

The JEWISH Spin on Current Events

GIVING AID

When does one jump in and when do you step back?

c OVERVIEW d

1. WHY DON'T YOU "MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS"?
2. WHAT OTHER SITUATIONS VIOLATES "DO NOT STAND IDLY WHILE YOUR FELLOW'S BLOOD IS BEING SPILLED"?
3. DOES ONE HAVE THE RIGHT INTERVENE WITH ANOTHER GOVERNMENT'S DECISION?
4. IS ONE ACCOUNTABLE FOR WITHHOLDING FOOD FROM STARVING PEOPLE?
5. IS ONE RESPONSIBLE TO HELP OTHERS IN SPIRITUAL DANGER?

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c SOURCES d**1. Why don't you "Mind your own business"?****c 1A d**

LEVITICUS 19:16

Do not stand idly by the blood of your fellow.

2. What other situations violates "Do not stand idly while your fellow's blood is being spilled"?**c 2A d**

EXODUS 2: 11-17

It happened in those days that Moses grew up and went out to his brethren and observed their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man, of his brethren. He turned this way and that and saw that there was no man, so he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

He went out the next day and behold! Two Hebrew men were fighting. He said to the wicked one, 'why would you strike your fellow?' He replied, 'Who appointed you as a dignitary, a ruler, and a judge over us? Do you propose to murder me, as you murdered the Egyptian?' Moses was frightened and he thought, 'Indeed, the matter is known!'

Pharaoh heard about this matter and sought to kill Moses; so Moses fled from before Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian. He sat by the well.

The minister of Midian had seven daughters; they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's sheep. The shepherds came and drove them away. Moses got up and saved them and watered their sheep.

c 2B d

MAIMONIDIES, LAWS OF A MURDERER, 1:14

One who is able to save and does not save, transgresses the commandment, "do not stand idly by while your friend's blood is being spilled." This also applies to one who sees his friend drowning in the water and doesn't save him, or sees thieves coming to attack him, or a wild animal coming to harm him, and he himself can save him or hire others to save him but he does not do so. Additionally, if he heard non-Jews or informers plotting to do some evil act or make a hidden trap, and he did not warn his friend, or he knew that a non-Jew or a rapist were going to attack and he could have appeased the attacker but he did not do so, and anything similar to these, whoever does this transgresses the commandment, "do not stand idly by while your friend's blood is being spilled."

c 2C d

MAIMONIDIES, LAW OF A MURDERER, CHAPTER 1, LAW 15

If you see someone being pursued for his life... and you are able to save the victim and you didn't, you have violated a positive commandment "You shall cut off her hand" (Deuteronomy 25:12), and two negative commandments, "Your eye shall not show pity", and "Do not stand idly by the blood of your fellow" (Leviticus 19:16).

3. Does one have the right intervene with another government's decision?**c 3A d**

TALMUD, SANHEDRIN 20A

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: Because of what sin was Avner punished (i.e., killed)? Because he should have protested to Saul [when Saul sought to kill the Kohanim of Nov], but he did not protest.

4. Is one accountable for withholding food from starving people?**c 4A d**

MAIMONIDIES, LAWS OF MURDERER, 3:10

But he who tied his friend up and he left him to starve until he died. Or he tied him up and left him in a place that the intense heat or cold would eventually cause him to die and he died. He turned a barrel over him, he took off the roof (and the cold air caused him to freeze to death), he sent a snake after him, and obviously if he sent a dog or a snake to kill him. In all of these cases, he didn't directly kill him but he is considered the murderer. And he who murders, he must be held responsible for his action.

5. Is one responsible to help others in spiritual danger?**c 5A d**

LEVITICUS 19:17

...You shall reprove your fellow and do not bear a sin because of him.

c 5B d

MINCHAS CHINUCH 239

...In addition to the positive commandment to rebuke, one is also accountable for the negative prohibition of "Do not stand idly by the flood of your fellow". For this isn't any worse than one who is drowning in a river... all the more so, if you can save him from transgressing a sin, which causes the loss of ones body and soul, most definitely one is obligated to save him.