

Politics & Mysticism in the Weekly Torah Portion

Parshat (Portion) Lekh L'ka

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Shalom & welcome all.

This week's Torah portion is called Lekh L'kha (Genesis 12:1-17:27).

This week...

** Abram, the Role Model Libertarian!*

** The Necessary Cost of Being Righteous in an Unrighteous Land.*

** Fighting Battles, When to Fight, the Cost of Victory!*

** Melchizedek and the Enochian version of his "virgin" birth, really?*

Online: The Life and Teachings of Avram Avinu (the Patriarch Abraham),
Role Model of the Mystic Scholar Warrior. **8 Individual MP3 lessons**

Genesis 12 begins with God's call to Abram to leave the land of his birth and to travel to a non-designated destination. God promises to bless all those who bless Abram, and to curse all those who curse him. To this day we find this blessing and curse fulfilled in Israel, the rightful heirs of those who walk Abram's path.

Rightfully, we too bless those who bless us, and curse those who curse us. And like Abram, we should never be so emasculated to think that blessings and curses are expressions of mere words. No! We bless and curse with our deeds and actions. Friends and family receive our all. Foes and enemies receive our disdain! This is the proper path of Heaven, for there is a time and a purpose for all things under Heaven.

We applaud Abram, the man of faith, who believes in God's design, and is willing to sacrifice what he has, for a promise of something better. Yet, the scriptural account of Abram, seems to the casual reader, as if he is coming into the middle of a story. Who or what is Abram, why is he so favored by God? There is clearly more to his story than the scriptural narrative relates. Since Biblical times, the peripheral details about Abram have been recorded in numerous literature. With these, we can properly understand Abram, the man, and see why indeed he is not only the father of many nations, but also the father and role model of freedom and faith!

Oral Torah teachings portray Abram as an outspoken social/political activist in his homeland. In prophetic, iconoclastic fashion, Abram attacked all the "sacred cows" of his peers, paying no mind as to whom he might offend. Abram's intent was that truth, freedom and the rights of the individual should reign supreme, and there is no greater truth than freedom!

Abram was no stranger to controversy nor confrontation. He willingly provoked public debates about religion and spirituality, challenging the accepted "sacred" belief structures. Now, here is where Abram rose above the rest, while he was clearly willing to smash the icons of mind-enslaving religion, we have absolutely no record of him, with regards to these events, ever becoming violent with his fellow human beings. We know from the scriptural record that

Abram was indeed a mighty warrior, as the wars with Chedorlaomer king of Elam, recorded in Genesis 14, prove. Nevertheless, Abram's violence in his homeland was leveled exclusively at images, icons and ideas. He never physically attacked the individuals who embraced them.

Like Shaolin warriors of a future time, Abram was ready and able to fight, but he recognized that the true battle is the inner struggle against the enslavement of the mind. Thus Abram attacked the icons of such enslavement to promote his universal message of freedom and human liberty.

Abram's outreach in his homeland was not welcomed or successful. While he did raise an army of like-minded souls who followed in his path, nevertheless, the mindless masses continued their mindless embrace of slavery to their false gods of government and its leaders.

For his efforts, Abram's peers put him on trial him for treason against the government, and for disturbing the social order. He was sentenced to death and thrown into a pit of fire. Legend tells us how he was miraculously saved from the flames by miraculous Divine intervention. This extra-Biblical story foreshadows the later story in the Book of Daniel (3), where in this same country, now called Babylon, three faithful sons of Israel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were also tried and found guilty for the same crime, as was Abram. They too were cast into a fire and were miraculously saved. Only with this later event, unlike Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon himself acknowledged the great power of God.

After the ordeal of fire, God revealed to Abram a profound revelation of eternal truth. Once a society has become so corrupt that it cannot be changed for the better from the inside, it is time for the righteous to leave that society, and find a distant and better place to begin anew. This is where our Biblical story picks up at the beginning of Genesis 12.

The old was given every chance, and the old was not capable of necessary change. Freedom and truth cannot blossom in the old that continually seeks to pervert them and deny them. The only option then is to take freedom and truth to another place, removed as much as possible from the corrupt old way, to start anew, as best as one can. Abram at this time was no young man. He was already 75 years old. This again goes to show us, that it is never too late to start again. It is never too late to make a stand for freedom and truth.

Oral Torah legend tells us that Abram was not thrown into the fire alone. Alongside him was his brother Haran, father of wife Sarai, and Lot. Haran did not survive. Apparently, he did not share his brother's resolve and stubborn faith, and thus did not share in his brother's miracle. Legends be as they may, we learn from this a valuable lesson. Not everyone who goes through the fire goes through unscathed. Many who stand up for what is right do in the end suffer and lose. Standing up for what is right is not done for the sake of miraculous salvations and ultimate vindication. Standing up for what is right is done simply because it is what is right, no matter the cost, and no matter the sacrifice.

Abram is the role model for the true public voice of moral conscience, who proclaims liberty. He not only talks about it, he demands it, regardless the price to one's person. Abram's call was not for government to reform, but for people to repent. When the individual is transformed, then the individual changes the structure of government to properly reflect the spirit of righteousness, self-reliance, freedom, and personal liberty.

Today, we have no Abrams, so today we see the continual hemorrhaging of our individual freedoms and rights. Like in the days of Nimrod, our rights will be subtly stripped away from us until not only we have none left. And we are so oblivious and distracted that we will not even notice or care that they are gone. We won't even miss them because we are all being brainwashed into becoming slaves. We accept an intolerable system and say "what can we really do"? Abram would never have thought this way. Abram would have found a way, any way! That is why he and those who walk his path are today the one's blessed by God!

