



Parashat Beshalach 5769

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## Ten Commandments for Hitching a Ride

[from parashah sheet "Maayanei Ha-Yeshua" – Parashah Behaalotecha 5768]

It is popular in Israel for Jews to give each other rides, especially in places where buses run infrequently. These rules are for this situation and NOT for outside of Israel when one should NOT hitchhike. This text is to show what is occurring in Israel and proper behavior which can be applied to many situations (While this list was created with young adults in mind, much of it would apply to anyone).

### 1. Precedence

Even if you are first in line, fulfill the mitzvah of kindness and let a woman with kids, a pregnant woman, an elderly person or a Torah scholar go first. Do not say: What about me? Don't worry, your turn will come and it is always best to have a good heart.

### 2. A Secure Ride

Do not get into a car unless you are one hundred percent certain that the driver is not an Arab. Remember: There have already been horrible cases, one in particular, in which an Arab dressed as a Jew with a beard and kippah killed a Jew. And if you are a woman, it is not enough that the driver is a Jew; you must be certain that the driver is trustworthy. Only travel with someone you know to be trustworthy or a man who is traveling with his wife or a similar situation.

### 3. Modesty

If it is a driver of the opposite sex, sit in the back seat if there is room. If a person of the opposite sex is sitting in the back seat already, it is okay. If there are two sitting in the back, do not enter and squeeze them.

### 4. Manners

Do not ask the driver: where are you going? This is not your business. Rather you should tell him where you need to go. You certainly should not ask the driver to charge his course for you. If he suggests it on his own – great.

#### 5. Burdening Others

You should seriously consider whether you should hitch rides and benefit from others. We are not beggars who “sponge” off other people. Therefore, take money with you and travel by bus. Only take a ride if you are in a place where there is no public transportation or you have to wait for a long time.

#### 6. Honoring Parents

If your parents are against you hitching a ride – do not hitch. After all, they are the one who give you the travel expenses. Even though you are already an adult and according to the basic Halachah you are not obligated to be just like them in thought and deed, the halachic authorities say that in unimportant matters you should give in to them, acting beyond the letter of the law. And why is this? Because they do many things beyond the letter of the law for you which are not required according to the Halachah, because they are concerned about you. Therefore, do not be stingy and ungrateful to only do for them what you are obligated to do, but act beyond the letter of the law. When you are independent and live on your own, you can act as you wish.

#### 7. Sit quietly

Do not talk with a friend during the trip, if it disturbs the driver. He may want quiet during the trip. Do not even talk in a whisper. Similarly, do not talk on your cell phone, as it will disturb the driver. If you must talk, and it is really necessary, ask the driver for permission and speak briefly and quietly.

#### 8. Cleanliness

Do not make a mess - I am embarrassed that I even have to mention this. Do not bang on the door, it can break – I am also embarrassed that I have to mention this. Obviously do not smoke, do not even ask the driver for permission.

#### 9. Do not make comments

If the driver is driving erratically, do not make any comments. It is your problem that you took a ride with him. It is obviously not okay, but he did not appoint you to be responsible for giving him proper instruction. He permitted you to enter his car which is like his house, and not to get involved with his private life. If he is driving dangerously get out in the middle of the trip and give some reason without insulting him, such as a change in plan.

#### 10. Thank You

When you enter say "thank you" with a smile. And say "thank you" when you get out as well. You do not have to say "Tizkeh Le-Mitzvot – May you merit performing other mitzvot." You can say it like a normal person: "Thank you very much."



## **Text Message Respon**



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 bake cookies with notes inside or is the ink not kosher?

A: It is permissible. The ink is kosher, since it is inedible and nullified within the cookie.

Q: Is it permissible to read the Haftarah on Shabbat from a transliterated text?

A: Yes, it is like reading it by heart.

Q: Are the people in the group "Peace Now" considered traitors?

A: They are considered confused.

Q: I have heard that it is forbidden to sleep alone in a house. This often happens to me. What should I do?

A: It is permissible if there is a mezuzah and light.

Q: If a woman feels a need can she put on Tefillin?

A: No, it is "yuhara" (religious arrogance), she should fulfill her obligations.

Q: We are getting married. My name is Chaim and my finance's name is Einat. Can you suggest a fitting verse to put on our invitation?

A: It is best not to put a verse on the invitation because it is forbidden to throw a verse in the garbage, and this is what happens most of the time when people receive invitations.

Q: Is there an explicit prohibition from avoiding taxes?

A: It is theft. Shut "Yechaveh Da'at" of Rav Ovadiah Yosef.

Q: If doctors define a person as a "vegetable," is it permissible for his wife to remarry?

A: No, he is not considered dead according to Halachah, because part of his brain is still alive.

Q: If we know the gender of our fetus, are we obligated to hide it?

A: No. It is a personal decision.

Q: Is it permissible to curse the extreme left in Israel?

A: G-d forbid!

Q: There is a growing problem of stray cats and dogs in Israel and they are often killed by starvation or car accidents. Is it permissible to spay them?

A: No, but it is permissible to place traps of food which contain ingredients which prevent pregnancy.

