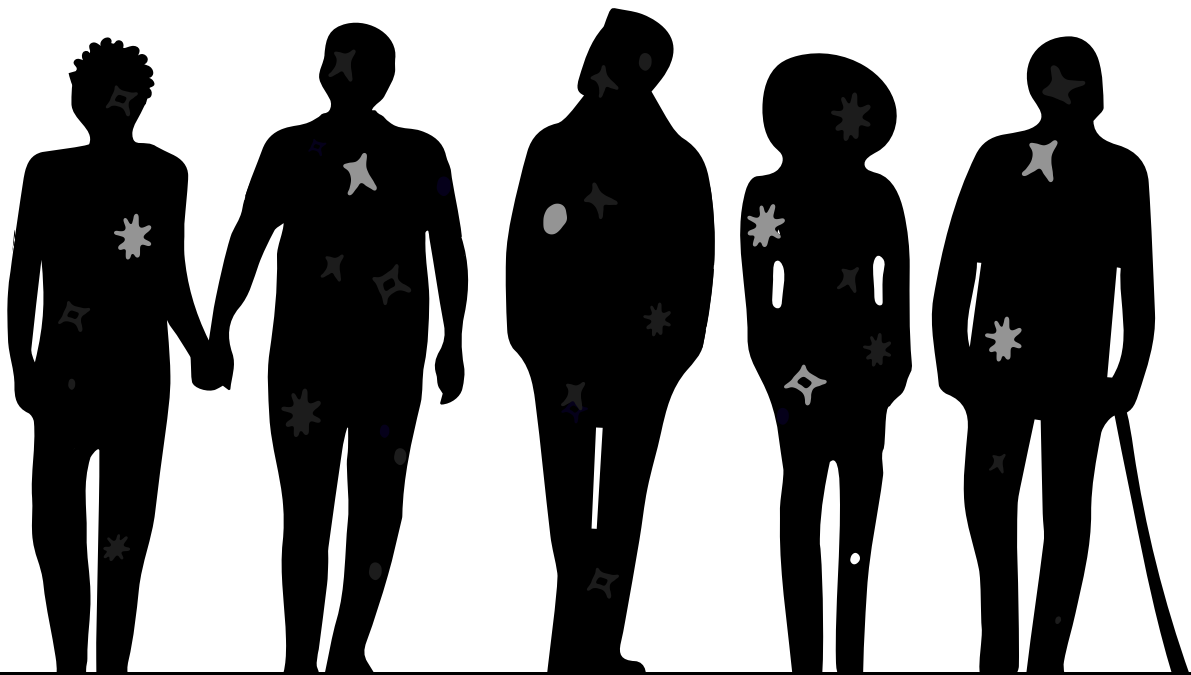


THE COSMIC WE

Episode 6: Futurism and Cosmic Rebirth

with Dr. Barbara Holmes and Dr. Donald Bryant



from the CENTER FOR ACTION AND CONTEMPLATION

Barbara Holmes: When crisis is a context for the past and present, hopeful people manage the now and imagine a future. When I first conceived my book *Crisis Contemplation*, I thought it would end with the chapter on healing. It didn't take long to realize that although our hope of healing has dominated our dreams and our social narratives throughout my lifetime, those dreams have roots in the politics and social concerns of this present era.

We have to imagine more peace than we currently have and more justice than the mere conversion of racist policies will allow. A transformative change is needed. We are not just organisms functioning on a biological level. Our sphere of being also includes stardust and consciousness. We all have a spark of divinity within, a flicker of the holy fire that can be diminished but never extinguished.

If we are treated as prey, stolen from our native lands, killed without restraint by those agencies charged with the responsibility of keeping order, our sense of empowerment and agency may wane.

During a crisis, survival becomes the focus. Understand now, prey run from predators. And so without realizing it, as we spiritually and actively seek to escape the clutches of white supremacy, we begin to think of ourselves as hapless victims of a prowling beast that cannot be stopped.

When parents of BIPOC children give the talk today, we're teaching our children to survive predation. But we have to imagine more. We have to imagine a new future before we can build it and inhabit it.

But how do we imagine what we've never known? Can we engage the imaginative constructs of Afrofuturism as a vehicle for creating a future?

