

# **Nishma Research**

## **A Political Survey of the American Orthodox Jewish Community**

**Survey Conducted January 14-26, 2020**



# Introduction and Methodology

## Introduction

This survey was conducted in order to help shed light on the Orthodox community's political views, including an exploration of the differences between the Modern Orthodox views and those of the Haredi community as well as differences within Modern Orthodoxy. Nishma Research covered the costs of this survey. The political questions (see questionnaire in Appendix II – pages 19-20) employ language commonly used in national political surveys, and we have added questions relating to Israel (which are not included in most political surveys).

## Methodology

Reaching the Orthodox community is challenging given its relatively small size and the lack of any centralized, accessible lists (address or phone) that would facilitate conducting an opt-out survey.

This study contacted synagogues, reaching their rabbis and members via communication through three rabbinic/synagogue organizations:

- The Rabbinical Council of America (RCA)
- National Council of Young Israel (NCYI)
- The International Rabbinic Fellowship (IRF)

Shul affiliation is virtually universal among the Orthodox, and it was thus felt that reaching the community through rabbis and synagogues was viable. The survey was programmed online and an email was sent to rabbis, encouraging them to ask their shul members to participate and providing a link to the online survey. The language used in the email to the rabbis was as follows:

*“US politics are of course a hot topic these days and there has been much talk about getting a better sense of our community’s views. I am therefore pleased to inform you of a new survey on the political views of American Orthodox Jews. Shul members (in the USA) are invited to take this brief (5-7 minutes) survey, which can be accessed at {link provided}.*

*“This survey is completely anonymous and is open to all persons age 18 or older. This survey is sponsored by and conducted by Nishma Research, an independent research firm that is run by Orthodox members of our community. Nishma is doing this in the interests of better understanding our community, and they will be sharing all of the results with the community. The survey will be online and available for you to complete.*

*“Please inform your shul members of this survey (vis email or your shul bulletin) and encourage them to take the survey. Thank you so much.”*

We left it to the rabbis’ discretion to use their preferred methods to inform their members, e.g., shul bulletin, listserv, announcements, etc.

We received 1,264 responses from Orthodox individuals in the United States from January 14 to January 26, 2020. Of these, 800 were received from congregants of RCA or IRF synagogues (i.e., through rabbis of those associations) and 464 were received from congregants of NCYI synagogues (i.e., through rabbis of that association).

We did not track individual synagogue responses (e.g., by assigning codes to respondents), so we do not know which rabbis followed up with their members, the number of

*(continued)*

## Methodology (Continued)

congregations that participated, or the distribution of participants across synagogues. We neither encouraged nor discouraged individuals from “telling their friends” about the survey.

The survey software captures some respondent geographic information, and we know that responses came from Orthodox residents across 30 states, led by New York (31%), New Jersey (16%), Massachusetts (8%), California (7%), Pennsylvania (7%), Florida (7%), Massachusetts (5%), Illinois (4%) and Connecticut (3%). We did not see any unusual clustering, e.g., responses in New York came from 58 different towns/boroughs, etc. and the percentages from the larger localities seemed in line with the sizes of the Orthodox population

Respondents’ classification within Orthodoxy are based on self-identification. The extent to which these samples are representative of the overall populations from which they derive is not knowable, as no such demographic profile of the Orthodox community exists. Such profiles exist for larger denominations of American Jewry (e.g., community, Federation, and Pew studies), but Orthodoxy is a small segment of the U.S. Jewish population.

We received more responses from “Modern or Centrist Orthodox” (1,030) than from Haredi (234). This is not surprising, as most (but not all) of the rabbis in the three organizations are Modern Orthodox. Most of their congregants are Modern Orthodox as well, although many Modern Orthodox synagogues have a diverse congregation that includes people who identify “to the right” (Yeshivish or Hasidic) as well as “to the left.” Also, the rabbinic organizations include rabbis who are or tend toward Haredi.

Results for the overall Orthodox community apply weights so that Modern/Centrist Orthodox and Haredi comprise 39% and 61%, respectively (based on demographic data) of the total

We received more responses from men (64%) than from women (36%); it is not clear why this occurred. Results for the overall Orthodox community apply weights so that men and women comprise 48.4% and 51.6% of the combined population, based on Rutgers University 2016 voting turnout (and lacking Orthodox turnout data).

The Haredi survey respondents may be different from Haredi whose rabbis are not members of the rabbinic associations we solicited, e.g., our respondents may have more center- or left-leaning political views than the Haredi universe as a whole because of greater exposure to Modern Orthodoxy and less inclusion in groups that tends to vote in a bloc deriving from “direction” by rabbinic leaders. There are no data to support or refute this theory.

