

PRIDE BLINDS US TO OUR OWN BLINDNESS. THERE IS NO PRIDE SWEETER TO THE TASTE AND SO ENSLAVING, AS THE ILLUSION OF SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE.... Author unknown.

Four thousand years ago, give or take a few centuries, Abraham inadvertently started a hatred that has grown among all peoples of the Earth. The question for the ages is: why has hatred for this small percentage of the human population arisen and never ceases? The question of "why" also seems to elude the greatest philosophers, writers, and citizens of all time. No solution seems to be within sight, and all justifications for the hatred seem weak or illogical.

Abraham is identified as the first Jew and the first Muslim, because he was the first noted leader to suggest that there is only ONE God, unlike all civilizations before had professed. Not only was there just one God, but that God had rules that required all to live by if they wanted to be included in an afterlife.

Moses came along about 800 years later with a written account of these rules, etched in stone for emphasis. Jordan Peterson's new book on "12 Rules For Life", has a story in the introduction on page one about Moses from a psychological standpoint. This sarcastic joke has a very deep meaning which should elicit somber contemplation rather than a couple chuckles. The story is: When Moses descended from the mountain, he told his fellow Hebrews that he had good and bad news. The good news was that he was able to reduce the Commandments from 15 to 10. The bad news was that adultery was still included.

This story illustrates a point that since the beginning of human existence, no one wants to follow someone else's rules. Not only do we hate to follow rules, we create scapegoats and reasons to not follow these rules.

Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin also have written an excellent book, "Why The Jews"; first copyrighted in 1983, with two updates. It discusses the history and the reasons (excuses) for antisemitism. His reasons along with other writers include the following: The Jews believe in just one God, they brought moral law down upon us all, they killed Jesus, they have disproportionate wealth, they control the banks and industry, they don't perform hard labor, they have a higher quality of life, they think they are the "chosen ones", they have lower intoxication rates than others, they seldom beat their wives, they dress strangely, they have strange diets and manners, they seldom commit crimes, and they think they are better than others!

Logic and reason would dictate that these reasons are models for admiration and not for hatred.

The most basic reason of antisemitism is a rebellion against the thou shalt and the thou shalt nots as mentioned by Prager. But, as we create reasons for hating Jews, we logically destroy these reasons because they conflict with each other making them invalid. For instance, if we dislike the Jews because they are too rich, do we then begin to sympathize with a poor Jew? Do we praise the Jew because they are responsible for so many discoveries in medicine, and science, and win so many Nobel Peace prizes?

Another reason, "they killed Jesus", is superfluous since the hate started before the life of Jesus.

The Jews are even more unique as a religious nation-culture in that they proposed to establish their own community with borders, and call it Israel. This has become defined as Zionism and that became reality in 1947 after forty centuries of harassment.

What if the question, "Why does the world hate the Jews", is actually a diversion from the real question and the real truth? Maybe the real question is simply, "Why is there hate"? If we frame this problem in the simple form of our own personal hate and realize that the sweet taste of "PRIDE" has consumed us, we might have a possible solution to this of the most pervasive and deadliest of sins.

As Knights of Columbus and Christians, our practice of CHARITY demonstrates the antithesis of this destructive hate. Our temptation to bully, and demote others is countered by acts of good character and civil behavior. For anyone who does not practice the Golden Rule, the most difficult obligation of life is to embrace this simple rule. To simply offer a deserved compliment to another person is an extremely difficult task for the average person.

As a former probation officer, I would on occasion give such a task to a juvenile or adult under supervision. This included an assignment to do something for someone else. More often than not, the client would fail because they could not comprehend what an act of charity involved. Keeping an informal statistical survey for about five years, I noted that less than 25 percent of all people that the courts placed on probation could recite the Golden Rule.

On occasion a probationer would have to pay restitution for a crime, and he might even offer an apology to a victim, but reconciliation was never discussed nor offered by the offender. If you note an occasion where a prominent figure on the news states that they are “sorry”, the apology sounds hollow. That is because the offender never states what they are willing to do to make his or her transgression right.

Today, in our society, hatred is foremost in the news. Irrational hatred is portrayed daily on the news. It is not just hatred toward Jews, or Christians; it is hatred towards political figures or political positions. This is the pride to which scripture speaks. The only solution to our problem of hate is to begin the practice of love and charity.

This simple solution is avoided as if it is not our own personal problem. The solution seems to move with the wind and with our busy daily life. As Bob Dylan once wisely sang, “The answer my friend is blowing in the wind. The answer is blowing in the wind.”