



Text Message Q&A #223 Ask Rav Aviner: toratravaviner@yahoo.com

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

Adding to the Prayers during the Wave of Terror

Q: In light of the current situation, should we add prayers to the Davening?

A: There is no need. This is the normal state of war with our enemies, which has been going on since the establishment of the State of Israel.

Terrorists

Q: Why are we revolted by terrorists? Don't we believe that they are performing Hashem's will?

A: This is not Hashem's will but rather evil. A wicked person absorbs Hashem's will in a false and evil manner. See Shemoneh Kevatzim of Maran Ha-Rav Kook 3:42.

Type of War

Q: Is this war considered an obligatory war according to Halachah?

A: Certainly. According to the Rambam, one type of obligatory war is to protect Israel from its enemies, i.e. Defensive War (Hilchot Melachim 5:1). According to the Ramban, it is to conquer the Land, cf. War of Independence (Sefer Ha-Mitzvot Le-Rambam, Additions to Positive Mitzvot #4).

Do We Need an Army?

Q: I heard a Rabbi say that we do not need an army and it is sufficient to rely on the spiritual strength of Rabbis. Is this true?

A: Moshe Rabbenu waged war, as did Yehoshua Bin Nun and King David. We need both: Human effort and Divine intervention. See Niddah 70b.

Talit for Single Man

Q: Should an unmarried man wear a Talit?

A: According to Sefardim, an unmarried man wears a Talit (Kaf Ha-Chaim 8:12). According to Ashkenazim, some wear a Talit (Be'er Heitiv 17:4) and some do not (Shut Levushei Mordechai Tanina #2). But everyone must wear Tzitzit.

Standing During the Blessing for Thunder

Q: Is one obligated to stand while reciting the blessing for thunder?

A: One is not obligated to stand for the blessings of praise and thanksgiving, but it is proper to do so. Piskei Teshuvot 218:1.

To Whom Does the Kotel Belong

Q: I heard that the Arabs claim that the Kotel belongs to them and the proof is that Mohamed tied his horse to it.

A: Nonsense and lies (In the year 5690, Ha-Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky, Rosh Yeshiva of Torah Ve-Da'at in Brooklyn, said: The leaders of the nations of the world are discussing to whom the Kotel belongs – to the Jews or to the Arabs. This is shocking! We have an entire tradition in the Torah, Gemara and Midrashim relating to the Temple Mount and the Kotel: The Akedah took place there, Yaakov Avinu slept and had his dream there, King David bought the land for full price, etc..., while the Muslim have a "story" that Mohamed visited there and tied his horse to the Kotel. How is it possible that all of our rights are denied based on a story?! Rav Kamenetzky answered that it is measure-for-measure. Since we ourselves are in doubt about the traditions of the Tanach and our Sages, Hashem shows us that even the nations of the world, the majority of whom believe in the Tanach, err in what even a nursery school child knows. Divine Providence clearly shows us this fact. Emet Le-Yaakov on Pirkei Avot p. 136 #131).

Clapping During Davening

Q: What is the source for clapping during Davening?

A: There is no source, and if it disturbs other people it is forbidden (see Mishnah Berurah 101:6. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 582:9. Mishnah Berurah #24).

Text Message Q&A

Q: From where did the innovation of the text message Q&A come?

A: There is no innovation. People have always asked questions not only orally but also in letters. The same concept applies to faxes, emails and text messages.

Murderous Driver

Q: What is the law regarding a driver who accidentally hit a pedestrian, fled without helping him and caused the pedestrian's death?

A: He is a double murderer.

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