



From the teachings of the
Rosh Yeshiva of Ateret Yerushalayim
Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner

On the Air with Rav Aviner ~ #107

From Ha-Rav's weekly radio program in Israel and more

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Friedfertig

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Questions in this issue:

1. Speaking Lashon Ha-Ra about yourself
2. Non-Jews on the Temple Mount
3. Prayer for the Sick
4. SMS Q&A

Speaking Lashon Ha-Ra about yourself

Q: Is it permissible to speak Lashon Ha-Ra about yourself?

A: There is a story about the Chafetz Chaim traveling on a train, and someone who did not recognize him, began to say all sorts of praises about him. The Chafetz Chaim said: He is not so great. The person was so upset about this offense to a Torah scholar that he yelled at him and slapped him in the face. We learn from here that a person should not speak Lashon Ha-Ra about himself. Nonetheless, the basic law is that a person may speak Lashon Ha-Ra about himself. There is, however, another issue. The Gemara in Berachot says (34b): One who publicizes his sins is brazen. A person need not relate his sins. A person should be ashamed about them. By relating them, he is shaming the Master of the Universe. But it is permissible if the goal is to say that one erred or stumbled in this or that regard and was able to overcome it.

Non-Jews on the Temple Mount

Q: If Jews are forbidden on the Temple Mount, aren't non-Jews also forbidden?

A: Almost all of the great Rabbis of this generation, both before the Six-Day War until now, prohibit ascending on to the Temple Mount. Maran Ha-Rav Kook, our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah and Rav Avraham Shapira, along with every one of the Chief Rabbis, have prohibited visiting the Temple Mount. Regarding the non-Jews, they do not ask our halachic authorities. We are certainly distressed that they go on to the Temple Mount. After all, a non-cohain who enters the area of the Temple, even when it is not standing, will die (Bamidbar 3:10), i.e. the Arabs and non-Jews who ascend are liable for death. And there was in fact a stone on the Temple Mount when the Temple stood which warned: A non-Jew who enters is liable for death. This stone is located in the Rockefeller Museum and a picture of it appears in the Talmudic Encyclopedia in the entry on the Temple Mount. We are not Pro-Arab, but we are not interested in Arabs dying. A right-wing Jew once said that he was happy that Arabs go up on the Temple Mount since they will die as a result. We do not say such things. Hashem desires evil to be eliminated by people repenting and living.

Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law

Prayer for the Sick

Question: Is there a point at which one no longer has to insert the name of a sick person into the prayer for the sick if they don't know the sick person's status?

Answer: One month.

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-Emunah." Here's a sample:

Q: Why do blessings begin in the second person and continue in the third person?

A: Because Hashem is close to us within the world and far away beyond the world (Nefesh Ha-Chaim 3).

Q: Do I have to wait 6 hours between meat and milk or is 5 enough?

A: You need 6 hours (Shulchan Aruch 89:1) unless you have a halachic-based tradition of waiting 5 hours.

Q: Ha-Rav wrote that the basic halachah is that it is not forbidden to give a boy's name to a girl and vice-versa, but it is improper. What is the source?

A: The book "Ta'ama De-Kara" of Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski, p. 119.

Q: Do we fulfill mitzvot because Hashem commanded us to do so or because they elevate us?

A: Because Hashem commanded. But Hashem commanded in order to elevate us: "Who has made us holy with His mitzvot and commanded us..."

Q: Does a younger sister have to wait before her older sister is married?

A: Not in our times.

Q: I had a good friend, who was Druze, who was killed in the last war. Is it permissible for me to recite Tehillim for the ascension of his soul?

A: Yes, he is a righteous gentile.

Q: If I wear a skirt down to the floor, do I have to wear socks?

A: No.

Q: Where is it written that we must learn about faith?

A: It is part of the Torah, and one must learn all of the Torah.

Q: Is there a halachic basis for the practice to wait three hours between meat and milk?

A: Yes, it is a stricter version of the position mentioned in the Tosafot and Rama to wait an hour, which is practiced among Jews of German descent.

Q: Is it permissible to speak with Hashem like a friend?

A: With trembling of holiness.

Q: Is it permissible to take bottles from the municipal recycling bin?

A: No. It is theirs.

Q: Is it permissible to pay with a counterfeit coin I received?

A: Definitely not. It is theft.

Q: I broke a friend's possession which he bought on sale. How much do I have to pay?

A: The price which it can be purchased in the marketplace.

Q: Is it an obligation to wear a seatbelt?

A: Yes, it is a life-threatening situation.

Q: Is it permissible to smoke?

A: Certainly not. It is dangerous. 1000 die from smoking in Israel each year and 1600 from second-hand smoke.

Q: It is permissible to kill flies or mosquitoes who are bothering me? After all, they were created by Hashem.

A: It is permissible. If it is for a human need, it is not considered cruelty.

Q: It is permissible to have a dog?

A: Yes, with the condition that it does not bother the neighbors by scaring them, with barking or filth.

Q: Is it permissible to put a dog who is suffering to sleep?

A: Yes, and it is a kindness.

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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim P.O.B. 1076 Jerusalem 91009 Tel.02-6284101 Fax.02-6261528

www.ateret.org.il To subscribe, send e-mail to: mororly@bezeqint.net

