

What's So Jewish About Civic Engagement?

Classical Jewish Texts & Medieval Rabbinic Commentary

- "But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." [Jeremiah 29:7](#)
- **Rabbi Eliezer** God said to Moses, "There is a time to shorten and a time to lengthen. My children are distressed, the sea is closing, the enemy is pursuing, and you are standing there going on and on with prayer?!? Say to the children of Israel, 'Go forth!'"
- **Rabbi Joshua** God said to Moses, "There is nothing else for Israel to do except go forward. Go forth: when their legs go forth from the dry land to the sea, you will see the miracles that I will do for them." [Shemot Rabbah 21:8](#)

- a. What language makes you uncomfortable?
- b. What do they say about the relationship between the city and the citizen?
- a. How does being a U.S. resident or citizen compel you to "use your legs?"
- b. How do these answers differ? How are they the same?

4 - H... t... r | t t R - H... t... c. t, | rmcl c... t... r m... t... G t t, r ^

- - , t r l . . , t . m t , .

D... .., c... c J... .. m, Am r c,
z l, t t, t R l, t t . t t
c t m r r y, , re t r, c, l - l , . - y
H... t . . . l . c . t . t , t

- a. Voting is the bare minimum
- b. Voting is your price of admission to the community
- c. Voting is bigger than the candidate or current election
- d. Voting demonstrates different theories of change

[i. Community Change: Theories, Practice, and Evidence](#)

... t t. r l, t . . z . t . . y r l . .
... r. c ... l t c, l - l , . - y, . . r
... r t , t

- a. How do our experiences and/or status/ privileged positions shape our answers to this

How to Vote Your Values

Jewish Text

Plus One: Getting Others to the Polls

What is our obligation to help others? What is our obligation to help others vote?

Jewish Text (Talmudic)

Pr. tA, t.

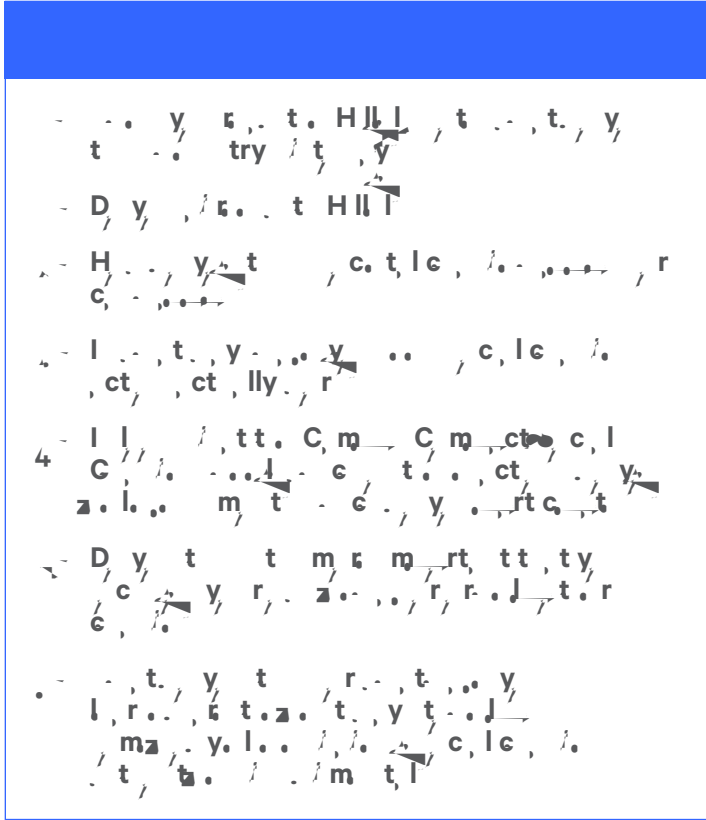
H, l, . . . t, y. If I am not for myself, who is for me? But if I am for my own self [only], what am I? And if not now, when? **Raz Hll I**

Contemporary Texts

There are many theories of change which guide civic participation. Here are two to consider:

- ACL . . . ry, C, . . .

- C, m - C m, ct, c, lG, . . . l
sCampus Compact advances the public purposes of colleges and universities by deepening their ability to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility. (From the Minnesota Campus Compact chapter)



Actions

- Text three friends who you think may need help navigating the logistics of voting. Maybe they plan to vote by mail but have not requested an absentee ballot.
- Schedule a date to facetime with them so that you can walk them through the process of applying for the absentee ballot in their area and help them make sure it gets done. . . l / tc, h, rr, r . . . l . . . t / ll / t, . t. m, l / t, rm, s t. z / l. tc, ll / . ry, . . . l . . . rtc, t / t. . t - D, t t, . . . l y, r r. . . tl, r, t

Should We Participate in a Broken System?

Jewish Text (Midrash)

וַיֵּרָא רָאשֵׁי

רָאשֵׁי מַרְעֵי תַּרְסֵי • Men were on a ship. One of them took a drill and started drilling underneath him. The others said to him: What are you



The Vote is Over. Your Person Won/Lost. Now What?

Jewish Texts (Talmudic)

1. Q. r t, Qm t, B. t. t.
"Give me friendship or give me death."
- Q. D. t. m t R. A. Or.

Action

Plan an event (virtual or in-person) to foster conversations and engage in the process of healing this country using L. / R. m C. r, t. or the P. r. t. r. m R. t. t. t. t.

Contemporary Texts

- AC It r, H. ly Ar. m t My J.
R. t. t. H. t. y H. Kr. m r
- R. t. ry from R. ct R. ll. R. r.
P. l. r. t. C. ll. C. m.
- Am rc. D. M. B y. C. lct
- G. r. t. P. lct. ID. r ty
J. Bl. J. G. l
- P. ye. l. y. P. l. r. t. H. C.
O. rc. m O r P. c.
- P. r. l. Am rc. N. t. l. R. t. t. t.
t. l. D. c.



What Does Society Need to Thrive?

Jewish Text (Talmudic)

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיָשִׁיב יָדָם מִיָּם וְיָשִׁיב יָדָם מִיָּם וְיָשִׁיב יָדָם מִיָּם

BEFORE YOU READ THE SANHEDRIN PASSAGE,
ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- ... , t. l m t , . . . t t t , . . . , c t y ... t z .
- t , . . . t t r .
- H . . . , y r , l . m , c t y , r , . . . r
- ... , t. l m t , . . . t t t , . . . , c t y . . . , r ,
- J r , t l . t . r , . . l y , . . t c , l l y
- A r , l l , t . . . c t t r l t . t J . . m

NOW READ THE SANHEDRIN PASSAGE.

- H . . . , y r , . . . r Q . t , . . . c m r
- t . . . , t . . . t . z y t r
- l t . r , y t / y . . . l . . . t y r . . . l c t y
- . . . r l c t , . . . t r . . . t r
- H . . . , y t t . c t y . . . y r . . .
- m , r . . . t y r . . . l c t y , . . . r . . . t t .
- r . . . r . . . , r , c t y

Actions

- Peruse the list of student clubs on your college's website.
- Identify a group or club involved in civic engagement on your college campus that you have been interested in learning more about or getting involved with.
- Now send them an email and introduce yourself!