

Daily Meditation 03/18/2023

Surrendering to the "Glory of Existence" - Celtic Spirituality, II

In today's meditation, we continue our meditations on the wonder and glory of the universe, and of our Earth, and of our existence.

Let me begin with a statement by a very renowned scholar of wisdom literature, the Bible, Gerhard Von Rad: "Creation not only exists, it also discharges truth."

Truth. There's that word that we worked with for several weeks because truth is under assault in our culture today. He goes on: "Wisdom requires a surrender verging on the mystical, of a person to the glory of existence."

I love that line. "Wisdom requires a surrender verging on the mystical, of a person to the glory of existence."

And it's not easy for biblical scholars to use the word "mystical." But it's striking therefore that Gerhard Von Rad, he was to surrender "verging on the mystical." What? Surrender to what? "Of a person to the glory of existence."

That word "glory," of course, we dealt with often. "Doxa" is a very special word in the Scriptures. And it is linked thoroughly with the idea, the experience of the Cosmic Christ. *Doxa*. Every time you see the word *doxa*, put your ears up, because the Cosmic Christ is right around the corner. It's present in that word.

And Simone Weil: "One should identify with the universe itself."

All this teaching is to get us beyond anthropocentrism, beyond the human, beyond what Pope Francis has called the "narcissism of our species." And its whole relation, psyche and cosmos, that makes us whole again. It is what Otto Rank says is at the essence of all authentic ritual, bringing the human psyche and the cosmos together. That's why ritual is important.

And then this amazing teaching from Albert Einstein. "The most important function of art and science..."

What would that be? That's exciting putting art and science in one sentence.

"The most important function of art and science is to awaken the cosmic religious feeling. And keep it alive."

Cosmic religious feeling. Emphasis on the cosmos again. This is what awe is, isn't it? It's an awakening. An awakening of every cosmic experience we've had. And not just awaken it but keep it going, keep it alive.

Remember what Rabbi Heschel says. He defines awe that way: "Awe is the encounter of the human mind with the universe. And awe is the beginning of wisdom." Awe is the beginning of our mystical journey. That's *via positiva*, isn't it? That's why what Einstein says is so important. And coming from him, of course, makes it especially important.

And then Teilhard de Chardin. A very powerful statement here: "Humanity has reached the biological point where it must either lose all belief in the universe..."

And there are many ways. That's what modern consciousness did. We've been told the universe has no meaning. It just all happened by chance. And it's survival of the fittest. That's what biology was teaching us for many decades.

But Teilhard says, Well, we can go that way if we want. "You must either lose all belief in the universe," or there's another option. What's that? "Quite resolutely worship it." Quite resolutely worship it.

This takes us back to Thomas Berry and Thomas Aquinas, who say: "The most excellent thing in the universe is not the human, but the universe itself."

Teilhard goes on. "This is where we must look for the origin of the present crisis in morality."

So again, it's from the universe that we get our ethics and our morality. And I've written about that in my book *Creation Spirituality: Liberating Gifts for the Peoples of the Earth*. This is where we get our morality and if we have no universe, we're in trouble.

And then Teilhard ends this section for us: "The world will only kneel before the organic center of its evolution."

So there is reverence to be learned, to be taken in, by bringing the universe back and finding its center. And really, its center is everywhere. There is no one center of the universe. That's postmodern thinking. That it is where depth is. That's where the center is. Where things are most alive, most beautiful and most glorious.

So indeed, it is appropriate that we surrender, verging on the mystical, to the glory of existence.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.