

Daily Meditation 07-15-22

Can the Webb Telescope Help to Awaken Humanity?

Good morning.

Today we're asking the question: can the Webb telescope assist in awakening humanity? Certainly, humanity needs awakening; we always need awakening, especially at this time in history.

So might there be something quite profound in this great accomplishment in the part of teams of scientists from, I believe, 40 different countries? Thousands of human beings contributing to this amazing invention of the Webb telescope bringing us into the presence of the earliest time of our home, coming to be, our universe.

Now, it seems to me that the greatest gift of the Webb telescope is awe itself. And how important is awe for humanity to wake up? Awe is the beginning of wisdom, we are told; it would be wonderful to launch into an era of wisdom, wouldn't it, instead of just an era of knowledge and competition?

And what is awe? Rabbi Heschel, who derives from the same spiritual tradition as Jesus, tells us that

...awe enables us to perceive in the world intimations of the Divine...

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What we cannot comprehend by analysis, we become aware of in awe.

So, awe is a companion to analysis, but it brings something very, very big into our worlds, into our consciousness. And that is intimations of the Divine.

Now, Thomas Aquinas also links awe with wisdom. He says,

One meditates on creation, in order to view and marvel at divine wisdom. The Divine Wisdom first appears in the creation of things.

So, clearly this telescope is putting us closer and closer to the creation of things, the very beginning of the universe, which of course, birthed our solar system, birthed our Earth, birthed our sun, our moon, all of us, all the beings on this planet and beyond.

This too is why Aquinas says

Both a poet and philosopher begin with amazement, because wonder causes inquiry; wonder awakens questions in us.

So of course you want to begin with amazement and wonder.

Surely this may be a new beginning for humanity at a great scale now that the Earth has become a village where we're side by side and elbow to elbow with one another. What an important moment this is that awe, take over what the mystics call the *via positiva*. And clearly the Webb telescope can assist in bringing that awakening to all of us.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.