



On the Air with Rav Aviner - #116

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

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Questions in this issue:

1. Punishing a child who refuses to help
2. Is Eilat part of Eretz Yisrael?
3. SMS Q&A

Punishing a child who refuses to help

Q: Is it permissible not give a child candy, when everyone else is getting, because he refuses to help in the house?

A: In general, one does not need to use punishment in educating a child, since we want him to help willingly and not because of pressure. We want him to understand that not only is there an obligation to help, but it is meritorious and pleasant to help. It is not possible to achieve this goal by force. In rare instances, one needs to use force if a child is doing something dangerous and we need to punish him, but in general this is not the way. If we force him to help, he will look for every possible way to get out of helping and/or he will have a bitter taste of helping when he grows up. You should therefore talk to him – not during the time you are asking him to help but at an opportune time – and say: There are many chores to do in house, and we work hard for everyone. Everyone in the family needs to do one chore. Give him a list and everyone can choose what they would like to do. And when they do it, give them a prize. Otherwise, helping will be seen as a punishment. More than him helping in this particular instance, we want to affect his character, and this is impossible by force. Ha-Rav Yisachar Shlomo Teichtal related a beautiful idea in his book "Eim Ha-Banim Semeichah" (pp. 78-79): "I heard

something beautiful on this idea in the name of our Rabbi, the brilliant and holy man of G-d, R' Bunim of Peshischa on the verse (Shir Ha-Shirim 1:4): 'Draw me, we will run after You.' He explains that there are two ways to acquire an animal by 'Meshichah' (pulling): 1. The buyer calls the animal and it follows after him. 2. He hits the animal with a stick and it runs in front of him. In each of these methods, he acquires the animal through 'Meshichah.' The only difference is that in the first way of 'Meshichah' when he calls to the animals, the owner walks ahead and the animal follows after him, while in the second way of 'Meshichah' when he hits the animal, the animal walks in front and the owner is behind. Which method of 'Meshichah' is preferred by the animal? The 'Meshichah' by calling is certainly preferable since he does not experience any pain. The 'Meshichah' by hitting hurts him and he suffers from the blow." We therefore see that the way of encouraging the child to help is by calling out to him in love.

Is Eilat part of Eretz Yisrael?

Q: Is Eilat a part of Eretz Yisrael or outside of its borders?

A: Eilat is part of Eretz Yisrael for three reasons:

1. Eilat is mentioned in the Tanach and it is possible that it is part of the Land to be conquered. While it is not completely clear that it is part of this Land, it is certainly belongs to Eretz Yisrael.
2. Even if we say that it is not part of the Land to be conquered, it is part of the Land promised to us in the future. In this case, there is no obligation to conquer Eilat, but one who lives there fulfills the mitzvah of settling in Eretz Yisrael.
3. And if we say that Eilat is not part of the Land to be conquered and it is not part of the Land promised to us, the fact is that we did conquer it in the War of Independence. After all, the Rambam wrote in Hilchot Melachim (5:6) that when a King of Israel conquers land, that land is considered part of Eretz Israel. And Maran Ha-Rav Kook wrote that the State of Israel would be considered the quasi-Kingdom of Israel (Shut Mishpat Cohain p. 338).

Each of these reasons is enough to show that Eilat is part of Eretz Yisrael and all the more so when they are joined together (See Shut Tzitz Eliezer 3:23, responsa of Ha-Rav Ben Tzion Uziel ibid. and Ha-Rav Shaul Yisraeli in Eretz Chemdah vol. 1 sha'ar 1, 9).

Text Message Responsa

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: My mother is sick. Should I go to a woman who can check if she has the evil eye or has been stricken by witchcraft?

A: There is no such thing. Rather you and she should repent, pray and give Tzedakah.

Q: Is "Mayim Achronim" obligatory?

A: If your hands are dirty.

Q: It is correct to have life insurance?

A: Very much so.

Q: Is it permissible for Cohanim to enter an empty burial cave?

A: It is a Rabbinic prohibition.

Q: Why does Hashem believe me if every time I repent I fall again.

A: Hashem loves you, and expects and is certain that all will work out with you.

Q: I had a miscarriage in my third month of pregnancy. Why? What is Hashem trying to tell me?

A: We do not know, but everything Hashem does is for the best even though we do not understand why. Perhaps the baby had a defect. This is the cause of many nature miscarriages. Nonetheless, it is always good to repent.

Q: How do I relate to a family member who was kind and a devoted soldier but committed suicide?

A: The relationship is complex. On the one hand, there is praise, respect and love for a good life. On the other hand, we are grieved by the act which is a type of murder, which comes from anger, sadness and insult, and is judged severely, as is found in the Torah and Talmud.

Q: Does pure Vaseline which is put on one's lips require kosher certification?

A: No.

Q: Do we have to refer to a Rabbi as "Rabbi" when he scorns other Rabbis?

A: Yes, we must respect all Rabbis.

Q: Where is it written that we must learn Emunah?

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

Q: I had a Druze friend who was a soldier in Tzahal and was killed in the last war. Should I say Tehillim for the elevation of his soul?

A: Yes, he is one of the righteous non-Jews of the world.

Q: Is seaweed kosher?

A: Yes, but there is a concern for bugs.

Special thank you to Fred Casden for editing "On the Air"



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