

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

SHEKINAH: DWELLING PLACE FOR THE DIVINE

5 MARCH 2012

(A transcript from a service with Circles of Light Ministry at Sunrise Ranch, February 19, 2012. The service began with Joyce Karchere singing, a cappella, "Behold the Temple of the Living God," by David Karchere.)

(Applause and expression of appreciation from Circles of Light and all in the Dome) So good to be together here this morning. It is such a pleasure for us to have Circles of Light here; Isis and all of you. We so enjoyed the music last night, so full of spirit. *(More applause)*

We are among a proportionately small number of awakening people all over the world. People in many walks of life, people of many faiths; people of seemingly no faith, in a traditional sense, anyway. But people who have a great sense of urgency from within to live a life of integrity, to live a life filled with spirit, to bring something different into this world. People who don't believe that it has to be the way it's always been for humanity, or for themselves—that there is a choice.

And we are finding out that spiritual things are not just about a special moment here or a special moment there. Real spirituality is a way of life, it is a way to live, it is a way to be. We are here to be filled with the spirit and to bring the spirit into the world. As a song by Natalie (Atherton) last night emphasized, it doesn't always go the way we think it's going to go. You probably notice that. We face our challenges, and we have to admit that in a human sense we don't know all of the divine plan, so we leave that in the hands of the Divine. But we know what *our* job and *our* role is in all that, and that makes all the difference because our job is to bring the Holy Spirit.

In fact, we are meant to be the temple of the Living God, as humanity. Not the God of belief or the God of hope, not the God of history. We are made to be the temple of the *Living* God. And that reality is longing to live fully and freely through us.

But for that to happen, there's something that we have to cast off. We have to cast off how we've always done it; we have to cast off the beliefs in our own limitations. We have to cast off our judgments of other people, so that we can be open to and embrace the inspiration of the spirit that lives within us. Here is the critical factor: That spirit is looking to bring inspiration and blessing in our life *all the time*—all the time. But we have to turn our face to it. As it's put in the Bible, we have to be willing to meet God face to face, and turn away from the ways we've been acting in our world that are bringing us no happiness, no joy, and no joy to the people around us, so that we can turn to that creative spirit and receive the inspiration of that spirit and the blessing of that spirit. If we truly receive, we can be filled to overflowing with inspiration and blessing.

I'd like to read a verse from the Book of Isaiah. He says this: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." (*Isaiah 55:6*) So why would spirit be near? And why would it be indicated that spirit is near for a time? Spirit is eternal. The invisible reality of spirit is always with us. So what was it that Isaiah was pointing to? He was a great spiritual leader. He said, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." Is there anything else to take from this, other than that Isaiah was saying, "I am here. I am making the reality of spirit apparent and available. You can find it because I am here. And take advantage of that fact while you can." Are we that kind of person who says you can find it because I'm here? I'm filled with that spirit. I am the temple of the Living God.

What people speak of as God is not just a reality someplace else. It may be a reality someplace else, but it is relevant for us as it's here with us and through us. That is what has significance for us personally, and significance for the people who touch us and hear us, and who are with us. This is what has significance to our world.

I'd like to introduce a word this morning that may or may not be familiar to you. The word is *Shekinah*. It is an ancient word, passed down to us through Hebrew. In Hebrew it's in a feminine form. The word *Shekinah* has to do with a dwelling place for the divine. Shekinah is the temple of the Living God. It is our flesh bodies, yes; this morning it is this Dome. But it is also our minds—our minds are meant to be Shekinah. It is also our feelings, what we emote; our feelings, too, are meant to be Shekinah, the temple of the Living God. You probably noticed, our feelings get into trouble when they are not being a temple for the Living God.

But when we turn our face of response to spirit, we are filled from within, and then filled to overflowing. That was so evident in the concert presented by Circles of Light last night—the singers were filled to overflowing, and it just kept coming. That's how our life is when

our face of response is turned, and stays turned. It seems easy enough in a time of prayer or a time of worship, a time of celebration such as last night. But when we attend to the things in our lives every day, how are we doing? Can we keep our physical face turned to the task at hand, to the person in front of us, to our work, to our family? But always keep the face of our spiritual response turned inward to spirit, so that we continue to be the temple of the Living God, every day, in all things.

Julian of Norwich was a nun who lived centuries ago in Norwich, England. I visited there several years ago. She confined her dwelling place to a room that was built on to the church, and there was a window in that room that faced the people. The people would come and unburden themselves in her presence. They would have an encounter with the Living God because of Julian of Norwich. Like Isaiah, she was a prophet.

