

Bereshit Rabbah 1:5

Commentary on Genesis 1:1

Rabbi Huna quoted in Bar Kappara's name: *Let the lying lips be dumb (te'alamnah תְּאַלְמָנָה)* (Ps. 31:19): this means, Let them be bound, made dumb, and silenced.

“Let them be bound,” as in the verse, *For, behold, we were binding sheaves (me'allemim allumim)* (Gen. 37:7); “Let them be made dumb,” as you read, *Or who made a man dumb (illem אילם)* (Ex. 4:11); while “Let them be silenced” is its literal meaning.

Which speak (athak עֲתָק – “arrogantly”) against the righteous (Ps. loc. cit.), meaning, [which speak] against [the will of] the Righteous One, who is the Life of all worlds, on matters which He has withheld (*he'etik העתיק*) from His creatures [the mysteries of creation, and which may be studied by a select few]. *With pride (ib.)* in order to boast and say, “I discourse on the Creation narrative!” *And contempt (ib.)*: to think that he condemns My Glory! For R. Jose b. R. Hanina said: Whoever elevates himself at the cost of his fellow man's degradation has no share in the World to Come. How much the more then [when it is done at the expense of] the glory of God! And what is written after it? *Oh how abundant is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You (ib. 20).*

Said Rab: Let him [who irreverently disseminates esoteric teaching, and so is not of *those who fear You*] have none of Your abundant goodness.

In human practice, when an earthly monarch builds a palace on a site of sewers, dunghills, and garbage, if one says, “This palace is built on a site of sewers, dunghills, and garbage,” does he not discredit it? Thus, whoever comes to say that this world was created out of *tohu* and *bohu* (Gen. 1:2 *unformed and void*) and darkness, does he not indeed impair [God's glory]! R. Huna said in Bar Kappara's name: If the matter were not written, it would be impossible to say it, viz., *God created* (Gn. 1:1).