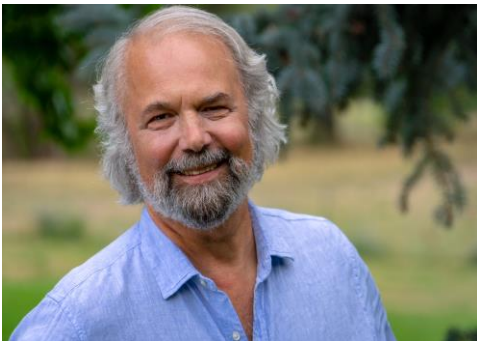


ENTERING THE HOLINESS OF THE HERE AND NOW

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.

*...put off thy shoes from off thy feet,
for the place whereon thou standest is
holy ground.*

Have you ever felt something like that?
Have you ever felt awed by the holiness of
life and felt the compulsion to somehow
rid yourself of whatever might get in the
way of experiencing it?

It could happen while in nature. Or during
a deep exchange with another person. Or
when you feel the Presence of the Divine
especially near to you.

Time, as you usually experience it, might
seem to stand still. You might feel a deep
reverence for life and the honor and
privilege of being alive as a human being.
Ordinary things can take on a deeper
significance.

Moses' experience must have been
something like that when he heard and saw
what was described in the Book of Exodus.
He was witnessing what is depicted as a
burning bush, a portrayal of the holy flame
of love present within all living forms.
And when he hears his name called to him
from out of the burning bush, he replies,
Here am I.

There are many ways to describe what is
written in the Bible. Religion ascribes
many different meanings to it and attaches
many different kinds of significance to it.
For me—and many others, I suppose—
some of the meanings and significances
resonate as true and some do not. What
seems to go mostly unnoticed is how often
the Bible emphasizes the significance of
being fully present in the here and now.
Throughout the biblical story, the voice of
Spirit—often spoken through individuals—

calls upon people to come fully into the present moment.

When a person invites someone to be here now, it is often expressed as an invitation to be with them in that place. Why would this be? It is because the here and now is the meeting place for all humankind. When we come fully into this holy place, we become aware of all others who are there. So if a person invites another to fully enter an awareness of the here and now, it is not as if they are inviting them to a different place from where they, themselves, are standing. That would be the *there and then*, not the *here and now*. So the invitation is often expressed as *be with me where I am*.

There is only one here and now, regardless of where a person may be physically. So when we deeply enter the here and now, we find each other. We find we are one people speaking one language, knowing one love, as one human family.

The biblical story is full of people who offer the invitation to enter that experience. And it is full of people who answer that call, often—like Moses—explicitly. *Here am I*. Here are some of the portrayals of this calling and of people answering it.

These are from Jesus:

*If any man serve me, let him follow me;
and where I am, there shall also my
servant be.*

John 12:26

*Father, I will that they also, whom
thou hast given me, be with me where I
am.*

John 17:24

And these passages are from the Hebrew Bible:

*And the angel of God spake unto me in
a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said,
Here am I.*

Genesis 31:11

*And God spake unto Israel in the
visions of the night, and said, Jacob,
Jacob. And he said, Here am I.*

Genesis 46:2

This is from a touching story of Samuel as a child under the tutelage of his spiritual elder, Eli.

*And the child Samuel ministered unto
the LORD before Eli. And the word of
the LORD was precious in those days;
there was no open vision.*

*And it came to pass at that time, when
Eli was laid down in his place, and his
eyes began to wax dim, that he could
not see;*

*And ere the lamp of God went out in
the temple of the LORD, where the ark
of God was, and Samuel was laid down
to sleep;*

*That the LORD called Samuel: and he
answered, Here am I.*

And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.

Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

1 Samuel 3:1-10

This is from the story of the prophet Elijah.

And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. 1 Kings 18:30

Even the most seminal story in the Bible, telling what goes wrong for us as human beings, describes the issue as whether we are fully present in the holiness of the here and now. Here is the first telling of the issue:

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

Genesis 3:8, 9

Apparently they had left the here and now.

And here is the second portrayal of the issue, portraying the departure from the here and now in symbolic terms:

Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:23

In the view of many, the forces of evil are at work in the world. What might those forces be? And who might be behind them? The deep state? A certain political party? A particular person, nation, or religion?

The greater issue is not the forces of evil in the world. It is the forces of distraction—the influences that can distract a person one way or another from being present in the here and now. And if a person leaves the here and now, they become disem-

powered. And if they begin to think that there are satanic forces they have to go fight, that can become the ultimate distraction.

Being in the here and now, we come into the power of Creation that's within us and all around us. We harmonize with that power, and we become instruments of it. We become instruments of holiness, with which the world is filled with that Reality. We have the opportunity to do that individually, each one of us, as we come fully into the here and now. And when we do it individually, there's an affinity we find with other people who are doing the same.

In the story of Moses, what comes immediately following his vision of the burning bush and the calling he hears is the spiritual urge to go down into Egypt and set his people free.

The story portrays how when we come into a holy space, there is power and direction that comes into us, and there is action that is born from that. We should never leave the holy space of the present moment in the process, because then it all falls apart. There's some kind of distraction that takes us out of our power. But if we stay in the holy place in ourselves, in our own life experience, we are filled with the power and direction to act. And if we, as a collective of people, find ourselves coming together in the here and now, we inherit the power of Creation that we bring into the world. But only if we stay undistracted and so stay in that place together.

The forces of distraction are portrayed as Satan leaving the here and now in the Book of Job:

*And the LORD said unto Satan,
Whence comest thou? Then Satan
answered the LORD, and said, From
going to and fro in the earth, and from
walking up and down in it.*

Job 1:7

What a portrayal of distraction! Human consciousness leaving the here and now.

Entering the here and now, it is as if the Universe is eager to finally have someone to address the issues of this human world. So the issues of this world can come rushing to meet such an individual. That's what happened to Moses. *All right. You entered this consciousness of the holiness of life. Now get to work and set the people free.*

From the world of mining, there is the term *coalface*. It is the exposed surface of a coal seam where coal is being extracted. Spiritual awakening brings a vivid awareness of the here and now, and in this place, there is the coalface of Creation. Perhaps that's why people avoid spiritual awakening. They don't want to face the issues of the human world that are right before them. The problem is that the coal is not someplace else. Distracted human beings are busy addressing all the problems of the world except the one that is directly in front of them. And thus they miss the opportunity that is immediately present, represented by the coal.

The issue is right here, now. Spiritual awakening compels us to face and bring the answer to it. It compels us to go down into Egypt and set the world free with the holy power of Creation we know.

Let us enter the holiness of this here and now. Let us do so now, for there is no other time in which we may do so. Let us

know Divine Presence in this place. And let us find each other and know the holiness of what we share.

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