

Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace!

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Introduction

I made several assertions about the definition and concept of peace and reconciliation in my self-published book entitled, ***Conflict Resolution and the Concept of Change*** that most of you have not had the privilege to read. Also, even those who had the chance to, they have remained mute and refused to share what they learned from the instructions and discourse I provided as a prescription for the peaceful resolution of the Liberian civil war in my capacity as an African Jewish Rabbi. I suppose some of my readers may have done so for selfish reasons best known to themselves. However, I pray that someday you will each grab a copy to read ***Conflict Resolution and the Concept of Change*** from front to back to truly understand what conflict does to the existence of our peace in the world we live and how we can attain peace when we develop an understanding of the decorum of the cosmos as God had initially intended it to be.

In this way, we all may be instruments of God's peace and stop wronging one another for material gains that we will leave behind when we exit the physical cosmos to join our ancestors in the spiritual world. Even there, it is believed there is some semblance of peace and tranquility

we have never before experienced and from where no one has returned to tell us what we are missing on that end of the cosmos. So, to be more pragmatic, it is best we first focus on how we can maintain a balance between the lives we live and the forces we have to contend with within the cosmos that engulfs you and me in the here and now.

Understanding the Cosmos and How We Fit into God's Holy Design of Peace and Decorum



The Cosmos—the world and all of its elements that God made and how they affect our lives.

Understanding the cosmos and how we fit into God's holy design of peace and decorum should be of great interest to every conscientious human being. Thus, one of my assertions that readily comes to mind when I see a people are troubled by the gross injustice and inequalities that go on in their lived world is that "Peace is not just the absence of war or the absence of stress in our lives". Instead, there is a brighter and more holistic and inspiring side to the definition of the word "peace" that we need to know and share with others that cross our daily paths. But, in order to understand what "peace" means and is, we need to have an understanding of the cosmos, the universe, the world or space around us.

We need to seek to know the Creator, our parents, family members, relatives, kindred, fellow countrymen and women, the greater community and society in which we live; and who you and I personally are. Also, we definitely need to understand what is the purpose for which God made the universe and peopled it with different kinds of human beings, and different races; and how we as beings should collaborate with our Creator, and the people in our lived world to fulfill God's purpose for our existence within the cosmos. Of course, this suggests that we cannot have peace unless the world in which we live as well as our bodies, minds, and souls are in a state of decorum with the cosmos.

The words "cosmos" and "decorum" go hand in hand when it comes to speaking about the importance of peace in our lives. Furthermore, to make meaning of peace we should strive to understand what the word itself stands for by asking ourselves what is peace and then subsequently attempt to figure out what brings us peace and satisfaction in life? In this light, the concept of peace may vary from one individual to another and from one race to the other.

However, peace as a word may imply so many things in our lives and accordingly demand us to fulfill certain tasks in order for peace to exist and be fulfilled or implemented. Against this backdrop there are many conditions to be met in order to have peace of mind, or to have concord, peacetime, amity, harmony, armistice, reconciliation, ceasefire, accord, goodwill, and end of war in our lives.

Therefore, the concept of peace may be meaningless if we pay lip service to nonviolence and do not put our words into action to ensure that violence and the destruction of human lives and properties are a thing of the past. Against this background we may make a fool of ourselves by thinking we have peace when in essence peace eludes us—when peace runs away from us because we are unable to meet its demands—either because we allow vicious people to eat over our heads—or simply because we eat over the heads of others we think we are “better than” based on our social, economic, or political status. In other words, it is very essential that peace accords must be held sacred and fulfilled in order to maintain lasting peace in postwar societies or to maintain broken human relationships. Below I want us to take our discourse to the next level by citing a vivid example of how peace may elude us if we do not put peace accords into action.

Peace Accords Must Be Held Sacred and Fulfilled in Order to Maintain Lasting Peace in Postwar Societies: A Brief Analysis of the Breakdown of the ECOWAS Peace Plan for Liberia



The word “accord” means an arrangement, covenant, treaty, promise, pact, settlement, bargain, understanding, deal, compact, bond, harmony and so forth. Hence, for instance, when you sign an “accord” with someone, as in the ECOWAS Peace Accords that have gone down the drain since the coming of the United Nations on the Liberian peace scene, it implies that by affixing our signatures to any accord we definitely agree to perform a specific task to restore a decorum that was disturbed due to conflict as in the case of the Liberian civil war. Thus, with respect to the ECOWAS Peace Accords, parties to the Liberian conflict affixed their signatures as a proof that they would adhere to the bargain that was agreed upon by all concerned parties to the armed conflict to ensure the restoration of lasting peace and tranquility in postwar Liberia. So, then, in order for the ECOWAS Peace Accords to be truly meaningful, belligerent parties to

the Liberian conflict had to fulfill their sides of the bargain to restore sustainable peace and decorum in Liberia.

