

The Standing of the Sun

Bill Isaacs: Today is the summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere. It's officially the first day of summer. It's exactly the reverse, of course, in the Southern Hemisphere. The solstice comes about when the Northern pole of the earth has its maximum tilt toward the sun. Over the past few weeks, I have been very conscious of the intensification of the light. I found myself waking up earlier and earlier, as the days got longer. In the Arctic Circle it's continuous daylight at this time of year. Light fills the world. This is also Father's Day. Our sun is a beautiful symbol of the radiant warmth of the Father of all things

There is a core pattern ordering the cosmos. The word "pattern" has the Latin root *pater*, which means father. We become aware at times like this of the celestial order of all things, embodied in the wider movement of the heavens. The word, "solstice," also flows from a beautiful source: *Sol* for sun and *stitium* which means stillness and has an even older root that means "to stand." In other words, the solstice is the standing still of the sun: a still point, a center point, around which all else revolves. This day comes around once a year. The cycle moves in an annual rhythm, a function of the fact that the earth orbits around the sun at a specific velocity and angle. Of course, the earth itself revolves. And the moon revolves around the earth. But it really doesn't stop there. Our solar system itself revolves around its own center in our galaxy; our galaxy also orbits another larger center. Orbital motion extends throughout the cosmos.

There are many variations in these rhythms. The time it takes for any particular cycle, measured in human terms at least, varies greatly. For instance, it takes us one year for the earth to move around the sun. However, it takes Saturn about 30 years, and Neptune about 160 years, to make the trip around the sun. Our galaxy takes more than 200 million years to revolve around its center. Everything orbits a center, at every level of being.

These orbital patterns have been somewhat mysterious to human beings—seemingly distant and unrelated. We now study them and now have very accurate measurements. Science writer Dr. Ethan Siegel describes the movement of the evolving and orbiting cosmos this way:

“We know exactly how the Earth moves through the Universe, and it's both beautiful and simple. Our planet and all the planets orbit the Sun in a plane, and the entire plane moves in an elliptical orbit through the galaxy. Since every star in the galaxy also moves in an ellipse, we see ourselves appear to pass in-and-out of the galactic plane periodically, on timescales of tens of millions of years, while it takes around 200-250 million years to complete one orbit around the Milky Way. The other cosmic motions all contribute, too: the Milky Way within the Local Group, the Local Group in our Supercluster, and all of it with respect to the rest-frame of the Universe”

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/startswithabang/2018/08/30/our-motion-through-space-isnt-a-vortex-but-something-far-more-interesting/?sh=729411c87ec2>

Every human being orbits around some center. As Bob Dylan once put it, “You’re gonna have to serve somebody.” There's a center for each person, a focus towards which they orient and revolve around—whether they realize it or not. For most human beings, that center has been quite earthbound, locked into form and quite local. People focus, for instance, on their family, or their ideas of success or comfort. Often money takes center stage, or an idealized view of society. Sometimes it is a political leader, or even a nation or religion. But on a day like this it is easy to lift one's eyes to the heavens and be reminded of the fact of a larger order, one that has a very definite and concrete impact on human consciousness. And one of which we are very much an intimate part. It shouts at us from the cosmos in case we weren't paying attention. Light fills the world.

While science today is ever more precise in its ability to track these movements, it is certainly clear that ours is not the only generation to have done so—to have gazed skyward and had some sense of our part in the larger order of things. For instance, it turns out that during the solstice, the sun sets exactly between the two pyramids on the Giza plain in Egypt. People have noted that during the equinoxes, in the spring and autumn, the sun sets on the shoulder of the Sphinx.

It does appear that there was some deliberate effort in the design and placement of these great symbols; there are many other measurements of the Great Pyramid that one could explore, which correlate quite precisely to other astronomical dimensions, for instance.

As symbols go, the Sphinx is particularly interesting. It has been framed as a great mystery, a half man, half lion, some would say. But from the perspective of Being, a stance we might usefully take with regard to all of these matters, it's relatively obvious what the Sphinx represents. It's the human condition: we are blended in form between Man, the truth of Being, and a beast-like or animal nature. We all have this in common. We all must manage the beast within ourselves. We all know something about this I am quite sure.

As we become aware of the presence of true being, of true identity within ourselves, and live from that reality, we have the means to function and handle everything in our lives with nobility, bringing light into every circumstance. Nevertheless, the emphasis in spiritual contexts has typically been individualistic—a focus on transcendent experience within oneself. There has been much emphasis in human consciousness on individuality, even in the cultures that are supposedly more collective. But what emerges in this era, and what we can make space for in this moment, is the emergence of the collective presence of the whole of Being. I am speaking within and from all of us in this sense: One voice, one identity that extends throughout the whole. And this awareness is gradually emerging everywhere. From the perspective of true identity this truly is no big deal. And yet from the perspective of human consciousness, it is an enormous change, one that has been both sought and despite claims to the contrary, resisted, for a long time.

