

Becoming a Spiritual Lightning Rod

Pulse of Spirit
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Benjamin Franklin was a publisher and printer, author, inventor, and diplomat of the American Revolutionary War era. In the days leading up to the War, he was the most well-known of the American Founding Fathers.

Among Benjamin Franklin's inventions were the bifocals, swim fins, urinary catheters, and the Franklin stove. His most famous invention was the lightning rod.

With the rise of Western civilization, the height of buildings grew higher and higher, especially churches. Church spires were subject to lightning strikes causing their destruction, the destruction of entire churches and human life, especially the bell-ringer's.

A mountain church in Austria was struck by lightning so frequently that parishioners were afraid to attend church services.

The tower of St. Marks in Venice was struck and rebuilt many times over the years, eventually in stone and brick. But even that stone and brick tower was shattered in a 1745 lightning strike, commemorated in art.

It is said that in Germany, lightning damaged nearly four hundred church towers, and 120 bell-ringers lost their lives within a span of 30 years.

To prevent these catastrophes, churches sprinkled holy water on the bells and offered prayers. They sent people to the towers to ring the bells, many of which were inscribed with the Latin motto

Fulgura Frango, meaning *I break up lightning*. Of course, this attempt to fend off lightning by ringing the church bells could be disastrous for the bell-ringers.

The story of Benjamin Franklin flying a kite in the thunderstorm is well-known to American schoolchildren. In 1752, accompanied by his son William, he flew a kite held by hemp twine with a metal key at the bottom. As the storm drew closer, the electrified air transferred current to the twine, whose strands stood out. The key emitted a mild electric shock. This led to the invention of the lightning rod.

Waves of protest grew around the Western world as lightning rods began to be installed in churches. Some Christians believed that if lightning struck a church tower, it was God's will. Earthquakes were blamed on the installation of lightning rods.

Gradually, the superstition regarding lightning rods subsided.

What might lightning rods have to do with our lives?

In last week's *Pulse of Spirit*, I wrote about *quickenings* and the activating power of Spirit in us. I wrote about how we can attune to creative forces that activate us. I said that if we allow that Attunement to continue, those forces abide in us, and the

presence from which those forces emanate abides in us.

I see the lightning rod as a symbol for this. And for *us*. We are spiritual lightning rods.

There are moments when a surge of spiritual lightning comes—times when the world in which we live calls for it. Truthfully, the spiritual lightning comes now or not at all. That is the quickening.

The art of living is being a lightning rod in the present moment and receiving the lightning. When we sustain that experience, there is an ongoing flow of spiritual current that abides in us.

We think of lightning as emanating from sky to ground. Lightning is electricity, and in fact it flows both ways.

Here is what the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says about it:

Does lightning strike from the sky down, or the ground up?

The answer is both. Cloud-to-ground (CG) lightning comes from the sky down, but the part you see comes from the ground up...

Since opposites attract, an upward streamer is sent out from the object

about to be struck. When these two paths meet, a return stroke zips back up to the sky. It is the return stroke that produces the visible flash, but it all happens so fast—in a few thousandths of a second—so the human eye doesn't see the actual formation of the stroke.

This, too, might remind us of ourselves. There is power that erupts from within our own flesh that reaches up to a higher vibrational level. When it does, it calls down the lightning. There is a returning power that enters us.

The lightning rod represents a focus of upward-extended energy, reaching out to the atmosphere, inviting down the lightning that it grounds in physical substance—the earth. For us as human beings, the focus of our love response extended to the power, Presence, and wisdom at higher vibrational levels is what invites those realities to come into us and into our world.

When lightning strikes sand, it repatterns it to create complex structures. Sometimes, people ground a lightning rod in sand to deliberately achieve that result.

Isn't that what happens to us? When we experience ourselves as a spiritual lightning rod, the voltage repatterns our substance of consciousness. It repatterns our life and our world.

This is what is happening in the Attunement process. How do you share an Attunement with another person without being a lightning rod? If there is no voltage running through you, nothing is happening. There is no Attunement current.

For us, being conscious Beings, Attunement is a conscious process. What you think matters. What you are opening yourself to in your feeling realm matters. Thinking and feeling can create lightning-rod consciousness.

This is the good news. It means that if you shift the direction to which your thoughts and feelings orient—if you change what they are opening to—you change your experience. You know the Attunement that leads to being a spiritual lightning rod instead of a burning church!

A church steeple can be a lightning rod that is not properly grounded. So, instead of conducting the power of the lightning into the ground, that power of the lightning burns down the church.

That's what happens to people when there is no focus of response to the source of power. It doesn't mean there is no longer any voltage in their life. It means that voltage is working destructively in their experience.

The remedy is simple: conscious response

in thought and feeling to the source of power.

Physical lightning grounds electrical current. What does spiritual lightning ground?

Power, Presence, and wisdom. These realities at a higher dimension enter us and manifest through us when we are a spiritual lightning rod.

As above, so below.

This is a hermetic text. One translation puts it this way:

What is above is like what is below, and what is below is like what is above.

It might seem like a random saying. But consider a contrary view of reality held by many, either consciously or unconsciously:

The nature of what we know as human beings has no semblance to what is in heaven, to what is above.

If that view is held, then what is at higher levels of reality has no relevance to us. It can't empower or inform us. The best that can happen is that we think of it with distant awe. This sense of disconnect can lead to another common view of reality:

There is nothing above the physical reality in which we live.

But what if we assume *What is above is like what is below?* There is thought here. There is thought there. There is power here. There is power there. There is presence here. There is Presence there.

If we create our lives by what we think and what we feel, and by the actions we take, then that is what is happening *above*. The universe is thinking Creation into Being. Love is the power of the universe, and the universe is loving Creation into Being.

When a human being becomes a spiritual lightning rod, then power, Presence, and wisdom from above enter them. They love with divine power. Their presence brings divine Presence. Their thoughts express the wisdom of the universe.

The prophet Isaiah spoke about thought at a higher level. He addressed the disconnect from it that people experience:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

I don't take this as a statement of inevitable reality. What would be the point of saying something that is just a spiritual put-down? I see this message as Isaiah addressing the disconnect that people experience.

We live in a sentient universe. It is filled with Presence. From that Presence, all form is created. That Presence is the Creator, spoken of by Isaiah in a way that was translated as *the Lord*. The thought that flows forth constantly from that Presence is an act of conscious Creation. The patterns of the universe are in those thoughts.

The love emanating from that Presence is the power that manifests the thoughts.

We are made to participate in that process as human beings, and in some fashion, we do. But as Isaiah was pointing out, often from an experience of separateness. Our thoughts can be self-active—perpetuated by our human experience separate from the thoughts of the Creator.

All that changes when we become a spiritual lightning rod. Our thinking stops being filled with anxious thoughts motivated by fear. They are the thoughts of the Creator. We become, in living experience, the Creator functioning here—*below*. Our thoughts are now filled with the patterns of Creation that transmute consciousness and transform the world.

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