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Shoftim 5769

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## The Time has come for Brotherhood

[From "Be-Ahavah U-Be-Emuna" – Re'eh 5769 – translated by R. Blumberg]

The time has come for brotherhood,  
Between myself and...  
My father and mother.  
My parents-in-law.  
My brothers and sisters.  
And between me and myself.

Between religious and irreligious  
Ashkenazi and Sephardi  
Right wing and Left  
Yeshiva-oriented and academic  
Employer and employee  
Commander and soldier  
High-brow and laborer,  
Chassid and Non-Chassid,  
Chareidi and Zionist.

Brotherhood between me and those I love  
Me and those I do not  
Me and those who love me  
Me and those who do not.  
Between those far removed  
Those intimately close  
And those in between.

Brotherhood between Nationalism and Universalism

Peace and war  
Mathematics and poetry  
Law and legend  
Intellectual study and phys-ed  
Body and soul  
Intellect and nation  
Spirituality and the mundane  
Between different peoples  
Between different nations  
Between all mankind  
Between man and other creatures  
Between everything

It is long since time.  
It was time already when Cain killed Abel.  
When the First and Second Temples were destroyed  
When rightist called leftist "traitor".  
When leftist called rightist "traitor".  
When one group rejected another.  
The time arrived.  
Long ago.

All the same I say:  
Now is the time!  
Don't tell an Ethiopian Jew:  
"You're not Jewish!"  
Just because he's "too dark".  
And don't tell a Russian Jew:  
"You are not Jewish!"  
Just because he's "too white".

Now is the time!  
We returned to our land for this.  
Because the time for brotherhood has come.  
It's so sweet!  
So wonderful!  
Be well  
My brother.



## **Text Message Responsa**

Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a week. Some appear in the parashah sheets "Ma'ayanei Ha-Yeshu'ah," "Olam Ha-Katan" and "Be-Ahavah U-Be-Eumnah." Here's a sample:

Q: I have a neighbor who borrows food items all of the time, but does not return them. Is it permissible for me to stop lending and lie when she asks by saying that I do not have a particular product?

A: It is possible, but the proper way is to ask for it back in a gentle manner.

Q: Why does Hashem forgive me when I repent, even though I could stumble again?

A: Because you exerted effort and struggled.

Q: Does a reflector jacket, which one is required to wear (in Israel) if he is on the side of the road with car trouble, require Tzitzit since it has four corners?

A: No, it is not a garment one wears for modesty, warmth or honor, but rather it is just a sign.

Q: Is it permissible to have a dog?

A: Yes, if it does not bother others.

Q: You had written that Ha-Rav Neriah innovated "Im Eshcachekh" (If I forget you, Jerusalem) at weddings, but it is mentioned in the Taz 560:4?

A: He innovated having the community sing it.

Q: Is it permissible for a young woman to have plastic surgery on her nose since it is causing her to have a lack of self-confidence?

A: Yes, in order to remove a distress such as in a rare case of a crooked nose. But it is not recommended to rush into this decision.

Q: Is it permissible to use two challot made with different grains on Shabbat?

A: Yes. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 274, Mishnah Berurah #4.

Q: The teacher gives us the same tests he gave in a different school last year. Can we get the tests from kids we know there and prepare for the tests?

A: You have to ask the teacher if he agrees.

Q: Is it permissible for a son to call the police if his father is hitting his mother?

A: Yes, but he should ascertain beforehand that his mother will not deny it.

Q: I am a mother of three small children. How many times am I obligated to daven a day?

A: The morning blessings, and beyond this according to your desire.

Q: Is it permissible to wish my parents "good night" after I recite the Bedtime Shema?

A: It is preferable to do so beforehand, but it is permissible if you forgot.

Q: I am a female officer in the army, far from religious observance. My husband's family is religious and when we spend Shabbat there I observe Shabbat, dress modestly, cover my hair, etc. I enjoy it immensely being with the family, but I don't feel anything. What causes a person to become a believer?

A: In order to come to faith, one must learn faith from people who believe, from books about faith or recordings of classes about faith.

Q: My wife and I are newly observant and are in the first year of marriage. Is it permissible to hold hands in public?

A: It is certainly forbidden to display public acts of affection. Kitzur Shulchan Aruch of Rabbi Shlomo Granzfield 152:10.

Q: Can a woman's whose due date past induce labor?

A: Based on the doctor's recommendation.

Q: Some hold that Torah learning protects more than the army?

A: Both are needed. This one is not sufficient without that one. See Niddah 70b.

Q: Is it permissible to shop on a weekday in a store which is open on Shabbat?

A: It is permissible, but a store which observes Shabbat is preferable.

Q: Because of the burden on the community, can a gabbai recite the blessing for the sick and each person recite the name (instead of each person coming, telling him the name and having the gabbai recite each one)?

A: That's a great idea.

Q: Is it permissible to roast a liver in the oven?

A: Yes, with the condition that there is a very high heat.

Q: Is it permissible to use a pen in a house where I am babysitting?

A: Yes, they will forgive the use.

Q: I fear that I will stumble in touching someone on a date - what should I do?

A: Meet in a public place where there are a lot of people.

Q: Who is more appropriate to teach in a girls' high school – a male Torah scholar or a woman?

