

Reviling

By Bishop George Khodr

Killing another can be physical or moral. Insults swearwords are a form of murder. We destroy the others by crushing and suppressing them or we cancel their inner being through words. My own thinking here is that we annihilate ourselves with that and not the others. In certain phases of our anger, we desire to cancel the other; and when we find we could not do that, we blot him out of our mind or heart and we express that through spoken words or in writing.

What prevents us from coexisting with others is an inner matter of our hearts. Duality is in the heart basically, or else it would not be in a person. The consideration and acceptance of the other's existence as he is, in his mentality and behavior, as different from your own mentality and behavior, is a matter that needs much effort. Accepting the differences between you and the others means that you coexist with them despite the differences and that you admit that you are not the only one who has the truth.

We usually do not coexist with others as they are. We exist with an image we have made of they; and when that image is shaken, the coexistence is done away with. Our life as such is a "dance" of images; and that can disturb us until we manage to draw of others an image that we feel at ease with. And this view of others is subject to changes because *we* can change that "dance" or *we* consider that the other has changed his "dance".

Your inner "rhythm" (temperament) is not stable. "Rhythms" shift in some people especially if they are temperamental. And when you remain at the same "rhythm" during the day you would appear to be stable and that can vex others but it is the right condition of healthy coexistence. And often your view of others changes since your own convictions are not stable and that makes you see others as having changed while in fact you see in them the image that you wish to see or that your temperament leads you to see.

The difficulty in true coexistence is that there are different and opposite temperaments; as such there are some who follow after the truth, and there are some who follow themselves, their benefits and their pleasures. The truth cannot be on equal footing with the "I" that is closed on itself and closes others in. That is, in this world, there is one who kills and the other who is murdered or who might fall prey to others. There are those who exist through their faith and convictions and there are those who exist through the upheavals experienced in their temperaments.

Why is it that one fluctuates and another does not but remains stable? The answer is simple: there are those who believe in the solidity of truth and those who do not because they see themselves in this existence as without an ultimate reference which is the Lord who is stable and immovable in Himself. They might not know the Lord in a personal way, but they identify their inner being with truths

that are self existing and steadfast that do not sway with the utilities of this world like, social prestige, or religious sectarianism, or a political partisanship. That is there are those who stand in truth and yield themselves only to that and there are those who stand in their own emotions or self interest and pride which they think is the truth.

A person who believes that what he has of truth is what makes every other person as standing in the truth, struggles steadfastly to spread the truth to all others since he is concerned for their being in putting on the shield of salvation and the helmet of righteousness. Such a person carries the divine inspiration in him, and in order to keep himself firm in that inspiration, he struggles; and due to that those who are weak in the Faith face him with insults and the real purpose in insulting him is to kill him or to smack him and as such in reviling him they cancel him from existence though they do not accost him physically on the outside. But those who love the truth hope for the conversion of all people and for them (the people) to get to know the truth and not to stop in their fight though they would suffer. Those who have no patience in having truth spread, use their tongues to revile others and annihilate them. "The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell." (James 3: 6) And the apostle goes on speaking of the tongue: "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness."

And James continues saying that good behavior is in the meekness of wisdom and that (good behavior) seeks the other as beloved of God and you have to safeguard him in this belovedness and not annihilate yourself and him through swearwords and reviling because swearwords which come out from you only due to anger, will kill him and thus his presence in your heart will cease.

When the Lord endows you with patience, then you are in a state of waiting. All hope is a waiting since the Lord promises he would come to people; and since God moves towards you and through your hoping, He moves towards the others.

The above attitude might bring you to a state of solitude. And quietness is a state of isolation from other people. It is a meeting with God and if you love Him you prefer His friendship to that of the "angry ones" and you would be content with Him and His dwelling in you so that you would bring about that quietude to those around you.

There is no escape from the partisanship of people except in your faith that the Lord is your sufficiency and that you are His messenger to those who seek Him and those who do not. You are not alone when you take Him as your refuge. He gives you His power since you continue in His grace for you. Keep yourself in His grace. You are not in need of the favor of other people. Having faith means that you stay only in God's favor, whether people accept that or not.

But beware of making your tongue unclean. If you stay away from swearwords, you are on to nurture many virtues in yourself. A wholly pure tongue

in you is the result of you lifting away inner anger from yourself and thus you let God speak through you. Do not utter words unless you have thought about them and only to edify others. You should not be one who defends himself. You are the delegate of Truth in word and in behavior. Submit to the person who has in God's will and has helped you in your conversion. When you are in such a type of obedience, your tongue would be safeguarded from reviling and He would safeguard it from the anger of swearwords so that it (your tongue) would remain a dwelling and habitat of blessing as long as you live.