



## Searching for a Winner: Review: Abram's Wisdom & Patrick Henry's Formula for Freedom; Military Power Neutralized Sans Divine Power; Netanyahu on Terrorism

Wrong motivation by believers in time of national crisis can lead to disaster. The mental attitude of a winner must be able to think divine viewpoint under the pressures imposed in such circumstances. There must be a response motivated by doctrine not emotion. Divine power enables the former and results in divine good. But human energy seeks to empower the latter and can only result in human good and evil.

I have recently read a column written by Charles Colson that gives an example of an emotional reaction to the Islamic War and after reading it I will critique his comments with an appeal for a doctrinal response to this evil.

**Colson, Charles. "Executing Righteous Wrath: The Morality of Anger." *BreakPoint: Commentary* #020529, May 29, 2002:**

"We learned in our class that if you believe in peace, you can stay alive," said the eleven- year-old boy. "We learned that you should always find a peaceful way to solve your problems because you should never be violent."

Ironically, the boy lives a stone's throw from the Pentagon, where more than a hundred people, peacefully going about their business, were murdered by terrorists.

I wish peace-loving people could always "stay alive," but they don't. So why do teachers persist in telling kids otherwise?

In his new book, WHY WE FIGHT: MORAL CLARITY AND THE WAR ON TERRORISM, my friend, Bill Bennett, writes that teachers like these are seeking to "prevent another generation of young people from learning the proper uses of righteous anger."

The very idea that rage can be righteous has become a foreign concept. And Bennett wants to know why, in the wake of September 11, the country's elites "seem to back away from any hint of righteous anger as if it were some kind of poisonous snake? Why wasn't anger itself considered a moral response to the unprovoked attack on September 11?"

In part, he says, it's because the denigration of righteous wrath is linked to darker goals. By casting a shadow of moral doubt over justified anger secular liberals in the press and academia are "sowing and reinforcing doubt" about America's purposes.

These elites embrace an ideology, rooted in the Vietnam era, that sees America as an imperialistic power intent on imposing its will on others. Moreover, not believing in the Fall, they see all wars as the result of misunderstandings. They believe all violence is wrong and that wars never solve anything. To their way of thinking, America's motives cannot be trusted; our "jingoistic aggression", Bennett writes, can "only be checked by a countercommitment to nonviolence." Instead of getting angry with terrorists or waging another "imperialistic" war, we should blame ourselves--figure out what we did to make them so mad.

This absurd, anti-American view has so permeated our culture that many citizens hesitated to express anger over the terror attacks.

But the morality of righteous wrath has been accepted throughout history as necessary for justice. "As the ancients recognized," Bennett notes, "anger is a necessary power of the soul, intimately connected with the passion for justice." The demand that we stifle our rage and negotiate with fanatics bent on wiping us out is thus immoral because it's a denial of justice.



And so teaching kids that all violence is wrong is morally bankrupt. "If no distinction is made among kinds of 'peace,'" Bennett warns, "children are deprived of the tools they require to distinguish a just from an unjust peace ([for example,] peace with honor from the peace of the grave.) They are robbed of the oldest and most necessary wisdom of the race, which is that some things are worth fighting and dying for."

We need to teach our kids why social liberals--including, sometimes, their teachers -- claim that all violence and anger are wrong: It's an expression of hostility toward America itself and an inadequate understanding of sin and the need for justice. And we must make sure that they know why -- in the face of great evil -- getting angry isn't wrong. It's the necessary prologue to justice.

I like Bill Bennett. He is articulate and his speeches and writings have inserted a much needed source of common sense into discussions with those who ignore the concept of cause and effect. However on this occasion I must disagree with his premise that "getting angry isn't wrong."

Anger is a mental attitude sin that results in the production of verbal and often overt sins. A righteous cause does not require sin to motivate its defense. Standards of divine truth must be the motivation, not sin. When our children are being taught pacifism in school it only compounds the problem for Bill to recommend they opt instead for anger.

Abram when he arrived at Hebron entered into a coalition with his neighbors and formed an early-day Delta Force. He did this before Lot was taken hostage by Chedorlaomer. Thus, when his G-2 agent arrived with the news, Abram was ready to immediately move out and pursue the Mesopotamian army up the Jordan Valley. Abram was led to Canaan by the Lord. He was promised the land between the Nile and the Euphrates. He was led specifically to Hebron. He could have assumed that the Lord would protect him as long as he was in His geographic will. But he didn't do this. His first act was to build an altar at which he daily worshipped God. He then formed a military force to protect his ranch, its flocks and droves, and his family. Why? Because man's soul is imputed free will at birth and he is free to use this decision-making capacity for either good or evil. Abram as a believer was under the protective care of God. But God does not override the free will of anyone except in extreme cases. And these extreme cases are not in view in Genesis 13 and 14. Abram understood this. He had the wisdom to discern that heathen forces might decide to invade his area and he prepared for it ahead of time.

Abram never attacked Chedorlaomer. Chedorlaomer attacked the cities of the Jordan Valley and made the mistake of taking Abram's nephew hostage. This required Abram to activate his Delta Force. He did not do so out of anger but out of duty. Note that he did not send an envoy to discover why Chedorlaomer attacked the Valley. He did not at that moment seek to build a coalition. He did not on the news of Lot's seizure decide to conscript an army. He had all these things done ahead of time because his wisdom informed him that we live in the devil's world and evil people are prone to perform evil acts that violate the rights of innocent people. To protect his freedom he chose to prepare for the worst and when the worst came he chose to defend his family. This simply did not require any form of sinning for activation.

