

# How Patient God Is...

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**To wake up a sleeping man, that's easy. Difficult is to wake the man who fakes sleeping.**

In 1994, between the 6<sup>th</sup> of April and the 15<sup>th</sup> of June, at the average rate of 20,000 per day and within the first 40 days of the genocide, a total of 800,000 absolutely innocent people were murdered in the small African country of Rwanda. The victims, the men, women and children of the Christian Tutsi tribe, were massacred in the hands of the shorter Hutu people, also a Christian tribe. It took no tanks or canons, neither bombs nor fighter jets, nor incineration chambers, to carry out the massive crime. The news of the murder of 20,000 people was broadcast daily around the world, a world that chose to fake sleeping.

The world has pretended to be sleeping for thousands of years in a political, religious, economic, and racial swamp. The incredible catastrophe of Rwanda took place not a thousand years ago, nor in the Stone Age, but almost yesterday at our doorsteps. Why the United Nations, the United States, Europe, Asia, or the Vatican, didn't interfere to stop it? Most importantly, whatever happened to human rights, or to the Golden Rule, “Love thy neighbor as thyself?” Weren't these people humans, too? Although human rights are being observed, *who* is deemed “human” seems to differ from one place to another. For one, the regional and global powers consider human rights to depend first on their own interests, and next on the nationality, religion, race or sect of the given individual, and most absurdly, on his or her inherited beliefs! In practice, human life is valuable to the extent that it meets the requirements of those who presently wield the power. For instance, even as now, millions of Arabs have become refugees, yet the wealthy Arab governments, despite the propaganda, haven't opened their gates upon these homeless people. We could hardly call Human Beings those, who far from all fundamental principles, don't have the love of humankind at heart, some of whom don't even allow for the others' right to live, or see them worthy of human rights. Thence, it isn't hard to see religion and politics as playthings in hypocritical hands. As a poet said,

**There are two kinds of believers in the school of religion:  
The cunning hypocrites, and the fools played in the cons' hands.  
You won't find another way to the court of creation:  
It's reason and reflection, or else, to stay in this prison.**

The contemporary poet Moeini Kermanshahi wrote beautifully,

**How patient God is! If I were in His shoes, the moment that I saw the first signs of cruelty among the unconscientious humankind, I'd crumble the world, in all its beauty and ugliness. How patient God is!**

For years, men of power, religious or otherwise, have been or have faked sleeping in the face of colossal catastrophes. This was most evident in their documented silence against the tragic Armenian and Jewish genocides during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the African massacres of the last decade of that century. No doubt, had the world reacted in time against the Armenian massacre, the abominable tragedy of the Holocaust wouldn't have taken place. As for the African tragedy in question, it might have been stopped within a day by a number of soldiers, or even by a warning from the Pope. This was not in essence a political, religious, economic or geographical incident. Those innocent victims hadn't stepped over the big guys' toes to raise the matter of interests. The Pope once kept silent amid the Armenian tragedy, because Armenians belonged to a different branch of Christianity. During the catastrophe of the Holocaust, they opted for deadly silence again, for the victims were not Christian in the first place, and since they saw it in their interest to see the victims vanish. The African catastrophe, like those committed earlier against Armenians and Jews, **remains a stigma on the faces of humanity, religion and politics**, the shame of which no pen could justly describe.

**Did you ever wish to scream  
In a nightmare, but your lips wouldn't part?  
Did you ever wish to call out your friends,  
From your heart's depth, but you could not?  
My soul's asleep, and my voice no-one hears.  
My lips, parted, to call out to friends,  
Yet, my cry has no voice for the ears.**

Once, following their tradition, the King of Qajar rewarded two neighboring villages one to each of two titled statesmen, in return for their services to the court. One of the men warns his neighbor, "Beware not to step on our tail!" That is, make sure you won't trespass to provoke us! The neighbor replies, "**You decide your tail's length, and we'll be careful not to step on it!**" Powerful political and religious men have tails of variable sizes. They asked a simple man, "What do you think of snakes?" He replied, "Snake is a good animal, but pity, it's all tails and no torso!" As they say, "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Many a wicked man whose seize of power turns his whole body into a large tail that stretches far beyond his worth to stir expedient sedition. But snakes shall die, too, and divisive incitement has an end! Speaking of political expedience, **Churchill** famously said, "We have no lasting enemies and no lasting friends, only lasting interests."<sup>1</sup>

