



PO Box 1076 Jerusalem 91009 \* Tel. 972-2-628-4101

# Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

## The Torah of Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner

---

Parashat Shemot 5768

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Friedfertig

[RavAviner-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:RavAviner-subscribe@yahogroups.com)

archived at [www.ateret.org.il/new/home.php](http://www.ateret.org.il/new/home.php)

Would you like to ask Rav Aviner a question? E-mail [mororly@bezeqint.net](mailto:mororly@bezeqint.net) and the question will be brought to Ha-Rav and I will e-mail you the answer.

### Letter Sent to President Bush on behalf of Jonathan Pollard

In anticipation of President Bush's upcoming trip to Israel

To the honorable Mr. George Bush, President of the United States of America,  
May peace and blessing be upon the President.

I turn to the President on behalf of the multitude of the Jewish People who dwell in the Land of Israel and throughout the world to grant pardon to our brother, Jonathan Pollard. Mr. Pollard has already sat imprisoned for twenty-two years. His release, as the President surely knows, was promised at the Wye River Accord ten years ago, but was rescinded at the last moment. With each passing day, Mr. Pollard's physical health continues to decline.

Granting pardon to Jonathan Pollard would bestow additional honor upon America, the renowned Land of freedom and human rights, would bring her blessings, and would strengthen the bond between her and the State of Israel: a gesture of goodwill during our State's sixtieth anniversary.

With honor and respect,  
Shlomo Aviner  
Chief Rabbi of Beit El  
Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim in the Old City of Jerusalem

\*\*\*\*\*

### Anonymity

Question: In this week's parashah, Parashat Shemot, is there any meaning to the fact that the names of many great people are not mentioned, such as Yocheved, Amram, Miriam, etc.?

Answer: The Torah is not a historic encyclopedia. What interests us in the Book of Shemot is the birth of the Nation of Israel. As a result, only items directly connected to this idea are mentioned. There are many interesting and important items which not mentioned in the Torah because they are not essential for the main subject. We focus on the essence. Eliyahu Ha-Navi – Who is his father? Who is his mother? Where was he born? Where did he grow

up? What school did he attend? It doesn't matter. If it is not important for our subject, it is therefore not mentioned.

  
**Text Message Responsa**

Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a week. Some appear in the parashah sheets "Ma'ayanei Ha-Yeshu'ah" and "Olam Ha-Katan." Here's a sample:

Q: I put some money aside for tzedakah and it got lost. What should I do?

A: You can give different money in its place, but you are not obligated to do so.

Q: Is it okay to meet someone for the purpose of marriage through the internet?

A: Yes, but do not reveal any personal details until you have references about the person.

Q: Is it permissible to pray in the Shemoneh Esrei for a soccer team to win?

A: Certainly not. We do not pray for vanity and a gathering of scoffers (Avodah Zarah 18b).

Q: I am a cohen. Can I volunteer for Magen David Adom when there may be situations of death?

A: Yes. If there is a death, allow someone else do what is required.

Q: Is it permissible for a 19 year old religious woman to be a waitress in a kosher restaurant with a "kosher" atmosphere?

A: It is permissible, with modesty, of course.

Q: My friends in yeshiva ask me, why can't we listen to love songs?

A: See Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 307:16, because they entice.

Q: Is it permissible to pick fruit from trees in a public garden? Is there a difference between a Shemitta year and a regular year?

A: You may only do so with permission. These fruits have not been abandoned and they are without the holiness of the seventh year. Furthermore, some authorities say that items are only abandoned if the owner indicates so.

Q: Is it permissible to buy flowers during Shemitta?

A: In a store with proper certification.

Q: What are the differences in Havdalah if a woman recites it?

A: There is a dispute whether she recites "Borei me'orei ha-aish."



