

Klaus Bung - The Futility of Force: A Buddhist View of the Gaza Genocide

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Klaus Bung is a freelance writer, retired training consultant and now white organist (LOL) in a black church. He grew up in Germany (formative years) but spent 65 years of his long life in England. He studied at University College London (B.A.Hons.) and has a Ph.D. in Linguistics from Cambridge University (England). He is widely travelled (Austria, Canada, Caribbean, Chile, Czech Republic, France, Germany, India, Iraq, Italy, Kenya, Philippines, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, USA, and, very briefly, Palestine and Egypt) and formed many deep and affectionate relationships with members of other races and religions, in different countries and continents. His academic publications can be found (or are listed) on http://www.rtc-idyll.com/shell_dyll/contents/academic_publications/publications_index.html

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SYNOPSIS

This essay is divided into three parts.

Part 1 (4,000 words) deals with the grievances of the Palestinians. It emphasises the fact that the current conflict and its 100-year prelude is not a specifically Jewish project, but that the "Israelis" (Zionists) are members of White Western society and share its illusions of racial superiority, have historically helped to create them (Hebrew Bible) and that their attempt to take over Palestine is just the most recent of innumerable previous cases of settler colonialism since 1492 (Columbus). It highlights the traditional belief in creating security by force and violence, which drives Netanyahu and his supporters.

Part 2 (6,517 words) contains two traditional Buddhist stories, giving their full text: Story 1 (1,300 words) and Story 2 (2,500 words). These stories illustrate the doctrine "Hatred is not quenched by hatred, but by non-hatred". The implications of these stories are then analysed. Netanyahu's brutal attacks on the Palestinians can only help to perpetuate the cycle of violence but never end it. Since Netanyahu is enthusiastically supported by White governments with their White populations, many of whom instinctively believe in their right to rule "inferior races", by violence if necessary, they are not likely to take these Buddhist stories on board.

Part 3 (1,400 words) contains some quotations which may give comfort to the oppressed Palestinians.

Further reading (9 titles; 170 words)

Notes for editors (1,100 words): (Not intended for publication but you can publish them if you wish.)

LENGTH

15,000 words, 42 pages A4

Klaus Bung:

The Futility of Force: A Buddhist View of the Gaza Genocide Mk1.50 - 15,000 words, 87,000 characters, 42 pages A4

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Part 1: The Background

On 7 October 2023, in consequence of "The Hundred Years' War on Palestine, 1917-2017" (Rashid Khalidi), Gaza exploded. It propelled the fighters and weapons of Hamas into the surrounding areas of ancient Palestine. The personally innocent invaders who happened to be in their path got killed or badly injured. That's life. The explosions were only natural and to be expected, and **if it were legal to do so**, I would applaud them.

But most White governments (and their citizens) historically "know" that white (and therefore civilised) people are by "god" and nature entitled to take away the land of uncivilised "black" people, who don't use their land like civilised White people do, uneducated peasants in little Arab villages and nomadic Bedouins in even smaller settlements, who, in their innocence and ignorance, don't create nice farms with artificial irrigation, don't build nice high-rise buildings and factories, don't subdue and destroy the environment, don't exterminate wild-life, who walk instead of using cars, don't travel in planes all over the world, don't have holidays in exotic countries, don't emit CO2, don't create global warming, don't have militias, armies, machine guns, bombs, drones and rockets, don't manufacture high-tech weapons for export, and don't appreciate the many other blessings of civilisation and its lifestyle, and, above all, have not been told by their God that they are the master race, (a race of masters, the "chosen people"), destined (and obliged) to exterminate or expel the inferior inhabitants of some alien land which their God has "given" them (the "promised land"), even though it doesn't belong to him.

White governments have acted accordingly since 1492 (Columbus). They now support the White settlers (aka Zionists) who since 1917 have been trying to take over the Palestine lands, which eventually they hope to possess entirely ("Final Solution").

By the time the settler-army has finished its "special military operation" in Gaza, the General can report: "Mission accomplished: All quiet as a grave." The territory will be ready for the settlers to settle.

The presence of the Zionists in Palestine is **not** a specifically Jewish project. If it were, the enthusiastic support and supply of weapons by the USA, UK & c would make no sense. It is only the latest case of White society trying to solve one of its **problems** by taking away the land of an "inferior race".

As Ilan Pappé observes:

The problem with Israel was never its Jewishness - Judaism has many faces and many of them provide a solid basis for peace and cohabitation; it is its ethnic Zionist character. Zionism does not have the same margins of pluralism that Judaism offers, especially not for the Palestinians. They can never be part of the Zionist state and space, and will continue to fight - and hopefully their struggle will be peaceful and successful.

Previous such attempts were the colonisation of North America, of Mexico, of Australia, and the eventually failing bloody colonial enterprises in Africa:

- South West Africa (now Namibia), 1904-1907: Germans committing genocide of the Zulu and Herero tribes
- Kenya, "Mau Mau" rebellion 1953-1955: British trying to subdue the Kenyans
- Algeria, 1954-1962: French trying to subdue the Algerians, to name but a few
- It was a problem within White society which prompted the Zionists to work for the creation of a Jewish state on alien soil: antisemitism often fuelled by Christian sentiments, the suppression and pogroms committed against Jews in Christian countries since the middle ages, culminating in the Shoah (Holocaust) committed by the Nazis. So white society had to "export" this problem to Palestine.

Four quotes show the pattern:

(1) About the genocide of the Zulu: "This bold enterprise shows up in the most brilliant light the ruthless energy of the German command in pursuing their beaten enemy. No pains, no sacrifices were spared in eliminating the last remnants of enemy resistance. Like a wounded beast the enemy was tracked down from one water-hole to the next, until finally he became the victim of his own environment. The arid Omaheke [desert] was to complete what the German army had begun: the extermination of the Herero nation." (quote taken from Wikipedia, who quote this proud 1904 report from a historic German Army publication: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herero_and_Namaqua_genocide)

The **similarities** with the facts (and intentions?) of today's events in Gaza are striking: cutting off supplies of electricity, fuel, food and water to Gaza and driving the population of Northern Gaza to the Egyptian border.

(2) "As the campaign developed, Avro Lincoln heavy bombers were deployed, flying missions in Kenya from 18 November 1953 to 28 July 1955, dropping nearly 6 million bombs." (Wikipedia, Mau Mau rebellion)

(3) "The US, Israel's closest ally, has over the years given the Jewish state more than \$260bn in military and economic aid, and has promised additional equipment, air defence missiles, guided bombs and ammunition." (Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-44124396> - retrieved 2023-11-06)

(4) "The Nakba, or catastrophe, refers to the displacement and dispossession of Palestinians between 1947 and 1949, when Zionist paramilitaries and then Israel's newly formed army destroyed more than 500 Palestinian villages and towns. About 15,000 Palestinians were killed, and more than 750,000 were forcibly displaced from their land." (Source: Anealla Safdar (23 November 2023): "As Israel pounds Gaza, BBC journalists accuse broadcaster of bias." - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/23/as-israel-pounds-gaza-bbc-journalists-accuse-broadcaster-of-bias> - Downloaded: 2023-11-24

"... the 531 villages and eleven urban neighbourhoods and towns that were destroyed and their inhabitants expelled under the direct orders

the Consultancy put out in March 1948. By then, thirty villages were already gone" (Source: Ilan Pappé: "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine")

That's why the USA, Canada and Australia are now civilised (i.e. white majority) countries with the original inferior races largely exterminated.

These White successes are the consequence of an inherited ideology (faith) which holds that there is a superior race which is entitled to take away the lands of inferior races (the Israelites vs the Philistines in biblical times, white Christian Europeans in the age of "discoveries").

The same ideology motivated the White UK and the White USA to encourage Zionist immigration into lands which did not belong to them. Freedom Fighters which attacked and tried to repel the White invaders were designated as "terrorists", i.e. people who spread terror without justification and without good reason.

Commentators have pointed out that the Gaza explosions of 7 October had to be expected (i.e. had their reasons) and that for the Israelis they must have been as horrible and significant as the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York must have been for the Americans or for "the White World". The analogy is apt: not so much because of the suffering it **caused** to its white victims but because of the suffering inflicted **previously** on the non-white world.

The events of 9/11 were symbolic, an act of revenge by an impotent (= powerless) enemy, the many people throughout the world who see the Americans as the exponents (symbols) of what they regard as "the white devils". If you have an overpowering enemy and you have no army, then you strike him where and as best you can. The distinction between soldiers and civilians is trivial, especially if you feel that the "civilians" among the settler invaders benefit from, and approve of, the injustices perpetrated by the politicians and their armies, and are therefore complicit, and therefore guilty.

