

CHOOSING SIDES

by Rabbi Pinchas Winston

At that time, all the earth spoke one language, and was united in speech. As they journeyed from the east, they found a valley in the land of Shinar, and settled there ... Then they said, "Let's build a city, with a tower whose top will reach into Heaven." (Bereishis 11:1-4)

Some things never change. Since man first left the Garden of Eden, he has developed a nasty practice of cutting off his nose to spite his face. It is simply amazing how much long-term damage people are prepared to cause themselves in order to reap some short-term benefit, and they are doing so today as much as ever before.

The question is, are they consciously aware that they are doing it? If yes, then they are liable. If not, then the degree of liability may be greatly reduced, but not completely, for like most people, they probably choose not to take advantage of opportunities to become more aware of who they are and how they live their lives, hoping instead that ignorance is the same as innocence.

It is not. If this week's parshah teaches us anything at all, it is just the opposite, or close to it, since everyone involved in the building of the Tower of Babel was punished, even the people who contributed just to build a very tall tower, and not to challenge God. This should (but won't) serve as a warning for anyone who shares Professor Steven Hawking's belief and outlook about God's role, or lack thereof, in the Creation process.

But, why use all of that God-given genius to remove God from the picture when just as much can be accomplished, if not more, by not dealing with the God issue? Removing God from the Creation-equation is spiritually-reckless, and it certainly does not make the math any more valid than if He remains in it. Indeed, if anything, a Godless world weakens the overall equation of existence, as the people of Babel eventually found out the hard way, and more than likely, we will too.

Often, you will find, perhaps very deep down, after you strip away all the genius and professionalism, that the God-challenger harbors some kind of anger and resentment towards God, perhaps for something negative that has happened in his life which he feels was unjustified (in Hawking's case, given his health situation, this is not hard to understand). Using his theories to 'disprove' God is often a way of 'getting back at Him,' or at least a way of venting resentment, while at the same time randomizing his experience to neutralize the agonizing question of, "Why me?"

After all, how can one study our universe, no matter how big it is, and conclude that he understands enough to deal God out of the game? It's like an art analyst drawing final conclusions about the

entire world of art from the paintings of a single gallery: no matter how clever and talented the analyst is, there are so many other galleries he has yet to even discover! But, that is the risk people take when they are in need of a desired outcome.

Sometimes the attack against God is not so direct. Instead of challenging God directly, as Nimrod and his cronies did in their time, it is only a war against truth. They falsify facts to suit their needs and desires, and they consciously choose to ignore inconvenient truths that rock their psychological boats. But, like a king who feels attacked when his nobles are attacked, God takes it personally when His truths are trampled.

An example of this was in last week's Internet edition of CNN.

Imagine seeing a picture in a newspaper of hardened criminals playing soccer with the caption, "No Real Place To Play." Would you feel sympathy, or anger? Would you decide to fight for the right of the criminals to play soccer in a regular league like everyone else, or become disgusted that the article even suggested that they be treated the same way as well-behaved citizens?

Yet, CNN did the exact same thing about three weeks ago, when it showed Palestinians playing soccer next to the wall designed to keep them from sneaking into Israel and murdering innocent Jewish civilians. The article chose to ignore the fact that all of them, if asked, "Would you prefer to see the Israeli state wiped off the face of the earth?" would answer yes, and would probably participate in the bloody attack without hesitation.

"But," the Leftist would argue, "that is because of how they have been mistreated by the Israelis!"

Inconveniently for the Leftist, history does not concur. For, polls have been conducted, some by Arabs themselves, that show how the hatred of Arabs for Jews and the Jewish State would continue (and probably even intensify), even if all of their demands would be met (A State Beyond The Pale; Robin Shepherd). Indeed, even though Gaza was given over to the Arabs, they quickly turned into a breeding ground for terrorists and a base to attack Israeli cities.

But, instead, the anti-Israel proponents, including Jews like Goldstein, continue to blame Israel for all of the Palestinian problems, regardless of who created them.

What's my point? My point is that before we simply read this week's parshah and move onto Lech-Lecha, we should really take stock of what the Tower of Babel meant in its time, so that we can appreciate what it means in our time, which is a lot more than people think. How many people even give it a second thought?