Respondents showed a high intention to vote in 2020 (92%), suggesting that they are highly engaged politically. In essence, politically engaged voters may be over-represented in our sample. This is not unexpected, as interest in a topic and opt-in participation are often correlated.

In conclusion, reaching and obtaining adequate samples from small segments is challenging, and that is why we chose the route of reaching the community through the synagogue rabbis. We follow the guidance of AAPOR (the American Association for Public Opinion Research) that opt-in surveys are not ideal but may be the best approach, lacking other options. As is true for all surveys, survey responses should be viewed with appropriate understanding and caution, and through the lens of what is already known.

**Political Identification – For all of orthodoxy, 54% identify as Republican/Conservative/Libertarian and 33% as Democrat/Liberal. While Haredi more often are on the “right” (65%), Modern Orthodox more often are on the “left” (52%).**

Q. How do you identify politically?	Modern Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
Liberal, Progressive or Left-Leaning Democrat	22%	7%	13%
Moderate Democrat	30%	13%	20%
<b>Subtotal Democrat/Liberal</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>33%</b>
Moderate Republican	15%	18%	17%
Conservative or Right-Leaning Republican	20%	42%	33%
Libertarian	2%	5%	4%
<b>Subtotal Republican/Conservative/Libertarian</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>54%</b>
Independent	8%	7%	7%
None of the above	2%	5%	4%
Not sure	1%	3%	2%

Q. How do you personally identify Jewishly? – Modern or Centrist Orthodox (924 respondents); Yeshivish / Agudah (165 respondents); Chasidic (69 respondents); Other Orthodox (106 respondents); Not Orthodox (48 respondents – excluded). For purposes of this analysis, the Yeshivish / Agudah and Chasidic were combined into the “Haredi” group (responses from these two groups were not significantly different for any of the questions) and the Modern or Centrist Orthodox and Other Orthodox were combined and are reported, for simplicity as “Modern Orthodox.” Responses from the Other Orthodox (quantitative and open-ended) strongly suggest that most of these respondents view themselves as Liberal Orthodox or Open Orthodox, and thus should be categorized in the “big tent” Or Modern Orthodoxy, rather than as Haredi.

Q. How do you identify politically? – Liberal, Progressive or Left-Leaning Democrat; Moderate Democrat; Moderate Republican; Conservative or Right-Leaning Republican; Libertarian; Independent; None of the above; Not sure. (n = Modern Orthodox 1,029; Haredi 234; Total Orthodox 1,263)

**2016 Presidential Vote – The total Orthodox vote was Trump 50%, Clinton 38%.  
A majority of Modern Orthodox voted for Clinton, while a comparable majority  
of Haredi voted for Trump.**

Q. Whom did you vote for in the 2016 presidential election?	Modern Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox	Total Among Voters
Donald Trump	29%	56%	45%	50%
Hillary Clinton	56%	20%	34%	38%
Gary Johnson	2%	11%	1%	1%
Jill Stein	<0.5%	0%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Other	4%	7%	6%	7%
Didn't Vote	7%	13%	11%	
Would Rather Not Say	2%	3%	2%	2%

Q. Whom did you vote for in the 2016 presidential election? – Donald Trump; Hillary Clinton; Gary Johnson; Jill Stein; Other; Didn't vote; Would rather not say. (n = Modern Orthodox 1,028; Haredi 234; Total Orthodox 1,262)

**Trump Approval Rating – Trump’s overall Orthodox approval rating is 55%, which is higher than that of the U.S. public as a whole (which has trended in the low-to-mid 40s). Approval is much higher among Haredi (68%) than among Modern Orthodox (36%).**

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?	Modern Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
Approve a great deal	23%	42%	34%
Approve a moderate amount	13%	26%	21%
<b>Total Approve</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>55%</b>
Unsure	3%	4%	3%
Disapprove a moderate amount	8%	5%	6%
Disapprove a great deal	53%	24%	36%
<b>Total Disapprove</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Margin (Approve minus disapprove)</b>	<b>-25%</b>	<b>+39%</b>	<b>+13%</b>

National polls have shown approval ratings in the low-to-mid 40s in recent months.