So on 9/11, the non-white world saw a chance of expressing its hatred of the white world and avenging the injustices they had suffered over centuries of white domination. The 7 October 2023 Gaza explosions can be seen in a similar light. It was bound to fail militarily, but it was a chance to take revenge for 100 years of injustice and hurt the white arch-enemy. No wonder that the other white powers (including a Coconut Prime Minister from the UK) rushed immediately to embrace their white brothers in occupied Palestine and offered unlimited support.

In the UK we have (or had till 13 November 2023) an ambitious Home Secretary (= Minister of the Interior), also a Coconut, who says that all pro-Palestine marches are "hate marches" and wants the police to ban them. The Coconuts proclaim loudly that "The Israelis have a right to defend themselves" but with eyes-wide-shut forget that the Israelis are invaders and aggressors and have been trying to wipe out the Palestinians since 1947 and have

made the lives of the surviving Palestinians a nightmare ever since then.

On 7 October 2023 Hamas did not attack. Israel had been attacking since 1947, and on 7 October Hamas was acting in self-defence.

It is the Palestinians who are still defending themselves, which they heroically did yet again when Gaza exploded on 7 October. If it were legal, I would think and say that Israel has no right to exist and therefore has no right to defend itself. But since I have been told that this is illegal, I neither think nor say so.

However, what I might say without breaking the law is that Palestine is not a safe environment for invaders, surrounded by hostile indigenous people. Almost any country in the world, e.g. the USA, the UK, and even modern Germany (deeply and rightly ashamed of the Holocaust), is safer than Palestine, and Jewish workers and families would be more welcome and less endangered there. Therefore trying to live in the hostile environment of Palestine is being culpably negligent.

The genocide now taking place in Gaza proves that civilised nations are at work. Only civilised nations have the necessary self-confidence and technical means. "The Nazis were similarly civilised, determined, confident and technically advanced," someone might say. But saying it would be illegal and antisemitic, and therefore, note well!, I do not say it.

I have always tended to mentally support freedom fighters. But it is now illegal to support people who are deemed to be "terrorists", and doing so can result in a long prison-sentence.

The moment this law came into force and the moment the Palestinian freedom fighters were proscribed as "terrorists", my thinking instantly changed. I am an upstanding citizen and will only think and say and do what my government decides. Obviously, like the Vicar of Bray, the moment the law changes, and the Hamas "terrorists" are reclassified as "freedom fighters" and our King, or his successor, apologise for the wrongs we have done to the Palestinians by arming the White settlers, I shall become an ardent supporter of Hamas.

But right now I hereby solemnly declare and swear by the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an that I do **not** support Hamas or any other terrorist organisation.

That brings me to an alternative approach to the current problems in Palestine.

Jews, Christians and Muslims are traditionally great believers in force and violence. In biblical times, Jews tried to drive the Philistines and other barbarian tribes forcefully out of Canaan. They never quite managed. Some still believe that their white god promised them these lands (even though they don't belong to him) and thereby are encouraged to continue these battles for "the

promised land" today. The Jewish bible also sometimes glorifies revenge, often extended over generations; e.g.

"... he [God] does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the **children** and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and **fourth generation.**" (Bible, Exodus 34:7, NIV translation)

"(6) May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged **sword** in their hands,
 (7) to inflict **vengeance** on the nations and punishment on the peoples,
 (8) to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron,
 (9) to carry out the sentence written against them - this is the glory of all his faithful people. Praise the LORD. (Bible, Psalm 149:6-9, NIV translation)"

Prophet of vengeance Netanyahu (like his spiritual predecessor in 1943) is determined to make sure, with the weapons of his white allies, that there **is** no fourth generation on which he has to, or can, wreak vengeance. "Do you want total war!", he screams threateningly at the Palestinians. "No, we want peace and the return of our stolen land and our liberty," they reply. "Who cares," roars the lion of Judah. "You'll get total war whether you want it or not and whether America wants it or not. It will be more total and more radical than you can even imagine." And so it was. And it was not a step towards peace but a step towards the perpetuation of hatred.

Christians and Muslims both often declare themselves to be advocates of peace, and both religions were peaceful when they were weak. But both have resorted to violence and oppression when they were strong.

GENOCIDE COMMANDED IN THE BIBLE

I shall now present six passages from the Jewish bible (Old Testament) which encourage (or command) racism and violent behaviour. Secular law of today would presumably regard this as criminal behaviour. Buddhist philosophy, as exposed below, would regard it as deluded and self-harming behaviour. The translation used for the following quotes is the "New International Version" (NIV) of the Bible.

1. 23 My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will **wipe them out.** ... 27 "I will send my terror ahead of you and throw into confusion every nation you encounter. I will make all your enemies turn their backs and run. 28 I will send the hornet ahead of you to drive the Hivites, Canaanites and Hittites out of your way. 29 But **I will not drive them out in a single year,** because the land would become desolate and the wild animals too numerous for you. 30 **Little by little I will drive them out before you, until you have increased enough to take possession of the land.** 31 "I will establish your borders from the Red Sea to the

Mediterranean Sea, and from the desert to the Euphrates River. **I will give into your hands the people who live in the land, and you will drive them out before you.** 32 Do not make a covenant with them or with their gods. 33 **Do not let them live in your land** or they will cause you to sin against me, because the worship of their gods will certainly be a snare to you." (Bible, Exodus 24:23-33)

Comment: "Little by little...": That is the hidden agenda of the settlements on the West Bank. Whether the international community calls them illegal or not, Israel will never voluntarily abolish them. They are meant to remain, to grow, to multiply, and imperceptibly increase the stranglehold on the Palestinians, until there is not a single free Palestinian left. That is the will of the Jewish god. And even Christians pray every Sunday: "Thy will be done." Some will! Some god! Therefore, many Christians **instinctively** support whatever Israel does.

2. 1 When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess ... 2 and when the Lord your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and **show them no mercy.** ... 5 This is what you are to do to them: **Break down their altars,** smash their sacred stones, cut down their Asherah poles and burn their idols in the fire. 6 For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. (Bible, Deuteronomy, 7:1-6)

Comment: The instruction "Break down their altars" &c is in keeping with the news reported on 2023-12-15 that Israeli soldiers entered and desecrated a mosque on the West Bank and broadcast Jewish prayers on its speaker system. The IDF said this was unacceptable behaviour, and the soldiers would be disciplined. But the Bible says it was obligatory behaviour. (Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-67719820>)

3. Hear, Israel: You are now about to cross the Jordan to go in and dispossess nations greater and stronger than you, with large cities that have walls up to the sky. ... the Lord your God is the one who goes across ahead of you **like a devouring fire.** He will destroy them; ... And you will drive them out and **annihilate** them quickly, as the Lord has promised you. (Deuteronomy 9:1-5)
4. 8 Observe therefore all the commands I am giving you today, so that you may have the strength to go in and take over the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, 9 and so that you may live long in the land the Lord swore to your ancestors to give to them **and their descendants,** a land flowing with milk and honey.

(Deuteronomy 11: 8-9)

"and their descendants": **No comment!**

5. 23 then the Lord will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations larger and stronger than you. 24 **Every place where you set your foot will be yours**: Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea. 25 No one will be able to stand against you. The Lord your God, as he promised you, will put the **terror and fear of you** on the whole land, wherever you go. (Deuteronomy 11:23-25)

Comment: "from the river to the sea" (Euphrates to the sea!)

6. 10 When you march up to attack a city, make its people an offer of peace. 11 If they accept and open their gates, all the people in it shall be subject to **forced labor** and shall work for you. 12 If they refuse to make peace and they engage you in battle, lay siege to that city. 13 When the Lord your God delivers it into your hand, **put to the sword all the men** in it. 14 As for the women, the children, the livestock and everything else in the city, you may take these as plunder for yourselves. And you may use the plunder the Lord your God gives you from your enemies. 15 This is how you are to treat all the cities that are at a distance from you and do not belong to the nations nearby. 16 However, in the cities of the nations the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, **do not leave alive anything that breathes**. 17 **Completely destroy them** ... (Deuteronomy 20:10-17)

Comment: Netanyahu would fail in his religious duty if he allowed a single Palestinian to survive. It is naïve of friendly but concerned nations (like the USA) to demand that he should **minimise** civilian casualties. Netanyahu says he is trying but it is difficult to do so. In fact, he knows that he wants to **maximise** all casualties, not only Hamas. That is his true war aim. Hamas, on 7 October 2023, provided him with a welcome opportunity to demonstrate his Abrahamic obedience to God.

These biblical instructions will have inspired the Zionists when they "cleared the ground" for the establishment of a Jewish state on land which did not belong to them:

The master plan was as follows:

[On] 10 March 1948, a group of eleven men, veteran Zionist leaders together with young military Jewish officers, put the final touches to a plan for the ethnic cleansing of Palestine.