Cosmic rebirthing requires a reclamation of everyday mysticism. If we're to remember our cosmic origins, if we are to recognize the star stuff in our bodies, if we're to understand our biogenic connections one to another, then we need more mystery, not less.

During crisis, we survive in community through the contemplative enhancement of discernment by tapping into spiritual wisdom sources, by reordering our taken for granted values, and by reliance upon the spirit within.

Donny Bryant: From the Center for Action and Contemplation, I'm Donny Bryant.

Barbara Holmes: I'm Barbara Holmes.

Donny Bryant: And this is The Cosmic We.

Wow. Dr. B. Chapter six already, Futurism and Cosmic Rebirth.

Barbara Holmes: Oh yes.

Donny Bryant: I think this is a heavy chapter. This is a big chapter. This is a very intriguing chapter. And how do you want to begin this conversation?

Barbara Holmes: Well, I think we need to ground it by talking about what Afrofuturism is. And it gets pretty complicated, and I'm not going to make it any more complicated than it needs to be. So let's start off with the simple definition.

Afrofuturism is a claim that there are Black people in the future. Now, that sounds like an unnecessary statement, that there are Black people in the future, but because of the oppression and the violence against people of color, this is not an easy claim to make. It's sort of like you shouldn't have to say Black Lives Matter, but you do have to say that.

Afrofuturism is the claim that we make it, we get there. It was a term that was coined by Mark Dery in 1993. He wrote an essay, *Back to the Future*, and he talked about the fact that the very essence of African strategies for survival is the creative impulse, the mythology, and the leap forward into the future.

So we have a long history of that because even the first generation of enslaved Africans brought with them stories of flying Africans, very futuristic thoughts. So it didn't really start with Wakanda. It began way before then.

So I think it was Toni Cade Bambara who talked about the necessity of magic and of creativity for Afrofuturism. And she says something like this. She says, "People could fly." They say that long ago in Africa some of the people knew the magic. They would walk up on the air like climbing up on a gate, and they flew like blackbird over the fields.

Now, Tony Morrison, when you hear something like that, you go, "Yeah, yeah, right, people were flying," but Tony Morrison says, "The one thing you say about a myth is there's got to be some truth in there somewhere."

So basically what you're looking is Black speculative tradition, which is the spiritual mother of folks like Octavia Butler, Amiri Baraka and Sun Ra. These are all Afrofuturists.

Recent artists who are Afrofuturists are Janelle Monae, Missy Elliott, and of course the movie *Black Panther*. So Afrofuturism expresses itself in many, many genres, science, technology, social media, the arts, film, song, music. I mean, you got Sun Ra right up in that mix. He was one of the first.

Donny Bryant: So in other words, is Afrofuturism the multidisciplinary approach or vehicle of seeing ourselves differently?

Barbara Holmes: Yes. It's that and a little more.

Donny Bryant: Okay, that and a little more.

Barbara Holmes: It's shapeshifting. It's the ability to ... It's almost as if, "Hey, you can't catch us because we can become invisible. You can't kill us all because some of us are going to make that leap into the future. We're going to transcend because there's magic in our midst."

Josh Jones says this about it. He says, “Afrofuturism transforms trauma, the erasure of the black past, the bleak prospects for the future into creative, powerful displays of creative agency.” And no matter what, it’s a radical act for Black people to imagine a future.

Donny Bryant: Yeah. That’s powerful, the transformation of trauma and the understanding that it is a radical act to see yourself differently.

You mentioned Black Panther, which obviously Wakanda Forever, these are some of the more recent, but would you include in that particular genre movies like Creed or Black Adam or The Woman King, these movies that seek to identify a particularly identity that transcends the trauma, that transcends the oppression, that transcends the narratives, that have the stock narratives and gives a future, a vision of a future that is prophetic, that is engaging, that is inspiring?

Barbara Holmes: Yeah. And it’s not like a pie in the sky future either. It’s a future that you can actually imagine inhabiting. I haven’t gotten a chance to see many movies lately, so I haven’t seen Creed or The Woman King, which is probably going to be a little too violent for my taste. But of the ones you mentioned, The Woman King sounds like it’s probably more in the genre than Creed would be. Creed is, from what I understand without having seen it, about identity and self-respect and all of that kind of stuff, but I don’t see the futurism. You may have seen it and you may know more about it than I do.

