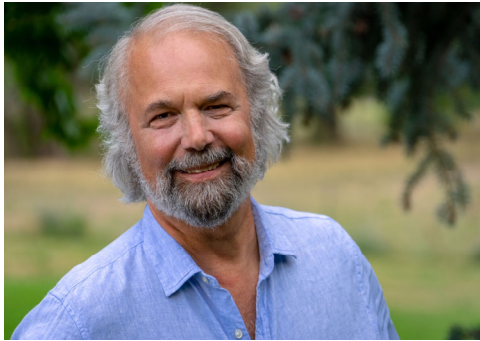


SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER?

PULSE OF SPIRIT
JANUARY 22, 2025



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.

Shall we gather at the river?

This is the title of a beloved Christian hymn from 19th-Century America. But beyond that, it is a real question.

Shall we gather at the river?

What is the river referred to here? Leaving behind whatever the original poet might have been thinking, *the river* is the spiritual flow out of the Invisible that is the rightful gathering point for all humankind. It is at the center of the Family of Souls.

Shall we gather at the river?

This has particular significance to people who have awakened to that flow and are committed to bringing it to the world.

The great urge to *gather at the river* is within all human beings, no matter how repressed it might be. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose

birthday we celebrate today, spoke of it as the urge to participate in *Beloved Community*.

This *Pulse of Spirit* is an expression of *the river*. The [services](#) offered by Emissaries of Divine Light are an outpouring of *the river*. Thank you for hearing the call:

Shall we gather at the river?

Over the New Year holiday, I wrote a 20-page paper for the Madras Institute of Development Studies. I titled it [Teaching Primal Spirituality](#). In the paper, I said that transformational faith and an ecology of hope are inspired by the original teachings behind the world's great faiths and spiritual paths.

On New Year's Day, at almost midnight, I did my last proofreading of the paper. (I felt like I was back in university. It had references, a bibliography, and all!) As I read quotations from the Bhagavad-Gita, the Tao Te Ching, the Hebrew Bible, and more,

I was in awe. Here was the river! An outpouring of enlightened awareness that has been given to humankind. So clear! So connecting! As I said in the paper, these were some of the most hopeful people the world has ever witnessed, and they brought hope to the world.

From the cosmic perspective, the river is ever-flowing. It is available for anyone to enter, to feel, and to drink from. Finding the river, we gather there and invite others to join us.

Gathering at the river, we make its flow immediately available to human culture.

Apart from the flow of the river, people live in ancient ignorance. Abraham was at the origin of three of today's great faith traditions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. He lived in Ur, thought to be the largest city in the world in his day. Ur still stands today in Iraq, close to the Persian Gulf. Ur was in Mesopotamia, a cradle of civilization. Humankind had discovered agriculture and thus was emerging out of its hunter-gatherer past in the Paleolithic Period which was the Stone Age and the time of Cavemen, or to be more politically correct, *Cavepeople*.

While the people of the Middle East were finding agriculture and forming cities, the ignorance and superstition of the Stone Age came with them. Abraham addressed this primitive state of consciousness. He had left city life, living first in Haran, 700 miles to the northwest of Ur in present-day Turkey, and then traveling 500 miles south to the land of Canaan, in present-day Israel. He and his family became semi-nomadic. As you read the story, you might notice the frequent reference to tents.

Abraham faced the ignorance and superstition of his day. That superstition was rooted in a fearful relationship with supernatural entities and attempts to appease them in order to gain favorable treatment. Abraham was entering into a new relationship with the mystic reality of God. But the ignorant impulses born out of the Stone-Age past were still there.

Abraham's awakening occurred as he was about to sacrifice his son Isaac. This is how the story is told:

And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

Genesis 22:9-11

The remainder of the Hebrew Bible contains the story of Israelite leaders, and later Jewish leaders, attempting to bring people out of their Stone-Age ignorance.

Other original leaders of the world's great faiths and spiritual paths around the globe addressed the ignorance and superstition of their culture. The Neolithic Age gave way to the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, and then the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Modern Ages. We had the Industrial Revolution, and now the Information Age, and perhaps the Age of Artificial Intelligence. Yet while there has been scientific advance-

ment and technological development, Stone-Age ignorance dies hard, especially at the most pivotal level of human experience—the relationship we have with the mystical source of our existence.

The original faith leaders got pushback from the ignorance in the cultures into which they were born. Muhammed was thrown out of Mecca. Pharaoh sought to keep the Israelites enslaved in Egypt. The Buddha was challenged, and Jesus crucified. But while they were alive, at least they were present to stand up for the truth they brought. When they were no longer here on earth, those who came after them felt free to distort their teachings as they chose. So the same ignorance they addressed in the culture around them infected the legacy of their teachings. This had the sad effect of hiding the liberating truth they brought, making it largely unavailable to people.

My book [Primal Christianity: Uncovering the Original Teachings of Jesus of Nazareth](#) documents how this process affected Jesus' teachings. But he wasn't the only one. In fact, the same thing happened for Emissaries of Divine Light when Martin Cecil died in 1988. The truth within his prolific writings became hard for people to access, simply because the

meaning of them was distorted and he wasn't present to facilitate a clear access to the realizations he brought.

Much has changed since the Paleolithic and Neolithic Ages. The teachers who initiated the great faiths and spiritual paths in ancient times profoundly affected world culture. Scientific and cultural advancements have changed human civilization. The cosmic cycles of Creation roll on. And still, the stark reality is that we are faced with the same ignorance and superstition they were, though in new forms. The Stone-Age ignorance they addressed persists in modern clothes.

What is needed from us today is the same as what they brought to the world—the river. This is the flow from the Invisible that dispels the ancient ignorance and brings the essence of a new world.

Shall we gather at the river? Shall we be the river and bring the water of Life to the world?

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OF DIVINE LIGHT

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