There is evidently a great reintegration afoot, a change that is bringing human beings together in unprecedented ways. And there is certainly good evidence of the opposite tendency: of the assertion of divisive, authoritarian patterns of all kinds. It is quite predictable that there will be an acceleration of both of these forces in days to come. Every human being will need to work out where he or she stands with respect to these matters.

I think the reintegrative energy that we see is intimately connected to the wider evolving process in the cosmos. There is a change in the cosmic weather pattern, such that the ability to operate outside of a stable and clear awareness of being is being squeezed out of human experience. It's becoming less and less possible for that to persist, which is not something that is being accepted openly and widely by everyone. In many cases it appears to be the opposite, in fact. I think it's important that we not kid ourselves about that reality.

The last eighteen months have been a rather dramatic illustration of these dual trajectories. There has on the one hand been an enormous integrative movement at work through the pandemic, a single experience brought to everyone on the planet, and even more and unique for this age, a shared awareness of the fact of everyone having this single experience. This kind of awareness really is the seed of reintegration—albeit for the moment forced and laced with danger. There have also been over the past eighteen months many examples of divisive, maladaptive and destructive responses to the pandemic; instances around the world where both local and national leaders have lied, denied or avoided facing facts, and as a result many millions have perished.

There is a clear prerequisite to perceiving the direction of the integrative process, and to participating creatively in the larger whole: the release of judgment. As we do so we can marvel at the remarkable coordinated shift in literally every part of the planet in a matter of days. One can draw many insights, many lessons from this. For instance, it becomes quite clear that we truly are one whole, and that while any are unsafe, all are unsafe. There are other dimensions to this shift as well. Another is the value of reflection, forced on many people because of being locked down, some for the first time in their lives. People experienced, seemingly out of nowhere, a compulsion to step back to look at their lives. And apparently many are coming out of this experience asking, “What am I doing?” “Why am I doing it the way I was doing it?” “What really matters?” Such thinking has produced among other things a major exodus out of cities and concomitant skyrocketing of housing prices. While there is an intense desire in many to return to a familiar state, the recognition is coming that there really is no going back, only forward to something new.

Another insight that can be seen from this experience is to acknowledge the remarkable power of the invisible and microscopic. After all, the virus is invisible to the eye. We have all been deeply and permanently impacted at a huge scale by something no one can see. We tend to privilege and make significant the large and noisy factors that dominate experience. And yet these invisible particles have catalyzed a planetary scale change: a very powerful indicator and symbol of where real power lies. The paradigm that big things, big moves, are what is necessary to cause big change falls apart in this light. This is another indicator of movement into a new paradigm.

We can certainly see an intensifying change of pattern on a large scale now. Things are heating up. The Western part of the United States is in severe drought conditions; the worst in centuries, far as anyone can tell. Conditions on the planet are tough and likely to get tougher. And yet light fills the world.

A reorientation is underway. While we see in the sun a focus point around which everything on earth revolves, a few hundred years ago, the paradigm was different. Our reference point was ourselves. The earth was the center, and people believed that the sun revolved around us. You could argue that people still think this way! But we had the Copernican revolution, new insights leading to a major paradigm change. As we have been reflecting today, we can see another massive change afoot—one that acknowledges the shared identity of being, around which all orbits. In the physical sense we revolve around an ever-greater set of centers, but that all of this is a symbol of the one point of center, shared among all. And this is the awakening opportunity.

We have the recognition that the machinery of the cosmos operates here, down to the micro level of our lives, in each breath, each thought. The primary block in perception has been the insistence on judgment, the resolve that human thought could control and order experience. This has created the separation that is so widely known. And so here we are with the opportunity to let that impulse dissolve in ourselves and to perceive the reintegrative effort being undertaken by the cosmos; but more than perceive it, to embody it. The pandemic, seen from this light, is a blessing. That can sound callous to human ears. And of course, the suffering that has gone on is certainly nothing we would wish anyone to have to endure. But the consequence of being compelled to move towards greater integration is quite evident.

What does it take to reveal a sacred space in which true center can be known continuously? Occasions like the solstice might bring this awareness to focus; but we can let it be present all the time. As that is, so there is an intensification of the representation of the center around which everything revolves, and it's brought more to point in human experience, beginning with oneSelf.

This has also been a great mystery. How could it all be brought to order simply through the presence of Being known in me? The judgment to release here begins with

assessments of one's own significance, including both the tendency to over-inflate it and to under-inflate it. Thinking one is "big" by virtue of having some level of awareness, or attempting to be "modest"—by acknowledging we are a small part of the larger whole—become seen as irrelevant assessments. We just Are. I just Am. We each of course have our own distinct sphere that we center, as intimately unified aspects of one vast Whole.

I was treated to a great Father's Day this morning from my two little boys, my older son and my wife, with a whole set of creative gifts. Being present together in this way is as wonderful as it gets. It's very much a part of this exact story—to be honored, and to honor the Father of all, and so to let the light fill the world. What else is there to do?

June 20, 2021

Bill Isaacs: bill.isaacs@dialogos.com

Introductory Music

Time

Composed and performed by Max Ananyev

Concluding Music

Trois Gymnopédies: No. 1, Lent et douloureux

Composed by Erik Satie & performed by Stephane Blet