BREAKING THE CYCLE

Four Generations of Lies, the Psychology of Hatred, and the Covenant Truth That Ends the War

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PART I — NAMING WHAT HAPPENED: THE MACHINE OF MUTUAL DEHUMANIZATION

Before a wound can be healed, it must be named accurately. The conflict between Israeli Jews and Palestinians has not been sustained for 75 years simply because two peoples want the same land. Land conflicts are resolved. This one has not been resolved because both sides have been **systematically educated to see the other as subhuman.** That education — conducted in schools, in media, in political speech, in religious institutions — is the engine that turns every ceasefire into the next generation of violence. Disarm it or rebuild all you want. The machine will produce the next war.

The covenant word for this process is found in Bereshit (Genesis) 4 — it is the same word used to describe what Kayin (Cain) did before he killed Hevel (Abel). The Hebrew is **yihar (וַיִּחַר)** — it burned, it kindled. Hatred does not arise from nowhere. It is kindled — deliberately, systematically, over generations — by those who need the fire to justify what they are doing. The covenant response to that fire is not a counter-fire. It is the truth that does not burn.

THE ISRAELI SIDE: WHAT WAS TAUGHT

Israeli school textbooks have been documented to contain narratives that dehumanize Palestinian Arabs, justify or erase historical events including the Deir Yassin massacre and the Nakba (the 1948 displacement of approximately 750,000 Palestinians), and frame the indigenous Palestinian population as recent Arab immigrants with no ancient claim to the land. The Nakba — the foundational trauma of Palestinian national identity — was for decades largely absent from Israeli state curricula. Palestinian villages depopulated in 1948 were erased from Israeli maps and replaced with Hebrew names.

Israeli political and military discourse has employed language describing Palestinians as **"human animals"** (Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, October 2023), as terrorists whose children are **"little snakes,"** and as populations whose infrastructure represents a legitimate military target. The Israeli media ecosystem has, particularly since October 7, 2023, reduced 2.3 million Gazan civilians — men, women, children, grandmothers — to the abstraction of a terrorist entity. This is textbook dehumanization: remove the individual face, assign the collective identity, and the killing becomes administratively possible.

The settlement project in the West Bank has been accompanied by a religious-nationalist ideology — particularly in the Gush Emunim and later settler movement traditions — that teaches Jewish settlers that

the Palestinian families whose land they are occupying have no covenant right to it, that the Tanakh gives them this land absolutely, and that Palestinian resistance to displacement is terrorism rather than the predictable response of a family defending its home. This ideology is false by the Tanakh's own standard: **Yehezkel (Ezekiel) 47:22-23** gives the ger (sojourner) dwelling within the tribal territories a covenant inheritance alongside the native-born. **The Tanakh they claim as their authority explicitly prohibits what they are doing.**

THE PALESTINIAN SIDE: WHAT WAS TAUGHT

Palestinian Authority textbooks — reviewed most recently in the 2025-2026 academic year by the IMPACT-se research institute — continue to contain antisemitic characterizations portraying Jews as **"devil's helpers,"** liars, and bloodthirsty enemies of Islam. A 7th-grade teacher guide reportedly instructs students to visually recreate scenes of Israeli soldiers committing atrocities against Palestinian civilians. Science and mathematics exercises are designed to normalize violence. The glorification of martyrdom — the framing of suicide attacks as the highest form of patriotism — runs through multiple grade levels.

Hamas educational materials and political discourse have employed Quranic passages ripped from their historical context to characterize Jews as cosmic enemies of Islam — apes and pigs, enemies of the Prophet, a people under divine curse. This is not Quranic exegesis. It is political weaponization of scripture, using the language of religion to fuel a conflict that is, at its root, political and economic. The Quran itself — the actual text, in its proper context — commands believers to distinguish between those who fight against them and those who do not, and prohibits the collective punishment of an entire people for the acts of some among them.

Palestinian media and political rhetoric has also, particularly in the years of the Second Intifada (2000-2005), glorified attacks on Israeli civilians — buses, restaurants, schools — in language that cannot be distinguished from the language of terrorism regardless of the political context that produced it. Children who grow up watching such attacks celebrated on state television absorb a framework in which Jewish civilian lives are acceptable collateral damage. This framework was produced October 7. And October 7 produces the next Gaza.

PART II — THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE OF SUSTAINED HATRED

Academic research on intractable ethnonational conflicts — including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict specifically — has identified a consistent psychological architecture that sustains violence across generations even when political conditions might otherwise allow resolution. Understanding this architecture is the prerequisite for dismantling it.

