

# 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 KI SISA – DEEP AS THE SEA

*Rabbi Shlomo Caplan*

Moshe Rabbeinu descended from Har Sinai after forty days of learning the Torah with Hashem. The Ibn Ezra states that emptyheaded people wonder what Moshe was doing for forty days and nights. However, they do not realize that even if he had spent forty years – or double that – he could not know one thousandth of the ways of Hashem and the secrets of His Mitzvos. Indeed, Iyov declared, “The Torah is more vast than the earth and deeper than the sea” (Iyov 11:9). The Rambam understands that this pasuk refers to each word of the Torah (Commentary to Mishna Sanhedrin Chapter 10).

Rav Yaakov Galinsky demonstrates this concept with a historical perspective. The Gra stated that Rav Zalman Volozhin knew the entire written and oral Torah. However Rav Chaim, Rav Zalman’s brother and Talmid Muvhak of the Gra, asserted that everything that Rav Zalman knew, the Gra knew before his Bar Mitzvah. When the Gra passed away, people were saying that he was as great as rabbis of the Talmudic era. However, Rav Chaim said that perhaps the

Gra reached the level of the Rashba or Ramban who lived in the twelfth century.

Rav Yochanan, the greatest Amora, acknowledged that he knew only a fraction of what Rebbi Akiva knew (Erubin 43a). Rebbi Akiva’s knowledge was a miniscule amount compared to Rebbi Eliezer (Sanhedrin 68b) and Rebbi Eliezer acquired a mere fraction of Rebbi Yochanan ben Zackai’s knowledge, who knew an infinitesimal amount of what Hillel, his Rebbi, knew. If we continue back in this manner to Moshe Rabbeinu, we cannot begin to imagine how little the Gra – the greatest Talmid Chacham since the era of the Rishonim – knew, in comparison to what Moshe learned in forty days.

So, what is the take-away? There are two: One, how careful we have to be when we dive into the vast sea of Torah that we don’t drown due to our lack of appreciation of its depth and breadth. We must realize that what we understand barely touches the surface. Although we should use all of our faculties to try to understand its words, we must approach it with great humility.

Secondly, we must recognize the greatness and superiority of our predecessors. As Chazal caution, “If a great man makes a statement do not scoff at it” – no matter how incredible it may appear (Berachos 19b). How often do we come across statements or stories in the Gemara that appear to be very strange. We must be prepared to humbly admit our lack of understanding and not be tempted to question their veracity. How often do we learn the words of Rishonim or Achronim or the Halachic decisions of great Poskim which are very difficult to comprehend. When we ask the obvious questions, we must be careful that our tone of voice is respectful not deprecatory.

In our davening we say, “*Vesein chelkeinu besorasecha* – Grant us **our share** in Your Torah.” We all have a share in Hashem’s Torah, which may seem to be quite small from this perspective. However, if we do **our** best, its true value is far, far greater than anything that we can imagine.

You can bring a zechus refua shelaima for Sandy Bruck - Shalom ben Tila Leah - by signing up for a weekly erev Shabbos contribution at <https://pay.banquest.com/lightuptheworld> and by joining the 2-3 minute daily shiur on the writings of the Chofetz Chaim. The shiur is sent out via WhatsApp and email.

Please contact [rabbigreenspan@firstseder.org](mailto:rabbigreenspan@firstseder.org) to join.

## PURIM DELIVERY

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

We were just uplifted and sanctified with the light of Purim. I'd like to share a question that just came up over Purim that relates to the mitzvah of reaching out to our fellow Jews.

Chava's cousin, Stacy, was not observant. Chava decided that she would mail her cousin a nice mishloach manos package. It was filled with delicious treats and food that Chava knew Stacy liked. Chava shipped the package by UPS and the package arrived at Stacy's home right before Purim. Stacy received the mishloach manos on Purim and was truly thrilled. She called Chava to

thank her for the very thoughtful package. She then said, "I particularly loved the cookie tin that the foods were packed in. The tin is so adorable."

After Stacy hung up, Chava had the following questions. She sent all the foods in a cheap pink tin cookie jar that she bought at a homegoods store.

Chava never toiveled the tin. Was it ok for her to send the mishloach manos in a metal container if Stacy may use it without toiveling it? Did she perhaps do the wrong thing by sending her the mishloach manos in a

container that may be used and was not toiveled? Then Chava wondered, after the fact, if it does need tevila what is the best way for her to fix the situation? Should she tell Stacy to toivel it? Should she ask Stacy to send it back to her? Should she tell her to throw it out? Or can she just leave it as it is? What do you think?

Regarding last week's question about the cake, Rav Zilberstein writes that he can cut it in half and fulfill his mitzvah. Please consult your Rav for any matters of practical Halacha.

## TOTAL DEDICATION

Purim is a time of Kimu Vekiblu, when the Jewish people joyously rededicated themselves to accepting and learning the Torah.

- Rav Yechezkel Abrahamsky lay deathly ill in Sha'arei Tzedek Hospital, barely responding. The hospital's director, Prof. Mayer, encouraged the talmidim who were staying with the Rav to speak divrei Torah near him so that he could hear them. Although they could see no visible reaction, whenever they would learn near him the monitors that he was hooked to indicated that these periods of learning

strengthened him and gave him energy.

- Rabbi Shimon Schwab related how he was once told by a young man, "At my school we are currently 'doing' Bava Kama." Rabbi Schwab replied, "When I went to yeshiva we did not 'do' Bava Kama but Bava Kama "did something to us."

- Reb Isser Zalman Meltzer would say about Rabbi Shach, "If you could see inside his veins, you would not see blood; you would see Rashbas and Rav Akiva Eigers!"

- Why are there so many kollelim nowadays?" the wealthy Mr. Tauber

asked Harav Aaron Leib Steinman, "There were never that many back in the good old days." "I would like to ask you a question," responded the Torah giant. "Why are there so many wealthy Jews nowadays? It never used to be like that. The answer to why there is much more wealth today is because there are so many kollelim that need to be supported. If there were less kollelim, there would be less wealthy Jews."

From In Their Shadow Volume Three, Five Great Leaders, Impact Volume Four, and Torah Leaders. reprinted with permission from Table Talk.)

### 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](mailto:rabbisilver.firstseder@gmail.com)

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*Seder*

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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](mailto:RabbiGreenspan@FirstSeder.org)

**Good Shabbos!**