We tolerate injustice to our persons, and in our societies. We sit back and "turn the other cheek." Abram was not the kind to turn the other cheek. You slapped his face, he slapped you back twice as hard, and he did not care if the one he slapped was a government official, or an officer of law enforcement. When one needs to stand up for their rights, one does so with full vigor and strength. One challenges a corrupt system, regardless of the personal cost. Granted, we do not literally go around slapping others, this is most dishonorable and unwise. But when others slap us with "the system," we must rise up and make all the noise that we can to fight back.

One who is silent in moments when speaking out is necessary, will find that they also are far too noisy at moments when silence is required. Meditation and bonding with God requires inner silence. Standing up for what is right requires external noise, and a lot of it. One who lacks in one area is sure to lack in the other.

The war against evil is fought in the prayer closet, but it is won in the streets. Unless one is willing to stand up against modern oppression, and be willing to sacrifice, like Abram did, we will never learn what it means to be blessed by God, like Abram did. Only those who walk the path of Abram can rightfully be called his children. Flesh and blood mean little. Faith and righteousness mean a lot!

For a time Abram was forced to leave the promised land that he was guided to, and temporarily migrated to Egypt, which at the time was a significant cosmopolitan center of culture and ancient science. Josephus (Antiquities 1,8,2) records how Abram engaged in dialogue with the local priests of the Egyptian cults introducing them to both mathematics and astronomy/astrology. While the scientific and mystical teachings of ancient Egypt and Babylon can be seen to overlap, not many in modern times would have guessed that the connection between these two great ancient civilizations was none other than Abram, the founder of what was to become a newer, greater civilization.

And now to switch topics to investigate a strange scriptural reference. Genesis 14:18-20 makes an interesting reference to one Melchizedek, King of Salem, who comes out to offer bread and wine to Abram's troops returning from battle. Melchizedek is a priest to El Elyon (God, Most High) and Abram gives him a 10% tithe of all that he has gained.

So, who is this Melchizedek? According to traditional Torah commentaries, Melchizedek is none other than Shem, son of Noah. He is a priest/kohen to God, called here, El Elyon, the Most High. Torah sources say that it was right there and then that Melchizedek chose Abram to be his rightful successor, and ordained Abram to be a priest/kohen as he was. Abram thus became the heir and new progenitor of what has come to be called the Melchizedekian Priesthood. Abram passed this priesthood down to Isaac with his patriarchal blessing, who in turn passed it on to Jacob, who in turn gave it to all twelve of his sons. Thus the entire nation

of Israel became Melchizedekian priests. This was confirmed at Mt. Sinai when God called the nation of Israel His “Mamlekhet Kohanim,” His nation of priests (Exodus 19:6). The sons of Aharon were later chosen to serve as the priests to Israel, as Israel serves as priests to the nations of the world.

The Melchizedekian priesthood of Israel was ordained by God, so that Israel would service the spiritual needs of the nations of the world (benei Noah), bringing to them the message of Mt. Sinai, the Ten Commandments and the importance of human freedoms and liberties. This is what Isaiah (49:6) meant when God said about Israel that, “I will make you a light of nations, so that My salvation shall be until the end of the earth.” As we look through history we see throughout the centuries how much Jews have contributed to culture, society, arts and the sciences. Indeed, even without knowing it, Jews, religious and otherwise, have fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy and indeed have been a light to many nations, fulfilling their role as Melchizedekian priests of service.

Now, there is another very old and almost forgotten story about Melchizedek found in a book called Second Enoch. In chapter 71 of this book, a legend is recorded that Melchizedek was actually the son of Sapanim, wife of Nir, brother of Noah and that he was born before the flood. Then the text relates something shocking. Melchizedek is born from an impregnation from on-high. In other words he is not the son of any human father. While his Mom was an old woman at the time, and not a virgin, still this story sounds awfully familiar to the Christian story about Yeshu also being born from on-high from a virgin mother.

Scholars debate the actual date as to when the book of Second Enoch was written, so there is no way to tell if this miracle birth story was influenced by the Christian account, or the reverse, that this account influenced the Christian account. Either way, this miraculous birth story echoes a negative message to Christian theology. For Christians turn to the story of the virgin birth to claim, and justify, that Yeshu, born from on-high, is thus the incarnate son of God. Yet, we see in this version of the story, that Melchizedek is also supposedly born from on-high, but there is not even a suggestion to consider that such a miraculous birth is in any way related to anything Divine. Thus, even if one is born in a miraculous way, this does not relate in any way to divinity. We can easily make this same claim with regards to the miracle births of Isaac and Moses. Thus supernatural births, even if true, do not make such children Divine incarnates.

The character of Melchizedek has proliferated widely, and has become the subject of many myths. People will tend to believe as they see fit. So be it. So, let those who wish, wonder about Melchizedek. As for us, we are the children of Abram, and we will follow in his footsteps, as the true nation of priests of the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4). “From you will emerge the priesthood and the kingship that your children will inherit from Shem your progenitor, the priesthood and the kingship, which were given to him.” (Rashi, Psalm 110:4).

Ours is not to challenge doctrine or creed. Ours is to be like Abram and to preach the message of liberty! And, that, I pray God, we will not fail to do!

Let's put religion and religious differences aside and work together to bring about change.

And this conclude my weekly Torah portion lesson in politics and mysticism.

Any comments? Please send them to me at kosher Torah1@yahoo.com