That same evening, military orders were dispatched to the units on the ground to prepare for the systematic expulsion of the Palestinians from

vast areas of the country. The orders came with a detailed description of the methods to be employed to forcibly evict the people:

- large-scale intimidation;
- laying siege to and bombarding villages and population centres;
- setting fire to homes, properties and goods;
- expulsion;
- demolition;
- and, finally, planting mines among the rubble to prevent any of the expelled inhabitants from returning.

Each unit was issued with its own list of villages and neighbourhoods as the targets of this master plan. Codenamed Plan D (Dalet in Hebrew), this was the fourth and final version of less substantial plans that outlined the fate the Zionists had in store for Palestine and consequently for its native population. - (Source: Ilan Pappé (2006): "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine.")

The German Nazis (National Socialists) dreamt of an Arian state cleansed of Jews ("Juden-rein"). Similarly the Zionist Nazis dreamt of a Jewish state cleansed of Arabs and tried to drive and squeeze the Arabs out of Palestine, with great success but still limited success. An exasperated Israeli journalist, Kobi Niv, expressed his frustration in a Hebrew article (omitted from the English edition of the newspaper) in Haaretz, 2018-11-28, entitled "From Task to Action: From Regularisation to Extermination". (My quote comes from Bresheeth-Zabner.)

At the end, we will do it [remove every Arab from the Palestinian territory]. What alternative is left? What did we not try? We besieged, barred and blockaded, starved and darkened - this is it, we have reached the end of the scale. We ran out of ideas and they are still there. We won, but what kind of victory is this? A victory is not a "regularisation." A victory is not real if there are no heads rolling on sidewalks, no blood in the streets. Therefore, Gaza needs destroying, leaving not a single stone, expelling, then killing anyone left. (my emphasis) Source: Koby Niv, "From Talk to Action. From Regularisation to Extermination," Haaretz, November 28, 2018 (Hebrew). Taken from Bresheeth-Zabner.

This is an allusion to Cato the Elder's famous admonition "Caeterum censeo Carthaginem esse delendam" (Apart from this, I believe that Carthage needs destroying.) In 146 BC, Carthage **was** razed by the Romans, and its entire remaining population was sold into slavery (Wikipedia). Today, in 2024, we witness Israel doing what Koby Niv demanded in 2018.

**INVESTMENT IN CORPSES:
RATE OF EXCHANGE: ISR-C 1 = PAL-C 14.3
A BARGAIN FOR THE ISRAELIS, USURY FOR THE PALESTINIANS**

The rate of killing in Gaza can be seen as an investment by the Zionist Nazis (Zionists acting in the spirit of the German National Socialists, the Nazis: "There exists a superior/supreme race, e.g. Arians or Jews, which is entitled to pursue its own interests at the expense of all other races, even if it means expelling or killing them").

Let us compute the rate of return. We assume the worst, namely that none of the hostages will survive.

In that case the investment (cost) for the Israelis in approximate figures would be:

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1,500 non-hostage Israelis killed
  250 Israeli hostages killed
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1,750 Israelis killed
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As of 2024-01-21, according to figures released by Hamas, approximately 25,000 Palestinians have been killed.

That means that, for every Israeli corpse invested, the Zionists get 14.3 Palestinian corpses, i.e. a return of **1,430%**, a stunning rate of return: makes your mouth water.

But that is 1,430% **per 3 months**, which has to be converted to the rate **per annum** to make it comparable to other investment opportunities for the Zionists. We then get 5,720% p.a., (let's call it **six thousand per cent** per annum), since the longer the "war" continues and the longer the white powers fail to stop it, the better the return: the investment in Israeli bodies hardly has to be increased but the benefits in terms of Palestinian bodies continue to flow as long as Netanyahu is allowed to continue his ethnic clean-up and, of course, as long as there are still any living Palestinians that can be turned into corpses. Living Palestinians are a finite resource.

As time goes by, there will be many more dead Palestinians but very few additional dead Israelis, unless the Israeli god intervenes and, Insha Allah, sends fire and brimstone on his godless "chosen people", as he did on Sodom and Gomorrah (Bible, Genesis 18-19).

Father Abraham, who out-haggled his god over Sodom and Gomorrah, would rub his hands in delight if he could see the rate of return his god allows his descendants to make. Unfriendly observers would call it **usury**, but I am sure saying that is illegal and therefore I will not say it but only think it.

The Israelis knew several months in advance that Hamas was preparing for a major attack. They did nothing to prevent it. They needed a casus belli, and Hamas provided it. In terms of investment, it was a bargain for the Israelis and usury for the Palestinians.

Since 1954, Dayan wanted war, and tried to prod the Arab states into military conflict so that Israel could conquer Sinai or the West Bank, not to mention destroy Egypt's army. This was what drove the IDF strikes in 1955 at Kuntilla and Sabha and against Syria in December 1955. (Ilan Pappé, (2006): "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine.")

The unshakable belief in the benefits of force inspires the actions of the Israeli government today: The harder you hit the Palestinians (all of them, including women and children) the more

likely the Israelis will have peace, "perpetual peace", in future - or so they believe.

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) in his "Perpetual Peace" (1795) criticised the arrogance of White "civilised" nations:

Let us look now, for the sake of comparison, at the inhospitable behaviour of the civilised nations, especially the commercial states of our continent. The injustice which they exhibit on visiting foreign lands and races - this being equivalent in their eyes to conquest - is such as to fill us with horror.

America, the Negro countries, the Spice Islands, the Cape &c. were, on being discovered, looked upon as countries which belonged to nobody; for the native inhabitants were reckoned as nothing.

In Hindustan, under the pretext of intending to establish merely commercial depots, the Europeans introduced foreign troops; and, as a result, the different states of Hindustan were stirred up to far-spreading wars. Oppression of the natives followed, famine, insurrection, perfidy and all the rest of the litany of evils which can afflict mankind. (Kant, Perpetual Peace (1795), Dritter Definitivartikel (= Section Three), translated by Mary Campbell Smith. George Allen and Unwin Ltd, London 1903)

The traditions of the Abrahamic religions seem unable to shake off the faith in force, which is popularly and instinctively held by many ordinary people as well. These people elect their governments, and governments therefore also pander to these beliefs.

The texts and comments that follow are intended to show an alternative to these mistaken beliefs in the utility of violence.

After the horrors of World War II, Germany and France decided it was better to end their centuries-old murderous enmity and make a pact of friendship (as we will hear in the two Buddhist stories). This accord gradually developed into the European Union, an organisation devoted to material prosperity and peace among its members. The BBC's Jeremy Bowen writes, in the midst of Israel's murderous onslaught on Gaza:

War is a cruel furnace that puts humans through terrible agonies. But its heat can produce changes that seemed impossible.

It happened in western Europe after World War Two. Old enemies who had killed each other for centuries chose peace. Will the war in Gaza shock Israelis and Palestinians into ending their century of conflict over the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan river?

(Jeremy Bowen (BBC): "Israel-Gaza war: What is the price of peace?"
Downloaded on 2023-12-14 from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-67701700>)

The stories at the core of this essay come from the Buddhist tradition.

They deal with Ahimsa (Non-violence), the problem of using force and violence. Ahimsa is the first and most important of the Five Silas (the five precepts of Buddhists). They can usefully be

compared to the Ten Commandments and are outstanding in the way they, unlike the Ten Commandments, concentrate on the essentials.

**DESIRE, FEAR AND ANGER,
OUR GREAT ENEMIES IN HINDUSM**

Hindus have similar lists of virtues and vices. But they have three "cardinal sins" against which they warn us again and again because they lead to other sins and to actions by which we destroy our happiness. They are "desire, fear and anger".

- The **Zionists** and the settlers should think about **desire** and the harm they do to themselves when they deprive the Palestinians of the land which rightfully belongs to the Palestinians.
- All **Israelis** should think about **fear** and the unreasonable attitudes it produces.
- And **Netanyahu** and the IDF should think about **anger** and the unreasonable behaviour it causes, e.g. when they are flattening Gaza and trying to exterminate the Palestinians.

Desire, fear and anger lead to unreasonable actions. Unreasonable actions fire back. If I act like this, I may be hoist by my own petard.

"The gateway of this hell leading to the ruin of the soul is threefold, **lust, anger and greed**. Therefore these three, one should abandon." (Bhagavad Gita 16:21, translated by S Radhakrishnan)

Part 2: The stories and comments

THE FIVE SILAS

Prohibitions	Recommendations
1. No violence	Acts of kindness
2. No theft	Generous giving
3. No sexual misconduct	Treating the body of others with kindness
4. No sins of speech	Helping others through good use of speech
5. No mind-altering drugs (including alcohol and tobacco)	Consuming healthy foods and drinks as necessary for the welfare of the body

STORY 1: THE STORY OF PRINCE DĪGHĀVU

Source: Paul Carus (ed): "The Gospel of the Buddha" (1915), chapter 37

This can serve as a Buddhist commentary on Luke 6:27 (Bible): "Do good to them which hate you."