Unfortunately, the ECOWAS Peace Accords were thrust into dustbins by the Liberian Legislature; and when the UN stepped in, it came as an occupational force to protect the selfish interests of its former employee, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and her cronies. In other words, the United Nations came to do business as usual, but not to keep the peace, a major function that it had usurped from the Economic Community of West African States nearly a decade ago. And, to give the world body more legitimacy as an occupational force so that it oversees the continuation of atrocities, rampant corruption, and injustices being perpetrated against the Liberian people by perpetrators of the Liberian civil war, prestigious western peace prizes and honors such as the 'Nobel Peace Prize' and the 'Congressional Medal of Honor', were awarded to individuals by key donor countries of the United Nations to reward their stooges they had used to disturb the peace and decorum of the Liberian society. Of course the key purpose of the international conspiracy analyzed above is to glamorize mayhem and atrocities committed by key players to the Liberian civil war so as to legitimize their illegal acts as 'acceptable cultural and political norms' of postwar Liberian society.



Hence, in this respect, while there may be an absence of the sounds of bazukas and AK-47s, and rocket-propelled grenades, genuine peace and rule of law continue to elude Liberians as they return back to square one when Liberians were awakened by the sounds of guns at Liberia's northeastern border posts with La Cote d'Ivoire in Butuo, Nimba County, on December 24, 1989. In fact, presently, as the failed administration of Mrs. Sirleaf gradually comes to a close, armed Burkinabes and Ivoirians have crossed over on the Liberian side of the international border and besieged the Liberian border towns and villages along the Cavalla River in Grand Gedeh County.

Worse still, these armed immigrants are illegally carrying out logging activities, and they are planting cash crops and seizing the lands of citizens of Grand Gedeh County under the watch of the United Nations. Efforts made by the local officials of Grand Gedeh County requesting for the timely intervention of the Sirleaf government has been very slow in coming on account of the

fact that Grand Gedeheans did not vote for Mrs. Sirleaf during the past presidential elections. Hence, the deliberate delay on the part of the Sirleaf government is being viewed as a big pay back and revenge to endanger the lives of the Krahn citizens of Liberia whose homeland is currently being invaded by armed forces from the La Cote d'Ivoire. Meanwhile, the UN has informed the world that it will withdraw its troops this year prior to the ensuing Liberian presidential and general elections. Of course this is the definition of 'peace' in Liberian terms while the rest of the world watches with nonchalance. What a joke!

Ladies and gentlemen, despite all of the negative news we hear from Liberia daily, with particular with respect to rampant corruption, poor health facilities, and bad road networks, a failed educational system and high unemployment and reported cases of armed robbery and ritualistic and secret killings, you will be amazed to know there are some Liberians nowadays who condone such nonsense from their offenders on the basis of nepotism, tribalism, "let bygones be bygones", and they are very adamant that legal action should not be taken against perpetrators to right the wrongs done to Liberians by Liberian warlords and economic criminals who are ransacking the resources of the country and subjecting the masses to destitute. Thus, as a consequence of the complacency of the Liberian government to take actions, most Liberians today thirst near the rivers of waters while their offenders and warlords treat them like slaves and turn them into a nation of beggars!

Let Us Learn from the Decorum of Nature in Order to Conduct Our Lives as Instruments of God's Peace



Let us take another look at peace with respect to understanding our cosmos—the world in which we live and the people that live around us. Let us take into account who made the cosmos in the first place and how he designed it to be and how we should live in it so that we may attain peace. From this perspective it is hoped you and I may arrive at an understanding why certain conditions we create for ourselves do not build peace but destroy the peace in us and our society as a whole. Thus, it is necessary to learn from the decorum of nature in order to conduct our lives as instruments of God's peace.

For instance, if you look at the world around you, you will observe that the cosmos is peacefully made and balanced by God: the sun, moon, stars coexist in the sky and each element has a role to play. The sun shines during the day and gives us sunlight. It heats up the earth and it helps our plants process photosynthesis, etc. Then at night the moon and the stars play their respective roles whereby we are able to sit by the village fire and listen to some wonderful African fireside stories. The oceans, rivers, creeks, and ponds give us animals that we eat, and we are able to drink and nourish our bodies from tilling the soil as well. Everything God made he made for a purpose. So then think twice: did God not make you and me for a purpose?

