

CONSCIOUSNESS NO LONGER FILTERED BY MAYA

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.

We find ourselves drawn together by the mystical power of Love. And not only to be drawn together by some disembodied power, but drawn together by that power working through us, gathering together all who belong with it, into one place. We find ourselves in multiple places geographically, but in one place vibrationally, and because of that, it's easy to feel the presence of others around the world—to feel our own arms of love reaching out to touch others and gathering them together in this one place.

Last week, it was a joy to hear the voices of our primal spirituality expressed through the cultures of the world. The more I read sacred scripture from around the world, the more I'm surprised at how vivid, how articulate and how plainspoken it is. And when you think about the daunting task that was being

undertaken—which was to express a reality that most people are unconscious of—what a superb job was done. How would you say it better?

Around the world, there are the stories of our primal spirituality. There are all the reminders of how we were created—in the beginning of our own life and how we, as humankind, were created. At the same time, sacred scripture from around the world tells us something else about what happened that can be the undoing of a person.

We were created with this truly immaculate conception and original blessing, as Matthew Fox says. Yet, so often the individual human experience is of something else. And then collectively as humankind, something else is happening. And so, we have stories from around the world that speak to why.

Looking at the stories, they are very plainspoken. And yet, how would you explain such a phenomenon to someone who was subject to that phenomenon? If the issue is wakefulness and there is a lack of wakefulness, how would you describe that lack of wakefulness to someone who's asleep? Quite a challenge.

Often, the ancient understanding of such things went to superstition. It was believed that there was some outside entity that was causing human beings trouble. And that's true even today. We have different brands of superstition. So, as much as the ancient sages tried to name what was at issue, what they named ended up seeming to be something foreign to human beings, as if it were an outside entity—the devil, or whatever it was, by whatever name. So often, the perception is of personal powerlessness and then these external powers that are affecting one's life, one's experience, and one's consciousness.

Another way to look at it is that what was named was almost necessarily named as a noun. A thing. This entity is a thing that is causing the trouble.

Sin is like that. The teaching of original sin is that it is a thing that you've got, like some incurable disease. You've got the original sin and there's nothing you can do about it except be forgiven for the fact that you have it. It's a noun.

But really, when you read ancient scripture, from whatever enlightened tradition, it points to something that is not a noun, but a verb. It's not something you

have. It's not something outside yourself that is causing you trouble. It is a process in which you're engaged. It's a verb.

That can be a hard pill to swallow. It's much easier to think that it's something outside me that's doing it to me, or inside me. Same difference. It's doing it to me. It's a thing. No, it's a verb. And at the same time, it's a tough pill to swallow to realize that the processes of un-wakefulness that lead to disaster, personally and collectively, are something we are doing. It's a verb. And yet, that is the good news. Because if you are doing it, if I'm doing it, if we're doing it collectively, we could do something different. It's within our power. But of course, you have to swallow the bitter pill to have that power. The bitter pill is realizing that what is happening is a verb. It's not a noun.

I want to make some reference to the way this is spoken of around the world. Muhammad spoke of it as *kibr*, the assertion of self as superior, the refusal to submit to a divine ordering that feels diminishing to the ego. In fact, Islam is a word that means *surrender to divine will*.

There are three words in Sanskrit that speak to this. The first one is *Avidyā*, a word that means *without vision*. It refers to a largely unconscious assumption that one is fundamentally a separate, bounded self.

That's closely related to another Sanskrit word, *maya*, a little more commonly used in Western culture today. It is the appearance of a reality that conceals a deeper reality behind or within it. *Maya* is

being lost in a surface reality that is hiding a deeper reality from the person. And you can see *avidyā* and *maya* are related.

The third element is *kama*, which is desire. It is perhaps familiar from the *Kama Sutra*. In the unfoldment of this formula for human ignorance, a lack of vision leads to living into an experience that is surfacy and is hiding a deeper reality. And then there's a desire for something else that drives a person in unhealthy directions. That changes when there is sight of a deeper reality, an acceptance of it, and a living out of that reality, letting it guide where you are going. Then the *maya* disappears and the desires become *eros*, the healthy desire of the heart to participate in Creation and to be a creator.

In Judeo-Christian culture, the symbols of what goes wrong are well known, though often not thought about very deeply. Of course, there is the story of Adam and Eve. It's not a story of original sin in the sense of a thing that we got, as if it was a disease. It is revealing something that was done long ago that keeps being done. It's not a noun; it's a verb. And what is the verb? Well, if you are reading the story, the bad guy is the serpent. And then it goes on from there. But it is all portraying the exact same thing that the Sanskrit words were portraying. That there is a larger pattern of creation symbolized by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That's the pattern of Creation that human beings weren't supposed to try to get hold of and determine all by themselves.

