

## **Homework**

### **Reflections Initiations by Earth, Class 2: Roots in the Earth**

From your roots you gain your animal and survival instincts, your connections to the laws of nature, to your own humanity and eventual identity. Each person needs to find an identity that is separate from the tribe. You must stray from the whole to be able to return as an individual. This need activates an initiation, a collision with tribal roots that prevents discovery of the individual emerging within. You either stand up for who you are or you turn to anger for not being supported. You either make the journey or you find a hiding place, a safe house and retreat inside for years.

#### **Opening Prayer:**

The roots of life have no beginning. The idea of billions of years ago means nothing to me. I have no idea what a black hole is and I don't believe in that theory anyway. Life is – that's all I know. But I also believe life is holy. Life – all life – is sacred, down to its roots. I marvel at this whole theater of creation – the stars, the galaxies, the vastness of all that the eye can see. I am in awe of how every living being on this Earth goes about its day doing its task – birds in flight, creatures in the ocean and forests, in the bush and hidden in places far from the human eye. The Earth keeps all of us alive – every living creature sharing this planet lives through the gracious sustenance of this magnificent Being of life, planet Earth. “Lord, break my heart into pieces, enough so that all living creatures can find a loving place within me to rest while I keep watch over them with my prayers. Keep me mindful that I am here for such a short time. I must do what I can while I can to nurture this Earth, to care for and about all life in whatever ways I can. I admit that I have been slow to offer my help in the past. I have looked the other way, preferring to believe that I am safe in my comfortable world. I will keep my eyes open now and I ask that you fill my soul with the grace of fortitude. Hover over me, Lord. Amen.”

#### **Your practice for the week**

The stories that you tell yourself about your life are like rings that form within the trunk of a tree. With the passing of the years, those rings tell the story of that tree, revealing whether it has endured long droughts or floods or infestations of insects or whether it has enjoyed just the right climate with minimal or average storms. Your body carries the rings of your life like a tree, reflecting the stories of your roots and how you shaped – and continue to shape – your identity.

- Does your history go to stories of strength or wounds? Wisdom or woe? To great teachings and wise elders/teachers or to traumas of abandonment?
- You are not just an apple that fell from any tree but rather from A tree. How did gaining your own identity collide with tribal roots designed to prevent discovery of your individual identity?

#### **Meditation**

Heaven help me understand that the experiences of not being accepted, or of being misunderstood or rejected were tied to my own impulse to leave the protection of “group thought” and into the my own capacity for discernment.

### **Closing prayer**

“Lord, I can see that You have released the winds of change upon the Earth. I can see that storms will come and mountains will shake and the land will crack wide open here and there and everywhere now. I can see that you have ignited the fires of transformation. People will wonder what is happening. Some will run backwards and try to hide in the old ways. Others will stand still, frightened, unable to move. I believe you have unleashed a bridge, a beam of light, a birth canal to a new way of sharing this planet. We must become one community of life. We must share this Earth as one humanity. It does not belong to any one of us; it belongs to all living creatures. We cannot continue to believe what is not true. Our world has become too small. The moment has come for that truth to show itself and it is blinding for so many. But then, the truth has always blinded people until they adjusted. And then their sight returned. Birth is not easy and it is never without pain. The birth canal is a dark passageway, a dark night before the bright dawn of life. But that bright dawn is a given, an assured destination. I believe these winds were always coming this way. I also know that no external wall can stand up to them. But a soul with stamina has nothing to fear. No wind can harm a person whose inner self has roots in truth. Grant me the courage to see the truth and not be blinded by my own fear. I am not always courageous. I am not always ready to go the next step. But I do know I cannot choose otherwise. Hover over me, Lord. Amen.”