

Promotional Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMWDzZx-A8>

Vignettes

- 1) A political candidate repeatedly and defiantly ignored lockdown rules, visiting friends and participating in parties from March through June. These actions contradict the halachic rulings of a Jewish community's *mara d'asra*. However, the candidate supports the Jewish community on many issues. May members of that community work with the candidate and his backers to organize a "Get Out the Vote" campaign explicitly supporting the candidate?
- 2) The Premier of a province smuggled ventilators into Canada from Iran, violating international sanctions and federal law. May a Jewish organization help the Premier to craft messages aimed at building support for her government (on other issues) within the Jewish community?
- 3) An organization promotes law-breaking as a form of civil disobedience in response to the death of George Floyd at the hands of police. They are also outspoken supporters of funding for religious schools. May a Jewish organization partner with them in pursuing litigation supporting funding for religious schools, if they also issue a public statement condemning law-breaking?

"Under Gd"

1. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (20th century USA), *Confrontation* (1964)

We cooperate with the members of other faith communities in all fields of constructive human endeavor, but, simultaneously with our integration into the general social framework, we engage in a movement of recoil and retrace our steps. In a word, we belong to the human society and, at the same time, we feel as strangers and outsiders.

2. Asa

- Divrei haYamim II 14 Destroys idolatry, Builds up Torah observance, Cries out to Gd for help and is answered
 Divrei haYamim II 15 As instructed, removes idolatry, creates a Covenant with Gd, donates to the Beit haMikdash
 Divrei haYamim II 16 Bribes Aram to defend him against Yisrael, is criticized, and stops relying on Gd

3. Yehoshaphat

- Divrei haYamim II 17 Gd is with him, Ends idolatry, Sets up Torah study
 Divrei haYamim II 18 Marries Achav's sister, Goes to war beside Achav against Aram
 Divrei haYamim II 19 Rebuked by a prophet for joining with Achav, Sets up judges and leads the Jews to Gd
 Divrei haYamim II 20a Prays for Gd's help against Moav/Amon, obeys the prophet and is saved, thanks Gd
 Divrei haYamim II 20b Joins with Achazyah ben Achav on business, criticized by a prophet, venture fails

4. Midrash, Avot d'Rabbi Natan I 9

ואל תתחבר לרשע מלמד שלא יתחבר אדם עם אדם רע ולא עם אדם רשע שכן מצינו ביהושפט שנתחבר עם אחאב ועלה עמו רמות גלעד [ויצא עליו קצף מאת ד' [שנאמר "הלרשע לעזור ולשונאי ד' תאהב ובזאת עליך קצף מלפני ד'"] (דה"י ב' י"ט ב') שוב נתחבר לאחזיה ויעשו אניות בעציון גבר] ופרץ ד' את מעשיו שנאמר בהתחברך עם אחזיה פרץ ד' את מעשיך וישברו אניות (דה"י ב' כ' ל"ז).

"And do not join with the wicked" – This teaches that one should not join with a bad person or a wicked person. For so we found with Yehoshaphat that he joined with Achav and ascended with him to Ramot Gilad and Divine anger burst out against him. [It is as Divrei haYamim II 19:2 says, "Would you aid the wicked, and love those who hate Gd? And because of this, Divine wrath is against you."] Again, he joined Achaziah and they made boats in Etzion Gaver, and Hashem smashed his creations, as Divrei haYamim II 20:37 says, "'When you joined with Achaziah, Gd smashed your creations,' and the boats were broken."

5. King Yehoshaphat: Strange Bedfellows <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/940622/>

6. Yeshayah 7:7-9 (tr. JPS 1985, from sefaria.org)

(ז) פה אָמַר ד' אַלְקִים לֹא תִקְוּם וְלֹא תִהְיֶה: (ח) כִּי רֹאשׁ אֲרָם דְּמִשְׁקָא וְרֹאשׁ דְּמִשְׁקָא רְצִין וְבַעוּד שִׁשִּׁים וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנָה יִסַּח אֲפָרַיִם מֵעַם: (ט) וְרֹאשׁ אֲפָרַיִם שְׁמֵרוֹן וְרֹאשׁ שְׁמֵרוֹן בְּן רְמַלְיָהוּ אִם לֹא תִאֲמִינוּ כִּי לֹא תִאֲמִנוּ:

Thus said my Lord Gd: It shall not succeed, It shall not come to pass. For the chief city of Aram is Damascus, And the chief of Damascus is Rezin; The chief city of Ephraim is Samaria, And the chief of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. And in another sixty-five years, Ephraim shall be shattered as a people. If you will not believe, for you cannot be trusted..."

