

Good or Bad, Words Do Matter

How could I say it any better than the wise King Solomon in Proverbs 18:20-21:

“From the fruit of a man’s mouth his stomach is satisfied; he is satisfied by the yield of his lips. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.”

The words we speak are oftentimes just as, if not more important than, our actions.

I’ve been thinking a lot about words this week.

Today, parts of the world are mourning the brutal dictator Hugo Chavez who died this week. In my opinion, Chavez was on the top five list of the worst humans on the planet. Not only did he violently repress any of his own Venezuelan people who dared to disagree with him, he was also a close ally of the vicious Iranian regime.

He even invited Hezbollah terrorists to literally set up camp in Venezuela, giving them a safe harbor in the western hemisphere, and setting the stage for what could have been the next “Cuban missile crisis.”

Now, mercifully and pitifully, Chavez is dead. And what he leaves behind is a legacy of hate-filled words.

Chavez famously went to the United Nations in 2006, during a meeting of the General Assembly, and called then U.S. President George Bush “the devil” and said the podium-area “still smells of sulphur.”

This comment made him a hero to many who hated Bush and his policies. But to me, as someone who actually studied diplomacy at the United Nations as a college student, this was an anathema to the very existence of the U.N.

What Chavez said during his multi-hour tirades on Venezuela television was his own business. But to go to the U.N., during a gathering of world leaders, seemingly under the guise of “peacemaking” and “bridge-building,” and to refer to the leader of the host nation as “the devil” made me further question why the U.N. even continues to exist.

Yes, words matter. Just ask the Venezuelan journalists who took on “El Comandante” and ended up being thrown into prison and brutally tortured.

But Chavez’s words aren’t the only ones ringing in my ears this week.

Take, for example, former basketball star Dennis Rodman (a childhood hero of mine, as a Detroit Pistons fan ... I once even dined with Rodman during a “fan luncheon”). Rodman was recently invited to North Korea, and upon returning, referred to dictator Kim Jong Un as “an awesome kid.”

It just so happens that “awesome kid” is the most violent repressor of Christians on the planet, sending them to work camps that rival Auschwitz. Just Thursday, North Korea vowed a preemptive nuclear strike on the United States. I hope Rodman has a bunker.

Yes, words matter.

Friday, America’s First Lady, Michelle Obama, will take part in a State Department event honoring “international women of courage.” One of those “courageous” women being honored is Samira Ibrahim. A quick glance at Ibrahim’s Twitter account, show just how courageous she is.

After five Israeli tourists and a Bulgarian bus driver were killed by terrorists, last year, Ibrahim tweeted: “an explosion on a bus carrying Israelis in Burgas airport in Bulgaria on the Black Sea. Today is a very sweet day with a lot of very sweet news.”

On the 2012 anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, as Egyptian rioters stormed the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Ibrahim tweeted: "Today is the anniversary of 9/11. May every year come with America burning."

And, Ibrahim even tweeted out the words of another prolific speaker, none other than Adolph Hitler himself. She shared his "courageous" quote: "I have discovered with the passage of days, that no act contrary to morality, no crime against society, takes place, except with the Jews having a hand in it."

Let us pray that an outcry reaches the White House, before Mrs. Obama humiliates herself by honoring such a woman.

Yes words matter.

Words mattered as U.S. Senator Mark Kirk, a champion for Israel, returned to the world stage this week, after a long recovery from a debilitating stroke. He courageously told an audience at the annual AIPAC convention: "I have one message for the dictators in Iran ... I'm back!"

Speaking of AIPAC, while I don't always agree with them politically, the words of U.S. Vice President Joe Biden and Democratic Senator Robert Menendez during the AIPAC conference were also very important. Both gave impassioned speeches in support of Israel and against Iran and the Palestinians.

Words mattered as the top U.S. commander in the Middle East, Marine General James N. Mattis, told Congress on Tuesday that the sanctions against Iran are not working. He said:

"Despite significant economic sanctions and increased diplomatic isolation within the global community, Iran continues to export instability and violence across the region and beyond."

It mattered this week, when Israeli singer Rita Yahan-Farouz

sang at a special United Nations concert. The Iranian-born Jew, who immigrated to Israel, sang an impassioned plea for improved relations between the people of her birth country and her adopted home.

And the words written by Muslim scholar Ed Husain matter. This week he wrote an op-ed in the *New York Times* calling for an end to “the Arab boycott of Israel.”

“The decades-long Arab boycott has failed miserably,” Husain writes, “How much longer will we punish Palestinians to create a free Palestine?”

It’s a powerful piece that should be read and shared by all.

Yes, King Solomon was right; *“Death and life are in the power of the tongue.”*

Choose wisely, today, what your legacy will be.

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