## Stories of Rabbenu – Our Rabbi

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

### Vilna Gaon

Every time that our Rabbi mentioned the Vilna Gaon, he shuddered as if he stood before a divine angel, and he would refer to him with only one word: "Ha-Gaon" (the Genius). (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali)

It once happened that our Rabbi was called up to recite one of the blessings at a wedding and they referred to him as "Ha-Rav Ha-Gaon." He did not move. When he was told that he had

been called up, he explained that he is not a "Gaon" and that it is only proper to use this description for the Vilna Gaon. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

#### Reb Leib, the son of the Chafetz Chaim

Reb Leib was a great Torah scholar and wrote part of the Mishnah Berurah with his father. When our Rabbi visited him, he gave him "Orot," "Eder Ha-Yekar" and other books of his father, our master, Rav Kook to read. Reb Leib flipped through them. At the end, our Rabbi gave him "Rosh Milin." Reb Leib began to read the first page, but he did not continue. He closed the book and said: "The Rav who wrote this is great in understanding. I do not understand." (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

#### Ha-Rav Yitzchak Hutner

Our Rabbi said about Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Yitzchak Hutner, who was a relative and was raised by our master, Rav Kook: "It seems that he hates Zionists." Rav Hutner died during the period of our Rabbi's illness. The students feared for our Rabbi's health and they therefore did not tell him. The custom was to bring our Rabbi newly published books, and when the book "Igrat ve-Ketavim" of Rav Hutner was published, it was also placed on the table of new books. Our Rabbi opened the book and read the epitaph "May the righteous be remembered as a blessing" on the title page and was shaken. He said: "What is written here? I do not understand?! How is this possible?" The students who were concerned for his health took the opportunity to hide the book. (Ha-Rav Achyah Amitai)

#### Ha-Rav Elchanan Wasserman

Regarding the holy one, Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Elchanan Wasserman, may Hashem avenge his blood, our Rabbi sternly said that when he met him he did not inquire about our master, Rav Kook, at all, and he had been Rav Kook's student. Incidentally, Rav Wasserman's father was the "shamash" (attendant of the shul) in Boisk (where Rav Kook had served as Rav). To a student who said that Rav Elchanan was a student of the Chafetz Chaim, our Rabbi said: "But far from him." (Ha-Rav Achyah Amitai)



### **Shat She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law**

A talk given after lunch at the yeshiva -

#### "Sponga" during Shemitta

Q: Is it permissible to do "sponga" (cleaning the floor by pouring a bucket of water on the floor, swishing it around with a cloth on a squeegee and pushing the water into holes in the floor or outside. It is a popular way to clean one's home in Israel because most houses have stone floors) and push the water onto the ground outside during the Shemitta year?

A: It is permissible for various reasons:

1. The prohibition of watering the ground during the Shemitta year is a rabbinic prohibition. This is unlike watering the ground on Shabbat and Yom Tov which is a Torah prohibition (a sub-labor [toladah] of "Zore'a – seeding"). It is therefore forbidden on Shabbat and Yom Tov to wash one's hands over the ground. One must be especially careful on Sukkot. During the Shemittah year, however, watering is only a rabbinic prohibition.

2. According to the majority of Rishonim (early authorities), observing Shemittah nowadays is a rabbinic mitzvah.
3. Watering the ground by pushing the water from "sponga" is an "unintended act which is not beneficial to him," since one does not want to water the ground or violate Shemittah, but needs some place to put the water.
4. Some people have pipes on their porch which brings the water to the ground. If the water travels through the pipe onto the ground it is called a "grama" – an indirect act.

Since the act is far from a Torah prohibition and there are extenuating circumstances, it is permissible.



*Family Matters* - Ha-Rav writes weekly for the parashah sheet  
"Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships

### How much to yield

*Question: How much do I have to yield to my spouse and how much should I stand my ground?*

*Answer: There is not an amount which can be measured. Through joint discussions you will joyously and lovingly arrive at equitable compromises. There are times when your spouse does not know the extent to which a particular issue is important and a matter of principle to you. In a situation as this, you should not be embarrassed to express your feelings, nor should you wait until he/she guesses. You must reveal your heart: "I feel strongly about this particular issue, please come to me." There are times, however, that after many years of tension, you arrive at an insufferable situation in which one feels trapped by his or her spouse. The solution is to make a "list of expectations." Each one should make a list: "If you give me these things, I will be so grateful that I will meet you in everything you want." If any of the issues on your lists are contradictory, then find a logical compromise. This is the best way to bring contentment, by opening the gate to building love and understanding.*

Special thank you to Fred Casden for editing the Ateret Yerushalayim Parshah Sheet