

## HANSEL AND GRETEL

Week #3 of a New 4-Week Series, "Metaphysical Fairy Tale Fun"

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Okay, well, again, it's me, Rev. Beci Rohkohl. We're in the middle – well, not in the middle of our series; I think there's one more after this, right? And I drew the straw of "Hansel and Gretel," the story.

And at first I was like, *"Hmm. Really? What is ...?"* You know, I knew the story. At least I thought I knew the story. But then, I was like, "Okay." And then ... in another kink, Steven Spielberg decides to write a movie and put Hansel and Gretel in his movie that just came out. So, I was like, *"Stealing my thunder!"* I'm not talking about his story. I'm going to talk about my story. My Hansel and Gretel.

And there's lots of different versions of it. So, I'm just going to give a synopsis of it. And then we're going to talk about how it relates to being in Unity and being in One.

We know that Hansel and Gretel lived with their father, a woodcutter, at the edge of the forest. And their stepmother -- at least that's the story that I'm following; some say it's mother, but anyway, it's too confusing. So, the stepmother was being very worried because they were running out of food. And she was telling her husband, *"We don't have enough food to feed everybody. So, you need to take the children and take them out to the woods."*

And on another note, I don't know if you guys know, but the Great Famine happened in 1315 to 1317. And it was in Northern Europe, and this was actually a practice that they did. They took their children into the forest and left them because they couldn't feed them. When I was researching and I found that, I was like -- my heart stopped. I was like, *"Okay, I'm done. I don't want to go on with the story."* But at least this one ends differently.

But yeah, they decided to take them out into the forest. And he didn't want to at first, and she convinced him. She kept pushing him. *"You've got to do this, because we're not going to make it. We're just not going to make it. We have too many mouths to feed."* So, he agreed, and the first night he took him out and he left him there in the forest.

But Hansel and Gretel had heard what was happening and Hansel had gone out and picked up a bunch of rocks and put them in his pocket. And as he took them out, he would drop a rock as he was walking. Because he's like, *"I can get us home. I can get us home."* So, the first night, he actually did. After the father dropped them off out there, made a fire for them, he left him out there thinking that was it.

He comes back to his wife. And then ... here comes his children. Because Hansel was smart. He's like, *"I'm going to find my way home."* And then when he arrives, the stepmother goes, *"Well, where have you been? We've been looking all over for you!"* Narcissist, right? *"It's all your fault. You did this!"*

And she's, *"Get in the house."* And she locks him in the house. She goes, *"You can't leave again. I'm going to lock you in the house!"* Because she'd figured out what he'd done, but she was going to make sure it didn't happen again.

She convinces her husband to do it again the next day. And he does. He takes them out into the forest -- deep into the forest where they'd never been; starts a fire for him; has them lay down to take a nap; and then he walks away from them. And when they wake up, they're alone, the fire's out, and they're in deep, dark forest. They have no idea where they're at. They don't even know how long they've been there or anything.

And as the story goes along, it says that they wandered around even deeper and deeper into the forest for days, getting hungrier and hungrier along the way. And they finally -- as luck would have it -- run into a house that is made of candy. Isn't that interesting? In the middle of nowhere, a house made of candy! They were very hungry, clearly. Right? It was like the desert and the water.

But they go up to the house and they start chewing on the house. And a little old lady goes, *"Who's out there? What are you doing?"* And she flings open the door and she's like, *"Oh my; you must be hungry!"* And she's talking to them like, *"Oh yes; wonderful! Come into my house and I'll take care of you. Well, I'll give you plenty of food inside here."*

So, they said, *"Okay."* And they went inside ... soon to realize that they weren't inside to be fed; they were going to be food, instead!

She locks away Hansel, and she makes Gretel do all her chores for her. And she decides she's going to fatten Hansel up so she can have really good meals. So, she couldn't see very well, but she went out there every day. They were giving him food, and she'd go out there. And he was in a cage, and she'd say, *"Give me your finger,"* and he'd stick out a chicken bone, and she'd touch it. She goes, *"You're just not getting fat!"* And she'd go back.

And this happened over and over again. All the while, Gretel's still doing all the stuff inside here, and he's still locked in that cage. But he got smart; smart young man. He's like, *"She's not going to fatten me up!"* Right? *"Even if I am getting chubby, I'm not going to show her that I am."*

So, after about a month of this going back out there, she said, *"Forget it! I'm just going to eat you anyway! I can't wait any longer. I'm hungry!"* (This is my version.)