Donny Bryant: Yeah. What’s interesting about Creed is that it’s on the heels of the Rocky Balboa, the movies, the Rocky one, Rocky two, which is obviously starring Sylvester Stallone. Apollo Creed was one of Rocky’s arch nemesis, and became a friend in the movie. And of course, Apollo had a son, and his son in the future Creed movies, which is kind of that movie is based upon the son’s identity and the son’s evolving into a boxer.

But what’s interesting is that from a pop culture standpoint, Rocky was it for many years as a kid growing up. I mean, I remember modeling running up when Rocky Balboa ran up on the top in Philadelphia, and he’s standing there with his ... I mean I literally remember doing pushups and sit-ups in my living room trying to get strong like Rocky. So there was an inspirational, but today, BIPOC individuals, Black and brown individuals watching, not Rocky Balboa, the Italian Stallion, but they’re watching Creed, right?

And Creed, they’re seeing themselves in this young man. They’re seeing themselves in the narratives, in the inspirational stories that are being told in these movies. So that’s why I asked, would Creed and movies like that be fit in this Afro, in a more modern Afrofuturism perspective here? So that’s why I put that in there.

But it’s very interesting, Dr. B. I think this is language, a framework that many people, many of us are very new to, this understanding. As you indicated, this

is not something that's new. I mean, this is something that has been engaging for generations. I mean, understanding here just the language. Afrofuturism may be new to people.

Could you help us understand a little bit more this? You've already tapped into it, but why this is important? Why seeing our ourselves differently is critical?

Barbara Holmes: Because you can't really survive without hope, Dr. Donny. What Afrofuturism does is it says there's hope, there's a way out of this. Because of the cyclical nature of oppression, you can absolutely lose hope because your generation fought segregation, and yet here it comes again and people are being killed by police officers; unarmed, innocent folk. It just, it seems to shapeshift and come back in every generation, which I think we talked about in one of the chapters.

So what Afrofuturism does is it says we can leap beyond the ordinary, that we are more than the color of our skin, that we're more than what people have decided our limitations are, that we have magic within our bones. And I think the person who gives you a visual depiction of what Afrofuturism the very best is Mikael Owunna, and we did an interview with him early on.

Donny Bryant: We sure did, yeah.

Barbara Holmes: His work is spectacular. Now, that's Afrofuturism at its best, at his very best because he is doing photography that shows the sacred self of people of color. I think it was Owunna who says, "The question I asked myself was, how can I transfigure Black bodies from sites of death and state violence into transcendent forms, into vessels of eternal cosmic life?"

He calls himself an Astro-Black mythologist. I mean that's really something. The astro communicates how life in many African traditions is in constant communication with interstellar and planetary context. The black evokes blackness as a divine and cosmic principle of the universe. And mythology serves as a mode of knowledge that fuses science, religion, and art to transform human consciousness. So that's what an Astro-Black mythologist is, and he certainly is one.

Donny Bryant: Yeah, I really love that. And you're right, he is a great example to describe or to articulate and illustrate really what it means to see yourself differently.

I think in a conversation with him, I remember discussing this and I remember him saying, "that I didn't really want to portray Black bodies through the narratives of others, but I wanted to display Black bodies through how we should see ourself or how we really are."

So there is this revelation there, there is this hope that's given there, that it's not through a narrative of someone else's eyes that he's telling the story, what you say about me. It is what I say about myself or what I see in myself, the authentic self, and the divine image that the transcendence that he's trying to present, the divinity within humanity that he's trying, that oneness there,

the universal connection that he's trying to display. It's beautiful. And he does it in such a beautiful way that you cannot help but to be inspired. You cannot help but to continue to have hope for a brighter and better and more inspired future.

So you're right. He's a great example. And there are many others within the genre of art, within the genre of literature that articulate in such a beautiful way also.

Barbara Holmes: It's really important because blackness has been associated with the demonic, with bad events. When we say something is dark, we usually associate that with evil. It's really a point of power to transform the blackness that whiteness created and allow the blackness that divinity created, because there is a blackness of darkness of the womb. There is the blackness, the earth was and void doesn't mean that there was an evil present. It means there was an alternation of light and dark at the creation of the universe.

