



Ask The Rabbi...

Researched at Ohr Somayach Institutions / Tanenbaum College
22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, 91180 Jerusalem, Israel
tel:972-2-810315 • fax:972-2-812890 • Internet:ohr@jer1.co.il



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Issue #66

- This edition contains:
1. Do Good Guys Wear Black Hats?
 2. In Search Of...The "Missing" Parsha
 3. Liddle Riddle

Zalman from Toronto asked:

When I went home, my parents got really upset by the way I dress. I think this is really hypocritical since they are the ones who are supposedly liberal and who believe in equality and tolerance. If everybody can do whatever they want, why can't I wear a black hat? Also, even though my Hebrew name (that THEY gave me) is Zalman, they insist on calling me Steve. How can I get them to understand?

Dear Zalman,

The Torah's ways are "ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace." If your actions do not bring peace, it may be that you are not following the ways of the Torah.

Rav Moshe Feinstein rules that, although it's better to use a Hebrew name, there's no prohibition in using a non-Hebrew one. According to this, if your parents address you by your non-Hebrew name you should respond, and you should not correct them.

Regarding dress, Rav Feinstein maintains that there is no halachic obligation to wear any particular style that has become traditional for Jewish communities in various places and times. He also rules that there is no prohibition of "following the ways of the pagans" in adopting fashions of the gentile world. This is all providing that the clothing has no pagan religious significance and conforms to the prohibitions against *sha'atnez*, immodesty, and cross-dressing.

I'm not advising you to wear ripped jeans and a Grateful Dead T-shirt. In Orthodox communities, as in all societies, specific styles of clothing are the norm. Integrating into these groups without dressing "frum" would be difficult. Therefore you should see your dress as an intrinsic part of your development, and not necessarily accede to your parent's tastes.

You *should* take their feelings into account, however. If your dress causes them great distress, a compromise would be to wear "civilian clothing" at home, or to tone down religious clothing styles.

Respecting parents will demonstrate that Judaism does not seek to alienate children from their families, and is concerned with the preservation of family ties even when not every member of the family observes Jewish law.

Respecting parents requires proper communication, as the following incident illustrates: A Mother told her daughter, "There are two words which you use constantly, and I'd appreciate if you'd eliminate them from your vocabulary ... One is "drippy" and the other is "disgusting."

"O.K., Mom," said the daughter, "Tell me what the words are and I'll stop saying them."

Sources:

- *Mishlei* 3:17.
- *Iggros Moshe Orach Chayim* 4:66, *Yoreh Deah* 1:81.
- *After the Return* -Mordechai Becher & Moshe Newman, 2:1, Feldheim 1995.

ATERES@aol.com wrote:

Regarding the question of skipped Torah Readings (Ask the Rabbi #63) what does an American do who is going to Israel after Pesach but before Parshat Matos - Masei? He will miss a Parsha. When does he make it up?

Dear ATERES:

I asked your question to Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg, *shlita*. He himself recently returned from abroad, having missed *Parshat Emor*. To allow him to catch up, his *minyan* read a double Parsha — the first *aliyah* to the Torah included the entire *Parshat Emor* plus the beginning of *Parshat Behar*.

Whether or not you are *obligated* to "catch up" is a matter of dispute amongst the Poskim, says Rav Scheinberg. Whether you are *able* to do so may depend on the cooperation of your fellow congregants. One should certainly take advantage of any opportunity to "catch-up." I'm told there's a *Minyan* that caters to people from *Chutz L'Aretz* in Jerusalem's Central Hotel (☎972-2-384-111).

Liddle Riddle:

Aside from *Channuka* and *Chol HaMoed*, when is the Torah read 5 days in a row?

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Ask The Rabbi is written by **Rabbi Benzion Bamberger, Rabbi Reuven Subar** and various other Rabbis at Ohr Somayach Institutions / Tanenbaum College, Jerusalem, Israel.

General Editor: **Rabbi Moshe Newman**

Production Design: **Lev Seltzer**

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