

# 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

## PESACH – ASK ME A QUESTION

*Rabbi Shlomo Caplan*

Rav Chaim Soloveitchik asks, “How is this night of Pesach different from all other nights?” On every night of the year there is a Mitzvah to remember the Exodus from Mitzrayim. In what way is the Mitzvah to recite the Haggadah on Pesach night different?

One difference that Rav Chaim describes is the requirement to follow a question and answer format. This not only defines the procedure for the Seder, but it is also the framework of all productive *chinuch* (education).

A question puts the student into the center of the discussion. It is an interactive experience. The answer is not merely a monologue but a response to something the student feels he needs to know. In this way the student is more likely to properly digest and retain the information.

A question also helps to define the topic of discussion and set its parameters. It demands a response that is clear and accurate. In this way the question enlightens the teacher as

well as the student. Rabbi Chanina declared, “I have learned much from my teachers, even more from my colleagues, and more from my students than from anyone else.”

After Reish Lakish passed away, his teacher Rabbi Yochanan was inconsolable. Although his students attempted to ease his pain by extolling his lectures, Rabbi Yochanan exclaimed, “Are you like Reish Lakish? Whenever I would say anything, he would ask twenty-four questions, I would give twenty-four answers, and the topic was clarified.”

Indeed, the question-answer format strengthens the relationship between teacher and student. Through a sincere desire to arrive at a clear and true explanation, a sense of mutual respect and admiration develops. The Gemara in Maseches Kiddushin (30b) asserts that although the discussion may become heated and even contentious, at the conclusion there will be only love.

There is, however, one type of question which does not deserve an answer. That's the rhetorical question, for in truth it is not really a question; it is a statement. That is the question of the Rasha, the wicked son. It is a wise father or teacher who can distinguish the rhetorical question from the genuine one. Sometimes it is the choice of words. Sometimes it is the tone of voice. However, Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz insists that in reality, it takes a true discernment of the personality or the agenda of the asker. Thus, although the questions in the Haggadah of the wise son and the wicked son are extremely similar, the father knows who is who.

Whether at the Seder, in the classroom or during the daily interactions of parents and children, learning and spiritual growth take place in an atmosphere which encourages and welcomes sincere and thought-provoking questions.

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 PERFUMES

*Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner*

I hope that each of you are enjoying the inspiration of Pesach. The following question came up this year.

The Frankel family sold all of their chometz with their Rav. In their list itemized of chometz that they sold, they included several expensive bottles of perfume. The perfumes were put aside in a drawer and were not used for Pesach.

On Pesach, two-year-old Shoshana, ever curious, opened up the drawer. In the drawer, she found the bottles of perfume. When she figured out how to use it, she began to spray herself all

over with the perfume. A minute later Shoshana's father found her with a huge smile on her face smelling like the perfume factory from the perennial question in Dayeinu.

Shoshana's father wondered if they would have to notify the non-Jew who bought the chametz for the use of the perfume. Would they have to pay him for the use of the perfume because it belonged to him? On one hand, the non-Jew made a down payment on the chametz and he was the owner of the perfume. But on the other hand, the amount of perfume that was used

was relatively small and it was hard to put a price tag on what was used. In addition, the non-Jew did not yet pay in full for the chametz. Mr. Frankel brought this question to his Rav. Did they have to notify the non-Jew about the perfume that was used?

Regarding last week's question about whether a man could daven that the chametz he sold does not get burned, Rav Zilberstein writes that he should not daven for it as he is demonstrating that he wants the chametz. Please consult with your own Rav regarding any matters of practical halacha.

## MUCH BIGGER MOFSIM HAPPENED WITH THE STEIPLER EVERY DAY AND EVERY MOMENT!

One Chol HaMoed after the Steipler Rav's passing, Rav Chaim Kanievsky visited Rav Elyashiv for his regular Yom Tov visit, and he related two incidents that had occurred during the last Yom Kippur of the Steipler's life.

That year, the Steipler was very weak, so before Yom Kippur a bed was placed in a side room of the Lederman shul so that it would not be necessary for him to go home to rest. At the beginning of the night, however, it occurred to the Steipler that there was a possible halachic issue related to the shul's ownership of the room he was in (which had been owned in the past by Mrs. Lederman), and he left the room and remained in the shul the entire Yom Kippur night, without sleeping. The

Steipler stood on his feet for many long hours that Yom Kippur, and at some point, a bowl of water spilled on him accidentally. Concerned about violating the prohibition of sechitah (squeezing water from a garment), the Steipler held his foot in the air — standing on the other foot for two hours, until his sock dried. This was when he was already ill and weak, on a fast day, and after a night without sleep!

Upon hearing this, Rav Elyashiv responded, "It's true that standing with one's foot in the air for two whole hours is a mofes [marvel], but when talking about the Steipler, it's not necessary to tell stories like these, because much bigger mofsim

happened with the Steipler every day and every moment!

The biggest mofes of the Steipler was that he was tormented with yissurim, but he exerted himself to learn b'iyun, in-depth, and to understand every Tosafos." Holding his leg aloft was difficult," he added, "but that lasted for only two hours. Learning biyun when he was no longer able to do so — that was something he did every day, every hour, and that is far more difficult than standing with one's foot in the air."

From Rav Elyashiv, By Yehuda and Malky Heimowitz, page 238. Published By Artscroll Mesorah. 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!**  
**Pesach Kasher v'Sameach!**