

The Veil is Getting Very Thin Indeed!

"Apparently there is an After-Life" ~ Raymond Moody

Have you noticed how many people are talking about, writing about, and interviewing others about, Near-Death Experiences (NDEs) lately? Interest in the subject has got to be at an all-time high; of all my talks on YouTube, the one I did for the Florence Unitarians on this subject back in 2018 is the most viewed (LINK).

Is it just that the work of Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, Brian Weiss, Raymond Moody, and half a dozen other psychotherapists made this topic acceptable - or are many more people, in fact, experiencing another plane of existence?

Yesterday, in my Course In Miracles class, we read again the words in Chapter Two: "'Heaven and Earth shall pass away' means that they will not always exist as separate states." Wow. Not destruction but union! No more separation! Is it possible? Placed in context, it's clear that the narrator of the Course, who identifies as Jesus Christ, is telling us that what we call Heaven is our natural state of being and what we call Earth is the experience we have been projecting around us as our minds have become culturally conditioned to think that we are separated from the Source of our life and wellbeing. In short, they are not 2 different life spaces, but rather 2 different ways of experiencing life.

So that means that what we call NDEs are not the journeys of our souls into another set of dimensions of space-time, but are rather experiences of our true life, our actual state of being, from which we are generating this dream we call birth, life, and death on Earth.

The folks who describe their NDEs tell us that, in the life which we call Heaven, unconditional love and acceptance, and an intensity of life without decay, light without darkness, and blissful joy, are the norm. There is no duality, no contrast, no conflict, no sense of "not okay" when they are in that state of being, that state of awareness.

They tell us that there is a sense of "travelling to" that state, often through the darkness of deep space, but only a few describe an equivalent journey back "into" their Earthly body. Usually it's a sudden "thump" and they're opening their eyes in the Earth world they had "left."

In the Vedic tradition of Hindus and Buddhists, there is a concept, *satchitananda*, which can be loosely translated as "love-bliss-consciousness". People in that tradition are encouraged to find that state of being and live in it and from it as much as possible. To enter into the meditative state of samadhi is a way get there. And, not too surprisingly, the people who achieve it often describe their experience as one of unconditional love, joyful bliss, and an intensity of life and light everywhere, with no sense of duality or conflict among the various aspects of being.

Is there a connection?

Is it possible that who we are is, truly, "not human beings but spiritual beings having a human experience" (to quote Wayne Dyer)? Is it true that when we are "awake" and active in this body we are actually in a dream-state in our heavenly bodies, generating this life experience?

"You do not have a soul. You are a soul." ~ C.S. Lewis.

We have all been trained to think that we are this body and that maybe, someday, some part of us called a soul will experience the love-filled way of being we called Heaven - if we've been good enough or "saved."

But the remarkable story in the book *Saved by the Light*, tells us we don't have to be good to get there. This pretty despicable character, a man who is filled with rage and enjoys dishing it out on everyone around him, is struck by lightning and finds himself in exactly the same place as all the other NDE experiences! A being of unconditional love and acceptance shows him the error of his ways and, with the usual "thump" he's back in his Earthly body, determined to live life differently. The author, Dannon Brinkley, has since been through a couple more such experiences and is a powerful, loving teacher, today.

In the New Testament, Jesus is often quoted as saying "the kingdom of Heaven is at hand" or "is within you", suggesting that Heaven is not a state of being that maybe, someday, if we are good, we might get to experience. And, on the cross, Jesus tells the 2 criminals nearby that "today you shall be with me in Paradise".

The Course In Miracles confirms this understanding: we are all eligible to experience Heaven. More, we can all experience it in this lifetime here, in the state of being we call life on Earth. And other spiritual traditions - and scientific insights support this realization.

"No one left out" - Sally Wantz

It fits, for example, the understanding of a small but growing group of Christians called Universalists. Since shortly after the Christian church was established these folks have held that a loving Father would never condemn his children to everlasting separation, much less the terrors of "the fires of *Gahenna*" (the name of the garbage dump outside Jerusalem). They say that all humanity came from God and is destined to return to their Creator-Source in love, for eternity. Carlton Pierce, a Baptist minister whose study of the Bible led him to this understanding a few years back, is one of today's most eloquent teachers on the subject.

In the biblical Revelation, after all the distress of Armageddon, there is a description of a "new heaven and earth" with the river of Life running through it and no contrasting darkness, only light. The narrator of the Course in Miracles tells us that this is a description of the new way of being, where Heaven and Earth are no longer separated, but once again merged into a single state of being, in which we are truly awake and active without projecting any dark thoughts or feelings into the world around us.

The Course in Miracles, we are told, is a way to get to that state of being, a process designed to dissolve the thoughts that create a sense of separation and restore us to the Reality which is our birthright. Clearly, it's not the only way, and many other processes are being introduced into the world to help us overcome our belief that we are separated from our source and so must struggle.

One of those is the teachings of Emma Curtis Hopkins and her many students, including the Fillmores who established Unity, Ernest Holmes who established Religious Science (now Centers for Spiritual Living), the Ritz sisters who established Homes and Sanctuaries of Truth, and the Brooks sisters who, with Malinda Cramer, established Divine Science - taken together, all these groups are called today, New Thought. Hopkins taught that our belief that we are separated from our Source is the basis for our experience of the solidity and durability of matter, which is otherwise quite changeable. Her 12 lessons are designed to help us rise above that belief, to overcome the limitations it sets, and so to function fully as the spiritual beings we are, united in the One Power that is everywhere present and experienced as love.

