

Contemplation:

The Universal Birth of the New Soul

December 2022

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The Spiritual Wisdom at the heart of all religious traditions

speaks directly to the heart of every seeker of the Light.

Today we would like to share and reflect on a selection of traditional stories from across the world describing the conception and birth of the New Soul.

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30 seconds musical interlude

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From West Africa comes this Yoruba story about the birth of Oshun:

A few years had passed in the kingdom of Olodumare

and peace had come upon the lands.

Harmony and tranquility had come,

and in Obatala's home as well tranquility had also come to pass,

although his mental illness lingered with him

and he could not fully attend to the kingdom.

And so it was his wife Yemaya had taken over and administered the kingdom.

Under her direction it became a world of pleasure, peaceful and of beauty;

order and harmony.

It was then after all these years on her rounds in the kingdom,

she felt a slight kick within her womb.

Joy had overcome her at last with the notion of a new child. Everyone in the kingdom could see the glow upon Yemaya as the months passed and her belly grew with life. They all knew this child was special and awaited the day of its arrival with joy and blessings.

The day finally arrived and Yemaya gave birth to a beautiful girl of immense beauty, and she was named Oshun, and received the blessings of Olodumare.

When Yemaya saw her laying there in her arms, a jubilant scream of emotion came from within Yemaya's soul and she shouted for all to hear:

"Yalorde ....Yalorde..... a queen, a queen has come!"

Yemaya proclaimed that Oshun would inherit all that was hers to give. Oshun would receive all sweet waters of earth, gold, love even the crown that Yemaya wore.

When everyone in the kingdom saw Oshun for the first time they became delighted and bowed to the beauty of her mothers arms.

Oshun had come in the perfect moment of the kingdom, and she would one day become the most important Orisa, as she would prove in her lifetime.

Yemaya knew then that Olodumare had given her a very special gift and when the time came it would be Oshun who would save the kingdom from great problems.

Thus, the human race would come and look to her in times of great need.

As she grew Oshun became more and more beautiful with each passing year. At a early age she became known as the Goddess of Love of the Yoruba, and there was no one who could take this title from her.

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30 seconds musical interlude

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We reflect on the biblical narrative from the Gospels of Mathew and Luke:

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to Mary,  
a virgin engaged to Joseph of the house of David, announcing:  
"Greetings, the Lord is with you. For you have found favour with God:  
you will conceive and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus."

Mary responded: "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"  
The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you,  
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you;  
therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called 'Son of God.'"

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying,  
"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife."  
And so when Caesar Augustus decreed a census,  
Joseph had to return to Bethlehem with Mary, who was heavy with child.  
Upon arriving in Bethlehem, they found there was no lodging,  
so Mary and Joseph took shelter in a stable.

During the night Mary gave birth to a son,  
wrapped him in cloth and placed him in a manger.  
An angel of the Lord appeared to shepherds guarding their flocks nearby,  
and the glory of the Lord shone around them.

The Angel said: “Do not be afraid.

I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all humankind.

In the town of David, a Saviour has been born; he is the Messiah.”

After visiting the newborn Saviour, the shepherds spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed.

Three wise men, following a bright star from the East, arrived to bestow gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh on the newborn king.

They had visited King Herod, who, unaware of all these things, asked them to report to him on their return.

Soon after, an angel again appeared to Joseph in a dream, telling him to flee to Egypt with Mary and the infant Jesus, since King Herod sought to kill the child.

After a time, Herod died, and the holy family returned to Nazareth with Jesus. Joseph and Mary performed all that was necessary according to the law, and Jesus grew strong in spirit and was filled with wisdom and the grace of God.

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30 seconds musical interlude

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This Aztec myth describes the birth of Huītzilōpōchtli, the god of the Sun:

Coatlicue, meaning 'mother of the gods', is the Aztec goddess who gave birth to the sun and the stars, and was the wife of Mixcōhuātl.

One day Coatlicue was sweeping the floor of the temple on Coatepec when a tuft of feathers fell from the sky.

She tucked them into her belt and later discovered that they had disappeared.

She also discovered that she was mysteriously pregnant.

Her daughter Coyolxauhqui felt dishonoured by the pregnancy,

so she hatched a plot along with her 400 brothers, to kill their mother.

However, this was not to be.

The child Coatlicue was carrying was none other than Huitzilopochtli,  
the sun god.

When Coatlicue was about to meet her demise at the hands of Coyolxauhqui,  
Huitzilopochtli was born as a full-grown man, armed and ready for battle.

He decapitated Coyolxauhqui and her body tumbled down  
to the base of the temple and was broken into pieces.

