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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

On the Air with Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner

Rav Aviner answers questions of Jewish Law and faith on the radio in Israel on Tuesday & Thursday nights (To listen: www.kimizion.org/shiur/shuf.html). On the Air presents a sample each week.

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Shabbat candle lighting when eating outside

Q: If we are eating outside on Shabbat and sleeping in a tent, where should we light Shabbat candles?

A: There are a few possibilities: 1. You can light in the tent under the condition that it is permissible and there is no danger of setting the tent on fire. 2. You can light candles in a lantern and then the wind will not blow it out. They are also inexpensive. There are lanterns which you light with gas and there are others in which you put a candle. Many Jews have something which resembles an aquarium in which they light Chanukah candles. You can also light Shabbat candles in them. This is similar to when I was in the army and we wanted to light Shabbat candles. We took a jelly jar and fiddled with the height of the candle so that enough air could enter and it would not be extinguished. Baruch Hashem for the technical creativity of the Nation of Israel. 3. If neither of these options is viable for various reasons, it is permissible to light with an electric light. There is much discussion about using electric lights for Shabbat "candles" and the Rabbis permit its use in the

end such as using a flashlight with a charged battery. A candle consists of three parts: the wick, the oil and a vessel to hold it. The halachic authorities say a flashlight parallels a candle: the wire is like the wick, the electricity is like the oil and the bulb is light the vessel. This is not the case with a fluorescent light which uses electricity to excite gases which produce visible light. There is nothing which parallels the wick. The Rabbis therefore do not agree to the use of fluorescent lights for Shabbat "candles," but they do permit electric lights. For example: in situations where there is a fear that an elderly person or someone disabled might knock over a candle and cause a tragedy, the Rabbis permit the use of electric lights.

Vessel for Netilat Yadayim

Q: Is it always necessary to use a "natlan" ("vessel," i.e. netilat yadayim cup) when washing netilat yadayim, such as after cutting one's nails, returning from a cemetery, etc...?

A: Some authorities always require the use of a "natlan" and others do not. The consensus of authorities is that a "natlan" is only necessary when washing netilat yadayim before eating and upon waking in the morning. At other times, one may wash from a faucet.

Giving tzedakah to your children

Q: If we give money to our grown son, who is not living at home, is it considered "ma'aser kesafim" (tzedakah)?

A: If he is poor, it is considered "ma'aser kesafim," since "ma'aser kesafim" is for the poor. In fact, we have a principle in Halachah that "the poor of your city takes precedence" and this is even more so in your case.

Two beds in an inseparable frame during niddah

Q: A couple purchased a bed which is two beds in an inseparable frame. Is it permissible to use it during the period of niddah?

A: This is a problem, since there needs to be a distance of at least a half meter, i.e. an amah, between the beds during the period of niddah. There are two possible solutions: 1. The husband should sleep on a separate small mattress which is the practice of many people. 2. To put a mechitza between the two beds at the height of a half meter. It can be made of plexiglass. It is a little funny, but it is a possible solution.

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