One Haji Agha sets out for the Haj pilgrimage along with his household. Fearful of the thieves lurking alongside the unsafe roads, he hires a burly young man named Gholdor Khan, "The Big Bully", hands him a horse, and asks him to be their guard on the journey. A few mountains and canyons behind them, the caravan pauses to rest, when lo and behold, a band of thieves raids the caravan. To everyone's surprise, Gholdor Khan lies down in the pleasant shade of a hill to watch the scene, instead of acting out his duty! The thieves are robbing the innocent, Haji is crying out to the skies, women and children are weeping their poor hearts out, when one thief leaps for Gholdor Khan. All of a sudden, he snaps to his feet, defends himself valiantly, and beats the man so badly that the band flees without a moment's hesitation!

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<sup>1</sup> Alternate version: "A nation has no permanent enemies and no permanent friends, only permanent interests." – Winston Churchill

Haji Agha, wounded and depressed, asks Gholdor Khan, “**Why didn’t you defend us from the outset?** Why did you fake sleeping when we needed you the most?”

**Gholdor Khan says**, “As long as they hadn’t stamped on my tail, I had nothing to do with them. Once they did, I served them what they deserved. Now, if you talk too much, too...”

Men of power have many tails – political, economical, temporary, permanent, long and short, colorful, assorted tails. During the shameful Armenian and Jewish genocides, no one had stamped on the big bullies’ tails, so the religious and political powers of the time didn’t find it in their interests to interfere in the matter, even if 800,000 people were murdered every day.

**Miserable is the nation that won’t rely on itself.** Thank God, the meaningless word *minority* has been rendered obsolete since the Armenian and Jewish peoples each achieved independence. The size of the population won’t matter; independence is about self-reliance. As **Muhammad Iqbal** wrote,

**God raised that nation atop  
Who wrote its fate in its own hand.  
He forsook the nation whose farmers  
For the others sowed their land.**

Let’s hope that someday humankind will view their interests collectively, instead of defining them by the narrow interests of one or another nation, religion or sect. Consider the oppressed people of Syria, Iraq, Yemen, or Libya. Their governments for long fanned the flames of hostility even within the holy space of schools. They spread hatred against various sects and religions so much that today, the proverbial baker is burning with the bread. Encourage kindness, for cruelty raises cruel men, but kindness nurtures the loving ones. To be merely human is different than to be endowed with humanity. The most ignorant members of any society are those fathers, mothers, or teachers who in whatever name, contaminate the minds with hatred. **If only humanity were contagious, and we had a vaccine for idiocy!**

It’s a lesson worthy to be taught at our schools. Those who’re fighting one another in today’s Middle East and Africa in the name of religion, much like the Catholic and Protestant soldiers, they too may follow one book and religion but belong to various sects that may hate one another. This is an outcome of incitement to divide.

**Let go of divisions to become whole, for only  
Once the Satan left, the Holy Angel would arrive.**

Classifications such as Orthodox, Extremist, Moderate, etc. among religious followers, even within families, have led to chaos and have driven people away from religion. Presumably, joining a reasonable group shouldn’t deter us from the religion; but sadly, in many cases, this very issue has even led to atheism, while it aids the speculators who continue to fish in muddy waters. As they say, “The sheep is sick worried for his life, while the butcher (read, the self-proclaimed religious advocates) minds only the meat!”

**This thought begs an explanation,  
Yet I’m afraid of the old minds, for  
Old myopic intellects, they bring  
A hundred awful thoughts to the mind.**

Sadly, all religious failures stem from the contingent codes that pertain to imposing discrimination between Us and Them, so much as their seeds turn into the means of enmity; until someday, somewhere, assuming a new name, such enmity sprouts and breaks through the soil, even reaching into the house of the inciters themselves. To reflect **Hafez**,

**The seeds of loyalty or contempt shall appear  
On this old meadow only at harvest.**

Let's keep in mind that naturally, anyone who believes in a religion or sect to the point of bigotry and discrimination, they'll begin eventually to ignore their own intellect and intuition, and as with today's Middle East, lose their ability to tell friend from foe. Just take a look around the world and see God's many followers who stand at odds with one another.

