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Text Message Q&A #42

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Shana Tova from  
*Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim*

From the Archives



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

Tashlich

Q: Is it permissible to carry Machzorim to Tashlich?

A: Yes. It is permissible on Yom Tov to carry from one domain to another, and in the public domain. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 518:1. It is also permissible to bring them back. Mishnah Berurah #6.

Q: And on Shabbat?

A: It is forbidden to carry. And, in general, Ashkenazim and Jews from North Africa do not perform Tashlich on Shabbat. Mishnah Berurah 580:8.

Q: Is it permissible to walk 2000 Amah outside of the Techum Shabbat to perform Tashlich?

A: No. The prohibition of Techum Shabbat is not waved. Siddur Tzahal, Nusach Achid p. 758.

#### Immersion in a Mikveh on Erev Rosh Hashanah

Q: Is immersing in a Mikveh obligatory on Erev Rosh Hashanah?

A: Yes, this is the custom. Rama, Orach Chaim 581:4.

Q: When should one immerse?

A: In the afternoon. Mishnah Berurah #26. And some authorities permit it in the morning. Emek Halachah 2:25. And this is how one should act if the Mikveh is extremely crowded in the afternoon.

Q: Do women immerse?

A: Married women who are in a state of purity may do so. Chazon Ovadiah (Yamim Noraim, p. 59).

Q: Single women?

A: No. Ibid.

Q: What should one do if he is unable to immerse in a Mikveh?

A: Pour "9 Kavin" – 12.5 Liters – over himself. Mishnah Berurah #26. Or take a shower with a continuous, strong flow of water. Shut Minchat Yitzchak (4:21, 9:34. Chazon Ovadiah -Yamim Noraim, pp. 57-61. And see Shut Divrei Yetziv, Orach Chaim #13. Shut Shevet Ha-Levi 8:24. Piskei Teshuvot #326 note 14. Although Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski said in the name of the Chazon Ish that a shower is not considered "9 Kavin" since it is not considered as a continuous flow).

#### Uman Rosh Hashanah

Q: Why are you opposed to traveling to Uman when Rebbe Nachman promised that anyone who visits his grave will be saved from Gehinom? It's worth it!

A: There are many things immeasurably greater which will save one from Gehinom, which our Sages and even Hashem Himself promised.

Q: Such as?

A: Teshuvah. Tzedakah. Acts of Kindness. Learning Torah. Serving in Tzahal. Any Mitzvah...

#### Nursing in Public

Q: Is it permissible to nurse in public when the mother is completely covered?

A: Yes.

#### Verse on a Blackboard

Q: Is it permissible for a teacher to write a verse on the blackboard? After all, it will need to be erased?

A: It is permissible since it is written in order to be erased. But Hashem's Name may not be written.

#### Skirt

Q: If I wear a long skirt that reaches down to the floor, do I need to wear socks as well?

A: It is enough to wear a long skirt (Shut Shevet Ha-Levi 5:79).

#### Palestinian State

Q: What will happen if the UN decides on a Palestinian State?

A: Nothing. Terrorists, as is their way, are trying to hurt us, which they do in any event. And the Eternal One of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

#### Whistling

Q: My grandmother tells me that Jews should not whistle. Is it true?

A: There is no prohibition against whistling. Outside of Israel, non-Jews whistled, so Jews refrained from doing so. In sum: Don't whistle in your grandmother's presence, out of respect for her.

Q: And on Shabbat?

A: It is also permissible (Shut She'eilat Shlomo 1:182).

#### Ends of Bread

Q: What is the source for the custom of not eating the ends of a loaf of bread?

A: It is an act of piety mentioned in Tzava'at Rabbi Yehudah Ha-Chasid #3. But it is surprising, and eating these pieces is permissible according to the basic halachah. Shut Minchat Yitzchak 9:8 #7.

#### Women Covering their Hair

Q: Why do women cover their hair? If it is immodest, then shouldn't single women also cover their hair?

A: Single women in Yemen did in fact cover their hair according to the ruling of the Rambam. But those who do not follow this custom explain that the hair of a married woman is a type of beauty saved for her husband, i.e. the prohibition creates an immodest situation. See Shut Igrot Moshe (Even Ha-Ezer 1:57, 4:32 #4).

#### Zoo

Q: Is there a problem of "Tza'ar Ba'alei Chaim" (causing pain to animals) by having animals caged in a zoo? Is it permissible to visit a zoo?

A: It is permissible since it is a human need. It is permissible to visit (Kum Hithalech Ba-Aretz #12).

#### Eating Before Buying

Q: Can I eat food in the supermarket before I buy it?

A: No. 1. Perhaps the store does not permit it. 2. It causes suspicion in front of others (that you won't pay for it). 3. "One who eats in the market is similar to a dog" (Kiddushin 40b. see Shut She'eilat Shlomo 2:443, 3: 81).

#### Flowers

Q: Is it permissible to pick flowers in a public park?

A: Certainly not. It is theft.

#### Found Object

Q: I saw a coin on the street and went to pick it up. My friend saw what I was doing, pushed me aside and picked it up for himself. To whom does the coin belong?

A: To him. Seeing an object does not acquire it. Baba Metzia. But he violated "Love your fellow as yourself."

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