

Daily Meditation 10-23-23

No Vengeance: Words from a Mother Who Lost a Child to Hamas

Good morning.

This morning we had I think, a very powerful YouTube video by Michal Halev, a mother whose son was murdered by Hamas, and it was forwarded to me by David Lorimer. That's L-o-r-i-m-e-r, who is living in, in France, actually. But he's a citizen of Scotland.

He's identified as a visionary polymath, poet, spiritual activist, writer, lecturer, and editor, founder of Character Education Scotland, Program Director of the Scientific and Medical Network, and former president of Wrekin Trust and the Swedenborg Society.

He's written a number of books, he's very interested in science and spirituality. Some of his books are "The Spirit of Science," "Thinking Beyond the Brain," "Science, Consciousness, and Ultimate Reality," "The Protein Crunch," and "A New Renaissance." His early books were on death and near-death experiences.

So he forwarded me the powerful YouTube this morning, and he also forwarded with it, two poems, which I'm going to share with you, which he wrote in response, really, to this declaration by Michal Halev, and in response to what's going on in Israel and Palestine today.

I found it very moving when I woke up this morning, and I was very pleased to have them, and he was generous to give me permission to share.

The first: "Not In Our Name." With a quote from Michal Halev, "In my name, I want no vengeance."

*The mothers, the grandmothers,
Carry each generation in their wombs.
They nurse, they cherish.
They love, they sacrifice.
They support, they comfort and console.*

*In their hearts, in the home, and community,
Their hearts aglow with warmth,
Their eyes shining with radiant kindness.*

*But now they can only weep and wail.
Their sons lie lifeless before them,
In pools of seeping blood.
Their lives shattered, their hearts wrenched in agony.*

*Who will hear their piercing screams?
Who will hearken to their searing cries?
Who will listen with their souls ajar?*

*Between their heaving sobs,
Angels of peace alight on their shoulders,
Whispering oh so softly in their ears:*

*Gentle mothers and grandmothers,
Forgive them, for they know not what they do.
Blinded by the rage of oppression and injustice,
Living by the sword, they can only die by the sword.
For violence begets violence.
Hatred begets hatred.
War begets war.*

*So dare to declare this unthinkable wisdom:
Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.
Do good to those who hate you.
For love begets love.
Forgiveness begets forgiveness.
Understanding begets understanding.
Such as the strength of vision and courage of love.*

*This dreadful cup of bitterness we have drained to the dregs,
To the depths of our broken hearts.*

*We cannot wish this crushing anguish that we've endured,
To be visited on other mothers and grandmothers,
Not. In. Our. Name.*

*In our name, we want no vengeance.
This deadly poisonous pattern of reciprocal pain
And mutual reprisal,
Perpetuated down the echoing centuries:
Not In Our Name.*

*We lend our name instead to healing.
We lend our name to care and love.
We lend our name to peace.
Shalom, Salaam, Shalom, Salaam, Shalom, Salaam.*

And a note follows this poem: "The unthinkable wisdom reflects Jesus' words on the cross and the Sermon on the Mount, and the thoughts and experience of Pitirim Sorokin (1889-1968) on self-perpetuating cycles of violence and love."

That poem, by David Lorimer, inspired by the words of today's YouTube.

And here's another poem by David, called: "The Dispossessed of Gaza."

*Dispossessed, displaced, dismembered
By powerful forces,
Battling in position behind closed doors,
Carved out, carved up, fenced off,
Neighbors who are estranged from living on the land together.*

*Subjected, subjugated, submerged,
Gasping for space,
These neighbors now survive apart.
They now survive in fear.*

*Tensions build, weapons brandished, rising defiance,
Resistance and ripostes.
Clamping down, closing in, rattling up,
Ignites a powder keg of rage on either side.*

*The Shadow is Other, the Other is Shadow.
Not I, the righteous one, but you, the accused.
The despicable, the despised, the destitute, the undeserving.*

*How do we write such wrongs?
How do we confess our share of guilt?
How do we defuse such griefs of history?*

*Not through resentment, not through revenge,
Not to recrimination, not through retaliation.*

*Only a new beginning will bring an end
To such recurring cycles of violence.
Only a new beginning.*

*Only by means of truth,
Only by means of justice,
Only through empathy,
Only through feeling the others' pain.*

*Only through forgiving the unforgivable,
Through pardoning the unpardonable,
Through excusing the inexcusable.
Only through our common humanity.
Only through people's rising up together,
Then speaking truth to power.*

*Only through declaring that enough is enough.
Enough of war,
Enough of violence,*

*Enough of suffering,
Enough of sorrow and grief.*

*At this crucial point of choice,
At this turning point of destiny,
Surely our children,
Surely our children's children,
Deserve no less than this:
To live in peace together.
To live in peace together.*

Thank you. We'll see you next week.