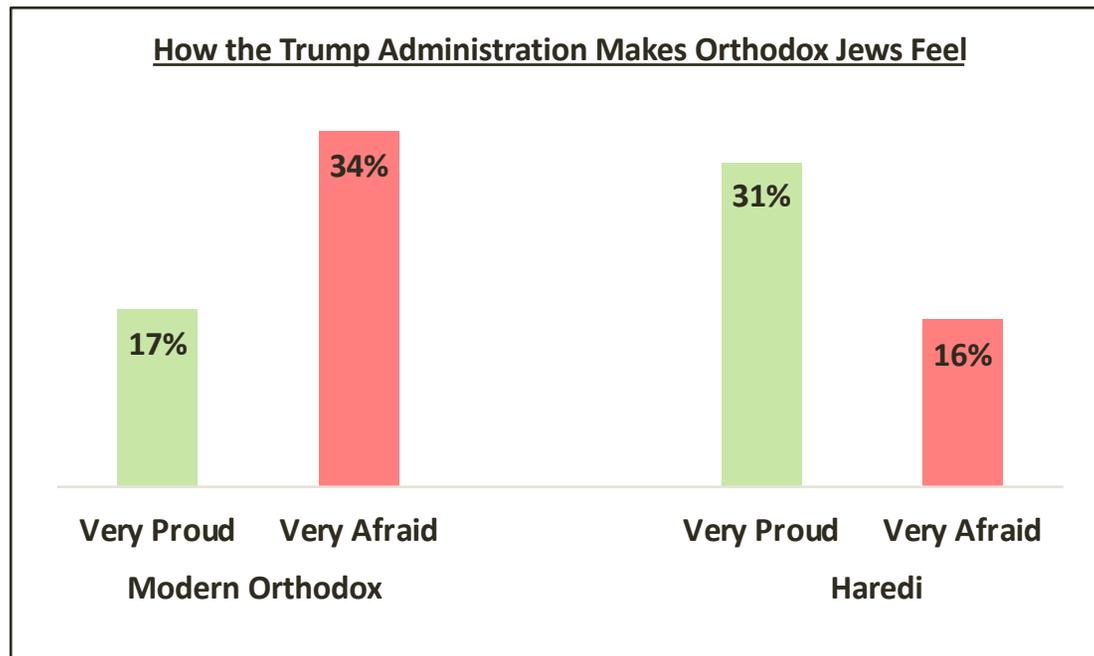
Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president? – Approve a great deal; Approve a moderate amount; Unsure; Disapprove a moderate amount; Disapprove a great deal. (Average n = Modern Orthodox 1,027; Haredi 233; Total Orthodox 1,260)

**Trump Administration Performance – Both Modern Orthodox and Haredi rate the Administration better on foreign issues – particularly those affecting Israel – than domestic issues. About 20% more Haredi, on average, rate the Administration’s performance as excellent.**

Q. How do you rate the Trump Administration’s performance on its ...	Modern Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
<b>Handling of domestic policy issues</b>			
– % Excellent	18%	36%	29%
– % Excellent or Good	32%	57%	47%
<b>Handling of foreign relations and policy issues</b>			
– % Excellent	25%	42%	35%
– % Excellent or Good	36%	61%	51%
<b>Treatment and actions affecting Israel</b>			
– % Excellent	42%	69%	58%
– % Excellent or Good	57%	80%	71%
<b>Handling of matters affecting the U.S. Jewish community</b>			
– % Excellent	29%	51%	42%
– % Excellent or Good	44%	68%	58%

Q. How do you rate the Trump Administration’s performance on its... handling of domestic policy issues; Handling of foreign relations and policy issues; Treatment and actions affecting Israel; Handling of matters affecting the U.S. Jewish community. Response options: Excellent; Good; Fair; Poor; Don’t Know. (Average n = Modern Orthodox 1,029; Haredi 234; Total Orthodox 1,263)

**Emotional Reactions – The Trump Administration makes Modern Orthodox Jews more often feel very afraid (34%) than very proud (17%), with almost the reverse among Haredi, where 31% feel very proud and 16% feel very afraid.**



Q. Does the Trump Administration make you feel proud? – Very proud; Moderately proud; Slightly proud; Not at all proud. (n = Modern Orthodox 1,027; Haredi 234; Total Orthodox 1,261)

Q. Does the Trump Administration make you feel afraid? – Very afraid; Moderately afraid; Slightly afraid; Not at all afraid. (n = Modern Orthodox 1,030; Haredi 234; Total Orthodox 1,264)

**The 2020 Election – Among all Orthodox, Trump is preferred against every Democrat, with only Michael Bloomberg coming close. Among Haredi, Trump is a landslide winner against every Democrat, while Modern Orthodox prefer every Democrat except for Sanders.**

