

## Daily Meditation 4/25/2023

### Cosmologist Brian Swimme on the Wonder of Being Human

Good morning.

In today's meditation, we're reflecting on some lessons applied by cosmologist Brian Swimme: lessons of wonder and expansion and belonging. Deep feelings of belonging to supplement the feelings of not belonging, shame and aggression and violence that can take over our culture so readily.

Remember that in modern age, we were told that Father Sky was dead and inert. And matter was that way. That's what the machine universe was all about.

But the more ancient traditions, pre-modern traditions, celebrate Father Sky. For example, in the teaching of the indigenous people of South America, there was a saying, "To be human"...to be human..."one must make room in one's heart for the wonders of the universe."

To be human, one must make room in one's heart for the wonders of the universe.

So notice how this underscores the invitation to relationship, instead of looking on Father Sky as a machine, inert, cold, passive, doing its own thing. This invitation from pre-modern consciousness tells us that our heart, our hearts, are eager for the wonders of the universe.

And that's exactly how Rabbi Heschel defines awe. He says, "Awe is the human mind encountering the universe."

So it's interesting: both pre-modern consciousness and the Jewish biblical tradition are saying the same things here: that the human heart is made for relationship, even with the great macrocosm that we call the universe.

Here's Meister Eckhart, in the 14th century. I'm citing here from my book on *The Hidden Spirituality of Men*. The first chapter is on Father Sky.

*The divine spirit in the human soul [says Eckhart] is not easily satisfied, it storms the firmament, it scales the heavens, trying to reach the spirit that drives the heavens. Because of this energy, everything in the world grows green, flourishes, bursts into leaf. But the spirit is never satisfied, it presses on deeper, deeper into the vortex, further and further into the whirlpool, the primary source in which the spirit has its origin.*

So Eckhart is building up on this yearning in the human heart, human soul, for connection to the whole. And that, I think, is what we're undergoing today as science and spirituality merge as they had in previous pre-modern cultures and religions, such as Eckhart's medieval expression of Christianity, where he could say things like he just said there.

Joel Primack and Nancy Abrams, in their important book, *View From the Center of the Universe*, say that we're living in the midpoint of time for our solar system: the Sun and planets about 5 billion years old, within another 6 billion years the Sun will grow so hot, it will expand and burn Earth to a crisp.

*Today represents a special window of time. It can only happen during a relatively brief epoch in the entire history universe. It's late enough that intelligent beings have evolved. And we have instruments to observe the distant galaxies. But it's not so late that the galaxies have begun to disappear. We need this period of overlap for intelligent beings ever to get the chance to figure out the nature of the universe.*

So, our studies of the universe, our growing understanding of the universe, all this is part of our relating to the universe, and can have a tremendous impact on our sense of wholeness and moving beyond the tribalism that Brian Swimme describes in today's meditation, that our ancestors the chimpanzees are subject to: they cannot get beyond their small tribal circle to the greater circle that humans are capable of connecting to.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.