

1. Is Voting a Mitzvah?

<http://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/864719/>

2. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Public letter, 1984

On reaching the shores of the United States, Jews found a safe haven. The rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights have allowed us the freedom to practice our religion without interference and to live in this republic in safety. A fundamental principle of Judaism is *hakaras hatov* – recognizing benefits afforded us and giving expression to our appreciation. Therefore, it is incumbent upon each Jewish citizen to participate in the democratic system which safeguards the freedoms we enjoy. The most fundamental responsibility incumbent on each individual is to register and to vote. Therefore, I urge all members of the Jewish community to fulfill their obligations by registering as soon as possible, and by voting. By this, we can express our appreciation and contribute to the continued security of our community.

3. [www.jewschoosetrump.org](http://www.jewschoosetrump.org)

"JewsChooseTrump.org is thrilled to have played a role in the seismic shift in the American choice of governance," Carol Greenwald, Jews Choose Trump chair said early Wednesday morning, following the Trump/Pence victory. "President-elect Trump is a man who will restore this country's role as the defender of our great history and the guardian of our future."

"Donald Trump and Mike Pence are both devoted to our nation's security and to the well-being of our greatest ally and the bulwark against Islamic Terrorism, Israel," said Richard Allen, JewsChooseTrump.org co-founder. "Respect for our allies and unrelenting vigilance against our enemies is the way America will be led going forward."

Vote for Me?

4. Talmud, Bava Metzia 62a

If two people were traveling, one of them holding a pitcher of water, and the result of both drinking would be that they would both die, but if one would drink then he would reach civilization:

Ben Petura taught: Better for both to drink and die, rather than for one to see the other die.

Rabbi Akiva taught: It is written, 'The life of your brother will be with you' - Your life precedes that of your brother.

5. Leviticus 25:35-36

Should your brother become poor with you, you shall hold on to him, the stranger, the resident, and he shall live with you. Do not take interest from him, and you shall revere Hashem your Gd; and the life of your brother shall be with you.

6. Talmud, Sanhedrin 2b-3a

We do not require experts judges, because of Rabbi Chanina's principle: Biblically, both financial and capital matters should require extensive interrogation of witnesses. Why did they say that financial matters do not require extensive interrogation? To avoid locking the door before borrowers.

Three Roles for Government

7. Rashi (11<sup>th</sup> century France) to Talmud, Gittin 9b

[We do not recognize a *get* from a non-Jewish court] because they are not subject to the laws of divorce and marriage. However, [we would recognize other documents because] they are subject to the Noachide laws.

8. Ramban (13<sup>th</sup> century Spain) to Genesis 34:13

In my view, the mitzvah of Laws included in the seven Noachide mitzvot is not only to establish judges in every region. HaShem instructed them in the laws of theft and fraud and cheating and employee wages and guardians...

9. Deuteronomy 16:18

Judges and officers you shall place in all of your gates...

10. Talmud, Moed Katan 5a

The courts go to de-thorn paths, fix roads and plazas, and measure *mikvaot*... And how do we know that if they fail to do this, then they are biblically liable for any blood which is spilled, as though they had done it? Deuteronomy 19:10 says, "[Innocent blood shall not be shed in your land...] and the blood will be on your head."

11. Talmud, Bava Batra 8b

Townpeople may make rules for measures and prices and wages, and may fine those who violate the norms.

12. Rabbi Shlomo ibn Aderet (13<sup>th</sup> century Spain), Responsum 3:393

If you were to establish everything on the basis of biblical law, and you would not punish other than as the Torah does for injuries and the like, the world would be ruined, for we would require witnesses and warnings...

Three Models of Voting

13. Rabbi Avigdor Miller, cited in *The Values Vote*, Ami Magazine 2-1-2012

I'm not afraid of Russia personally. The President, who is against Russia, is against them for his own reasons, because they are the Big Bad Wolf and they are having an arms race with nuclear ballistic missiles. Our interest has nothing to do with that. We're not afraid of them; we just have to stand against them because they are kofrim [deniers] in Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

14. Rabbi Myer Schwab, cited in *The Values Vote*, Ami Magazine 2-1-2012

If it would come out that the frum Jews voted for and put into office someone whose behavior was despicable by all standards of humanity— that decent people everywhere consider abominable—if it became known that the frum Jews of Boro Park or Monsey or New York voted for him, it would be a chillul Hashem, and chillul Hashem trumps everything.

15. Rabbi Shlomo ibn Aderet (13<sup>th</sup> century Spain), Responsum 2:134

The king's order to make an entrance and doors in the middle of the neighbourhood to protect the nation is within his authority. The law of Jewish kings is equal to that of the nations in this regard.

16. Rabbi Moshe Isserles (16<sup>th</sup> century Poland), Code of Jewish Law Choshen Mishpat 163:1

For any community matter on which they cannot find common ground, they should convene all taxpayers, and they should agree that each will voice his view altruistically, and they will follow the majority.

17. Rabbi Moshe Sofer (18<sup>th</sup> century Hungary), Chatam Sofer Choshen Mishpat 160

The people of a certain town gathered to hire a rabbi and teacher, and they agreed regarding four rabbis to place their names into a box, and then to vote on each name as it would be withdrawn... The third candidate won the majority of votes. After several days, the masses raised a stormy voice, for many of the people had accepted monetary bribes from the relatives of that rabbi, to appoint him upon them... It is as obvious as the kashrut of an egg in yogurt that this vote is void, for they were required to voice their opinions altruistically, as recorded by Rabbi Moshe Isserles...

18. Talmud, Sanhedrin 26a

Hezekiah was afraid, saying, "Perhaps, Gd forbid, Gd follows the majority, and since the majority wishes to surrender [to Sancherev], so must we!" The prophet [Isaiah] came and told him, "Do not say *kesher* [in context here: a ruling majority] whenever this nation says *kesher*. (Isaiah 8:12)" Meaning: It is a *kesher* of the wicked, and the *kesher* of the wicked does not count.