

## Clash of Civilizations?

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There is much talk these days about a “Clash of Civilization” between the Western and Islamic worlds, and real differences between the Jewish and the Arab cultures. This is nothing but pure propaganda folks.

It is enough to take a quick look at the incredible sophistication, technology, and high minded tolerance of the Islamic Empire at its zenith to realize that there is and never has been any such thing as a “Clash of Civilizations.” But there is, and has always been, a clash of ignorant egos with low levels of consciousness.

As for real differences between Jewish and Arab cultures, based on my familiarity with both of these as well as several other cultures, I must confess the only differences I see among peoples and cultures are differences in levels of consciousness and maturity.

I have witnessed high and low levels of consciousness among all groups, but because of our suffering and wandering, Jews are expected to be wiser and are held to a much higher standard.

Many Jews judge non-Jews solely on the basis of religion and still expect to be respected and loved by non-Jews—how could this be? I know some Jews who refuse even to be in the same room with their daughter’s boyfriend or their son’s girlfriend simply because he or she is not Jewish!

The bottom-line is: As we sow, so shall we reap. Jews are at the forefront of the alchemical transformation of human consciousness. Therefore, as Jews, we must be the change we seek to bring to the world. We must stop hiding behind the tragedy of the Holocaust and take a really good look at how we have

separated ourselves from non-Jews and what xenophobic nonsense some of our so-called “holy books” and the Halakhah contain. Only by doing so can we truly honor the memory of those who died at the hands of the Nazis as well as all other Jews and non-Jews who were tortured and killed because of their faith throughout the centuries.

The only solution to divisiveness among the human family is the deliberate effort to raise the individuals' level of consciousness. On the group level, we can begin by fostering of mutual recognition and respect and the cultivation of a unity-in-diversity mentality where no group claims any superiority over any other in any shape or form.