

Perceptions • Tammuz 9, 5785 • July 5, 2025 • Issue #2103

Chukas

Last week I received a forwarded email that was titled, “Joseph Goebbels Could Have Written This in the 1930s.” They weren’t kidding. It was a page right out of the Nazi Propaganda Playbook, except that it was current. It talked about “good Jews” who rejected everything Zionist, and “bad Jews” (anyone remotely supportive of Israel and its current government), against whom tactical nukes should be used. They even blamed the war against Iran on “Zionistic genocidal tendencies.”

I wish I could say that the person who wrote it was simply misguided, but they said the same thing about Goebbels in his time. I wish I could say that his opinion was only personal and represented no threat to the Jewish people, but they said the same thing about Hitler, *ysh"z*, and his “magnum opus,” *Mein Kampf*. I would like to believe that people like that come and go, barking a lot more than biting, but Jewish history argues otherwise.

If I had to amend the subject heading of the email, I would add to it: “And the Jews of the Diaspora Could Be the Jews of 1930 Europe.” I have relatives living in North America who see what is going on, but refuse to see the events of today as warnings. Even as I was writing this, I got a message from someone with a picture from a Milano, Italy, shop window, saying, “Israeli Not Welcome.”

The Italians have never really been our allies, especially since Rome is the headquarters of the Catholic people who have always considered Judaism a painful thorn in their side. They’d like to believe that God changed His mind about His chosen peo-

Dedicated in loving memory of

Yisroel Ya'akov ben Tzvi, z"l,
niftar on Tammuz 8, 5772.

May his *Neshamah* have *aliyah* after *aliyah*, and may he continue to be a *meilitz yosbar* for *Klal Yisroel*, especially during these difficult times.

Family Winston

ple and chose the Catholics as their replacement. Preposterous, for sure, but also a good reason to go on crusades to force Jews to convert or murder them.

It started as early as in this week's *parsha*, at the border of Edom, Eisav's descendants, and Rome's predecessors. All the Jewish people wanted to do was peacefully pass through their land on the way to *Eretz Yisroel*. They even offered to do some business while there to give revenue to the locals. This was Edom's response:

But he said, "You shall not pass through!" and Edom came out toward them with a vast force and with a strong band. (Bamidbar 20:20)

Even if you want to say that Edom was paranoid and didn't trust the Jewish People to pass through their land, still, they saw God accompanying them on their journey. They weren't just saying no to the Jewish nation. They were saying no to God Himself! How crazy was that?

Nevertheless, the Jewish nation turned away without incident. God didn't seem to say anything. Edom was left untouched and unbothered, but what a reaction! It was so out of proportion to the request that others might have jumped all over it. You can sense the deep-seated hatred of Eisav for Ya'akov even thousands of years later through a couple of verses.

I remember thinking how fortunate our generation was to have escaped all the Anti-Semitism of the past, and how much better and civilized the world had become since the Holocaust. I felt comfortable being a Jew everywhere I went and safe to travel anywhere I chose.

But that was thirty years ago. I'm not surprised that Anti-Semitism has returned, given my line of work. I even predicted it, based upon the rules of Jewish history and the goals of Creation. I'm just surprised by how it did, and how fast. Forty years ago, most Palestinians lived in the Middle East, and most Islamic haters of Jews and Israel were in their home countries. Today they have emigrated all over the Western world and, unlike immigrants of the past who were grateful to be accepted and wanting to blend in, they resent their host nations and want to make them like the worlds they came from.

This has meant that millions of Jews who once lived in friendly and supportive host countries suddenly found themselves among hostiles without going anywhere. The hostility came to them and surrounds them. Their property and sense of entitlement bind them there, making Jews vulnerable, once again, to their sworn enemies.

Oh, and please do not tell me that they are only against Israelis, and not Jews in general. That's like secular Jews in the early 1940s watching their Jewish neighbors dragged from their homes and shipped to the camps thinking, "They won't come for

me because I am different . . . totally assimilated into German society with no connections to Judaism whatsoever.” Hitler and the SS begged to differ.

And you know why? As the GR”A explained, it has nothing to do with how religious you look or don’t, or any kind of politics. Contrary to how it may look to the un-knowledgeable, all of that is just the pretext to draw the enemies out to do their hateful things, like Pharaoh being “inspired” by Moshe’s demands to increase Jewish suffering. It is darkest before the dawn, especially when it comes to Jewish history and redemption.

It is only human to hate pain and suffering. It is quite Jewish to worry about pleasant exiles going south. But it is also reckless to take your chances and bet that, when history starts down this dark, Anti-Semitic path, that things will get better and not worse if you’re in the wrong place at the wrong time. As the GR”A explains over and over again, upcoming redemptions, like births, are always preceded by the world turning against the Jewish people.

I, for one, would love to transition into the Messianic Era without another scratch on the Jewish people. I do not need or want Jews who rejected *aliyah* to suffer because they did, or others to get cut off because they cut themselves off from all things Jewish. What do I care who makes it safely to redemption as long as I do and those whom I worry about? Judgment is God’s, not ours.

But that’s not the way things roll in Jewish history. Call it a *chok*, a statute, a law that we cannot fathom, but it is the way of our people. History seems to need it, and though I can explain some of it away, I’m still left unable to accept it and what may come our way because of it.

The *parsha* begins with a Rashi that tells of the disdain of the world for the Jewish People. The *Parab Adumah* didn’t create it, or any of the other *chukim*. It just surfaced it, just as Israel is surfacing anti-Jewishism around the world. But the *parsha* ends with the Jewish People turning the hatred of other nations back onto themselves. The Jewish People are still here today after three millennia. Its haters of the past are not, and the current ones will go that way too. We just need faith, patience, and it certainly doesn’t hurt to be living where God wants you to *ultimately*.

Wishing all of you a Good Shabbos, and all of us a safe redemption.

Pinchas Winston

thirtysix.org / shaarnunproductions.org

UPCOMING SEMINAR: Unlock the Gates: We are told that the Gates of Prayer are closed. This is a class about opening them up again. July 4,

2025, 8:30 p.m. Israel time. Registration here: