

Letter to Mesora

DR. ALAN KEYES

(continued from page 1)

slaughtered in the era that gave birth to the state of Israel.

When "the international community" asserts its moral authority to dictate Israel's security policy, we will remember what the "international community" did in 1967, when Arab forces were amassing to launch a death blow against Israel, when Egyptian President Nasser kicked out the U.N. troops from the Sinai, and the international community did precisely nothing.

We will remember how the "international community" sat and waited for those hundreds of thousands of Arab troops to deliver a deathblow to Israel, and we will remember that such a blow wasn't thwarted by international outrage, but by the unanticipated brilliance of the Israeli military. We will remember that Israel acquired the Sinai, West Bank and Gaza not in a war of conquest, but in a desperate and just defensive war for survival. We will remind the "international community" that territory acquired in a defensive war of survival can, according to universal understanding, international law, and common sense, be retained until a negotiated peace is reached. And we will proclaim the truth that the Israeli people have again and again shown their willingness to put those territories on the table in the hope of achieving just such a negotiated settlement for just peace.

Israel's friends in America will insist that the world acknowledge that the Israelis have shown that they will negotiate in good faith, and keep agreements reached in good faith. We will remember the historic Camp David accords between Israel and Egypt in 1978, which resulted in Israel's peaceful return of the Sinai to the Egyptians. An agreement made, an agreement kept. We remember that with Egypt, with Jordan, even quietly with Syria, the Israelis have proved to be a people of their word, when faced with a negotiating partner willing to meet its solemn obligations.

And because we will remember all these things, we will continue to insist that American and international policy recognize the poisonous significance of the unbroken record of murderous deceit which is the history of the PLO, the Palestinian Authority, and Yasser Arafat. While the Israelis have made concession after concession, and followed through with real and dangerous steps, such as turning over



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to Yasser Arafat authority in the West Bank and Gaza, Arafat has consistently refused to honor those agreements, to make significant concessions, and to do the one needful thing – to stop killing Israelis. We remember, and see to this day, what the "international community" of appeasement refuses to see – that the Palestinian strategy remains the manipulation of all discussion through the intentional use of terrorist violence, with the ultimate goal of destroying a demoralized, intimidated and isolated Israel.

We will remember these things, and speak the truth about them, not only out of respect and solidarity with the decent and heroic people of Israel. We will do so as well because we know that peace for all people of the region cannot be built on a foundation of manipulation, deception, violence.

The first pre-requisite for peace, and for self-government, is the restraint of one's own passions and violence out of respect for justice and fairness. Israel's noble restraint is unique in the history of the world. Israel has continued, to this day, to impose on herself the rational restraints of justice and truth, under circumstances of danger and assault far exceeding those normally sufficient to entice a people to submit entirely to rage and retribution. It is difficult to find words to express the contemptibility of the moral lectures such a noble people routinely receives from the self-appointed guardians of moral smugness in Europe and elsewhere.

The people in the Middle East deserve a better fate than tragic self-immolation. They will attain such a better fate only when they understand that the plea of victimization – even if true, which in this case it is not – cannot excuse the surrender to evil in one's own soul. The friends of Israel serve the cause of the people of the entire region when we insist that the path to peace requires dismantling the Palestinian terror machine.

The truth, and the truth alone, will set the Palestinian people free, for they are imprisoned not by the Israel's just defense of its right to exist and defend its people, but by the self-imposed hatred that poisons the soul, and withers the future.

Israel is today, as Israel has always been, a sign of hope that God's children can seek to be pleasing in His sight. Israel is today, as Israel has always been, hateful in the eyes of those whose neck is stiff, and whose heart is filled with hate and falsehood. Until it shall please God to make the land of His special favor a pleasing sight to all the nations, may it please Him to continue to give all Americans the eyes to see in Israel, as is truly the case, a beacon of justice, courage, and truth.

My prayers, my heart, are with the brave people of Israel. □

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- Alan Keyes

Friendship Equals Love & Compassion

RIVKA OLENICK

"A friend loves at all times and becomes as a brother in adversity." Proverbs 17:17

Who is a true friend? It is someone whose philosophical life and values we share. True friends care about each other's well-being and are happy for each others positive goals, achievements, and growth. A true friend enjoys sharing knowledge and philosophy of Judaism and Torah, since this is the essence of their friendship. One shouldn't think, "I'll keep this information to myself so I will become greater than my friend." Sharing knowledge is an important and essential part of the friendship and gives each one the strength and courage to continue in their search for truth and doing God's will. How much time can friends spend in meaningless talk? Talking about the stock market for hours doesn't provide for growth. Since growth in Torah is perfection. Stock is acquisition - growth of a different kind!

Each one is looking to find ways to help his/her friend grow by helping each other correct their thoughts by communicating and exchanging ideas. In the most ideal way we nurture our friendships this way and we prove to each other that we are loyal to the friendship by being involved in God's

wisdom together. The strongest bonds of friendship can be maintained this way and help to bring peace to each others lives. There is mutual respect and enjoyment in the good and pure traits and intentions our friend possesses. We are there for each other in good and joyful times as well as in times of sorrow and adversity. For in times of sorrow it is this friend who remains. Why? Because the friendship was cultivated by the sharing of truth to begin with. Sorrow and times of distress is also truth. Sorrow and crisis are part of reality, of life. And so our "true friend" is there for us and is willing to help us with the burdens that adversity brings. Your friend understands: "Love your neighbor as yourself." And so your friend commiserates with you and listens to you sincerely and allows you to speak freely from your heart about your sadness. There is trust between you and your friend wants to help you because he/she knows that you are feeling overwhelmed and vulnerable.

Friend equals love and compassion. There cannot be true friendship without compassion. From the book Horeb, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch says: "Compassion is the warning voice of duty, which points out to you your brother in every sufferer, and your own sufferings in his, and awakens the love which tells you that you belong to him with all his sufferings with all the powers that you have. Do not suppress this compassion! If you do it will no longer well up of itself, and you will have cut yourself off from the company of all your fellow creatures. You yourself will have destroyed the first proof of your mission as man and Israelite. Your heart becomes a stone and there no longer sounds in it the voice of God, reminding you of your mission."

In times of your distress the true face of your friend's compassion shows. This is how we know for sure if our friend is sincere - no other way can match this way. This is what to look for in a true friendship.

Compassion. Don't think that expressing compassion is a sign of weakness, it is not. On the contrary, it is the highest emotional level a person can express because it is also part of love. And what if there were no one on earth, and you were left alone; to whom would you show your compassion? Who would be your friend? So, don't say, "Well, my friend will always be there for me, no matter what." That is not always true. Be very honest with yourself and be sure about your friend. In adversity does your friend love at all times and become as a brother? □

Page 2