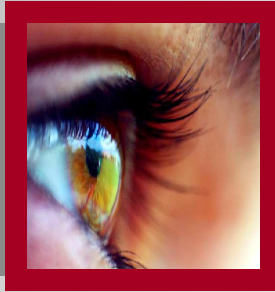


VISIO



DIVINA

The Wisdom Contemplative Vision

REIGNING

The Gospel of Thomas, Logion 2

Of all the words that Yeshua uses to mark the progression of the seeker of wisdom, the word reigning may be the most difficult to understand. In most democratic societies we do not think much about monarchies, though there are constitutional monarchies like Great Britain as examples of this form of government.

How might wisdom be understood as a form of reigning like a queen or a king? Imagine that there is a subject or an area of expertise in your life over which you are quite masterful. We of say that you've mastered an art, a craft, a musical instrument, or an area of knowledge when you are able to use it skillfully. It means that in some sense it is under your control or command, that you can use it at will.

We might think, then, that you are sovereign over that subject or topic. You can use it masterfully. In that domain you reign.

Suppose, then, that wisdom could be used in a sovereign way. If we embodied whatever wisdom we have learned so that it were a part of us, it would then be within our inner domain over which we exercise sovereignty.

Sovereignty need not mean brutal or forced domination. It is more like mastery than tyranny, and there is joy in its use because we have integrated it into our whole being. It is that much a part of us, and not something extraneous to us. This is a kind of benign dominion that can be used for the good of all.

Something like this seems to be at the heart of Yeshua's use of this word. We have only to remember that he uses "Kingdom" to describe the realm over which God is sovereign. And that "monarchy" is a rule of love, beauty and justice. It is not a reign of terror or tyranny.

Yeshua's view of the Divine as a Sovereign was not an isolated one. The Greek culture also envisioned a wise king or queen at the heart of its understanding of the best politics and government. In the Persian world God was understood to be the Lord of Wisdom (*Ahura Mazda*) who reigned over darkness and light. These are a few of the many associations made between sovereignty and wisdom.

Reflections on Image and Text:

1. *It is difficult to portray the idea of sovereignty in an image without it becoming a form of dominating hierarchy. It is clear that wisdom cannot be such a reign. However, it involves sovereignty of some kind. Looking at the first image, do you sense its benign nature?*
2. *What else do you see and sense in this image that helps you understand the exercise of sovereignty and how it might be used by a Master?*
3. *Are there areas over which you feel a kind of sovereignty? How do those feel to you especially when you exercise your mastery in them?*
4. *How do you imagine wisdom to be a kind of inner mastery? How does it feel when you exercise your skill and mastery?*
5. *What effects does sovereignty have upon others who witness or experience it?*
6. *How might you integrate wisdom? What practices could you use to gain mastery?*

LECTIO DIVINA

The Contemplative Reading of a Sapiential Text

Yeshua says,

If you are searching,
you must not stop until you find.
When you find, however,
you will become troubled.
Your confusion will give way to wonder.
In wonder you will reign over all things.
Your sovereignty will be your rest.

—*Logion 2*

Contemplating
THE ILLUMINATIONS