MECHANISM 1: VICTIMHOOD COMPETITION

Both Israeli and Palestinian national identities are organized, in significant measure, around historical trauma: the Holocaust and two thousand years of antisemitic persecution on the Israeli side; the Nakba, seventy-five years of occupation, and systematic dispossession on the Palestinian side. When two groups both define their primary identity through victimhood, **any acknowledgment of the other's suffering is experienced as a threat to one's own.** Israeli acknowledgment of the Nakba feels, to many Israelis, like

a concession that delegitimizes the state. Palestinian acknowledgment of the Holocaust's centrality to Israeli trauma feels, to many Palestinians, like it justifies the dispossession that followed. Both sides protect their wound by denying the other's. Both sides are wrong, and both sides are understandable. The covenant does not ask you to minimize your wound. It asks you to see that your brother carries one too.

MECHANISM 2: THE IN-GROUP PURITY DYNAMIC

Sustained conflict produces in-group purity dynamics: anyone within your community who expresses sympathy for the other side is traitor, collaborator, or self-hater. Israeli Jewish voices who speak out against the occupation are called self-hating Jews. Palestinian voices who advocate for reconciliation with Israeli civilians are called collaborators. This dynamic **systematically silences the peacemakers on both sides** and amplifies the voices of those with the most to gain from the continuation of conflict — arms manufacturers, ethno-nationalist politicians, extremist religious movements, and diaspora fundraisers whose power depends on the war continuing.

MECHANISM 3: COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT LOGIC

Both sides have adopted, in different forms, the logic of collective punishment: the idea that every member of the other group is responsible for the acts of some among them. This logic — which the Tanakh explicitly prohibits (Devarim/Deuteronomy 24:16: **"Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; each person shall be put to death for his own sin"**) — is the psychological mechanism that justifies the killing of Palestinian civilians as collateral damage in a war against Hamas, and justifies the killing of Israeli civilians as legitimate resistance against Israeli military policy. Both applications are covenant violations. Both produce cycles of retaliation that outlast every ceasefire.

MECHANISM 4: THE CONTACT HYPOTHESIS FAILURE

Research on intergroup conflict consistently shows that personal contact between members of opposing groups — particularly contact under conditions of equal status, cooperative activity, and institutional support — is the most powerful predictor of reduced prejudice and increased support for conflict resolution. A survey in mixed neighborhoods in Israel found that **Jewish and Palestinian Israelis who interact frequently and positively show significantly higher support for contested conflict-resolution proposals** than those who live in separation. The separation wall, the settlement system, the checkpoint infrastructure, and the blockade of Gaza are not just political and military instruments. <u>They are **hatred-maintenance machines** — they prevent the contact that would, over time, allow the humanity of the other to become visible</u>.

PART III — THE COVENANT DIAGNOSIS: WHY POLITICAL SOLUTIONS ALONE CANNOT WORK

> **"If you return to me, I will return to you — you have planted wickedness, you have reaped evil, you have eaten the fruit of deception. Because you have trusted in your own ways and in your many warriors, the roar of battle will rise against your people, and all your fortresses will be laid waste." — Hoshea (Hosea) 10:12-14**

Hoshea (Hosea) identifies the precise mechanism: **"you have eaten the fruit of deception."** Deception — the false narrative about who the other is — is both the cause of the violence and the food that sustains it. Every political solution that is built on top of the deception, rather than replacing it with truth, produces the next generation of the same violence.

The Oslo Accords of 1993 did not address the curriculum in Israeli or Palestinian schools. They managed governance structures and territorial handoffs. The children who were in grade school when Oslo was signed are now the soldiers and militants of the current war. Their textbooks told them the other side was subhuman. Oslo told them the other side was an administrative counterpart. The textbooks won.

The Board of Peace's reconstruction plan does not address the curriculum in Israeli or Palestinian schools. It manages infrastructure and economic zones. If the children who survive the current war are educated in the same dehumanizing frameworks, the $70 billion reconstruction will produce the same result as Oslo: a generation of infrastructure followed by a generation of war.

PART IV — THE COVENANT SOLUTION: WHAT TRUTH-TELLING ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE

"Come, let us reason together, says Yahweh: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." — Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 1:18

STEP 1 — INTRODUCE THE GENETIC RECORD INTO BOTH CURRICULA SIMULTANEOUSLY

Eight peer-reviewed genetic studies confirm that Israeli Jews and Palestinians share 70-87% of their Y-chromosome ancestry in the same pool, and that Palestinians carry the genome-wide ancestry of the Bronze Age Levantine population — the same population the Israelite tribes descended from. Ben-Gurion himself called the Palestinian fellahin (agricultural families) the descendants of Hebrew farmers who never left the land.

