

**B**irth is entrance into chaos. We are not born equipped with a clear understanding of who we are and why we are here. We are not even born fully functional, but must learn to use our arms and legs, even our eyes and other senses. We are thrown into a swirl of countless possibilities and ever-shifting forms, none of which has any obvious or intrinsic meaning.

*"Meaning is the function of mind. It does not inhere in things themselves, nor in consciousness or awareness itself. Where there is simple, direct awareness of something, there is no meaning. The worlds are without meaning. Just so, consciousness and every body are without meaning. Meaning appears only when something arising is compared, found to be like something in past experiences. The usual man lives in an unreal world of meanings and the absence of meanings. He is aware of little directly, but perceives all arising relative to meaning."*<sup>1</sup>



Man is a creature addicted to meaning, for whom the search for meaning has become a more or less constant activity. Meaning is the tool by which we seek

happiness and shield ourselves against everything that threatens us in our mortality. Therefore, meaning is generally seen as the single most important attribute of any object or event, and we chronically limit awareness to objects and events to which we can ascribe meaning. All else either goes unnoticed or is relegated to the status of "nonsense." Yet, as Master Da Free John observes:

*"We are all participants in a vast Realm of Nonsense, and we are struggling to make 'sense' of it by attaching ourselves to selected or experientially preferred phenomena. We are confronted by an Infinite Chaos of Experience, and we each try to enforce an order and a limit on Infinity via the self-limiting mechanisms of our own body-mind and independent consciousness. We each try to make a 'Universe' out of 'Chaos' by continually imagining an inner being, or mind, or soul that is 'I' and that is a fixed and independent center of experience. The inner 'I' is the 'Principle' to which experience is referred, and it is this self-reference that provides a center and singleness to the otherwise open-ended and centerless chaos of experiences and possibilities. The 'I,' and not phenomena themselves, is the 'Principle' whereby the World-Process is made to appear as a defined and logical 'Universe.' Then, on the basis of the 'I-sense, we exploit our internal and external experiential possibilities in the 'Universe.' But the truth of the matter is that we are terrified by our vulnerable mortality, and the Infinite Chaos of the World-Process is not a Condition into which we tend to be joyfully and ecstatically surrendered."*

*"We are afraid, because we exist, and we observe that our existence can apparently come to an end. We also observe that our existence can achieve pleasurable distraction. Thus, we are attached to all the ways by which we can make ourselves feel good, and we are afraid of all the ways by which we can suffer and be annihilated. That fear is our fundamental response to existence. It is what produces common religion, mysticism, conventional spirituality, science, popular culture, everyday life, all the ways by which mortals struggle to be satisfied."*<sup>2</sup>

Through structures of meaning, erected on the cornerstone of the "I," Man imposes order on chaos. Even the simple act of seeing involves an imposition of order—not merely perception, but conception. People who have had their sight restored after being blind from birth are unable to distinguish even the simplest objects. They must learn to see. To see an object is to conceive it as limited and separate from the seer and all other objects. From the position of the

2. Da Free John, *Scientific Proof of the Existence of God Will Soon Be Announced by the White House!* (Middletown, Calif.: The Dawn Horse Press, 1980), p. 163.



assumed separate self, Man confronts Reality as "Other," alien to his being. He creates systems of meaning to function as a screen to limit awareness and as models to understand and order this limited reality.

Models of reality can be simple, as in ancient myth, or complex, as in the modern scientific world-view, but their primary function is to provide meaningfulness. Roy A. Rappaport, in *Ecology, Meaning, and Religion*, draws the useful distinction between meaning and meaningfulness.<sup>3</sup> The former is based on semantic sense, such as when one distinguishes an "animal" from a "human being." But the latter carries an added emotional "charge" or significance, and points to a level of understanding beyond simple distinction. Meaningfulness, which is a higher-order form of meaning, is based on the discovery of similarities which transcend

3. Roy A. Rappaport, *Ecology, Meaning, and Religion* (Richmond, Calif.: North Atlantic Books, 1979), pp. 126-27.

1. Bubba [Da] Free John, *The Paradox of Instruction* (San Francisco: The Dawn Horse Press, 1977), p. 112.

distinctions, yielding a more general truth that unites apparent differences. The characteristic vehicle of meaningfulness is not fact or abstract description, but metaphor—significantly, the primary mode of mythology.

From ancient times, Man has been a myth-maker, expressing his search for meaningfulness, and his curiosity about the world and himself. One would imagine that the most common questions to arise in the minds of men would concern why and how some thing or being came to exist, and not surprisingly, most myths are etiological. Creation myths are not merely the most common forms of mythological account, they seem to be a universal feature of human society.