And so the expansiveness of blackness is what Afrofuturism allows for, so that our children can begin to see themselves not stamped into a mold of expectations or the lack thereof, but can see themselves as cosmic, knowing of course that the entire universe is made out of dark matter and dark energy. Now, that's a powerful blackness.

Donny Bryant: In the book, Dr. B, you describe a section and you describe this concept in regards to the blessing of liminality, the blessing of liminality, and we describe liminal space, this in-between space. In reference to transitioning and transfiguring trauma, I would like you to speak a little bit more about this. Could you help us to understand how there is a blessing in this in-between space, this liminal space?

For those who may, I was having a conversation with a friend of mine. I was trying to describe this idea of liminal space. I was trying to paint a picture, Dr. B. And we have children, and a lot of our kids, and many of our listeners may understand what I'm talking about. There's these trampoline venues where you have birthday parties and the kids go and they just jump all day long. I mean, just bouncing all over the place.

And as a 48-year-old man, I've learned very quickly that there's this concept of bouncing on a trampoline and that there's a liminal space, there's an in-between space that I found myself in when I'm jumping up in the air and it's just like I am. And for a moment there is a little, there's uncertainty, there's ambiguity. There is the potential that things can go one way and possibly another way, right? There's instability. There's doubt. There's questioning.

I use that example of being in that space where the younger kids, there was no doubt. They had fun. They knew that they were going to land appropriately, and nothing was going to hurt when they bounced off the trampoline. But for me, there was a lot of doubt, a lot of uncertainty.

Could you, as the author here, help us to understand how there is a blessing in liminality?

Barbara Holmes: Oh, absolutely. It's Victor Turner's idea. Liminality is a betwixt in between space. Neither here nor there. Victor Turner likens it to death or to being in the womb, to

invisibility, to darkness, to the wilderness, to eclipse.

When you are in a liminal space, you have the advantage of being able to see what you could not see in other circumstances. In other words, it's like being a fly on the wall. You're neither here nor there, but you're aware of what is going on.

So it's sort of like a ritual passage is what it is. So it's the ritual passage from one state of being to another state of being. And this is the in-between state, sort of like you were talking about, when you're jumping and there's that moment before you land, there's that space in between or it's like the space between your heartbeats. Your heartbeats, there's a pause where the mystery lies before it beats again. You don't know whether it's going to beat again or not. You hope so. There's a pause between drumbeats, and that's where the power lies. It's in the spaces, the interstices in between.

What I'm talking about is the fact that we are in the midst of ritual passage from one state of being to another. We thought during the civil rights movement that we had a goal ahead of us. We would march until we got to that goal, and then we would take the brass ring, declare victory, and go on about our lives. And it didn't happen that way, because progress doesn't happen all in one fell swoop. No matter how much you march, you're still going to have other issues of oppression that arise in other generations.

So what we really did was end one phase of a movement toward healing and wholeness in preparation for the next stage, a preparation for healing and wholeness. So we are moving from one ritual passage to the next ritual passage. And when we recognize that we don't get as discouraged when things don't happen the way we want them to happen immediately. I would've liked for the death of Martin Luther King to have been the event that caused the nation to come to its senses so that once and for all the founding documents that required that all folks are equal would be implemented throughout the society.

It did for a little while. Laws were passed. Some were enforced. Some were not. And where are we now, Donny? We're in the process. More laws, some enforcement, some not, and we're still in the struggle.

Life is a ritual passage from one phase to another. And for people of color, BIPOC folks, we have to realize that isn't going to happen the way we want it when we want it.

What is that saying that you preachers talk about all the time? God may not come when you want him, but comes right on time.

Donny Bryant: He's always on time.

Barbara Holmes: Or she.

Donny Bryant: Or she.

You describe a little bit more about this concept of the sacred journey. As you mentioned this, the liminal space, the ambiguity, it's part of the ritual, is part of the sacred journey. Is it helpful for us as humans? Is it helpful for us as members of this village, this global, this cosmic community, this cosmic village? Is it helpful for us to see life as a sacred journey and not just this temporary momentary opportunity for consumption and capitalistic opportunities?

And then, when we use the term sacred journey, could you give some context to that? Could you give us a definition and understanding of how you would interpret what the journey of life is and what the sacred journey would mean?

