

Weekly Torah Gatherings - Week of 2/10/21

Dear everyone,

I don't think it would surprise anyone that there seems to be a new and rising level of anti-Semitism in this country. Much of it appears as a phenomenon with such a wide array of manifestations and background causes, some of it emanating from economic deprivation, psychologically rooted manifestations of paranoia and conspiracy theories, not to even mention just pure unadulterated hatred for 'the other.' And here, unfortunately and dangerously, the Jews all too often find themselves serving as the '*coal miner's canary*' due to such blatant and virulent forms of these hatreds in the society at large.

- This story (above and note: see 'study materials attachment') has caught my attention for a variety of reasons, not the least of which, as you might note in this brief synopsis, that one no longer has to be a Gentile (i.e. a non-Jew) nor devoid of Jewish blood in your DNA to find yourself in a position to either possess or spout-out certain hatreds toward both Jews and Judaism.
- Let's bear in mind that some of the worst persecutors of Jewish history have been those born of Jewish households, often hiding behind masks that might otherwise reveal or suggest some form of discomfort (i.e. self hatred) within or toward their own Jewish bloodline (also: ethnicity) along with a personal self-enmity towards the religious beliefs of the Jewish tradition.
- This story also reveals to a fuller extent the degree to which 'tribal politics and party affiliation' have now seeped into the ugly realms of '*racist-anti-Jewish-sentiments*' and public outbursts.



- And finally, all of this has served to remind me that the insanity we see in the article of the street corner, while at first glance seems innocuous, still it is in no way comparable to the dangerous presence of an elected representative of the United States Congress railing on numerous videos and public pronouncements that the Jews have developed the technology to train lasers on their selected enemies. While there is even more, some of which is almost unmentionable, I am however not startled that her pronouncements are tolerated by her electorate (although I am disappointed).
- I am instead startled that she maintains the continued support of her mainstream political party which has often claimed to be a bastion of love and respect for the Jewish people. That there is support for her, rather than severe repercussions is as disheartening as it is angering. I should add, my thinking has always been, 'love us less,' we can do without your love.

And now pivoting to Minnesota . . .



- Of course in what otherwise might be perceived as 'whataboutism,' let me not leave you without my equal disappointment and disdain for 'the other political party' with their own claims of love of and loyalty to the Jewish people.
- For any number of reasons, we have a prominent United States House Representative who also unabashedly broadcasts blatant *racist-anti Semitism* all of which have become 'increasingly mainstream' especially in '*Progressive*' circles. All of this ironically comes from *the Minnesota-based-Somali-born-Representative Ilan Omar* who defines her own race-driven-identity-politics by calling out the question of

the legitimacy of the Jewish State and the overriding influence of monies donated by citing the Jewish names which she has almost gleefully reported in an almost mantra like defense of her accusations of Jew-money used for manipulative purposes. It's almost as good as what we could find in the anti Semitic and racist 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion,' and yet it is just as insidious.

- Let's remember her famous words in referring to the overtly Jewish names she was quick to recite: 'it's all about the Benjamins.'
- She is a racist because she defines her own crude anti Semitic crusade on the basis of race and in her own particular way of defining and separating out 'good and evil' with her obscenity-laden- perspective that *the Jews are not an indigenous people* and have no human right to their ancestral homeland nor the right to defend themselves against another people of color who magically appear to match her narrative and just as magically appear to demand the very rights of the Jewish people. She willfully cites (all of this) while manipulating to her purpose, however erroneous it may be, the very nomenclature of race.
- And while this is not only startling, and rather appallingly so, this Representative was never specifically called out nor censured by her own party, nor taken off of her committee assignments. There was a white-washed Congressional condemnation (pun not intended) of many forms of hatred, yet she was intensionally "shielded" from individual condemnation -- and by whom you ask yes, that's correct, the Democratic party.
- For the record, it might be interesting to peruse her committee assignments which remain to this day, it might both startle and apall you as well.

I am hoping to see everyone this Wednesday evening at 7:00 PM EST and then again on Sunday at 3:00 PM EST. There is much to examine, not only on the streets of Miami Dade, but in the *Halls of Congress*, around the nation and throughout the world.

We have come to a time in which we appear to have arrived at a 'new normal,' and yet I find it appalling not only as-to-what-we-will tolerate -- but in the 'shielding from criticism and condemnation' that one should expect when fomenting such words from the most powerful pulpit on earth. Racist anti Semitism requires a repeated response and this response remains sorely lacking.

- "I can't be anti Semitic because I am a Jew . . ."
- "I can't be a racist because I am a Black Somali African American . . ."

We must never succumb to the new normal, for if we do, we become complicit in the crime itself.

"The whole world is but a very narrow bridge, the main point is not to be afraid." Rabbi Nachman of Bratslov

"Of really anything . . ." Rabbi Seth Frisch

Stay tuned, but in the meantime . . .

Warm regards,

Seth