



# Ask The Rabbi

Researched at Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem

## This Issue Contains:

1. Shoot Me or I'll Kill Myself
2. Hard Heart
3. Yiddle Riddle



Surie Fleischman < sally@post.tau.ac.il >

*If a Jew were to hold a gun to his own head and threaten to kill himself unless you ate pig for example, what should you do? Please answer as soon as possible (Just kidding!). Thank you.*

Dear Surie Fleischman,

In general, you must do anything in your power to save a life. Except for murder, idol worship or forbidden relations, you must even perform Torah prohibitions in order to save a life.

However, it's forbidden to transgress the Torah to save the life of someone who, with forethought and malice, is trying to cause another person to sin. So, theoretically, in the hypothetical case you asked about, you would not be allowed to eat the unkosher meat.

But in reality, anyone who would do such a thing is probably emotionally disturbed and not fully responsible for his actions. In such a case, you would eat non-kosher food — you would even break Shabbat — to save the person.

Sources:

- Yoreh Deah 158:2
- Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 329:1

David T. Subar < dsubar@interna.com > wrote:

*The Parsha refers to Hashem hardening Pharaoh's heart, and therefore not letting our people free. This hardening caused further plagues, including slaying of the first born. Therefore, Hashem's action (hardening of Pharaoh's heart) led to unnecessary suffering, since Pharaoh was of the mind to free the Jews. How is this explained by the Sages?*

Dear David T. Subar,

Great question! Here are two answers:

The extra plagues weren't a punishment for Pharaoh's stubbornness; rather, they were punishment for *previous* actions, such as oppressing innocent people, throwing babies in the river and attempted genocide. All these actions were done with free will.

The hardening of Pharaoh's heart was merely a pretext, so to speak, for the timing of Egypt's punishment. It was timed so as to impress indelibly and historically upon the collective consciousness of the Jewish People that Hashem controls everything. But Pharaoh and company got only what they deserved, based on their previous bad deeds.

Here's another answer: Really, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart wasn't taking away his free will. Just the opposite! The plagues had taken away Pharaoh's free will (in the opposite direction) by making Hashem's existence too obvious. By hardening his heart, Hashem was merely restoring Pharaoh's free will to the point it had been prior to the plagues.

That is, Hashem didn't force Pharaoh to say "No." He simply gave Pharaoh the opportunity to do so. Nothing but his own stubbornness stopped Pharaoh from repenting.

Sources:

- Ramban, Exodus 7:3 citing Midrash Rabbah

*If you have E-Mail and a question, you can submit it to Ask The Rabbi for possible inclusion in a future edition. Just write your question using your E-Mail program, set the subject to "Ask The Rabbi" and send it to ohr@virtual.co.il. We can't include all questions submitted, but we do try to respond to everyone.*

Ask The Rabbi is written by Rabbi Moshe Lazerus, Rabbi Reuven Subar, Rabbi Avrohom Lefkowitz and other Rabbis at Ohr Somayach Institutions / Tanenbaum College, Jerusalem, Israel.

General Editor: **Rabbi Moshe Newman**  
Production Design: **Lev Seltzer**

Ask The Rabbi is available from several sources:	• World Wide Web: Our address is <a href="http://www.ohr.org.il">http://www.ohr.org.il</a>	• Fax and Mail in Israel and US-MAIL in America. Send us a note requesting a subscription in Israel, or call 800-431-2272 in the US for details.	• E-Mail via InterNet. To subscribe, send the message "sub ask (your full name)" to <a href="mailto:lstproc@virtual.co.il">lstproc@virtual.co.il</a>
22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem Israel	☎ 972-2-581-0315	☎ 972-2-581-2890	✉ <a href="mailto:ohr@virtual.co.il">ohr@virtual.co.il</a>
38 East 29th Street 8 <sup>th</sup> floor, New York, NY 10016, USA	☎ 1-212-213-3100	☎ 1-212-213-8717	✉ <a href="mailto:RZCorlin@aol.com">RZCorlin@aol.com</a> or <a href="mailto:estern@Aol.com">estern@Aol.com</a>
613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 5V3, Canada	☎ 1-905-886-5730	☎ 1-905-886-6065	✉ <a href="mailto:Somayach@MSN.com">Somayach@MSN.com</a>

©1997 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved

Issue #139 - 15 February 1997 - Terumah

Dedication opportunities are available for Ask The Rabbi — Please contact us for details  
This publication contains words of Torah. Please treat it with due respect. Do not let this land on a garbage heap.

## Yiddle Riddle

Last week we asked:

Halachically, what do the following days have in common?

- 1) 21 Cheshvan
- 2) 3 January
- 3) 14 Iyar

**Answer:** They are the days outside Israel after which you no longer have to repeat *Shmoneh Esrei* prayer if you forgot whether or not you:

- 1) Said "*Mashiv Haruach u'Morid Hageshem*"
- 2) Said "*Tal U'Matar*"
- 3) Omitted the above

The silent prayer contains seasonal additions for rain. On Shemini Atzeret we begin **praising** Hashem for rain by saying *Mashiv Haruach u'Morid Hageshem*. Starting the night of December 4th we add a prayer — *V'ten tal u'matar Livrach* — **asking** for rain. On the first day of Pesach, we stop saying both of these.

If you forgot whether you correctly added the seasonal addition (or in the proper season omitted it), during the first thirty days you are assumed to have erred due to force of habit. Therefore you must repeat the prayer correctly.

The dates listed above are, respectively, thirty days after the beginning of saying *Mashiv Haruach u'Morid Hageshem* (*Shemini Atzeret*), "*Tal U'Matar*" (December 5th), and omitting them both on the first day of Pesach (15 Nissan).

*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 114,117*