



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

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Parashat Kedoshim 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.

### Yom Ha-Shoah - Holocaust Remembrance Day

#### Buying German Products

Question:

Should one refrain from buying German products?

Answer:

1. We do not find a prohibition in Halachah against buying from murderers or other evil individuals. There is a prohibition on selling them weapons lest they use them to murder (Avodah Zarah 15b-16a), but there is no prohibition on doing business with them in other ventures. And during the entire Exile, Jews bought from their neighbors even if there were murderers among them.

2. Preference should certainly be given to products sold by Jews, as our Sages taught on the verse, "When you make a purchase from the hand of your fellow" (Vayikra 25:14) that one should buy from Jews (Sifrei ibid., Rashi ibid. and see Rav Aviner's responsa "Mi-Kedem Le-Beit El" vol. 1 #24 and Shut She'eilat Shlomo [original edition] 4:24), This opposition is not particular to Germany, however, but for non-Jews in general.

3. There is value in a boycott on Germany products, but within Halachah this is classified as an act of piety which each person must decide on his own. Furthermore, it is also incumbent on each person to weigh if he is ready to spend more money in order to avoid a German product, or whether he wishes to spend this same money on a different act of piety.

4. If the Sages had decreed that it is forbidden to buy from Germany, then this matter would have left the realm of the personal decision of each person, but they did not make such a decree, since they avoid enacting decrees which the majority of the community is unable to uphold (See Igrot Ha-Re'eiyah vol. 2, 521 and Shut Tzitz Eliezer vol. 5 #17).

5. This is similar to our relationship with Spain after the Expulsion, which was done with special cruelty. There are those who mention that after this tragedy our Sages decreed that it is forbidden to live in Spain. Rabbi Yosef Karo, who in his youth was himself one of those

expelled, however, does not mention this prohibition. Rabbi Yitzchak Abarbanel, who was also expelled, relates the events of the Expulsion, but does not hint at such a decree in his writings (beginning of his commentary on Melachim). Despite this, the Mabit, who lived in their generation, writes: "There are no Jews there and we are certain that no Jew will ever live there, because Hashem, may He be blessed, will gather..." (Shut Ha-Mabit vol. 1 #307). Even if he relied on his great perception, this is still his personal opinion.

6. Rav Meshulam Ratha in Shut Kol Mevaser (1:13) discussed the question of whether it is forbidden to enter Germany, and he rejects this idea for two reasons: A. It is forbidden to institute decrees after the Talmud. While there are many Rabbinic decrees for one city or even one country, there are not decrees for the entirety of the Jewish People. B. We only institute a decree if the majority of the community can uphold it. Even regarding returning to Egypt, which is a Torah commandment, the Jews could not uphold it and they established communities there, and the great Rabbis of Israel had to defend their practice (see Rambam, Hilchot Melachim 5:8 with commentaries).

7. The general principle which arises is that there is no prohibition on buying German products, but there is value in avoiding doing so. This, however, is a personal decision for each individual, if he is willing to sanctify his money toward this purpose, or if he wants to sanctify his money for another worthwhile cause.

Shut She'eilat Shlomo vol. 5 #99



### **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: Is it permissible to wear scandals on Shabbat and holidays?

A: It is permissible if it is considered respectable clothing.

Q: Is it permissible to learn Torah during the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei? Please provide the source.

A: No. Mishnah Berurah 124:17.

Q: If a person sins with the thought "I will sin and repent" – does he have no way to atone for his sin?

A: He can be forgiven if he greatly exerts himself with self-sacrifice.

## **Stories of Rabbenu – Our Rabbi**

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

This year in Jerusalem

One year on Simchat Torah, the students were singing "Next year in Jerusalem." Our Rabbi stopped everyone and said: "This year!" (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #3).

### Fly Israeli

Rav Yitzchak Hutner – former Rosh Yeshiva of Rabbi Chaim Berlin in New York – once visited our Rabbi in Israel. Our Rabbi asked him which airline he was flying. Rav Hunter mentioned the name of a foreign airline. Our Rabbi pressed him: "You need to fly El Al." Rav Hutner responded that terrorists were beginning to hijack planes and he was therefore concerned about flying an Israeli airline. Our Rabbi stood firm. In the end, the plane on which Rav Hutner flew was hijacked to Jordan, and was release only after negotiations with the terrorists. (Iturei Cohanim #176)

### Everything the host tells you to do

Our Rabbi was asked about the end of statement, "Everything the host tells you to do, you must do, except for 'leave'" (Pesachim 86b) – what right does one have to be stubborn and not leave? Our Rabbi responded that the emphasis is on "Everything the host tells you to do, you must do" that a guest should act like a guest and not initiate. He should wait patiently while the host establishes the order, except in one area: the person should not wait until the host tells him to leave, but he should understand on his own that it is time to go. (Ha-Rav Chanan Porat – Iturei Cohanim #219).

### Emotion

A student asked our Rabbi: how should one choose a spouse? He responded with one word: intellect. The student said: what about emotion? Our Rabbi answered: animals also have emotion, the essence is intellect. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #3)

### Looking at women

Our Rabbi was extremely particular not to stare at women. Even when a woman came to him for a long conversation on important matters, he listened to her carefully and responded warmly – he sight was always to the side. The same was when he gave a class to women. He would stand for a woman who was a Torah scholar, but he would not directly look at her. (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali – Iturei Cohanim #176)

### Wigs

When a student tried to convince our Rabbi that one should not permit women to cover their hair with a wig (but with a hat or a scarf), our Rabbi forcefully rejected his argument and said: "Our holy mothers wore wigs" (Ha-Rav Binyamin Eisner – Iturei Cohanim #219)



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

### Where is Hashem?

Q: My four-year old son asks why he does not see Hashem yet. How do I answer him?

A: Because the Master of the Universe is hiding

But we know that He is hiding.

We do not see him

But He sees us.  
And we yearn for Him.  
There is a story about a girl hiding behind a wall and crying.  
They asked her why she is crying.  
She said: I am playing hide-and-seek and no one is looking for me.  
Therefore, if no one is looking for the Master of the Universe  
He is sad.  
But if we know that He is hiding  
And we are looking for Him, He is happy.



**Family Matters** - Ha-Rav writes weekly for the parashah sheet

"Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships

### Couch Potato

*Question: My husband is addicted to watching TV. From the moment he arrives home, he is stuck in front of it. He does not talk to me, relate to me, go to sleep with me, or eat with me. I have tried to speak to him about it many times, but it is like speaking to a wall. I need him greatly, but he is married to the TV. It is as if I am invisible. What should I do?*

*Answer: If it is as if you are invisible, than from now on, it is as if he is invisible. Do not make his food, wash his clothes or do anything for him. Up to now, you have been gentle, subservient and amiable, it is now over. This is not a war, but your strength has worn out. In the army, one does not say, "Commander, I do not want to" but "I am unable." Tell him that because of the way he has treated you, you are spent and have no more energy. Know from the beginning that it will not be easy for you. Therefore, be in contact with a good friend at every step. If possible, it should be with a friend who knows something about marriage counseling. It is true that you need him, but for a brief time, do not be so nice. Deep down, your husband is a good person. Let's hope that this helps him. And perhaps someone has different advice?*

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