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Shut SMS #3

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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:

#### Training for Blessings

Q: At what age should one be particular about his children reciting blessings?

A: As early as possible, although each case is different.

#### Shehechyanu

Q: Should a boy recite Shehechyanu the first time he puts on Tefillin?

A: Yes. The same applies to the first time any Mitzvah is performed (Shut Orach Mishpat 268-269).

#### Honoring In-Laws

Q: Is there an obligation to honor one's father- and mother-in-law?

A: Yes. But not to the same degree as parents (Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 240:24).

#### Garbage

Q: Is it a Mitzvah or a proper custom to pick up garbage outside?

A: Proper custom.

#### Drinking

Q: It is permissible to drink alcohol?

A: Only a bit and only for adults – because of the prohibition against getting drunk.

## Dating

Q: Should I continue dating a young woman who once transgressed with a boyfriend?

A: If she repented, her transgression is erased (Rambam, Teshuvah 2:1).

Q: But if I feel it is a stain?

A: This is your own issue. Yehoshua Bin Nun married Rachav.

## Dating

Q: What should I check for in a young woman who was suggested to me, but her parents are divorced?

A: If she has proper character traits, the same as in the case of any young woman.

## Dating a Secular Man

Q: I am dating a secular young man. Will I be able to change him into a religious person?

A: This is a big gamble. Chances are that you will not be able to do so. You should therefore stop dating him.

## Guarding One's Tongue

Q: At the Shabbat table, everyone speaks Lashon Ha-Ra about all the things that happened during the week. All my pleas to stop do not help. What should I do?

A: Leave quietly.

## Switching a Ketubah

Q: A Rabbi suggested to my wife that she should change her name and switch our Ketubah in order to solve our marital problems. Is it proper to act this way?

A: Changes such as these do not help in these matters. Rather you should turn to a marriage counselor. We also do not switch a Ketubah at will.

## Internet

Q: When I completely cease using the internet, after stumbling so many times, how can I attain atonement when, according to the Rambam, true atonement is attained through being in the same situation and overcoming one's evil inclination?

A: The ultimate atonement is that you completely ceased using it. Fortunate are you!

### Eating at a Wedding

Q: We came to a wedding to check out the band. Is it permissible to eat at the buffet?

A: Certainly not. It does not belong to the band but to the people having the wedding.

### Marriage of Two Women

Q: Is there a Torah prohibition for two women to get married?

A: Yes. Shulchan Aruch, Even Ha-Ezer 20:2. Sources there.

### Temple Mount

Q: Is it permissible to enter the Temple Mount?

A: No. There are signs posted by the Chief Rabbinate which say that it is completely forbidden.

### Abandoning Faith

Q: How should relate to a son who abandoned the Mitzvot?

A: With love. If Yitzchak loved Esav, you should love your son all the more so.

Q: A spouse?

A: Same as above.

### Charedim

Q: How should we relate to the Charedim who do not serve in the army, avoid paying taxes, and do not believe in the State of Israel?

A: Focus on their positives: Torah, Mitzvot, fear of Heaven, and proper character traits. Do not sign up for the "Committee to Find Blemishes Among Others," but, rather, look for blemishes among yourself.

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