



Text Message Q&A #25

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

Attaining Faith

Q: How does one attain faith in Hashem when it is impossible to prove His existence?

A: It is possible to prove His existence. But faith is above proof and it is attained with the aid of books about Emunah.

Shiduch

Q: I am meeting a young man for the purpose of marriage, but my parents are opposed since he is from an extremely poor family. What should I do?

A: Continue. Money is not important. In the end, your parents will accept it.

Proposal with a Ring

Q: How should one propose marriage with a ring?

A: He should not. This is a new creation. One should refrain from doing so since there is a concern of Kiddushin. If it is done, it should be without witnesses.

Q: Then how does one propose marriage?

A: The young man and woman, who are meeting with the purpose of getting married, should decide together.

The Daughter of a Torah Scholar

Q: I daven to Hashem to send me a wife who is the daughter of a Torah scholar, but He only sends me young women who are good and righteous, but who are not the daughters of Torah scholars. What should I do?

A: They themselves are in the category of Torah scholars (Re'im Ahuvim p. 125).

Uprooting a Fruit Tree

Q: Is it permissible to uproot a fruit tree if it is in the way of a building project?

A: Yes. Since the building is worth more than the tree. It is preferable that a non-Jew does the uprooting (Shut She'eilat Shlomo 1:129).

Tzitzit

Q: Is it permissible to wear Tzitzit directly on one's body?

A: Yes.

Pollard

Q: Should we add Jonathan Pollard's name into the prayer for captured and missing soldiers?

A: Certainly. After all, he is a great hero who displayed self-sacrifice for the sake of the Nation of Israel.

Mourner

Q: Is it permissible for a mourner to go out of his house to get some air?

A: Yes, in an empty place without bumping into friends.

Palestinian State

Q: Is it permissible to establish a Palestinian State on condition that the settlements remain in their places?

A: Certainly not! Besides the fact that this is not realistic, there is the Mitzvah of settling the Land of Israel, and it is not only the issue of individuals living in the Land, but – first and foremost – a national matter in which all of this Land is under our control and not under the control of another nation (Sefer Ha-Mitzvot of the Rambam, additions of the Ramban, Positive Mitzvah #4).

Cookbook

Q: Is it permissible to keep a non-Kosher book in one's house, but only prepare Kosher food from it?

A: Not if the author is Jewish, since it is forbidden to strengthen the hand of those who sin. But it is permissible if the author is a non-Jew.

Birthday

Q: What is the source for a person having the power to bless others on his birthday?

A: There is no source.

War with Amalek

Q: What is the difference between what the Nazis did to the Jews and what we are commanded to do to Amalek (i.e. eradicate them)?

A: The Nazis' goal was to exterminate us no matter what. We do not go to war against any nation, including Amalek, without first offering them peace. Rambam, Hilchot Melachim 6:1. And the fact that we threaten them with war is for the sake of deterrence, so that they do not wage war against us. Moreh Nevuchim.

Non-Jew in Shul

Q: Is it permissible for a non-Jew to enter a Shul?

A: Yes, if he is not wearing a cross.

Loving Hashem

Q: What is more important – the love of Hashem or love of Israel?

A: They go together. True love of Hashem automatically leads one to the love of Israel.

Tzitzit on the Flag

Q: If someone is wearing the flag of Israel, does he have to put Tzitzit on it?

A: No. It is not a garment nor is it intended to be a garment. It is therefore exempt. Biur Halachah, Orach Chaim 10:11.

Convert

Q: I was adopted and am a convert and fear that people will find out. Can I be called to the Torah by my Jewish adopted father's name and not as "Ben Avraham Avinu"?

A: Yes (Shut Igrot Moshe, Yoreh Deah 1:161. As opposed to Shut Minchat Yitzchak 1:136, 4:49).

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