

## The JEWISH Spin on Current Events

### ON BEING AN ISRAELI ALLY

*Why be an ally of Israel?*

#### ∞ OVERVIEW ∞

1. WHAT IS THE RIGHT TO ISRAEL'S EXISTENCE?
2. BEING THAT JUDAISM STRONGLY ADVOCATES PEACE, AND ADDITIONALLY, JEWISH LIFE IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE, WHY DON'T WE SACRIFICE 'LAND' FOR 'PEACE'?
3. WHAT APPROACH SHOULD ONE, OF A DIFFERENT BACKGROUND AND RELIGION, BE AN ALLY OF ISRAEL?
4. HOW CAN WE STRENGTHEN THE SAFETY OF JEWS IN ISRAEL AND AROUND THE WORLD?

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## ∞ SOURCES ∞

### 1. What is the right to Israel's existence?

#### ∞ 1A ∞

GENESIS, 17:8, 26:3, 35:12

G-d speaking to Abraham: I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land of your temporary residence, all the land of Canaan as an eternal possession (17:8).

G-d speaking to Isaac: Stay in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and your descendants I will give all these lands. I will [thus] keep the oath that I swore to Abraham, your father (26:3).

G-d speaking to Jacob: The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you; and to your offspring after you I will give the land (35:12).

#### ∞ 1B ∞

RASHI, GENESIS 1:1

IN THE BEGINNING: R' Yitzchak said: G-d need not have begun the Torah but from "This month shall be for you," because it is the first commandment which Israel was commanded. What is the reason that it began with the Book of Genesis? Because "The power of His acts He told to His people, in order to give them estate of nations." So that if the nations of the world will say to Israel, 'You are bandits, for you conquered the lands of seven nations,' Israel will say to them, "'The whole earth belongs to the Holy One, Blesses is He.'" He created it and He gave it to the one found proper in His eyes. By his wish He gave it to them and by His wish He took it from them and gave it to us.'

### 2. Being that Judaism strongly advocates peace, and additionally, Jewish life is of great importance, why don't we sacrifice 'land' for 'peace'?

#### ∞ 2A ∞

TALMUD BAVLI, TRACTATE ERUVIN, 45A

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: If gentiles besieged an Israelite city on the Sabbath, Jews may not go out against them with weapons, nor may they violate the Sabbath because of them. This rule has also been taught in a Baraisa: "If gentiles besieged, etc. In what case was this rule said? Where they came over a matter of money, but if they came over a matter of lives, they may go out against them with their weapons and may violate the Sabbath because of them."

But in the case of an attack on a city close by the border of the Jewish area, even if they did not come over a matter of lives but only over a matter of straw and stubble, Jews may go out against them with their weapons and violate the Sabbath because of them.

Rav Yosef bar Manyumi said in the name of Rav Nachman: Babylon is like a city close by the border. This means they city of Nehardea.

⌘ 2B ⌘

EXTRACTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE  
AND FORMER CHIEF RABBI OF THE UNITED KINGDOM IMMANUEL JAKOBOVITS  
REGARDING THE HALACHIC POSITION OF  
THE AREAS LIBERATED AFTER THE SIX-DAY AND YOM KIPPUR WARS.

I am completely and unequivocally opposed to the surrender of any of the liberated areas currently under negotiation, such as Yehudah and Shomron, the Golan, etc., for the simple reason, and only reason, that surrendering any part of them would contravene a clear ruling found in Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim, Ch. 329, par. 6,7). I have repeatedly emphasized that this *Psak-Din* has nothing to do with the sanctity of Eretz Yisrael, or with “days of Moshiach,” the *geulah*, and similar considerations, but solely with the rule of *pikuach-nefesh*. This is further emphasized by the fact that this *psak-din* has its source in the Talmud (Eruvin 45a), where the Gemara cites as an illustration of a “border-town” under the terms of this *psak-din* — the city of Neharde’a in Babylon (present-day Iraq) — clearly not in Eretz Yisrael. I have emphasized time and again that it is a question of, and should be judged purely on the basis of, *pikuach-nefesh*, not geography.

The said *psak-din* deals with a situation where gentiles (the term is Goyim, not enemies) besiege a Jewish border-town, ostensibly to obtain “straw and chaff,” and then leave. But because of the possible danger, not only to the Jews of the town, but also cities, the Shulchan Aruch rules that upon receiving news of the gentiles (even only preparations), the Jews must mobilize immediately and take up arms even on Shabbos — in accordance with the rule that “*pikuach-nefesh* supersedes Shabbos.”

