



INACTION AND SILENCE ARE UNACCEPTABLE

The latest tragedy, the targeted, racist slaying of African Americans in Buffalo, New York has deeply wounded a close-knit community and –once again-- ripped open the wounds of the greater community of Black/African Americans. It's not as if we had healed from the executions of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery, even though their killers met with justice. It is not as if the killing of unarmed Black/African American such as Breonna Taylor, Tamir Rice, or Michael Brown, the killing of the nine at Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston, S.C., among too many others to enumerate here, were not still weighing on our souls. No. But as we've endeavored to live peacefully with all men, as much as the ability to do so lay within us, there comes --yet another-- assault on us as a people.

The intentionality and planning with which this massacre was committed is, by the definition of all the Abrahamic religions, "Evil." Likewise, the philosophy and beliefs that fueled it must also be labeled for what they are; "Evil." The ideology of White Supremacy and the conspiracy theory of "Replacement" played a documented role in this action. As such, we need to identify them for the evil that they are and that they promote.

As the "Playbook of Tragedy" is rolled out once more, politicians and officials will offer their thoughts and prayers. Various people –secular and religious—will call their Black/African American friends with condolences, and heartfelt sorrow. And because the victims are Black, people will want to know whether the Black Community will forgive this shooter, and by extension all of the pundits, politicians, talk show hosts, and religious leaders who make such actions possible by their endorsement of such theories, ideologies, and theology. Pastors and clergy, especially those of us who are Black, will struggle to help their people understand how, in 2022, these things can continue to happen to Black people; how God can allow such evil to persist. People will hold vigils and rallies. People will demand change.

Perhaps, though, something different needs to be done. To combat this great Evil, people of goodwill need to speak up. Black clergy should not be the only ones preaching against this from their pulpits. All of us who claim to be the Children of God must start naming this evil for what it is; evil. When politicians feed into this ideology to get elected, it's not politics; it's evil. Let's call it what it is. When media influencers use these theories to enlarge their audiences, it is not marketing; it is evil. When pundits use these ideologies to encourage people to vote, it's not mobilization; it's evil.

Rather than excusing those with White Supremacist Ideology and Theology; rather than making excuses for those who stoke the fear that our Jewish brothers and sisters are using Black and Brown people to "replace" them, men and women of goodwill, especially those who claim to love God, must agree to point out that this is evil and those who promulgate it are wrong. What is obvious to too many of us is that this will continue as long as we allow it. What we know is that, until people identify evil as evil, people will justify their evil as a good. What history has taught us is that "For evil to flourish it only requires good men to do nothing."

So, let's do something. Let's, at the very least, say something. For to do nothing or remain silent is unacceptable.

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