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Shabbat Shemot

שבת פ' שמות

Sat. 17 - 18 Jan. 2020 - 21st of Tevet, 5780

כ"א בטבת תש"פ

Issue Number 935

Baal Koreh <i>Yom Shabbat Kodesh</i>	Rabbi Asher Sebbag	(Page-292).
Mufteer & Haftarah	Mr Avishay Kestenbaum	(Page -8).

Mincha, Shir Hashirim, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit.	15:50
Shabbat Candles.	16:05
Shabbat Shahrit - Followed by Kiddush. (Shema 010:01).	08:30
Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a.	*
Mincha Shabbat - Followed by Seuda Shelishit. (*) (Sunset - 16:25).	15:50
Arbit Motzei Shabbat.	17:20
Shahrit Weekday - (Sunday - 7:30).	06:40
Mincha & Arbit.	16:00
Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a.	16:30
Next Friday: Mincha, Shir Hashirim, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit.	16:00
Next Friday: Candles. Shabbat. Va'eira	16:17

Shmot 5780 (Exodus 1:1-6:1)

Jan 12, 2020 | by [Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig](#)

GOOD MORNING! These past few weeks we have seen a truly frightening rise in violent antisemitic attacks, including nine (NINE!) attacks in the Greater New York area alone. Incredibly, these attacks closely followed the despicable murders at the kosher market in Jersey City just weeks before. 2019 closed with well over two hundred antisemitic incidents in New York, according to the New York Police Department.

Just this past week, I received the following message from a random reader, "Please remove me from your list, I have discovered the Kalergi Plan and want nothing to with Jews ever again."

The vile piece of hatred called The Kalergi Plan was written in 2005 by the

Neo-Nazi Gerd Honsik. It purports that there was a secret plan to mix white Europeans with other races. Somehow, the fact that Honsik was sentenced to five years in prison for Holocaust denial and other Nazi activities and is basically a total nut job, is apparently lost on many gullible people.

That such lies persist in the 21st century, a time of unprecedented access to knowledge and information gifted to us by the advent of technology, is simply stunning. How can anyone ignore all evidence and persist in their denial? The only explanation that I find plausible is that people will believe what they want to believe - regardless of the truth. Yet, why do people choose to believe ideas that all the available evidence establishes as false?

Perhaps we need to start at the beginning. Who was the first antisemite? This week's Torah portion gives us the answer. "A new king arose in Egypt...he said to his people, 'Behold the Children of Israel are more numerous and stronger than we. Come let us act wisely...'" (Exodus 1:8-10).

Pharaoh was the first person to identify the descendants of the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as a nation. Incredibly, IN THE VERY SAME BREATH he characterizes them as being "a problem." Thus we became the "Jewish Problem"; a label that has stuck and tragically followed us through three millennia of existence.

Pharaoh's solution, as we know, was to enslave the Jews; the first of a horrible trend of extermination and expulsion suffered by the Jews for thousands of years, culminating with the "Final Solution" to this "problem" put forth by the evil Adolph Hitler - may his name be eternally blotted out.

In order to understand this issue a little deeper we must examine how the Torah characterizes it. This week's Torah reading includes a fascinating insight; "And they (the Egyptians) were disgusted because of the Children of Israel" (*ibid.* 1:12).

About a thousand years ago the most famous Bible commentator in Jewish history, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki, explained this verse: "They (the Egyptians) were disgusted with their lives." He goes on to explain that the Hebrew word for "disgusted" comes from the Hebrew word "thorn" and the Talmud explains that the Children of Israel were like thorns in their eyes (*Talmud Sota* 11a).

On the face of it, these seem to be unrelated issues. Obviously having a thorn

in one's eye is painful, but what does this have to do with being disgusted?

From here we see an incredible insight, one from which we may derive the true root cause of antisemitism. What frustrated the Egyptians about the Jews? That the more they oppressed them the greater the Jews grew in number and in strength (*ibid.* 1:12).

Watching the Jews ascend to greater heights, no matter how poorly they were being treated, was supremely painful to them; akin to having a "thorn in one's eyes." Why was it so painful to them? Because seeing the Jewish people flourish even under the most difficult circumstances made them "disgusted with their own lives."

The real reason that Jews have been tortured, exiled, and exterminated for thousands of years is because our successes in each and every place we have been has made the local population feel terrible about themselves and highlighted their own inadequacies. But working on oneself to grow and achieve is hard work. Instead of trying to improve themselves they opted to remove the constant reminder of their own failures.

In 2005, I was on a very special trip known as "The March of the Living," which included tours of the concentration camps in Poland and Germany. What made the trip particularly special was the survivors of these camps who accompanied us and gave us a firsthand description of their experiences there.

From the survivors I learned a fascinating fact; in their experience, the biggest anti-Semites - the ones who were most malevolent and brutal - were the Ukrainians and the Poles. By contrast, the Germans, while far from being kind or humane, treated the whole affair as an impersonal business matter. The Jews

simply needed to be exterminated. But the Ukrainians and Poles were on a mission of hatred.