Hence, this is why so many people are repeating history in such a dramatic and destructive manner. We're living in a world right now in which what is different is considered comparable, and what is

comparable is considered different. Nazi treatment of the Jews is compared today to Jewish treatment of the Palestinians, when they are in fact worlds apart for so many reasons. But, the West's treatment of Israel, which is a modern-day version of ancient blood-libels is seen as a heroic attempt to subdue an 'oppressive' Israeli force while liberating its Palestinian 'captives.'

Rashi, on Chumash, explains that when the nations of the world challenge the Jewish people, they in fact challenge God. They would like to think that they are doing it on behalf of God, with His full support. For example, the Crusades sought to liberate Jerusalem on behalf of God, just as the Arabs do so today on behalf of their version of God as well, each of them ruthlessly murdering innocent victims along their way.

However, checking it out, it is clear that in each case, the truth had to be distorted to justify the wars that they waged. In retrospect, there is nothing to be proud about the Crusades. Rather, they were simply brutal and barbarous attacks on millions of innocent people who wanted nothing more than to survive from day-to-day through the work of their own hands.

Likewise, today, the Muslim religion is the biggest imposition on the world in the history of mankind. The demands its adherents make on others, the threat they have created around the world, and the countless deaths they have perpetrated in the name of Islam is staggering, and they have only just begun. For, like the Nazis during the 1930s, and with whom they collaborated, the Muslim world has been quietly building towards world domination, doing whatever they feel is necessary against any non-Muslim to accomplish their long-term goal of a completely Muslim world.

But cross them in any way, and they respond with anything from death threats to actual execution.

And, they routinely distort the truth with the blessing of the Koran, as do others who take up their cause. Therefore, like other crusading religions before them, their belief system, at least the fanatical side of it is an affront to truth, as so much literature recently has tried to make clear. Therefore, though they claim to fight on behalf of God, they are really fighting against Him, by living a life of denial.

In the book, "A State Beyond The Pale," Robin Shepherd does a thorough job of showing how the West's war against Israel is just a function of the same way of thinking. Their support of the Arab world against the Jewish people, and specifically against the State of Israel, is just a function of their greater desire to have the world their way, as was the case with Nimrod and the tower-builders of his time. And, when people like Avraham Avinu stand in their way, representing God's truth, then they are targeted for extermination.

Likewise, the Jewish people have always been the bearers of the Torah, the word of God. Yes, we make plenty of mistakes and yes, we have been subject to corruption like the rest of the nations. However, for the most part, the nation has maintained a certain level of moral integrity, and we certainly have never been marauders driven by an imperialistic desire to rule the world.

Even the modern state, in spite of its secular bent, was voted into existence in 1948, and immediately tried to make peace with the Arabs who were stuck on destroying every last Jew living on the land. In fact, not one war since, and there have been many, has been initiated by the Jewish people, being in defense against an Arab attack. And, any land that has been annexed, such as the West Bank, has been the consequence of such Arab-perpetrated wars.

As Mr. Shepherd points out, it is simply mind-boggling what scholars and intellectuals have been prepared to falsify or distort, just to maintain their attack on the Israeli state. So, even if the government remains secular, and they do not see themselves as fighting on behalf of God or His Torah, they still represent certain fundamental truths, and fighting against them becomes a war against God as well.

Anytime someone fights against truth, they fight against God. It can be on the level of the individual, a nation, or even international, but the result is the same: a challenge to God. As such, though God does not get intimidated by such challenges, He does become disgusted by them, and as in the case of the generation of the tower, He takes action against the challengers.

God descended to see the city and the tower that the people had made. God said, "They are one nation with one language, and they do this! Now nothing will be stop them from what they set out to do. Come, let us go down and confound their language, so that one person will not be able to understand the language of the other." (Bereishis 11:5-7)

And, He will do so again in our day as well. First, He will allow the Muslim world to wreak their havoc on the West, to teach the West a lesson about the making of unholy alliances, especially against His people. And then, He will end off history with the War of Gog and Magog, to reveal and then overcome all the liars of history, those who dared to look Truth in the face and mock it.

Judging by the pace at which events are occurring in that direction, I would say that it is a good time to choose sides, and to make sure that the one you choose is the one that the God Himself endorses.

Text

Copyright © by [Rabbi Pinchas Winston](#) and Project Genesis, Inc.

Rabbi Winston has authored many books on Jewish philosophy (Hashkofa). If you enjoy Rabbi Winston's Perceptions on the Parsha, you may enjoy his books. Visit Rabbi Winston's [online book store](#) for more details! www.thirtysix.org