

# 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 VAYAKHEL PEKUDEI – HOW TO GET IT DONE

*Rabbi Shlomo Caplan*

In Parshas Terumah, Hashem instructs Moshe to build the Mishkan and provides a detailed description of the structure and all its vessels. In Parshas Tetzaveh, the Torah describes the *bigdei kehuna* – priestly vestments – down to the last detail. In Parshas Vayakhel the Torah proceeds to describe at length the actual construction of the Mishkan, repeating every detail. Subsequently, Parshas Pekudei launches into a similar discussion of every detail of how the *bigdei kehuna* were made. Why didn't the Torah merely relate that the Mishkan, its vessels, and all the *bigdei kehuna* were made as described previously? What purpose was served by repeating every last detail?

Rav Avraham Pam answers that there is a vital and relevant message here. Everything was done precisely as instructed, down to the last detail. This stands in stark contrast to so many building projects today, that face delay after delay, numerous cost overruns, and a final product which doesn't look very much like what the planners had envisioned. The initial motivation was there, the plans and blueprints were there, but there was no proper follow through.

Or consider all the great intentions which are inspired by Elul and the Yamim Noraim.

People resolve to improve their davening, their Torah study, and refrain from speaking lashon hara. Unfortunately, by the time Chanukah comes around, they are back to where they started. No follow through.

Therefore, the Torah rewrites every detail of the Mishkan to emphasize that in regard to building the Mishkan, everything was done exactly "*ka'asher tzivah Hashem es Moshe* – precisely as Hashem had commanded Moshe." Indeed, this phrase is repeated eighteen times in Parshas Pekudei.

"How can a person translate plans, dreams and aspirations into solid results?" asks Rav Pam. "Only with the trait of *zerizus* (alacrity and zeal)." The Mesillas Yesharim (Chapter 7) states that there are two facets to *zerizus*: to begin a Mitzvah as soon as possible and to see it through to completion. Thus, we find in regard to ensuring the succession of power to his son Shlomo, Dovid Hamelech acted with utmost alacrity. When he was told by Bas-Sheva and Nosson Hanavi that Adoniyah had attempted to usurp the kingship, Dovid took swift action. He immediately summoned his servants to take Shlomo (who was only twelve years old) to Nachal Gichon, the traditional site where kings

were anointed, and proclaim, "Long live Shlomo Hamelech!" What was the big rush? The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 76:2) explains, "Many obstacles may yet arise from here to Gichon."

The Mesillas Yesharim (Chapter 9) notes that one major obstacle to acting with *zerizus* is unwarranted fears. Rav Pam suggests that this includes fear of failure. Many people have remarkable talents that remain unfulfilled simply due to fear of failure. How does it happen that everyone agrees that a certain project must be undertaken, but no one volunteers to take responsibility?

Conversely, the Ramban states that when Moshe called upon Bnai Yisrael to build the Mishkan, Bnai Yisrael came to Moshe and said, "I will do whatever my master has spoken." Although none of them had studied any of the crafts that were required or had experience, "their hearts were elevated in the ways of Hashem" (as per Divrei Hayamim 2 17:6). Indeed, the Mishkan was built with alacrity and confidence and that is why every single detail was done precisely "as Hashem had commanded Moshe."

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.

## THE RESCUER

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

We are soon going to begin the season of Pesach. Consider the following fascinating story.

Yehuda lived in Eretz Yisrael, and he had a large warehouse filled with wholesale food items. Every year he would sell his chametz to a kind Arab man with whom he had a relationship. One day Yehuda was driving on a road that he had never been on before. He took a wrong turn and realized that he was in an Arab village and everyone was staring at him. Suddenly his car broke down and people began to surround his car. Yehuda got out of the car and started to run. Sinister looking men began to chase him. Yehuda ran for his life and hid in an alley. Suddenly an Arab man jumped in front of him.