Barbara Holmes: It's absolutely a sacred journey, but we don't know that when we're younger. And we don't want to think about it in terms of a sacred journey because we don't know for certain where we came from and we don't know for certain where we're going. We know by faith, depending on your faith tradition, you have traditions about who you are, how you got here, and where you will end up.

But in the everyday maelstrom of life, people don't want to think about any of that. They just want to get through their day. They want to accomplish things, they want to own things. And there's nothing wrong with that. But when you get to the halfway point in your life, you begin to realize that all of the things that you have accumulated don't mean a whole lot. And of course you can't take them with you. You begin to take into account what really matters in life.

And of course, it's easy to say. And that's family, relationships, love, commitment, service to others, all that matters. And when you start focusing on those things, it no longer becomes just something to say or something to do or a churchy phrase. It really warms your heart to work with others. It changes who you are to lead with love.

So the journey is absolutely sacred because we are not just flesh and blood. We are also spirit beings. And what other kind of journey could a spirit being take except for a spiritual journey?

Donny Bryant: And Father Richard Rohr, really, he does a good job at painting a picture that everything is sacred, that everything is spiritual in a sense that what we tend to define as secular and define as sacred, that in actuality there is no division, that there is a oneness there, that there is a lens that we could actually look through that sees everything as part of this cosmic community, that there is a connection, that there is a oneness, if you will there, that all rolls up to a reality that is beautiful. And that the source of that is a divine source that reflects love, as you say, lead with love, live with love.

But to see it from that lens, that perspective, it does come from some insight in order for that perspective to be held. And that insight comes from an understanding of self and who you really are and who we really are.

Barbara Holmes: Yeah, Layli Maparyan who is a woman, a scholar, she talks about the innate divinity and inner light as a spiritual practice available to anyone who chooses to recognize the inherently luminous nature of humans and of all creation.

She also describes the emergence of an egalitarian society as a luminous revolution, a movement away from materialism toward which she calls luxocracy, a nonviolent social order grounded in spirituality and the rule by light.

So there you have it. You can embrace the healing elements of darkness, shadow, and eclipse while leading by light.

Donny Bryant: Yeah. Wow. Brene Brown, she calls it your flame. Yeah, I love that term, your flame, that you have a flame, that I have a flame, that everyone has a unique flame that is specific to them, and at the same time, powerful enough to be compassionate and generous. There's enough capacity in that flame that gives you what you need, but is enough capacity to give me what I need.

Barbara Holmes: Yeah. And everybody has that flame. I mean, do you remember when we were interviewing Dr. Peter Gathje, who runs a homeless shelter in Memphis? He sees that flame in people who are unhoused, who have no jobs, who are living on the streets. Can you imagine what life would be like if instead of focusing on what people did for a living and beginning the question with what do you do, we focused on the flame, the light within each human being?

Donny Bryant: Yeah. In our tradition, we call it the divine image or the Christ image. But that is a universal image. It's not just for people who confess Christ, but it's something that is within all of us, regardless of your confession. And the ability to see that regardless of your behavior or your articulation of your thoughts, is really powerful. And that is compassion. That comes from a deep source, an indestructible source. It comes from a well that is eternal. It comes from that flame.

Barbara Holmes: Yes, it does. I mean, I'm on the other side of 50 now, and all of my priorities have shifted, every single one of them. The ambition, all of the things that I was striving for don't make a lot of sense at this point. The fulfillment comes in doing what you are led to do. I mean, that leading light. The Holy Spirit is supposed to in the Christian tradition, lead you into all truth. I see it as a light, a guiding light where you're walking by the path and there's a lamp onto your feet that helps you to know what to do and how to do it, and to be still. This is where contemplation comes in.

It is impossible to shift priorities if you are in a constant, busy, frenetic lifestyle. There has to be that pause, that breath, that waiting, that willingness to be still until you know. Be still and know. Well, the stillness doesn't immediately lead to knowing. I mean, at first, you have to be still, and then you have to be patient until the knowing comes about.

Donny Bryant: This is a beautiful transition because in your title of this chapter, you speak of cosmic rebirth. So this understanding of Afrofuturism and I for Don, I like to see this because it is very critical for people who have experienced trauma, who have been marginalized, who have experienced oppression, whose identity has been reshaping. It's really important for them to be able to have a vision of a brighter future. It's important for them to be able to see themselves differently.

