

NOACH (GENESIS 6:9-11:32)

Nimro-bama Dialogues

2009 · Rabbi Yerachmiel Sepowitz

The following message is one of the most controversial ones I have ever written. As you will read in my follow-up below, I had originally decided to delete this article. I have changed my mind. However, I will try to avoid writing articles of this nature in the future. Although I stand by what I wrote (which is why I decided not to delete it), articles of this nature do not serve the purpose of this website. **I have left the original article intact. After the article, you will see the responses I received, pro and con. I have deleted the last names and addresses of the senders.“Nimro-bama”

DISCLAIMER: I USUALLY try to avoid politics in these articles. I usually succeed. Sometimes I don't. This week, I'm not even going to try. Depending upon your political point of view, you may opt to skip this week. Or, unlike the subject(s) of my article, you may decide to be open-minded enough to look at another perspective.

Y.S.

233 years ago, G-d gave a great gift to the world. It is called America.

4,112 years ago, G-d gave another gift to the world. It is called life.

In spite of the fact that the world was corrupt and deserved to be annihilated, G-d displayed compassion toward the human race and allowed Noah and his family to survive. Had He not done that, you and I wouldn't be here to talk about it.

Humanity should have appreciated the favor. Instead, they rebelled:

The entire earth had one language with uniform words...They said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the sky. Let us make a name for ourselves, so that we will not be scattered all over the face of the earth.” (Genesis, 11:1, 4)

Various commentaries offer different opinions as to the exact purpose of this tower. All agree that it was an act of rebellion. Some say they wanted to worship idols on top of the tower. Others say they wanted to wage war against G-d. Yet others see the tower as a means of either preventing another flood, or providing high ground as a protection against a flood.

The K'sav Sofer offers an interesting approach:

King Nimrod (more about him later) and his followers were looking to create a New World Order. There was to be a central world government, controlled from the tower. The goal was that the tower should be so high that it could be seen from everywhere. The tower was to be the source of instruction for all the world to follow.

Why was it so important that the entire world be organized under the leadership of this single world government? They remembered G-d's promise:

"I will confirm My covenant with you – Never again will all life be cut short by the waters of the flood, and never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." (Ibid, 9:11)

They knew that G-d could punish individuals. But they also knew that G-d had promised to never again destroy **all** life. Therefore, it was essential that the world rebel in unanimity. As long as the ENTIRE population of the earth was united in rejecting G-d, He would be powerless—or so they reasoned—to punish them.

Therefore, "...Let us make a name for ourselves, so that we will not be scattered all over the face of the earth."

If they were scattered, Nimrod would not be able to control the actions of the entire world. A few people might remain devoted to G-d. If that would happen, G-d would be able to single out the sinners and punish them. But if we were ALL sinners, every single one of us, G-d would be stuck in His promise not to destroy the whole world.

In spite of Nimrod's efforts at world domination, his plan was not universally accepted.

Noah was the tenth generation of the human race. The tenth generation after the Flood was a trouble maker by the name of Abram. (later known as Abraham.) Abram saw things a little differently than the proponents of the dominant culture.

That could not be tolerated. Abram, who had no children, was ridiculed. "He's a sterile mule," they said. (General rule: if you can't argue intelligently in defense of your position, insult, and thereby silence, your opponent.)

Abram was in his forties at the time. But he already had a history of opposition to the Administration.

Nimrod (literal translation of his name = "Let us rebel.") didn't like Abram's attitude. Nimrod was, by his own description, a god. He declared himself god of the sun and all of nature.

Young Abram had the audacity to challenge Nimrod's claim of being a god:

"Since you rule the sun, could you please tell it to rise in the west tomorrow instead of the east? Or, being a god, perhaps you can tell me what I am thinking right now."

Nimrod was very unhappy with Abram's challenges. Abram needed to be discredited. The "thought police" threw him into prison.

Eventually, Abram was given a choice – "Worship idols or we will throw you into a furnace."

Abram, a young boy of 13 (see Bava Basra 91a and Maharsha ibid) was a man of principle; he was willing to die for his beliefs. They threw him into a crematorium where he spent the next three days being waited on by angels. Miraculously, he emerged unscathed.

Abram's brother Haran was a pragmatic fellow. He was asked to decide whether he was with Abram or with Nimrod. Haran was not willing to go out on a limb. He didn't want to take the risk of being seen as thinking differently than Society. On the other hand, what if Abram was right??! He decided to reserve judgment until after Abram's auto-da-fé.

Once he saw that Abram was saved by a miracle, he felt safe choosing sides. "I'm with Abe," he said. Now it was Haran's turn to enter the furnace. The result? TOAST!!

Society was uncomfortable with Abram's "Inconvenient Truths." He said things that challenged their beliefs. He contradicted Nimrod's plans of absolute sovereignty. He dared to accuse the "Great Leader" of being, well, merely mortal. Therefore, he had to be silenced.

Last November, the people of America displayed the "Audacity of Hope" and voted for "Change." As the bumper stickers ask, "How's that 'Hopesy-Changey' workin' out for you?"

I am not an economist, so I won't talk about what he's done to the economy. I'm not a doctor, so I'm not going to talk about the mess he wants to make of health care. I'm not a military strategist, so I'm not going to talk about his unwillingness to listen to the advice of his own generals.

I am, however, an American, and I am appalled (but not surprised) by his penchant for blaming America first and apologizing for American leadership in the world. I am disappointed (but again, not surprised) by his willingness to engage America's enemies all over the world while ostracizing loyal Americans and allies who happen to disagree with his agenda.

In Nimrod's Babylon, everyone had to think the same and support the Tower project. If you didn't, you needed to be silenced.

In Obama's America, there is no room for independent thought. Try to challenge the orthodoxy (you should pardon the expression!) of global warming, and you'll be ridiculed. This in spite of the fact that many scientific experts reject it outright as a hoax, with many more seeing it as at least debatable. Unfortunately, there is no room for debate.

The candidate who promised us transparency repeatedly breaks that promise. Why will the American people not be given the opportunity to read the drafts of the health care reform bills that are being discussed and voted on? Why are members of the House and Senate being bullied by their leadership to support legislation that their constituents don't want?

Why, in a land that celebrates free speech, do the President's henchmen dismiss the legitimacy of news organizations that have the unmitigated gall to present a viewpoint different than his, and encourage other news organizations to do the same? Why, in America, can the political and media powers that be get away with depriving an American of his right to purchase a football team just because they don't like his political opinions? Why, in America, do we tolerate public schools that indoctrinate young children with songs that sing the praises of our Dear Leader?

If you are a banker or a Wall Street investor or an auto maker or a doctor or an insurance company or Joe-the-Plumber or anyone else in the public eye, you had better get your policies in line with those of the Administration, or you're going to find yourself on an Enemies List. (It's a good thing I don't have more readers! :-))

Nimrod and his thugs tried to control the way society thought. There was no room for dissent.

G-d had a solution to the problem.

Unity is fine, but single thought (and single payer!!) is dangerous. G-d "mixed it up." He confounded their language. The tower builders could no longer communicate. Nimrod's plans for world government fell apart.

They no longer spoke the same. More importantly, they no longer thought the same. Debate is healthy. Different political points of view are part of what makes our country great. We should not apologize for America; if anything, we should apologize for what we are doing to America.

May G-d continue to bless America, and save us from ourselves.

Have a great Shabbos.

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