



Text Message Q&A #179 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:

Another Child

Q: I want another child but my husband does not. This causes me great distress.

A: You are right. But this is too complicated for a text message. Talk to my wife.

Running to Shul

Q: It is a Mitzvah to run to Shul from my house?

A: No. Only when you are close to the Shul, so it is clear why you are running.
Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 90:12. Mishnah Berurah ibid.

Israeli Flag

Q: Is it permissible to throw away a worn Israeli flag or must it be placed in the Geniza?

A: It may be thrown away, but not in a disrespectful manner (In the book Nefesh Ha-Rav pp. 99-100, it is related that one year the Agudat Yisrael Conference was held in a hotel in Yerushalayim and there was an Israeli flag flying on the roof. Some of the participants, who were opposed to the State of Israel, were unhappy about this, but instead of requesting that the flag be removed they asked if all of the flags of the participants' countries be flown as well. After this was publicized, Ha-Rav Yosef Soloveitchik stated at the Mizrahi Conference that while the Jewish People had flags

in the desert, they were temporary and not for all generations. But the flag of Israel has a different significance. There is a Minhag in the name of the Rishonim brought in the Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 366:4: "If a Jew is found murdered, he is to be buried as he was found [i.e. in his bloody clothes] without any shrouds." The Shach #11 explains that the reason for this Minhag: to kindle Hashem's wrath when He sees how this person was buried without shrouds. Hashem's compassion will thus be aroused to avenge him. And the same applies to the Israeli flag. Towards the end of the War of Independence, the UN set a specific time by which the Jews and Arabs could seize land. They established that all the territory in the hands of the Jews, as signified by raising the Israeli flag on that spot, would become part of the State of Israel, and all territory in Arab hands, would remain outside the State of Israel. And this is indeed what occurred. During this period, much Jewish blood was spilled in order to raise the Israeli flag over as much territory as possible. Many Jewish fighters were killed, displaying self-sacrifice for the sole purpose of raising the Jewish flag, the flag of Israel. Therefore, Rav Soloveitchik said, the flag of the State of Israel has the status of a murdered Jew's clothing, a symbol of the spilled blood of the Jews. As a result, when the flag of Israel flies, it arouses Hashem's compassion for Am Yisrael).

Glue and Knot at End of Tzitzit

Q: Is it permissible to put glue or tie a knot on the end of Tzitzit so they do not unravel?

A: Some authorities permit it and others forbid it. Piskei Teshuvot 11:14.

Wig and Sofer Stam

Q: Which is preferable – a Sofer Stam with more beautiful script but whose wife wears a wig or a Sofer Stam with less beautiful script whose wife covers her hair with a scarf?

A: The former. 1. The Sofer Stam is the deciding factor and not his wife. 2. Wearing a wig is permissible for both Ashkenazi and Sefardi women (see Shut She'eilat Shlomo 1:442, 3:416. And there is a story told about a couple who moved from Hungary to America, and the wife wanted to cover her with a wig like others in America instead of shaving her hair and wearing a scarf as had been the custom of her foremothers in Hungary. The husband, however, did not agree and went to Ha-Rav

Moshe Feinstein to ask about this issue. Ha-Rav Feinstein saw that the husband did not have a beard. He asked: Did your father and grandfather have beards? He said: Of course, everyone had a beard. He asked: So why are you clean-shaven? He said: This is America! Ha-Rav Feinstein said: If so, there is no problem for your wife to wear a wig. See also Shut Igrot Moshe Yoreh De'ah 1:81 on wearing modern clothing).

Large Kippah in Tzahal

Q: The main officer of my base told me that my Kippah is too large. What should I do?

A: A large Kippah is praiseworthy. Ask a military Rabbi or call the hotline for soldiers of the Military Rabbinate: 052-941-4414.

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