A recurrent motif in the creation myths is the sacrifice or self-mortification of the Original Being, the archetypal Person or Cosmic Man. This is, for instance, imaginatively elaborated in Zuni mythology where Awonawilona, the Maker of All, is said to have conceived within himself and fashioned out of himself the universe, as well as the Earth-Mother and the Sky-Father who then lay together to beget the world's creatures. According to the Thompson Indians of the North Pacific Coast, the Chief or Old One had to pull five hairs from his head to create the first five women. Three he turned into the elements Water, Earth, and Fire. The other two (one good, one evil) he impregnated to beget the ancestors of mankind. In the mythology of some tribal peoples, such as the Pawnee Indians, the archetypal Person is female—Mother Corn. Again the metaphor is that of self-sacrifice. The archetypal Mother creates worlds and beings from her own body and gives them birth.

Possibly the clearest expression of this motif is found in India, in the Purusha myth of the ancient Vedic people as it was handed down in the *Rigveda* (X.40). The motif of sacrifice is prominent throughout Indian culture. Sacrifice, which means "to make whole or holy," is a key concept in all the esoteric schools of liberation. Even in exoteric ritualism the sacrifice or *yajna* is understood to be a recapitulation, on the human plane, of the original Sacrifice of the Primordial Being.

Sacrifice is at the core of all true spirituality. As Master Da Free John expresses it:

*"The Living God, the Beloved of all beings, has, from eternity, become a Great Sacrifice. The Radiant One has become the process of all possibilities. We are not merely the creatures or victims of God, created and set apart to suffer for some inexplicable reason. We are the very Sacrifice of God. God is Alive as us. Our lives are the creative ordeal to which God is eternally submitted. We need only Realize the Living One and thus become capable of this Divine Sacrifice,*

*which is an eternal creative ordeal of Love that leads, step by step, toward a Most Wonderful Transformation. Once we transcend the illusion of our dark separate selves and enter into the Divine Process, we see clearly that the existence and destiny of the world and every being is the Fullness of Love-Bliss in a perfectly Transformed state that has become One with the Person and the Domain of the Transcendental Divine."*<sup>4</sup>

This wisdom about the nature of self-sacrifice is absent in modern interpretations of human genesis. Instead, scientists engage in laborious paleontological reconstructions, forever seeking the "missing link." The real missing link, however, is the understanding of the mechanism by which Man avoids



spiritual self-sacrifice, by which he perpetuates his subhuman disposition. Since the knowledge explosion that began with the rise of science in the Renaissance, the Western model of the world has become increasingly complex, but at the same time more factual, mental, and abstract, less human-oriented, less personally meaningful. The modern model of human nature and genesis is deficient. It is not simply objectively incomplete. It lacks the sensitivity and intuitive, feeling dimension of the ancient myths, whose creators understood the sacrificial, psycho-physical nature of the universe.

The modern cult of fact-finding or informationism has effectively buried this archaic sensitivity and intuitive knowledge, and is actively suppressing it. Yet, while scientific materialism is busy "demythologizing" Man's models of the universe, it simultaneously creates new myths: the myth of unlimited progress (now exploded by science itself, though still held by many

people), the myth of science as the cure for all social ills, the myth that there is no higher Reality but that all that exists is what registers on the instruments of science.

Myth, like cult, has become a dirty word. Scientific man operates only with logical models, rational systems. This is expressive of his avoidance of the feeling dimension. In authentic spiritual life, emotion must not be excised but integrated. Myth, like poetry, has its place in the culture of mankind. Yet, like every other form of human knowledge and experience, it must ultimately be transcended. True Wisdom is the sacrifice of meaning.

*"All meaning is implication. Something is meaningful when it implies something else, when it stands for something, when it stands out in Consciousness, distracting the Consciousness from its own Condition of Enjoyment. True Liberation involves freedom from all implication, and, therefore, from the whole force of meaning, the power of living dreams, the power of worlds and experiences. When the power of meaning or implication is sacrificed or comprehended in the Consciousness, then the creative position fails at its root. Where there is no meaning, no force of implication, the Consciousness rests in its own Realm, no longer making the dream of self and world. Then the only Destiny is the Uncreated, the seedless Realm, which may not be described, since it has no relation to any gross or heavenly realm that any being, great or small, has ever known. My devotee is the inheritor of this Destiny and this Sacrifice."*<sup>5</sup>

5. *The Paradox of Instruction*, pp. 111-12.

#### Suggested Readings Related to the First Stage of Life

Asimov, Isaac. *In the Beginning*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1981.

Eliade, Mircea. *Gods, Goddesses and Myths of Creation: A Thematic Sourcebook of the History of Religions*. Part 1 of *From Primitives to Zen*. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.

Kalter, Reuben Luther. *Creationism: The Scientific Evidence of Creator Plan and Purpose for Mankind As His Universe*. Bible and Science Seminar Series. Minneapolis, Minn.: Theotes-Logos Research, 1979.

Maclagan, David. *Creation Myths/Man's Introduction to the World*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1977.

4. Da Free John, *The Four Fundamental Questions* (Clearlake, Calif.: The Dawn Horse Press, 1980), pp. 82-83.