**Class # 7 – The Impeachment Inquiry and the Perils of Jewish Success**

Senior Fellowship Leadership Program

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10 Steps to Redemption

**Successful Jews: USA and Ukraine**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKbOKbOPTUA>

The Jewish players in the latest affair:

1. Ukraine’s new president, Volodymyr Zelensky
2. Jared Kushner – chief strategist for President for the impeachment
3. **Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman**are associates of [Rudy Giuliani](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudy_Giuliani) who have aided him with his search in [Ukraine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukraine) for detrimental information on U.S. President [Donald Trump](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Trump)'s political opponents

**The impeachers:**

1. Rep. Adam Schiff – Democrat Congressman from California - Schiff took a personal mission to investigate Trump's connections to Russia, separate from the investigation by the Special Counsel
2. Jerry Nadler – Democrat Congressman [NY] He has also been [Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_Committee_on_Judiciary) since 2019.
3. Eliot Engel -Democrat Congressman [NY] he took over as Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.
4. **Alexander Vindman**  is a [United States Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army) [lieutenant colonel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lieutenant_Colonel_(United_States)) who serves as the Director for European Affairs and chief advisor on Ukraine for the [United States National Security Council](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Security_Council_(United_States)) (NSC). Vindman came to national attention in October 2019 when he testified before the [United States Congress](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Congress) regarding the [Trump–Ukraine scandal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trump%E2%80%93Ukraine_scandal).

**Pirkai Avot 1:10**

Shemaiah and Abtalion received [the oral tradition] from them. Shemaiah used to say: love melacha (craft;professional work), hate acting the superior, **and do not attempt to draw near to the ruling authority.**

Questions

1. Why would someone NOT love melacha- how else is one to get ones needs?
2. How is being a superior a strategy for avoiding the indignity of melacha?
3. How is drawing near the authority a strategy for avoiding lowly melacha?
4. Why is drawing near a Non Jewish authority (Pharaoh, Trump) even more perilous than doing so with a Jew?
5. What strategy of leaders such as Trump is the Pirkei Avos mindful of?
6. Are the successful Jews listed above being mindful of this Pirkei Avos?
7. What was Joseph’s Goshen plan limiting pursuit of high office in Egypt? Why didn’t Joseph’s Goshen plan work?
8. Does Joseph’s “laying low” approach to Anti-Semitism mean that no one should assume high office? Didn’t Joseph himself have a high office?
9. During World War Two, the American Jewish community took a timid approach in dealing with President Franklin Roosevelt in pushing him to deal with immigration and bombing the concentration camps. Those efforts failed. What lesson did we learn?
10. How do we reconcile the lesson of WW2 with the Pirkei Avos?

Application of the Pirkei Avos lesson to today:

1. President Trump says that Jews who oppose him are “ungrateful” and “disloyal”. What do you think the “Republican street” is saying about Nadler, Schiff [“little shifty Schiff”] and Engel being so visible in the impeachment effort of President Trump?
2. If President Trump is actually impeached, what do you think the “Republican street” will say about Nadler, Schiff and Engel?
3. There is a well known saying: its not WHAT you know, its WHO you know. Does Pirkei Avos agree?
4. Give examples of too much honing skills.
5. Give examples of too much networking.
6. Is success measured in job title and salary alone or are there other factors to consider? (stress & corruption).
7. How much of my energy should I put into honing my craft skills vs networking?

**False security: the challenge of success in emancipation**

**Beraishit 47:27**

וַיֵּ֧שֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵ֛ל בְּאֶ֥רֶץ מִצְרַ֖יִם בְּאֶ֣רֶץ גֹּ֑שֶׁן וַיֵּאָחֲז֣וּ בָ֔הּ וַיִּפְר֥וּ וַיִּרְבּ֖וּ מְאֹֽד׃

Thus Israel settled in the country of Egypt, in the region of Goshen; they acquired holdings in it, and were fertile and increased greatly.

**Otzar Ha’midrash** – “The land grabbed them and held on to them, if they want to leave before the set time- they would not be able to, like a man who is held without his control…”

**Shemot 1:7**

וּבְנֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֗ל פָּר֧וּ וַֽיִּשְׁרְצ֛וּ וַיִּרְבּ֥וּ וַיַּֽעַצְמ֖וּ בִּמְאֹ֣ד מְאֹ֑ד וַתִּמָּלֵ֥א הָאָ֖רֶץ אֹתָֽם׃

 But the Israelites were fertile and prolific; they multiplied and increased very greatly, so that the land was filled with them

וַיָּ֥קָם מֶֽלֶךְ־חָדָ֖ש עַל־מִצְרָ֑יִם אֲשֶׁ֥ר לֹֽא־יָדַ֖ע אֶת־יוֹסֵֽף׃ A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph

**Sephorno -1:7** - פרו וישרצו were fertile and prolific

, after the last of the original 70 migrants had died, their whole lifestyle became more like that of creeping insects, creatures headed for destruction. This is why when

1:8 A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph.

although there can be no question that in the annals of Egyptian history the 80 year reign of Joseph and his legislation saving Egypt from the famine was duly recorded, as well as how he legislated that the whole land would belong to Pharaoh and the farmers would become his tenants, it did not occur to anyone to associate the Hebrews of his time with the family of Joseph who had been so highly esteemed. The idea that the present-day Hebrews deserved special consideration on account of their illustrious forbears did not occur to anyone observing the way these Hebrews behaved at that time.

1) What is the Seforno’s theory of Jewish enslavement?

2) How did that aid in assimilation?