

Daily Meditation 05/31/2022

Happy Birthday to Walt Whitman, Bard of 7th Chakra Numinosity

Good morning.

Today we're celebrating the birthday--the hundred and third birthday--of Walt Whitman. And this just came along by surprise to me. I was talking with a friend the other day, and he mentioned that. And this friend is Steve Herman, whom I cite in today's meditation.

And this is his book, *Walt Whitman: Shamanism, Spiritual Democracy, and the World Soul*. A really fine book. And the whole idea of spiritual democracy, that there is an equality among religions in their efforts to awaken humanity. And this is very contemporary. This is deep ecumenism, really. Walt Whitman was writing about it 90 years ago.

And so it seemed to me very appropriate to bring him in to the discussion of the seventh chakra and buttressing ourselves with strength--inner strength--to deal with the shadow side of the seventh chakra. The seventh chakra is off-center, and we have the violence and the hatred and the self-hatred in all that we're swimming through these days.

But it just so happens that the other day, also, I happened to come across this master's thesis in my library here that I hadn't looked at in years. And it was by Bruce Clary, and he did it for the McPherson College in 1985. 1985. And the title of that thesis is *The Poet/Prophet of "Song of Myself"....* (that, of course, is Whitman's big poem) *...on the Fourfold Path of Creation-Centered Mysticism*.

So he took the four paths of Creation Spirituality and applied them to *Leaves of Grass*, to Walt Whitman's great poem. And I want to share with you some of his findings, because it, too, bolsters us in terms of the seventh chakra, because that chakra is about light that leaves our crown and links up with other light beings.

He says: "'Song of Myself' repeatedly illustrates the poet/prophet's trust in creation as the primary revelation of the Divine."

And there are 20, he writes.

"To me, the converging objects that the universe perpetually flow, all are written to me, and I must get what the writing means."

This is so much like Meister Eckhart saying, "Every creature is a book about God." So that's exactly what Whitman is saying. He's learning to read this book, this Book of Revelation from nature.

And the author goes on: "Nothing better illustrates the role of creation as a primary revealer or divine reality as the epicenter for communion with the Divine than the recurring grass symbol."

Notice the whole collection was called *Leaves of Grass*, remember.

"In one sense, a single blade of grass, whom the poet/prophet quietly observes in lyric 1, gives rise to all the wisdom revealed in the entire poem. Certainly his meditation upon that blade of grass gives rise to the first peak experience in lyric 5. Assured of the divine reality within all things, the blade of grass explodes in lyric 6 with God's 'writing.' And the poet/prophet begins to 'get what the writing means.'"

So there's a breakthrough in Whitman's own consciousness about the divine revelation found in a blade of grass. "Its green color and pennant-like shapes suggest the promise of life and fertility."

Verse 3. "It must be the flag of my disposition out of hopeful green stuff woven." Its fragrance identifies its divinity. "Or I guess it is a handkerchief of the Lord, a scented gift and remembrancer designedly draft."

Lyrics 4 and 6. "Its universal habitat suggests the equality of all persons."

8-11. "Finally, its waving motion in the wind becomes the uttering tongues..." (that's Whitman's phrase) "...uttering tongues of those buried in the ground beneath it, whispering the message that there is really no death."

To receive the many revelations that are coming through with just a blade of grass in Whitman's Creation Spirituality, and then the poet surrenders to the Via Positiva.

"The converging objects of the universe get what the writing means. When we surrender to the converging universe, then we understand what this book written by nature and God is all about."

And then he invokes the five senses, and how important the senses are as doorways to encountering the Divine in creation. And then there is this image that Whitman gives us of a climbing up on a bale of hay that is being drawn by horses.

Here's Whitman: "The dried grass of the harvest time loads a slow-drawn wagon. The clear light plays in the brown, gray, and green, intertinged. I am there, I help. I come stretch the top of the load. I felt a soft

jolt, one leg reclining on the other. I jumped from the crossbeams in seas of clover and timothy, and row head over heels and tangle my hair full of wisps."

And the commentator says, "This gambol in the hay is a good example of the earthy simple pleasures preferred by the creation mystics."

So that's just a summary of one passage of *Leaves of Grass*. Again, I think a marvelous way to build our souls up, our spiritual muscles, with the seventh chakra connecting to the light of the universe. So, light and hay. The light in grass. The light in all things.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.