Q: Is there something special to hanging pictures of Rabbis in one's home?

A: Yes, "Let your eyes behold your teacher" (Yeshayahu 30:20).

Q: Two years ago I completely broke off connect with someone who was a good friend. I decided that I did not want any relationship with her or her family. Is it permissible not to answer the phone if someone from her family calls?

A: The important thing is that you act with politeness and thoughtfulness.

## Stories of Rabbenu — Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

### Cohanim and Kivrei Tzaddikim (the graves of the righteous)

Our Rabbi told the following story about Maran Ha-Rav Kook (Le-Shelosh Ba-Elul vol.1 #76), that during his travels to oversee Jewish matters in the Galil, he did not visit Kivrei Tzadkim when he was in Tzefat, because he was a Cohain.

Ha-Rav Mordechai Eliyahu wrote (Parashah Sheet "Kol Tzofa'ich #279), "In his time, I told Ha-Rav Ha-Gaon Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook, peace be upon him, that it is written in the book 'Kuntres Yechi'eli' that it is permissible for cohanim to enter Kever Rachel. He asked me: what do they say there? I said that they read the verses about our mother Rachel there. He travelled there, but only went as far as the door. When he returned, I asked him: why didn't you enter? He answered: My father did not enter, therefore I did not enter."

In the book Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah - Eretz Yisrael (edited by Rav Shlomo Aviner, p. 142 note 1), it relates that after the Six-Day War, the students of our Rabbi organized a trip to the liberated areas in the Shomron. One of the places they visited was Kever Yosef. The students entered inside, but our Rabbi remained outside, because he was a cochain.

In Iturei Cohanim (Sivan 5766 #261), Rav Aviner was asked, is it permissible for a cochain to enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah? He answered that there is a dispute, but Maran Ha-Rav Kook did not enter. In Shut She'eilat Shlomo (vol. 3 #329), Rav Aviner also writes that although there are authorities who permit cohanim to enter "Kivrei Tzaddikim," since the righteous are called "living even in their death," the accepted halachah is that it is forbidden. There are also authorities who allow cohanim to visit Maarat Ha-Machpelah and Kever Rachel, because they were built in a way that the cohanim would not become impure; but the acceptable halachah for this is also that it is forbidden. Therefore, we say that cohanim should not enter "Kivrei Tzaddikim," but we can defend the practice of those who act in this way, especially entering Maarat Ha-Machpelah and Kever Rachel.

In the book "Ke-Chitzim Be-Yad Giborim" (vol. 3, p. 108), Ha-Rav Avi Ronski, the current Chief Rabbi of Tzahal, was asked: is it permissible for a soldier who is a cochain to enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah for a tour in order to learn about the place in the event of a terrorist attack and his unit is required to take action? Rav Ronski answers that it is permissible for three reasons: 1. It is obvious and clear that the security apparatus that would be sent on such a mission must train for it properly. 2. In general, it is not clear that the graves of our forefathers are directly located under the floor of the prayer halls, and even if they are located there, it is possible that the impurity does not break out and spread upward since it is possible that there are hollow spaces larger than a "tefach" (handbreath – 7.6 cm-9.6 cm) which separate between the floor and the graves. 3. There are Rishonim (Rabbis of the Middle Ages) who ruled that the graves of the righteous do not cause impurity, and Ha-Rav Mordechai Eliyahu permits cohanim to enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah and Kever Rachel. Even though the majority of authorities prohibit entering, it is possible to add this lenient opinion to the other reasons to permit it. Rav Aviner writes in his comments to this book that it is important to know that the first reason is the main

one, and the second and third reasons are only additional minority positions which can be added to permit it. And we must point this out so that people do not learn that there is a blanket permission to enter.

Note: Rav Aviner – who is also a cochain – has not and does not visit any of the "Kivrei Tzaddikim."



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

#### Shidduchim

Question: I believe Rav Aviner has two shidduchim websites. Can you please forward them to me?

Answer: There are the two Israeli websites which Rav Aviner often recommends:

1. Kulanu Shadchanim (We are all match-makers) - [www.kulanu4you.org](http://www.kulanu4you.org)
2. Shoshvinim (Groom's Men/Bride's Maids) - [www.shoshvinim.org](http://www.shoshvinim.org)  
(On this website, one's friends or family register them)



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

I Don't Feel Anything toward Her

*Question: I have met with a woman for the purpose of getting married, and she seems like a good match: she has good character traits, but I do not feel anything towards her. I have met other woman for this same purpose and have felt something. What should I do?*

*Answer: Theoretically, a lack of feeling is not a problem. The feeling of love will appear later. We must understand that the feeling of love before marriage and the feeling of love after marriage are different types. In fact, the Torah relates that Yitzchak loved Rivka only after marriage. But in reality, we do not act this way, as we are not angels and this is a dangerous risk. After all, even when there is love between a couple, difficulties arise. The desire to live together as husband and wife is therefore essential, and it greatly aids in creating upright offspring. We therefore do not take this risk. The essence is not to exaggerate and demand a burning love at every single moment, but there is a need to have a desire to build a life together. On this foundation, it is possible to beginning to build a deep connection together.*

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