A: Certainly a woman, whether on account of modesty or as a role model. And there is no lack of female Torah scholars.

Q: When one washes hands before davening must it be done from a cup or is it enough to wash?

A: It is enough to wash.

Q: Is it permissible to throw a Koran in the garbage?

A: No, since it includes ideas of believing in one G-d.

Q: Should one kiss his kippah if it falls on the ground?

A: There is no need; wearing a kippah is for the sake of modesty.

Q: Should we follow the books of medicine of the Rambam?

A: No, this is old medicine. See Rambam, Hilchot De'ot 4:18 with Kesef Mishnah and introduction of Rabbi Avraham ben Ha-Rambam to Ein Yaakov.

Q: Is it permissible to lie for a surprise birthday party?

A: Certainly. This is not the type of lie the Torah forbids.

Q: Is it permissible to pass by a place on Shabbat which has a video camera?

A: It is permissible. It is a "benefit which comes to a person against his will" (Pesachim 25b), since you are walking on your way, do not do anything in relation to the camera and it does not matter to you. Pnei Yehoshua ibid. in the name of the Ran.

Q: Is it permissible to eat a dairy product with fish?

A: Some are strict, but it is permissible according to the basic Halachah.

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

### Character Traits

#### Don't get excited

The administrator of the yeshiva once entered in a rage and said to our Rabbi: "It is written in the newspaper that they do not learn in the yeshiva but waste all of their time with Soviet Jewry and politics. We cannot be silent. We must respond!" Our Rabbi did not respond. He took counsel with a few people and decided not to respond. A journalist once interviewed our Rabbi and published an article filled with distortions. A student said to our Rabbi: "You must respond. It is impossible to let this pass in silence." Our Rabbi did not get excited. He explained that there is no need to respond to every little thing. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

#### Like everyone else

Our Rabbi participated in a funeral and the eulogies went on for a long time. One of the family members of the deceased went to one of the neighbors and brought our

Rabbi a chair to sit on. Our Rabbi refused and said: "Everyone is standing. I will therefore also stand." But he leaned one leg on the chair and explained: "I am standing like everyone else, but if someone exerted effort and brought a chair, I will use it." (Ha-Rav Mordechai Greenberg)

#### Saying Shalom

Our Rabbi said that according to an explicit Mishnah, one should say "shalom" and not use other greetings (Berachot 54a). When he was asked: But Jews customarily say good morning or good evening in Yiddish? He responded in surprise: Is Yiddish our language?!

#### Who goes first

A student who was holding a chair was walking in a narrow hall in the old yeshiva building. He met our Rabbi in the hall and immediately moved to the side to make room. Our Rabbi said: One who has a load and one who does not have a load – the one with the load goes first (Sanhedrin 32b), and he insisted the student go first.

#### Fear of Heaven

Our Rabbi davened with great concentration, and he was very strict that the students not talk in the middle of davening. He would repeat the words of our Sages: "These are things that are the most important in the world, yet people disgrace them" (Berachot 6b). New, young students occasionally chatted during the davening. It once happened that our Rabbi pointed it out once, then twice and the third time, when they were speaking during the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei, and he threw them an admonishing look. Right after the davening, our Rabbi strayed from his custom and did not remain to hear the Halachah class given at the conclusion of davening. Instead he went up to the library, where he usually removed his Tefillin. Those students felt responsible and went up to the library to apologize. When they opened the door, they found our Rabbi crying. They approached in trembling, asked forgiveness and promised not to continue in their foolish ways. Our Rabbi then said to them: "You think I am crying on your account, I am crying on my account, since our Sages said: 'Anyone who has fear of heaven, his words are heard' (Berachot 6b). And if I told you once, twice and three times and you did not listen, it is a sign that there is a blemish in my fear of heaven." (Ha-Rav Chanan Porat. See Or Le-Netivotai 3, 308, 326)



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

Husband and Wife Swimming Together during Niddah

Question: Is there a problem for a husband and wife to swim together in the same pool while she is a niddah? - We are talking about a private pool where there are no mixed swimming issues.

Answer: Yes, it is forbidden for a husband to see his wife not completely dressed when she is a niddah. And even if she is fully dressed and enters the water, it is still a problem since a husband and wife should not frolic when she is a niddah. This does not mean that we should go to the opposite extreme. A husband and wife still have to smile, laugh, etc. during this period of time, but it is not possible to swim together.

*From Rav Aviner's Commentary on Birkat Ha-Mazon,  
entitled Shir Ha-Ma'a Lot*

May The Merciful One should send us Eliyahu the Prophet, who is remembered for good...

The last of the prophets, Malachi, announced that prophecy will return: "Behold, I am sending to you Eliyahu the Prophet...and he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the sons, and the hearts of the sons to their fathers" (Malachi 3:23-24). Maran Ha-Rav Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Cohain Kook explained that "the fathers" are "Ha-Yishuv Ha-Yashan - the old settlement of Israel," the Jews who are righteous and God-fearing, and "the sons" are "Ha-Yishuv He-Chadash – the new settlement of Israel," the Jews who build the Land and the revive the Nation [but were largely secular]. There is alienation, and sometimes even tension, between these two camps, and on account of this, both sides lose out. This is the mission of Eliyahu: to explain to the fathers the value of the sons, and to the sons the value of the father, and with this, salvation will arrive.

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