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Text Message Q&A #28

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

Fear

Q: Where can I read about strengthening myself intellectually against fear?

A: Mesilat Yesharim, end of chapter 9.

Pidyon Ha-Ben

Q: What is the source that a Pidyon Ha-Ben is equal to 84 fasts?

A: There is no source. In Sdei Chemed it is written that this is a nice saying that people use.

Engaged Couples

Q: Is it permissible for an engaged couple to pass items from one to the other?

A: Yes.

Wireless Internet

Q: Is it permissible to use another person's wireless internet?

A: Only with his permission, since it slows down the speed of his connection.

Shiduch

Q: A young man who was offered to go on a Shiduch with a young woman, asked for her picture. Should I give it to him?

A: If she agrees.

Tattling

Q: Is it permissible for me, as a teacher, to ask my students to tell me who colored the wall black in the classroom?

A: No. We should not accustom the students to tattling, except for in the case of something severe. Rather, you should say to the class: The repair costs this amount of money. Please make sure the money is on my desk within a week.

#### New Testament and Koran

Q: I found a New Testament and a Koran. Can I throw them in the trash?

A: You can throw away the New Testament, since it is idol worship. The Koran, which includes both words of proper faith and words of heresy, should be wrapped up and placed in the Geniza.

#### Selling a House to a Non-Jew in Israel

Q: Is it permissible to sell a house to a non-Jew in Israel which will serve as the consulate of a foreign country?

A: Yes, since it supports the standing of the State of Israel.

#### Strawberries and Mikveh

Q: My hands are stained from eating strawberries and I can't remove the stains with soap. Is it an impediment (chatzitzah) in the Mikveh?

A: No, since it does not have any thickness.

#### Mezuzah with Glue

Q: Is it permissible to affix a Mezuzah with glue instead of nails?

A: Yes, on condition that it is firmly attached and does not move. Shut Yechaveh Da'at (1:58).

#### Gilad Shalit

Q: What should we do for the sake of Gilad Shalit?

A: Not to bow to extortion, but – on the contrary – add strength and courage, and entrust the Mossad and Shabak to continue to work on our behalf.

#### Song and Dance

Q: I have a talent for singing and dancing, but – as a woman – I feel that the Torah closes off this area to me. What should I do?

A: Be involved in it only for women.

#### Keffiyeh

Q: Is it permissible to wear a keffiyeh on one's head instead of a Kippa?

A: No. It is non-Jewish dress. "**Chukot Ha-Goyim**" – imitating non-Jewish practices.

#### Shaving one's Mustache

Q: Is it permissible to shave one's mustache with a straight razor?

A: There are those who forbid it, but most authorities permit it.

#### "Death to Arabs"

Q: Why is it forbidden to say "Death to Arabs"?

A: Because it is not true. Only murderers and those who aid them are deserving of death.

Q: What is the source?

A: Do not murder.

#### Challah under one's Pillow

Q: Is it true that if one places challah which has been separated from dough under his pillow, he will dream about his intended?

A: Nonsense.

#### Learning to Swim

Q: Is there an obligation in our times to teach one's child to swim?

A: It was never an obligation, but only good advice. The Rambam and the Shulchan Aruch therefore do not mention it. In our times, it is proper to do so (Ha-Rav Chaim David Ha-Levy in Shut Mayim Chaim 2:54).

#### Skirt Length

Q: What is the necessary length of a skirt?

A: Some say it should be down to the floor, and others say 10 centimeters below the knee, so that even while sitting the knees are covered (Shut She'eilat Shlomo 1:449).

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