calls it, that's in all of us, in all people.

And it also includes struggle, there is a struggle, because the pearl is named there. And the pearl, of course, is a imperfection in an oyster that struggles with the waves and the sand in the ocean. It becomes a gem in the process. And this is all of us, our imperfections get worked on and become gemlike.

But one other important archetype, and there were more, is that of fathering, and mentoring, because mentoring is a kind of fathering. And obviously King was a tremendous mentor to literally millions of people during his lifetime, and afterwards. And, of course, Thurman was himself a mentor to Dr. King.

So there's fathering going on here. But I want to share with you an amazing passage in Howard Thurman. Very original, which is part of being a blue man, isn't it, originality, artistry, and creativity?

This is what he wrote about being present at Dr. King's I Have a Dream speech at the Lincoln Memorial, 1963. Thurman says:

The thing that made the deepest impression on me at the ceremony at the base of the Lincoln Monument was not the vast throng, as thrilling as it was to be a part of such a tremendous movement of people on the march. It was not the inspired oratory of all the participating speakers, including the dazzling magic of the music, and utter vitality springing from the throat of Martin Luther King. It was not repeated refrain of Eugene Blake, saying on behalf of the church, we are late, but we are here. No, it was none of these things.

What was it then? It was a big surprise coming from Thurman:

What impressed me most was a small group of young people representing student nonviolent groups, fresh from the jails and violences of the South, who time and time again caught the spiritual overtones of the speakers and led the critical applause which moved like a tidal wave over the vast audience. I do not know but this observation may be an embarrassment to them. But this is how it seemed to me. These young people were tuned to the spiritual dimension of what they were about, even as what they were about was the exercising of their civil rights inherent in their citizenship.

This is strong language from a mentor to the younger generation. Acknowledging and praising their willingness to bring spirituality to the battle, and to therefore flow with a spiritual energy, that Thurman felt all around him in all the speakers and all the people and all the music, and all the energy of the time. A beautiful acknowledgement of intergenerational wisdom, the young acknowledged by the elders and the elders, encouraging the young.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.