



Text Message Q&A #180 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:

Teacher with Bad Odor

Q: What should I do if one of my teachers has bad body odor?

A: Either leave him an anonymous note written politely, or inform the principal. The same applies to bad breath.

Sister's Clothing

Q: Is it permissible for me to take my sister's clothing, since they were bought with our parent's money?

A: Certainly not. They belong to her.

Cohain as Combat Soldier in Tzahal

Q: Is it permissible for a Cohain to serve as a combat soldier in Tzahal?

A: Certainly. In circumstances when there are corpses, he will receive special directives as how to act (And regarding the question as to whether a Cohain serving in Tzahal who kills someone in war can still recite the Birkat Cohanim, see Shut Yechaveh Daat 2:14, where Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef rules that such a Cohain is exactly the right person to bestow a blessing upon us since he killed defending the Nation and Land of Israel. See also Shut She'eilat Shlomo 3:61. This is unlike Ha-Rav Yosef Soloveitchik who held that just as King David was unable to build the Temple on account of his participation in war, so too a Cohain who kills in war is no longer able to recite the Birkat Cohanim. Nefesh Ha-Rav, p. 132).

12-Step Program

Q: It is worthwhile to use the 12-Step Program to fix my behavior?

A: Certainly not. This program is only for someone with an addiction. It is like a drug which cures but has side effects. One can therefore not use it except in the case of an addiction which cannot be cured otherwise.

Question to the Wrong Rabbi

Q: I accidentally sent a text message question to a different Rabbi and he sent me an answer. Am I obligated to follow his ruling or can I ask Ha-Rav?

A: If you intended specifically to ask me, the lowly one, it is permissible to re-ask the question. If you intended to ask a Rabbi in general, you must follow his answer (Similarly, it once happened that a couple had a question about the laws of Family Purity on Shabbat Night. Since they lived nearby to Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef, the wife went to his apartment building, but accidentally she went to the floor above Rav Ovadiah, where Ha-Rav Ben Tzion Abba Shaul lived, and he ruled that it was forbidden. When she returned home, the husband understood that his wife had made a mistake. He went on his own to Rav Ovadiah, who permitted it, and related that his wife had accidentally asked Rav Ben Tzion Abba who prohibited it. Rav Ovadiah said: Rebbe Ben Tzion is a Gaon in Halachah, but my opinion in this case is that it is permissible. Therefore, if you originally intended to ask me, it is permissible, but if you intended to ask any Rabbi, it is forbidden, especially since you asked Chacham Ben Tzion, and I cannot permit what he did not. Maran by Ha-Rav Michal Shtern pp. 247-248).

Biblical Criticism

Q: How should we relate to Biblical Criticism?

A: It is nonsense which is not worth relating to. This was explained by Maran Ha-Rav Kook and Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah (See also Ha-Rav's book "Torat Emet").

Kippah during Military Exercises at Sea

Q: During military exercises at sea is a soldier obligated to wear a Kippah?

A: No. And it is a pious act to only remove it right before heading out to sea. Piskei Teshuvot 3:12.

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