

Daily Meditation 08/20/2022

Cosmos & Psyche a la Meister Eckhart, continued

Good morning,

We meditate again on the new creation story, and what it's telling us about how we got here. And where "here" is and what "here" is. And for how many years we've been arriving, insofar as the universe itself has been calling us forward.

But it had to do an awful lot of preparation before this very fragile, but sometimes intelligent and creative species we call Homo sapiens could arrive and could discover the messages we're given today about the age of the universe, 13.8 billion years, and the size of the universe, which just two summers ago or so, leapt into the domain of 2 trillion galaxies, each with hundreds of billions of stars.

So all this is enough to awaken awe and wonder in us. Rabbi Heschel says, "Wonder is the act of the mind encountering the universe."

The human mind encountering the universe automatically puts us in a state of awe, and that is, of course, the via positiva of the mystics, that is the kickoff, that is the beginning, that is the leaping off the diving board, into the world of mysticism.

And in this age that is called the Aquarian Age, about water, Aqua, it seems very fitting to be connecting the wonder of the universe with the capacity of the human mind and spirit and soul to burst open, which is part of awe, isn't it?

And so Eckhart says, back in the 14th century, even without the science we have today about the size of the universe, he says,

Heaven is so immense and so wide--

Of course, by heaven, he means the heavens, he means the sky --

...that if I told you, you would not believe it --

this, back in the 14th century. Today, it's even more wide and more immense.

...If you were to take a needle and prick the heavens with it, then that part of heaven that the needle point pricked would be greater in comparison to heaven and the whole world than heaven and the world are in comparison to God.

So this is an amazing way of trying to articulate the wonder of the world in which we live, the wonder of the universe that has birthed us, birthed the earth and the stars and the supernovas and all the rest.

Obviously, we can translate Eckhart's amazing language into what we now know about the universe. And to bring this poetry in is a tremendous way to stir not only our imaginations but our spirituality and the choices we make, therefore our practicing our decision making, and ethics and morality.

Then he says there are many lessons, many moral lessons to learn from the sky.

There are various things (he says) we should know about the heavens above: that they are firm, pure, all-embracing and fruitful. These same qualities should be found in human beings, for each of us should be a heaven in which God dwells.

And so we're told in the scriptures,

The spirit of God fills the whole world and the glory of God (the doxa), fills the whole world.

That's what Eckhart is talking about. The whole universe is filled with the divine. And we as humans can learn from the goings-on of the universe. One of the goings-on in the universe, of course, is interdependence. And another is creativity, birthing. There's so much birthing going on. A star is being born every 15 seconds. And a star is mighty in size.

The heavens (said Eckhart) surround everything and contain everything in themselves. This too is something human beings can obtain in love. They are able to contain everything in themselves, friends and foes alike.

So, it's like Hildegard talks, about being embraced by the arms of the mystery of God, that we too have this capacity to embrace the whole world with love, and to look for it, even in friends and foes.

And the heavens are fruitful (he says) for they are helpful to every endeavor; the heavens work more than a carpenter when he builds a house.

Pretty down to earth analogy there! But again, the heavens are where would we be, and the tides that rise and bring the ocean fruitful: without the sun, where would we be? Without the moon, creatures onto the earth and all the rest?

So he's absolutely right. This is another way of talking about interdependence, which is so at the center of how nature works, and what has brought us here after all these billions of years.

Let us be grateful.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.