

Tragedy in Israel...Again...and Again

Dear Friends,

Great insights often come what seem to us as unlikely sources. This is especially true when we assign a journalist/commentator the epithet "I-RARELY-IF-EVER-agree-with-what-s/he says". So it was for me when, in the last twenty-four hours, after reading one message after another with the phrase "Our prayers go out to the grieving families and the nation of Israel", I received a email from David Suissa, President of Tribe Media Corp and the Jewish Journal.

I really do, hardly, ever agree with Mr. Suissa and when I read his article entitled "For Murdered Teens, Revenge is Not Enough", I was surprised...and encouraged. Mr. Suissa saw through most of the emotional responses of much of what we've all been reading and hearing. Even though he uses the word "Revenge" in the headline of the piece, in his article he speaks about "finding the murderers and punishing them". He goes on to talk about "inflicting pain on the *leaders* (my emphasis) of Hamas, but he does not specifically refer to military or violent pain.

Instead David Suissa, who probably disagrees with most of what *I* write and say, especially about Israel, has some strong demands on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He writes that "Netanyahu must say to the leaders of Hamas":

"I can assure you that Allah does not want innocent students to be murdered. To suggest otherwise is the ultimate blasphemy.'

'Bibi must stop worrying about the Western media and the Western world, and speak directly to Muslims. He must tell them the truth: "The Quran did not sanction the deaths of these three boys.

'In this holy period of Ramadan, Bibi must be relentless and fearless with this message. He must tell the murderers that when they took the lives of these boys, and ripped out the hearts of their families, they also ripped out the heart of Allah.

'Yes, Allah is great,' Bibi must declare. 'He is great because He values life, the life of all His children. You, who

murder in the name of Allah, owe Him repentance. How will you repent?

‘Bibi and others must preach in the name of a loving Allah with the same fiery passion as those who preach in the name of a hateful Allah.

‘This is bigger than terrorism. It’s bigger than the rules of crime and punishment. It’s bigger than the secular values of law and order.

‘This is, above all, about God, and helping the loving God win.’

These are strong, beautifully articulated words to the leader of Israel and through him to Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. When Suissa suggests that “Bibi **and others** must preach in the name of a loving Allah...” I take that as a call to action for me and for those of you who share this perspective who are reading my words. **We** are the “others” (or at least some of the others) and it is for us to stand at the podium of our lives and preach about a “loving Allah”.

To those who continue to ask, “What now?”, wring their hands in desperation and frustration and then bend to the seeming inevitability of the persistence of the cycle of violence and vengeance, we, even we **as Jews**, must “preach in the name of a loving Allah”.

Suissa is right. This is about God; and in this world there are no hands, eyes, feet or hearts of God other than our own.

May the memories of Naftali Fraenkel, Gilad Shaar, and Eyal Yifrach be for a blessing – a blessing that we help to create by preaching in the name of a loving God/Allah/Adonai.



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David Suissa’s entire article can be found by clicking [here](#).

An Unfortunate but Necessary Addendum as of July 2, 2014:

The knee-jerk retaliation and vengeance have begun. Prime Minister Netanyahu has launched strikes against Hamas in Gaza, both to respond to the more than 20 rocket attacks on Southern Israel in the past two days and, no doubt, also in response to the deaths of the three Israeli teens. Meanwhile an Arab teen, Muhammad Hussein Abu Khdeir, was abducted and killed.

And so, our prayers and our outrage must expand. Now, specifically to the Israeli government and to the Israeli-Jewish outliers who are no doubt responsible for the death of Muhammad, we say: "It is time for Jews, **all** Jews, to pray, preach and **act** in the name of a loving Adonai." For the Jewish community, as it is for our Muslim brothers and sisters, we must understand that this violence and murder is antithetical to the notion of a loving Adonai, who is one and the same as a loving Allah; this violence and murder is an abhorrence at odds with the Core-of-All-Being and the Universe itself is **screaming** at the perpetrators to stop!

We join the name of Muhammad Hussein Abu Khdeir to the names of Naftali Fraenkel, Gilad Shaar, and Eyal Yifrach, united now forever because their lives were snuffed out by those with the same base emotions and warped sense of religion, spirituality and that which is divine. We are all part of the same divinity, all necessary to it. Every young person reflects the image of Allah-Adonai-God from his/her eyes and every one of them is vital to **tikkun olam**, the correcting and turning of our world from a reflection of a warlord God to a God of love. May they rest in peace and may we **never** rest until peace has come.