But this concept, there's a reality there that is for everyone. There's an individual,

but there's a communal perspective here too. And so the journey of life, some great wisdom to come from this idea. And I think it's important for all of our listeners that even this concept of Afrofuturism is not just for people who may be within that community, but I really want to center in Dr. B on this idea of decentering race and cosmic rebirth.

How would you describe to our listeners this concept of cosmic rebirth and new beginning?

Barbara Holmes: Well, I mean it depends on your perspective, but I take cosmic rebirth as a immersion into everyday mysticism. I think I choose that aspect of cosmic rebirthing because I am an everyday mystic.

As you well know, I was born into a family of shamans and rootworkers and healers, and they saw beyond the veil and mediated the realms of life after life. So they knew how to cure you of what ailed you. They could do that spiritually. They could do it naturally. I had more than my share of kerosene and sugar when I had a cold and castor oils. So there was a mix of medicine and mysticism.

They were amazing people, and they're sometimes a little bit scary. As a result of that upbringing, I loved the signs and wonders of the Pentecostal church, the charismatic church, but I wearied of the constant expectation that something was going to happen immediately.

There was always this, if you pray hard enough, then Jesus will break the skies and come to you immediately. And all of that was fine because you want that. Yet even so come Lord Jesus. But, there is an everyday life. There are people who are dying on immigrant ships being turned away from countries. There are the poor. There are the hungry. There are just folks with mental illness who are not being treated, who are not being cared for by society. And so it has to be more than just the holy, the holiness untouched by everyday life.

I remember being a member of a storefront Pentecostal church. I used to inhabit those primarily because the smaller and the weirder the church, the more exciting the happenings inside. Don't give me tradition and a high pulpit. I want to go where there's folding cheers and people levitating and all that kind of good stuff.

But the problem was in order to get into the little storefront church, we had to step over drunks. We had to say, "Excuse me" to prostitutes leaning on the wall. Nobody spoke to them. Nobody prayed with them. Nobody invited them in. Everybody was excited to get inside so that the Holy Spirit could start them rolling through the aisles.

And so it occurred to me that if we're going to rebirth, then we have to have a mysticism. We have to have the magic and the mysticism that allows us to take care of our neighbors, to love our neighbors while we're seeking the inbreaking of the Holy Spirit. It can't be one or the other. It just cannot.

Mysticism has all kinds of definitions, and all it means to me is that this life is not the end of everything. We didn't enter it as a beginning. It was ongoing when we entered

it. It'll be ongoing after we leave. And that the boundaries between life and death are permeable.

So the real power that we have as individuals, it didn't come to you from your Congress person. It is seeded by the divine. That makes you a spiritual person on a spiritual journey. And if that's not mystical enough, I don't know what is.

Donny Bryant: The hope that is rooted in what you're saying is profound. The hope for healing, the hope for newness, the hope for restoration, the hope for wholeness, it seems that it is always connected to a deeper source of seeing, knowing and understanding.

And I like this cosmic concept, Dr. B that you're talking about of rebirth because it is in that hope that I think we all, that we all aspire to have, regardless of economics, regardless of status, regardless of power, position. Yeah, there's this ... The human experience is a shared experience. And as the seasons change, as the stars continue to do what the stars did, the astrological entities do what they are designed to do, there is a seed within every human being that is multiplying.

And I think, what I think I get from this chapter as it concludes your work, I get that the communal experience of crises, the communal experience of trauma, the communal, the village engagement of not only individual, but collective wilderness experiences, that trauma, the liminal space, the unknowing, the unexpectedness, the unpreparedness, the pain, the grief that comes with it, the emotions, the anger, the behavioral responses, all of that. But that in that, in that is a gift, in that is an opportunity, in that is a blessing, in that is wisdom, in that is a knowing, in that is a presence that a source that is indestructible. Although everything around you may be destructible, everything around you may have an expiration date, but there is something that is within that that does not.

And it takes what I'm getting that it takes all of that. It takes the crisis, it takes the trauma, it takes the pain, it takes the anger, it takes the misinterpretation, the miscommunication, the unknowing and not being ready, the frustration, the confusion, the disorder, the reorder, the new order, but back to the disorder, the reorder and back to the disorder. It takes all of that to get to a place where you are centered and that all of your definitions, all of your knowing, all of your wisdom, as Solomon said, is as vapors. It's nothing. It's like looking at smoke disappear in the sky. I thought it was there. What I thought I knew, I do not know. And it brings me to a place of truly authentically knowing.

