



Ask The Rabbi

Researched at Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem

This Issue Contains:

1. Adult Circumcision
2. How Fat is the Kotel?
3. Crisis of a CEO
4. Lion Blessings
5. Live in the Garden of Eden
6. Yiddle Riddle
7. Public Domain



ADULT CIRCUMCISION

Sam Steinberg from Cedarhurst, New York <cooldad524@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

I am the son of concentration camp survivors. After the war, they ended up in Belgium. I was born in 1949 in Belgium. The Korean War was breaking out and everyone was worried about a new European War. My parents didn't have me circumcised because they were worried that if there was a new war, I could end up exposed as a Jew and killed. I am now 48 and getting more involved with my religion. Should I now have a circumcision?

Dear Sam Steinberg,

You should definitely try to do this very important mitzvah.

The Torah commands that all Jewish males be circumcised. G-d said to Abraham "This is My covenant which you shall observe, between Me and you and your future offspring: Circumcise every male ... An uncircumcised male who (purposely) does not circumcise himself, that soul will be cut off from its people — he has violated My covenant."

You need to get an expert *mohel* (person who performs circumcision) who is knowledgeable in all Jewish laws concerning circumcision. The mere fact that someone is a doctor or surgeon does *not* qualify him to perform circumcision.

I recently met a *mohel* who is one of the most experienced people performing circumcision on adults. His name is Rabbi Y. Aron Fisher, Phone number 1 800 367 2747 or 914 425 3266. He told me he will be happy to help you, so feel free to contact him.

I applaud you for your efforts to reunite with your Jewish heritage. In the merit of this great mitzvah, may Hashem bless you with great success in all your endeavors.

Sources:

- Genesis 17:10-14
- Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 260

HOW FAT IS THE KOTEL?

Name@Withheld wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

I am delighted to find this website. I have several questions for you: My 5 year old son "Eliron" is sitting here with me. He just started Yeshiva last week and we are very proud of what he has learned already. His question for you is "How long did Moses live?" His second question is "What does G-d look like?" His third question is, "What is your name?" As you can see he is very inquisitive. He also wants to know how big the Kotel is... "how wide, tall, and fat?"

Dear Name@Withheld,

Moses lived to the age of 120. This, by the way, is the origin of the blessing "may you live until 120." My wife's uncle always wishes people that they should live to be 122...so that they should not die suddenly!

G-d does not have any physical form, so he doesn't "look" like anyone or anything. (See the prayer "Yigdal" on pages 12 and 13 in the ArtScroll Siddur.) Even though the Torah says things like "G-d took us out of Egypt with a *strong hand*" — this is the Torah's way of telling us about G-d in a way we can understand.

The Kotel's measurements are 488 meters long, 55 meters high, and on the average 1.5 meters "fat." (A meter is roughly three feet.)

May your son Eliron be a constant source of joy to you and your family, and may he scale the heights of Jewish knowledge and righteousness.

Sources:

- Deuteronomy 34:7.

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 info@ohr.org.il. Or use our form at <http://www.ohr.org.il/ask/page/ask.htm>. 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 Lauffer, Rabbi Reuven Subar, Rabbi Avrohom Lefkowitz, Rabbi Mordechai Becher 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 <http://www.ohr.org.il>
- 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 listproc@virtual.co.il

22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem Israel

972-2-581-0315

fax: 972-2-581-2890

info@ohr.org.il

38 East 29th Street 8th floor, New York, NY 10016, USA

1-212-213-3100

fax: 1-212-213-8717

RZCorlin@aol.com or estern@aol.com

613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 5V3, Canada

1-905-886-5730

fax: 1-905-886-6065

Somayach@MSN.com

CRISIS OF A CEO

Name@Withheld from Georgia, USA wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

What resources are available for depressed Jewish CEO's/professionals? My very good friend is in need of contacts or support in what is a very difficult and confusing time. I want to somehow guide him towards a Torah based approach to his depression and seeming state of "stuckness" and perhaps help him find a Jewish Professional Support System. He feels alone and confused and I want to help.

Rabbi ... I am soon converting and he is not particularly observant ... I don't want to make him feel like I'm pushing his heritage on him at a time when he is trying to find his own path, I do feel strongly however in the wisdom and absolute power of Torah in transforming life and providing the answer to ALL of life's issues. How can I serve best as a support system and what are some possible options for him? Thank you.

Dear Name@Withheld,

Your sensitivity is admirable. You're probably right to avoid doing anything he will feel is "pushing his heritage on him."

It's difficult via email to address your specific situation. As for a reference, I suggest you contact either of the two people listed below. I'm sure they will be able to refer you to a sensitive Torah-oriented professional.

Rabbi Binyomin Friedman or Rabbi Menachem Deutsch
Atlanta Scholars Kollel (A.S.K.)

