

Daily Meditation 03-27-23

God, the Holy Spirit as Fire & Compassion

Good morning.

Today we're meditating on the topic of God as a Holy Spirit, as fire and compassion.

There's some wonderful, brief teachings about this topic from Hildegard of Bingen:

Who is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is a burning spirit. It kindles the hearts of humankind, like tympanum and lyre, it plays them gathering volume in the temple of the soul.

So much in that teaching: burning spirit, the hearts, the hearts of humankind. And it plays them like an instrument, volume in the temple of the soul. The soul is a temple. The soul is a big place and a sacred space.

Then we have Eckhart: "God glows and burns with all divine wealth, all of the Divine bliss in the spark of the soul."

And the spark of the soul was meant to burn incessantly and to grow, become a burning fire, and "this fire is nothing other than the Holy Spirit."

And then John of the Cross, talking about the "living flame of love."

This flame of love is the Holy Spirit that bathes the soul in glory, refreshes it with the quality of divine life, so that all the acts of the soul are divine. Love is never idle, submitting flames everywhere like a blazing fire.

These are very rich teachings.

And then Aquinas: "Compassion is the fire that Jesus came to set on the earth."

And then Rabbi Heschel:

How important is compassion? Humanity is a reminder of God. As God is compassionate, let humanity be compassionate.

So, I invite you to think of your own experiences of spirit as fire. What has fire and Spirit brought into your life? What has it burned down and melted? And given birth and rebirth to?

But I also want to point out how these teachings invoke physics, because the four elements--earth, air, fire, water--you know, were the basic way in which humans thought about cosmology and physics for centuries.

In the Bible they used the four elements and certainly these medieval mystics use the four elements, too.

So God is fire.

And then we also have God as Earth. Gaia, Gaia. Gaia is a goddess. Gaia means Earth. And, of course, this sense of the sacredness of Earth, she's coming back today in our time of climate change and peril that is occurring to Mother Earth.

Earth, air.

Air, of course. God is Spirit. God is breath, air, God is sky. Sky is air.

Earth, air, fire, water.

And, of course, water. Meister Eckhart talks a lot about the rushing river that Divinity is. And I pick up on that in my writings on creativity. That creativity is a rushing river. Eckhart says that, too. And, of course, the river is Yin energy. It's feminine energy. And fire is male energy, masculine energy.

So you have that balance too with this fraternity of physics as Earth, air, fire, water.

What's interesting is, you see, that... and of course of baptism, the whole imagery of water. The Age of Pisces, the fish, baptism idea. All this is building on the idea of God as water.

First, water is cleansing but also water quenches the thirst. And wisdom is often talked about as water especially in the Bible. Among desert people, obviously water is salvation. Water is essential and special when you're living in a desert place.

So I'm just pointing out that historically, traditionally, physics and religious archetypes have interacted with each other. So we have every right and every tradition of linking physics to spiritual concepts. And it's important we be doing that now with today's new physics. It gives life to spiritual nomenclature.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.