

Daily Meditations 07-01-22

Some Teachings from Thomas Aquinas on the Angels

Good morning.

We've been meditating together for several days about the Supreme Court's decisions and so forth. It's time to return to our watering hole, or oasis, to our meditating like the camel, and filling up with good news and the energy that goes with it, so that we can continue our journey, sometimes through the desert in difficult times like ours.

So, again, we're drawing on the wisdom of the mystics. And in this case, Thomas Aquinas talking about angels. And we begin with his citing Dionysius Areopagite, sixth century Syrian monk, about how angels have a special relationship to the corporeal world and the heavenly bodies.

And remember that in ancient times, many philosophers felt that the stars were spirits, and the planets too. So Dionysius calls these heavenly minds. And Isaiah talks about an army of celestial wonders such as the heavens, the stars and angels, putting angels in the context of cosmology.

Now, in many ways, this is a big part of this study on the physics of angels, this dialogue that British scientist Rupert Sheldrake and I made together, because of course we are living in a new understanding of the cosmos. It's every day, we're learning new insights about the universe we didn't know before. And this is the basis of our discussion here. But Rupert makes the point that he says,

Modern science is based on the idea that the universe is governed by invisible principles, namely, the laws of nature. But these laws are essentially intellectual because mathematical equations are things that exist in minds. They're not physical things you actually encounter in the world. You don't look through an electron microscope and see Schrodinger's equation among the molecules, or look through a telescope and see Einstein's equations written in the sky. They are invisible governing principles. But they're conceived of in an extremely limited and noncreative sense, as abstract mathematical equations, rather than as living minds with creative power.

This is what discussion of the angels brings: living minds with creative power. Creativity is supposed to come into the evolutionary process, in the modern conscious, through blind chance. And what happens is, "these laws are totally disembodied," he says, "they're limited and narrow, in their vision, lacking in love and joy." And then he says,

As far as people believe that mathematical equations are the ultimate truth, this is a form of idolatry. It treats manmade mathematical models as the ultimate reality.

But reality is much more interesting than that, and surprising and creative. He says,

In an evolving universe, it seems to me that the idea of creative intelligence throughout the cosmos makes a lot more sense than the collection of abstract mathematical equations beyond space and time ,with creativity itself just a matter of chance.

So I think this discussion places the topic of angels, or guiding intelligences, in a much more delicious setting where love and joy, creativity, intuition, can follow. So we'll be sharing Thomas Aquinas' understanding of angels, which touches on all these things, in the upcoming daily meditations.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.