



From the teachings of the Rosh Yeshiva of Ateret Yerushalayim
Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit"a

Text Message Q&A #160 Ask Rav Aviner: toratravaviner@yahoo.com
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Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a day. Here's a sample:

Wearing Tzitzit Out

Q: My boss at work demands that I don't wear my Tzitzit out. Should I concede?

A: The Mishnah Berurah (8:26) writes that one should always wear his Tzitzit out, and you should therefore not concede. Shut Tzitz Eliezer (17:4). But it is enough to have a little bit of the Tzitzit sticking out (This is also the ruling of the Steipler Gaon in Orchot Rabbenu Vol. 1 p. 229).

Birkat Cohanim and Fertility

Q: We do not have any children. Will it help to ask the Cohanim to have us in mind during the Birkat Cohanim?

A: Yes. After all Hashem is the one who blesses and not the Cohanim, and the blessing of Hashem is a great thing (When this question was asked of Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski, he responded: Why not? Segulot Raboteinu pp. 274-275).

Tzedakah for a Non-Jewish Parent

Q: I am a convert. Can I give Tzedakah to my non-Jewish father who is poor?

A: Yes. We also help the non-Jewish poor. And you should give him even more than your Tzedakah (Gittin 61a). And this is true all the more so for your biological father to whom you have an obligation to give gratitude (Sdei Chemed – Avelut #156).

Traveling to Rebbe Nachman's Grave in Uman

Q: Is traveling to Uman good or bad?

A: In general, it is forbidden to leave Eretz Yisrael, except in the case of a Mitzvah. Visiting Kivrei Tzadikim (the graves of the righteous) is not defined as a Mitzvah, but as a positive act. Are there no graves to visit in Eretz Yisrael? Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, Sarah, Rivka, Rachel and Leah are greater than Rebbe Nachman (Shut Orach Mishpat #147).

Q: Why don't we ask the Rabbis of Breslov their opinion?

A: The senior Rabbis of Breslov are opposed (see the booklet "Rosh Bnei Yisrael" of Breslover Chasidim).

Q: But 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). When the great Rabbis were asked about leaving Eretz Yisrael to visit Uman, Ha-Rav Mordechai Eliyahu said: "It is not proper to leave Israel on Rosh Hashanah or during the rest of the year, and it is preferable for one who wants to pray at the graves of tzadikkim to visit the graves of tzadikim in the Land of Israel – Hevron, Kever Rachel, Kever Rashbi – who was the teacher of Rebbe Nachman, etc. Do not leave Israel for the impurity of the lands of the other nations." Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv answered: "Go daven at the Kotel." Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef said: "How did the grave of Rebbe Nachman become more important than the graves of the Rambam and Ha-Gaon Rav Yosef Karo?" Ha-Rav Dov Lior explained how absurd is the thought-process of those who travel to Uman: "People travel to the grave of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai in order to ask him to help them to travel to the grave of Rebbe Nachman so they can make a request of him" (See Kum Hithalech Ba-Aretz #49).

Orot Ha-Teshuvah

Q: Whose notes appear in Orot Ha-Teshuvah of Maran Ha-Rav Kook in the edition of Or Etzion?

A: They are the notes of Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah.

Recovering Corpses in the Army on Shabbat

Q: Is it permissible on Shabbat to recover corpses of soldiers who have been killed or is violating Shabbat only permissible to save a life?

A: It is permissible. 1. For the morale of the soldiers, since they know that they will not be abandoned if - G-d forbid – something happens to them. 2. Out of a concern that the enemy will recover them and try to ransom them. Ha-Rav Shlomo Goren (Meishiv Milchamah Vol. 2 p. 217).

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



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