1st Seder Weekly Divrei Torah

A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

FIRST SEDER BAIS MEDRASH established in 2012 by Rabbi Uri Greenspan, provides a unique learning program for men with diverse schedules, ages, and backgrounds. Since its inception, the daily learning programs of Gemara, Mishnayos, Tanach, Halacha, and Jewish ethics, have provided hundreds of First Seder participants with a rich, challenging, and authentic Bais Medrash experience. The wide range of subjects and the varying levels of difficulty allow for the participants to choose which learning track best fits their individual needs, enabling them to truly take their learning to the next level.

DAILY SCHEDULE:
9-11:30am: Gemara in-depth and B'Chavrusa
9:10am-1pm: Classroom Learning

Monday 9-9:45pm: Dirshu Mishna Berura Shiur
Tuesday *8:45-9:45pm:* Daf HaShovua Gemara Shiur

TO JOIN: Contact Rabbi Uri Greenspan at 732.407.3178
Office@FirstSeder.org, Lower Merion Synagogue

PARSHAS VAYIGASH – YOSEF HATZADDIK

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

After Yosef revealed his true identity to his brothers, he told them, "Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Yosef said, 'G-d has made me a master over all of Mitzrayim.'" Rav Yaakov Neiman wonders how these words could have impressed Yaakov. This would be like telling the Chofetz Chaim that his son became President of America. He answers that Yosef intended to convey to Yaakov that he attributed his position in Mitzrayim only to Hashem. He could have said Paroh made me a master over Mitzrayim. Or he could have said that due to his brilliance and his uncanny ability to interpret dreams he had impressed Paroh to appoint him as the viceroy. By attributing his lofty office only to Hashem, he sought to convey to his father that his Emunah had remained intact even after his being in galus for 22 years and even after his appointment to his new position.

However, the question is not fully resolved. Why would Yaakov be happy that Yosef was the ruler of a foreign country even if he still believed in Hashem? Hence, we must consider another factor to explain this matter. Rashi (Bereishis 37:10) states that Yaakov believed Yosef's dreams were a harbinger of his ultimate rise to power and his role as provider and sustainer. Therefore, he realized now that his role of viceroy of Mitzrayim was predestined. His main concern was regarding Yosef's fidelity to Yaakov's *mesorah.* With the words "G-d has made me master" Yosef sought to allay Yaakov's fears.

I would like to suggest that nevertheless something about Yosef had really changed – for the better. Rashi in Parshas Vayeishev (ibid 37:2) cites the Medrash on the words "*vehu na'ar*" that Yosef acted in a childish way by tending excessively to his appearance. Although Yosef was a Tzaddik, nevertheless it seems that he had a slight sense of self-importance. It might have been due to the special attention that his father showed him and his exceptional brilliance (Onkelos translates *ben zekunim* as *bar chakim*). Perhaps his assumption that his brothers were doing *aveiros* – which he related to Yaakov – made him feel more righteous than them.

Although his sale into slavery may have humbled him, he soon rose to power and great esteem in Potiphar's house. Rashi cites another Medrash that Yosef once again began to groom himself, accentuating his handsomeness. However, when Mrs. Potiphar made bold advances to him and he almost faltered, he saw it as a wakeup call. From then on he attributed all his greatness to Hashem. When he approached the butler and the baker and offered to interpret their dreams, he proclaimed, "Behold all interpretations are from Hashem" (ibid 40:8). And again, when Paroh asked Yosef to interpret his dreams, Yosef declared emphatically, "It is beyond me, G-d will respond with Paroh's welfare!"

Thus, it was only natural for Yosef to console his brothers by telling them, "It was not you who sent me here, but G-d; and He made me a patron to Paroh and master of his entire household." Not only had he demonstrated a very high level of Emunah and humility, but he even became the paradigm of how we should respond to those who have seriously harmed us.