2191-A Briarcliff Road Atlanta, Georgia 30329 Phone: 321-4085, 636-3362 Fax: 325-3788

You can submit your questions to
Ask The Rabbi
with your web browser from the page:

<http://www.ohr.org.i/ask/page/ask.htm>

Or if you want to use e-mail, address it to:

info@ohr.org.il

LION BLESSINGS

Josh Wisotsky from Jamaica Estates, New York City <NM7QC@qcunix1.acc.qc.edu> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

We read on Simchat Torah about the blessings of all of the sons of Yaakov. When it came to Dan, Moshe said "Dan Gur Aryeh — Dan is like a lion" (roughly translated). When Yaakov dies he blesses his sons. In that Parsha it says: "Gur Aryeh Yehudah — Yehudah is like a lion." Is this a contradiction? Why does the Torah compare Yehudah to a lion cub and then Dan to a lion cub at the end of the Torah? Thank you very much.

Dear Josh Wisotsky,

Yaakov conferred the blessing of "lion" upon Yehuda for two reasons: That just as the lion is "king of the beasts," so too would Yehuda rule over the Jewish People, and that Yehuda should be blessed with the courage of the lion.

In the end of the Torah two tribes are "lion-blessed" —Dan in the verse you mentioned, and Gad in the verse "like a lion he dwells." Rashi explains that both these tribes needed additional bravery because of their geographic location. Gad's portion was on the east bank of the Jordan and therefore exposed to invasion. Dan's portion was situated on the sea shore and exposed to piracy.

Sources:

- Rashi Deuteronomy 33:20, 22
- Rashi Genesis 49:9

LIVE IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Chaim Lichtenstein from NY, NY <wildmana@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

Besides Elijah and Chanoch, who else went to heaven without dying?

Dear Chaim Lichtenstein,

Tractate Derech Eretz Zuta lists nine people who entered Gan Eden alive: Chanoch, Eliezer servant of Avraham, Eliyahu, Mashiach, Chiram the king of Tzur, Eved the king of Kushi, Yaavetz the son of Rabbi Yehudah HaNassi, Batya the daughter of Pharaoh and Serach the daughter of Asher (granddaughter of Yaakov). According to some, Yehoshuah ben Levi should be included in this list.

Sources:

- Tractate Derech Eretz Zuta 1

Yiddle Riddle

In what situation will two people in the same place be obligated to make Kiddush on different nights? That is, the night the first one is obligated, the second one is not, and the night the second one is obligated, the first one is not.

THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Comments, quibbles, and reactions
concerning previous "Ask-the-Rabbi" features.

Re: "Who was the first person to die after the Mabul" (Ask the Rabbi #177):

I like the reasoning that leads to the fact that Haran was the first person to die after the flood. But not only Noach's sons were on the ark. So were Noach's wife and daughters-in-law. And their parents were dead. Granted that Noach's children were all still alive but who says that his wife and/or daughters-in-law didn't die before Haran?

Avi and Dalia Davidowitz from Bait Vegan, Jerusalem

Re: "Here's Sneezin' Atchool!" — The ancient Jewish roots of saying "G-d bless you" when someone sneezes (Ask the Rabbi #177):

There is additional material regarding this type of thing in the Torah Temimah on Parshas Noach (7:22) on the words "ruach chaim b'avav — breath of life in its nostrils."

Micha <males@actcom.co.il>

Re: What Maimonides says about Chanukah (Ask the Rabbi #177):

I believe you missed an important part of the Rambam you were quoting. The Rambam there says: "And sovereignty was returned to Israel for more than 200 years until the second

destruction." The return of Israel's sovereign rule was also a great part of the miracle.

*Yehoshua and Rachel Seidenfeld from Efrat, Israel
<gseiden@pangaea.co.il>*

Re: "Starry Starry Night — When does Shabbat End?" (Ask the Rabbi #176):

Actually I recently heard on the Daf Yomi shiur that 72 minutes refers to Nissan and Tishrei (presumably in Northern France where Rabbeinu Tam made his calculations) and that it should be even longer than 72 minutes in the summer.

Carl Sherer <sherer@actcom.co.il>

Re: "Praying Out Loud — Saying the Silent Prayer for the Visually Impaired" (Ask the Rabbi #170):

Hi. In our local shul in Maoz Zion / Kastel neighborhood of Mevasseret [a city just outside Jerusalem] on Friday nights the amida is said out loud by the sha"tz (prayer leader), apparently because people were both unfamiliar with the text for Friday night and because Friday night there is no repetition. The ethnic origin of the shul is from Kurdistan (the whole neighborhood is Kurdistani, except for us interlopers).

Ira (Gavriel Dov) Pollack <dov@optics.jct.ac.il>

Take part in

THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Send your comments to:

info@ohr.org.il

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 info@ohr.org.il. Or use our form at <http://www.ohr.org.il/ask/page/ask.htm>. 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 Lauffer, Rabbi Reuven Subar, Rabbi Avrohom Lefkowitz, Rabbi Mordechai Becher 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 <http://www.ohr.org.il>
- 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 listproc@virtual.co.il


 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem Israel

 972-2-581-0315

fax: 972-2-581-2890


 info@ohr.org.il


 38 East 29th Street 8th floor, New York, NY 10016, USA

 1-212-213-3100


fax: 1-212-213-8717

 RZCorlin@aol.com or estern@Aol.com

 613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 5V3, Canada

 1-905-886-5730

fax: 1-905-886-6065

 Somayach@MSN.com