

## Rabbi's Column

[All that contains God's name is considered worthy of burial and not destruction in other fashions, out of respect for God. The less liberal the denomination or individual inclination, the more kinds of texts with God's name in them are included in this category. This is important context for what follows.]

You might have easily missed it, especially if you are not on their particular email list or a facebook/twitter follower of theirs. (they might be on some of the other social media as well, but I am not) In addition to the continued kite and balloon incendiary devices there was at least one other troublesome burning. After the Women of the Wall group held their recent monthly service and were on their way home, a mob of Hareidi men physically attacked them and burned several items they had with them, including a Siddur.

The individuals who perpetrate these violent atrocities, their leaders and teachers and all within their communities who continue to accept them, have, in my opinion, decided that idolatry is more important than God.

[But they are Hareidi, I hear some people object. Don't they fervently worship God? How can they be idolaters?]

When a person places an interpretation of Judaism above other people who are fashioned in God's image, then a person places an image, an idol as it were, as more important than God. This is the Golden Bull statue of this generation (and maybe a couple of generations before us).

Are there Hareidi who are not idolatrous? Probably. Anyone who chooses to live that lifestyle without worrying about what other people are doing is choosing God over idolatry. The news seldom focuses on them - and they are very seldom rewarded for being decent human beings.

Knowing that I have no power over these individuals who are showing that their evil inclination is dominating them, my preferred punishment for them and their leaders is that these males would be in one of the tunnels, just inside the Israeli border, and in order to eat they would have to ask politely for food from women in bikinis. The women chosen would all be masters of judoka or similar martial arts.

We begin a new book of the Torah this week. Moses filibusters God's decree concerning his death, by speaking to the people and trying to review with them everything he has said to them over the past 40 years. We are not told if God delayed Moses' death at all or if the original plan had presumed that Moses would indulge himself in a long goodbye; we are told that Moses was not successful in changing the outcome. Death is a part of God's creation - and so is a human reluctance to participate, at least personally, for a very long time. It is also part of human nature to eventually accept that there will be a future without us. The ideal is to be hopeful that the future will be better than the present, and not to rush the "now moment" that does not include us.

The difficulty we all have in getting to that stage is exemplified by Moses throughout Deuteronomy, so we are all in good company.