7. Talmud, Sanhedrin 104a

כל המזמן עובד ע"ז לתוך ביתו ומשמש עליו גורם גלות לבניו, שנאמר "ומבניך אשר יצאו ממך אשר תוליד יקחו והיו סריסים בהיכל מלך בבל".
Anyone who invites an idolater into his home and serves him causes exile for his descendants, as it says...

8. 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.

The Laws of Choosing an Ally

9. Rabbi Ovadia of Bartenura (15th century Italy, Jerusalem), Comment to Avot 1:7

למה הדבר דומה, לנכנס לביתו של בורסי, אף על פי שלא לקח ממנו כלום מ"מ ריה רע קלט והוציא עמו:

To what may this be compared? To one who enters a tanner's house. Even though he takes nothing, still, he absorbs the foul scent, and takes it out with him.

10. Rabbi Shimon ben Tzemach Duran (14th-15th century Majorca, Algiers), Magen Avot to Avot 1:7

וכלל בזה כל התחברות בין בעסק משא ומתן בין בחברת אהבה, כי כשהוא מתחבר עמו הוא מחזק את ידו להוסיף על חטאתו פשע, כי הרשע אומר מה אני מפסיד במעשי הרעים והלא כל בני אדם הם מחבבים אותי ומתחברים אלי.

This includes all joining, commercial and social, for joining with him strengthens his hand to add to his sins. The wicked person says, "What do I lose with my bad deeds? Everyone loves me and joins me."

11. Rambam (12th century Egypt), Mishneh Torah, Laws of Robbery 5:1

אסור לקנות דבר הגזול מן הגזול... שכל העושה דברים אלו וכיוצא בהן מחזק ידי עוברי עבירה ועובר על ולפני עור לא תתן מכשול

One may not purchase stolen goods from a thief... Doing such things strengthens the hands of sinners and violates "Do not put a stumbling block before the blind."

12. Vayikra 19:17

לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך ולא תשא עליו חטא.

Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke (educate) your friend, and do not bear sin for him.

13. Rabbi Myer Schwab (1990's), 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.

An Opposing Pole

14. Talmud, Sotah 41b

מותר להחניף לרשעים בעולם הזה שנאמר +ישעיהו לב+ לא יקרא עוד לנבל נדיב ולכילי לא יאמר שוע מכלל דבעולם הזה שרי ר' שמעון בן לקיש אמר מהכא +בראשית לג+ כראות פני אלקים ותרצני

One may flatter the wicked in this world. Isaiah 32:5 says, "[In the future] the repellent person will not be called generous, and the stingy person will not be called giving" – but in this world, one may do so. Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish cited Genesis 33:10, "Seeing you is like seeing the face of Gd, and you have accepted me."

15. Talmud, Nedarim 22a

עולא במיסקיה לארעא דישראל איתלוו ליה תריין בני חוזאי בהדיה קם חד שחטיה לחבריה אמר ליה לעולא יאות עבדי אמר ליה אין ופרע ליה בית השחיטה כי אתא לקמיה דר' יוחנן א"ל דלמא חס ושלום אחזיקי ידי עוברי עבירה א"ל נפשך הצלת

When Ulla ascended to Israel, he was accompanied by two people of Mechoza. One killed the other, and then said to Ulla, "Did I do well?" Ulla replied, "Yes, and open his throat [to kill him faster]!" When Ulla came to Rabbi Yochanan he said, "Gd forbid, did I strengthen the hand of a sinner?" He replied, "You saved your life."

16. Rabbi Yitzchok Frankfurter, *The Values Vote*, Ami Magazine 2-1-2012

I wasn't brought up in a community that was trying to impose Jewish values on others. Rather we were very happy to be able to preserve our Yiddishkeit and practice it in this medinah shel chessed... I spoke to Rav Reuven Feinstein... He told me that Rav Moshe did not believe that family values would outweigh a politician's support for yeshivos.

