Dear Rabbi,

As usual I enjoyed another one of your responses, this time to Philip Americus about ‘Scalping Tickets.’ [Ask the Rabbi #96] Your logic is commendable. However, could you reconcile for me your advice of not using tricks to get around a law, with the practice at Pesach of selling one’s chametz — or even more adust — locking them up in a cupboard and selling “futures” to someone who will never pick them up.

Confused in California

Yiddle Riddle

(Based on a riddle sent in by Shlomo Steinhardt)

Triplets and their cousin are born within a 2 hour period, yet the brit milah for each of the four takes place on four consecutive days. They are all healthy — i.e., no jaundice or other health problems. How can this be?

Sources:
• Shulchan Aruch Orah Chaim 448:3

Dear Binyomin,

Kabbalah certainly has ‘redeeming’ qualities. But it has dangers as well. On his death-bed, the Arizal (preeminent Kabbalist, 16th century Safed, Israel) told Rabbi Yitzchak Hakohen: “Tell the disciples in my name that from today they are to stop studying Kabbalah.” He warned that they might misunderstand it and thus come to harm.

I spoke to Rabbi Shlomo Fisher, shilita, about this statement of the Vilna Gaon. He explained it as follows: Learning Kabbalah requires an exceptionally high spiritual level. The Geula will come when the people at that high level learn Kabbalah.

As far as the ‘significance’ of your studies in bringing the Geula, the Talmud says that Torah study helps us survive the exile. And were the whole Jewish people to learn Torah, the Geula would come immediately!

Sources:
• Even Shleima 11:3
• Shivchei Rabbi Chaim Vital pp. 25b-26a