



Text Message Q&A #12

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

Valentine's Day

Q: How should we relate to Valentine's Day?

A: What do we have to do with a gentile, Christian holiday?!

Anti-Semitism and wearing a Kippah

Q: It is permissible NOT to wear a kippah outside of Israel if there is a fear of Anti-Semitism?

A: Yes, to our great distress. But perhaps you can wear a hat.

Zionist

Q: What is the definition of a Zionist?

A: One who supports our national revival in our State and Land.

Dog Food

Q: Is it permissible to give a dog food which has pork in it?

A: Yes, there is no prohibition of benefiting from pork. It is however forbidden to benefit from milk and meat mixed together.

Mechitza

Q: In theory, if men and women acted properly, would it be possible to eliminate the mechitza in Shul?

A: No. After all, we learn the obligation to have a mechitza in the Temple from the eulogy for the Yetzer Ha-Ra (evil inclination) which will be given in the future, and there is nonetheless a requirement for a mechitza during the eulogy. Sukkah 51-52.

Convert

Q: Our tradition says that a Jew who "converts" to another religion remains a Jew. So why doesn't someone who converts to Judaism remain a non-Jew?

A: Because they have a hidden Jewish soul all along.

Rebuking One's Father

Q: My father talks a lot during davening. Should I say something to him?

A: Not during the davening. You should first ask him if he wants to speak with you about it, and you must obviously speak in a respectful manner (see Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 240:11).

Nursing and Pregnancy

Q: Should I end nursing my baby early in order to hurry to get pregnant again?

A: No. Let him nurse as he requires. It is his turn now.

Ordering from a Caterer for Fewer People

Q: If I know that caterers always give extra food and we always have leftovers when we order, can I slightly decrease the number of people I am ordering for? If I am ordering for 20, can I order for 18, assuming the risk that there will be enough food?

A: One cannot be deceptive. Caterers always provide more food than each person can eat to ensure that there is enough. One cannot then take advantage of them and order for fewer people.

Verse on a Tombstone

Q: Is it permissible to write a verse on a tombstone?

A: Yes.

New Apartment

Q: We want to buy an apartment where the previous owner committed suicide. Could this prevent a blessing from residing in the home?

A: There is no problem.

The Book "Dat Ha-Tziyonut" (The Zionist Religion)

Q: I saw a book called "Dat Ha-Tziyonut" which is full of lies and malicious comments against Torah scholars. I am surprised that Ultra-Orthodox Rabbis do not protest against it.

A: I did not read it since it is forbidden to read such things. But who said that they did not protest? Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef said in response that it is forbidden to speak against Rav Kook who was an angel of Hashem (www.halachayomit.co.il/QuestionDetails.aspx?ID=221). And Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv was shocked how the author forfeited his World to Come by shaming Torah scholars. And he made harsher comments which I do not want to mention.

Separate-Gender University

A: Is there a need to separate men and women at a university?

Q: Certainly. Like in America at Yeshiva University.

Mixed Singing for Kiruv

Q: Is it permissible to organize an event for Kiruv with men and women singing together? If not, how can we bring Jews closer to Torah?

A: Kiruv is a great Mitzvah, but we do not fulfill a Mitzvah through performing a transgression. Many Ultra-Orthodox groups are involved with Kiruv without mixed singing. Do your homework to see what they do.

Chabad Minyan

Q: Is it permissible to daven in a Chabad Minyan where they say: "May our master, our teacher, our Rabbi, King Messiah, live forever"?

A: Yes. They are proper and G-d-fearing Jews with many merits.

Q: But they think that a man who died is still alive and that he is the Messiah, which is similar to the Christians?

A: So they are mistaken. Everyone errs. But they are not similar to the Christians, G-d forbid, they are righteous Jews.

Q: Why don't we remove them from the community of Israel as heretics?

A: They are not heretics. Not every mistake is heresy!

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