"I Dream a World" Langston Hughes

The idea that "the ten thousand things" as Taoists describe the material world, have emerged out of a false understanding that we are separated from our source is part of both the Taoist and Sumerian creation stories, and is described in more scientific terms by the British magistrate, Thomas Troward, in his *The Creative Process in the Individual* ("translated" in my new book *The Creative Power of Thought*).

The idea that "matter is changeable" is part of the Vedic (Hindu and Buddhist) tradition, described in the word *maya*. English-speakers have been taught that maya means "illusion" but its root is more like "plastic" or "malleable," with the implication that mental activity - feelings, thoughts, beliefs - affects the forms matter takes.

The basic reality of the universe, according to quantum physicists, is that bits of matter and energy emerge out of a fundamental field and then return to it, apparently at random. However, as former professor of quantum mechanics Amit Goswami points out in his *The Self-Aware Universe*, that process only happens in the presence of a conscious being. While other physicists are more hesitant to link consciousness and quantum phenomena, an increasing number accept "panentheism" - the presence of consciousness in and through everything.

"There is one mind common to all humanity" ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

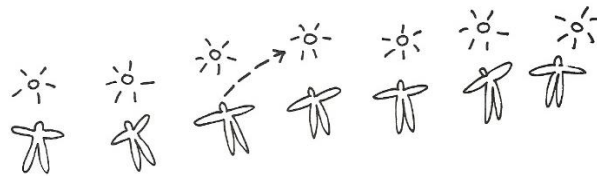
That consciousness, that "one mind" pervading all matter and energy, is shared by all human beings, as well. At the level of atoms it is not experienced as thought but, according to Danah Zohar in *Quantum Self*, as tendencies and choice. At the level of single-cells and plants it is not experienced as thought but as responses (as described in Peter Tompkins' *The Secret Life of Plants*). At the level of reptiles and birds it's experienced as instincts and sensations. At the level of mammals, it is not quite experienced as thought but (as any dog owner knows) as emotions, habits, and understandings. At the level of humans that same consciousness is experienced as thoughts, images, memories, beliefs, and imaginings - as well as all the other levels and kinds of experiences found in other forms of being. And, as humans, we have the power to choose which of these we will focus on, as well as awareness of being part of the larger whole.

It is this ability to choose that is the reason for all the Vedic trainings, all shamanic initiations, and such processes as are laid out in A Course in Miracles. For, once we realize we *can* choose, then we seek guidance on how to choose, so we can have the most satisfying and fulfilling life possible.

Then a strange thing happens. All these trainings, all these processes, not only teach us to make our experiences more satisfying, but open our awareness to a whole new state of being. We begin to experience states of being that can only be called "love-bliss-consciousness", or "heaven on earth". And that's when we discover that who we are is not this body but something that can only be called (in English) Spirit.

The discovery may take the form of an NDE, or an OBE (out-of-body experience) or an ecstatic union with all that is. It may feel like the Hindu-Buddhist Samadhi or a timeless shamanic journey. For some it begins with a past-life regression. Certain drugs seem to induce a glimpse into this state, as well. So many more ways than the death of the body!

THERE IS NO DEATH
ONLY A CHANGE OF AWARENESS,
A CHANGE OF COSMIC ADDRESS



THE REAL "I" IS BEYOND SPACE-TIME

From Space, Time, and Beyond, Ben Toben and Fred Alan Wolf

"Saecula Saeculorum" ~ Roman liturgy

This state of being, this Reality of our spiritual self, exists outside of this world, this point in space and time - outside of space and time completely.

This Heaven, this experience we've been told is not accessible unless we're very good or have been "saved," exists, not on some other "plane of being", not in another "set of dimensions", not even in the skies above. It is, as the Christian gospels tell us, "within" each and every one of us - and around us, and flowing through us. All physical form is simply a temporary structure in the field of being we call Heaven - which is the only Reality. And there is no space and time in that field because what we call the space-time continuum exists within it, like a cloud in the sky or a whirlpool in the stream. It is the Vedic Brahman, the ground of being (which is sometimes personified in order to teach, but is understood by

the teachers to be unnameable and undefine-able). It is the Tao. It is the Oversoul, the I Am, the *Yod-Heh-Vod-Heh* which cannot be spoken.

Time outside of time; space outside of space; life beyond life - this is what these NDEs are about. Not a body dying, but a soul coming alive. Not a "transition to another plane" but a realization of the true Reality of our lives. Not a hallucination based on deep beliefs and longings, but Truth made manifest to a mind that has been temporarily awakened from the dream we call life on Earth. Each person, having a unique mind and soul, has a slightly different experience, but in essence it is always the same - across cultures and generations.

So it's happening; one by one, step by step; the apparent separation is dissolving; the nightmare of isolation from our loving Source is nearly over; the light of joyful wisdom and love is dissolving the darkness of ignorance and fear. Heaven and Earth are not separate - and soon, all humanity will know it and live in that awareness... for so it truly is, and so I say Amen.