



Ask The Rabbi

Researched at Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem

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18 December 1999
Issue #259
Parshat Vayigash

Y2K DAY

Eliahu Leiba from Israel <elياهو.לויבא@telrad.co.il> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

As we approach the Year 2000, many especially in the computer field will be asked by their management to provide round the clock support during the transition from December 31, 1999 to January 1, 2000. This transition occurs Friday night, on Shabbat. In many companies, an argument will be presented to the employees that their support is a

employees will be told that the software they are knowledgeable about provides a vital service either in Israel or abroad (e.g. telecommunications, infrastructure, aircraft monitoring systems, water supply, etc.). Much pressure will be placed on the employee in an attempt to convince them to work that Shabbat. Please provide a general checklist of halachic criterion as to what constitutes pikuach nefesh with respect to requiring desecration of Shabbat. This would enable your readership to respond in a respectful and intelligent way when

your software breaks, so and so can happen and it is

Dear Eliahu Leiba,

It is a commandment to break Shabbat in any and **pikuach nefesh** saving a life. Even in a case of a shadow of a doubt of a doubt. Example: A building falls, but chances are it was empty; and even if someone was inside, chances are on. Even so, we must dig out the rubble, even on Shabbat, in order to possibly save the life of someone who may be buried underneath.

If someone has the chance to save a life, but refrains from doing so because he fears breaking Shabbat,

services are needed to prevent possible loss of life, he is indeed required to work even on Shabbat.

But what constitutes a life-threatening risk in regard to the so-called Y2K bug? Is your job one that requires your ways to do your job just as well while minimizing the Shabbat

minimize the amount of buttons that need pushing)? This is a complex issue with many factors. If you think your job

left to consult a rabbi who is a qualified halachic authority. The rabbi, after consulting technical experts in the field, will decide each case based on its own individual merits.

millenium on the Christian calendar, this year is a millenium of

marked 1930 years that Jews have been living in the shadow of the destruction of the Second Temple. Add to this the 70 years of Babylonian exile between the First and Second Temples, and you get exactly 2000 years that the Jewish nation has lived without a Holy Temple.

FOOD FIGHT

AnonymousTeacher@yahoo.com wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

I am a teacher in the [withheld] school system, and I have a rule in my class that my students may not eat. If I do catch a student eating, may I take away the food without returning it, or is this stealing?

Dear Anonymous Teacher,

Best would be to obtain permission from the parents for food confiscation. Otherwise, it would be an improper punishment. To punish with food confiscation, without such explicit permission, is a negative means to train a student.

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 and send it to info@ohr.org.il

Ask The Rabbi is written by Rabbi Moshe Lazerus, Rabbi Reuven Lauffer, Rabbi Reuven Subar, Rabbi Avrohom Lefkowitz, **General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman** **Production Design: Eli Ballon** everyone.

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☎ Somayach@MSN.com

Sources:

Igrot Moshe II, 103

SEA BURIAL

Alter B. Raubvogel from Cincinnati, OH
<alterbentzion@juno.com>

Dear Rabbi,

Hi! A few of us were discussing the recent Egypt Air crash, and the question arose: Is there a Jewish concept of burial at sea? Is there an obligation to retrieve and bury the remains of someone who has died in a shipwreck or plane crash at sea, G-d forbid? May

rabbis be eternally blessed for the service you provide to your people.

Dear Alter B. Raubvogel,

The Jewish concept of burial is only in the earth.

an obligation to try to find him and bury him, if possible.

Sources:

See Beit Yosef, Yoreh Deah 375:7

PEACE

Ramona Freedman <moneoli@hotmail.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

I am wondering where it is written that the notion of internal peace is like a peaceful home.

Dear Ramona Friedman,

In Eichah Rabba there is an interesting parable which perhaps alludes to internal peace vis-a-vis a peaceful home. A king was in a rage, and walked out angrily from his palace. When he was outside [and calmed down], he

inside my palace; peace inside my kingdom house. Peace inside my dear home. Let there be peace from now on; let

Sources:

Eichah Rabba, Petichta 25

Yiddle Riddle

Prayer Book bug. The year 2100 marks a change which will make almost every current English *siddur* (Jewish Prayer

THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Comments, quibbles, and reactions

-the-

If I Were a Rich Man...

Hi. My name is Richie Tockar. I appreciate your

I think your info is a wonderful facility and I look forward to further contact. Thanks for the help and sincere effort you have made. I will be contributing by making donations to your worthy cause. I am 12 years old, not earning money as yet, but will save my pocket money and then give to **tzedakah**. Regards.

Richie Tockar <tockar@ozemail.com.au>

Re: Testing G-d (Ohrnet Vayeitze):

G-d in the matter of **tzedakah** (charity) and giving tithes. I

am tr

When I do so, and forward it to an actual worthy cause like a fund that feeds the poor on Shabbos or Pesach, I have noticed what I considered to be positive reactions, although I never asked for them. In one case, I sealed the envelope and got a phone call about a job (I freelance.)

Name@Withheld

Re: Tekoa (Ohrnet Vayeshev):

teacher, Eira Hayairi, was from this city. (**Chagiga 2b**)

Name@Withheld

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