The other side of that room had another opening that faced inward to the church, symbolic of what allowed her to be of service to other people. She was getting filled from within while she was serving. Her face of response was turned within. It's not a physical thing. You can't see that about a person because of which way their head is turned. But you can feel it through a person whose face of response is constantly to spirit.

So are we who have gathered here this morning, and we, whoever we may be around the world, who are awakening spiritually, are developing the capacity to truly be the temple of the Living God. Are we up for doing the work that is ours to do, to be in that stance of service? I say that, knowing that for each person in this Dome there are challenges that come up in our life. There are things that tell you that your challenges are more important than being a temple of the Living God, that your disappointments are more important, that because you didn't get your way in a given situation, *that's* more important, because your feelings are crunched, or because, as Natalie's song said, somebody left or could leave you.

If we'll listen, and if our face of response is turned, there is a voice that comes up from deep within us that echoes the words of Natalie's song: "I will do it anyway." I will be a temple of the Living God. And if I stumble, I'll pick myself up. And if I did something stupid, I will learn. I know none of you probably do stupid things, but sometimes I do. I will learn. I will not hide. Do you ever want to hide because you do something you're ashamed of? Sometimes people hide from each other. No, I won't hide from you. And what's even more important, I will not hide from my God. I am here.

I am here. That's a statement that's found often at points of calling and awakening in the Bible. At a point where there was a real need and a person felt the calling of spirit, they would answer, very simply, "Here I am" or "I am here. I'm not hiding. I hear your call, and I'm answering." Whatever's happened, whatever my successes have been, whatever my apparent failures have been, whatever challenges are before me, whatever age I am, I am here.

Shekinah is spoken of as a dwelling place. So who is it a dwelling place for? Who is the one who dwells? It is spirit. And when we ourselves are fully present, we find that that reality of spirit is the truest aspect of who we are—that that person that we know ourselves to be is, at best, the capacity for the outer expression of the spirit who we are, of the One Who Dwells. But the realest thing about each one of us is that I am here, you are here. I am that reality that dwells in this temple. I am the temple, and I am the One Who Dwells.

In 1996, along with some others, I came into the responsibility of leading this ministry that we speak of as Emissaries of Divine Light. I was a lot younger than the man who had led it before me, and people around me said, “You’re young. You’ve got a lot to learn.” And they were right; I did have a lot to learn, and—well, I was younger then than I am now. That went on for a while. At some point, somebody said to me, “Well, we’re getting a little old for this.” And I thought, when did I pass that magic moment when it was just right?

When *is* it just right? And are you waiting for it to be just right, to be the right age, to look just the right way, to be perfect? No, I’ll tell you when it’s just right: right now! (*Applause*) It’s always just right, right now. I don’t care how easy it is; I don’t care how hard it is. It’s *always* just right, right now. I am *here*.

(*From the audience: “I see you.”*)

Thank you. Sawubona. That is Zulu for “We see you coming.” If you are here and I am here, I see you. That carries blessing. *Sawubona* is a word of blessing, because the eyes of spirit bring blessing, don’t they? The gaze of spirit through a person brings blessing. I’ve been blessed by you who have come; we have been blessed by you—by the love that emanates through your eyes and through your voices, through your warm greeting. But that’s just how it is when I am here. When I am here, I exude blessing; I exude inspiration and encouragement.

Encouragement is something of the heart, isn’t it? It has within it *courage*, and within *courage* is that word *coeur*, which is French for “heart.” The feeling realm on-line—I am with you. And as Joel Osteen says, I’m not just with you; I’m *for* you. I want you to succeed; I want you to fulfill your destiny. I love it when you are being the temple of the Living God, because I know that we have that to do together, wherever you are, wherever I am.

As I am here, I am calling to all awakening ones, wherever they may be. I am calling them to rise up into the stature of who they are truly, to not settle for anything less than that—not to give up, not to settle for any small-minded theology that keeps them from being the greatness of who they are, a theology that waits for later or for tomorrow or for another lifetime. I’m sure there are tomorrows and I’m sure there are other lifetimes, and Planet Earth is not the only place in the universe. It just happens to be where we are, right here and now, to bring the glory of God, the glory of the Divine, to let this house be filled with praise, be filled with the living flesh of spirit, Shekinah.

When we're at home in this house, we are, by that act, calling to awakening ones, wherever they may be. They may have a restless night because of that calling. They may feel a sense of hope that they hadn't felt before. They may feel the presence of the Holy Spirit, and a greater appreciation for the sacredness of life that they may have allowed to turn cheap in their eyes. No, this life is sacred, and everything about it, starting with you and me. The temple of the Living God is sacred.

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