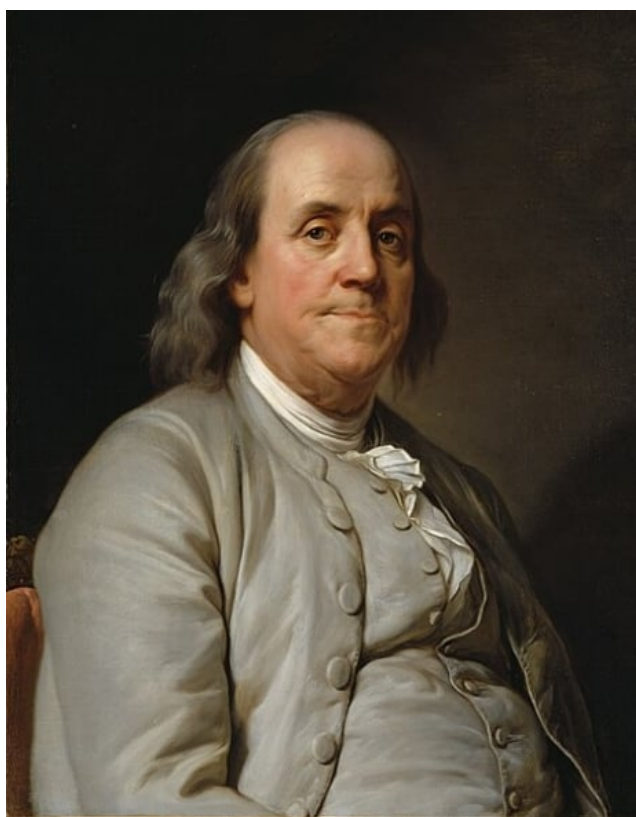


# Forgive One's Enemies but Not One's Friends

Best Advice Ever from Ben Franklin

By Phyllis Chesler

According to an article by Stacy Schiff, in the November edition of *The Atlantic*, Benjamin Franklin broke with the son who was once his closest friend and ally over their political



differences. Franklin's son was a British loyalist; Franklin was an American Revolutionary who described the royalists as a "fratricidal mongrel race." He did not rescue his son from years of bitter prison and, in fact, wrote this:

"We are commanded to forgive our enemies but we are nowhere commanded to forgive our friends."

And so Franklin, who studied electricity, has lit my way.

Two radical feminists in Australia with whom I share important feminist views, and who are fiercely opposed to the Jewish state—have not even sent a single line my way offering condolences and noting that the Intifada has indeed gone global, that it has landed on their own shores. Maybe they're

on vacation and cut off from the news. Maybe they still view such a Jihad attack, one probably strategized and funded by Iran and Qatar and “inspired” by ISIS—as justified because of Israel’s alleged “apartheid” and “occupation” of Palestinian lands. Maybe their letter is in the mail.

However, I fear that the same profound silence that once greeted us all after 10/7—immediately followed by venomous denunciations of the Jewish state—has begun again post the Bondi Beach massacre.

Let me note that I’ve received letters of support and condolence from mainly Christian feminists in the UK and in Ireland. Indeed, I’ve begun to work with a new group: Feminists Against Antisemitism. I’ve waited for a long time to see something like this emerge, and now it is here, and I am in its service. They are very brave, very principled feminists, clearly in the minority, but they may very well grow and flourish.

Of course, of course, my close friend and ally Mandy Sanghera, a British Sikh whose family came from India, and who got me involved in co-leading a group that rescued 400 women from Afghanistan, immediately wrote and posted a statement of outrage and support, which declared that she “stands by the Jewish people.”

None of the many Muslim and ex-Muslim feminists and dissidents with whom I’ve worked have, as yet, said a single word. I would have thought that at least they might have reached out to simply note that one very brave Syrian-born Australian Muslim, Ahmed al Ahmed, was the only hero in the Bondi Beach Jihad attack, who stopped one of the two shooters—and at great personal risk—while the Australian police apparently “froze” for at least ten if not twenty minutes.

Two supposedly pro-Israel Muslim women, whom I’ve previously interviewed and who have been royally funded by Jews, have not

written a word. I've been told that they are now going to Doha (!), perhaps in search of Qatari money. Maybe they've run through all that Jewish money? In any event, the points they wish to make in Doha have Israel much lower down on their list of urgent priorities. However, while their concern for Muslim-on-Muslim abandonment, cruelty, and indifference are all priority items, the downgrading of their pro-Israel advocacy is a bit disappointing. Suspicious perhaps.

Of course, many Jews, but not necessarily feminists, have been exchanging letters of outrage, sorrow, condolences, and defiance with me. And I with them. I wrote to some Chabad rabbis here—but wish I could have written to each and every Chabadnik in Australia.

I've not heard a word from those American and Israeli feminists who are still alive—well, they *are* institutionally, politically, and philosophically out to lunch, gone with the winds of time, misguided, dangerously wrong on so many issues. Nevertheless, these Jewish, Christian, atheist, and Marxist supporters of J Street, B'Tselem, If Not Now, and of the long-defunct Women's Studies departments, some of whom voted for Mamdani in NYC, maintain the same silence they kept after 10/7. Then, it took such American feminists at least two months to dare to sign a Democrat-approved petition, which was rather mealy-mouthed and torturously and fearfully "balanced." Afterwards, at least two of them finally published pieces blaming *other* feminists for having kept the silence. They are shameless in how they cover their asses and revise history. (I see you, I see what you do, it is only a matter of time before it becomes known to one and all as a matter of history.)

Not a single Jewish or Christian feminist involved with any of the left, liberal, anti-Israel, and pro-Marxist/Islamic groups has written to me. While they, too, might be in free fall (and here I am being quite magnanimous; no, really, I am being sarcastic)—they remain silent, carefully, vengefully, silent.

My closest feminist friend, Merle Hoffman, has of course been exchanging non-stop words of sorrow, anger, and support with me on the subject as have those with whom I am privileged to study Torah. My Zionist feminist friend, the great Daphne Patai, is right there with me. My editors at Jewish media have been all over the issue; they have published my work and said all the right things. I am thinking of Fern Sidman, Rochel Sylvetsky, Freema Gottlieb, Libbe Englander and others too numerous to name. Yes, all the Christian and Jewish pro-Israel pro-truth cognitive warriors with whom I communicate remain in close touch; they surpass even me in knowledge, concern, passion, rage, defiance, and expert ideas.

My son and my daughter-in-law, as well as the woman who is my lifetime partner, are, blessedly, "on the same page." Without their support, it would have been even harder to keep on. I am so lucky. I've heard of many families—spouses, parents, daughters and sons, children—who are, rather painfully, at odds.

And so, to quote Benjamin Franklin, I have finally been driven to never "forgive" these former and so-called friends or colleagues who could not even muster the decency to "reach out" with a word of sympathy. They might all be very educated, but in my view, they are no better than those who smirked as they tore down the posters of Israeli hostages still in captivity.

I am not personally affected in any way—not anymore—but I always like to be clear. After all, I've been enduring and absorbing anti-Jewish and anti-Israel attacks since 1971. Now, it's "goodbye to all that."

Sayonara. Khodahafez. Ma'aSalam. Gule Gule. Auf Weidersehen. Do svidanya. Arrivederci. Au Revoir. (But there will be no "next times.") Now, it is only Shalom you cowards.

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