Two years ago, I drove through Poland and Ukraine. Outside of the larger cities, people were living the same way they did a thousand years ago, in hovels with a well in the front lawn for water and a single cow and some chickens for basic nutrition.

I then understood why in that part of the world antisemitism is "mother's milk" - what everyone is raised upon. Any success the Jews achieved was a constant reminder of their own miserable lives - because the Jews there had somehow managed to transcend the very same living conditions. Their solution? Let's get rid of the people that make us feel badly about ourselves.

My brother, Rabbi Akiva Zweig, delivered a brilliant and groundbreaking lecture on antisemitism when he was asked to give the keynote address at a symposium on antisemitism at Oxford University in London. His complete lecture can be found [here](#).

He posed the following simple, yet illuminating question: The Oxford English Dictionary defines a Semite as a member of any of the peoples who speak or spoke a Semitic language, including in particular Jews and Arabs. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, specifically names the Semites as number of peoples originating in southwestern Asia. These include Akkadians, Phoenicians, Hebrews, and Arabs.

Yet the VERY SAME dictionary defines antisemitism to be specifically referring to hostility or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group, to the exclusion of all others. How do we explain this phenomenon? On the one hand, a Semite is any member of many different peoples, but being an anti-Semite is defined as having a specifically anti-Jewish agenda?!? What gives?

His solution is perhaps the finest explanation of antisemitism that I have ever read or heard. Unfortunately it is beyond the scope of this edition - but if you follow the link above you can read it for yourself!

I will leave you with a parting thought on the subject. As we know everything that happen in this world is ultimately decreed by God. Rabbi Kalman Packouz of blessed memory used to approach everything that happened in his life with the following question, "What is God trying to tell me?" We too must ask, what is God trying to teach us by all these recent incidents of antisemitism?

Consider how when a nation gets attacked by an outside force it draws the people to form a unified bond (think of the patriotism following 9/11). I believe the message that we have to internalize is that we must stop the petty infighting between ourselves, our communities, and our people. Because if we don't create a unified nation, God will surely send us an enemy that will inexorably unite us and that will likely have harsh consequences.

So let's make the effort on our own to end all the petty arguments and divisiveness, and usher in God's ultimate redemption of the Jewish people and the entire world.

Midian when the deed becomes known, becomes a shepherd, and then is commanded by God at the Burning Bush to "bring My people out of Egypt." Moses returns to Egypt, confronts Pharaoh who refuses to give permission for the Israelites to leave. And then God says, "Now you will begin to see what I will do to Pharaoh!"



In loving memory of
Rabbi Kalman Packouz
Kalman Moshe ben
Reuven Avigdor
1950-2019
Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig



Dear family and friends
We are looking forward to celebrating with you the
SHABBAT CHATTAN of
Dina and Avishai

Where Avishai will be reading the Haftara.
Looking forward to seeing you all
Orna and Ghassan Cohen

Hot Kiddush: presented by Orna & Ghassan Cohen and Deborah & Jonathan Kestenbaum for the occasion,

Also: by Samira Shahsa, in memory her late husband **Yehaskel** ben Ragina Shasha ל"ה, (full year).

Security Alert: Please be very vigilant when you leave the Synagogue. Do not stand in groups and chat, go home without gathering on the main road. Be safe and alert.

Kolel every Sunday: We are still having a Kolel every Sunday at the Synagogue hall from 09.30am - 12.00pm. Everyone is welcome.

THE KEHILLA WISHES חיים ארוכים "LONG LIFE"
TO THE FOLLOWING WHO HAVE YAHRZEIT

02 Tevet	Dr. Maurice Gubbay	19 Tevet	Mr Nadhim Mouallim
03 Tevet	Mr Mayer Levy	20 Tevet	Mr Cesar Sassoon
03 Tevet	Mrs Gilda Aslan	20 Tevet	Mr Joe Sassoon
08 Tevet	Mr Yaakov Georgy	20 Tevet	Mr Robert M. E. Sassoon
08 Tevet	Mr Maurice Sheena	20 Tevet	Mr Maurice Lawee
05 Tevet	Mr Joseph Clement	24 Tevet	Mrs Naomi Sheena
09 Tevet	Mr Nissim Tricot	27 Tevet	Mrs Gracy Dallal
11 Tevet	Mr Zohair Ishak	28 Tevet	Mrs Naomi Cohen
14 Tevet	Mr Moshe Moses	29 Tevet	Mr Elie Abdulezer
16 Tevet	Mr Adrian H. Klein	29 Tevet	Mrs Doris Ezer
17 Tevet	Miss Nancy Dwek	29 Tevet	Mr Salem Abraham
18 Tevet	Mrs Naomi Cohen		

Join Prof Eliyahu Kelman on Sunday the 19th of January at 7.00pm till 8.30pm

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learn how to understand its depth and be really affected by its inner power

Ohel David Entrance fee donation of £5 to cover synagogue expenses

Refreshments served

Quote of the Week

**In spite of everything, I still believe that
people are really good at heart.**