

Dear Editor,

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and the liberal media have two sets of standards when it comes to commenting on what Biden says versus what Trump says. Schumer and many in the media are critical with Presidential candidate Donald Trump's most recent comment, "Any Jewish person that votes for Democrats hates their religion, they hate everything about Israel and should be ashamed of themselves because Israel will be destroyed." I don't recall any significant moral outrage from reporters, editorial boards and political commentators when in 2020 Biden said, "If you have a problem figuring out whether you're for me or Trump, then you ain't black." Senator Schumer did not take to the Senate floor to criticize Biden's comments, which millions of African American citizens found condescending and racist.

Sincerely, Larry Penner Great Neck, NY

Dear Editor.

For all those espousing faux outrage at former President Donald Trump for stating the obvious, they are among the deranged part of the political system. The Democrat Party used to be the party where Jews felt most comfortable. Now, it is obvious that the party has abandoned its Jewish base. When the heads of the party – Biden and Schumer – both throw Israel, a true ally of the United States, under the bus and instead push for a ceasefire and a victory for Hamas, then we know that the party is no longer representing the principles of those who value peace and conservatism.

A ceasefire is a signal to Hamas: you will get whatever you want as long as you slaughter hundreds of Jews and hold 135 of them hostage.

The Democrat Party is no longer the party for me.

Sincerely, Avi L.

Dear Editor.

Chametz spelled backwards is tzemach, a sprouting. This is logical since chametz is indicative of ego and haughtiness, as the Gemara (Berachot 17a) indicates the yetzer hara is like the yeast in the dough. Tzemach, though, is representative of a small sprouting, rooted in the ground and springing forth.

When one thinks of tzemach, they think of the bracha in Shemoneh Esrei, "Et tzemach Dovid – the sprouting of Dovid." We know tzemach is a reference to Moshiach, as the verse (Zecharia 6:12) says, "Thus said G-d of Hosts: Behold, a man called the Branch shall branch out from the place where he is, and he shall build the Temple of G-d." The branch translated as tzemach is representative of the Messianic kingdom that will sprout forth to build the Temple.

Dovid, of course, saw himself "not even as high as a worm," yet his supplications to grow are unparalleled. His ability to "branch out" was boundless, but he knew he was a mere sprout that was looking to grow but never formed.

It is in the first chapter of Tehillim that we see Dovid pronounce, "He is like a tree planted beside streams of water, which yields its fruit in season, whose foliage never fades, and whatever it produces thrives." Dovid's ideal Jew is one who is continuously sprouting forth with vigor and vibrancy, never retiring to rote practice, but rooted in the ground.

Purim, which we just celebrated, is the necessary holiday that must precede Pesach. Purim is about *simcha*, from the root word *machah*, to wipe away, because one must negate their essence to come close to and exalt in the redemption of G-d. Only one fully reliant can reach a level of belief that allows reliance.

We now leave a state of negation with the knowledge that G-d runs every detail of nature and enter a sphere of the miraculous, knowing that the miraculous exists in every moment.

Steven Genack

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