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Text Message Q&A #248    Ask Rav Aviner: [toratravaviner@yahoo.com](mailto:toratravaviner@yahoo.com)

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Tzion    Visit our blog: [www.ravaviner.com](http://www.ravaviner.com)

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Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a day. Here's a sample:

Smoking

Q: Why isn't there an explicit Halachic ruling that smoking cigarettes is forbidden?

A: There are many given by Gedolei Yisrael (Including by Rav. See Piskei Shlomo Vol. 4 under the heading "Smoking").

Being Drunk and Bed-time Shema

Q: Is it permissible for someone who is drunk to recite the Bed-time Shema?

A: If he can recite it properly. But in general, one should not get drunk (See Biur Halachah #695).

Crossing on a Red Light

Q: Is it permissible to cross the street on a red light when it is late at night and there are no cars?

A: It is certainly forbidden. 1. Pikuach Nefesh - it is a life-threatening situation. There are sometimes people who think they can outsmart the system, and have been hit by a car or caused an accident. If the traffic light is still working at night, there is a logical reason for it (including international regulations). 2. The general principle, or in Aramaic, "Lo Pelug" – "We don't distinguish regarding exceptions" (And Ha-Rav Avraham Genichovsky, Rosh Yeshivat Tshebin in Yerushalayim, was extremely careful not to cross against the light even late at night and even when no one was on the street, lest a child see him from a window and follow his lead. He has added that this is in order to teach a person not to disregard boundaries and accepted standards. And he once noted that crossing against a red light is the mindset of "My power and the strength of my hand" (Devarim 8:17) instead of Hashem providing me with power and strength, i.e. he crosses when he wants and does not need to be concerned with the rules. And he referred to the verse: "And Edom (the name of a nation, but also meaning "red") refused to give Israel passage through his border. Bemidbar 20:21. And it is known that Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv once saw someone crossing at a red light, and said: Rasha - an evil person. The person was very taken aback and asked why he called him that. Rav Elyashiv said that such an act causes blood to be spilled, since children will see you and learn from your actions. Ha-Rav Genichovsky added that the Gerrer Rebbe - the Beit Yisrael - once saw a person cross against a red light and said the verse: "Edom says: Don't pass through me". Bemidbar 21:4. And Rav Genichovsky explained that the Beit Yisrael did not tell jokes, but rather intended that everyone would relate his "Vort" and learn not to cross on a red light. Agan Ha-Sahar, p. 456).

## Succeeding in Tests

Q: I keep failing tests. Is there a Segulah in order for me to succeed?

A: Ask someone for help how to prepare for tests. And, of course, Teshuvah, Tefillah and Tzedakah.

## O.C.D.

Q: Is it possible to be cured from O.C.D.?

A: Yes. If it is mild, a Rabbi can help. If it is more serious, one requires a psychologist. If it is severe, one requires a psychiatrist. 4% of the population suffers from this problem. It is possible to overcome it.

## Citizens who Live in Yesha

Q: How many Jews live in Yesha?

A: 340,000. 1/3 secular, 1/3 Religious-Zionist and 1/3 Charedim. Klal Yisrael.

## Nargila

Q: I found a Nargila in the trash. May I take it?

A: Yes, and break it into little pieces and throw it away, so that no one else finds it and uses it. Nargila is a greater killer than cigarettes, and cigarettes kills 10,000 people a year in Israel, 100 times more than Arab terror (See Shut Igrot Moshe, Yoreh Deah 3:35. An observant Jew once came to the yeshiva to speak to Ha-Rav Moshe Feinstein and explained that his son was in prison for selling drugs. He wanted Reb Moshe to write a letter to the judge asking to have mercy on his son. Reb Moshe harshly said to him: "Your son causes people to be sick and hurts them. Let him sit in

prison!" And the father tried over and over again to convince Reb Moshe, but he in no way agreed to sign such a letter, and added that his actions were against the laws of the country, which are not forfeited. Reshumei Aharon, p. 22).

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