

Daily Meditation 03/15/22

Mysticism and Prophecy, Our Yes to Life and No to Evil

Good morning.

Today we're dealing with a theme of yes and no, life versus evil, mysticism and prophecy. It seemed appropriate to go to this place, this kind of discussion, when we're living through so many traumas of this time: the war in Ukraine, but also, of course, the war against Mother Earth, and the struggle between democracies and autocracies and many other soul searching invitations of our time.

So it's interesting that to me that in this meditation, I go back to really one of my very earliest books on *Prayer: A Radical Response to Life*, because I ended that book with a different version of the Trinity, if you will, or a spin-off of the meaning of Trinity. The last chapter, called "Postscript, a Fresh Look at the Trinity," talks about life as spirit, "ruach".

And how our radical response to life is, of course, a deep root-like response. And the deepest is called our Yes, which is mysticism on the one hand, and the second response is No, which is our refusal, it is our interference with that which, which endangers life: injustice in particular.

And I quote from the German writer, Gunter Grass; he says: "Wrapped up mysteriously, like an enigma, in his No, there lies hidden a Yes."

Like an enigma, wrapped up mysteriously, like an Enigma, in our No, there lies hidden a Yes. I think this very beautiful and echoes what William Hocking says, that "the prophet is a mystic in action."

So you take the Yes energy, of falling in love with life, the mystical energy of saying Yes to life, into the No, that refusal. And we see this being played out today, in very high stakes in Ukraine, where it seems everybody and ordinary people are saying No to the invasion of their land, and destruction of their culture, so we're talking about real things here, and really deep things. Our mysticism and our prophecy, our Yes, and our No.

And I allude to the teaching of Hafiz, the great 14 century Sufi mystic, and I quote something from his teaching. And I want to expand on the poem where he says what he says in my meditation. He says,

It is a naive person who thinks we're not engaged in a fierce battle. For I see and hear brave foot soldiers all around me going mad, falling on the ground in excruciating pain. But you, you could become a victorious horse person, and carry your heart through this worldlike a life giving sun, but only only if you and God become sweet lovers.

So this is spiritual warriorhood, that your deep and healthy, masculine response to injustice, or to vice, is virtue. That deeply manly response, whether you be male or female, that arouses the courage in you to stand up for what you truly believe in.

That is the healthy masculine, as distinct from the toxic masculine. Hafiz goes on:

The warriors tame the beast in their past, so that the night's hooves can no longer break the jeweled vision in the heart.

So, the inner struggle, the inner war, the jihad. This is important, that we have to tame the beast of the past: that Mr. Putin is not taming the beast of his past. And thereby he is literally breaking many hearts and lives. And Hafiz says,

The intelligent and the brave --

...that's all of us...

...open every closet in the future and evict all the mind's ghosts who have the bad habit of barfing everywhere.

I like how he brings a little humor in here, too. But the future is obviously on Putin's mind, as our essay yesterday suggested; he's worried about his own death and mortality and therefore striving for an exaggerated immortality in the name of war and nationhood.

But as Hafiz says, we have to let go of these bad habits and ghosts that barf everywhere, and that bring down so many others with us, if we yield to them, and do not do our critical examination of our own intentions and stories, past and future. The real spiritual warrior deals with these kinds of realities.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.