

Daily Meditation 09/13/2021

Racism Against Asians: Arrogance At Work

Good morning.

We've been meditating on arrogance as another expression of a failure of the first chakra, along with acedia. And in fact they make strong companions and bedfellows.

But today we speak specifically to racism, and to the story of the racism against Asians in America. Of course you could be talking about that genocide toward indigenous people, or of course slavery toward the Africans, who were brought over here very much against their will.

But today we're focusing on racism against Asians because it really has not received the attention that it too deserves to be told.

Now once again the medicine, the solution for racism and for all forms of arrogance, comes from our recovering the larger context, the whole, the cosmos, which is the task of the first chakra. Picking up all the sounds of the universe and grounding us in the Earth, which is, if you will, the daughter of the universe.

As Thomas Berry says, ecology is functional cosmology, so let us continue with some of the wonders of the flesh of the universe that we all share. And by "we all" I mean every one of every race and nationality and ethnicity and color.

We're told this today about the universe: for every particle of matter there are one billion particles of light... for every particle of matter there's one billion particles of light. And so incarnated matter, incarnated light, this is what matter is.

As David Bohm, physicist, says: "matter is frozen light." So incarnated light is matter, but it's one in a billion... one in a billion. So we who are incarnated light, we who are matter, whether we talk about trees or planets or rocks or human beings, we are unique in the universe: one of a billion.

Ilya Prigogin, a Nobel prize-winning chemist, says matter is just a minor pollutant in a universe made of light... in a universe made of light, a minor pollutant. That's how modest the presence of matter is in the universe.

Sixty percent of the matter of our bodies is hydrogen atoms. All of them were once constituents of the original Big Bang. So 60 percent of the atoms in your body and mind are 13.8 billion years old. Which is why you need a nap once in a while! All the other chemical elements of our bodies -- 40 percent of the atoms of our bodies -- were forged in the interior of stars. They are literally recycled stardust.

So light is a vital ingredient in all atoms and molecules and life forms, including humans. All of them made up of atoms. How this rings wonderfully with the stories from so many religious traditions about light being the synonym for divinity. Christians say Christ is the light of the world...Christ is the light in all beings. The Cosmic Christ, therefore.

But this same celebration of light is found in Buddhism: we be en*light*ened and illuminated. And it's found in Celtic religion. It's found in African religions, this honoring of the light.

The human body stores immense amounts of light: 100 trillion atoms...100 trillion atoms in each of our 100 trillion cells together store at least 10^{28} photons. This is enough light to illuminate a baseball field for three hours with one million watts of floodlights.

The bottom line being that we are not only light bearers -- we are light givers. We ourselves give off light quite literally... quite literally.

So these are just a few of the facts of our existence that are so much bigger than our temptations to pettiness, racism, sexism, arrogance, and the rest. All these born of arrogance: that if we were to reconnect to the whole, including this, the wonder of light that is intrinsic to all matter, we would birth a different civilization. We would be happier beings.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.