I believe that we can perceive from this episode how Emunah and humility go hand in hand. When one grows in Emunah, he becomes more humble, recognizing that it is Hashem, not he, Who is responsible for his inborn traits and for all his success. And when one becomes more humble, it opens his eyes to perceive Hashem's role in all human affairs.

YOU CAN LIGHT UP THE WORLD

To find out how, please visit firstseder.org or speak with Rabbi Greenspan

THE KIDNEY MIRACLE

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week's Torah portion, we have the story of the incredible hashgacha pratis, divine providence, that brought Yosef to power in Egypt, and that brought Yosef face to face with his brothers once again. This story of hashgacha pratis leads us to the following fascinating story of hashgacha pratis that was told over by Rav Zilberstein.

Rachel had a daughter who was in desperate need of a kidney donation. Rachel got tested and was told that her kidney would be a good match for her daughter. Rachel agreed to pay the enormous medical fees involved with removing her kidney and transferring it to her daughter.

Unfortunately, the surgical team made an error and took out the kidney from the wrong side. This is known as a "wrong site surgery" and it happens occasionally. The kidney that was removed was not a good match for Rachel's daughter. Rachel was of course extremely upset and after the surgery she began proceedings to sue the surgeon for malpractice and restitution. She also refused to pay the doctor, Dr. Weiskoff, for the expensive procedure. She felt that the procedure was a total waste and a disaster.

But this story has a fascinating ending.

Tests were done on the mistakenly removed kidney and it turned out that it was highly cancerous. Had the doctors removed the correct kidney, Rachel would have lost both kidneys, the one that was removed and the one that was cancerous. Now she only lost the kidney that was cancerous and her life was clearly saved by the doctor's mistake. It was apparently clear divine providence that caused the doctor's mistake that saved her life.

After this story was revealed, Dr. Weiskoff asked Rachel to drop her malpractice and restitution lawsuit. In addition, he asked her to pay for the procedure because it turned out that the procedure was essential and it saved her life. Rachel however argued that even though he saved her life, she never asked him to remove that kidney so she refused to pay him for the procedure. In addition, he damaged her without her consent so he was liable for malpractice.

However, Dr. Wesikoff argued that she should pay him for saving her, and he never actually damaged her, he saved her.

Who is right? If the doctor did a procedure that unwittingly saved her life is she obligated to pay him for it? Does she have to drop her suit? See Hebrew Veharev Na Volume One page 321

Regarding last week's question of vaccine priorities, we brought this question to Rav Tzvi Berkowitz. The answer to this dilemma is complex and there are many factors to consider, but Rav Tzvi said that the general principles can be found in the Mishna in Horios.

OUR WIVES ARE HERE AT THE CONVENTION. WE SHOULD DO IT FOR THEM

Once Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky and Rav Shneur Kotler were at an Agudah convention. Rav Yaakov and Rav Shneur were about to enter the main hall of the convention together. Rav Shneur started heading for a side entrance so that the crowd would not notice him coming in. He did not want everyone to notice and then stand up for him.

However Rav Yaakov, who was renowned for his humility, uncharacteristically insisted on entering through the main door.

Rav Yaakov then explained why it would be better to go through the main door rather than privately through the side.

"Our wives are here at the convention. We should do it for them", Rav Yaakov explained. "All year long they put up with the endless demands on our time. Now let them at least enjoy the honor we are shown when everyone rises for us."

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First Seder Bais Medrash's Mishnayos Shel Chesed Program

When a Jew passes away, they can no longer perform mitzvos or get closer to Hashem. By arranging learning for the soul of a departed family member or friend, their soul can be elevated. As their loved ones, it is within our power to help their neshamos (souls) ascend ever higher.

To join the over 200 learners or bring an Eternal Merit to a loved one, please contact Rabbi Greenspan or rabbisilver.firstseder@gmail.com

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For more information or to register for First Seder, contact Rabbi Uri Greenspan at 732-407-3178 or RabbiGreenspan@FirstSeder.org

Good Shabbos!