Shut SMS #5

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Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text messages questions a day! Here's a sample:

Nanny
Q: We have a nanny for our baby. She is an Orthodox woman, but she puts on Talit and Tefillin.
A: This does not invalidate her from being a nanny. The essence is that she is motherly.

Non-Religious Mohel
Q: If someone had his Brit Milah performed by a non-religious Mohel is it legitimate, or does he need a "Hatafat Dam Brit" (drawing a drop of blood)?
A: It is a dispute (Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 264:1. Rama ibid. Chidushei Rabbi Akiva Eiger ibid. See Shut Mi-Ma'amakim 1:8).

Sleeping
Q: Is it true that sleeping with socks negatively affects one's eyesight?
A: Nonsense. On the contrary, it is modest.

Mezuzah
Q: If a Mezuzah falls, is it invalid?
A: No.

Distancing Oneself from Women
Q: Is it permissible for me as a single man to eat at a married friend's house?
A: Yes, but distance yourself from his wife. Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 152:8-10.

Christian Music
Q: Something in my heart tells me that Christian music is forbidden. Is this correct?
A: Yes, it is forbidden on account of the prohibition of benefiting from idol worship (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 167:1).

Sitting on the Ground
Q: Is it permissible to sit on the ground (since it is a sign of mourning)?
A: There is no problem according to the basic Halachah, whether on the floor or on dirt.

Flies
Q: Is there a problem with killing flies?
A: No. They bother people (Shut Teshuvot Ve-Hanhagot 2:726, Shut Igrot Moshe, Choshen Mishpat 2:47 and Chazon Ish in Ma'aseh Ish vol. 7 p. 163).

Socks for Women
Q: Is a woman who always wears a modest skirt, which always covers her knees, obligated to wear socks?
A: The Mishnah Berurah does not require it, and it is permissible to follow his ruling (Gan Na'ul pp. 37-38).

Women and Gemara
Q: I am a woman. Should I learn Gemara?
A: The Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 246:6) rules that you should not.

Dating 2 Men at Once
Q: Is it permissible to meet two Shiduchim at once?
A: No. It is unethical, except in rare cases.

Long Hair
Q: I (a man) have long hair with a pony tail. Am I obligated to get a haircut?
A: Certainly. There are three severe Torah prohibitions that are transgressed by having long hair: 1. It is an impediment between one's head and Tefillin, and therefore causes a blessing to be recited in vain when putting on Tefillin. 2. Following the ways of the non-Jews (which includes acts of conceit and haughtiness). 3. "Lo Tilbash" (the prohibition of men dressing or appearing as women) (Shut She'eilat 1:23).

Crucifixion
Q: Is crucifixion practiced in Judaism?
A: No. Those who are stoned are momentarily hung, but not like the known crucifixion.
Stubbornness
Q: I want to learn a profession which is my passion, but I keep failing the tests in that area. Is this a sign from heaven?
A: No. One must be stubborn and persist in important things.

Shaking a Woman's Hand
Q: If a secular woman puts out her hand, can I shake it?
A: No. Politely apologize: "Forgive me, this is saved for my wife" (Shut She'eilat Shlomo 4:298).

Capitalism
Q: Is the ideal of Judaism capitalism or socialism?

Big Bang Theory
Q: Is the Big Bang Theory possible?
A: It is possible. And in the Beginning, G-d created heaven and earth through the Big Bang.
Q: And what about evolution?
A: Same. Hashem created man through evolution.
Q: But the simple meaning of the verses do not seem to imply so.
A: They are a parable, or have hidden meaning (Igrot Ha-Re'eiyah 1, 91).

Michael
Q: I have been told that we should not name our son Michael since this is the name of an angel.
A: This has no source in the Gemara or halachic authorities. This is a good name. As is Refael, Gavriel and Oriel (also angels' names).

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