



Text Message Q&A #67

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

Gilad Shalit

Q: I heard that Gilad Shalit's father is not Jewish? Did we have to release him?

A: Even so, he [Gilad Shalit] is still Jewish! And we must free our soldier even if he is a non-Jew. But even a Jew is not to be freed at all costs.

Magic Show

Q: Is it permissible to have a magician perform in school?

A: It is a dispute. Shut Yechaveh Daat (3:68) forbids it. Shut Aseh Lecha Rav (2:44) permits it. It is permissible to rely on the lenient opinion, if the magician reveals how he performs the tricks (see Chochmat Adam 89:6. Shut Yabia Omer vol. 5 Yoreh Deah #14. Shut Igrot Moshe, Yoreh Deah 3:44. Shut Betzel Ha-Chochma 4:13).

Which Yeshiva?

Q: Which is preferable – a Pre-Military Academy, a Hesder Yeshiva or a Yeshiva Gevoha?

A: The more one learns Torah, the more praiseworthy he is, and each person according to his ability. The crown of Torah is lying in front of everyone and anyone who desires can come and take it. Rambam, Talmud Torah 3:1.

Class or Helping to Clean

Q: Which is preferable – attending a Torah class or helping my mother clean for Pesach?

A: Certainly helping. This is a Mitzvah that cannot be performed by others. Moed Katan 9a.

Shemurah Matzah

Q: Is there an obligation to eat Shemurah Matzah?

A: It is a stricture based on the opinion of the Vilna Gaon that there is a Mitzvah to eat Matzah during the entire holiday of Pesach. But the majority of authorities rule that there is only an obligation to an a Kezayit worth of Matzah 4 times during the Seder: 2 for the Mitzvah of Matzah, 1 for the Korech and 1 for the Afikoman.

Wet Matzah (Gebrochts)

Q: Is it permissible to eat wet Matzah?

A: Yes. There are those (especially Chasidic communities) who refrain from eating wet Matzah, but this is a stricture, especially in our days when Matzot do not contain pockets of flour.

Changing One's Luck

Q: How can a person change his luck?

A: Repenting, davening and giving Tzedakah.

Traveling to Uman

Q: Is it worthwhile to travel to Uman in order to pray for a spouse?

A: Travel to Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah or Kever Rachel. Our Forefathers are greater than Rebbe Nachman.

Kimcha De-Pischa or Maot Chittim

Q: Is it permissible to use Maaser Kesafim for Kimcha De-Pischa, which is collected for the poor to provide their Pesach needs?

A: Yes. It is giving Tzedakah (This is also the ruling of Ha-Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerach in Halichot Shlomo – Pesach 2:2).

Desecrating Shabbat for a Cat

Q: Is it permissible for a fireman to desecrate Shabbat in order to help get a cat out of a tree?

A: No.

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