

February 10, 2023



Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

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HINENI

By Julie Mussché

*"Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, 'Abraham!'
'Here I am,' he replied."*

Genesis 22:1

*"The angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob.'
I answered, 'Here I am.'"*

Genesis 31:11

*"When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him
from within the bush, 'Moses! Moses!'
And Moses said, 'Here I am.'"*

Exodus 3:4

*"Then the Lord called Samuel.
Samuel answered, 'Here I am.'"*

1 Samuel 3:4

Reflection

What are the means by which God communicates with us? How are we to know God's will and desire for us, collectively as well as personally? These certainly are the baseline questions for discernment. Recently, during a presentation at the Center for Spiritual Development offered by Elizabeth Liebert, SNJM, Ph.D., several discernment practices were explored and processed.

The timing of the session, which I attended via Zoom, was extraordinary since a number of invitations had been received by me recently that would reap benefit from further discernment. At the same time, on the day of the program, I was very tired as the previous week had been a bit grueling and I wasn't certain how focused I would actually be. Hence, my *modus operandi* was, by necessity, simplicity.

As led by the presenter, entering into prayerful presence, my day started with foundational questions to help guide the processes. Without much cogitation, the things that emerged seamlessly were "hineni," or "here I am" and "how shall I be?"

Without belaboring the details of the discernment practices, a tree in my backyard took a leading role in my reflection. Dorothy, the White Nectarine, was introduced to you in a prior reflection (July 2021). In the morning, walking through my backyard, I noticed Dorothy had budded in preparation to flower. Moving up more closely to the fruit tree, and reflecting on the miracle of seasonal movements, flora, and the unfolding of flower, the message that reverberated was, "have patience and let Grace lead."

Later in the afternoon, while engaging another discernment practice and strolling in contemplation, I glanced out my window and noticed several small patches of white on Dorothy. What in the world? Although not intending to revisit Dorothy, I hurried outside to find several gorgeous blossoms starting to open out in splendor and readying to offer fruit. Hmmm, why over-think it?

The scripture passages at the beginning of this writing offer examples of where God has called, and those called have responded, "hineni," or here I am. Exploring a few commentaries about this affirmative response to God, several attributes or qualities stood out in relation to discernment. First, there is no goal or action attached to the response, it is a spontaneous exclamation to a call. There is no clear expectation or outcome, but there is an embedded intimacy, vulnerability and trust in the reply. It initiates a sacred dialogue, a

call and response. How we receive and hear the call is unique to each of us. God's voice is expansive, limitless and persistent. Sometimes it resonates loudly and sometimes it is a whisper.



Photo by Julie Mussché

For Pondering and Prayer

- How do you hear God's voice?
- What is your preferred process or practice for discerning God's desire for you?
- How would you live to grow your listening?

Here I am, God.

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Center for Spiritual Development | 434 A South Batavia Street, Orange, CA 92868 (714) 744-3175

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