



Parashat Vaera 5769

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Would you like to ask Rav Aviner a question? E-mail mororly@bezeqint.net.

[Like Rav Aviner's popular song "A Slow Line Enters Gaza: A Song for Israeli Soldiers" - this article has also been made into a song by Elyon Shemesh. We are also hoping to record it professionally. If you are interested in supporting the studio time, the cost is \$550. Please let me know if you are interested.]

I Have Seen Heroes

[From the parashah sheet "Ma'ayanei Ha-Yeshua" – Parashat Shemot]

I have seen heroes.

I have seen a war break out on Chanukah, and the spirit of the Hasmoneans reawakened in young men now determined to wage war with amazing strength and faith. They do not make personal calculations; they are willing to sacrifice themselves.

I have seen soldiers committed to the mission, waging war with true courage; and even when their friends fall in battle, they do not stop for a moment, but say: "We are in the middle of the battle, and we must continue on and finish it."

I have seen a soldier say: "There is nothing to fear; we do what needs to be done. The individual is not important, only the national goal.

I have seen a unit of 120 soldiers, in which 116 were called and another 5 volunteered – including three newlyweds who did not want to forgo their responsibility. And including someone expelled from Gush Katif who had a heavy heart and they said to him: "You are not obligated to go," but he said: "Of course I am obligated."

I have seen soldiers fight with great effectiveness in a war in crowded, built-up areas, knowing that in a situation like this on a darkened night, it is impossible to be completely immune from the dangers of friendly fire, yet they understand that war is war and they march on.

I have seen a high-ranking officer says: "What was once done by an elite combat unit is now accomplished by a regular unit." I have seen an overwhelming response of 115% from those called up and even those who have not been called up, including deserters who begged to be forgiven, and then rejoin their units.

I have seen a soldier in the hospital who was wounded from head-to-toe and wanted to return to the battle and when they told him: "The next war." He stood firm and said: "Now!"

I have seen a mother whose son was killed in the last war who did not hesitate for an instant to consent that her other sons could join combat units.

I have seen soldiers volunteer for dangerous units. I have seen an officer sign up for the standing army, since this army is his supreme ideal. He believes in what he is doing, and his soldiers follow him.

I have seen an officer who was wounded in the face but continued to fight. He refused medical treatment, and he only agreed to go to the hospital after a few hours. He immediately returned to his unit, and said to the reporter: "Please do not turn this battle into a story of heroism. We are just doing what we have to do." I have seen a soldier who waged war like a lion, and when he was asked where he gets this strength, he responded: "From the Nation of Israel! Don't you know? This is a great generation!"

I have seen officers with great spirits who says: "The needs of the Nation are above our needs. We have received so much from the State, we are happy to give a little back. We are happy to worry about the national honor, to worry about our friends."

I have seen officers full of integrity, morality and gentleness.
There is no doubt, I have seen new souls.
There is no doubt, I have seen the Divine Presence returning within us.



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: We were in a serious car accident and we were saved by a miracle. How do we thank Hashem?

A: "Birchat Ha-Gomel" and tzedakah.

Q: I love to blast Chasidic music with the windows rolled down when I drive. Is this a desecration of Hashem's name?

A: Definitely, we should not bother others. By the way, it will also hurt your ears.

Q: Can I send a text message when it is free for me but the person who responds will have to pay?

A: You should inform them.

Q: I am 17 years ago and I have had a recurring dream for many years now. I can fly in the dream and each time the story is somewhat different. Another recurring dream is that I can shoot

spider webs like Spiderman, people are chasing me but I cannot shoot the spider web. What does it mean?

A: It does not mean anything. It happens to everyone and there is no reason to worry. If you are concerned recite the "Hatavat Chalom" (improvement of a dream) which is printed in the siddur before three friends. You do not have to relate the dream.

Q: Is it permissible to have a scheduled Cesarean Section on a Wednesday, three days before Shabbat? I know that for elective surgery we should take its proximity to Shabbat into consideration.

