



Shut SMS #2

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

Difference of Opinion

Q: I became religious and am Ultra-Orthodox. My sister became religious and is a Religious Zionist. This causes us to fight all the time. How do we reach some level of agreement?

A: Difference of opinion is permissible, but division of hearts is forbidden. You should know that what you share is much greater than what separates you.

Betting

Q: Is it permissible to bet money in a card game?

A: It is very bad (Rambam Gezela Ve-Aveda 6:10-11. See Aruch Ha-Shulchan 670:9. Biur Halachah ibid.).

Prayer during Guard Duty

Q: Is it permissible to pray during guard duty when the level of danger is extremely low?

A: Only with permission.

Sandek

Q: Is it permissible for someone to be a Sandek twice for the same family?

A: There is no problem. Shut Yechaveh Daat 3 221.

Eating before Davening

Q: Is it permissible to drink coffee and eat a pastry before davening? If not, why is this custom so prevalent?

A: It is forbidden. It is not a proper custom, unless it is completely necessary (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 89:3-4).

Partial Aliyah

Q: A family is unable to make Aliyah because of the difficulty of finding a livelihood, unless the father continues to work outside of Israel and comes once in a while. Is this acceptable?

A: Such an arrangement is okay for the time being.

Officers' Course

Q: I am set to begin an officers' course but am afraid that they will have me participate in expulsions.

A: There is no concern. Tzahal is involved 99% of the time in combating the enemy.

Yahrtzeit for a Baby

Q: Is it permissible to commemorate the Yahrtzeit for a baby who died when he was a half a year old?

A: It is permissible, as for everyone else.

Body Cream on Shabbat

Q: What type of cream is permissible on Shabbat?

A: Liquid cream, which pours out on its own (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 314:11).

Revenge

Q: What should one do if he wants to take revenge on someone who was once his friend and is now arrogant and disgusting?

A: Know that everything is from Hashem. See Sefer Ha-Chinuch #241.

Weapon on Shabbat

Q: When is it permissible to carry a weapon on Shabbat?

A: It is always beneficial (Ha-Rav Shlomo Goren, Meshiv Milchama 2:61 pp. 52-53. 2:80 p. 80).

Ethiopians

Q: We have a stand for people to put on Tefillin. Is it permissible to suggest to Ethiopians to put them on? Perhaps they are not Jewish?

A: They are Jews – as long as it is not proven otherwise (Shut Yabia Omer 8 Even Ha-Ezer #11).

Ha-Gomel

Q: Should one recite Ha-Gomel if one's young son or daughter is saved?

A: Ashkenazim do not (Mishnah Berurah 219:1. Piskei Teshuvot ibid. #9).

Davening Alone

Q: Is it permissible to daven alone if one davens with better kavana alone than with a Minyan?

A: No. Because of the great benefit of davening with a Minyan (Shut Igrot Moshe Orach Chaim #7).

Quinoa

Q: What is the blessing on quinoa?

A: Ha-Adamah. It is not one of the five types of grains.

Beggars

Q: What is the status of the beggars at the Kotel?

A: We cannot presume that they are truly poor (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 251:10).

Court

Q: Is it permissible to sue another Jew in a secular court?

A: Only if he refuses to go to a Beit Din.

Bike Riding for Women

Q: Is it modest for a woman to ride a bike?

A: Yes, with modest clothing.

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