So, Gretel hears this and she's like, *"Okay; I've got to do something here."* So the witch loads up the fireplace -- big fireplace -- and she tells Gretel, *"Go check in there and make sure it's hot enough."* And Gretel knew if she stepped anywhere near that fire pit, she was going in it.

So she goes, *"Oh, I don't know what I'm supposed to do. I don't know what you're looking for. I don't understand what you mean."* So she was playing like she didn't have an idea.

And the witch is like -- you know, like anyone -- *"Do what I told you to do. Get in there and do it! Reach in there. Just go in there and see if it's warm enough yet."*

And she said, *"I just really don't understand."*

And she goes, *"Let me show you!"*

And as she went in, Gretel got her! Closed the door, and locked it. And then there was the witch, right? It talks in the story about the sounds coming out, but I will spare you that. [Congregants laugh]

She runs over and frees her brother. And they go running through the house. And as they're getting ready to pass out of the house, they see this bag full of jewels, pebbles ... You know, like jewels and pearls and all these little cute little shiny things. And they're like, *"Wow! That must be worth a lot of money!"* So, they snatch it up, they stick it in their pocket, and they go running out of the door.

Still lost in the forest, but at least they don't have a witch chasing them now. So, Hansel's like, *"I'm going to get us home. We're going to do this. We know what we need to do. We need to get home."* So, they walked and wandered and wandered and wandered. And they've come up to a lake.

And Hansel said, *"If we can get across this lake, I think I know where we're supposed to go."* But they were looking around going, *"How are we supposed to get across this lake? We don't know!"* And all of a sudden, this duck comes by. And in one story, it's a big duck that carries both of them. But in another

story, it's one duck. They have to go one at a time. But the duck takes them across the pond. And they get out the other side. And sure enough, he knows where he's at. And he gets them back to the house.

And they go running in, fling open the door. They're so excited to see their dad. He gives them a big hug; he's so happy to see them. Their stepmother had coincidentally died. All right? Coincidence?

But anyway, they had the jewels; they had their father; and now they had their happily ever after, because they had the jewels to pay for food and they were going to be okay.

So, I was sitting there going, *"I am ... Metaphysical? Okay, let's go."*

But the first thing that popped out for me ... And you know that when we define things metaphysically, what we're looking for: anything in a story, especially like in the Bible or stories like this, really what's happening is it's what's happening inside us. The interpretation is actually about what's going on inside us.

Well, for this one, the first thing that popped out for me was **CONSCIOUSNESS OF LACK**. How many times have you heard from this very stage, abundance is who we are. Not lack. They were living in this consciousness of lack. And when we can look through, we know here at Unity, when we look through the eyes of truth, there is no lack. We have all we need.

So the stepmother and the father are so concerned about not having enough -- and so blinded by that fear and that misunderstanding, "We don't have enough; we're not going to do it" -- that they send the children away. And they're not consciously living in the awareness of abundance. So, they acted scared and they made a decision to send them away.

So, this happens to people all the time. I know that you've seen this and I know that I've experienced it. And I won't make you guys raise your hand, but somewhere in here, someone's had the same thing. We've gotten in our mind that we don't have enough money or we don't have enough food, or we don't have enough cars, or we can't go there. There's all this stuff that we can't do. *"I can't, I can't, I can't, because there's not enough."*

And as students of truth, we know that that's not true. That is the lack of consciousness. Our truth is of abundance in all things. And we can get caught in that sense of dark.

So, if you've ever suffered from a sense of lack, Charles Fillmore, the co-founder of Unity, says this: *"The mind of man is like the net catching every kind of idea. And it is man's privilege and duty under the divine law to separate the good from the bad."*

So, we're going to catch it all. It's all going to come into our minds. But what are we holding on to? Are we going to hold on to that not-good part: the lack? Or are we going to hold on to the truth? And not just blindly accept whatever is given to us -- whatever is caught in there, *"Oh, that's all I get. I'm going to take it"* -- but to actually put intention behind it and know that this is where my focus is going to go, and I'm going to focus on the good.

And it can be hard. I mean, sometimes, you know, there's a big fear. I know there's been a time in my life where I thought if I made a move that I was going to lose so much and I would not have anything to help me back me up. And it was a scary thing to do, because I thought I'm going to live without. This was way before Unity, by the way. Oddly enough, though, when I moved, my life changed completely. And there was not any lack. We had all we needed. I was a single mother raising my children.

