

Daily Meditation 05/14/22

## Beyond Patriarchy: More Wisdom from Julian of Norwich

Good morning.

In yesterday's meditation we reflected on Julian of Norwich and her wonderful teaching about compassion, which is also about the return of the Divine Feminine, which also is the antidote, and the counterpoint, to patriarchy, because patriarchy wants to reduce compassion to pity and ignore it.

Compassion is not about pity. It's about interdependence. It's about working out our interdependence. And whether that be shared joy, or shared suffering, removing one another's suffering to the extent that we can integrate structures of justice, because injustice is the opposite of compassion, and of love.

As Meister Eckhart put it, "Whatever happens to another, whether it be a joy or a sorrow, happens to me." That is interdependence.

And Julian of Norwich was very aware, I think, of much of Meister Eckhart's teachings. And she says, among other things,

*Compassion allows us to fail miserably. And as much as we fail, and so much we fall; in so much as we fall, in so much we die. For we must die if we fail to see and feel God who is our life.*

What I see in this teaching is something very parallel to what Meister Eckhart taught when he said that compassion begins at home, with one's own body and one's own soul. So Julian is talking about being compassionate to oneself when we fail, and that, life does contain falls and failures. But she also says that compassion never leaves us. She says,

*No matter what our fears and shame, our dying and sorrow, in all this, the sweet eye of kindness and love never leaves us, nor does the working of compassion cease.*

So we're always called to be compassionate to self and to others. And in many ways, compassion is the doing of non-dualism because it is the doing of interdependence. Julian says,

*God wants to be known and loved through justice and compassion, now and forever.*

That's significant that she brings justice up as a parallel, a synonym for compassion. She says,

*Justice is that thing that is so good, that it cannot be better than it is.*

And she says,

*God is justice, and God creates justice in all who will be liberated through goodness.*

So justice and compassion are not separate for Julian. And they were not separate for Meister Eckhart, who said that compassion means justice. And in saying that he's very much in alignment with the Jewish teaching from the Hebrew Bible and the prophets, that "Hasid," the word we often translate as compassion, is also a synonym for justice.

So in all this, Julian is presenting a view of the world, a view of our action, a view of love and even self-love, as something very, very different from patriarchal consciousness, which is so often a consciousness of control, not the consciousness of caring, and sensitivity, and as she says, bringing the goodness alive and well.

This is the work of compassion. And this is why one of the most powerful names for God is that God is the Compassionate One.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.