Not by hatred is hatred appeased;
hatred is appeased by not-hatred

"In former times, there lived at Benares a powerful king whose name was Brahmadata of Kāsi; and he went to war against Dīghīti, the Long-suffering, a king of Kosala, for he thought, 'The kingdom of Kosala is small and Dīghīti will not be able to resist my armies.' 037:14

"And Dīghīti, seeing that resistance was impossible against the great host of the king of Kāsi, fled, leaving his little kingdom in the hands of Brahmadata; and having wandered from place to place, he came at last to Benares, and lived there with his consort in a potter's dwelling outside the town. 037:15

"And the queen bore him a son and they called him Dīghāvu. 037:16

"When Dīghāvu had grown up, the king thought to himself: 'King Brahmadata has done us great harm, and he is fearing our revenge; he will seek to kill us. Should he find us he will slay all three of us.' And he sent his son away, and Dīghāvu having received a good education from his father, applied himself diligently to learn all arts, becoming very skilful and wise. 037:17

"At that time the barber of king Dīghīti dwelt at Benares, and he saw the king, his former master, and, being of an avaricious nature, betrayed him to King Brahmadata. 037:18

"When Brahmadata, the king of Kāsi, heard that the fugitive king of Kosala and his queen, unknown and in disguise, were living a quiet life in a potter's dwelling, he ordered them to be bound and executed; and the sheriff to whom the order was given seized king Dīghīti and led him to the place of execution. 037:19

"While the captive king was being led through the streets of Benares he saw his son who had returned to visit his parents, and, careful not to betray the presence of his son, yet anxious to communicate to him his last advice, he cried: 'O Dīghāvu, my son! Be not far-sighted, be not near-sighted, **for not by hatred is hatred appeased; hatred is appeased by not-hatred only.**' 037:20

"The king and queen of Kosala were executed, but Dīghāvu their son bought strong wine and made the guards drunk. When the night arrived he laid the bodies of his parents upon a funeral pyre and burned them with all honors and religious rites. 037:21

"When king Brahmadata heard of it, he became afraid, for he thought, 'Dīghāvu, the son of king Dīghīti, is a wise youth and he will take revenge for the death of his parents. If he espies a favorable opportunity, he will assassinate me.' 037:22

"Young Dīghāvu went to the forest and wept to his heart's content. Then he wiped his tears and returned to Benares. Hearing that assistants were wanted in the royal elephants' stable, he offered his services and was engaged by the master of the elephants. 037:23

"And it happened that the king heard a sweet voice ringing through the night and singing to the lute a beautiful song that gladdened his heart. And having inquired among his attendants who the singer might be, was told that the master of the elephants had in his service a young man of great accomplishments, and beloved by all his comrades. They said, 'He is wont to sing to the lute, and he must have been the singer that gladdened the heart of the king.' 037:24

"And the king summoned the young man before him and, being much pleased with Dīghāvu, gave him employment in the royal castle. Observing how wisely the youth acted, how modest he was and yet punctilious in the performance of his work, the king very soon gave him a position of trust. 037:25

"Now it came to pass that the king went hunting and became separated from his retinue, young Dīghāvu alone remaining with him. And the king worn out from the hunt laid his head in the lap of young Dīghāvu and slept. 037:26

"And Dīghāvu thought: '**People will forgive great wrongs which they have suffered, but they will never be at ease about the wrongs which they themselves have done. They will persecute their victims to the bitter end.** This king Brahmadata has done us great injury, he robbed us of our kingdom and slew my father and

my mother. He is now in my power.' Thinking thus he unsheathed his sword. 037:27

"Then Dīghāvu thought of the last words of his father. 'Be not far-sighted, be not near-sighted. For not by hatred is hatred appeased. Hatred is appeased by not-hatred alone.' Thinking thus, he put his sword back into the sheath. 037:28

"The king became restless in his sleep and he awoke, and when the youth asked, 'Why art thou frightened, O king?' he replied: 'My sleep is always restless because I often dream that young Dīghāvu is coming upon me with his sword. While I lay here with my head in thy lap I dreamed the dreadful dream again; and I awoke full of terror and alarm.' 037:29

"Then the youth, laying his left hand upon the defenceless king's head and with his right hand drawing his sword, said: 'I am Dīghāvu, the son of king Dīghīti, whom thou hast robbed of his kingdom and slain together with his queen, my mother. I know that men overcome the hatred entertained for wrongs which they have suffered much more easily than for the wrongs which they have done, and so I cannot expect that thou wilt take pity on me; but now a chance for revenge has come to me.' 037:30

"The king seeing that he was at the mercy of young Dīghāvu raised his hands and said: 'Grant me my life, my dear Dīghāvu, grant me my life. I shall be forever grateful to thee.' 037:31

"And Dīghāvu said without bitterness or ill-will: 'How can I grant thee thy life, O king, since my life is endangered by thee. I do not mean to take thy life. It is thou, O king, who must grant me my life.' 037:32

"And the king said: 'Well, my dear Dīghāvu, then grant me my life, and I will grant thee thine.' 037:33

"Thus, king Brahmaddatta of Kāsi and young Dīghāvu granted each other's life and took each other's hand and swore an oath not to do any harm to each other. 037:34

"And king Brahmaddatta of Kāsi said to young Dīghāvu: 'Why did thy father say to thee in the hour of his death: "Be not far-sighted, be not near-sighted, for hatred is not appeased by hatred. Hatred is appeased by not-hatred alone," - what did thy father mean by that?' 037:35

"The youth replied:

'When my father, O king, in the hour of his death said: "Be not far-sighted," he meant, Let not thy hatred go far.

And when my father said, "Be not near-sighted," he meant, Be not hasty to fall out with thy friends.

And when he said, "For not by hatred is hatred appeased; hatred is appeased by not-hatred," he meant this: Thou hast killed my father and mother, O king, and if I should deprive thee of thy life, then thy partisans in turn would take away my life; my partisans again would deprive thine of their lives. Thus by hatred, hatred would not be appeased.

But now, O king, thou hast granted me my life, and I have granted thee thine; thus by not-hatred hatred has been appeased.' 037:36

"Then king Brahmadata of Kāsi thought: 'How wise is young Dīghāvu that he understands in its full extent the meaning of what his father spoke concisely.' And the king gave him back his father's kingdom and gave him his daughter in marriage." 037:37

STORY 2: THE BARREN WIFE

Source: Eugene Watson Burlingame: Buddhist Legends: Dhammapada Commentary, Vol 1 - Translated from the original Pāli text of the Dhammapada Commentary by Eugene Watson Burlingame. Harvard University Press, 1921, Book I. Pairs, Yamaka Vagga

Motto:

For not by hatred are hatreds ever quenched here in this world.
By love rather are they quenched. This is an eternal law.
(Dhammapada I:5)

This religious instruction was given by the Teacher [the Buddha] while he was in residence at Jetavana with reference to a certain barren woman. §-01

It appears that a certain householder's son, on the death of his father, did all the farm and household work by himself alone and took care of his mother to boot. Now his mother said to him, "Dear son, I will fetch you a young woman to wife." §-02

"Dear mother, speak not thus; my sole desire is to care for you so long as you shall live." §-03

"Dear son, you alone are doing all the farm and household work, and I am not satisfied to have it so; let me fetch you a young woman to wife." He protested time and again, and then held his peace. §-04

The mother left the house, intending to go to a certain family and fetch home the daughter of that family. Her son asked her, "To what family are you going?" §-05

"To such and such a family." He would not let her go to the family she had in mind, but told her of a family he liked better. So she went to the family he fancied, selected a wife for her son, and having set the day, installed her in her son's house. **The woman turned out to be barren.** §-06

Then said the mother to the son, "Son, you had me fetch you a wife you yourself selected. Now she turns out to be barren. Without children a family dies out, and the line is not continued. Therefore let me fetch you another young woman to wife." §-07

"Enough said, dear mother," replied the son; but the mother repeated her request time and again. §-08

The barren wife heard the talk and thought to herself, "It is certain that sons cannot disobey the words of their mothers and fathers. Now if she fetches him a wife who is fruitful, they will

treat me like a slave. Suppose I were to fetch him a young woman of my own selection?" §-09

So the barren wife went to a certain family and selected a young woman for him. But she immediately encountered the opposition of the young woman's parents, who said to her, "Woman, what say you?" §-10

The barren wife replied, "I am a barren woman, and without children a family dies out. If your daughter gives birth to a son, she will be mistress of the family and the wealth thereof. Therefore give your daughter to me for my husband." She finally prevailed upon them to grant her request, and taking the young woman with her, installed her in her husband's house. §-11