When you look at it, it is a straightforward teaching. There is already a pattern of Creation. It is not for us to make up as human beings. It is for us to know, to express, and to live in. That's different. And then the matter of desire comes in. That's Eve saying to Adam, *Hey, make me happy*. That is what the human heart says. The heart wants to be made happy and demands that the human mind make it happen.

The story of Job is an ancient sacred scripture that portrays what goes wrong in human experience. It tells of something going so wrong and creating disaster in the world. Job had responsibility for it all. It was all coming to focus in him.

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

Job 1:1

Highly symbolic.

His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

Job 1:3

Again, highly symbolic. It portrays seven cosmic forces and three dimensions in the earthly planes. And there is a communion

between the heavenly forces and the earthly house of God.

And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Job 1:5

Apparently, there was an awareness of the possibility of things going wrong, and so he held a pattern of blessing over it all, sanctifying it all continuously.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

Job 1:6

Satan. Did he have a forked tail? Horns? The word *Satan* simply means *adversary*. And before it was used as the name of someone, it was used just to characterize somebody as an adversary.

And here, that is what is being portrayed—human function that's adversarial to life. This is function that takes us down, that is self-sabotage. And so, there is all the creativity portrayed, and then a self-sabotaging voice, and with that, a self-sabotaging spirit that comes to destroy.

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

Could it be said any more plainly? Where was this function in consciousness coming from? *It was earth-centered—going to and fro, up and down, all enmeshed in the outer dimensions of things.*

The rest of the story contains 36 chapters of agony. And then finally, as it's put, the Lord answers Job out of the whirlwind. The Lord gets Job's attention.

And why Job? The Lord could have spoken to one of his sons or his wife. No, it was Job because he was responsible for it all. It was all coming to focus in him. And so, he was the one who was in the hot seat to answer the Lord's questions. And he listened. The consequence was that all was restored to him and more.

So, what could this mean for us today? I'm citing sacred scripture and referencing this tradition and that tradition. But what would it mean for us today to come to terms with what is being portrayed that is in ourselves and with us collectively? Do self-destructive tendencies show up in your life? Do they show up in this community? They certainly show up in the world. What would it mean for us to deal with it?

We can go skipping along as if it's not happening, only to have our legs kicked out from under us when we least expect it because we are not paying attention. The reality is that there is something to do now. There is blessing and sanctification to offer. And then there is a knowing to allow to go deep into ourselves.

There is a deeper reality to be known and to be lived into. But it's then to be allowed to assert itself in one's world—to assert itself through oneself, through us as a community, and ultimately through all mankind. There is an inner reality that is not just a nice place to go. It is there to come into us and to assert itself.

The knowledge of good and evil is a knowing of the pattern of life that is emerging. That pattern should be known by a human being and then expressed by them to assert itself in the human world.

It is interesting that in Job, at the beginning of the story, this function in human consciousness that is destructive came in with seemingly small sabotaging statements. Similarly, in the story of Jesus and the temptations, Jesus has an encounter with the devil. The *devil* and *Satan* are essentially the same thing—not some creature with a forked tail, but that function in consciousness that whispers little seductive, destructive, self-sabotaging things in a person's ear—in this case, Jesus's ear.

Jesus quoted scripture to the devil in reply. And finally, the third time, he brought it to issue. He simply said, “Get out.” In the King James Bible, it is written in what sounds to us as proper Elizabethan English, “Get thee hence.” In present-day parlance, that means *get out* or *get away from here*.

You have no place here. No place here. The Lord of heaven and earth and the Queen of heaven and earth rule here in me and for us in this world. This is God's world.

This is God's kingdom—not only up there but right here. We make it real because we are here, and we allow God's kingdom to express itself through us, forthrightly. We allow it to assert itself.

The kingdom is not just a place you go to. It is a place that comes to you and then moves through you. If you go to the kingdom, the kingdom comes to you, and then it comes through you and into your life. Then you have the pattern of Creation as it is divinely ordained. And then, and only then, do we get to live our primal spirituality. Because otherwise, we are sabotaging it at all the key junctures. And you can skip along and pretend it's not happening. But then when the pressure comes on and there is a critical juncture in your life, if you haven't taken control of this, it's ruling the day.

I'm happy to be speaking about these things. A little fire and brimstone on a Sunday morning! Not really, though. I think you can feel that. This is not, *Shame on you*, or anything like that. This is a declaration. We are awake people, and awake people must be awake. We stay awake and bring wakefulness to all things. We bring consciousness no longer filtered by maya. We know something else, we express something else, and we allow something else to assert itself through us in the world.

This is the pattern of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that is the pattern of life. Without it, there is no tree of life in the human experience.

So good to be present as free people. This is what it means to be free—free to know and express our primal spirituality uncontradicted by maya.

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