



Text Message Q&A #167 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:

Dwelling in Jerusalem

Q: Why did you establish a Yeshiva in the so-called Muslim Quarter?

A: It is a Mitzvah to dwell in the entire breadth of our Land, and all the more so in Jerusalem, and all the more so in the heart of Jerusalem.

"Nachem"

Q: Hasn't the time come to change the wording of "Nachem" (which we recite on Tisha Be-Av) which describes Jerusalem as the destroyed, shamed and desolate city?

A: Please come and visit our yeshiva "Ateret Yerushalayim" which is located in the heart of the Old City of Jerusalem, in the so-called "Muslim Quarter," and you will be convinced on the spot to leave it as is (since on the way you can see that much of the Old City is still in a state of destruction and shame, and is desolate of Jews. Immediately after the Six-Day War, Rabbenu Ha-Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook was asked whether "Nachem" should be changed. He answered: "Jerusalem is still scorned and desolate, since the essence of Jerusalem is the Beit Ha-Mikdash." Le-Mikdasheikh Tuv, p. 11 #1).

Temple Mount

Q: Is it permissible today to visit the Temple Mount?

A: Since the Chief Rabbinate of Israel posted signs there saying that it is forbidden, there is not even a question. There is therefore no need for an answer.

Ascending to the Temple Mount

Q: Why don't we ascend to the Temple Mount? There are great Rabbis who permit it and other great Rabbis who prohibit it, and these and those are the words of the Living G-d.

A: 1. There are different levels among Torah scholars. Those who forbid it are the greatest Rabbis of our generation 2. The Chief Rabbinate of Israel, which is the deciding body in national issues, prohibits it. 3. Our Rabbis, Maran Ha-Rav Kook and Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, forbid it.

Story of the Two Brothers

Q: What is the source of the story of the two brothers, one married and one single, who brought wheat back and forth for each other on the spot that became the Temple Mount?

A: It is of non-Jewish origin. See The Legends of the Jews by Louis Ginzberg.

How the Beit Ha-Mikdash will Appear

Q: Is there a Mitzvah nowadays to build the Temple or will it descend from the Heavens?

A: It is a Mitzvah to build it after appointing a King and eradicating Amalek (Rambam, Hilchot Melachim 1:1-2).

Direction of Davening

Q: If a Shul is not facing Jerusalem, in which direction should we daven?

A: Towards the Torah ark. But obviously the Rabbi who is there should decide (Be'er Heitev 94:3. Shut Meishiv Dvar 1:10. Shut Teshuvot Ve-Hanhagot 1:79. And not like the Magen Avraham ibid. #3 and Yad Eliyahu brought in the Be'er Heitiv ibid).

Davening in the Wrong Direction

Q: After I finished davening Shemoneh Esrei, I realized that I did not daven towards Jerusalem?

A: After the fact, you fulfilled your obligation (Be'er Heitev #94. Shut Meishiv Davar 1:10. Shut Teshuvot VeHanhagot 1:79).

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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim P.O.B. 1076 Jerusalem 91009 Tel.02-6284101 Fax.02-6261528

www.ateret.org.il To subscribe, send e-mail to: mororly@bezeqint.net

