



On the Air with Rav Aviner – #127

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

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Kosher medicine

Q: Do medicinal pills require kosher certification during the year and for Pesach?

A: As a general rule, all medicines which lacks taste are kosher since they are not food, and they are also kosher for Pesach. And we even turn medicine which has taste into medicine which lacks taste. How? We wrap the pill in a thin piece of paper. There are authorities who even permit medicine with taste since the ingredients which give the taste are kosher or not chametz. The non-kosher and chametz ingredients lack taste and kosher ingredients with taste are added. This is the opinion of Ha-Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach in the book "Halichot Shlomo" (6, 4 and in notes). As a result, almost all medicines are kosher and almost all medicines are kosher for Pesach. There are organizations which publish catalogues with long lists of which medicines are kosher for Pesach as a kindness for people, since they

could sum it up in one sentence: 99% of medicines lack taste and are kosher. People are concerned, however, so they publish long lists.

A Ba'al Teshuvah (newly-repentant Jew) and Kitniyot

Q: I am Sefardic and I am having a guest coming for Pesach who is Ashkenazic and a Ba'al Teshuvah who was influenced to become religious by Sefardic Jews and so he eats kitniyot. Can I serve him kitniyot?

A: You may serve it to him. He knows what he is doing and asked a Rabbi what is the correct way to act. I was once at a Rabbinic conference and Ha-Rav Mordechai Eliyahu – the Sefardic Chief Rabbi of Israel – was there and someone asked him a similar question. Chabad Chasidim have influenced many Sefardic Jews to become religious and they are now Sefardic Jews who have all sorts of Ashkenazic practices. Is this a problem? Ha-Rav Eliyahu responded. May it be Hashem's will that all Israel repents even if they become Ashkenazic!

Shut She'eilat Shlomo – Questions of Jewish Law

Naming a baby "Herzl"

Question: Is it proper to name a son "Herzl" after the founder of political Zionism? While we believe he was an agent of Hashem and owe him much gratitude, is there a problem of naming your child after someone who wasn't religious?

Answer: It is certainly proper. And we have "Maaseh Rav" that Rabbi Yehuda Herzl Henkin, author of Shut Bnei Banim, carries that name and he uses the name Herzl and is not embarrassed by it.

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: Is it permissible to take a walk on Shabbat?

A: Yes, for pleasure (Shemirat Shabbat Ke-Hilchata, chap. 29).

Q: What is the source for the idea that if one prays 40 days straight at the Kotel, his prayer will be answered?

A: There is no source. Any prayer, even one time, is heard. There are, however, various sources about the value of prayer for 40 days based on Noach in the ark and Moshe Rabbenu on Mt. Sinai. But any prayer is heard, and there is no need for forty days of prayer.

Q: What is Ha-Rav's opinion regarding refusing orders in evacuating settlements?

A: It is a complicated issue but there are three general principles. 1. Using refusal as the flag of the struggle is improper. 2. Using Tzahal for issues which are deep communal disagreements is improper. 3. An officer who does not take into consideration the "world" of the soldier is also improper.

Q: Is it worthwhile for one to sleep in his Kippah?

A: Yes, but he is not obligated to do so (Shelah. See Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 2:6).

Q: I sometimes read stories on Shabbat which make me cry. Is this permissible?

A: Yes, like Rabbi Akiva who cried on Shabbat on account of his cleaving to Hashem. (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 288:2 and Mishnah Berurah #4)

Q: What is the source that on one's birthday he has the power to bless others?

A: There is no source.

Q: Is it permissible to buy Tefillin from someone who does not pay taxes?

A: Certainly not (see Shut She'eilat Shlomo 2:375).

Q: Is it true that the beggars at the Kotel are untrustworthy?

A: Not all of them, but almost all of them. Some collect 1000 shekels a day (The police stationed there)!

Q: I accidentally davened Musaf on Rosh Chosdesh wearing my tefillin?

A: You fulfilled your obligation (Mishnah Berurah 25:61 and see 423:10).

Q: Is it preferred to shop in a Jewish-owned store which is open on Shabbat or in an Arab-owned store?

A: Certainly in a Jewish-owned store (Vayikra 25:14).

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