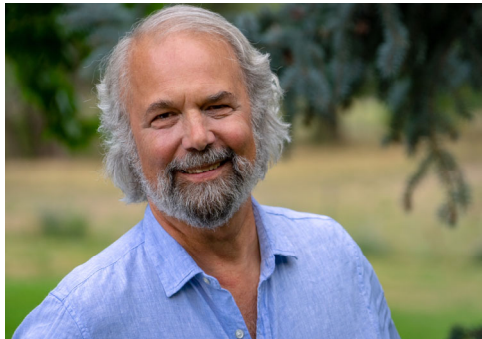


OPENING THE BOOK OF LIFE

PULSE OF SPIRIT
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DAVID KARCHERE is a speaker and workshop leader who assists people to renew their Primal Spirituality—an experience that virtually all human beings know at birth, and that ideally grows as they mature.

*From age to age
Love's word rings forth,
"The truth is true and all is well,
Unconquerable life prevails."*

This is the opening stanza of Martin Cecil's poem *Thus It Is*. In it, you can sense the epic powers of Creation at work throughout history and before. You might say that the poem relates to the past—*From age to age*... But there was never a time that love's word rang forth in the past, nor in the future. It is always in the *now*. And it is ringing forth in this present moment, just as surely as it ever has.

There are a lot of other things that have transpired in human history—calamity of all sorts, and a failure to experience and know unconquerable life. And we might fear a future calamity. Pick your existential threat!

And still, here and now, *The truth is true and all is well. Unconquerable life prevails.*

If we don't land in the present moment, we're full of the past and the future, anticipating what will go wrong. Landing in the present moment, there's life. There's love. It's all here, it's all happening. And it's happening in and through us, for us, individually and together.

All the rest gets left behind. It can fade away into the oblivion of the past. And the feared future doesn't manifest according to our previous fears. We are eternally here, now.

The last book of the Bible is Revelation. It's a book of *apocalypse*. The root of this word simply refers to an uncovering.

The Book of Revelation is full of mystical language. In it you meet beasts, dragons,

angels, and a woman clothed with the sun. It was written by the Disciple John on the Isle of Patmos, late in his life. If your experience reading Revelation has been anything like mine, you were first met with symbology that seemed to make no sense. Then, the more life experience you have had, the more it speaks to you. Chapter 5 is like that for me. Here is part of it in the King James Version.

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

Did they think about asking a woman?

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

Fantastic language!

Who will open the book of life? Who has the ability to open life up for themselves and for the world in which they live? Who has that kind of authority? The author of the book has authority over it. And who is the author of the book of life? The Creator of it. That is certainly not us as a mere human being. We are not the source of life. But there is a Reality that is. Only that Reality, known through us, can open the book of life.

We are bound to futility when it comes to opening the book of life all by ourselves. Until there's something more that comes into us, the book remains closed.

The power to open the book is described as *the lion of the tribe of Judah*. What is that? The spirit of the lion is the spirit of the Creator. It is love's word ringing forth in the world. That spirit empowers a person in the present to bring love into the world and manifest it with others. The spirit of the lion lets unconquerable life prevail in human experience.

How does that spirit enter us and come through us? How are we empowered by it? What is the formula?

The ancient teaching about this is simple. There is a word from Hebrew—*teshuvah*—and a version of it in Aramaic—*thubu*. The word means *to turn around*, or *to return*. It was translated into Greek as *metanoia*, which means to experience a change in heart and mind. Because when we turn, we are changed.

What do we turn to? The Spirit of the Creator—the lion. Or you could call it *the Christ Spirit*. When we turn and open to it, it enters us. We have come into a relationship with it. And it's not a distant one. It's a love relationship. It's communion. And when it enters us, it comes through us. The lion is in us and comes through us into the world. It's opening the book of life for us, for our community, and for the world in which we live.

The world needs the spirit of the lion. It doesn't really matter what faith the person associates with, or if they associate with any religious community. It could come through a politician, a teacher, or an author. It could come through somebody who is seemingly nobody. It doesn't matter. The stature of the lion isn't based on human roles or on the human being, as such, at all. The stature is based on the lion coming through.

This is from the Book of Mark in the gospels, speaking of Jesus:

And they went to Capernaum and straightway on the Sabbath day, he entered into the synagogue and taught.

This is so intriguing to me. For one thing, it is obvious that what was transpiring was within

the Jewish culture of the day—*on the Sabbath*, and *in the synagogue*.

And they were astonished at his doctrine for he taught them as one that had authority and not as the scribes.

Jesus taught as one having authority. That's what ticked people off. He referenced and honored the Hebrew Scriptures, what he called *the law and the prophets*. But he owned what the Hebrew Scriptures presented for himself. And he offered a fresh understanding of truth based on who he was and what he knew. He had the authority of one who knows.

The Christ Spirit was coming through him. The lion was coming through him, so he had that authority. He was in the now. He wasn't lost in what Moses had said ages before. He was in the now and spoke with the authority of the lion.

The truth is true and all is well. Unconquerable life prevails. Love's word rings forth now. We have the opportunity to open to it, to know it for ourselves, and to live with the authority of love, which is the authority of the Creator. And then our words carry that authority.

This is what opens the book of life, which implies that the fabric of life is being woven in our experience, individually and collectively. It is being woven between us.

David Whyte's poem *The Truelove* ends with these words:

*...finally
after all this struggle
and all these years*

*you simply don't want to
any more
you've simply had enough
of drowning
and you want to live and you
want to love and you will
walk across any territory
and any darkness
however fluid and however
dangerous to take the
one hand you know
belongs in yours.*

The apparent meaning of the poem relates to finding *that special someone—the Truelove*. But it has a more universal meaning. That one hand you know belongs in yours is of that person right in front of you. If you take the poem out of the purely romantic context, it

could be a man or a woman, a friend, or a co-worker. When the book of life is opened, there are people in the book. And love weaves the fabric of life with those people.

We could be looking for the true love forever, believing they are in the future. But the true love is that one person who's meant to be with you in the creative cycle that you're in right now, doing what you're doing right now. Take that hand. And learn how to be in *that*. Call upon the spirit of the lion. Be in that spirit together with the authority to open the book of life.

David Karchere
dkarchere@emnet.org
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