

## *The Cycle of Conferences – The Geneva Accord*

### *A Spirit of Compromise*

Recent developments in the Middle East, following the election of Hamas and the election results in Israel have brought further uncertainty with a heightened sense of crisis. However, it's possible that the present situation, from a spiritual perspective, may be "an experimental period of discovery...where people, in their relationships, will discover exactly what they are..."<sup>1</sup> Life itself, whether we know it or not, is a process of discovery where, through trial and error, we gain greater understanding. The whole process of discovery may be considered as being a series of opportunities to discover what we really are, although we may not take those opportunities when they are presented. Then there will be delay, but the journey still goes on. This is a process of discovery which applies to, individuals, communities and nations and can be observed in the great sweep of history.

The Middle East is of immense importance to humanity's spiritual future and for this reason the focus of the group mind has been placed on the Geneva Accord. To recap, "the Accord is unique in that it seeks to mobilise the power of public opinion by directly enlisting the support of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples rather than relying solely on government channels. It rises above arguments of the past and focuses on the vision of a settlement based upon spiritual principles and mutual respect".

At the present time an accord, or agreement, seems a long way off with positions polarised. However, the reality is that an agreement must *eventually* be reached because, according to an editorial in the Lebanon Daily Star, "*Both the Israeli and Palestinian publics are tired of nearly 60 years of war and long for peace, but an end to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will not come through unilateral actions. Peace will only come with a bilateral process that recognises the rights and aspirations of both peoples*".<sup>2</sup>

What will help tip the balance towards an agreement? As we have seen from the Northern Ireland peace process the terrible pain and suffering involved in conflict over many years inevitably brings about "crisis points" which are a kind of forcing process leading ultimately to light at the end of a long dark tunnel. The struggle from darkness to light is essentially one of conflict between opposing forces whether for the individual, the community or the nation.

Signs of the emergence of light are discussed in an article by David Levy, who was the lead Israeli drafter of the Geneva Initiative. In an article titled *Visions of Israel After the Conflict*, he writes:

*The election results partly suggest that further territorial evacuation has been pocketed as a given, but they also reflect socioeconomic concerns and an element of escapism. Israeli society is not yet in a post conflict place, but it might be looking more soberly, willingly, and resignedly at the steps necessary to get there...[and] In his victory speech, [Ehud] Olmert reached out to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and described a negotiated peace agreement as "Israel's best and most stable alternative," mentioning unilateralism only as a fallback. Abbas has long advocated peace negotiations, but he and Hamas are in a cohabitation government, and despite some moderate noises from their internal leadership and their adherence to a ceasefire, Hamas is still some ways away from climbing onboard the permanent and unequivocal nonviolence train of the Irish Republican Army and the ETA. Combine this with a suspicion that Israel may*

*want to maintain some territorial and other aspects of the occupation, and many suggest that unilateralism will be the preferred Olmert policy. This may be an accurate reading of intentions, but it would be a wrong-headed policy. An approach that consists only of barriers, separation, and unilateralism cannot deliver ongoing quiet.*<sup>3</sup>

The peoples of the Middle East, as part of the world community, ultimately have to find that middle way which will bring about a solution for the common good. Such a solution involves compromise but this is not the kind of compromise which is the most expedient; it is “*the art of spiritual compromise*” which develops when the pain of conflict gives way to mutual co-operation. This is an *art* which is intensely difficult to master because it is sounded by the voice of the higher Self which communicates to mind and brain that clear thinking, loving and intelligent understanding which *negates fanaticism*. This kind of spiritual compromise is required, not only in the Middle East, but in conflict situations all over the world; however, the Middle East conflict being constantly under the media spotlight symbolises the struggle and conflict for all humanity. Yet, this constant attention also gives cause for encouragement for it is not until a problem is brought out into the open that it can be dealt with.

Spiritual compromise follows upon a balanced appraisal weighing up all points of view and all sides of the argument. With a spirit of compromise the past cannot determine the future. There may be complex reasons for fanaticism on all sides but the fanatic cannot be allowed to succeed because the fanatic has no vision other than his own; and “where there is no vision the people perish”. Those who are blessed with the spirit of compromise see through a wide angled lens – they see a more universal picture. The way of mutual co-operation is, in the last analysis, the only way forward in an interdependent world.

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1. Problems of Humanity, Alice Bailey. P. 27-28
2. Editorial: Lebanon Daily Star
3. [www.geneva-accord.org](http://www.geneva-accord.org)