

Peace or War, ! or ?

by Ariel Bar Tzadok

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“Cry 'Havoc!', and let slip the dogs of war.” (Shakespeare)

War is raw, it is such a chore. Must peace decrease, is it destined to cease?

Tell me this, O' brave armchair warrior, will you go to the door of the family and deliver to them notice that their loved one has died in battle? Will you stand tall to comfort a grieving mother over the loss of her son, or a sobbing woman devastated over the loss of her husband, the father of her children? If you have never stood in the face of such grief and loss, then in my opinion, you have no right to call for it.

There are wars and rumors of war everywhere. Nation threatened to nation. Within nations, one segment of the population attacks another. It seems that everyone wants to fight, everyone want to destroy the other guy. Yet, as any combat instructor will teach you, while you may win the war, there is no guarantee that you will not be hurt in prosecuting it.

War is a dirty business. It causes nothing but pain, misery, and suffering. Granted, some wars do have to be fought. But even these should be taken on with trepidation.

Bloodthirsty leaders and generals are the worst ones to prosecute a war. They only care to send others in harms way, without any regards for anything other than their own personal agendas.

On the other hand, wise military leaders, and there are many of them, loath war! They have seen firsthand the carnage that it can cause, and seek to avoid such suffering on their side, and will often seek to lessen it upon the enemy.

Wise generals know how to prosecute necessary wars. Foolish generals, led by dangerous politicians, care not for caution, but seek only their own ends, regardless of the cost in human life, and damage to society.

All justifications for war sound reasonable to those so convinced. Of course, the bad guy is bad, and he is hurting innocents. Of course, we have the moral upper hand, the moral right, and the moral compulsion to intervene, and punish the bad guy. After all, that is what “we” good guys do, isn't it? With this type of rationale, every war can be justified, and along with it, every form of prejudice, racism, and persecution.

The one thing every seasoned, experienced soldier will tell you is that there is no glory in war. There is a only a lot of blood and guts, and truly, a lot of sacrifice and individual honor of devoted, loyal soldiers. Yet, who will call this glory?

Granted the enemy combatant is to be killed. Yet, in the eyes of the enemy combatant, the one trying to kill him is the enemy, and the enemy is only trying to kill the one trying to kill him. And so soldiers fight, often with each side expressing sacrifice, devotion, bravery, blood and guts. After the war, soldiers on both sides are decorated and honored by their individual countries. And, on and on the conflicts go.

So, you want to go the war? You want to punish the bad guy? You want someone else's son, husband or father to go into harms way, all because you believe that it is the right and moral thing to do.

What gives you the right to be your brother's keeper? Who made you God's policeman?

To intervene to help the helpless is always a right and good thing, but how this is to be accomplished should be thought out wisely, and with forethought for consequences. It does not always require violence and destruction. There are better ways!

True, some wars need to be fought. Some enemies are just too evil to be ignored. Yet, when wars of this nature are to be fought, then the resolve to fight them must be complete. One must fight until evil is utterly defeated! But mind you, one man's evil enemy is another man's righteous cause!

Wars are not limited to the struggle between nations. They also exist between peoples, and specific interest groups. In order for there to be a war, one group must come to declare that another group has wronged them, thus earning their enmity. Excuses upon excuses are then piled up until there is a long list of grievances. Within this intact, be it truth or myth, animosity is created. After animosity comes hatred, hatred leads to belligerence, belligerence leads to perceived dangers, perceived dangers lead to interpreting everything as provocations, provocations leads to violence, and violence leads to war. This type of war is easy to start, and extremely difficult to end. I would say that this type of war is probably responsible for more human suffering and deaths than any other type. In my opinion, this is evil incarnate, and the face of the devil on earth.

While we all have differences, some more than others, this do not grant anyone permission to define such differences as justifiable cause for one group to perpetrate inhuman behaviors upon another.

In the end, regardless of all our differences, we all bleed red blood!

In the end, regardless of all our differences, we are all homo sapien human beings, created in the Divine Image.

In the end, regardless of all our differences, we are all born to share this planet together.

Therefore, in the end, regardless of our differences, we are all born to live, and in the end, regardless of our differences, we all live to die.

We are all equally born innocent babes, and in death, we will all equally be corpses in the graves.

As for our immortal souls, we all argue over our fate in the afterlife, but one thing is for sure, it will be God who decides the destiny of a soul, and not any human doctrine or theology.

No amount of differences will ever chance these facts!

If we, as individuals, as nations, or as a race in whole, want war, and desire to kill ourselves, then this is exactly what we will have. We have been killing each other since prehistorical times. Now, we have the technology and weaponry with which we can finally and successfully eliminate the entire human race.

As a person of faith, I do not believe that the Divine will permit us to go that far, but, I also firmly believe that the Divine will not stop us from trying!

We do not have to continue killing ourselves! We do not have to continue provoking others, and allowing ourselves to be provoked by others.

We can chose a better way. But the better way cannot begin at the racial, national, or group level. The better way for peace must first be an individual decision. The way of peace begins in the individual heart and soul of every human being, who truly desires and respects life.

When like-minded individuals unite and say, enough! Then, there will be enough! Until that time, struggle, fighting, suffering, death and war, will be the lot of all those who seek it, embrace it, or tolerate it.

Granted, evil must be fought and totally destroyed. This too is necessary for human survival. However, let us never forget that the greatest evil out there, and the greatest threat to human survival is not the other guy, rather, it is the enemy within each of us, the one that we can spot, when we look in the mirror.

Peace begins within. When each of us makes peace with ourselves, then peace with the other guy will become a easy and forgone conclusion.

There is no greater truth. There is no easier solution to war.

We all have our work cut out for us. I say, let's get busy!