



Text Message Q&A #135 Ask Rav Aviner: toratravaviner@yahoo.com
Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Tzion Visit our blog: www.ravaviner.com

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

Stain on One's Clothing

Q: If a Torah scholar has a stain on his clothing on account of visiting a fruit and vegetable market to check that they were separating Terumot and Ma'asrot properly, is this stain shameful, as it says in the Gemara Shabbat (114a): Any Torah scholar who has a stain on his clothing is deserving of the death penalty?

A: No, since it was for the sake of a Mitzvah (I merited accompanying Ha-Rav when he visited the Chief Rabbi of Israel, Ha-Rav David Lau Shil"ta. At the end of the meeting, Ha-Rav gently pointed out to the Chief Rabbi that there was a stain on his jacket. The Chief Rabbi said that he had not seen it, but he knows where it came from. The previous night he had paid a surprise visit to the Tzerifim market to check the separation of Terumot and Ma'asrot. Similarly, the clothing of Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv were once all dusty from Bedikat Chametz. He told his grandson not to clean it since it is "Kitmei Mitzvah – a stain from a Mitzvah." And it says in the Gemara Pesachim 65b that it is praiseworthy for Cohanim to serve when they are up to their knees in blood! Beginning of Chashukei Chemed – Eiruvim. And also the Chatam Sofer wrote in his Chidushim on Sukkah 36a, that when an Etrog turns brown from being used so much, it is a Hidur!).

Non-Jewish Prime Minister

Q: If a non-Jew is elected the Prime Minister of the State of Israel will the State still be holy and still represent the beginning of the Redemption?

A: Don't waste time dealing with nonsense. By the way, the Rambam (beginning of Hilchot Chanukah) writes that the holiday of Chanukah is on account of the return of Kingship to Israel for 200 years, which included Hordus who may have been a non-Jew.

The Kotel Tunnels

Q: Do the Kotel Tunnels have the same holiness as the Temple Mount?

A: No. Shut Ha-Radvaz (#691 brought in Shaarei Teshuvah 561:2. And after the liberation of the Old City during the Six-Day War, there were extensive excavations of the Kotel Tunnels, which extend under the Temple Mount. Ha-Rav Meir Yehudah Getz, Rav of the Kotel, asked Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, is it permissible to excavate under the Temple Mount to find the Temple implements? Our Rabbi answered, "No, do not dig." Our generation is still not ready to merit discovering the treasures of the Temple. The book "Rav Ha-Kotel", p. 306).

Rebbe Nachman will Lift One out of Gehinom

Q: Why shouldn't one travel to Uman for Rosh Hashanah? After all, Rebbe Nachman promised that he will lift out of Gehinom anyone who visits his grave!

A: Rebbe Nachman is not greater than Avraham Avinu, and it was already promised that Avraham Avinu sits at the entrance to Gehinom and will not even allow anyone who has a Brit Milah to enter (Bereshit Rabbah 48:8. And the Chidah wrote that Asher ben Yaakov stands at the entrance to Gehinom and saves anyone who knows Mishnah. Midbar Kidmot, Marechet 1 #51).

Avraham Avinu – Sefardi or Ashkenazi

Q: Was Avraham Avinu Sefardi or Ashkenazi?

A: He was above Sefardi, Ashkenazi, Yemenite and Ethiopian: He was a Jew or a Hebrew! (Once in a talk in Bnei Brak, Ha-Admor of Sanz-Klausenburg, Ha-Rav Yekutiel Yehudah Halberstam, said: "I can't stand the division between Sefarim and Ashkenazim. I say that Avraham Avinu was Sefardi. He came from Aram Naharaim!" And he also said: "I love Sefardim so much that in another reincarnation,

I was Sefardi". This was related by his son, Ha-Admor of Sanz-Klausenburg, Ha-Rav Shmuel David of Boro Park, in a visit with Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef).

Entering the Temple Mount by Mistake

Q: I entered the Temple Mount a few times with a group of religious Jews and then learned it is a severe transgression. I am totally broken. How do I atone?

A: Ha-Rav Ben Tzion Abba Shaul said that one should remain awake all night and learn Torah. This is Teshuvah for one Karet and each night will exempt one of the punishments of Karet. Shut Or Le-Tzion 3:30 #4.

Maran Ha-Rav Kook and the Charedim

Q: If Maran Ha-Rav Kook's approach is correct, why don't the Charedim follow it?

A: They have not learned it in depth.

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