This is not a Palestinian argument. It is a scientific finding from institutions with no stake in Palestinian liberation. Introducing it into both Israeli and Palestinian educational curricula — simultaneously, as the **scientific basis for the shared identity of both peoples** — does something no political agreement can do: it gives every child in both communities a factual reason to see the child next to them as kin. You cannot sustainably hate your cousin once you know you are cousins. **The truth is the disarmament.**

STEP 2 — MUTUAL NAKBA AND HOLOCAUST ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Both traumatic histories must be taught in both curricula — not as competing victimhoods but as a shared tragedy of what happens when a covenant family does not know it is a family and allows external political forces to weaponize their mutual grief into a war. Israeli schools must teach the Nakba as documented history — 750,000 Palestinians displaced, 400+ villages depopulated, a foundational wound that the people living under Israeli governance carry. Palestinian schools must teach the Holocaust as documented history — six million Jewish people murdered by European antisemitism, a trauma that drove desperate people to a land that already had a people, with catastrophic consequences for both.

The covenant word for this simultaneous acknowledgment is vidui (confession) — the practice in the Tanakh of speaking the truth about what was done, to whom, and why. You cannot build a covenant community on a foundation of denied history. The Yovel (Jubilee) principle of Vayikra (Leviticus) 25 requires **a return to the original state — the state before the dispossession.** That return begins with naming the dispossession for what it was.

STEP 3 — STRUCTURED INTERGROUP CONTACT PROGRAM

The contact hypothesis is among the most replicated findings in social psychology. Its conditions are: equal status between the groups in the contact situation; common goals; intergroup cooperation; and institutional support. A covenant intergroup contact program — structured, funded by the Board of Peace reconstruction budget, built into school curricula from grade 3 onward — would bring Israeli Jewish and Palestinian Arab children together in cooperative educational environments designed around the shared genetic and historical discovery. Not **"here are your enemies, make peace with them."** But: "here is your cousin. You share 82% of your Y-chromosome ancestry. Here is the village his grandfather and your grandfather both remember. What are you going to build together?"

STEP 4 — COVENANT MEDIA STANDARDS

The Board of Peace should condition reconstruction funding on the adoption of media standards prohibiting the dehumanization of either community. Specific covenant standards, drawn from the Tanakh:

Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:16: "You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people." Political speech and media that characterize the other community as subhuman, as animals, as cosmic enemies, or as legitimate targets for collective punishment violates this standard — regardless of which community's media is doing it.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:16-19: False witnesses — those who fabricate testimony to incite violence against their neighbor — shall receive the punishment they intended for their target. The standard of truth in testimony applies to journalists, politicians, religious leaders, and educators who fabricate or grossly distort the record to incite violence.

STEP 5 — THE COVENANT CONSTITUTION AS THE SHARED FOUNDATION

Ultimately, the hatred between Israeli Jews and Palestinians cannot be permanently resolved by curricula, contact programs, or media standards alone. It requires a **constitutional framework** that gives both communities a shared legal identity — one that is grounded neither in Jewish ethnic supremacy nor in Palestinian national grievance, but in the covenant record that predates both modern nationalisms and to which both communities have a claim.

The Covenant Constitution of the 12 Tribes of Yisra'el (Israel), transmitted as a companion document to this study, provides that framework as an example. It is a constitution under which a Jewish family from Yehudah (Judah) and a Palestinian family from the same hills can both be citizens with equal standing, both be descendants of the same covenant bloodline, and both be protected by the same covenant law. That shared constitutional identity — rooted in the Tanakh, confirmed by the genetic record, and built on the **Yehezkel (Ezekiel) 47-48** territorial framework — is the only foundation that does not produce the next war.

CLOSING — THE COVENANT WORD ON THE HEALING OF THE BREACH

"Behold, I will send you Eliyahu (Elijah) the prophet before the great and awesome day of Yahweh comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers." **— Malakhi (Malachi) 4:5-6**

Malakhi (Malachi) closes the entire Tanakh with a covenant promise: the turning of hearts. Not the imposition of a political settlement. Not the victory of one side over the other. The **turning of hearts — fathers to children, children to fathers.** The restoration of the family bond that the conflict severed. The recognition that the face across the checkpoint, across the settlement wall, across the interrogation room's glass partition — is the face of a cousin. A member of the same ancient family. A bearer of the same ancient blood.

That turning is the covenant solution. Every curriculum change, every contact program, every media standard, every constitutional provision is in service of that turning. The Board of Peace has the resources to build infrastructure. The covenant has the truth to restore a family. We are asking the Board to use both.