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The Religion of Secularism

By Rabbi Ariel Bar Tzadok

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Well, it has happened, just as it has so many times in the past. Another worldwide religion has swept over humanity bringing to itself countless followers. This new world religion, like those before it, is just as fanatical, just as convinced that its way is the only way, and that its outlook is the only one that makes sense and thus the ideal and exclusive path that everyone should follow. We have heard these claims before, whether from medieval Christianity of old (and new) Islam, and now we are hearing them again, this time in a new package, under a different slogan, waving a new flag. Yes, indeed, the new world religion, the one that has its own unique view of G-d, other religions and how life should be lived is today what we honestly must call the “religion” of Secularism.

Secularism is the way most people live today. Its aim is to place traditional religion on the “back burner” of life and to instill a completely new way and outlook on life. Traditional religion taught that man lives for G-d and is here on earth to serve Him. The secular religion teaches a different credo. Man is here on earth to live for himself, man created G-d in his own image, not the other way around. G-d (and thus traditional religion) is here to serve the needs of man. The individual is paramount and his desires are sacred.

While many might not desire or be willing to view secularism as a religion, the philosophy underlying it definitely fits the dictionary definition of what is a religion. One just need do a standard web search of online information and the official and accepted definitions of both religion and secularism become clear. Looking at them side by side one should be able to draw one’s own conclusions. The Wikipedia, free online Encyclopedia has provided these statements.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion> Religion—sometimes used inter-changeably with faith or belief system—is commonly defined as belief concerning the supernatural, sacred, or divine, and the moral codes, practices, values, and institutions associated with such belief. In its broadest sense some have defined it as the sum total of answers given to explain humankind's relationship with the universe

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secularism> Secularism means: in philosophy, the belief that life can be best lived by applying ethics, and the universe best understood, by processes of reasoning, without reference to a god or gods or other supernatural concepts.

A religion is a “belief concerning... the... divine.” Secularism is “the belief... without reference to a god.” Reference specifically not to mention a god is as much a statement of religion as is the mention a god. One way or the other a relationship between man and god

is established, one in favor, and one against. Nonetheless, both fit the dictionary definition of a religion.

Whether or not one wishes to accept or reject this definition of secularism as a religion is not what is important. Essentially such an argument is only semantics. Names and descriptions are often subjective and subject to the eye of the beholder. Arguments over words are superfluous. Instead of discussing words, we must discuss deeds and attitudes.

Religion and secularism are mere words to describe how people think and what people do. What others do is influenced by what they believe. We are all subject to the thoughts and deeds of others. Therefore, it is important for us to understand what it is that motivates others who desire to influence us.

Those who wish to “apply ethics” have first to explain what is the source of the ethics they wish others to adopt. When we define something as right or wrong, by what criteria do we make such a definition. Who says this is right or this is wrong. Who decides? Who is to judge? Herein lies a serious problem. All societies are defined by a common set of laws and values. All societies have as their common denominator a core set of beliefs that defines what it is, what its purpose is and what its course of manifest destiny is.

Without such a foundation then a society is essentially baseless, without any adhesive to bond the people to a social contract of mutually agreed acceptable behavior. Without such a common language of ethics, everyone does what is right in his own eyes. Some might not think this a bad thing, until someone does something to oneself that one objects to, and then demands retribution, only to find out there is no law against said behavior and what happened to one is deemed socially acceptable, regardless of how much pain was inflicted thereby.

When social ethics are defined at the individual level, then one man’s good is another man’s bad, and who is to judge between them. By what criteria of judgment does one decide what is and what is not right and wrong? Herein lies the dilemma of secularism. To address this serious issue, secularism has embraced democracy as its chosen sword of conquest.

Secularism has deified the concept of democracy and proclaims it the highest and finest form of government. Majority rule is the law, regardless of the will of the minority. Therefore, public ethics and values are decided in the ballot box on Election Day and are subject to change with each and every election. This fluid type of ethics definition is a sure way to undermine the long-term value of ethics in general and the short-term observance of the law in particular. For if a law passes that one group finds objectionable, they simply protest and make enough noise about it until the wheel of democracy turn their way.

In essence, it is the law of the jungle, the mightiest rules, and the defeated are conquered and vanquished. One simply need look at political job placements after an election votes in a different party than before. Once a new political party is installed in a political office, all previous employees, regardless of their value, are dismissed simply because of their party loyalty and replaced by others who may or may not be equally qualified to fulfill such posts. With the new people come new rules, the new rules are based upon a new philosophy. The new philosophy will remain dominant until the next election, the next party change and the coming of the next philosophy. In essence, democracy by definition creates instability in political office, as it does in society in general. Democracy does have its good points; however, those points are all too often buried under a heap of rubble and garbage piled up on top of democracy’s good name.

Every form of government has their good points and bad points, this includes democracy. The problems inherent within a democratic system have long been abused by extremists of one sort or another to further their individual agendas. The secularist here is no different. The secularist will use wave the banner of democracy to attack the very foundations upon which the democracy was established.

An example of secular radicalism is their constant assault upon any public display of anything associated with traditional American religions. For hundreds of years throughout this land there have been public displays of Biblical verses and similar religion icons. For over two hundred years, no one ever expressed any objections to this, regardless of whether one believed in them or not. Religion played a cultural role in the founding of American society, helped form and make this country what it once was, something great. The public displays of religious symbols was always accepted and respected as an integral part of Americana.

Then suddenly the secularist arose with the zeal of an Islamic jihad and used the forces of democracy and open courts to attack any semblance of religion interpreted to be in the public domain. Even non-religious organizations such as the Boy Scouts were attacked because they ascribed to doctrines and belief about morality from Biblical origins.

Nothing traditional and normative about American society was safe from secularist attack. The founding fathers of this nation were themselves attacked judging them guilty by 20th century secular standards and condemning them and for living according to the moral standards of their day. At the same time the secularist attacks everything that is defined as traditionally American, they extol the virtues of foreign governments and societies and work hard to remold the United States into a society like that which it has never known.

Thus today, here in the U.S. we have what has been defined as a culture war between conservatism and liberalism. Yet, these two terms are more of a disguise for the real war going on. Today the war is between the old religion and the new. Today the war is between the religions of the Bible (Christianity, Judaism, and even Islam) verses the religion of the “new world order,” the “anti-religion” of secularism.

Today secularism can no longer hide behind the face of just being non-religious. Let the truth be told, many of their rank-and-file are anti-religious, view religion with venom, and wish to attack it with a zeal found only among jihadist extremists of the worst forms of religion.

It is always prudent to know the truth and to tell the truth. It we confront secularism for what it truly is and challenge the secularist to see him/herself for what they truly are, maybe some eyes can be opened. Being “anti” anything always leads to the creation of extremists and fanatics. The U.S. is already under major attack from enemies foreign and abroad. Must we also suffer from the attack of the enemies of traditional American values from within?

Sincerely,

אריאל ב"ר נדוק

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