*Democratic candidates are listed in order of preference among all Orthodox, from most to least preferred)*

<b>Trump vs.</b>	<b>Modern Orthodox</b>	<b>Haredi</b>	<b>Total Orthodox</b>
Bloomberg	Bloomberg 69%, Trump 31%	Trump 68%, Bloomberg 32%	Trump 53%, Bloomberg 47%
Biden	Biden 63%, Trump 37%	Trump 70%, Biden 30%	Trump 57%, Biden 43%
Klobuchar	Klobuchar 60%, Trump 40%	Trump 73%, Klobuchar 27%	Trump 59%, Klobuchar 41%
Buttigieg	Buttigieg 59%, Trump 41%	Trump 74%, Buttigieg 26%	Trump 61%, Buttigieg 39%
Warren	Warren 54%, Trump 46%	Trump 75%, Warren 25%	Trump 64%, Warren 36%
Sanders	Trump 50.2%, Sanders 49.8%	Trump 81%, Sanders 19%	Trump 69%, Sanders 31%
<b>Average for all Democrats</b>	<b>Democrat 59%, Trump 41%</b>	<b>Trump 73%, Democrat 27%</b>	<b>Trump 60%, Democrat 40%</b>

Q. If the 2020 presidential candidates will be Donald Trump and [Democratic candidate], whom would you vote for? – Definitely Trump; Probably Trump; Not sure at this time; Probably [Democratic candidate]; Definitely [Democratic candidate]; Probably wouldn't vote. The question is repeated for six Democratic candidates: Bernie Sanders; Elizabeth Warren; Pete Buttigieg; Amy Klobuchar; Michael Bloomberg. (Average n = Modern Orthodox 1,028; Haredi 234; Total Orthodox 1,262. The table excludes an average of 7% who indicated they are currently not sure and an average of 4% who do not plan to vote.)

**Support of Administration Actions Affecting Israel – There is strong support among Haredi, and moderate support among Modern Orthodox (69% and 46% “fully support,” respectively and 15% more on average “tend to support.”)**

<b>% Fully Support Trump Administration on Its ...</b>	<b>Modern Orthodox</b>	<b>Haredi</b>	<b>Total Orthodox</b>
Recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and move of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem	51%	73%	64%
Closing of the U.S. Consulate in East Jerusalem	36%	56%	48%
Recognition of the Golan Heights as part of Israel	53%	72%	64%
Declaration that Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria / the West Bank are not illegal	48%	71%	61%
Closing of the Palestinian Authority offices in Washington D.C.	42%	67%	57%
Decision to not fund UNWRA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees)	48%	73%	63%
<b>Average Level of Support for the Listed Administration Positions / Actions</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>59%</b>

Q. Did you support the Trump Administration on its – Recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and move of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem; Closing of the U.S. Consulate in East Jerusalem; Recognition of the Golan Heights as part of Israel; Declaration that Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria / the West Bank are not illegal; Closing of the Palestinian Authority offices in Washington D.C.; Decision to not fund UNWRA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees). Response options: Fully support; Tend to support; Tend to not support; Do not support; Don't know. (Average n = Modern Orthodox 1,027; Haredi 233; Total Orthodox 1,260).

## Impact of Israel on the Vote – There is strong agreement across Orthodoxy that candidates’ views on Israel are a very important factor affecting how people will vote.

Importance of Candidates’ Views on Israel in Decision on Whom to Vote For	Modern Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
Critically important – Views on Israel will essentially determine their vote	18%	31%	26%
Very Important	45%	45%	45%
<b>Subtotal – Critically/Very Important</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>71%</b>
Moderately Important	23%	13%	17%
Slightly Important	11%	6%	8%
Not Important	2%	4%	3%
Don’t Know	<0.5%	0%	<0.5%

