

Smoking and Non-Kosher Food

Q: Is smoking as severe a prohibition as eating non-Kosher food?

A: There is an aspect to smoking that is more severe (And Ha-Rav Asher Weiss said that smoking cigarettes is like eating Treif food, and we are stricter with dangers than with prohibitions. Today there is no doubt that smoking kills. From his class on Parashat Ki Tzetzei 5767).

Divine Messenger

Q: What is unique about Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah among all the other Gedolei Yisrael?

A: Maran Ha-Rav Kook and Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah are special Divine messengers for the appearance of Torah during the revival of Am Yisrael in its Land.

Pollard for Terrorists

Q: Is it permissible to release terrorists in exchange for Jonthan Pollard?

A: It is certainly forbidden, and he himself opposes it. He is not a murderer like them but a national hero. And see the Gemara regarding redeeming captives in Gittin 43. But if they are releasing murderers in any event, it is a great Mitzvah to take advantage of this opportunity to free him.

Stories of Tzadikim in the Restroom

Q: Is it permissible to read stories of Tzadikim in the restroom?

A: No. They are full of fear of Heaven (Ha-Rav Ephraim Greenblatt was also asked about reading stories of Gedolei Yisrael, such as Ha-Rav Moshe Feinstein and Ha-Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky, and he responded that it is forbidden. Shut Revivot Ephraim 8:504).

Writing Name in Cement

Q: I wrote my name in wet cement on the sidewalk and now people are stepping on it. Will it bring me bad luck?

A: No. But you are obligated to donate money to the city since you vandalized public property.

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