



Text Message Q&A #58

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

Lubavitcher Rebbe

Q: Was the Lubavitcher Rebbe a prophet?

A: No. But he was a great Torah scholar.

Groom's Dvar Torah

Q: Should we interrupt the Groom's Dvar Torah with singing during the Kabbalat Panim?

A: This is a custom which should be stopped.

Shatnez

Q: Is it permissible in a store to try on a piece of clothing which is doubtful Shatnez?

A: It is permissible, since it is not to wear but only to check the fit.

Religious and Secular

Q: Why are religious and secular Jews always in conflict with one another?

A: There is no "always". 99% of the religious and secular get along just fine. There are individuals, who don't represent anyone but themselves, who try to cause conflict, and the media shows it for all to see.

Segulah against Cancer

Q: Is it true that someone who refrains from speaking Lashon Ha-Ra will not only be cured from cancer, but will not get the disease in the first place?

A: Every Mitzvah brings blessing, and guarding one's tongue certainly helps more than other Segulot, which are not Mitzvot.

Holy Rashi

Q: How is it possible that that Holy Rashi erred in a few places regarding the geography of Eretz Yisrael?

A: 1. This is extremely rare, and everyone errs once in a while. Even the Sanhedrin could make a mistake, and there is a sacrifice mentioned in the Torah for them to bring when they do err. 2. Especially in this case, it is not an error in Torah but an error in the facts, which were inaccurately given to him (See Ramban on Bereshit 35:16 on the location of Kever Rachel that he originally wrote, when he was in the Exile, that it was location in Ramah, but when he came to Eretz Yisrael, he saw with his own eyes that it is in Beit Lechem, near Yerushalayim).

Wedding Changes

Q: [A woman asked:] I am about to get married, and want to be a part of the wedding ceremony. Can I recite Shehechyanu under the Chupah?

A: Certainly. After you receive the ring recite the blessing quietly. As is known, it is permissible to recite Shehechyanu quietly since it is said to Hashem and not in order to make a show of it.

Q: Can I recite "Im Eshkachek Yerushalayim" (If I forget you, Jerusalem)?

A: Certainly. When the groom is breaking the glass. It should obviously be said quietly. After all, it is to remember the destruction of the Temple and not in order to make a show of it.

Q: Can my Rebbetzin speak under the Chupah? She is very dear to me.

A: This is also personal, and not to make a display, she should therefore tell you a Dvar Torah in private.

Tattoo

Q: If someone is a Ba'al Teshuvah and has a tattoo from his past, is he obligated to remove it? If he does not do so, is his soul compromised?

A: He is not obligated to do so. It is obviously proper to have it removed but there is no obligation to do so (Shut Lehorot Natan 8:72 .Shut Revivot Ephraim 8:308. And see Shut Minchat Yitzchak 3:11 where he rules that a Ba'al Teshuvah is not obligated to remove a tattoo of a naked woman, and the book Ma'a lot Rivka where Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski rules that a Ba'al Teshuvah is not obligated to removed a tattoo of a cross).

Q: Must the tattoo be removed before burial?

A: No.

Lashon Ha-Ra

Q: If Lashon Ha-Ra is so horrible as to be compared to murder, forbidden sexual acts and idol worship, then why isn't it mentioned in the Shulchan Aruch?

A: Things which are horrible but known to all are not brought in the Shulchan Aruch. For example, murder, forbidden sexual acts and idol worship...

Le-Chaim

Q: Why do we say "Le-Chaim" (To life) before drinking wine?

A: Since they give wine to one who is about to receive capital punishment, so that he will not be overly frightened.

12-Step Programs

Q: Is it permissible to join a 12-step program designed to wean people off an addiction?

A: Yes. It is a very good method.

Young Women Singing at a Wedding

Q: The custom is that the bride's friends sit around her and sing together in the wedding hall, and the men hear it. What should be done?

A: The young women should certainly sing in a place where the men cannot hear. If the men do hear, they should leave that area if possible. During the time when the men daven, they should ask them to stop singing.

Red Shirt

Q: Is it permissible for a man or woman to wear a red shirt?

A: No. Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, chap. 3. Or any other loud, immodest color.

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