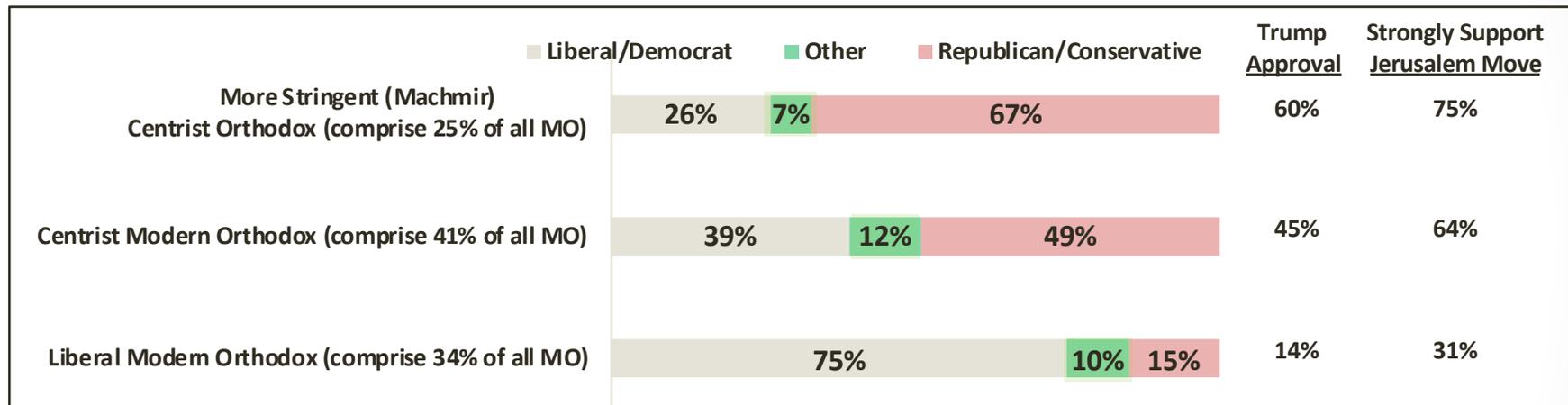
Q. In thinking about the Presidential election, how important a factor in your decision is the candidate’s views on Israel? – Critically important – Views on Israel will essentially determine my vote; Very important; Moderately important; Slightly important; Not important; Don’t know. (n = Modern Orthodox 1,029; Haredi 233; Total Orthodox 1,262).

**Anti-Semitism – Two-thirds (across all of Orthodoxy) view anti-Semitism as a serious problem. In a 2017 survey of Modern Orthodoxy, 43% agreed at that time that anti-Semitism was a serious problem.**

Regard anti-Semitic acts against community members or institutions as a problem facing their Jewish community	Modern Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
Serious Problem	66%	69%	67%
Somewhat a Problem	30%	26%	28%
Not a Problem	4%	4%	4%
Not sure	1%	1%	1%

Q. Do you regard anti-Semitic acts against community members or institutions as a problem facing your Jewish community? – Serious problem; Somewhat a problem; Not a problem; Not sure. (n = Modern Orthodox 1,029; Haredi 233; Total Orthodox 1,262).

**Diversity Within Modern Orthodoxy – Data presented so far shows differences between Haredi and Modern Orthodoxy. It is also noteworthy that Modern Orthodoxy contains a very disparate range of views. Additionally, the data show that liberal Jewish views correlate with liberal political views.**



Q. Where do you see yourself within the range of Modern or Centrist Orthodoxy? – “To the left” ... Liberal Modern Orthodox; “In the center” ... Centrist Modern Orthodox; “To the right” ... More stringent (machmir) Centrist Orthodox; Don’t know. (n = 918). Percentages shown in graphic above exclude 2% who responded “Don’t know”).

## Demographic Characteristics and Their Relationships to Political Views

	Relationship to Political Views
<b>Gender</b>	Trump’s Orthodox approval rating is 13% higher for men than women — 61% vs. 48% — which is identical to the gender gap found in recent overall U.S. population surveys.
<b>Age</b>	Median age = 50 among Modern Orthodox; 46 among Haredi. Trump’s approval rating among all Orthodox is 46% for ages 18-44; rising to 52% for ages 45-54; and rising further to 68% for those 55 and older.
<b>Income and Education</b>	Median household income = \$160K among Modern Orthodox; \$120K among Haredi. % with post-grad education = 66% among Modern Orthodox; 46% among Haredi. Political views vary little by income or educational levels.
<b>Baalei Teshuvah</b>	44% of Modern Orthodox are <i>baalei teshuvah</i> (became observant/Orthodox at bar or bat mitzvah age or later), as are 33% of Haredi. Overall, <i>baalei teshuvah</i> give Trump a 40% approval rating, compared to 56% among those who were raised observant. This tracks with Nishma’s 2019 study of <i>baalei teshuvah</i> , which found that many keep liberal views after becoming Orthodox.

## Appendix I – Sample Verbatim Responses

Q. Please share any other thoughts you may have on the topics discussed in this survey. [Open-Ended; Maximum 500 characters] (n = 345 respondents who offered comments, including 293 Modern Orthodox – representing 28% of all Modern Orthodox survey respondents – and 52 Haredi – representing 22% of all Haredi survey respondents.)

