

Daily Meditation 08-02-22

## A Ceremony of Sorrow, Hope, Action in the Face of Nothingness

Good morning.

I'm very pleased to share with you today what I experienced as a very, very powerful meditation on the theme of nothingness.

We've been talking about the theme of our own extinction as a species, and, of course, the theme of climate change, and all the obstacles that face us.

Now, just recently, there's a bill in Congress, worked out by Schumer and Manchin that may get us someplace, if all the Democrats go along with it.

I don't understand where the Republicans are on the theme of climate change. It's as if they must not have grandchildren or great grandchildren. I just do not understand why they aren't in the fray of working out laws that would put the earth on a more sustainable basis. Except, of course, the dark money that owns so much of American politics, thanks to the Supreme Court that allows dark money to be floating around like crazy in there, for dark interests own our politicians.

And they would put their own ambitions ahead of the future of the planet, the future of the human community, and the future of literally millions of other species. This is intolerable.

So anyway, I think that Rabbi Heschel, but actually Rabbi Waskow -- certainly a student of Rabbi Heschel -- Rabbi Waskow shares with us a very powerful teaching here in so many ways.

And I open up the door to the wisdom of deep ecumenism, that all people of all traditions, and none, who are thinking seriously today, are thinking, of course, about our demise as a species that faces us at the hands of climate change.

So I love what he's done with his own tradition.: taking the mourning done because of the ancient temple in Jerusalem being lit on fire, and applying this analogy to the fire that is endangering the temple that is our Earth...the temple that is our Earth. As he says,

*As the ancient temples were burned by the Babylonian and Roman Empires, so Temple Earth is being burnt, boiled, broiled by imperious fossil fuel corporations, bent on increasing already hyper-profits.*

And I think his invoking of the first word of the book of Lamentations, which is of course a book dedicated to grief, this word being the same root phrases as the word that occurred in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve did their thing:

"Where are you?" were God's words. Where are you?

And so I comment on where are we, while this degradation to the Temple of Mother Earth, that we can all agree on, we all live in, matter what our traditions.

And he points out, to the temple they brought "offerings to the breath of life" -- And the breath of life is a name for God -- offerings of minerals and vegetation, animals and human song, human song, human praise.

And the tradition is that fasting is appropriate at a time like this, and the chanting of grief, for the degradation of joy itself, that joy itself is, is slipping away, with our health, and our healthy air, and our healthy soil, and the waters and animals and birds, are slipping away.

So I thank Rabbi Waskow and his tradition for bringing this powerful message and this invitation to ritual and ceremony to our pressing times. And we will be continuing this gift from the Shalom Center in tomorrow's meditation.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow