

WHO IS THE GIRL CHILD?

Once upon a time ...



There was a girl who ventured out into the world

daring to believe in her own equality, in her own freedom...

She has lived in every time and place and class.

She is the face of half of the 7+ billion human beings who share this planet.

Her own quest has helped to drive all of humankind's great struggles of emancipation from injustice and oppression, yet strangely has been marginalized by them.

Her story is still being written... Her time is now. She has come a long *long* way, yet like no other group or tribe on this planet occupies a dangerously low social status—"the least of these" in a vast and historic *hierarchy of being*—as she struggles to find her way through centuries upon centuries of ancient gender norms which have defined her more as a family "asset" or "role" than as a full human being.

Is humankind's Long Walk to Freedom hers too? Do all those beautiful words of human emancipation—liberty and justice for all—that gave birth to our New World declarations of independence, our constitutions, our movements to end slavery and grant civil rights to all, our international treaties and declarations of human rights, do all these also apply to Her?



It's evening for us, but still morning for our daughters.

~ Masai woman from Tanzania

Is she too born as a *free person* with all of the rights and opportunities of self-determination we now equate with the basic "inalienable rights" of what it means to be a human being and a citizen of our world? Or is she designed by God or Nature to live a life of one-sided submission and servitude as voice after voice through the centuries has compared to slavery?

Maybe you know Her? Well into the 21st c., her body and her very being is still caught in a tenuous tug and pull between the Old World and the New as we her human family still struggle to fully live into our highest ideals of shared dominion and rid our world of all forms of human subjugation and slavery along with the whole treasure chest of ancient ideas which have for too long sanctioned these.

What do you want for Her life journey? What kind of world do we want to greet Her?

What navigation rules have made ours a “man’s world” and not Hers? What needs to change so She can freely set sail? So She is not the “least of these”? What’s faith got to do with it?

Such a time as this... The truth of Her being is rising up to tell its own story. She is rising up to lead us to Another World that is not only possible but is on Her way... Let’s get faith fully onboard.

Who is the Girl Child?



She is your daughter.
She is your sister.
She is your mother,
your aunt,
your grandmother,
your friend,
your colleague.
She is you.
She is the woman in the girl, the girl in the woman.

The She untainted by centuries upon centuries of diminishing ideology, theology, traditions which treat being born female as *lesser than*... as unclean... as inferior... as the cause of evil in the world... as not meant to grow into the full human agency of adulthood.

She is the human spirit within each of us that comes into the world not knowing any of these rules, roles, and codes that await Her and define her path.

She is that scrappy voice within that presumes an equal place in the banquet of Life.



She is both a me and a we. She sees self in the other. And the other in the self. She is part of a movement that spans the centuries, one girl, one woman standing on the shoulder of another. She/we still has work to do. The descendants of Eve are scattered across time and place yet are climbing the same mountain of injustice. She has collectively been defined from the outside, but another truth has been arising from Within. The train has left the station... the butterfly is breaking out of its cocoon, the genie has left the patriarchal bottle and cannot be put back in...

The Girl Spirit is rising up and is telling Her truth to the world.

Her gaze says to the john, the pimp, the master of the house, *you do not own me* and to the pastor, *maybe just maybe the real message of the Bible and Koran says something different?*

