

By the Grace of G-d
 19th of Sivan, 5717
 Brooklyn, N. Y.

Greetings and Blessings:

This is in reply to your letter, in which you write about the case of the Cohen who is contemplating marrying a divorcee.

I am surprised that there should be any doubt, on the part of any Jew, about the strict prohibition of such a marriage, inasmuch as it is emphatically prohibited, both in the Written Law, as well as in the Oral Law. So strict is the prohibition, that a Cohen who violates this law, desecrates his sacred calling, which is his heritage of countless generations. The point I do wish to emphasize here is, that in all matters of matrimony, the happiness of two partners is involved, and if there is any issue, the happiness of children and future generations is at stake. Obviously, a marriage which has been prohibited by the Creator and Master of the Universe, is one that cannot possibly be a happy one, and is certain to be harmful to both parties concerned. In other words, if the said Cohen has any feelings for the divorcee in question, he should realize that his marrying her would expose her to untold harm, not only in the after-life and in a spiritual sense, but also in this life, and even in a physical and material sense. The fact that this may be beyond one's comprehension, is immaterial, for it is certain that the Creator of the world knows best what is good for his creatures, and since He has so strictly prohibited such a marriage, there can be no doubt that it is harmful. Therefore, even on humanitarian grounds, the said Cohen, if he has any feeling for the said divorcee, should give up the idea and avoid causing himself and her irreparable damage, physically and spiritually.

I trust that you will find the most suitable words to explain the seriousness of the matter to the person in question, which no words can really over-emphasize.

With blessing,