God Purposefully Created a Balanced Cosmos So That We May Live Balanced Lives



God purposely created the cosmos in a balanced manner so that all living and nonliving creatures may coexist peacefully. For this reason, God certainly did make each of us for a purpose as he did for the sun and moon, the stars, rivers, oceans, creeks, and ponds and the earth on which we live. Hence, part of the decorum of the cosmos are the beautiful mosaic of human beings God created! In this light, it should no longer matter to us what color you claim to be, but what is most noble in God's sight and what should matter the most for each of us is to acknowledge our fellow human beings as human creatures made in the image of the Creator. For this reason, God made us Negroid or Africoid, Caucasoid, Mongloid, American, Australoid, with the same human structures, heads, eyes, noses, ears, mouths, arteries, veins, and blood vessels. As a result, we all bleed when we cut our skins; we eat, digest, and excrete our foods; and we similarly have basic human needs such as shelter, clothing, and food. In essence, these commonalities are meant for human beings to coexist in peace but not to tear one another apart with automatic machine guns. Also, God forbids us to take away the life of another or to commit ritualistic murders and extract human body parts to make juju in order to win elections or to enrich ourselves.

Therefore, it behooves us to understand that before we came into this world, our cosmos was in perfect decorum as our Creator is perfect. And, because God has a purpose for our being he created us in different shapes, colors and forms so that we may live together in peace and harmony. However, how our world has become imperfect and dangerous to live in, may be on account of us humans who have not understood the peace God intended for us when Younsuah made humans in his own image. Consequently, we are obligated to live in one accord but not in disunity and discord as we now do around the world.

How We Disturb the Decorum and Peace of the Cosmos and Ourselves



We disturb the decorum and peace of the cosmos and ourselves when a few of us selfish individuals clandestinely and forcefully grab for our selfish benefit, resources God created for the common good of mankind and subsequently deprive the less fortunate of society the opportunity to gain from those resources that were also intended for them. Time and time again, this happens throughout the world and those that suffer the most are basically women and children who are more vulnerable and unable to fend for themselves than men during adverse circumstances. These adverse conditions include but are not limited to wars, natural disasters, or man-made events such as genocides or rampant corruption as is the case in present day Liberia and other third world countries around the universe.



Furthermore, when we disturb the decorum and peace of the cosmos for our own selfish gains, we not only create difficulties for others but in the long run we affect ourselves. We affect not just one or two individuals but millions of families, women, children, and the elderly. We impoverish the others around us so that we may become rotten rich or to become as Liberians say, “the one eye man in the land of the blind”! However, as the saying goes, “What goes around comes around” when our negative actions eventually lead to health hazards and widespread epidemics because resources intended to be used wisely to address the citizens’ needs are instead

used to fund the individual pleasures of a handful of self-centered crooks that are only concerned about themselves and not about those they lead.



As a victim of war, I have seen how those who engineered the machinery of war were themselves victimized by their own medicines or wicked devices they concocted. I have witnessed how those who once lived in gated palaces and mansions in Liberia ended up dying during the Liberian civil war they funded and their corpses being carried in wheel barrows and bumped in the sands of South Beach in Monrovia. For some strange reasons, it appears that South Beach seems to be the scene for garish cruelties in Liberia where many prominent citizens were executed; or where the murdered bodies of Liberian whistle blowers would subsequently surface after their bodies had been gaudily abused and mutilated by their offenders! This is just an observation. I may be wrong but at least I can count countless numbers of time when such gaudy scenes have occurred on South Beach and instilled fears and lack of security in the hearts and minds of millions of Liberians at home and abroad.

Conclusion

For once in our lives now is the time to put a close to lawlessness, mayhem and atrocities in Liberia before it gets too late. I am making this assertion because it does you and me no good to continue to support our relatives and friends who have breached the law and yet expect for Liberia to be safe and prosperous when the rest of us are bleeding to death economically, socially, morally, politically. It also does us no good to see Liberians dispersed throughout the world in refugee camps and dying from various diseases due to our silence or the support whether direct or indirect that we give our relatives and friends to perpetuate criminals in power and to destroy the socio-economic and political fabrics of the Liberian society.

Most importantly, there is nothing more joyful and rewarding than being an instrument of God's peace because through this process one gets to experience self-fulfillment and the everlasting joy of being in consonance or at peace with the cosmos in which we live. Therefore, it is my ardent prayer that this message will not fall on deaf ears but that you may take heed and

govern yourselves accordingly for the greater good of Liberian youths and their families, as well as the elderly and women who are mostly victimized by the wicked deeds people that lack conscience perpetrate against the weak and down trodden of society.

Please join me and let us make a difference in the lives of millions of Liberians at home and abroad by being instruments of God's peace and by making sure that the rule of law is restored to postwar Liberia in the not too distant future. In addition, use your right to vote wisely come 2017 when we go to the polls to democratically elect our new corps of public servants. Let us not make our decision based on prejudice and nepotism but rather, we should be fair by casting our votes for those who are competent and are willing to diligently serve the people of Liberia as law abiding citizens and instruments of God's peace! Blessings to all of you.

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