The verbatim comments provided in this appendix are unedited (spelling, typos, upper case, etc. ... they are shown as received in the survey) and were randomly selected. Responses to each question were sorted using a randomization process and then every n<sup>th</sup> comment is shown. This process was adopted in order to provide a relatively brief but random snapshot of respondents' comments. It is a common practice to edit any verbatim responses that contain possibly identifying information (e.g., names of individuals, synagogues, locations, etc.) in order to retain anonymity; in the case of this survey, responses did not have any such potentially identifying information.

## Sample Verbatim Responses: Modern Orthodox Respondents – Please share any other thoughts you may have on the topics discussed in this survey.

- *I think Trump is a disgrace to our country and debases the office he holds. It's hard to say whether I support or do not support particular policies because many require use of judgment and I do not believe he has any. He acts rashly and only in one cause: what is best for Donald Trump. So while I might support a sensitive policy by a president I respected because I knew he had given it great thought and relied on expert advisers, I would tend not to support it when Trump was deciding it.*
- *Trump's support for Israel combined with his abhorrent behavior makes Jews look worse by association.*
- *Obama tried to destroy America. He was a Socialist. Their viewpoints are beyond sickening. There is no place for their ideology in America. God bless Donald Trump.*
- *Strongly support the president's immigration priorities including building the wall/ending chain migration/ending automatic birthright citizenship. Strongly support his judicial appointments. Appalled by HIAS and most major Jewish organizations on immigration.*
- *Be a shul group, not a politics group. [Editor's note: This seems to be directed to the communal organization that announced the survey.]*
- *I voted against Clinton in 2016 as a protest, knowing that the Democrats would carry NY anyway. Trump is a danger to society, Jews, and the US.*
- *I have always valued a presidential candidate who was imbued with compassion and mercy, one who seemed capable of understanding the plight of the average and the downtrodden American, and one who professed to do something about it. Trump is not such a person. Fortunately, he is, FOR NOW, a supporter of Israel. My fear is he could turn on a dime, especially if Israel rejects the essence of his purportedly forthcoming "peace plan."*
- *Immigration is the most important issue that faces the Jewish people. Current immigration policy at best elects individuals that do not share Israel and Jewish interest, e.g. Minnesota and at worst physically harms Jews. If the current policy continues, it won't matter if the embassy moved or not, the US will not be in a position or willing to support Israel or America Jewry. I want to point out that the Jewish community cares more about bringing in Syrian refugees than protecting Jews.*
- *I agree with many of Trump's decisions about Israel, I just think that the world sees those decisions as illegitimate because they are coming from him.... understandably.*
- *Survey is too ridged. Trump's character is deplorable. His unpredictability has been dangerous. He's also had some big wins domestically and in foreign policy (often I wonder if it's sheer luck), and some other gambles where we won't know if they are good or bad for a long time as they set things in motion that work on longer cycles than the news. I don't like him as a person or model for our community. The Trump worship is Avak Avodah Zara, and sickens me. Yet, there is some Hakarat Hatov.*
- *Trump is an embarrassment to this country and has facilitated the reemergence of white supremacy and overt anti-Semitism. Any Orthodox Jew who voted for him, and who votes for him this year, has the blood of Pittsburgh and Poway and every future synagogue shooting (because there will be future synagogue shootings) on their hands.*
- *Trump makes me ashamed to be American, and his actions and followers make me afraid to be Jewish.*
- *Every time Donald Trump mentions the Jews, I cringe. He is putting a target on our backs, giving the white supremacists legitimacy in hating us. His constant mentioning of the Jews in connection to his decisions regarding Israel also makes those who are concerned about Israeli politics & treatment of the Palestinians hate us as well. I do not believe his rhetoric about Israel has anything to do with us as a people. It's an embarrassment to see Jews supporting this immoral and unethical man.*
- *Very disappointed with the Democrats. They never gave Trump a chance. Once the election was over, their sole purpose was to get him out. Because of that myopic behavior they have completely neglected the citizens of this country and totally disrespected the fact that we voted for this man to run our country. Our vote for Trump was a message to them that we are not happy with the job they have done and we are not happy with the status quo of politics in this country.*
- *I find this administration a complete and utter embarrassment and a danger to our Torah values. While I may like some of the policies implemented regarding Israel, I do not agree with how or why they were done (for personal gain, not any personal conviction or fidelity to the Jewish community). Trump is too volatile for any action to be permanent and being in favor one day does not mean you are not out of favor the next. This is the same man that supports and encourages neo-Nazis; vile & evil*
- *I would like to think that there are other aspects to being orthodox beyond blind support for right wing israeli government policies*

## Sample Verbatim Responses: Haredi Respondents – Please share any other thoughts you may have on the topics discussed in this survey.

