No forgiveness for those who don’t stand with Israel

written by David M. Weinberg | 13.10.2024

On the eve of Yom Kippur, I know that we are supposed to atone for our sins and forgive others. But one year into a multi-front war in which Israel is battling for its life, I am not in a forgiving mood.

I cannot and do not forgive those around the world who fail to sufficiently support Israel in this existential moment or who weaken the Jewish state.

I find it hard to forgive the Biden-Harris administration for handcuffing Israel at so many critical times over the past year and preventing swifter, neater victory. This includes the current moment when a crushing Israeli blow against Iran is being held back by American angst over escalation and slavish belief in long-invalidated diplomatic “solutions.”

Joe Biden indeed has helped Israel defend itself in so many concrete ways, and for this he deserves deep gratitude. But this ought to be the moment for a crushing Israeli and American blow against Iran’s nuclear military project, not another restricting and enfeebling American bear hug.

There is no way to forgive world leaders like French President Macron, British Prime Minister Starmer, and Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau for slapping arms embargoes on Israel. They profess “robust” support for Israel’s “right” to defend itself but deny Israel the wherewithal to do so when it is in actual need. Their protestations of friendship for Israel have been shown shallow.

Undermining Israel instead of resisting evil

Only an idiot can forgive Western politicians for continuing to support UNRWA, instead of collapsing and replacing it with aid mechanisms that do not brazenly serve as a platform for the never-ending Palestinian “war of return” against Israel, and with facilities that do not serve as actual armed bases for Hamas. The fact that the aid agency is a leading contender for the Nobel Peace Prize (to be awarded this weekend!) is proof of the utter-gutter rank hostility of some Europeans to Israel. Ugh.

The Jewish People and true defenders of freedom globally never should forgive United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who will be remembered, if at all, as a slimy stain on the history of the UN. He has yet to denounce the massacre and sexual atrocities committed by Hamas murderers on October 7, and has not led any efforts to declare them a terrorist organization, nor has he unequivocally condemned Iran's direct missile attacks on Israel.

And oh yeah, he loves and defends UNRWA with a passion matched only by his gushing embrace of every dictator (like the Turkish and Iranian presidents) who seek to destroy Israel.

Guterres and his wretched army of high-minded diplomats are all about promoting Israeli perfidy instead of resisting real evil. No forgiveness.

I am at a loss to understand, and certainly cannot forgive, Western leaders who davka in the wake of October 7 have doubled down on the drive for Palestinian statehood; people like US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, as well as European leaders who have unilaterally "recognized" Palestinian statehood to defiantly dump on Israel. This beggars the imagination. It is strategic insanity. And it is profoundly antagonistic.

The call for an "urgent" process leading to Palestinian statehood runs contrary to Israel's revised, most basic security understandings; indeed, to Israel's very existence for the medium to long term. A prosperous and safe Israel is just not compatible with Iran-armed, eliminationist Palestinian nationalism – which alas, is all we can expect of the Palestinians at the moment.

None of this seems to have penetrated the closed thinking, the stale air of Western-liberal foreign policy establishments. In my view, there is no forgiveness for delusionary, dangerous, duplicitous diplomacy regarding runaway Palestinian statehood.

There is really no absolution for the American, Canadian, and European university presidents who have found it impossible to unequivocally condemn antisemitic activity on their campuses or end violent anti-Israel, anti-Jewish, anti-American, and anti-Western protests.

Calling for the genocide of Jews is not necessarily against the universities' codes of conduct, because "it depends on the context," University of Pennsylvania

President Liz Magill averred to Congress, and she was backed by the presidents of Harvard and MIT. “It depends on the context” has got to be the most iconic, infamous, immoral, and contemptible phrase of the year.

These supposed intellectual leaders have created a permission structure for antisemitism. No forgiveness.

State governors, provincial premiers, city mayors, police chiefs, and other local leaders are in deep deficit, too – undeserving of forgiveness and deserving of punishment at the ballot box – for failing to combat the radical Islamists rampaging through the streets of North America and Europe. The rioters burn American, Canadian, and British flags, not just Israel’s, and roar “Death” to America, Canada, and Britain, not just to Israel… But local councilors are cowed into silence.

Government leaders at all levels are similarly undeserving of forgiveness for propagating moral equivalence between antisemitism and “Islamophobia,” something that has become an automatic catechism in every statement against racism and violence.

Everybody knows, but is curiously afraid to acknowledge, that antisemitism and anti-Zionism (which are today indistinguishable) have become genocidal in their agenda and brutally exclusionary to entire communities – against all Jews. Furthermore, the false narrative about Muslims being under attack after the Palestinian October 7 atrocities has it backwards. It is Moslem groups and their extremist leftist allies who are fueling the surge in antisemitism.

Entire books could be filled with the sins of Western media against Israel: for its willing consumption of Hamas propaganda about civilian casualties; its failure to cover the tyrannical, terrorist takeovers of Palestinian and Lebanese societies by Hamas and Hezbollah; its failure to track and raise the alarm against Iran’s hegemonic march across the Mideast; its failure to significantly cover the devastation of Israeli northern and southern communities in the current wars, and more.

No forgiveness possible.

Issues back home

On the home front in Israel, there are people and movements that I find hard to forgive too, although I want to. These are leaders and actors who should make amends and can be granted absolution if they repair their ways. This runs in all political directions.

There are leftist generals still purveying their hackneyed, clearly-proven-wrong security paradigms on the evening news. There are army reservists who threatened to desert the IDF (encouraging the enemy to attack last year), including some who once again are now threatening to refuse-to-serve unless our hostages are "brought home" immediately (as if that were possible)!

There are newscasters who know only to vent "rage" against the government, never capable of broadcasting messages of resilience or stories of heroism, even on the recent first anniversary of October 7 and even as Israel remains at war and needs national unity.

There are ultra-Orthodox leaders who impudently still cannot see the need to assimilate haredi (ultra-Orthodox) men into sharing the national security burden in concrete military terms.

There are right-wing rabble rousers who spread poisonous messages about the "treason" of the Left; and government leaders who still have not shouldered responsibility even in words for the catastrophe of October 7, even as they claim credit for Israel's appreciable recent victories.

Yes, there is teshuva, repentance, needed at home, and here there is room for brotherly forgiveness – but that is for a different article at a different time.

Published in The Jerusalem Post, October 12, 2024