Then this thought occurred to her, "If my rival gives birth to a son or a daughter, she alone will be mistress of the household. I must see to it that she shall not give birth to a child." §-12

So the barren wife said to her rival, "As soon as you have conceived a child in your womb, pray let me know." §-13

"Very well," replied her rival. In accordance with her promise, as soon as she had conceived, she told her fellow-wife. §-14

Now the barren wife was accustomed to give her rival a meal of rice-porridge regularly every day with her own hand. So along with the food she gave her a drug to cause abortion. The result was that her rival had a miscarriage. §-15

Again the second time the fruitful wife conceived a child and informed the barren wife. And again her fellow-wife did as before and brought about a miscarriage. §-16

The women who lived in the neighborhood asked the fruitful wife, "Is not your rival putting an obstacle in your way?" §-17

When she told them the facts, they said to her, "You foolish woman, why did you do this? This woman was afraid you would get the upper hand. So she mixed a preparation to bring about a miscarriage and gave it to you. Do not tell her again." §-18

Accordingly the third time the fruitful wife said nothing to her rival. But the barren wife, seeing her belly, said to her, "Why did you not tell me that you had conceived a child?" §-19

Said the fruitful wife, "It was you who brought me here, and twice you have caused me to suffer a miscarriage; why should I tell you?" §-20

"Now I am lost," thought the barren wife. From that time on she watched to catch her rival off her guard. When the babe in the womb was fully matured, she took advantage of an opportunity, mixed a drug, and gave it to her. But because the babe in her womb was fully mature, an abortion was out of the question, and

the result was that the child lodged across the neck of the womb.
§-21

Immediately the mother suffered acute pains and feared that her hour had come. §-22

"You have killed me!" she cried. "It was you alone that brought me here; it was you alone that killed my three children. Now I also am going to die. When I have passed out of this existence, may I be reborn as an ogress able to devour your children." §-23

And having made this Earnest Wish, she died, and was reborn in that very house as a cat. §-24

The husband seized the barren wife, and saying to her, "It was you who destroyed my family," beat her soundly with elbows, knees, and otherwise. As the result of the beating she received, she sickened and died, and was reborn in that very house as a hen. §-25

So the fruitful wife was reborn as a cat, and the barren wife was reborn as a hen. The hen laid eggs, and the cat came and ate them. This happened three times. Said the hen, "Three times have you eaten my eggs, and now you are seeking an opportunity to eat me too. When I have passed out of this existence, may I be able to eat you and your offspring." §-26

And having made this Earnest Wish, she passed out of that existence, and was reborn as a leopardess. The cat was reborn as a doe. §-27

So the barren wife, at the end of her existence as a hen, was reborn as a leopardess; and the fruitful wife, at the end of her existence as a cat, was reborn as a doe. Thrice the doe brought forth young, and thrice the leopardess went and devoured the doe's offspring. §-28

When the doe came to die, she said, "Thrice this beast has devoured my offspring, and now she purposes to devour me too. When I have passed out of this existence, may I be able to devour her and her offspring." §-29

And having made this Earnest Wish, she was reborn as an ogress. When the leopardess passed out of that existence, she was reborn at Sāvātthi as a young woman of station. §-30

So the fruitful wife, at the end of her existence as a doe, was reborn as an ogress; and the barren wife, at the end of her existence as a leopardess, was reborn at Sāvātthi as a young woman of station. §-31

When the latter grew up, she was married and went to live with her husband's family in a little settlement near the gate of the city. After a time she gave birth to a son. The ogress disguised

herself as a dear **friend** of the young woman and went to see her. §-32

"Where is my friend?" said the ogress. §-33

"In the inner room; she has just given birth to a child." §-34

"Did she give birth to a son or a daughter? I should like to see her." So saying, the ogress went in. While pretending to be looking at the child, she seized him, devoured him, and then went out. §-35

Again a second time she devoured a child of the young wife in the same way. §-36

The third time the young wife was great with child she addressed her husband, "Husband, in this place an ogress has devoured two sons of mine and escaped. This time I intend to go to the house of my parents to give birth to my child. §-37

Now at this time that ogress was away doing her turn at drawing water. (For Vessavaṇa's ogresses take their turn at drawing water from lake Anotatta, passing it along from the source. At the expiration of four or five months they are released; the others die of exhaustion.) §-38

The moment the ogress was released from her turn at drawing water she went quickly to the young wife's house and inquired, "Where is my friend?" §-39

"Where you will not see her. There is an ogress that devours every child she bears in this house, and therefore, she has gone to the house of her parents." §-40

"She may go wherever she likes, but she will not escape from me." Spurred on by an impulse of hatred, the ogress dashed towards the city. §-41

On the day appointed for the naming of the child the mother bathed him, gave him a name, and then said to her husband, "Husband, now we will go back to our own home." Accordingly she took the boy in her arms and set out with her husband along the path leading through the grounds of the monastery. §-42

When they reached the monastery pool, the young wife gave the boy to her husband and bathed in the pool. When she had finished her bath, her husband bathed in the pool. While the husband was bathing, the wife remained near, giving suck to her child. §-43

Just then the ogress drew near. The young wife saw her coming and recognized her. Immediately she screamed with a loud voice, "Husband! husband! come quickly! come quickly! here is that ogress!" Not daring to wait until her husband came, she turned and dashed into the monastery. §-44

Now at this time the Teacher was preaching the Law in the midst of the congregation. The young wife laid her boy at the feet of the Tathāgata and said, "I give you this child; spare the life of my son." §-45

The deity Sumana, who resided in the embattled chamber over the gate, prevented the ogress from entering. The Teacher addressed the Elder Ānanda, saying, "Go, Ānanda, summon that ogress within." The Elder summoned her within. §-46

The young wife said, "Here she comes, Reverend Sir." §-47

Said the Teacher, "Let her come; make no noise." §-48

When the ogress came and stood before him, the Teacher said, "Why have you so done? Had you not come face to face with a Buddha like me, you would have cherished hatred towards each other for an aeon, like the Snake and the Mongoos, who trembled and quaked with enmity, like the Crows and the Owls. **Why do you return hatred for hatred? Hatred is quenched by love, not by hatred.**" And when he had thus spoken, he pronounced the following Stanza, §-49

- (5.) **For not by hatred are hatreds ever quenched**
 here in this world.
 By love rather are they quenched.
This is an eternal law. §-50

At the conclusion of the Stanza the ogress was established in the Fruit of Conversion. §-51

The Teacher said to the woman, "Give your child to this ogress." §-52

"I am afraid to, Reverend Sir." §-53

"Fear not. You have no reason to be alarmed because of her." §-54

The young wife gave her child to the ogress. The ogress kissed and caressed him, gave him back again to his mother, and began to weep. §-55

The Teacher asked her, "Why do you weep?" §-56

"Reverend Sir, in the past I have managed somehow or other to get a living, but I have never had enough to eat. Now how am I to live?" §-57

Then the Teacher comforted her, saying, "Do not worry." And turning to the mother, he said, "Take this ogress home with you, let her live in your own house, and feed her with the choicest rice-porridge." §-58

So the young wife took the ogress home with her, lodged her on the central rafter of the hut, and fed her with the choicest rice-porridge. §-59

Now when the rice was threshed and the flail was raised, she feared that it would strike her head. So she said to her friend, "I shall not be able to live here any longer; lodge me elsewhere." §-60

She was lodged successively in the flail-hut, the water-chatty, the bake-house, a storeroom, the dust-heap, and the village gate. But she refused to live in any of these places, saying, "Here the flail rises as if it would split my head in two; here boys empty out slops; here dogs lie down; here boys attend to nature's needs; here they throw away sweepings; here village boys practice fortune-telling." §-61

So they lodged her in a quiet place by herself outside of the village, and there they brought her the choicest rice-porridge. §-62

The ogress said to her friend, "This year there will be abundance of rain; therefore plant your crops in a dry place. This year there will be a drought; therefore plant your crops in a moist place." Other people's crops were destroyed either by excessive moisture or by drought, but the crops of the young wife flourished above measure. §-63

People asked the young wife, "Woman, your crops are destroyed neither by excessive moisture nor by drought. When you plant your crops, you seem to know in advance whether the season will be wet or dry. How is this?" §-64

The young wife replied, "I have a friend, an ogress, who tells me whether the season will be wet or dry; and I plant my crops according to her directions on high or low ground. Don't you see? Every day the choicest rice-porridge and other kinds of food are carried out of our house; to her are they carried. Do you also carry the choicest rice-porridge and other kinds of food to her, and she will look after your crops also." §-65

Straightway all the residents of the city rendered honor to her. On her part, from that time forth, she looked after the crops of all. And she received abundant gifts and a large retinue. Subsequently she established the Eight Ticket-foods, which are kept up even to this present day. §-66

ANALYSIS

Notation:

A > B = A attacks B

A < B = B attacks A

The arrow, < or > , points at the victim.

