



On the Air with Rav Aviner ~ #90

From Ha-Rav's weekly radio program in Israel

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Giving human food to animals

Q: Is it permissible to give leftover challah to cows?

A: In general, we do not give human food to animals, but in this case I understand that you are going to throw the leftover challah out (wrapped in two plastic bags). It is certainly better to give the food to animals than throw it out.

Hugging and kissing a step-granddaughter

Q: When my grandchildren come over and give me hugs and kisses, my step-granddaughter also does. Is it permissible to give a hug and kiss to a step-granddaughter?

A: If she became your step-daughter when she was very young and was accustomed to giving a hug and kiss, it is permissible. She is like an actual granddaughter. But if she came into the family when she was older – it is forbidden. We do not follow the biological connection but the regular connection of life and how she feels. There are some who are strict.

Accidental radio on Shabbat

Q: The radio was accidentally connected to the Shabbat timer, and it turned on. What should one do in such a case?

A: There are three options: 1. Put a blanket over it. 2. Turn the dial on the timer to turn off in 5-10 minutes and the radio will turn off indirectly (gemara). 3. If the volume is controlled by a knob (not an electric button), you can turn the volume down with a "shinui" (an unusual way, i.e. with your thumb, back-handed, etc.)

Askenazi in non-Ashkenaz minyan

Q: Should an Ashkenazi Jew davening with a Sefardic or Nusach Sefard minyan say Tachanun when they are saying the Vidui or when they also put their heads down?

A: It does not matter. When he is the only one in the minyan who is Ashkenazi he should also say the Vidui because of "Lo Titgodedu – do not make different groups," but today most minyanim in Israel are mixed. By the way, it is explicitly written that when the community is saying Aleinu one should also at least bow when others do, since it is said at different times in the davening.

Direction of Davening at the Kotel

Q: Should one turn slightly to the left when davening at the Kotel to face the spot of the Temple?

A: There is no need since we do not know the exact spot of the Temple. We therefore face forward. I once ask Rav Simchah Ha-Cohain Kook – who grew up in Jerusalem -- when he was visiting the yeshiva, and he said that the custom is not to turn left (See Rav Aviner's book "Le-Mikdashech Tuv" p. 241 for a short responsum on this question).

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