



Text Message Q&A #171 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:

Jewish Terror in Revenge for the Murder of the Three Teens

Q: What is the law regarding the Jews who murdered the Arab teen? Is it permissible to take revenge on the Arabs for the murder of the three Jewish teens?

A: 1. A person is considered innocent until proven guilty. 2. It is certainly forbidden to murder one person on account of another person's transgression. In general, it is forbidden to murder a non-Jew. After all, our souls were at Mt. Sinai and heard: Do not murder. In any case, it is the terrorists who should be punished, not civilians. 3. Punishing terrorists must not be via the act of individuals, but rather through the decision of the entire Nation, i.e. via Tzahal, with the Government's permission, since the consequences are paid by the entire Nation.

Making Aliyah

Q: When I make Aliyah, should I kiss the tarmac at the airport or wait until I get to actual rocks or dirt of Eretz Yisrael? Do I recite Shehechyanu and when?

A: Yes, kiss the tarmac. And recite Shehechyanu before kissing the ground (see the booklet "Oleh Chadash").

Religion or Nation

Q: Some claim that it would be good for us to have separation of religion and state in the State of Israel.

A: Judaism is not a religion, it is a Nation - a Nation with a religion (as indicated by the blessing over Torah learning: "Who Chose us from all of the nations and [afterwards] Gave us His Torah").

Aliens

Q: Many people testify that they have seen aliens. Is this true?

A: Nonsense. People have made such claims for 60 years and there is not one proof in the world which verifies them (When the first man walked on the moon, a huge dispute erupted over whether there was life on other planets. The Satmar Rebbe - Ha-Rav Yoel Teitelbaum - exerted with total certitude that there was no life on the moon. If there was life on the moon, he reasoned, the Ponevizher Rav – Ha-Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman, who was a most successful fundraiser for his yeshiva in Bnei Brak, would have gone there collecting! Builders, by Chanoch Teller, p. 352).

The Drink "BLU"

Q: Is it proper for a religious youth to drink energy drinks such as BLU?

A: It is forbidden, even for non-religious youth. It contains much caffeine which is dangerous.

Ha-Rav Chanan Porat

Q: Even if a Rabbi waives his honor, his honor is not waived since it is not only his honor but the honor of the Torah. Why then do we refer to Ha-Rav Chanan Porat Ztz"l by his first name?

A: The Halachah is that a Rabbi's honored may be waived, but he is not allowed to waive all of the Torah's honor. I, the humble, therefore always called him Ha-Rav Chanan (Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 240:7).

Ticket-Checker

Q: I worker as a ticket-checker on the bus to ensure that the passengers pay. Is it permissible for me to wake up someone who is sleeping or is it considered stealing sleep (Gezel Sheina)?

A: You are obligated to wake him. Stealing sleep (Gezel Sheina) is based on the Mitzvah of "Love your fellow as yourself", and here it is necessary (see Piskei Shlomo Volume 3, "Stealing").

Traveling on Shabbat

Q: If a person drives his wife to the hospital to have a baby on Shabbat, can he use Waze in order to take the shortest route?

A: Yes, activating Waze is a Rabbinic prohibition, while traveling extra is a Torah prohibition (See Ha-Rav's commentary on Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Volume 3, Chapter 93).

Charedi or Religious-Zionist

Q: I am in doubt what to be. Who is correct - Charedim or Religious-Zionists?

A: Depends on what issue.

Q: So which path should I take?

A: Torah. "We will do **everything** which Hashem said". Shemot 24:3.

Picture of the Even Ha-Shetiya

Q: Is there a problem with seeing a picture of the Even Ha-Shetiya (the Foundation Stone, which is on the Temple Mount and is on the spot where the Kodosh Ha-Kedoshim stood)?

A: It is forbidden, since it was photographed by someone, whether a Jew or non-Jew, who transgressed by entering the Temple Mount.

Kopi Luwak

Q: Is Weasel Coffee Kosher? The coffee beans are eaten by small animals, digested and defecated whole, and ground into coffee.

A: There is a doubt. There is a dispute if the urine of a non-Kosher animal is forbidden (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreah Deah 81:1). The beans also absorb the secretions from the digestive system, which is what gives it taste. It is therefore a doubt (see Techumin Volume 31, p. 423 which leans towards permitting it). Nonetheless, it is forbidden on account of Bal Tashchit since the cost is astronomical.

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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

