

A Nation of Golems

By William A. Cook

'Even the most perfect of Golem, risen to life to protect us, can easily change into a destructive force. Therefore let us treat carefully that which is strong, just as we bow kindly and patiently to that which is weak. Everything has its time and place.'*(Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel, 1512-1609)*

The U.S. House of Representatives voted 344-36 in support of H. Res. 867, a vote to reject the Goldstone Report Findings and Recommendations, thus protecting Israel against indictment for crimes against humanity and illegal acts of war as determined by the United Nations Human Rights Council's special investigation of the Christmas invasion of Gaza this past year. The House of Representatives, acting as a body, embodies the most heinous machinations of the ancient legend of a mythical beast called the Golem.

The most famous of the Golem stories comes out of Medieval Prague where Rabbi Loew contended with the paradox of human existence as driven by human desire to control life on the one hand and God's absolute power over life, "from dust to dust," on the other. The good Rabbi, it is alleged, turned to the forbidden scriptures to give life to a human form created out of the mud of the Vltava River that flows through Prague; this figure constructed of clay, inanimate matter, a shapeless mass, imperfect, unformed, a body without a soul, responds in perfect obedience to his master.

He symbolizes the ultimate protector of the victimized as he assumed in ancient Prague protection of the Jews who were to be expelled or killed from their ghetto. To bring this monster to life, the Rabbi carved in Hebrew the word EMETH on his forehead, the meaning of which is "truth." This being, living yet not whole, becomes a servant and protector of the people, a tool of his maker, but in time his purpose is slighted, his use abused by those who think only of their desires and self-indulgence.

In time this virtual Faustian figure seeks to know himself, rule himself, become his own master and in his soulless state, his ambition and arrogance assume control as he spreads his massive shadow of malevolence across the ghetto. Only the Rabbi can control him by rubbing out the first letter on his forehead, Aleth, leaving Mem and Taw—Death. Once loosed on the world, the Golem becomes a destroyer and hence the Rabbi's admonishment above.

How do our representatives become a Golem? By obedience to their master. That master is Israel through its Zionist government and its multiple lobbies in the U.S., by their use of extortion and threat, and by control of monetary resources. There is no need to recount how these charges are true; books have been written about it, most especially those by former Congressman Paul Findlay and the recent study by Mearsheimer and Walt, Grant Smith's America's Defense Line, John Hosteller on the Iraq war, Aaron David Miller on the peace process, and Stephen Sniegoski's Transparent Cabal.

A cursory review of the U.S. Knesset actions taken on behalf of Israel demonstrates conclusively the obedience "our" representatives pay to their owners: 2003, a resolution supporting force against Palestinians, 399-5; 2004, a resolution forbidding a return to the 1967 borders, 407-9; 2006, a resolution defending Israel's illegal invasion and destruction of Lebanon, 410-8; 2009, a resolution defending Israel's Christmas invasion of the defenseless people of Gaza, 390-5; and today, a resolution condemning the Goldstone Report issued by the UNHRC, 344-35. Every one of these resolutions support Israel's illegal actions while the remainder of the world's nation, excepting a few controlled by the U.S., vote against the crimes of the state of Israel. Their resolution, if adopted and acted upon in the Security Council, would make the state of Israel immune to law.

Rabbi Loew's incantations brought to life the Golem of Prague's ghetto, a mythical image that reflects a mind conditioned by massive oppression and defenselessness, a need to believe that there could be a way to protect the innocent against the terror that encircled them in their ghetto. But that mindset of necessity rejects the true power over life, the God that gives life, in favor of a dream of self-control over the forces that exist in the world, thus replacing obedience to God with a soulless form that is obedient to the hubris that contaminates a mortal. The myth explores the conflict between the self-proclaimed overlord and belief in the God of the Jews. It is the confrontation of the essence of Judaism and the power of the secular forces that forego the true Torah, the polarity battle between oppression and indifference or compassion and love.

There is, as Rabbi Loew knew well, a Golem in each of us, the human form that we desire to be but cannot form because we are not alone in this world, because we must exist within a community of others, because we understand that to inflict our will on others gives license to others to inflict theirs on us, because we form societies to protect each other realizing that forging a society to fear its own survival breeds violence against its perceived enemies resulting ineluctably in devastation and death.

That is the curse of the Golem, to be brought into existence without knowledge of its master's intent, yet obedient to that intent; to witness life behind the walls of the ghetto but locked into the mind of the elders that portray life beyond the walls; to feel the pulse of life beneath the carved "truth" that is emblazoned on the forehead, yet know no other truth than that imposed by the masters; to sense, as time passes, the masters' inner passions, that gave rise to the creation of the Golem, erupt in vengeance against their own phantoms of inadequacy as they command the Golem to destroy all but those who will obey them, and know, that he is the means to avenge; hence the image of the Golem as the corrosive being within us that, once loosed, releases its acid throughout the body and the mind because we have become but a shapeless mass, unformed, imperfect, an artificial creature without natural sympathies, soulless—the obedient slave to another's will.

This is the fate of our congressmen and women, indeed, it is the fate of the Jewish people in Israel who have built a wall around themselves, as the Jews in Prague did in the 16th century, fearing all but themselves, victims of all beyond the wall. Golems all, abandoning their God to placate their masters, the ruling secular Golems that have created a state of fear instead of a state for Jews, a state of oppression and indifference, a state of molded minds lacking human sympathy, a state willing to use its only friend in the community of nations for its own ends turning its representatives into pliant, obedient, mindless, soulless clay forms as heedless of the weak as their masters.

"Whence did you come?" asks Nathaniel Hawthorne. "Whence did any of us come? Out of the darkness and mystery; out of nothingness; out of a kingdom of shadows; out of dust, clay, mud...And why are you come? Who can tell? Only one thing I am aware of,—it was not to be happy. To toil and moil and hope and fear; to love in a shadowy, doubtful sort of way, and to hate in bitter earnest, —that is what you came for!" (Works, XIII, 18-19)

It is time for the good Rabbi Loew to remove "Aleph" and let our Congress rest in "Mem" and "Taw."

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