** Shailos for Rabbi Willig**

***Conference Call #34***

1. A family in my shul has a wonderful boy with severe learning disabilities and social skill issues. He is graduating from a yeshiva with a special education track. I say ‘wonderful’ because he is not angry and does not appear to be going off the derech. Sadly, he has no friends but comes to shul on Shabbos with his father and davens. The one or two high schools that might accept him are asking $50,000 for yearly tuition with no scholarships – an amount of money the family does not have nor would it be easy to get from the community at large.

A suggestion has been made that one of the Special Ed rabbeim from his elementary school (and trained in Special Ed) could be hired to be his rebbe in the afternoons for a modest sum of $16,000 and learn with him privately each afternoon two or three hours a day, four or five days a week. The boy would attend a Special Ed program in the local public high school where he would receive all the services for free. He would be home by 2 p.m. to learn with the rebbe.

Being that I am their Rav and a partner in raising the funds for the child, should I encourage such a suggestion? Does being in any kind of yeshiva and raising steep funds from the tzibbur outweigh this suggestion of attending public school and a private rebbe?

1. I am a retiring rav planning to remain in my community. The shul has asked that I advise them on their search. One candidate they are seriously considering has an acceptable *semicha* and learned in fine yeshivas. However surprisingly, at one point in his career, he served as a rabbi of a shul without a *mechitza*. The committee may or may not find this out. [ A) Do I tell them? B) This situation is recent history, taking place over the past 10 years – not 30 or 40 years ago when rabbis found or were given *heterim* to make *parnasah* or turn around the shul.] Should an applicant who has served in a shul without a mechitza be given an opportunity to serve in a traditional Orthodox shul?
2. We have Shabbos morning youth groups through fifth grade. After that, the pre-Bar Mitzvah boys and Bas Mitzvah girls daven in the main shul next to their parents, or just hang out. We have not been successful developing a consistent teen minyan. Parents have asked if we could set up a *non minyan* for 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. There would be no minyan, no kaddish, or kedusha, but they would take out the Torah, have a *bal koreh* read from it, and call the boys to the Torah for a pseudo Aliyah without saying HaShem’s name. The parents hope that it would build up to a successful teen minyan over time. Would it be *mutar* to take out a Sefer Torah for this purpose?
3. Shabbos Chazak:  Is it a problem of a *hefsek* for the baal korah to receive the Aliyah for Chazak? Does his saying Chazak, Chazak be a *hefsek* before his bracha?
4. Mishnah Berura writes that, when calculating Mincha Gedolah, you should calculate a 30 minute half-hour even when the hour is only 45 minutes. Is that necessary regularly when shul is davening Mincha Shabbos because people might not come back, and Maariv will be davened after Shabbbos?
5. Approach to dealing with someone whose father is living with him. Where do you draw the line between taking care of him to the extent of telling him what he has to do, versus *kibud av*?
6. We have six Sifrei Torah. Some are clearly more *mehudar* than others. Should we use only those that are *mehudar,* or should we use them all?
7. The minhag of the shul is to make Kiddush Friday night, but we often do not have a child to drink the wine. Should we try to fade out the minhag, or should we continue with the person making Kiddush drinking the wine?
8. What is the definition of *tinok shenishba*? Should we give an Aliya to such a person, even if the policy of the shul is not to give an Aliya to a *michallel Shabbat*?
9. In my out-of-town community, there is a treif restaurant that sells sealed, double wrapped kosher meats prepared by the local Chabad. The store sells them “to go” or will heat them in the restaurant while sealed and double wrapped, and give to customers while they are still sealed, with the customers opening and eating them in the store. The menu states that they sell “Glatt Kosher” meats and this arrangement is well known in the community. Does any of this present a problem of *Maras Ayin,* or may one eat this kosher food in the restaurant?
10. What type of mistakes should be corrected during laining? Does it make a difference if it is A) the regular Bal-Korah or someone reading their bar-mitzvah parahs? B) Monday, Thursday Shabbos Mincha or Shabbos morning? C) During the Haftorah? If a mistake is made after HaShem’s name is said, should the Bal Koreh go back to the beginning of the pasuk?
11. An elderly woman who is quite sick insists on being cremated (r”l). Her daughter is an only child and secular, but is distraught over this decision and is doing what she can to get her mother to change her mind. This is taking place far away from my community. I received a call from a Jewish social worker involved with the mother and daughter who asked me the following question:  The woman’s husband passed on many years ago and had purchased a couples’ grave in our shul’s chalukah. The daughter is asking (if she does not succeed in stopping her mother) could she bury the ashes in the reserved grave next to her father? What can be done in this situation?