



**FROM: THE DESK OF PASTOR CARUANA**  
**TO: The People of Zion**  
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## **THE CHOICE FOR GOD OR THE WORLD**

Hi All ... It's me again.

Just thought I would share a paraphrase of a story written in John Aurelio's book: *Colors! Stories of the Kingdom*.

Once upon a time, a great and loving king ruled over a vast territory. There was something very strange about this kingdom, however. Everything was the same. The people ate the same food, drank the same drink, wore the same clothes, and lived in the same types of houses. The people even did all the same work. There was another oddity about this place. Everything was gray – the food, the drink, the clothes, the houses. There were no other colors.

One day, a majestic and very beautiful bird flew from the west into a small village that lay a great distance from the capital city. The bird deposited a yellow egg and flew off. The people were fascinated with their new possession since they had never seen anything but gray. They played with the egg and poked it. In the process the egg broke. Inside was a yellow powder. Anything that came in contact with the powder instantly turned yellow. At the outset, a few people's clothes and some other objects turned yellow, but the people were soon so struck with their new discovery that the whole village was "painted" yellow. The next day, the same bird flew from the west and deposited a blue egg in another small village. It didn't take long before everything in this village was blue. This same scenario repeated itself on seven consecutive days, as the majestic bird deposited seven different colored eggs in seven villages.

The great king in the capital city, where all was still gray, heard about these strange events and wondered what the sign might mean. He called in his royal councilors and advisors and asked them if anything like this had happened in the past. They checked the ancient manuscripts and discovered that many generations ago the kingdom was ruled by a philosopher king. At the time there was much dissension, strife, and conflict in the kingdom. It was further discovered that the source of this dissension came about from the differences that existed among the people. The king, who wanted peace, believed that the only way to restore harmony was to eliminate all differences among the people. That's why all the people did the same things and all was gray.

The present king was worried that the various colors in the villages would again lead to dissension and strife. Thus, he ordered the royal archers to locate the majestic bird and slay it. The archers found the bird and their arrows were sent straight and true, but they had no effect on the bird which simply flew away. If the bird could not be stopped then the people must be thought of by the king. Thus, he ordered the people to remove all the colors and return to gray. But the people, who were enamored with the new colors in their lives, refused to obey the king's order. Dissension, strife, and conflict ensued – the very things the king was trying to prevent.

The king was unsure as to what to do, until one day the beautiful majestic bird flew into the royal palace and deposited seven different colored eggs. The king was frustrated and angry and in a fit of rage he hurled the eggs in all different directions. They burst into an array of color. The beauty was so great that the king, in a moment of inspiration, knew precisely what he needed to do. He

now realized that the bird was a sign that change was needed, but he had ignored the sign. Thus, the king ordered that all the people must have all the colors. Again, there were no differences and dissension, strife, and conflict ceased. All the people lived happily ever after.

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John Aurelio's story speaks about how a king was given a choice – follow the sign of God or ignore the sign and go your own way. His failure to heed the sign almost brought disaster for him and his kingdom. Jesus, in the gospel story for this coming Sunday, presents all of us with a choice – will we enter life through him, the gatekeeper, or seek another road. The choice is ours.

John's gospel, which is filled with powerful images, presents us with one of the most significant. Jesus describes himself as the gate through which all must pass who seek God and eternal life. Jesus is very clear when he says, "I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and have a rich and satisfying life.

Everyday we are given signs to follow and choices to make – both good and bad. I'm sure we can all attest to that! While free will is a gift given to us by God, it can also result in a choice to ignore the signs of the Good Shepherd. What choices will you make? Are you ready for change? In the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic and the ultimate reopening of Zion's doors, we will be faced with numerous choices and opportunities for change. Embrace that change and the "new normal" (whatever that means) in a way that allows each of us to have a rich and satisfying life.



*The Awakening of the Tree of Life  
in all its Radiance*

*Peace and blessings to everyone!!*