

Wage war against fallen nature, not other people

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November 18, 2023



People carry placards during a protest calling for the immediate release of hostages held in Gaza who were seized from southern Israel on October 7 by Palestinian Islamist group Hamas gunmen during a deadly attack, at a square in Tel Aviv, Israel, November 11, 2023. (photo credit: REUTERS/AMMAR AWAD)

When you're gripped by outrage, if you take that narrow gate to ask God or yourself, "Have I ever done that?" or "Have you ever felt that way, God?", then you open a bridge to a harmonious world. But if you don't take that gate, then you are outraged and angry at something outside you that is reflecting your own nature. People stuck in this often go on 'anti' crusades, campaigning loudly and publicly against anyone who is doing what they are doing themselves..

Revolutionaries denounce tyrants and want to eradicate them from the face of the earth, but if they succeed they become tyrants themselves.

People attack intolerance, treating their targets with a merciless vengeance, rejection and lack of forgiveness that embodies intolerance itself. 'If there's one thing I can't stand, it's intolerance.'

People, political parties or countries founded on an 'against' attitude, frequently accuse their 'enemy' of exactly what they are doing. Russia dismisses reports of its unprovoked attack on Ukraine as "propaganda" generated by those who "want to destroy our country".

If you watch closely, you can see that they are doing exactly what they are loudly accusing others of.

Our newsfeeds are filled with people accused of wrongdoing, who refuse to admit they are doing it, but try to find a smaller fault in their accuser and rail on about that. It's called 'whatabouting' and its unspoken premise is 'They're doing it, and it's wrong. So you can't blame me until they're completely clean.' They are tacitly admitting that what they're doing is wrong, because they're accusing others of it. They're also admitting that they can't control this fault in themselves until someone else completely overcomes it.

This is the embodiment of what Father taught us about Cain and Abel, God's side and Satan's side. Satan will always accuse and be arrogantly unrepentful until a man and woman achieve perfect love, then he has to shut up. There are two standards: God's side has to follow heavenly law strictly, and Satan's side will go on acting up until the very moment that God's side perfects love.

This, for instance, is why Israel is being roundly condemned for doing something similar to what Hamas did. Whether we realize it or not, the world expects Israel to act better than the Palestinians. The Palestinians get a pass to be utterly uncivilized, and the Israelis get dinged for not scrupulously following international law.

But that's how it is.

We end up ruthlessly trying to exterminate in others the faults we can't face in ourselves. We make enemies outside ourselves because we don't get along with ourselves. If we have recognized our own flaws, we can look at someone doing that and say, "I know just how that is," and embrace that person, instead of "This person must be eliminated."

This is where cancel culture comes from. The desire to eliminate anything that reminds you of your own unexamined flaws.

And I have been such a crusader myself, so I can look at them and say "I know what that's like. I act like that too, sometimes." Or at least "I'm capable of acting that way myself." I've railed against fruit and veg having to look perfect, but I still choose the nicest looking ones to buy. I've seethed when family members don't stand up for themselves, when that's exactly how I am. I've rolled my eyes at someone who kept derailing themselves whenever they got a shot at success, when I do just that myself.

And if there's one thing I can't stand, it's intolerance.

Here's the bottom line: If someone outrages us, we need to ask ourselves "Have I ever done that?" or "God, have I ever made you feel this way?" If we don't admit our own flaws, we will be trying to erase anyone who reminds us of them. And there's an unlimited supply of people who fit that bill.

Wage war against fallen nature, not other people.

The way has been opened to have a relationship to God that is stronger and deeper than the desire to get revenge on an enemy. There is a door, and beyond the door a bridge out of conflict and into harmony. But you have to knock on the door, ask for help and walk through it yourself.