In each life, the other person becomes the victim.

Son chooses **B**arren woman (B).

Barren Wife (B) chooses Fertile woman (**F**).

(1) B > F (Barren woman hurts Fertile woman: this starts the cycle of violence)

[Note: In Palestine, the cycle of violence was started by the White invaders, the foreign settlers. But in this story it does not matter who started it. The only question is "How to end it".]

(2) Hen < Cat (Hen is hurt by cat, who eats her eggs)

(3) Leopardess > Doe (Leopardess hurts Doe)

(4) Woman < Ogress (Woman is hurt by Ogress)

(5) Here the Buddha intervenes.

[Woman + Ogress] - together

(6) The two old enemies do their utmost to help each other: the violence ceases.

The trigger of the action is the fact that often a barren woman is treated with disdain, as, for instance, in the story of Hagar (Bible, Genesis 16:1-6), same as Hājar, ancestor of the Holy Prophet Mohammed, in the Muslim tradition.

THE ETHICS OF THE BUDDHIST STORIES

The Buddhist stories imply that it is beneficial to interpret the Biblical commandments "Love thy neighbour" and the injunctions to treat the stranger well as follows:

It is the present custom that each individual or each community looks first after its own interests - and after the interests of others only as an act of special charity and on second thoughts. It would be more useful for mankind to develop the instinct to be more concerned with the welfare of The Other and leave it to chance whether The Other deserves it or reciprocates and leave our own welfare to chance (i.e. to "God"). This is the instinct of a mother, who will put her children's welfare above her own.

In concrete terms: **be more ready to be kind** to people of a different race, a different country, a different sex, a different age (old vs young), a different religion, a different social class, of a different political party &c, than your own. This would have implications for our treatment of economic migrants, asylum seekers, "bogus asylum seekers", refugees, Gypsies, "bloody foreigners" &c. As a result, Christians would, **by preference**, feed Muslims and Jews (prior to their own members), whites would feed blacks and vice versa. Let Africans feed Caribbeans. Let Hindus feed Muslims (as Gandhi recommended) and Muslims feed Hindus, let Sunni Muslims feed Shia Muslims and vice versa, **let Israelis (happily and generously and lovingly) feed Palestinians and vice versa**. ("All humans become brothers", as it says in Schiller's "Ode to Joy".) That would speak in favour of the "one-state solution" proposed for Palestine many years ago.

The injunction "Love thy neighbour" can be interpreted in this way: "Neighbours" are those who belong to a different group, those who are not near but all those who are "**distant**."

The readiness to be kind can also find non-showy expression: When we recognise that somebody is a "stranger", i.e. belongs to a different group, e.g. in the street or on a bus, we can greet him in passing or give him a smile rather than ignore him or give him a cold stare; this way he knows he is not in a "hostile environment" (an unpleasant attitude the UK government tried to encourage recently) and the stranger will feel a little more secure. Our heart should be ready to make such gestures, and we should bring up our children to feel like this.

A saint called Geron (or something like it) once had a dream. Heaven and hell looked very similar. In hell, the "dead" people sat around a huge cauldron with the most delicious curry. They had iron ladles with long iron handles. They had been starved and looked like living skeletons and could not get at the delicious food in the cauldron. The iron handles of their ladles were red hot, and they could not get the food to their mouths.

By contrast, in heaven the souls were all well-fed. The cauldron was as big as that in hell, the iron handles of their ladles were also red hot, the curry was as delicious (all came from the same caterer, Heaven&Hell Supplies Unlimited). They fed each other.

Are we not really stupid, and deserve our misery and our wars, if we act otherwise!

In this spirit, there is a Buddhist recommendation that the primary aim of our lives should be to promote the welfare of others rather than the welfare of ourselves.

Then the Blessed One, perceiving that **death was near**, uttered these words:

"He who gives away shall have real gain.

He who subdues himself shall be free, he shall cease to be a slave of passions.

The righteous man casts off evil;

and by rooting out lust, bitterness, and illusion, do we reach Nirvāna."

(Source: Carus 095:25)

These then are, almost, the last words of the Buddha.

So, paradoxically, we benefit more if we give than if we take. That is the Buddhist doctrine. It is also expressed in a German proverb: "Geben ist seliger denn nehmen." (Giving is more blissful than taking.)

Much conflict in the world would disappear if this wisdom predominated in teaching, upbringing and practice.

Hinduism has a doctrine which is related to this attitude (and would eliminate the culture wars being conducted on social media): Focus on doing your duties instead of demanding your rights; for your duties are the rights of The Other. If everybody does his duty, nobody will have to fight for his rights. Focus on doing **your** duty rather than trying to force others to do theirs and punish them if they fail to do so.

About the treatment of The Other in today's world, see also: Byung-Chul Han (2018): "The Expulsion of the Other: Society, Perception and Communication Today".

The precept of Ahimsa, Non-violence, can be usefully applied not only to other human beings but also to the animal kingdom, the air, the soil, the mountains and the seas. This is beautifully summarised in the concluding verses of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner":

.

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
 To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
 He prayeth well, who loveth well
 Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
 All things both great and small;
 For the dear God who loveth us,
 He made and loveth all.

Applied to soil and mountains, it means that we should not destroy the sacred soil of Palestine or sacred mountains in Australia or the USA.

INJUNCTIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT (BIBLE)

Now follow twenty injunctions from the Old Testament about the treatment of strangers, sadly, "more honour'd in the breach than the observance." (Hamlet 1:4).

The translation is based on the New International Version (NIV).

(1) But the seventh day is a **Sabbath** to the Lord your God. On it you shall **not do any work**, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the **stranger** who is within your gates. (Exodus 20:10)

(2) "You shall not wrong a traveller or oppress him, for you were **strangers** in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 22:21)

(3) "You shall **not oppress** a stranger. You know the **heart** of a traveller, for you were **strangers** in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 23:9)

(4) When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall **leave them** for the poor and for the **stranger**: I am the Lord your God. (Leviticus 19:9-10)

(5) And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall **leave them** for the poor and for the **stranger**: I am the Lord your God." (Leviticus 23:22)

Comment: This is a wonderful idea. Ruth (in the Bible) benefited from it.

(6) If your **brother** becomes poor and cannot maintain himself with you, you shall support him as though he were a **stranger** and a traveller (sojourner), and he shall live with you. Take no

interest from him or profit, but fear your God, that your brother may live beside you. You shall not lend him your money at interest, nor give him your food for profit. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God. (Leviticus 25:35-38)

Comment: This instruction has remarkable implications in favour of the stranger. It is taken for granted that a stranger is treated well. And the treatment of the stranger is used as the measure of how well the brother should be treated. Nowadays a similar instruction would probably be formulated the other way round. It is taken for granted that we treat our brother well, and we would therefore be instructed: "Treat the stranger as if he were your brother."

(7) And if a stranger sojourns among you and would keep the Passover to the Lord, according to the statute of the Passover and according to its rule, so shall he do. You shall have **one statute**, both for the stranger and for the native." (Numbers 9:14)

Comment: i.e. the stranger has the same rights and duties as the native.

(8) He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and **loves the stranger**, giving him food and clothing. **Love the stranger**, therefore, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Deuteronomy 10:18-19)

(9) You shall **not abhor** an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were a stranger in his land. (Deuteronomy 23:7)

Comment: This prohibits racism, i.e. ill **feelings** on the grounds of race or nationality. Not only visible actions are prohibited but also the thoughts since thoughts are the source of all actions.

The remark about the Egyptian refers to an old story when the Israelites were guests of the Egyptians, i.e. benefited from them. By the same token, when "upstanding white people" complain about petty thieving of Gypsies, or benefits given to "non-white" "bogus asylum seekers", we should see it in the light of the grand thieving which the colonial powers have conducted for centuries in the past. History is not dead. It matters. Kant, in "Perpetual Peace", makes a similar observation.

(10) You shall not oppress a **hired servant** who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the **strangers** who are in your land within your towns. (Deuteronomy 24:14)

Comment: This prohibits exploitation of strangers, which so often happens, especially if their immigration status is in doubt and they are therefore afraid to lodge an official complaint. We find such cases in the press at regular intervals.

(11) When you reap your harvest in your field and **forget** a sheaf in the **field**, you shall not go back to get it. It shall be for the **stranger**, the fatherless, and the widow, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat your **olive trees**, you shall not go over them again. It shall be for the **stranger**, the fatherless, and the widow. When you gather the **grapes** of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the **stranger**, the fatherless, and the widow. (Deuteronomy 24:19-21)

Comment: This is a beautiful rule, easily followed in an agricultural society. We have to consider how we could apply it in ours. Perhaps it corresponds to giving something to the foodbank when leaving the supermarket. The general implication is that we share with the strangers what we have instead of treating them with hostility (Creating "a hostile environment" as Christian Britain officially did.)

