



On the Air with Rav Aviner - #113

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

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Group Torah learning on a train

Q: Is it permissible to learn Torah in a group on the train if it may bother others?

A: It is certainly forbidden. When one travels on the train, he cannot bother others. The train is not a shul or yeshiva. If a person wants to learn, he should learn quietly. By the way, some people talk so loudly or scream on their cell phone in public and this is a severe transgression. It penetrates the private areas of another. People need proper respect for other people on a train, bus, street, etc. And this is true all the more so for one who learns Torah since "derech erez" (proper ethical behavior) precedes Torah. The same applies to organizing a minyan on an airplane when it bothers others. The great halachic authorities ruled that it is forbidden to daven in a way which will bother others, and one should therefore daven in his own seat. They include: Ha-Rav Moshe Feinstein (Shut Igrot Moshe, Orach Chaim 4:20), Ha-Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Halichot Shlomo – Tefillah p. 95) and Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef. And this is how they themselves acted. El Al published a small booklet called "An Information Guide for the Religious Passenger" which includes the opinions of these great Rabbis. Ha-Rav Yosef

Shalom Elyashiv also recently ruled: plane travel supersedes a minyan. There are buses in the United States rented by religious Jews where they learn Torah and daven but the main principle in our case is that it is forbidden to bother others.

Repenting for speaking Lashon Ha-Ra

Q: If another person is unaware that one spoke Lashon Ha-Ra about him and he wants to repent, should he tell him?

A: The Chafetz Chaim in Hilchot Lashon Ha-Ra (4:12) wrote that if one wants truly repents he should tell him even though he will cause him further pain. It is taught in the name of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, however, that one has no right to cause another pain so that he can do Teshuvah.

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: Should I stay in a job which is not good for me?

A: Until you find another.

Q: What blessing did they recite on the manna?

A: "Ha-Motzi Lechem Min Ha-Shamayim" (Who brings forth bread from the heavens).

Q: Is "Maaser Kesafim" an obligation?

A: Each person according to his ability.

Q: Is reciting "Perek Shira" a segula (spiritual remedy) for finding a match?

A: Like all other mitzvot.

Q: Is it worthwhile to take a trip to Petra in Jordan?

A: No. 1. It is dangerous. 2. It is Eretz Yisrael but it is not under Israeli sovereignty and visiting there is descending in holiness.

Q: Why did Hashem create creatures which have no benefit like flies and ants?

A: Every creature has a benefit based on the wisdom of the Creator, and that which has not been revealed now will be revealed in the future. Rambam in his introduction to the Mishnah.

Q: If I began reciting the Shemoneh Esrei facing the wrong direction, is it permissible to turn around?

A: Yes, walking without talking is not considered a break.

Q: A miracle occurred to me and I want to thank Hashem. What should I do?

A: Tzedakah.

Q: Is it permissible to enter a bathroom with a siddur or Mishnah in my pocket?

A: If it is in a bag, i.e. two coverings.

Q: Is it permissible to borrow money from the Tzedakah box?

A: For a short time and return a little extra.

Q: It is difficult for me to honor my parents. What can help?

A: A feeling of gratitude.

Q: I work with youth groups and realized that my Tzitzit are invalid. Should I have taken them off and the kids would see me without Tzitzit or continued wearing them even though they are invalid?

A: Take them off in front of them and explain why you are removing them. This is great education.

Q: Is it permissible to kill or catch a fly that is bothering me on Shabbat?

A: Certainly not.

Q: Is it forbid for a man or women to wear red?

A: Yes, because of "Chukat Ha-Goyim" (following non-Jewish practices). See Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 3. And it also draws attention in our days.

Q: Do I have to tell a potential Shidduch of my past transgressions from before I was religious?

A: No, repentance erases them.

Q: Does a broken mirror mean anything?

A: It is a superstition.

Q: Is it permissible to say "Yah Allah" (Oh G-d!) in Arabic?

A: It is forbidden because of the prohibition of saying Hashem's Name in vain, which applies in other languages as well.

Q: Is one obligated by the Halachah to follow the laws of the State of Israel?

A: Yes. 1. Dina De-Malchuta Dina - 'The laws of the country must be followed, even in another country. 2. "Shivat Tuvei Ha-Ir" - The seven leaders of a city must be followed. 3. The Government has the authority of a king in this realm.

Q: Should I accept a "Shidduch" with a woman who has non-religious parents?

A: Yes, the most important thing is the woman. Rivka also had non-religious parents, as did Rachel and Leah.

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