

Daily Meditation 05-24-22

Some Practices to Prepare for Facing Evil

Good morning.

Today we are meditating on some practices that would prepare us for taking on evil, preparing for evil, even for thinking about evil. It's so important that we ground ourselves in the good, and the beautiful, and the sacred if you're going to take a hard look at evil. So I think any one of these practices is powerful and important.

In some ways, that is summarized by point number five: that we become camels, we learn to store up our good memories and memories of goodness and the sacred, because we need this when we go in the desert, like a camel does, storing up on water, to make the journey.

And we are all on our journey today, especially with the bad news that is coming to us about the struggle Mother Earth is under, under the weight of climate change. And, of course, the motivation we need to develop alternative sources of energy and to clean up the messes we are making and have made vis-a-vis our relationship to the earth and her many creatures, the waters and the winds and the sun, and the soil, the forests and the rain forests, the other animals and birds, all of them are suffering, and humans are suffering too. It's not going to get better in the short run.

Hopefully, we can roll up our sleeves and go to work and make it better, but the time is running out. It's where science is telling us we have seven years left. And that's just the basic issue of climate change, which is the basic issue.

But we also have the example of the human capacity for war, and even the threats of nuclear war that are sounding at this time in history from Putin, and of course, the horrors of his invasion of Ukraine. And we have the melting and deliberate attacks on democracy here and abroad. The urge for authoritarianism to rise again, even at home, to dismantle democracy.

And humans are not shortchanged when it comes to misusing powers of love and energy as Thomas Aquinas calls it: "misdirected love" is his definition of sin and evil.

So to learn to redirect our love is so important.

That's one reason I gave in the notes for this meditation: the three chapters were really four chapters in my book on *Sins of the Spirit, Blessings of the Flesh: Transforming Evil in Soul and Society*. And that title comes from Thomas Aquinas, who says, "Sins of the spirit are far more serious than sins of the flesh. Sins of the flesh take you toward God; sins of the spirit take you away."

Sins of the spirit include greed and envy and fear and hatred and gluttony or consumerism and silencing one's voice. So I have a chapter dedicated to the sacredness, the sacred flesh of the universe and another on the sacred flesh of the earth, and another on the sacred flesh of the body, the human body, and another dedicated to the seven

chakras, because this is another way of understanding the beauty and power, the original blessing of our bodies and souls, because the chakras name seven power centers in all of us, that when they are directed appropriately, when they are strong and not off-center, they teach us lessons of love and groundedness and of sharing and community, and natural for us.

But we can make bad choices, especially if we're wounded and self hating; we can make bad choices. And so it really behooves us to spend time meditating on these powers that we have. We see them from our ancestors; we see them from nature, we received them from 13.8 billion years of history. So of course they are strong. And of course they are blessings, original blessings, imparted to us, and part of the entire universe that is beautiful and good and a blessing.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.