When righteous standards are violated--people are captured, or killed, or injured--then integrity demands that the villains be confronted. This is a reckoning not revenge. It is duty not anger. It is divine good not human sin.

The Christian soldier whose guidon is righteousness is able to love his enemy while he pursues him. He is able to love his enemy when he squeezes the round that separates his soul from his body. He is able to love the survivors once the sword is sheathed. Consequently, virtue love never motivates a person to ignore the infliction of pain and death upon innocent people by forgiving their attacker's behavior. Forgiveness is Lot's option. Warfare is Abram's obligation. Love demands righteousness. Righteousness demands justice. Justice demands retribution. Thus it was love that motivated him to initiate military action, not anger. To quote Patrick Henry, "An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us."



- 34- Patrick Henry and most of his fellow burgesses had the wisdom necessary to act. As Henry said at one point during the debate, "An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!"
- 35- These patriots understood what Abram understood: military force must act in concert with divine guidance. Abram established his headquarters at Hebron and at the same time established an altar before God. Principle: Worship produces spiritual growth which results in confidence. When wisdom is added to confidence it results in courage toward life and circumstances. Through this process, Abram had developed the attitude of a winner.
- 36- When the news came that Lot was captured he was prepared to take action. He had been gone from his birthplace in Sumer for only about 10 years and it is quite possible he was familiar with Chedorlaomer and Amraphel and possibly with Arioch.
- 37- He instantly mustered his division along with those of Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner and headed for the Jordan Valley. Together they made up a small army of a little over a thousand men.
- 38- Abram's Special Forces didn't have enough men to match the Mesopotamian force of 100,000 men but they had several advantages: they were believers, they were well-trained, they had the element of surprise, and they had divine protection.
- 39- These are the elements that should be identified with the Special Forces we are sending to execute operations in the Islamic War. Those who hold the key to our success in this war are our special forces.
- 40- One man who has developed some establishment wisdom with regard to fighting terrorists is the former Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu. His thoughts on this subject are found in his book:

**Netanyahu, Benjamin. *Fighting Terrorism: How Democracies Can Defeat the International Terrorist Network*. 2001 ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), 144-145:**

Greater emphasis must be placed on the training of special units equipped for anti-terror operations. In anti-terror training, law enforcers learn to fight a completely different kind of gun battle, in which the goal is to *hold* their fire rather than to unleash it. Operations against terrorists often involve the rescue of hostages or the possibility that innocent bystanders might be hurt. Counter terrorist operations usually require the barest minimum application of force necessary to overcome the terrorists, who often use hostages as a human shield.

- 41- What Netanyahu recommends was understood in the early 1960s by Col. Charlie A. Beckwith. This concept came to him while reading a copy of a book, written by British Field Marshal Sir William J. Slim, entitled *Defeat into Victory* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000):

Slim was commander of the 1st Burma Corps during World War II. He led his shattered forces from Burma to India in one of the lesser-known but more nightmarish retreats of World War II. Once out of Burma, yet with virtually no support from home, Slim restored his army's fighting capabilities and morale, and counterattacked. His army's slaughter of Japanese troops ultimately liberated India and Burma, and inflicted on the Japanese army its largest and most devastating land defeat of the war.



What Beckwith read that caught his attention is cited in his book:

**Beckwith, Charlie A. and Donald Knox. *Delta Force*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1983), 36:**

The more I read [*Defeat into Victory*] the deeper I became involved. He [Slim] laid it all out, how he felt about Special Operations. Although he concluded that most special units are wasteful and have more disadvantages than advantages, he believed that there was one type of special unit that should become an essential component of any modern army. This special unit is one that operates deep behind enemy lines, whose purpose is to disrupt the enemy, to collect information, to work with indigenous peoples, to sabotage enemy installations, to assassinate enemy commanders. The troops who made up this unit would require many qualities and skills not expected in the ordinary soldier and would use many methods beyond his capacity. Field Marshal Slim felt they could achieve strategic results if handled with imaginative ruthlessness.

- 42- Beckwith would later use Slim's ideas along with a principle developed in the late 1940s by Chinese Communist Chairman Mao Tse-tung called "the fish in the sea." Netanyahu gives us a brief description of how Mao's "special forces" operated during his revolution:

**Netanyahu, *Fighting Terrorism*, 12:**

One of the most revolutionary pieces of revolutionary wisdom ever uttered: Mao Ze-dong's [*sic*] theory that the irregular violence of his "people's army" could not be resisted because his men would simply disappear into the friendly and supportive populace, swimming among them "like the fish in the sea." This theory may have worked in China in 1949. Massacred, starved, impoverished, and oppressed, parts of the Chinese populace may very well have constituted such a sea that could provide the guerrillas with succor, cover, and moral support. Most proponents of modern terrorism have liberally borrowed this theory.

- 43- Charlie Beckwith understood the ideas held by both Slim and Mao. He began to press his superiors for the development of a special operations unit during his service in the Vietnam War. It was a tough sell. Some officers did not agree with the idea of a Special Forces unit the way Beckwith proposed it. They felt outfits such as the Army Rangers, the Marines, and the Navy SEALs could handle such missions. The man he ultimately had to convince was Gen. Frederick J. "Fritz" Kroesen, commander of all the Army Combat and Combat Support Forces in the United States. The manpower pool Delta Force would draw on would have to have his support.