



Text Message Q&A #192 Ask Rav Aviner: toratravaviner@yahoo.com

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Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a day. Here's a sample:

Birthday

Q: Is there a source for celebrating one's birthday?

A: There is no early source besides the Torah's mention of Pharoah's birthday. There is no mention in the Mishnah, Gemara, Rambam or Shulchan Aruch. The Aderet harshly opposed birthday celebrations. The book "Nefesh David". And some authorities opposed it on account of "Chukot Ha-Goyim" – non-Jewish customs. But one may permit it since it is a custom based on a rational reason. The Chazon Ish did not celebrate his birthday in any way (in the name of Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski. Segulot Raboteinu p. 350). And Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah said that there is some value in celebrating one's birthday on condition that one does a Cheshbon Nefesh (taking an account of one's spiritual state) on that day.

Non-Combat Soldier

Q: I was not accepted into an elite combat unit in Tzahal and I received a lowly position. Why should I even go to the Army?

A: Every position in the army is incredibly important. "For as the share of him who goes down into battle is the same share of one who stays with the equipment, they shall share alike" (Shmuel 1 30:24).

Free Choice for Animals

Q: What is the source that animals have free choice?

A: There is none.

Hallel over the Yom Kippur War

Q: we recite Hallel on Yom Yerushalayim for the miracle of our salvation during the Six-Day War. Why then don't we do the same for the miracle of our salvation during the Yom Kippur War?

A: It is included in the Hallel of Yom Ha-Atzmaut, just as all the miracles of the original conquest of the Eretz Yisrael are included in the Hallel of Pesach. And Yom Yerushalayim is unique (See the book "Milchemet Yom Ha-Kippurim" of Ha-Rav Menachem Mendel Kasher).

Correcting Your Wife

Q: If my wife is saying a Dvar Torah at the Shabbat Table and she makes a mistake, should I correct her?

A: This is a good question, but don't ask me, ask your wife.

Choosing a Doctor

Q: I need a medical procedure. Should I turn to a private doctor or use a doctor from my Kupat Cholim? [In Israel, there is socialized health care and each person belongs to one of the health-care providers]

A: If it is a routine medical procedure, a doctor from your Kupat Cholim. If it is a more complex procedure, then a better doctor, if you have the money (Ha-Rav Moshe Feinstein once needed to have a pacemaker implanted, and his family said that he should wait for the world expert to do it rather than a regular doctor. Reb Moshe listened to their advice. After the procedure, he needed to return to the hospital because the procedure was not so successful and had to be fixed. Reb Moshe once said: "I made a mistake in waiting for that special doctor, since I was shown from the Heavens that a doctor does not have to be the greatest expert, a regular doctor will

suffice and the rest is dependent on Hashem". Reshumei Aharon of Ha-Rav Aharon Felder Volume 1, p. 27).

Cohanim in Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah

Q: We are Cohanim and follow Maran Ha-Rav Kook and do not enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah. But our son is distressed when all the kids in his class enter and he remains outside with me. What should I do?

A: Compensate in another fashion (See Shut She'eilat Shlomo 3:329. Piskei Shlomo Volume #2 in section on Kedushat Cohanim).

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