- *The US government is in big trouble the house is a joke*
- *On some options I was conflicted such as I thought recognizing Jerusalem as the capital was good, but I think moving the embassy didn't really do much practically.*
- *I find it distressing that there are many in our community who, upon listening (religiously) to conservative talk radio or Fox news, believe with religious fervor that it is self-evident that the talking points they hear on the radio or TV are a religious duty for all Orthodox Jews to believe, even if at odds with reality, science, or basic civilized norms. It's shortsighted to ignore dangerous behavior or words. A respected and ethically intact USA is in the best longterm interest for Israel.*
- *Proud was an odd choice for a question about Donald Trump. I neither feel proud nor ashamed of him. This seemed out of sync with the rest of the survey.*
- *Not sure why you need political info from us, but I filled out the survey to show that regardless of Trump moving the embassy to Jerusalem, he is an absolute moron and I fear for our country. He is a horrible and embarrassing representative of USA globally. He totally represents the elements of society that disrespects anyone who disagrees with him, bullies the handicapped, etc., is terrible to women, and is anti intellectual. How can a self respecting Jew be for that???*
- *As the Dem party is today, there's not a one I would vote for, particularly on a National level*
- *Thank you President Trump. May Hashem continue to bless you and all of your loved ones with the best of health, happiness, and success in all of your personal, academic, professional, and spiritual endeavors; Amen.*
- *The anti Semitic acts we face in our community are likely more a product of the liberal ideals such as placing shelters and low income housing which attracts people with psychological issues to our communities. Also, unrelated, but all of the candidates that went to meet with Al Sharpton, including Bernie, are as anti Semitic as Obama. And we only need to look at his records to know that voting for any of them is suicide for our communities.*
- *Why does Trump not need to wear glasses? Because he has 2020! #4MoreYears*
- *Trump has been the best president ever*
- *I am sure you will find the more "yeshivish" non Zionist crowd more concerned about Israel in their political calculation than the modern pro Zionist community. Ironic but true.*
- *Besides for Israel, stance on abortion, healthcare, and gun control are important factors in my political decisions. I also think Trump has Israel's best interest in mind, but may do things as a show of support that just irritate allies for no reason. Also, I don't trust his mental state, so while he's been a friend to Israel in the past if given the chance to elect another friend of Israel I would jump at it!*
- *Trump is a Menuval.*
- *Wasn't aware that Trump defunded UNWRA or that he closed the East Jerusalem consulate. I think he is doing a much better job than I ever expected and by far the best I've seen from a president in my lifetime. To clarify, I was alive for Reagan but was young enough that I wasn't aware of politics much. But from what I've read about Reagan, he was good but not as good as Trump so far.*
- *I only dont vote as I have a green card but not citizenship otherwise i would vote. you can thus change to i voted if it makes more sense*
- *I love Trump's support of Israel and his no-nonsense attitude toward illegal immigrants but wish that he could Tweet less and be more careful of what he says.*
- *I do not feel our president is a moral person and I am concerned about the way he is running the country.*
- *Stereotyping hasidim as 100% Trump supporters has caused violence against hasidim. I have seen reports of women on trains being shoved and harassed with direct statements that "[You] People vote for Trump". Many hasidim I know do not support Trump at all, but they are not vocal and especially not vocal to outsiders who would use such differences to turn us on each other in different ways.*
- *Trump is an embarrassment as a human being. Any positive aspects of his presidency are in spite of him not because of him*
- *I may agree with many of Trumps actions regarding Israel, but I believe he did them for his own political gain, not true support of Israel. Withdrawing US troops from the Syria/Turkey border was dangerous for Israel and its ally, the Kurds. A "pro-Israel" President would not have done something so dangerous.*

## Appendix II – Survey Questionnaire

# Survey Questionnaire (Page 1 of 2)

Nishma Research Political Opinion Survey of American Orthodox Jews – January 2020

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this survey is to develop statistically reliable data on the political views of American Orthodox Jews. This survey includes some questions relating to Israel, as well as some demographic questions. Additionally, there is an open-ended question at the end of this 5-to-7 minute survey, where you will be able to express your thoughts on any of the topics discussed.

This survey is completely anonymous and is open to all persons age 18 or older. We encourage you to answer all questions as fully as possible. You may get several invitations to the survey, and we encourage you to respond only once per person.