So often we get caught in our sensations thinking it's all about what's here right now. It's our humanness, right? And the feeling of not having enough. But we know we can overcome that by

becoming still and leaning into gratitude and knowing that the Divine Source is the ultimate source of abundance in our lives.

The key here is we do not have to wait until we have fully entered the kingdom or attained a complete understanding of Spirit before prosperity begins to manifest. We don't have to know it all, but we do have to see and to turn our attention in that direction. We do have to have our eyes open to see.

Daily concentration of the mind on Spirit and its attributes will reveal that the elemental forces that make all material things are here in the ethers awaiting our recognition and appropriation. Everything we have is already here! We just have to acknowledge that it is. Our net is open. It's there!

Charles Fillmore says this, *"Go into the silence daily at a stated time and concentrate on the substance of Spirit. This opens a current of thought that will bring prosperity into all your affairs."*

He was such a simple guy, right? He's like, *"This is all you have to do!"* Well, then you got to put it into practice.

So, the second lesson I got from this was about **FEAR**. That's a big one. The kids were afraid. Even the parents were afraid of not eating, but the kids were very afraid. They stayed in that fear. Even when they were locked in the cages and doing all the maid work, they were still living in that fear. They were so afraid of what was going to happen to them.

And Ernest Holmes wrote this: *"The thing itself, Divine Mind, is always present even when we cannot feel it."*

Has anybody ever in their life felt like they were so alone and so much fear that they were all alone and they could not feel that Presence? I have. Woo! I don't even want to go there, but it was a long time ago. And right now I'm getting teary-eyed thinking about it. Thinking I was alone and I would never have anything I needed. And that God had given up on me, essentially, is what I thought.

And I asked God, *"If you really do love me, and if you really are there, then you will send me a hug."* And I imagined in my poor little mind, my dad would come through and give me this big hug, you know. But it wasn't my dad, it was someone else. But I still, within 30 seconds, somebody walked through the door and said, *"Could you use a hug?"*

I'm like, *"All right, now you're just smarting off!"* [Congregants laugh] Because I really had gotten to the point ... I was 36 years old; I really had gone through enough in my life that I was just like, *"I'm done. I can't do this anymore. So I have to have some proof!"* And I definitely got it.

Unfortunately, fear sends us to things -- sometimes sends us first to things that we think are good for us. The kids were in fear, hungry. They walked up to the house. They're like, *"Oh, yay! Food!"* Even though it's candy. They're like, *"Yeah!"* That's what my kids would do. *"Candy! Yes!"*

But it doesn't always seem like that. My mother used to use this phrase all the time. *"Beci, you go out of the frying pan into the fire."* Like every choice I made was like, *"Oh yeah, I'm getting out of this; but, oh wow, what the heck did I just land in?"* You know what I mean? And it happened a lot.

But the story of the children: were so eager to eat that they didn't realize that what they were consumed in -- unconsciousness -- would consume them. What we consume in unconscious mind will actually consume us back.

I mean, just ... I don't know how I never knew this before, but I had to wait until I got it, right? So, in the story, the children were so eager to eat this house that it consumed them eventually. They were captives in their own thinking. They were thinking things like ...

Fillmore says, "Race consciousness is the collective error beliefs that shape our thinking without our awareness." So, we're thinking it, we're doing it without even really being aware of it. Remember, Fillmore said we've got to look at it.

The **belief in appearances**. Making outer conditions for ultimate reality. They thought the house was nice. You know, how many times have we turned to ourselves, "Oh, that'll work!" No, it doesn't. Because it looks like it's -- I believe that it would. Again, out of the frying pan.

And the **sense consciousness**. Living in our senses, living in our sight, living in our hands. Thinking it has to be tangible for it to be real. And, in reality, this is the part that's not real. It's what we can't see that is real. Because we can't see Spirit. We can't see our consciousness. We can't see truth. We can see people walking in their truth. But that's what's really tangible for our lives.

But in the story, Gretel finally gets to a point where the love for her brother was enough to scare her and back her into a corner enough that she overcame her fears. And they were freed by her efforts. They weren't going to get eaten that day.

So, Fillmore taught this: that, "We don't fight error thinking -- we dissolve it with truth." You're not supposed to struggle against it. That's the point. It's not like, "Oh, I'm bad; you're bad." No, no, no. We dissolve it with the truth. We open the light to the truth. We open our hearts and the Christ in our hearts and say, "This is the truth here." And that will dissolve the fear.

And he says how to overcome fear is to -- **fear is cast out by perfect love**. We saw that with Gretel. To know divine love is to be selfless. And to be selfless is to be without fear. She fought through it and she pushed him out. And, of course, jewels that they took back were abundance.

