

“Earth crammed with heaven and every common bush afire with God; But only he who sees takes off his shoes . . .” Elizebeth Barrett Browning, “Aurora Leigh”

(Only he/she who remember will “Nehway See-be-yona Aconna”) I am back to the Lord’s Prayer

“Divine perfection is precisely the ability to include what seems like imperfection.” Before we come inside to pray, work or teach any theology, its giant presence has already spoken a silent sermon over us.

“Jesus is the gift that honored the gift, which is what divine presence is . . .”

What stinginess on our side, our selfishness, the opposite of Love, made us limit God’s eternal concern just to ourselves.

Once we become aware of the generous creative presence that exist in all things natural, we can receive it as the inner source of all dignity and worthiness. (d’bwashmaya is remembered) . Dignity is not doted out to the worthy; it grounds the inherent worthiness of things in their very nature and existence.

“To work up to loving God, start by loving the very humblest and simplest things, and then move up from there. The Creator’s supreme power, wisdom and benevolence shine forth through all created things.” (St. Bonaventure (1221-1274) in “The Soul’s Journey to God.”

“It might be the only way to love. “How we do anything is how we do everything.”

The Great Chain of Being

The Great Chain of Being is an all or nothing proposition: if we fail to recognize the presence in anyone link of the chain, the whole sacred universe falls apart.

The basis for truth and authority has been around forever, or at least for 13.7 billion years. But because of the significance of rationalism and science, by mid 19th century Catholics declared the Pope to be infallible, and the Evangelicals decided the Bible was inerrant, despite the fact that we had gotten along for most of 1800 years without either belief . . . both a modern day “Golden Calf.” Existence is its own story, if we could only see it with humility and love

It takes contemplative practice, stopping our besy and superficial minds long enough to see the beauty, allow the truth and protect the inherent goodness of what it is – whether it profits me, pleases me, or not.

The divine pattern is set by the seventh day . . . in the creation story: Doing must be balanced out by not doing, called the” Sabbath Rest.” (Back to the Lord’s Prayer: “Net Gadish Shmack” (make space to remember d’bwashmaya, of which we are all a part).

All contemplation reflects a seventh day choice and experience, relying on grace instead of effort. Full growth implies timing and staging, acting and waiting, working and not working.

All other sentient being seem to know this and are fully engaged in the cycle of life and death, mirroring the eternal self-emptying and eternal infilling of God, and somehow trusting it all – not suffering from the fear of death, like we humans do.

If we can recognize that we belong to such a rhythm and ecosystem, and intentionally rejoice in it, we can begin to find our place in the universe. *(Again, the Lord's Prayer: Tay Tay Mulikutah ... meaning our world view will change such that our operational drives are beyond "Ideals" and are truly driven by the creative will of our creator and we become in sync with that force of potential to actual, that all the cosmos is made of. . . d'bwashmaya off bah a r ah ... on earth as in heaven)*

Original Goodness, Not Original Sin

The true and essential work of all religion is to help us recognize and recover the divine in everything; to mirror things correctly, deeply, and fully until all things know who they are. Authentic mirroring can only call forth what is already there.

The "mind of Christ" mirror fully knows and loves us from all eternity, and reflects that image back to us. People who live inside of this resonance are both happy and healthy. Those who do not resonate and reciprocate with things around them only grow in loneliness and alienation, and invariably tend toward violence in some form, if only toward themselves.

This truth we all know, this implanted knowing in each of us – an inner mirror, this consciousness, this soul, this law written in our hearts is what we Christians refer to as the indwelling holy Spirit. It didn't descend on us; we wake up to it. The goodness is original. When we see God we will see being itself.

This idea of original sin was 1st put forth by Augustine in the fifth Century. We got off to a bad start through no fault of our own, But the original metaphor for creation was the garden itself.

Thus the prevailing theology is "Sine Management" administered by elite clergy, our schizophrenic religion is not to be taken seriously.

"I have never met a truly compassionate or loving human being who did not have a foundation and even deep trust in the inherent goodness of human nature. The Christian story needs a paradigm shift, a positive and overarching vision for humanity and for history to get beyond the primitive exclusionary, and fear-based stages of most humans development.

Holding on to a Positive Vision

Velcro/Teflon theory: We are more attracted to the problem than to the solutions. Thus our problem experiences are what drives us.

Neuroplasticity: How we increase our bandwidth of freedom, and it is surely the heart-beat of any authentic spirituality; deliberately practice enjoying a positive response and a grateful heart. Contemplate “The Good, the truth and the beautiful .” This is how we practice the Original Goodness.

“There are three reliable theological virtues: Faith, hope and love. Participating in the very life of God infused into us at our very conception. Theological virtues define we humans far more than “moral Virtues”: the various good behaviors we learn.

Positive Anthropology

The Christian life is simply a matter of becoming who we already are: The positive aspects of our biological and physiological characteristics and our evolution, poor catechesis notwithstanding.

Catechesis are religious instructions given to a person in preparation for Christian baptism or confirmation, typically using a catechism

The moral worthiness, also taught is a lot less stable and secure. Even a good theology will have a hard time making up for a bad anthropology. If a human person is a pile of manure, even the snow of Christ only covers it and does not undo it. Sooooo, we are back to the original goodness, what the creator produced. (as in Abwoon d’bwashmaya. God created the garden of eden of which we were a part. So we need to remember that.)

God does not come uninvited. God and grace cannot enter without an opening from our side, or we would be mere robots.

We find original Goodness when we can discover and own these three attitudes or virtues deeply planted within us:

- A trust in inner coherence (gut-feel or inner truth, the still quite inner voice) itself. “It all means something.” *FAITH*
- A trust that this coherence is positive and going somewhere good . *HOPE*
- A trust that this coherence includes me and even defines me. *LOVE*

COHERENCE

- a. The situation when the parts of something fit together in a natural or reasonable way.
- b. A clear relationship
- c. The quality of forming a unified whole

Healthy religion has the power to offer us a compelling and attractive foundation for human and dignity and show us ways to build on that foundation.

Unless we see original goodness, the dignity as being given universally, objectively, and from the beginning by God, we will continue to regress towards racism, sexism, homophobia, militarism, look-ism, class-ism. We must rely more on “an inherent original goodness and a universally shared dignity.”

“The best Criticism of bad is still the practice of the better.” Oppositional energy only creates more of the same. The true starting point is Original Goodness”

We must reclaim Jesus as an inclusive savior instead of an exclusionary Judge, as a Christ who holds history together as the cosmic Alpha and Omega. Then both history and the individual can live inside of a collective safety and assure success. Some would call this the very shape of salvation. (see Revelation Chapter 21)