And that's the blessing, that's the gift. And that's where the rebirth comes from.

Barbara Holmes: And it's a journey we can take together. You see, I mean because in the West there's so much emphasis on race, I've often had people who identify as white ask me what can they do because they're as traumatized by whiteness as anybody else's, by white privilege, by white supremacy.

And so by decentering race and welcoming cosmic rebirth, we realign ourselves with our neighbors, we recreate the community that has been fractured on the anvil of politics. There's this author, Gary Howard, and this is a quote that's a little longer

than I would normally offer, but it is so succinct and so good. And it says, “What we haven’t been able to identify for those who identify as white but are traumatized by the way that whiteness is used in the West to harm others.”

And it says, “Racism for whites has been like a crazy uncle who’s been locked away for generations in the hidden attic of our collective social reality. This old relative has been a part of the family for a long time. Everybody knows he’s living with us because we bring him food and water occasionally, but nobody wants to take him out in public. He’s an embarrassment and a pain to deal with. Yet our little family secret is that he’s rich and the rest of us are living either consciously or unconsciously off the wealth and power he accumulated during his heyday. So even though many of us may disapprove of the tactics he used to gain his fortune, few of us want to be written out of his will. The legacy of racism, which has been fueled and legitimized by our assumption of whiteness, has haunted the house of collective white identity for centuries.”

And so what I offer to folks who identify as white and don’t want to be traumatized by the oppression of whiteness is stop identifying with your rich uncle. Stop pretending that he’s not in the attic.

Donny Bryant: Wow. That’s great Dr. B, that’s good. So where do we go from here? Where we are today in our society and our culture. Where do we go from here?

Barbara Holmes: We need several things that are not readily available right now. We need an understanding of our ritual history and spiritual practices. We need a way to situate ourselves as fully human and divine beings. We need to know how to heal our wounds. We need to, for some of us to stop or pause energy sapping activist practices so that we can breathe and be.

And every once in a while, I don’t know about you, but I need to crawl into the cosmic outline of human possibility and make a home there until the morning comes. And if after several decades we still find ourselves in places of death and destruction, despite all the singing and the marching, if we still find our mother Rizpah fighting on a hill to protect what’s left of our bones, then with all the might we can muster, we’ll have to make the transcendent leap into the future. We will leap trusting the glory of ancestral guidance, the blessed hope of the dawning of a new world order, and the promises of God.

I want to close Donnie with this brief litany. We are unique and ordinary mystics in the making, flowing from one state of existence to another, inhabiting the ordinary, touching the eternal. We are embedded in a continuum of life related to the divine, the earth and our neighbors. We didn’t just burst out of nowhere and we will not disappear when we die. We come from particularity and community, mystics and cosmic realities. Believe it or not, we have a future. Thanks be.

Donny Bryant: Thanks be.

Dr. B, we want to say thank you for your contribution with this wonderful work, this contribution to the global community. Thank you for your sacrifice. We really appreciate it. And thank you for this time together. These six episodes have been truly

a pleasure, truly a blessing, and I hope our listeners truly enjoyed it also.

Barbara Holmes: It's been fun, Dr. Donnie. I've enjoyed it so much. Onto the next one.

Donny Bryant: Onto the next one.

While this has been a great conversation for us to really end this season on, that this chapter on Afrofuturism and cosmic rebirth, to me, if I had to summarize Dr. B, it's really about seeing oneself differently. Well, race is no longer a limiting factor, and we participate in the reclamation, the recreation, and even the rebirth of a new beginning, of community and identity, that is as you have made it so clear in this episode, rooted in a citizenship that is ultimately cosmic.

Barbara Holmes: Absolutely. There is something about having survived generations of slavery, predation, and just the stress of living in a world where white supremacy sneaks into even the safest spaces. And so it takes a lot of effort. It takes community. You don't transform all by yourself. You can't sit in a room and transcend alone. You need community to remind you of your cosmic origins, your God-given spirit. You are not prey. You are loved by God.

Donny Bryant: Selah.