(12) When you have finished paying all the tithe of your produce in the third year, which is the year of tithing, giving it to the Levite, the **stranger**, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your towns and be filled, then you shall say before the Lord your God, 'I have removed the sacred portion out of my house, and moreover, I have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all your commandment that you have commanded me. I have not transgressed any of your commandments, nor have I **forgotten them**. (Deuteronomy 26:12-13)

(13) '**Cursed** be anyone who perverts the justice due to the **stranger**, the fatherless, and the widow.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' (Deuteronomy 27:19)

Comment: Dire punishment will hit the person who treats the stranger unfairly.

(14) The **stranger** has not lodged in the street; I have **opened my doors** to the stranger) (Job 31:32)

(15) The **Lord watches** over the **strangers**; he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. (Psalm 146:9)

(16) For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly execute justice one with another, if you **do not oppress the stranger**, the fatherless, or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own harm, then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever. (Bible, Jeremiah 7:5-7)

Comment: This can be seen as a condemnation of the Home Office policy of creating a "**hostile environment**" for illegal immigrants.

(17) The people of the land have practised extortion and committed robbery. They have oppressed the poor and needy, and have **extorted from the stranger** without justice. (Ezekiel 22:29)

(18) You shall allot it as an **inheritance** for yourselves and for the **strangers** who **reside** among you and have had children among you. They shall be to you as native-born children of Israel. With you they shall be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel. In whatever tribe the stranger resides, there you shall assign him his inheritance, declares the Lord God. (Ezekiel 47:22-23)

(19) **Do not oppress** the widow, the fatherless, the **stranger**, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart." (Zechariah 7:10)

(20) Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, **against those who thrust aside the stranger**, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 3:5)

INJUNCTION FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT (BIBLE, MARK 12:28-32)

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: '**Love your neighbour as yourself.**' There is no commandment greater than these."

"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to **love your neighbour as yourself is more important** than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Part 3: Comfort for the Oppressed

alias
 "Why should the devil have all the best tunes"
 alias
 Use the weapons of the oppressor

"Why should the devil have all the best tunes" is a saying attributed to William Booth (1829–1912), founder of the Salvation Army, when he encouraged a drive to use popular tunes with secular texts and use them for songs with religious texts.

A MIGHTY STRONGHOLD IS OUR GOD

If the Palestinians knew German, or if great belligerent reformer Dr Martin Luther (1483–1546) were born in Palestine, the Palestinians could sing his battle hymn "Ein feste Burg" (A mighty stronghold is our God).

<p>(1) Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott, ein gute Wehr und Waffen. Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not, die uns jetzt hat betroffen.</p> <p>Der alt böse Feind mit Ernst er's jetzt meint, groß Macht und viel List sein grausam Rüstung ist, auf Erd ist nicht seinsgleichen.</p>	<p>A mighty stronghold is our God, A good defence and weapon. He frees us from all misery Which now has overwhelmed us. [Comment: Not quite, it seems!]</p> <p>The ancient evil enemy [iblis] now means business: His cruel armour is Great power and great cunning: Nothing like it is on this earth. [Comment: So true!]</p>
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<p>(3) Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär und wollt uns gar verschlingen, so fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr, es soll uns doch gelingen. Der Fürst dieser Welt, wie sau'r er sich stellt, tut er uns doch nicht; das macht, er ist gericht': ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen.</p>	<p>And if the world were full of devils And wanted to devour all of us, We still are not afraid: In spite of all we shall succeed. The prince of this world, [iblis, the devil] However threatening his face, He cannot harm us; he has already been found guilty: One little word can destroy him.</p>
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Comment: Verse 3 does not apply. The "inmates" of the concentration camp called Gaza will realise that. "Ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen (One little word can destroy him)"? No, that requires more than one little word. It requires a downpour of rockets from Iran getting through to Jerusalem and leaving no stone upon the other - and wishing that is illegal, and inhuman, and therefore **I do not wish it**. But if retaliation should be "proportionate", as has so often been demanded in the media, then at the end of it all, Jerusalem should look like Gaza City. Therefore let us pray that retaliation be **not proportionate**.

Sadly, the god of Israel thinks otherwise; he commands that things should be proportionate: "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" (Bible, Exodus 21:23–27), i.e. a bomb for a bomb, a ruin for a ruin, a corpse for a corpse, a child for a child, a flattened neighbourhood for a flattened neighbourhood. Some Palestinians, subhuman though they are, may be human enough to pray that this does not happen to Jerusalem, as even the Bible has so often warned!

"Take warning, Jerusalem, or I will turn away from you and make your land desolate so no one can live in it." (Bible, Jeremiah 6:8)

(4) Nehmen sie den Leib,
Gut, Ehr, Kind und Weib:
lass fahren dahin,

sie haben's kein' Gewinn,

If they take away our body,
Possessions, honour, children, wife:
Let them go,
[Comment: "So true!" the suffering
Palestinians will sigh.]

They will not benefit.
[Comment: No, not true. The invaders, the
occupiers, the settler-colonists **will win**,
because they are supported by White
governments, White media, White technology,
and their naïve white followers, an infinite
supply of weapons from White USA, and
because they all believe in the "one and only
true god", who, in biblical times, **promised**
them land which belongs to the Philistines
(Palestinians), making a present of somebody
else's property.

As we all know, since the destruction of the
island of Melos (416 BC) in a conflict between
force and justice, force will always win. The
powerful Athenians (inventors of Western
democracy!), when at last they managed to
crush the heroic resistance of the Melians,
killed all the men, sold the women and children
into slavery and settled their own citizens on

das Reich muß uns doch bleiben.	the island. So this island was now "rightfully" Athenian, just as happened when White settlers took over the USA, Mexico, Australia, and many other lands, just as Palestine will (or will it?) one day be "rightfully" Israeli.] "the Kingdom must remain ours," [the deluded Palestinians will sigh as the last of them expire.]
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[Comment: That is the "Final solution".

The rest is silence.

Now cracks a noble heart.

Good-night, sweet prince;

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest. (Hamlet)]

DA PACEM, DOMINE

Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris Quia non est alius Qui pugnet pro nobis Nisi tu Deus noster.	Give peace, o Lord, in our time, For there is nobody Who could fight for us, Except you, our God.
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This is a Latin prayer originating in the 7th century AD. In 1529, Martin Luther (1483-1546) translated it into German verse and provided it with a tune, and in various versions and translations it has been sung and prayed ever since in Christian churches. There is no reason why Arabs should not use it for their dua, in Arabic, of course.

O CHANGE OF TIMES! YOU HOPE OF THE PEOPLE

<p>O Blindheit der Großen! Sie wandeln wie Ewige Groß auf gebeugten Nacken, sicher Der gemieteten Fäuste, vertrauend Der Gewalt, die so lang schon gedauert hat. Aber lang ist nicht ewig. O Wechsel der Zeiten! Du Hoffnung des Volks!</p> <p>Bertolt Brecht: "The Caucasian Chalk Circle" Translation by Klaus Bung</p>	<p>O blindness of the Great. They stride like eternal Gods Tall on bent necks, sure Of the hired fists, trusting In the force which has endured so long. But for long is not for ever. O change of times! You hope of the people"</p>
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- The British were driven out of Kenya by the Mau Mau (eight years: 1952-1960) and by history.
- The French were driven out of Algeria by the resistance fighters and by history (eight years: 1954-1962). (see Alistair Horne: "A Savage War of Peace - Algeria, 1954-1962")
- The "Thousand-Year Reich", of which Hitler and his followers dreamt and which was based on military might, survived a mere 12 years (1933-1945).
- Israel: Thy clock is running.

PEOPLE LIVING IN THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION

An Israeli charity that acts in the spirit commended in the Buddhist stories is called "Road to Recovery".