**Immanuel Kant** said that humankind had two scales by which to measure the truth – his own reason, and the judgment of the others; thence, he could examine a single issue from various points of view. The followers of all religions must accept that others can be right too, that to tolerate other opinions is a sign of civilization and contributes to public safety. Meanwhile, ideas collide hardest when a bunch of fools teach and spread their religions! As **Molière** said, an educated idiot is more stupid and dangerous than an illiterate fool. Well, it's easy for us to criticize, but let's also ask what should be done.

It won't be easy to change the world; but in the long run, the world changes gradually alongside changes in people's views. Whether "how long" and "what cost" this process will take to bear fruit, that's another aspect of the discourse surrounding the evolution of intellect.

**Tolstoi** wrote that no power was greater than that of two warriors: Time and Patience. The millennia-old era of Patience has come to an end. Suffice to see the actions, behavior, and beliefs of the Popes in recent years; the disintegration of the Soviet Union; the inclination of Communist China toward the Capitalist world; or the independence of many a nascent nation; in order to realize that how, by the demands of evolution, changes in human perspective and attitude can effect changes in the world.

For instance, in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, after 2000 years of humiliation and oppression imposed upon them, things began to turn around for the Jewish people. In 1965 a letter presumably dated 1960 and attributed to the late **Pope John XXIII** began circulation, which offered the following unprecedented prayer:

"We are conscious today that many, many centuries of blindness have cloaked our eyes, so that we can no longer see the beauty of Thy Chosen People, nor recognize in their faces the features of our privileged brethren. We realize that the mark of Cain stands upon our foreheads. Across the centuries our brother Abel has lain in the blood which we drew, or shed tears we caused by forgetting Thy Love. Forgive us for crucifying thee a second time in their flesh. For we know not what we did."<sup>2</sup>

Forty years afterwards, and before the eyes of the world, the late **Pope John Paul II** offered the Jewish people the following undisputed apology during his visit to the Western Wall in Jerusalem, Israel:

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<sup>2</sup> The authenticity of this apology has been disputed, even though it may have been true at least in spirit, given the evident affinity of Pope John XXIII for the Jewish people. For an article in this regard, see: <http://robertfaurisson.blogspot.com/1990/11/fake-john-xxiiis-prayer-for-jews.html>

“God of our fathers,  
You chose Abraham and his descendants to bring your Name to the Nations.  
We are deeply saddened by the behavior of those, who in the course of history, have  
caused these children of yours to suffer, and asking your forgiveness, we wish to commit  
ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant.  
*Jerusalem 26, March 2000*  
*Signed: John Paul II*”

This came from the very office where as late as 45 years earlier, his peer Pope Pius XII, had remained silent in the face of Nazi catastrophes. At the end, truth is uncovered, as it was revealed to the Pope, even if at too high a price, but despite the many losers who try and help postpone its discovery.

**Heartbeats, ever so slowly, changed into moans.  
The moans any louder and they'd turn to cries.**

Let's strive to change our minds and those of our children, and let's try to remove all kinds of despicable hatred, be it inherited, religious or sectarian. In order to live we may have to believe in some truth; the tragedy begins, however, when some people deem their own beliefs absolute, and disregard others as nothing.