A: There is no problem to schedule it on a Wednesday. Schedule it for a day that is comfortable for the mother. Mazel Tov!

Q: I was stopped by the Police for speeding and received a ticket. Is it preferable to plead guilty or deny the charge?

A: It is best to tell the truth, to regret the past, and take upon yourself to act better in the future.

Q: It is permissible to guarantee someone else's bank loan?

A: If you are willing to take the risk that you would have to pay, or you are certain that there is no risk.

Q: Should I buy a lottery ticket with the hope of winning and spending my time learning Torah?

A: It is nonsense. The chances are lower than the chances of getting run over by a car on the sidewalk.

Q: If someone's father is secular, should he recite kaddish for him for 11 or 12 months?

A: 11 months. He is not considered wicked, he is a "tinok she-nishba" (literally, "captured infant" – it refers to some who sins inadvertently as a result of having been raised without a proper Torah education). Nonetheless, it is proper to recite it more than 11 months but not 12.

Q: Is it permissible to buy "Peticha" (opening the ark in shul) from "ma'aser kesafim," since my wife is in her ninth month of pregnancy (and it is said that opening the ark will help open the womb)?

A: No. "Ma'aser kesafim" is for the poor, and it is better to give it to tzedakah.

Q: Is it permissible to buy cookies with kosher supervision for Arabs?

A: You should buy from Jews.

Q: Is it permissible to read the Koran, since it is not idol worship?

A: It is not idol worship, but it is filled with heresy. See Rambam, Avodah Zarah 2:2.

Q: Is it permissible to throw out missionary literature which contains verses with Hashem's Name?

A: Yes, it has no holiness.

Stories of Rabbenu – Our Rabbi

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

Pictures

Our Rabbi did not like when people took pictures of him. The majority of the pictures in which he appears were without his knowledge. Occasionally, when he noticed that some was taking his picture, he would turn his head in the other direction. (see Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald and see Shut Da'at Cohain, p. 162)

At one of the Tzahal Parades, someone photographed our Rabbi. Our Rabbi took offense and asked if he had permission. At that time, our Rabbi related that Ha-Rav Kook only had his pictures taken at the beginning of new periods in his life, such as making aliyah or moving to Jerusalem. He would hire a photographer and would be particular not to fill the entire picture, i.e. from head-to-toe. (Ha-Rav Yitzchak Steiner and see Shut Da'at Cohain, p. 166)

Our Rabbi was not particular if someone took a picture of him from afar or he happened to be in the picture, but he was not happy if someone took a picture right on from a close distance. (Ha-Rav Daniel El Chai)



Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law

The Term "Occupied Territories" (from the book "Responsa of the Intifada" - p. 43)

We do not recoil from the term "occupied," since the Rambam explained based on various verses in the Torah that we are commanded to conquer the entire breath of our Land and not to leave even a part of it (Sefer Ha-Mitzvot of Rambam, Positive mitzvah #4 according to the Ramban). It is certainly preferable to enter into our Land in a peaceful manner, with the agreement of the non-Jews who are temporarily located there and with their recognition that this Land is ours. But if this is not the way it occurs, we are obligated to conquer our Land. This is the War of Liberation or Independence, which is an honored concept among all the nations of the world. The Ramban emphasized that this mitzvah also applies during the Exile, but to our distress, we were unable to fulfill it on account of our lack of ability for two thousand years, and now that the ability has returned to us, this mitzvah has also returned to us. We are not going to conquer foreign lands like Yemen or Algeria, only our Land which belongs to us. There is therefore no difference between the occupied territories that are located on one side of the "Green Line," which were conquered during the War of Liberation, and the occupied territories on the other side of the "Green Line," which were conquered during the Six-Day War. This "Green Line" has absolutely no spiritual, ethical, halachic or national meaning. We certainly do not have just any "territories," but territories of the Land of Israel, territories of the Holy Land, which Hashem gave us and which we now occupy because of the loving-kindness of Hashem.

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