This survey is sponsored by and conducted by Nishma Research, an independent research firm that is founded and run by Orthodox members of our community. If you have any difficulties accessing the survey please email [mark@nishmaresearch.com](mailto:mark@nishmaresearch.com).

Thank you.

### Q1. How do you personally identify Jewishly?

- Modern or Centrist Orthodox
- Yeshivish / Agudah
- Chasidic
- Other Orthodox
- Not Orthodox – TERMINATE

### Q2. How do you identify politically?

- Liberal, Progressive or Left-Leaning Democrat
- Moderate Democrat
- Moderate Republican
- Conservative or Right-Leaning Republican
- Libertarian
- Independent
- None of the above
- Not sure

### Q3. Whom did you vote for in the 2016 presidential election?

- Donald Trump
- Hillary Clinton
- Gary Johnson
- Jill Stein
- Other
- Didn't vote
- Would rather not say

### Q4. How likely are you to vote in this year's presidential election?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Not sure

### Q5. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?

- Approve a great deal
- Approve a moderate amount
- Unsure
- Disapprove a moderate amount
- Disapprove a great deal

### Q6. How do you rate the Trump Administration's performance on its:

- Handling of domestic policy issues
- Handling of foreign relations and policy issues
- Treatment and actions affecting Israel
- Matters affecting the US Jewish community

#### Response scale:

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Don't know

### Q7. Does the Trump Administration make you feel proud?

- Very proud
- Moderately proud
- Slightly proud
- Not at all proud

### Q8. Does the Trump Administration make you feel afraid?

- Very afraid
- Moderately afraid
- Slightly afraid
- Not at all afraid

### Q9a. If the 2020 presidential candidates will be Donald Trump and Joe Biden, whom would you vote for?

- Definitely Trump
- Probably Trump
- Not sure at this time
- Probably Biden
- Definitely Biden
- Probably wouldn't vote

## Survey Questionnaire (Page 2 of 2)

**Q9b-f is Q9a repeated for other Democratic candidates** If the 2020 presidential candidates will be Donald Trump and [Democratic candidate], whom would you vote for?

- Definitely Trump
- Probably Trump
- Not sure at this time
- Probably [Democratic candidate]
- Definitely [Democratic candidate]
- Probably wouldn't vote

Q9b. Bernie Sanders

Q9c. Elizabeth Warren

Q9. Pete Buttigieg

Q9e. Amy Klobuchar

Q9f. Michael Bloomberg

**Q10. In thinking about the Presidential election, how important a factor in your decision is the candidate's views on Israel?**

- Critically important – Views on Israel will essentially determine my vote
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not important
- Don't know

**Q11. Did you support the Trump Administration on its ...**

Recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and move of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem?

- Closing of the U.S. Consulate in East Jerusalem?
- Recognition of the Golan Heights as part of Israel?
- Declaration that Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria / the West Bank are not illegal?
- Closing of the Palestinian Authority offices in Washington D.C.?
- Decision to not fund UNWRA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees)?

Response scale:

- Fully support
- Tend to support
- Tend to not support
- Do not support
- Don't know

**Q12. Do you regard anti-Semitic acts against community members or institutions as a problem facing your Jewish community?**

- Serious problem
- Somewhat a problem
- Not a problem
- Not sure

**Q13. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- Non-conforming, other

**Q14. What is your age?**

- 18 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65+
- Would rather not say

**Q15. (Ask of those who identify as Modern/Centrist Orthodox in Q1): Where do you see yourself within the range of Modern or Centrist Orthodoxy?**

- "To the left" ... Liberal Modern Orthodox
- "In the center" ... Centrist Modern Orthodox
- "To the right" ... More stringent (machmir) Centrist Orthodox
- Don't know

**Q16. At what stage in your life did you begin to identify yourself as being an observant Orthodox Jew?**

- From birth, or at a young age (before Bar or Bat Mitzvah)
- Between Bar or Bat Mitzvah age and 17
- Between ages 18 and 24
- Age 25 or older

**Q17. What is your total annual household income?**

- Under \$50,000
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more
- Would rather not say

**Q18. What is the highest level of schooling you have completed?**

- Less than high school graduate
- High school graduate
- Some college, no degree
- Two-year associate degree
- Four-year Bachelor's degree
- Some postgraduate or professional schooling, no degree
- Postgrad. or professional degree (master's, doctorate, medical, law, etc.)

**Q19. Please share any other thoughts you may have on the topics discussed in this survey.** [Open-Ended; Maximum 500 characters]