"Road to Recovery" (Derech Hachlama in Hebrew) is an Israeli charity that connects Israeli volunteers with Palestinians in need of transportation to doctor's appointments and other medical care within Israel. The group also assists in transporting Gazans to appointments in the West Bank. As of 2023, the group was serving about 2,700 Palestinian patients each year. In addition to providing logistical assistance, the organization also serves to develop connections between individual Israelis and Palestinians. In some cases, volunteers and patients will also meet to spend time together in recreational settings, attend memorial services for patients who have died, or support the families of deceased patients.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Road_to_Recovery_\(charity\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Road_to_Recovery_(charity))) "

In a similar spirit, German poet Johann Wolfgang von **Goethe** (1749–1832), in his poem cycle "West-östlicher Divan" (West-Eastern Divan) reached out to Persian poet Hafiz (1326–1390)

Among those poems are these verses:

Gottes ist der Orient! Gottes ist der Occident! Nord- und südliches Gelände Ruht im Frieden seiner Hände.	To God belongs the Orient! To God belongs the Occident! The Northern and the Southern lands Are protected by his hands.
Er, der einzige Gerechte, Will für jedermann das Rechte. Sey, von seinen hundert Namen, Dieser hochgelobet! Amen.	HE who alone can be called Just Desires Justice for everyone. May, of his one hundred names, This one be most highly praised! Amen
	Translation by Klaus Bung

In a similar spirit, Jewish international conductor Daniel Barenboim and Palestinian scholar Edward Said (1935–2003) brought young musicians from often hostile countries together in the "**West-Eastern Divan Orchestra**". This is "based in Seville, Spain, consisting of musicians from countries in the Middle East, of Egyptian, Iranian, Israeli, Jordanian, Lebanese, Palestinian,

Syrian and Spanish background." (Wikipedia)

Ilan Pappé concludes his book on the Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine as follows:

Not all the Jews in Israel are blind to the scenes of carnage that their army left behind in 1948, nor are they deaf to the cries of the expelled, the wounded, the tortured and the raped as they keep reaching us through those who survived, and through their children and grandchildren. In fact, growing numbers of Israelis are aware of the truth of what happened in 1948, and fully comprehend the moral implications of the ethnic cleansing that raged in the country. They also recognise the risk of Israel re-activating the cleansing programme in a desperate attempt to maintain its absolute Jewish majority.

It is among these people that we find the political wisdom that all past and present peace-brokers of the conflict appear to lack so totally: they are fully aware that the refugee problem stands at the heart of the conflict and that the fate of the refugees is pivotal for any solution to have a chance of succeeding.

True, these Israeli Jews who go against the grain are few and far between, but they are there, and given the overall desire of the Palestinians to seek restitution and not demand retribution, together they hold the key to reconciliation and peace in the torn land of Palestine. They are found standing alongside the 'internal' Palestinian refugees today, almost half a million people, in joint annual pilgrimages to the destroyed villages, a journey of Nakba commemoration that takes place each year on the day official Israel celebrates (according to the Jewish calendar) its 'Independence Day'. You can see them in action as members of NGOs such as Zochrot - 'remembering' in Hebrew - who stubbornly make it their mission to put up signs with the names of destroyed Palestinian villages in places where today there are Jewish settlements or a JNF forest. You can hear them speak at the Conferences for the Right of Return and Just Peace that began in 2004, where together with their Palestinian friends, from within and outside the country, they reaffirm their commitment to the refugees' Right of Return, and where they, like this writer, vow to continue the struggle to protect the memory of the Nakba against all attempts to dwarf the horror of its crimes or deny they ever happened, for the sake of a lasting and comprehensive peace to emerge one day in the land of Palestine. (my emphases)

FURTHER READING

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**NOTES FOR EDITORS
(NOT INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION
BUT YOU MAY PUBLISH THEM IF YOU WISH)**

1. 7 October 2023: Date on which Hamas fighters broke out of the confines of Gaza and managed to kill and kidnap Israeli citizens.
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2023_Israel
%E2%80%93Hamas_war](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2023_Israel%E2%80%93Hamas_war)
2. 1917 - Date of the Balfour declaration, in which the British government promised to establish "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balfour_Declaration
3. 1492 (Columbus): In January 1492, Spanish King Ferdinand defeated the Muslim rulers in Spain. In August 1492, Columbus set out on the expedition which ended in the subjugation of the Americas.
4. Final solution (Endlösung): Term used by the Nazis for their aim of erasing the Jewish race from the face of the earth.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Final_Solution
5. "Special military operation": term Vladimir Putin used to describe his invasion of Ukraine which started on 24 February 2022.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_military_operation
6. Philistines : Palestinians - The names are etymologically closely related: compare:
P h i l i s t i n e s
P a l e s t i n i a n s
7. Discoveries: They were discoveries only from the European point of view. The natives didn't have to discover their territories. They knew them all along. About the implications of the term and the "discovery doctrine", see Wikipedia:

--- quote starts ---

The discovery doctrine, or doctrine of discovery, is a disputed interpretation of international law during the Age of Discovery, introduced into United States municipal law by the US Supreme Court Justice John Marshall in *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823). In Marshall's formulation of the doctrine, discovery of territory previously unknown to Europeans gave the discovering nation title to that territory against all other European nations, and this title could be perfected by possession. A number of legal scholars have criticized Marshall's interpretation of the relevant international law. In recent decades, advocates for Indigenous rights have campaigned against the

doctrine. In 2023, the Vatican formally repudiated the doctrine.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discovery_doctrine - downloaded 2023-11-14

--- quote ends ---

8. 9/11: Attacks by al-Qaeda on the World Trade Centre in New York on 11 September 2001
9. Coconut: Black on the outside, white on the inside; a black person thinking and acting in the white way; especially a person not showing solidarity with races oppressed by white culture and instead trying to succeed by adopting white values.
10. The Home Secretary (= Minister of the Interior) of the UK at the time when this essay was started (7 November 2023) was Suella Braverman. She has since been forced to resign because of her use of undiplomatic (too aggressive) language in public utterances.
11. "Do you want total war?": 1943 speech by Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels in Berlin Sportpalast: "Wollt ihr den totalen Krieg? Wollt ihr ihn, wenn nötig, totaler und radikaler, als wir ihn uns heute überhaupt noch vorstellen können?" (Do you want total war? Do you want it, if needed, more total and more radical than we can even imagine today?) This speech was addressed to a crowd of his German supporters, the **aggressors** in this total war. When cheering this speech, they hoped for a quick victory by making their war total and merciless (as is Netanyahu's war against the Palestinians). Their hopes were disappointed: Two years later, in 1945, the Nazis had their **come-uppance**: many German cities were in ruins; they looked like Gaza City looks today. But the Nazis were the aggressors: therefore they deserved defeat.

The Palestinians do not. They are weak. They are victims of Israeli aggression. They are virtually defenceless by comparison with Israel. Hamas is nothing compared with the combined might of Israel, the USA and the UK. They have been deprived of their traditional lands by the Zionist invaders, and the "total war" war now conducted against them has the purpose of driving them out of their remaining land (Gaza) as well. The clearance of the "West Bank" has started and will be next. A **pause** in the fighting is meaningless. Only a **total end** of the fighting makes sense to the Palestinians. But to the Israelis it makes no sense, since their aim is to drive the Palestinians out of Gaza altogether. That's why I call Netanyahu's onslaught "total war". Its purpose is not defeat of the enemy but **annihilation** of the enemy. The Hamas operation gave Netanyahu the excuse, the

opportunity, for this military operation.

12. Melos (416 BC): Greek historian Thucydides describes this event in his "History of the Peloponnesian War", Book 5:17). This is how the story ends. The Melians would not yield to the superior power of the Athenians. The Athenians therefore besieged the island, cutting off all its supplies (just as all Gaza supplies have been cut off by the Israelis). A Melian traitor opened the harbour of Melos to the Athenians, and the Melians surrendered. "Athenians put to death all the grown men whom they took, and sold the women and children for slaves, and subsequently sent out five hundred colonists and inhabited the place themselves."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Melos

The Athenians had their come-uppance soon after when they attacked the Sicilian city of Syracuse and suffered a devastating defeat. Will the Israeli army ever have their come-uppance?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Expedition

13. White politicians and media and naïve western and Christian-minded supporters have professed dutifully and ad nauseam: "but Israel has the right to defend itself". This platitude has been rejected by: "Israel has no right to exist; it is an intruder: an intruder does not have the right to defend himself."

By contrast, the Palestinians have the right to exist in their own country. They therefore have a right to defend themselves and try to eject the intruders, which is what Hamas is trying to do. "Civilians", women and children are also intruders and therefore have to be removed.

In their revenge campaign against the Palestinians, the Israelis pretend that their fight is only against Hamas and not against ordinary Palestinians. In fact, their ultimate objective is to remove all Palestinians (including "civilians", women and children), by killing them, letting them die or expelling them. This is their goal in Gaza as well as on the West Bank. The more Palestinians they kill, Hamas or not, the happier they will be.

14. The arrogance of the Western mindset is manifested in the following thoughts of Karl Marx (1818-1883):

"England has to fulfill a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating - the annihilation of the Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia." (quoted in Edward Said, Orientalism)

This is what the USA with the help of their Israeli stormtroopers in the West Bank and the carpet-bombing of Gaza are thinking they are doing in Palestine. It "justifies" their genocide on Palestinian soil.

15. Evidence that the Israelis knew about the planned Hamas "attacks" but for good reasons did nothing to prevent them:

New York Times article of 2023-11-30:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/30/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-attack-intelligence.html>

and the BBC News article of 2024-01-15

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-67958260> - Retrieved 2024-01-15

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