

Daily Meditation 02/06/2023

Light, Science, and Moving Beyond Dualism

Good morning.

In today's meditation, we're beginning a series where we're going to reflect together on light. Light and spirit. Because I think what science has discovered in the 20th century is so very, very important in the history of spirituality. Because I really do believe that science has melted the dualism between spirit and matter. And the key to this is light, we've learned about light. Matter itself is light.

But in my book on *One River, Many Wells* where I look at 18 themes that are held in common, though with diversity, by all the religions, spiritual traditions of the world--indigenous, African and Celtic and Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist and Hindu and Taoist and Christian--we find this theme of light as being so central. It makes up a chapter--chapter three of my book.

So much here that is so rich, and it's such a big moment, if I'm right, that science has ended the age of dualism, which of course is signified in the Piscean naming of the last 2000 years. We've moved from Pisces to Aquarius, and Pisces is dualistic. It's two fish swimming in the opposite direction.

The dualism goes back before 2000 years ago. We find it very strong in Greek philosophy, for example, especially the Platonic and new Platonic wing of that philosophy.

So here's a prayer of praise to Aten in the eighteenth dynasty, around 1600, around the 16th century BCE, in Egypt:

"Beautiful you rise Oh Eternal Living God. You are radiant, lovely, powerful. Your love is great, all encompassing. Your rays make all radiant."

Your rays make all radiant. So this is a worshipping of the sun, you see.

"Your brightness gives life to hearts when you fill the two lands with your love."

So that is an ancient prayer to an ancient deity, putting light forward. So, to talk of creation is to talk about light. This is evident in many creation stories from Akhenaten in Egypt, to Genesis and Psalm 104, which is the oldest creation story in the Bible, Psalm 104.

And we'll look into that in a day or two. And in the prologue to John's gospel--quotation that Christ is the light of the world. A teaching we find in the East, too, that Buddha talks about becoming a light unto yourself, and about enlightenment.

And of course, today's creation story from science is so much about light. After all, Albert Einstein once said, "All I want to do with my life is to study light." It was so important to him, so central.

But here is how Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme tell a new creation story from science:

"Fifteen billion years ago, in a great flash, the universe flared forth into being. In each drop of existence a primordial energy blazed with an intensity never to be equaled again. The beginning universe is a great shining..." (great shining) "that expands rapidly and then explodes into hundreds of billions of dark clouds.

"Later, 100 billion galaxies light up with a splendor new to the universe. The beginning of the universe is a smooth, intense flame. A few billion years later, the large-scale structure of the universe glows in great sheets of galaxies, in the intersections of long spidery filaments of sparkling worlds. The supernovas blaze with the same numinous energy that flared forth at the dawn of time."

And of course, we talk about the fireball, don't we? Which flared for 750,000 years at the beginning of universe and birthed the atoms and potential beginnings of galaxies and stars and so forth. And now we have Webb telescope bringing into our living rooms these very pictures of these early, early stars which are light beings, sending light forward, even to our time, 13 billion years later.

All this fills us with awe. And it is no wonder that humans around the world have often identified Light and Divinity. Light and the Creator.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.