

Must We Endure "Gross Darkness?"

By
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For the last half century, children the world over have had to learn that their elders possess biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, which could destroy all life on earth. Today, millions of young people are talking and singing and “rapping” about death and dying and killing. They wonder if they’ll live to “grow up” — and whether they even want to grow up in a world where adults are continually threatening to use man’s most hideous inventions.

While youth cries out in speech and song, many of their elders try to convince themselves that no one would actually initiate nuclear warfare. And some people even believe that worldwide disarmament will soon become reality. So, youth “sings” of death while adults find solace in wishful thinking. But if we'll honestly acknowledge that a nuclear war *can happen*, we could finally address our need to speak realistically about the Jews, Christians and Muslims, whose age-old religious arguments are threatening to erupt in nuclear explosions.

Some years ago, fundamentalist Muslims declared that everyone must “join Islam or burn.” Most of the world paid no attention to those “religious fanatics.” Today, militant Muslims express their belief differently. While political, economic, and psychological “experts” endlessly discuss complicated reasons for the terrorism that has plunged the world into its newest war, the terrorists tell us they are simply waging a “jihad” to cleanse the world of “unbelievers.” They identify “unbelievers” as everyone who is not a “properly observant” Muslim. But they especially condemn Israel, the “sinful” Jewish State that is “occupying” Palestinian land, and the “morally corrupt” United States, a predominantly Christian nation that supports Israel’s existence.

The onslaught of religiously based terrorism has made the world acutely aware of how readily militant Muslims or their potential victims could ignite a war fought with biological, chemical and nuclear weapons. When Muslims, Christians or Jews seriously consider using weapons of mass destruction against their “evil” enemies, they are testifying to a fact of modern life: Believers in God urgently need an *improved understanding of the God they worship and the messages He sent.*

Our urgently needed “improved understanding” rests in the *combined* teachings of *all the Prophets, from Abraham through Muhammad*. Those linked messages clearly contradict the long-standing divisive doctrines invented by the clergies of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

For example, the Hebrew Prophets told the world there is only One God. Jesus told the Jews and the world that he came from and serves “...the only true God” (John 17:3) revealed by the Hebrews. Muhammad told the Jews that Jesus is the true Messiah, and he told the Christians that “the Messiah, Jesus...” “...does not disdain to be a servant of God” (Women 4:171-172).

But today we don’t hear Muslims telling the world about the Divinely ordained “Messiah, Jesus.” Instead, the most noticeable Muslims devote themselves to implementing the threat voiced by Al Qaeda soldiers, in a message discovered in a school where the soldiers had trained. They clearly told us, “We will continue our jihad until the end of the world.” That one sentence concisely expresses what Muslim militants truly believe to be their “God-given duty.”

Regardless of what the terrorists believe, Muhammad explicitly told Muslims to believe all the Prophets who preceded him. Muslims are to “...discriminate against none of them” (The Family of Imran 3:84). In actual practice, however, Muslims do exactly what Jews and Christians do with arrogant certainty. They “...draw a line between God and His apostles, saying: ‘We believe in some but deny others...’” (Women 4:150).

These days, a growing number of people dismiss all religious beliefs as “childish myths.” They actually believe that religion is of no real importance in our scientifically educated world. Nevertheless, religion has been one of the most powerful motivating forces throughout history, and its power remains undiminished. The Middle East conflict, alone, which threatens the whole world, testifies to the enormous power of religious beliefs in modern times.

The divisive interpretations of their own Scriptures, invented by organized Judaism, Christianity and Islam, are driving us toward the prophesied time when the world will be bathed in “...blood and fire and pillars of smoke...” (Joel 2:30); “...the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light...” (Matt. 24:29); “...darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the peoples” (Isa. 60:2); and “...unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved...” (Matt. 24:22). In other words, the time scientists describe as a “nuclear winter.” But the Prophet Malachi offered us hope of avoiding the “gross darkness,” if we are willing to “...turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” (Mal. 3:24//4:6).

In a religious sense, the Hebrews and their descendants, the Jews, are the “fathers” of monotheism. Christians and Muslims are the “children” of the faith. Yet the Prophets made plain that all human beings are God’s children, and today, whether you are a believer in Abraham’s God, or a believer in other forms of a Higher Power, or an agnostic or atheist, you are in danger of enduring the prophesied “nuclear winter.” To spare ourselves the horror, we urgently need to rethink the messages delivered by *all* the Prophets. The truth rests in their *combined* teachings, not in the exclusive teachings of one faith or philosophy.

If, however, too many people refuse to grow wiser while the sun shines, then “blood and fire and pillars of smoke” will envelop the world. Then, all survivors will learn there are no atheists in a nuclear winter! Everyone will be desperately praying that the promised Messiah will prove as real as the prophesied darkness. But must we endure “gross darkness” to enlighten closed minds?

Jane Broida Drake is the author “Of Promises and Previews: Urgent Old Messages for a New Millennium” (iUniverse, 2001), in which she combines the most essential teachings delivered by the Prophets. Available through any major bookstore online and off, or read more about it at: www.ofpromisesandpreviews.com