Eric Butterworth says this in his essays. He says, "Worry is an amazing preoccupation. It is a concentration of the mind on experiences and relationships from the most pessimistic point of view. Some persons become highly skilled at the art of worrying."

Do you know anybody like that? [Congregants laugh] I'm married to one! Shhh; don't tell him I said that. Hopefully he won't watch. Sorry. [Laughs] Worry, worry, worry. Everything's a worry. For a long time, I called him Chicken Little, because everything's a problem. Oh, no, no, no, no. You know, I'm like, "Why are we worried? Why are we worried? We live in abundance. It's going to be okay."

He says I'm "woo-woo." [Laughs] But I really do believe that we live in abundance. But some people get stuck in that.

And it says here that, "As a matter of fact, if they would pray with the same intensity with which they worry, they would enjoy answers without ceasing." If we would pray as much as we worry, what would our life be like? Right? To me, I was just like: when I wrote that down, I was like, "Oh, oh, oh! Okay; you got me!"

So think about it. **If we spent as much time praying as we did worrying, we could, in fact, create our own heaven on earth.** Right here, right now. Because we would let go of the worrying.

So, the last part that I'm going to bring forward to you was the last principle for me was

### **DEMONSTRATION**.

Now, when I was in ministerial school, this one was a hard one for me to understand, because they tried to teach you and I'm like, "What does that mean? I don't understand what demonstration means." So hopefully I can get across to you in much simpler ways, because the way they were saying it to me, I couldn't really get it.

It's defined as *"The proving of a Truth principle in one's body and/or affairs. The manifestation of an ideal when its accomplishment has been brought about by one's conformity in thought, word, and act to create Principle of God."*

You know what it is? It's alignment. I believe it. I think it. I walk it. That's how I demonstrate my faith. That's what I do out there. That's what I do up here. I demonstrate my faith. That's what I do in my home. I walk the talk. Because that's how I'm demonstrating out in the world.

And for them, they got to walk away. They demonstrated their strength: the strength that they got. And the wanting to go home and the determination behind that. I almost lost the word. The determination that they had; they finally had that focus and lined up. And they were able to go home and bring back the jewels, too.

So, they returned like the hero's journey with the lessons learned -- those were the jewels -- and being reunited with their father. Coming back to the conscious state of connection and awareness of Spirit. The stepmother, of course, was gone, but we were ... Some say ... In some of the stories, they say she was actually the witch in disguise.

So, in Unity Metaphysics, every story is a parable about consciousness. In Hansel and Gretel, it maps the soul's journey from lack to error thinking through fear and back to its awareness of the Divine within. Home within ourselves. We come home.

That was a perfect song because they came home. They came home to themselves.

The hero's journey is what Eric Butterworth's "Essays on Abundance" says: *"The journey home depends, not on the distance between where you are and where our good is. The journey depends on how long it takes us to accept the truth about ourselves; to accept the realization that we already have within us all that which we seek."*

We already have it! It's not about going over here. How much more do we need to understand that we have what we want? We already have everything we need inside us!

So, my question for you guys along the story is: @here are you living in lack? What fears are blinding you in your life right now? And how many things have you allowed to overshadow or consume your sense of self?

I could have a list. I'm glad they're behind me, but I could have a list. You guys would probably go, "Ooh!" Some of the stuff on that list. But how many things are we letting do that?

It comes down to this. Our fifth principle says, *"It's not enough to understand spiritual teachings. We must live the truth we know."* Are you living the truth that you know? Are you living the truth that you listen to when you come here? That your friends talk about when you share getting coffee on Sunday night, Sunday morning? Are you living the truth?

This week, look at your journey and ask yourself: Where are you and where do you want to be? And are you living in or feeding fear in your life? Are you living into your potential or feeding the fears in it? And are you demonstrating what you already have?

Because you don't have to have it all, like I said. You just have to be pointed in that direction. Don't judge yourself, okay? I'm not saying this so you go home and judge yourself. That doesn't help. That doesn't help any of us.

Just: Where do I want to be in my life? What do I want to have in my life? And jump into the current -- the flow -- of abundance on that.

And as Fillmore says, practice by going into the silence. So, if we go within and really listen to our inner Christ, we might see we are not that far away from our own truth. We really aren't. You're here. You're not that far away. So, after all, we are each unique expressions of the Divine incarnate on earth. So, let's live. in that truth.

Thank you.

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