



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

## Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

### On the Air with Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner

From Ha-Rav's weekly radio programs in Israel

---

8 Kislev 5769 – #62

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Friedfertig

To subscribe, send e-mail to: [mororly@bezeqint.net](mailto:mororly@bezeqint.net)

Questions in this issue:

1. The murder of the Chabad emissaries
2. Women talking in shul
3. A seven-branched candelabrum
4. One visit to the cemetery for both mother and father

#### The murder of the Chabad emissaries

Q: How could the Chabad emissaries, Rav Gavriel and Rebbetzin Rivka Holtzberg, may Hashem avenge their blood, have been murdered in Mumbai, India by terrorists at the Chabad House when the Gemara states, "Harm will not befall one on the way to perform a mitzvah?" They were not on their way to perform a mitzvah, they were performing a mitzvah!?

A: See the Gemara in Pesachim 8b. "Harm will not befall one on the way to perform a mitzvah" is said in regard to an infrequent danger. The example given there is one who is checking for chametz and perhaps he should check under rocks. No, he should not check because there may be snakes or scorpions under the rocks. The Gemara asks – how so, harm will not befall one on the way to perform a mitzvah. Answer: This is a frequent occurrence and there is therefore a chance that he may be harmed. Another example. A person has a joint wall with a non-Jewish neighbor, and perhaps he should stick his fingers into the cracks in the wall to search for chametz. No, he should not check because the neighbor may accuse him of witchcraft and causes him terrible problems. The Gemara asks – how so, harm will not befall one on the way to perform a mitzvah. Answer: This is an evil neighbor and it is considered a frequent occurrence. We do not apply this principle when

there is a frequent occurrence. This is discussed at length in the book "Mesillat Yesharim" at the end of chapter 9. It is obvious that if one is seized by terrorists it is considered a frequent occurrence and even people performing a holy mitzvah such as these Chabad emissaries can be harmed.

#### Women talking in shul

Q: What should I do about women talking in shul? I spoke to them about it and they were upset.

A: This subject can be divided into a few parts:

1. You were certainly correct to speak to these women in a gentle and loving way without insults and it is their problem if they are upset. If you want to be strict, you can say to them: "I am sorry for pointing it out to you." Even though you are correct, there are times that even a person who is correct can ask forgiveness from someone who is not right. At times you should be wise instead of right.
2. Regarding speaking to them further, the mitzvah of rebuke is based on the Gemara which says (Yevamot 65b): Just as it is a mitzvah to say something which will be heard, so too is it a mitzvah not to say something which will not be heard. To our distress, speaking to them will not help. They have a bad habit of talking in shul and you cannot change it.
3. There are various possibilities: you can pray in the shul in a quiet corner in the women's section or – and this will sound funny but some women do it – use ear plugs. You can also pray in a different shul or at home.

#### A seven-branched candelabrum

Q: It is permissible to light a seven-branched candelabrum?

A: It is forbidden to make any item in the form of one of the objects in the Temple (Avodah Zarah 43a). It is possible that this candelabrum does not have the same form as the menorah in the Temple, but it does not matter since any seven-branched candelabrum would have been kosher for use in the Temple. When the Hasmoneans entered the Temple after defeating the Assyrian-Greeks, they did not have enough materials to create a beautiful menorah, they did what they could and made a simply one. If you look into the Rambam's commentary on the Mishnah (Menachot 3:7), he has a picture with the menorah with rounds branches and not straight ones. There is a dispute whether this is the correct picture drawn by the Rambam or not. Either way, it is forbidden to have a seven-branched candelabrum of any shape. There are a few solutions. 1. There is a novel ruling of our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, to which Rav Herzog (former Chief Rabbi of Israel) agreed. you should take screws and connect the candelabrum to a table or shelf, and it is thus not no

longer an object. An object is something which is carried and this is not something which will be carried around. 2. Add a branch. There is a famous question for Chanukah which has one hundred answers (see the book "Ner Le-Meah"): if there was enough oil for one day, then the miracle of Chanukah only occurred for seven days. Why then is Chanukah celebrated for eight days? This is called "Kushiyat Ha-Beit Yosef" (the difficulty of the Beit Yosef), since he quotes this question (Orach Chaim 670). One of the answers of Maran (our revered teacher) Ha-Rav Kook is that since it is forbidden to make an item in the form of one of the objects in the Temple, the Rabbis added a day to Chanukah or it would have been forbidden to use a chanukiyah (Mitzvah Re'eyah, p. 84). Thus, you can add a branch. 3. You can remove a branch and you will have six.

#### One visit to the cemetery for both mother and father

Q: My parents died very close to one another on the calendar, can I visit the cemetery one time for both of them near their yahrtzeits?

A: There is no problem. You can visit one time even if there is a week or month between the date, since this is not an obligation to visit the cemetery, but it is a proper practice. For a proper practice, each person may choose the best way to perform it. They certainly would not want it to be a burden and especially when the dates are close to one another. Furthermore, there are times when you cannot visit on the yahrtzeit itself, such as when it falls on Shabbat and you move the visit. You see from this that it is possible to visit on a different day. You can therefore visit your mother's and father's grave on the same day. The Kaddish, however, should be said for each one of them on the proper day.

Special thank you to Fred Casden for editing "On the Air"