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Will it make a difference to Jews if there is a Mormon president?

Response by Rabbi Peter Schweitzer

When the Jewish boy rushed home to tell his immigrant grandfather that the Yankees had won the ballgame, his *zayde*, unschooled in the American ways, asked, "Is it good for the Jews?" In fact, not just the outcome of baseball games, but every action and event was and continues to be examined through this cautious lens.

If, in 1960, John Kennedy could break the religion barrier that held back Catholics from becoming president, then might the nomination and potential election of a Mormon in 2012 be a harbinger for the electability one day – what? in a hundred years? - of a Jewish president? But of course we'll still ask if that is good for the Jews.

And if that small miracle was possible, *mirabile dictu*, will the day come sooner and more speedily to elect someone without religion at all? Not just a Jew, for example, but one who is secular? *Halevai*, it only should be so!

In the end, the label doesn't matter. What does count is the extremism and fanaticism of the person. Or the ability to have personal convictions and accept that others, side by side, may see things differently. Does he castigate and condemn others who don't share his beliefs? Or does she protect and respect a multiplicity of viewpoints?

In the end, the real question is not, "Is it good for the Jews?" but rather, "Is it good for all Americans?" not to mention, all humanity.