**How great to be free of our own chains,  
To notice the others who are besides us.**

We'd better teach the next generation to strengthen the faith in their hearts as far as it won't change into hatred towards those who disagree with them; and pray that people's understanding grows for those commandments whose practice would at least be worthy of modern civilization and the knowledge and abilities of its present and future generations. Because the happiness of the coming generations will depend on making the right decisions, **and the right decision requires first the right information.** Let's wipe off of our minds and our children's what information proven wrong by experience; otherwise, to paraphrase **Abu Saeed Abol-kheir**,

**We aim for piety through wine and drunkenness.  
We covet the world, yet wish for the afterlife.  
When ever the world and the religion could reconcile?  
Thence, we have neither the religion, nor the world.**

Let's keep in mind that no book is too holy to be scrutinized. We've had enough of such tolerance and duplicity. As **Saadi** wrote centuries ago,

**Tell all the pious men, that  
Saadi repented his piety.  
I don't fear the barrel of wine or the reed,  
The music, the flute, or the bells,  
As much as I fear deceitful piety.**

Minutes to a funeral, one man asks the priest, “Should we proceed before or behind the casket?” The priest answers, “It won't matter much. Just try and stay out of it.” Within our families or cities, let's make sure that we won't end up ensnared like the people of the Middle East. May we never be sucked into the whirlpools of divisiveness, even within our own minds. It won't matter which club we belong to. Let's not fool ourselves: No doubt, every road ends in a blind alley.

As Mr. **Esmail Malekzadeh** said, we're neither parrots nor mirrors; we're human beings. We should stop justifying our misunderstandings by blaming them on other people or on some flawed writings. We are the decision-makers and responsible agents. As the fable goes, "They told a Deer Musk that it had one flaw: Whoever it sat with, it passed on to them its pleasant scent! The Musk said, 'That's because I mind not my company, but only who I am.'"

This author is convinced that in the near future, the world will witness the displacement of millions of refugees, unless the wealthier governments, as with the earlier Marshall Plan, support and educate those people within their own habitats. This is an international problem which demands international cooperation.

We spoke of how people might turn into mere tools in the hands of religious and political speculators. That reminds me of an episode from my earlier days. I was fifteen, when I was sent to collect 40 crates of unassembled parts for one thousand bicycles from Tehran customs. I was then to take them to the warehouse of Haji Agha Khamoushi Kermani on Nasser Khosrow Avenue, next to the Gilan & Mash-had Garage, and to receive the proof of delivery in return. I received the crates as planned and had the carriage drivers and the porters load the crates on the wagons. Then I sat on top of the shaking crates, on the forefront cart, and went with them straight to Haji Agha's warehouse.

One by one, the porters opened the crates, and Haji Agha received them all, before he would hand me the receipt. At its bottom, the receipt read, "Discrepant." I protested, "Haji Agha, please give me a proper receipt! Everything was accounted for. I can't accept any claim of discrepancy." But the Haji refused.

So I hollered at the porters and the drivers and ordered them to load the crates back on the wagons; and sure enough, they started as they'd been instructed. The second cart was loaded when Haji Agha realized that I was dead serious. "Ok, Kid!" He said. "Come on here! Stop it!" Then he wrote me the receipt as I had asked him to.

Then he added, "Wait a minute!" For a moment, I thought that he meant to tip me. But I was wrong. Instead, he took a piece of wrapping paper and wrote on it a verse, "**The town cleric whispered into his donkey's ear, 'Don't ever be fooled, for fools are sure to be ridden like asses!'**" He gave me the note and told me in his sweet Kermani accent, "You'll become successful." What he wrote and said was indeed better than any tip he could have given me in coins; and I've dearly preserved that note and verse for the past 70 years.

Life is all about gathering experience. As time goes by, some people turn into manipulable playthings, while others, in the name of politics and religion, keep riding others as long as anyone gives them a ride. They refuse to understand that **global happiness and security can be realized only when the safety of the individual is observed**, and not by practicing some provisional religious laws. Alas, as long as religion remains a means to be exploited, the United Nations and the Human Rights will continue to be disarmed and frustrated.

**Don't fool me, you the pious man,  
For hell has no fire! And if it had,  
Then it was taken there from *here*.**

As **Moeini Kermanshahi** concluded,

**How patient God is! Why should I be in His shoes? It's for the best that He's seated  
and can put up with the ugly acts of this creature. Else, if I were in His place, how**

**never would I make the tiniest compromise with the ignorant or the sage. How patient God is! How patient God is...**

*Norman "Nourollah" Gabay  
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