

Two Or Three Things I'm Learning About Antisemitism.

Erev Shabbat Services on January 13 and 20

Part One

Dear Friends,

I hope you will forgive me for beginning the New Year with such a topic. For the last several months I had been studying profoundly painful areas in the history of modern political antisemitism, which led me to the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, Project Paperclip, and a rather broad topic with a frightening title: *The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism*.

We can sense a rise in anxiety simply by reading this list of topics, and thus see how antisemitism works on our inner lives.

When anything went wrong in Russia in the 19th century and early 20th Jews got blamed. Antisemitism of any form; political, religious, economic or social seem to have a natural home in autocratic czarist Russia.

Antisemitism in America today is a very different story, but it is dangerous and it is complicated. If the success of Jewish candidates in the recent election does indeed suggest a very different story here than in czarist Russia, so does the surreal candidacy and election, and honoring by a right wing Jewish coalition of a man who it turns out only posed as Jewish, George Santos.

Actually Santos was one of several GOP candidates who posed as Jews. As columnist Harry Siegel wrote in the New York Daily News:

I'm not entirely sure what this new pseudo philosemitism is about, but I know it never ends well for Jews, or really anyone, when people can't stop obsessing about the Jews.

My reflections on antisemitism will be a look back to re-understand its history, and candid suggestions about where we are today.

Sending a healthy, peaceful New Year.

Alan