Daily Meditation 04-06-26

Mechtild of Magdeburg on Undergoing “Our Easter”

Good morning. A blessed Passover and Easter season to all.

In this morning’s meditation, we called on Mechtild of Magdeburg, for her beautiful teachings about Easter, Resurrection, about the Via Creativa and the Via Transformativa.

I’d like to begin with a poem that was sent to me by Raphael Jesus Gonzalez on Good Friday, and then to develop more the teachings of Mecthild of Magdeburg. Raphael’s poem is called “Enemy of the State.”

The young rebel Rabbi called to him the humble, those who mourn, the gentle, those who want justice, the merciful, the pure of heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted for standing against evil. He said, feed the hungry. Give water to the thirsty. Welcome the stranger. Clothe the naked. Visit the jailed. Care for the sick. Love, he said, your neighbor as yourself, and love your enemies. He upset the tables of the bankers in the temple. He minced no words. The authorities, the uptight priests, the government officials, did not like it. It undermined the Empire. And the Empire nailed Him to a cross as enemy of the state.

I think, a very succinct summary of the Jesus story, and of Good Friday. And now I’d like to share a few more of Mechtild of Magdeburg’s teachings, about the Resurrection, the Via Creativa, and what to do with our creativity, the Via Transformativa. Because obviously human creativity can go many ways, as I said, in the divine direction: serving, such as Raphael just spoke of, citing from the Beatitudes from Matthew 25 — or it’s serving and caring for the poor. Or it can go the way of the demonic and of more and more war-making. Here is Mechtild:

The Holy Spirit flows through us, the marvelous creative power of everlasting joy. God has given me the power to change my ways. And that’s one kind of power that we often don't celebrate, don't name as explicitly as we ought to.

The true blessing of God flows from the heavenly flood out of the spring of the flowing Trinity. This flowing contains such power that it takes all strength from the body and lays the soul naked to itself. Again notice her use of the word power. She employs it frequently. And as a woman in the Middle Ages, I think this is especially important that she was at home with her power, and come to grips with it, and even the power of her

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fifth chakra to tell her story, to write this, this book, which was a journal she kept all her life, and to put it into the world, was very daring for a Beguine and for a woman of the time. And she had encouragement from certain men like her spiritual director.

She says, *We are invited by God in the following manner: Fly, dove-winged one, and soar in all things beyond yourself. When you're tired and weary, return to the flood again.* Interesting that she uses that word flood, or return to the source, return to the wellspring, a return to regeneration. And she's very explicit, we get tired, we get weary.

And she speaks to why she wrote her book, and the daring it took to write it, as a woman in her time: *I am forced to write these words regarding which I would have gladly kept silent, because I fear greatly the power of vainglory. But I have learned to fear more the judgment of God, should I, God's little creature, keep silent.* So there's a danger in expressing yourself, and there's a greater danger in keeping silent.

Rise up with power, she writes, *My glory is and will be manifold. Come to the Divine place, and there the Holy Trinity works such wonders. There flows and moves and charms and makes for love.* Again, she's tapping into a theology of the Holy Trinity and the Holy Spirit that's moving her to write and to work, fulfilling her vocation.

What is the greatest kind of love? Great Love does not flow with tears. Rather, it burns in the Great Fire of heaven. It burns in the Great Fire of Heaven. *In this fire, it flows and flows swiftly. Yet all the while, remains in itself in a very great stillness.*

It's interesting, John of the Cross also talks about the "fire inside" that motivated him to attempt a very daring escape from prison, where his brothers were torturing him for his work in the Via Transformativa, trying to reform religion, the Church, his Order, in the 16th century in Spain. But he says it was "fire inside" that drew him to attempt that daring escape.

Says Mecthild, *Thou shalt burn and never be extinguished, like a living spark in the Great Fire of the living majesty. If one blows even of the tiniest spark, it gives forth both heat and light in the fire of heaven, where all the radiant saints abide. Who is God? God is the meaning for my joy. God is a gladsome joy to my being.*

She had an understanding, as Julian of Norwich did, of God as Mother. The Divine Feminine definitely penetrated her awareness. *God is not only fatherly*, she writes, *God is also mother who lifts your loved child from the ground to her knee. The Trinity is like a mother's cloak, wherein the child finds a home and lays his head on the maternal breast.*

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Do you wish to know my meaning? Then lie down in the Fire. See and taste the flowing Godhead through your being. Feel the Holy Spirit moving and helping you within the flowing Fire and Light of God. God says, My Love bids you to work. Leap, leap in order dance. Be a vanquisher of evil spirits. If you love the justice of Jesus Christ more than you fear human judgment, then you will seek to do compassion. Compassion means that if I see my friend and my enemy in equal need, I shall help both equally. Justice demands that we seek and find the stranger, the broken, the prisoner, and comfort them and offer them our help. Here lies the holy, compassionate God that causes the devils much distress.

Who is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is a compassionate outpouring of the Creator and the Son. This is why, when we on Earth, pour all compassion and mercy from the depths of our hearts, and give to the poor and dedicate our bodies to the service of the broken, to that very extent do we resemble the Holy Spirit.

When do we like God? I will tell you: As far as we love compassion, and practice it steadfastly, to that extent we resemble the Heavenly Creator, who practices these things ceaselessly in us.

So there's no question that Mechtild names our works of compassion and love and justice as the image of God at work in us, the hands of the Divine.

Thank you and blessed Easter season to you all. See you next week.

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