

Shalom Chaverim,

As you all know, there is an important election coming up. It is so important because it has the potential to shape the nation. I can't remain quiet. So, I want to do something I usually don't do. I want to endorse a candidate and ask you to vote with me.

Before I tell you who it is, allow me to share a word of Torah.

Since we are approaching Purim, we might pause to consider the name of the holiday. Purim, we are told in the Megillah refers to the casting of lots. The evil Haman was trying to determine on which day he should destroy the Jewish people. So, "hipil pur, he drew lots." And it fell on the 14 day of this month of Adar.

In other words, Haman left it up to luck or to some supernal power to determine the fate of the Jews.

This is not the only time the Torah speaks of drawing lots. On Yom Kippur, kohanim drew lots to choose which goat to send off to the wilderness.

As they were concluding their desert trek, the 12 tribes drew lots to determine how they would apportion the land of Israel.

Jump ahead 3000 years. Tel Aviv was just a pile of sand on a beautiful beach. Prospective builders drew lots using seashells to allocate plots of land.



Founding of Tel Aviv: Allocation of land in Ahuzat Bayit. April 11, 1909

In these cases, for good and for bad, casting a lot was an easy and fair way of making a decision. It eliminated the need for personal judgment, lowered the risk of conflict and freed participants of their personal accountability for the outcome. Just let the lot decide.

Not so the casting of votes. We are responsible when we cast a vote in a way that is not true when we cast lots. Voting requires judgment. And sometimes, it can lead to internal and interpersonal conflict.

But some decisions are so important, we can't leave it to chance. That is certainly the case today with this election.

So, I want to endorse a candidate and ask you to join me in voting for... Mercaz. Oh, did you think I was talking about a different election?

Friends hear me out because this is really important.

We don't have the right to vote in Israel's elections. But we have the responsibility to vote in an election that will likewise shape the future of the Jewish State.

Once every five years, the World Zionist Congress holds elections. This was the organization Theodor Herzl founded when he set out to build the State of Israel. Today, among other things, the WZO is responsible for allocating millions of dollars to dozens of organizations in Israel including to our own Conservative movement. Since (shamefully) the Conservative movement does not receive direct government funding, the allocation of funds by the WZO is crucial.

The Conservative movement does great things in Israel. But it is limited by funding challenges. It can accomplish so much more if only we get the votes.

Right now, the Conservative movement is behind in the polling. But you can change that. The WZO allocates funds to the movements based on a proportion of a votes in this election. So, go to Mercaz2020.org and vote for Slate 6. When you vote for Mercaz, you will turn a \$7 voting registration fee into millions of dollars for the movement.

Don't leave it to luck. Cast a vote to ensure Israel's future as a modern, pluralistic, democratic state.

Today.