17. Talmud, Kiddushin 71a

בימי רבי פנחס בקשו לעשות בבל עיסה לארץ ישראל אמר להם לעבדו כשאני אומר שני דברים בבית המדרש טלוני בעריסה ורוצו כי עייל אמר להם אין שחיטה לעוף מן התורה אדיתבי וקמעייני בה אמר להו כל ארצות עיסה לארץ ישראל וארץ ישראל עיסה לבבל נטלוהו בעריסה ורוצו רצו אחריו ולא הגיעוהו ישבו ובדקו עד שהגיעו לסכנה ופירשו

During the time of Rabbi Pinchas they wished to challenge Babylonian Jewish lineage, as compared to that of Israeli Jews. Rabbi Pinchas told his servants, "After I make two statements in the study hall, put me on the litter and run." He entered and said, "There is no biblical source for the *shechitah* requirements of a bird." While the sages were examining this statement, he added, "All lands are of questionable lineage compared with Israel, but Israel is of questionable lineage when compared to Babylon." They put him on the litter and ran; the sages pursued, but could not catch him. They then convened and investigated Israeli lineages until they reached a point of danger, and then desisted.

18. Rabbi Moshe Isserles (16th century Poland), Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 157:1

מכל מקום בדבר שיש חשש סכנה אין צריך להוציא ממונו על זה
Still, where there is concern for danger one need not spend for the purpose of rebuke.

19. Tosafot (13th century France/Germany) Shabbat 55a **ראע"ג**

היינו היכא דספק אי מקבלי כדאמר בסמוך לפנייהם מי גלוי אבל היכא דודאי לא מקבלי הנה להם מוטב שיהו שוגגין ואל יהיו מזידין
This is where one does not know whether they will accept; as the Talmud says, "Is it obvious to them [that others won't listen]?" But where they definitely will not accept, leave them; better for them to sin accidentally than intentionally.

Review Questions

- Name Jewish kings who were condemned for alliances which betrayed faith in G-d.
- What are the four levels of problems in creating partnerships with our halachic opposites?
- What are three Halachic justifications for these alliances?
- What are three steps we can take to mitigate the effects of such alliances?

20. Yeshayahu 19:18-25

ביום ההוא יהיו חמש ערים בארץ מצרים מדברות שפת פנעו ונשבעות לד' צבקות עיר ההרס יאמר לאחת: ביום ההוא יהיה מזבח לד' בתוך ארץ מצרים ומצבה אצל גבולה לד': יהיה לאות ולעד לד' צבקות בארץ מצרים כי יצחקו אל ד' מפני לחצים וישלח להם מושיע רב והצילם: ונדע ד' למצרים וידעו מצרים את ד' ביום ההוא ועבדו זבח ומנחה ונדרו נדר לד' ושלמו: ונגף ד' את מצרים נגף נרפוא ושבנו עד ד' ונעמנו להם ורפאם: ביום ההוא תהיה מסלה ממצרים אשורה ובא אשור במצרים ומצרים באשור ועבדו מצרים את אשור: ביום ההוא יהיה ישראל שלישיה למצרים ולאשור ברכה בקרב הארץ: אשר ברכו ד' צבקות לאמר ברוך עמי מצרים ומעשה ידי אשור ונחלתי ישראל:

On that day, five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by Hashem, Lord of multitudes; one of them shall be called "City of Destruction". On that day, there will be an altar of Gd in the land of Egypt, and a monument for Gd at her border. And it will be a sign and witness for Hashem, Lord of multitudes, in the land of Egypt: when they cry out to Gd before their oppressors, and He will send them a redeemer and leader, who will save them. And Gd will be known to Egypt, and Egypt shall know Gd on that day, and they will serve Gd with sacrifices and gifts, and they will vow to Gd and fulfill it. And Gd will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to Gd, and Gd will respond to them and heal them. On that day, there will be a road from Egypt toward Assyria, and Assyria will come to Egypt and Egypt to Assyria, and Egypt will serve with Assyria. On that day Israel will be a triad with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the land, as Gd has blessed it, saying, "Blessed is My nation Egypt, the work of My hand Assyria, My portion Israel."