

JEFF BALLABON

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“THE POLITICS OF KIDDUSH HASHEM”

Election 2016: What’s Really Happening? What’s Really at Stake?

Election 2016 is breaking all the rules. On the Republican side, presumed front-runner Jeb Bush’s deep-pocketed campaign never got off the ground. Instead, shocking both the moderate “establishment” and the conservative “base,” outsider Donald Trump convulsed the GOP, tearing the party apart. Among Democrats, Independent Bernie Sanders transformed overnight from fringe eccentric to youth icon, making socialism acceptable and challenging the massive Clinton machine - even as Hillary finds herself under investigation and under fire. Meanwhile, the political map is being rewritten with many Jewish communities suddenly finding that their votes might matter more than ever. In this session Jeff Ballabon will answer questions on so many minds: Why is this happening? And what does it mean for America, for Israel, and for Jews?

The Politics of Kiddush Hashem

What is the Jewish role in politics - and what should it be? What are the Jewish community’s priorities and what should they be? Who should make that decision and how? Should Jews form alliances with other groups? Can we trust those who appear friendly but may have ulterior motives? Is it absurd to seek for idealism in an arena as apparently corrupt and corrosive as politics - or is that precisely where it matters most? In this session, Jeff Ballabon vividly makes the case that the centers of political power are among the greatest untapped opportunities for Kiddush Hashem in our generation...and that it’s high time we change our approach to Washington.

Understanding 'The Jewish Vote': Democrat and Republican, Church and State, America and Israel

Jews have long been a remarkably reliable Democratic voting bloc, confounding experts and leading to the politically incorrect witticism, "Jews earn like Episcopalians but vote like Puerto Ricans." In this session, Jeff provides a more sophisticated analysis and explains the famous enigma of the Jewish vote as well as future trends in the Jewish political demographic and what they signify.

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Behind Closed Doors: Advocating in America For - and Against - Israel

Regardless of their understanding and views of Zionism or the halachic and hashkafic implications of the State of Israel, most observant American Jews feel passionately that they want to help our brethren in Eretz Yisrael. But how does one do so effectively? Who defines “pro-Israel” and what does it mean? What role do Jewish advocacy groups play? Should we work with – and can we trust - Christian Zionists? If the Israel lobby is so powerful, why did Israel lose so badly on the incredibly unpopular Iran Deal? How can we help Israel win? Jeff Ballabon explores these questions and more, revealing the surprising – sometimes shocking – truth of what goes on behind closed doors in Washington.

Saving Jerusalem; Losing Jerusalem: Inside Stories of Political Intrigue

Saving Jerusalem: A sitting Israeli Prime Minister and a trusted American Secretary of State are conspiring to divide Jerusalem with the help of the American Jewish lobby: Should they be stopped? Can they be stopped? Is it ever right for American Jews to fight the policies of an Israeli government? And how does one even go about it? The behind the scenes account of the successful fight against the Annapolis Conference holds the key to understanding why we must fight and how we can win – lessons needed now more than ever.

Losing Jerusalem: For 1500 years, the Greek Orthodox church has possessed vast swaths of the Holy Land, including the lands on which the Knesset and Prime Minister’s residence now sit. And for 1500 years there have been power struggles within and challenges from without. From Washington to Constantinople; from bugged hotel rooms to a tense midnight confrontation deep in the Christian Quarter; from clandestine Cayman bank accounts to furtive couriers delivering a top secret package from Damascus, this is the true story of an ancient struggle for power, money and the destiny of Jerusalem’s Old City. Hear a first hand account of involvement in this saga more amazing than fiction, with a cast of incredible characters – and convulsive consequences that are only beginning to be felt.

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Fighting to Win

Abba Eban's famous quip that "the Arabs never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity" is still repeated by Israeli government spokesmen and mid-east analysts. But in the decades since he first said it, Hamas and the PLO have been turned into quasi-states and sympathies for recalcitrant Arabs have only grown stronger, while support for the existence of a Jewish state has plummeted. It seems as though the more Israel sacrifices and risks for peace, the more Israel is vilified. Is it just anti-Semitism – the notorious "double standard" – beyond Israel's control? Or has Israel been the one missing opportunities in its policies and messaging. In this session, Jeff examines the phenomenon and explores whether maybe – just maybe - we have much to learn from our enemies.

An Open Political Forum with Jeff Ballabon

In this all Q&A session, Jeff Ballabon will respond to wide-ranging political questions submitted by the audience.