Coatlicue regretted such violence.

So Huitzilopochtli threw Coyolxauhqui's head into the sky to form the Moon,  
so that his mother would be comforted in seeing her daughter

in the sky every night. Huitzilopochtli also attacked his 400 brothers.

Those who survived became the Southern stars in the sky.

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30 seconds musical interlude

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This ancient story is a Dreaming of the Ngiyampaa people of outback Australia:

Long ago in the Dreamtime, before the ancestors walked the land,

two sisters strolled through fields carpeted with flowers.

Where these sisters came from no one knows; for it was the springtime of the  
world when all life was still young, and there were not yet any men in the land.

The sisters walked joyfully together amongst the sea of sweet-scented flowers,  
at times hand in hand, and at other times apart,

as they searched for yams and berries to satisfy their hunger.

As one particularly bright and beautiful sunny day drew to a close,  
one of the sisters noticed an unusually large flower,  
and bending down to look at it,  
she saw in the petals the face of a tiny baby so appealing  
she plucked the flower immediately.

Carefully she placed the flower between two pieces of bark to protect it,  
leaving it in the field so that it would be washed with the dew in the early  
morning. Sure that she had found a treasure she must keep to herself,  
without saying anything to her sister, she visited the flower every day  
as the baby grew and became more desirable every time she looked at it.

But summer passed quickly,  
and as the autumn nights steadily became colder and winter approached,  
the girl suddenly realised that the flower was fading away.  
Although it was still growing,  
the little child's face and hands were turning blue with cold.  
Immediately she hurried back to the bark hut where she slept with her sister,  
and fetching a soft piece of possum fur,  
she gently wrapped the baby to protect it from the cold.  
When the baby smiled at her, her heart turned over,  
and she instinctively picked him up and put him to her breast,  
as he lay contentedly in her arms, clasping her breast and waving his tiny hands.

Now the girl who had not known a man had become a mother,  
and the time had come to tell her sister of the wonderful thing  
that had happened amongst the flowers of the field.  
Together they nurtured the child through infancy,

playing with him and teaching him to speak and sing,  
and bestowing on him the little knowledge they possessed.  
When fully grown the man-child became Mulyan, the Eagle-hawk,  
and at the end of his life rose into the sky as a bright red star.

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30 seconds musical interlude

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From ancient Nepal comes the story of the Birth of the Buddha:

A Nepalese king, Suddhodana, married a beautiful princess named Maha Maya.  
One full moon night, the queen had a vivid dream.

She felt herself being carried away by four devas-spirits  
to Lake Anotatta in the Himalayas.

After bathing her in the lake, the devas clothed her in heavenly cloths,  
anointed her with perfumes, and bedecked her with divine flowers.

Soon after a white elephant, holding a white lotus flower in its trunk,  
appeared and went round her three times,  
entering her womb through her right side.

The next day, early in the morning, the queen told the king about the dream.

The king was puzzled and sent for some wise men  
to discover the meaning of the dream. The wise men said,  
"Your Majesty, you are very lucky. The devas have chosen our queen  
as the mother of the Purest-One and the child will become a very great being."

The king and queen were very happy when they heard this.

The whole kingdom waited eagerly for the birth of the new prince,

and Queen Maya enjoyed a happy and healthy pregnancy,  
living a pure life for herself and her unborn child.

As Queen Maya was expecting her child, she went to the king and said,  
"My dear, I have to go back to my parents. My baby is almost due."  
The king sent soldiers ahead to clear the road and prepared others  
to guard the queen as she was carried in a decorated palanquin.  
But on the way to the Koliya country, the great procession  
passed a beautiful garden, and the queen ordered the bearers to stop for a while.  
As she rested underneath one of the sala trees,  
her birth began and a baby boy was born.

According to the legends about the baby Buddha,  
he began to walk seven steps forward  
and at each step a lotus flower appeared on the ground.  
Then, at the seventh stride, he stopped and with a noble voice shouted:

"I am chief of the world,  
Eldest am I in the world,  
Foremost am I in the world.  
This is the last birth.  
There is now no more coming to be."

After the birth of her baby son,  
Queen Maha Maya immediately returned to Kapilavatthu.  
When the king learnt of this he was very happy,  
and as news of the birth of the long-awaited heir spread around the kingdom  
there was rejoicing all over the country.

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30 seconds musical interlude

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When we open ourselves to the Spiritual essence within all things,  
we see through the outer appearances of different ways of expressing  
the Universal Spirit, and find the One Spirit in All,  
and at the heart of our own Being.

Thank you for listening.