



Shut SMS #4

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Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text messages questions a day! Here's a sample:

Redemption

Q: When will the Redemption come?

A: It began 130 years ago with Eretz Yisrael plentifully giving off its fruit. Sanhedrin 98a.

Receipt

Q: Is it permissible for a yeshiva student to buy something without a receipt?

A: No. On the contrary, theft is forbidden to him more than to others (Yoma 86a).

Mourning for a Non-Jew

Q: Do I observe the laws of mourning for my non-Jewish father, who just died (my mother is Jewish)?

A: Somewhat. Mourn in the way of the non-Jews (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 241:9. See Shut Igrot Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:130. Shut Yechaveh Da'at 6:60).

Equality of Women

Q: Are men and women equal in Judaism?

A: Yes. It is written in the Torah that both of them are created in the image of G-d.

Pig-Skin

Q: Is it permissible to wear a pig-skin jacket?

A: Yes. And a belt too. Eating or selling pig is forbidden (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch #64).

Shira

Q: Is it possible to name our daughter "Shira" or is there a problem?

A: It is a wonderful name.

Distributing Newspapers

Q: Is it permissible to distribute newspapers since they have forbidden things in them?

A: Yes, since regarding the prohibition of "Do not place a stumbling block before the blind" (Vayikra 19:14), we are "Tolim" (literally "hanging" on the assumption) that one will only read the permissible items (Mishnah Gittin 5:9).

Tanach of Christians

Q: What should one do with a Tanach printed by Christians?

A: Throw it in the garbage (Shut Igrot Moshe Yoreh Deah #172).

World to Come

Q: What is the World to Come?

A: Two meanings: 1. The world of souls, after death. 2. The world of resurrection, after the Resurrection of the Dead.

Shiduch

Q: We just got engaged, but a Rabbi we consulted said that based on our names we will end up hating each other.

A: There is no such thing. Get married and it will be good.

Studying Secular Subjects on Shabbat

Q: Is it permissible to study secular subjects on Shabbat? For tests?

A: The Rambam forbids it, since it is proper that Shabbat should be completely for Hashem, but the Rashba permits it. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 307:17. The Halachah is that it is permissible but it is proper to be strict. Mishnah Berurah. The Rambam also holds that it is not forbidden according to the basic law, but it is a pious act to refrain. Aruch Shulchan. In sum, it is permissible but preferable not to.

Downloading Songs

Q: Is it permissible to download songs from the internet?

A: If you pay for them (Shut She'eilat Shlomo 2:374).

Bus Transfer

Q: Is it permissible to give my bus transfer to someone else?

A: No, it is only for you.

Two Rabbis

Q: Is it permissible to have two Rabbis and ask one sometimes and the other at other times?

A: Yes. Unless they give leniencies that are contradictory (Eruvim 6b).

Struggle with Inclination

Q: I want to overcome my inclination but cannot succeed. I stumble and get up over and over.

A: Then you are like all of us, or almost all of us. This is our mission from Hashem to constantly wage war against our inclination (Mesilat Yesharim, chap. 1).

Aid from Non-Jews

Q: Should we look positively on the aid from non-Jews in extinguishing the fire in the Carmel?

A: It was not a kindness, but mutual help which countries perform for one another.

Hard of Hearing

Q: A wonderful young man was suggested to me for a shiduch, but he is hard of hearing and this frightens me.

A: Nonsense. It is of no importance. Many good young men have this issue and it does not impinge on their positives. If this is his only problem, do not hesitate, you will be happy.

Vacation outside of Israel

Q: What is the source which permits a vacation outside of Israel?

A: I am not aware of one. See Rambam, Melachim 5:9.

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