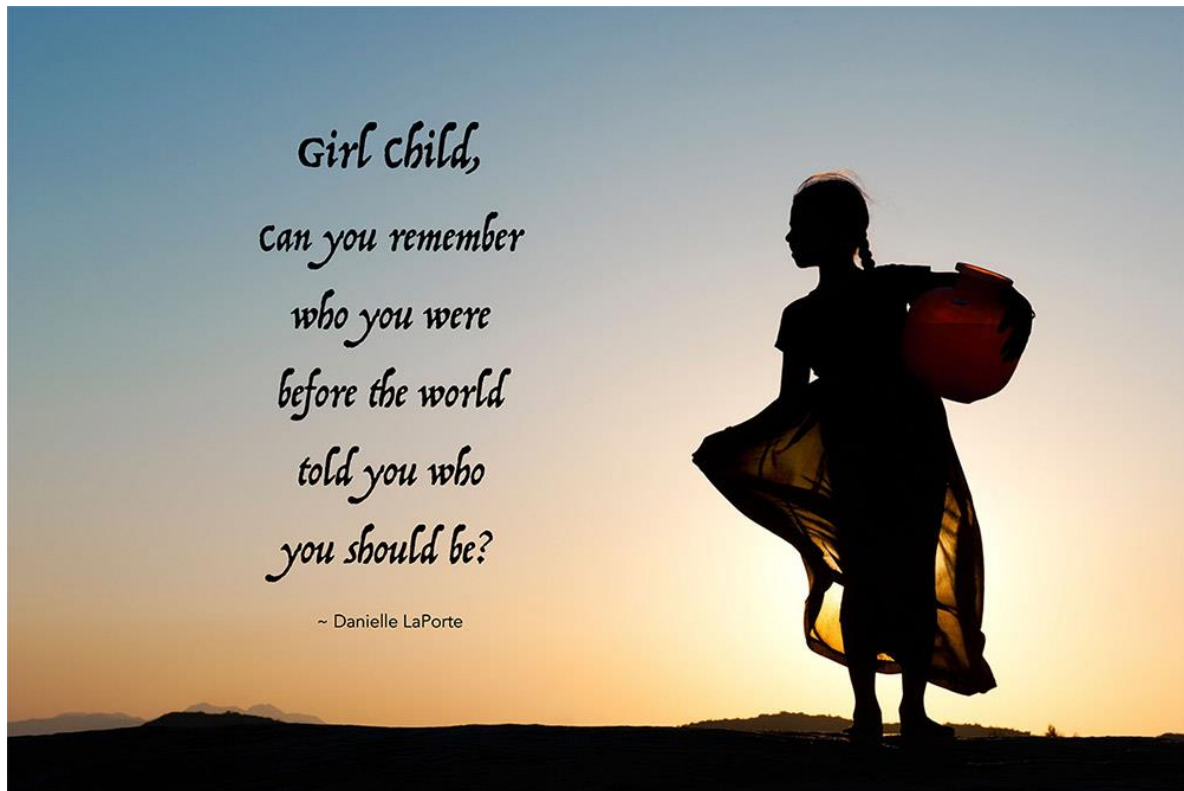
She is the author of Her own story. The captain of her own ship.



She is the feminine face of God in pure essence which, like a mother's fierce love, loves even when She is hurt, diminished, marginalized, dehumanized, and overworked.

She is saying something to the world. She knows there is another way to be human that can accept differences without elevating one over the other.

She is a sister who loves her brothers. Like them, she wants to play. And go to school. The playground of Life though is still far from level. The rules of the game are still stacked against Her.



Her climb today in the 21st c. is way too steep, way too treacherous. Her basic human rights still frightenly tenuous and prone to regression and backlash in the name of God and tradition.

This uphill climb is Hers to take. She is bravely climbing every mountain in her path saying to the world I am more than what this edifice of traditions has said. I am not a passive recipient of traditions, I am part of recreating them. She is strong and powerful and is spreading Her wings. The genie is out of the bottle. The train has left the station. But She is not alone on Her Long Walk to Freedom. It is also mine, It is yours, it is all of ours, Her human family.

None of us is free until we all are. Her chains are yours, mine, and ours. She is each and every one of the 160,000 girl babies born each day into our world

with a heart ready to unfurl its sail...



A pilot reading pilgrimage is beginning in October 2018 through March 2019. Participants will read weekly chapters of “Putting Faith to Work Through Love to Break Ancient Chains”, by Emily Nielsen Jones and Domnic Misolo.

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