Should there be a question whether the risk does in fact create a situation of *pikuach-nefesh*, then — as in the case of illness, where a medical authority is consulted — the authority to make a judgment is vested in the military experts. If military experts decide that there is a danger of *pikuach-nefesh*, there could be no other overriding considerations, since *pikuach-nefesh* overrides everything else. Should the military experts declare that even though there is such a risk, it should be taken for some other reason, such as political considerations (good will of the gentiles) — this would clearly be contrary to the *psak-din*, for the *psak-din* requires that *pikuach-nefesh*, not political expediency, should be the decisive factor.

Now in regard to the liberated areas, all military experts, Jewish and non-Jewish, agree that in the present situations giving up any part of them would create serious security

dangers. No-one says that giving up any part of them would enhance the defensibility of the borders. But some military experts are prepared to take a chance in order not to antagonize Washington and/or to improve the “international image,” etc. To follow this line would not only go against the clear *psak-din*, but would also ignore costly lessons of the past. One glaring case in point is the “Yom-Kippur War.” Days and hours before the attack, there were urgent sessions of the government discussing the situation with the military. Military intelligence pointed to unmistakable evidence that an Egyptian attack was imminent, and the military experts advised a preemptive strike that would save many lives and prevent an invasion. However, the politicians, with the acquiescence of some military experts, rejected this action on the ground that such a step, or even a general mobilization, before the Egyptians actually crossed the border, would mean being branded as the aggressor, and would jeopardize relations with the USA. This decision was contrary to the said *psak-din* of the Shulchan Aruch, as pointed out above. The tragic results of that decision bore out the validity of the Shulchan Aruch’s position (as if it were necessary), for many lives were needlessly sacrificed, and the situation came close to total disaster, but for G-d’s mercies. Suffice it to mention that the then Prime Minister later admitted that all her life she would be haunted by that tragic decision.

### 3. What approach should one, of a different background and religion, be an ally of Israel?

#### ס 3A ס

TALMUD BAVLI, TRACTATE SHABBOS, 31A

There was another incident involving a certain gentile who came before Shammai and said to him: “Convert me on condition that you will teach me the entire Torah while I stand on one foot.” Shammai pushed him away with the ruler in his hand. He [the gentile] came before Hillel [and presented him with the same request], Hillel converted him. Hillel said to him: “That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow; this is the entire Torah, all the rest is an elaboration. Go and learn it.”

#### ס 3B ס

LEVITICUS 19:15

You shall not commit a perversion of Justice; you shall not favor the poor and you shall not honor the great; with righteousness shall you judge your fellow.

#### ס 3C ס

RASHI IBID.

The judge shouldn’t say, being that this litigant is poor and the other litigant who rich is obligated to support him, I will justify the poor, thus the poor is supported.

#### 4. How can we strengthen the safety of Jews in Israel and around the world?

##### § 4A §

##### DEUTERONOMY 11:13-17

Should you thoroughly heed My commandments that I am commanding you today - to love the L-rd, your G-d, and to serve Him with all your desires and with your entire beings, I will provide the rain of your land in its time, fall rain and spring rain, and you will harvest your grain and your wine and your olive oil. And I will provide grass in your field for your animals, and you will eat and be full.

Look out for yourselves lest your heart be misled and you turn away and serve other gods and bow to them, and G-d's anger will be aroused against you, and He will restrain the skies and there will be no rain, and the soil will not yield its produce, and you will swiftly be removed from upon the good land that G-d is giving you.

##### § 4B §

##### YESOD HAMISHNAH V'ARICHASA, PG. 38

It is well known that the "Men of the Great Assembly" (Anshai Knesse HaGedolah) consisted of one hundred and twenty elders, as the Talmud states in Berochot 33a that, the Men of the Great Assembly instituted for the Jewish people, blessings, prayers (and recitals of) Kiddush and Havdalah, and the Talmud states in Megila 17b that, one hundred and twenty elders, among whom were many prophets, formulated eighteen blessings (i.e. Amida) in their order.

##### § 4C §

##### DEUTERONOMY 28:10

All the nations of the earth will see that the name of the L-rd is upon you, and they will fear you.

##### § 4D §

##### TALMUD BAVLI, TRACTATE BERACHOS 6A

And from where is it derived that tefillin are the strength of Israel? For it is written: "All the nations of the earth will see that the name of the L-rd is upon you, and they will fear you". And it was taught in a Baraisa: R' Eliezer the great says: There are the tefillin that are worn on the head.