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I have a dream: Reconciliation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

The narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one mired in death and suffering, containing within its midst two mutually exclusive versions concerning the reasons and consequences of this tragedy. Moreover, both sides boast their own extremists and self-righteous preachers who fan the flames of intolerance and furious hatred. Indeed, more than any other clash in history, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a clash soaked in traumas and wounded feelings that seems to offer no hope for resolution. Throughout, commentators have observed that this was an ethnic conflict between two communities within one society or that it was a religious war, or a struggle for de-colonization. Yet, in essence, this is an anguished clash between two peoples asserting a right to the same peace. As one Israeli author put it, "In this conflict, one has to be on the side of peace... This is not a Hollywood movie with good guys and bad guys. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not a black and white film, but more like a Greek tragedy."

There is no easy answer. This paper does not seek to determine whose fault it was, or whose blindness it was that caused what the Israelis call "the situation". This paper maintains that the value that should prevail above all others, the value of life itself, is the key to solving this bitter struggle that has claimed thousands of lives over the last two and half years since the outbreak of Intifada II, and tens of thousand over the last 26. It will be pointed out that while the conflict is a political issue, there are also the moral, psychological and philosophical questions that reside within this discussion. For Israelis, the word peace is always associated with a wish, with a non-existent state of being, as if peace in the Hebrew language is a unique word. Life in a prolonged state of war has made the two nations forget the simple things.

In addition, the paper will argue that what both parties need to do is to declare that they are willing to make all the compromises that are needed to be made (as long as they are not dangerous to Israel's existence) to achieve real peace. Above all, reconciliation is constructed with tangible building blocks, a dense network of partnerships and common goals that transform destructive relationships into commercial ones.