"I recognize you", the Arab man said. "You own that large food warehouse not far from here. Your life is in great danger. I will save you on one condition. My name is Khalil. I know the person that you sell your chametz to every year before your holiday of Pesach. He makes a nice profit from the sale. I will save you if you swear to me that for the rest of the time that you own that warehouse, you will sell the chametz to me instead".

Yehuda, fearing for his life quickly agreed to Khalil's bargain. True to his word, Khalil hid Yehuda in his home. A few hours later Khalil helped Yehuda fix his car and helped Yehuda return home safely. Yehuda kept his bargain and every year after that, he sold his chametz to Khalil, and paid him a nice profit afterwards for his efforts.

After ten years of this arrangement Yehuda tried to reach Khalil to sell his chametz before Pesach. Yehuda was unsuccessful in getting together with Khalil despite trying numerous times. Finally it was three days before Pesach and Yehuda was unable to get in touch with Khalil. He decided that with no other recourse he would sell his chametz to someone else.

But as he picked up the phone he stopped. He had sworn to Khalil that he would only sell it to him. How could he break his oath? He must try to find him at all costs. But on the other hand he thought, perhaps his oath was not really binding because it was only said under the threat to his

life. Yehuda wanted to know how much effort he had to put into tracking down Khalil in order to keep his oath. Was his oath even binding in the first place? A similar question was brought before Rav Zilberstein. What do you think? See Chashukei Chemed Pesachim Page 143.

Regarding last week's question about the *mishloach manos* tin, Rav Shuchatowitz answered as follows: The governing rule is that only the owner needs to be *tovel* and only the owner can be *tovel* the container. Hence, Chava bought the tin for her cousin and therefore does not need to be *tovel* it. The cousin on the other hand owns the tin and needs to be *tovel*. By sending her cousin this tin she transgressed *lifnei iver* since her cousin would not be *tovel*. Once it was done she should use common sense whether or not to tell her cousin what to do. Rav Tzvi Berkowitz answered as follows: If the tin is something that is typically used as a cookie jar, it needs *tevila*. If it is typically used only as a "package" for cookies, then it possibly may not. See Igros Moshe Y.D. chelek 2.

## HASHEM ALWAYS SENDS MESSAGES TO EVERYBODY; SOME PEOPLE OPEN UP THE MESSAGE AND OTHERS IGNORE IT by Rabbi Paysach Diskind

The power of inspiring a fellow Jew to become more connected to HaShem and to His Torah is not the exclusive talent and ability unique to Kiruv professionals. When any sincere Jew lives their life in the way HaShem expects them, they will inspire those around them. I would like to thank Eugene and Marina Vurgaftman for allowing me to share their story with our readers.

In 2004, when Eugene and Marina Vurgaftman decided it was time to move from Owings Mills to Pikesville, they engaged Dora to list their home. The market was slow and Dora was interested in getting people to see their home. They were approaching Memorial Day weekend so Dora mentioned that she would like to

post their house on Saturday. Eugene and Marina were relatively new to *shmiras* Shabbos but they knew that it would not be appropriate to sell their property on Shabbos. They told Dora not to post their house till after Shabbos. When she asked them what the problem was they explained to her that since Shabbos was the day upon which HaShem does not want us to do work, her efforts would certainly not bear fruit. She accepted their request and waited to post the house until Sunday. Remarkably, within that week they landed a contract, in spite of the slow market.

Several years later Eugene met Dora and asked how she was doing. She told him that she no longer works on Shabbos. She

explained that since that discussion about posting the house on Shabbos, she started checking the work she did on Shabbos to see if, in fact, those efforts bore no fruit. She noticed how accurate that assessment was. Nothing she did on Shabbos panned out. She decided that there must be something to this and began observing Shabbos which led to other *mitzvos* as well.

When I expressed my wonderment to Eugene he told me, "Rabbi Paysach, this is nothing extraordinary. HaShem always sends messages to everybody. Some people open up the message and others ignore it." (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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**Good Shabbos!**