GOD SPOKE ANYWAY AT GROUND ZERO



September 11, 2011

In spite of pleas by Christian and Jewish clergy, Mayor Michael Bloomberg steadfastly refused to allow those who had brought spiritual comfort during the 9/11 tragedy to participate in the ten year Memorial at Ground Zero. The Mayor hadn't always felt that way. His first inclination was to include Feisal Abdul Rauf, the Muslim Imam who fought to build a Mosque at Ground Zero. But since the outcry against that was great, the Mayor decided to eradicate all expressions of faith including prayers.

"Rather than have disagreements over which religious leaders participate, we would like to keep the focus of our commemoration ceremony on the family members of those who died," Bloomberg spokeswoman, Evelyn Erskine told AP.

It must have been quite a surprise, then, when the President of the United States, Barack Obama, stood to deliver these words:

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, Though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, Though its waters roar and foam, Though the mountains tremble at its swelling."

Many are skeptical of Barack Obama's professed Christianity. He was raised by a mother with no faith, mentored, according to "Dreams from my Father," by communist-atheist Frank Marshall Davis. His earliest work was with radical-anti-God- Alinsky community organizers who counseled him to join a church if ever he expected to make progress in the Black Community. It would seem to many then, that as a means to an end, he spent twenty years at Jeremiah Wright's Church, supporting all forms of abortion and homosexual rights, listening to Louis Farrakhan's hate-filled rhetoric, praised by the adulterous, flamboyant, Pastor Wright.

President Obama continued with Psalm 46:

"There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, The holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.

The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; He utters his voice, the earth melts.

The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our fortress."

The God of Jacob? The God of Jacob is not Allah or Buddha or the Hindu Monkey God. He is the God of Jews and Christians. The first commandment he gave to Moses was not about adultery, theft or murder. It was "You shall have no other gods before me." When Moses asked what name for God he could utter as he delivered those commandments, God identified himself as "I am that I am...I cause to be what is." "I Am" sent Moses.

President Obama has told us on more than one occasion, we're no longer a Christian nation. "We are also a Jewish nation, a Muslim nation, and a Buddhist nation, and a Hindu nation, and a nation of nonbelievers." He even instructed his staff to cover a cross at Catholic Georgetown, so it wouldn't hang behind him as he spoke. But in a strong voice at Ground Zero, he assured the bereaved audience," The God of Jacob is our fortress." It's a good thing Feisal Abdul Rauf was not on the platform.

"Come, behold the works of the Lord, How he has brought desolations on the earth.

He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; He burns the chariots with fire.

"Be still, and know that I am God.
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!"

The Lord of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our fortress." (ESV)

Barack Obama surely knew Mayor Bloomberg had banned expressions of faith. Did he read this Biblical passage to fill a necessary void? Did he read it out of strong personal conviction that the God of Jacob should be exalted above all Gods? Or did he do it because it was a perfect twist at an opportune time to get his slumping poll numbers up in a huge constituency from which he needs support?

We can't possibly know, but one thing we can be sure of; The words he spoke inflicted a powerful rebuke to him, to Bloomberg and to all those who have spent years distancing themselves in embarrassment from the God of our Fathers, that same god millions of Americans sought refuge and blessing from just ten years ago.

Whatever Obama's reason, it was the God of Jacob's voice and only His voice we heard powerfully at Ground Zero. It just came in a way we weren't expecting it.