



Text Message Q&A #55

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40 Women Separating Challah

Q: Is there a Segulah for finding a match, healing, fertility, etc. if 40 women to separate Challah together on a Friday? Is it permissible for some of the women to separate Challah on Thursday if there is a pressing need?

A: This is a new creation, which has no source. There is certainly a level of holiness in separating Challah – just as there is holiness in the fulfillment of every Mitzvah – but there is no source for 40 women separating it together. It can therefore be performed in this manner.

Checking Tefillin

Q: How often must one have his Tefillin checked?

A: There is no set schedule. It is even possible not to have them checked throughout one's entire lifetime. But if they were exposed to moisture or extreme heat, it is certainly proper to have them checked (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 10:26).

Abandoning Torah

Q: Why do some religious youngsters abandon Torah?

A: Sometimes on account of confusion regarding faith, sometimes on account of the evil inclination, sometimes on account of both.

Trees of Arabs

Q: Is there a halachic problem with uprooting olive trees of Arabs?

A: It is certainly forbidden to cause them damage. If there is a security or national need, only Tzahal is permitted to perform this act in the name of the Nation.

Mirror for Tefillin

Q: Is it permissible to use a mirror to make sure that one's Tefillin is in the correct place?

A: Yes. There is no problem of "Lo Tilbash" (the prohibition of men dressing or appearing as women), since the prohibition is against beautifying oneself in front of a mirror, and here one is simply ensuring that his Tefillin are in the proper place (Rama, Yoreh Deah 156:2. Shut She'eilat Shlomo 3:26. It is related that the Griz – Ha-Rav Velvel Soloveitchik of Brisk – once visited a Chasidic town and used his mirror to place his Tefillin correctly, as was his usual custom. The town's people placed the Teshuvot Divrei Chaim [Orach Chaim 2:6] next to where he was sitting in Shul which says that it is a "Minhag Borot" – custom of boors, i.e. the uneducated – to look in a mirror for proper placement of one's Tefillin. The Griz said to them: "We will use a Chasidic story: Reb Moshe Leib Sassover ztz"l said regarding the halachah which says that anyone who sits in the Sukkah while it is raining is a 'Hedyot – ignorant': 'It is worth being called ignorant as long as I fulfill the Mitzvah of Sukkah'. I say the same thing: It is worth being called a boor as long as the Tefillin are resting on my head in the exact spot." Uvdot Ve-Hanhagot Le-Beit Brisk vol. 3, pp.179-180. And there is a picture of Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv looking in a mirror to ensure that his Tefillin are in the proper spot. Ha-Shakdan vol. 1, p. 261).

Breaking Dancing

Q: There is a problem with break dancing?

A: It is not gentle.

Mouth-to-Mouth Resuscitation

Q: Is it permissible to give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation? Perhaps the sick person has a contagious disease.

A: There is a minimal risk, which we would certainly take in order to save another person.

Kiddush Levana during the Day

Q: Is it permissible to recite Kiddush Levana during the day if the moon is visible?

A: No. One also may not recite it at twilight. The moon must be prominent.

Beauty of Eretz Yisrael

Q: How is it possible that there are places more beautiful in the world than in Eretz Yisrael?

A: There aren't! A man does not love his wife because she is beautiful, but on account of his love for her, she is the most beautiful in the world. See Netiv Ha-Emet of Maharal. And the same applies to our Land.

Mikveh

Q: After men immerse in the Mikveh, should the water be changed for the women?

A: Yes. It bothers them. In essence, it is the women's Mikveh. It is permissible for men to use it only if it does not bother the women.

Tefillin Straps

Q: Should one blacken both sides of the Tefillin straps in case they flip over while wearing them?

A: It is enough to blacken just one side (This is also the ruling of HaRav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv. Va-Yishma Moshe, p. 32).

Q: If the Tefillin straps are blackened on both sides, and some of the black color rubs off from both sides, do they combine together to be considered blackened?

A: No, the outer side is what counts.

Q: Does one need special color to blacken them?

A: It is sufficient to use a regular magic-marker. It is not made from a non-Kosher animal.

Shave a Girl's Head

Q: Is it permissible for a girl to shave her head bald?

A: No. "Lo Yilbash" (the prohibition of women dressing or appearing as men, or vice versa). And the same applies for having a short haircut like a boy.

Special thank you to Orly Tzion for editing the Ateret Yerushalayim Parashah Sheet



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