



---

Text Message Q&A #99

Ask Rav Aviner: [mororly@bezeqint.net](mailto:mororly@bezeqint.net)

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Tzion

Visit our blog: [www.ravaviner.com](http://www.ravaviner.com)

---

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

Automatic Door on Shabbat

Q: If one is "trapped" in a hotel or hospital on Shabbat because there is an automatic, electric door, is it permissible to go through the door if it is opened by a Jew violating Shabbat?

A: One should find an alternative exit or walk through it after one who is fulfilling a medical or security role. It is forbidden to go through after someone violating Shabbat on account of having benefit from Shabbat by violating and desecrating Hashem's Name (Shut Igrot Moshe, Orach Chaim 2:77. But some permit it in a pressing circumstance when there is no alternative, since one is not actually benefiting from a forbidden labor of Shabbat, because the door opening is merely the removal of a stumbling block. Shemirat Shabbat Ke-Hilchata 18:63 in the name of Ha-Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach).

Arab Children Killed in Gaza

Q: Isn't there an ethical problem that Arab children were killed in Gaza during the "Pillar of Defense" military campaign?

A: War is war. And we did not kill them - the evil ones who used them as human shields killed them (And this is the ruling in Amud Ha-Yemini, end of #16 and in Sufa Be-Midbar of Ha-Rav Yonah Metzger #35 which is at the end of Shut Mi-Yam Ha-Halachah vol. 3). Furthermore, three pictures were distributed by Hamas of children who were killed, and it was discovered that two of the pictures were from the civil war in Syria and one was of an Israeli child (the person helping him was wearing a vest with "Kiryat Malachi" written on the back).

Medicine with Gelatin

Q: Is it permissible to take medicine which contains Gelatin?

A: Yes. Many authorities also permit Gelatin from a non-Kosher source, since its form has completely changed. But even those who forbid it, permit medicine which contains Gelatin, since it is not food and lacks taste (see Shut Har Tzvi, Yoreh Deah #83. Shut Minchat Yitzchak 5:5. Shut Tzitz Eliezer, introduction to vol. 4).

#### Waiting for One's Family to Light Chanukah Candles

Q: Should one light Chanukah candles right away at nightfall or wait for one's spouse?

A: If one lights inside the house, he should wait. If one lights outside, he may wait as long as there are passersby (The Chafetz Chaim's rebbe, Rebbe Nachumke of Grodno, once waited several hours until his wife returned home before lighting the Chanukah lights. The Chafetz Chaim asked him why he waited, and his teacher explained that if one can buy either Chanukah candles or Shabbat candles, we rule that he should buy Shabbat candles, since Shabbat candles are for "Shalom Bayit" - peace and tranquility of the home (Shabbat 23b. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 678:1). If Shabbat candles takes precedence over Chanukah candles because of "Shalom Bayit", then I should all the more so wait for my wife, since if I don't wait for her, she may be distraught. Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv explains, however, that this conduct of Rebbe Nachumke only applies outside of Israel where people light Chanukah candles inside, and since the lighting is publicizing the miracle to his family, we therefore take "Shalom Bayit" into consideration. But in Eretz Yisrael, where we light outside, and we must light as long as there are passersby to publicize the miracle to them, and if it is too late, we do not fulfill the Mitzvah, we therefore do not take "Shalom Bayit" into consideration. Peninei Chanukah, pp. 172-173).

#### Operation during Chanukah

Q: Is it permissible to undergo surgery during Chanukah even though he will not be able to light Chanukah candles?

A: Yes. It is permissible for a person to put himself into a situation where he will be unable to fulfill a Mitzvah on account of Pikuach Nefesh (preserving life). See Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv brought in Ashrei Ish, p. 233.

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