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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

The Torah of Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner, Rosh Ha-Yeshiva

Parashat Toldot 5768

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archived at www.ateret.org.il/new/home.php

?????Anyone who would like to ask Rav Aviner a question may do so by e-mailing mororly@bezeqint.net. The question will be brought to the Rav and I will e-mail you the answer.?????

Text Message Responsa

Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a week.

Here's a sample:

Q: Is it forbidden to tell someone that I am pregnant at the beginning of the pregnancy?

A: There is no prohibition. It is personal preference.

Q: Is it permissible to throw a tape with Divrei Torah in the garbage?

A: Yes, this is not considered written, and the Torah only prohibits throwing out Torah which is written.

Q: Is it improper to eat a sandwich on the bus if other people can smell it?

A: This is improper.

Q: Can I pull off a fingernail which is partially coming off on Shabbat?

A: No. Put a band-aid on it so that it does not hurt.

We are United and Unique:

The Return of Ethiopian Jews to Israel

This week – on the 29th of Marcheshvan – Ethiopian Jews celebrate a holiday called "Sigd." It commemorates the return of the Exiles from Babylonian in the time of Ezra and Nechemiah and the great National repentance which occurred at that time. A parashah sheet is being distributed to the Ethiopian community in honor of the holiday and we present a piece written by Rav Aviner which appears in it:

The Jews who came to Israel from Ethiopia are an essential part of the Nation of Israel and are unique among the Nation of Israel, as are all of the other tribes. Aharon Ha-Cohain had the twelve jewels representing each of the tribes on his heart and he loved them all.

Question: Why did Hashem divide the Nation of Israel into tribes instead of having one Nation in which we are all the same? Why did Ya'acov Avinu and Moshe Rabbenu give a separate blessing to each of the tribes before they died?

Answer: Each tribe has its own character, its

own trait, its own unique contribution to the Nation of Israel. It is true that this has caused hatred and war between the tribes and even created two kingdoms. The Master of the Universe, however, desires different tribes, each its own unique entity.

Now, with the kindness of Hashem, the time of the Return to Zion has arrived. All of us are returning to our Land. All of the different tribes are returning. All of us are becoming one. This is not an easy task, since each tribe is capable of considering itself to be the most important and to act disrespectfully towards the others. But little by little, since we live together, we are getting to know each other, and respect and love will sprout out of this experience. In the end, the vision of Yechezkel will be fulfilled: "And the word of Hashem came to me saying: And you, son of man, take one stick and write on it 'For Yehudah and for the children of Israel his companions,' and then take another stick and write on it, 'For Yosef, the stick of Efraim and for all of the house of Israel his companions,' and join them together to make one stick, and they shall be one in your hand... Thus Hashem G-d says: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, into which they went, and I will gather them from around and bring them to their Land. I will make them one Nation in the Land on the mountains of Israel. One king will be king over all of them and they will no longer be two nations" (Yechezkel 37:16-17, 21-22).

This unity will not come about by blurring the differences between us and with one tribe attempting to be like another. Everyone must remain faithful to the traditions of their ancestors. "Hear, my son, the instruction of your father and do not forsake the Torah of your mother" (Mishlei 1:8).

One is first and foremost connected to Klal Yisrael (the entirety of Israel), but he is a different shade within the Nation of Israel. This is similar to a road with many lanes. All are good, but one must be careful not to drive off of the road.

As Ethiopian Jews return to reunite with the Nation of Israel, we must distinguish: On the one hand, anything which is the heritage of the entire Nation of Israel, as found in the Gemara and the Shulchan Aruch, they should follow like the rest of the Nation of Israel. On the other hand, what is unique to the Ethiopians and does not contradict the Halachah, they should faithfully continue to observe. These are the customs of their forefathers and foremothers, which are upright and beloved practices, proper for the holy soul of those who have returned home from Ethiopia.

Book of the Week Written by Rav Aviner



Re'im Ahuvim

Beloved Friends

Rav Aviner has distinguished himself as one of the few Rabbis who have written extensively on the path to marriage and marriage itself. His books on interpersonal relationships present sensitive guidance and great understanding. This wide-ranging work includes chapters on the difference between men and women, what marriage actual is, the proper age for marriage, choosing a spouse and many other topics.

Stories of Rabbenu – Our Rabbi

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

Drinking the Wine of Havdalah Slowly

When our Rabbi was asked why he drinks the wine of havdalah slowly, he responded: This is how I like to eat it. A different time he responded: This is the cup of salvation and the salvation of Israel comes slowly, slowly (Iturei Cohanim #112).

Rav Kook's Passion for Hashem

Once when they were in Rechovot, our master Rav Kook said to Rav Charlop: If I daven minchah now, I will die from divine pleasure, and so they went and looked at fields and cows. Another time Rav Bromberg said that our master Ha-Rav had a desire burning within him to pronounce to four-letter Name of Hashem. When our Rabbi read this he said: Other Torah scholars have different concerns.

Mechitza at the Kotel

After the Six-Day War, when the discussion arose about erecting a mechitza to separate men and women at the Kotel, Our Rabbi said that in the place where a person comes to seclude himself with his Creator in Heaven and to turn his eyes upward in prayer, it is simple logic that we must remove any seduction that might force him to turn his eyes downward and disturb his focus (The book "Rav Ha-Kotel of Rav Simchah Raz pg. 239 and see Sichot Rabbenu 9, Ish Ve-Isha 15).

Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law

Ve-Ten Tal U-Matar

In Israel, we begin requesting rain on the 7th of Marcheshvan. Outside of Israel, we begin requesting rain on December 4th. Since it is currently in between these two dates, i.e. we have begun reciting it in Israel, but not outside of Israel, a recent visitor from America asked Rav Aviner if he should recite "Ve-ten tal u-matar" like everyone else in Israel while here, and how should he act when he returns to America. Rav Aviner answered that both in Israel and outside of Israel he should recite "Ve-ten berachah" until December 4th, since his livelihood is dependent on the rain of America. Ha-Rav added, "Who brings forth bread from [outside of] the Land." This is a word play on the blessing before eating bread.

Jonathan Pollard Count: 8020 Days in Jail



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