

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 BEHAALOSCHA – THERE IS NO COMPLAINT DEPARTMENT

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

“The people took to complaining [and] it was evil in the eyes of Hashem; Hashem heard and became angry, and the fire of Hashem burned them and consumed the edge of the camp” (Bamidbar 11:1). The pasuk does not state the nature of the people’s complaints. Furthermore, the pasuk does not say they complained, rather it says that they were “*kemisonenim* – like complainers.” Additionally, we need to understand why Hashem became so angry.

I would like to suggest that the people became “like complainers” means that they themselves became constant complainers. Hashem resents complaining as it reflects on Him. “*Hakol bidei Shamayim chutz miyiras Shamayim*– Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for fear of Heaven” (Berachos 33b). Therefore, if one believes that there is something wrong with his lot, he is complaining about the way Hashem is treating him. Since Hashem is just in all His ways, this is unacceptable.

One might argue that they did not realize that Hashem was the cause of their bad fate and it should not be taken personally. This is even worse since they were denying *Hashgacha Pratis* – that Hashem controls everything. The Chafetz Chaim once asked someone how things were going with him. “It could be better,” came the reply. The Chafetz Chaim responded, “If it could be better, it would be better.” Complaining is not merely a negative response to misfortune, it smacks of heresy. We must never forget the One Who is the “cause above all causes”.

However, there is an alternative to complaining – a wonderful alternative! Tell your problem to Hashem and ask Him to solve it. It is a Mitzvah D’orysah too. The pasuk (also in our parsha) states, “When you go to wage war in your land against an enemy who oppresses you, you shall sound a *teru’ah* on the trumpets and you shall be recalled by Hashem, your G-d, and you shall be saved from your foes” (Bamidbar 10:9). Both the Rambam (Taanios 1:1) and the Ramban

(Hasagos L’seder Hamitzvos #5) derive from this pasuk an obligation to pray to Hashem when one is in distress for any reason. The Sefer Hachinuch (Mitzvah 433) states that one who is in distress and does not daven to Hashem to save him violates this *Mitzvas Asei*.

Sometimes we feel that whatever is bothering us is too trivial a matter to “bother” Hashem with it. But it is not too trivial to complain incessantly about it; or to become aggravated and agitated over it. The frustration might even provoke us to speak lashon hara, but it is still too trivial to “bother” Hashem. On the contrary, anything worth complaining about is definitely worth talking to Hashem about. More than that, we are obligated to daven to Him and beseech His assistance.

So the next time we have a problem, we should not resort to complaining, which won’t help anyway. We must go straight to the Source and talk to Hashem. He is actually waiting to hear from us.

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.

HUMBLLED BY HAGBAH

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Torah portion references the passuk, Vayehi Binsoa Haaron, (Bamidbar 10,38) that we quote when we take out the Torah to read in shul. This leads us to the following fascinating true story.

Before we begin this story it's important to know that it says in the Shulchan Aruch (124, 7) that if a person is talking in the middle of davening one is allowed to loudly rebuke them. (Go'arim Bo) This is true even if it causes the person some embarrassment. We see that in extreme cases it is permitted to embarrass somebody in order to stop them from talking during davening. This is because talking in shul is a severe aveira.

So back to our story. Ari enjoyed going to shul. But he also greatly enjoyed the social aspects of shul. Very often, Ari would talk to his friends throughout the prayer service. Behind Ari sat a man named Shimshon. Shimshon tried asking Ari to stop talking but Ari often rudely dismissed him. Ari was quite arrogant about it and he wasn't open to any reproof from his neighbor Shimshon.

One Shabbos, while Ari was still talking to his friends during the Torah reading, Ari was called up to the Torah for Chamishi, the fifth Aliyah. However, he was so engrossed in this conversation that he didn't hear the gabai call his name. Shimshon realized that he had an opportunity to perhaps teach Ari to never talk during the Torah reading again. Shimshon leaned over and told Ari, "They just called you up for Hagbah".

The shul was full, and between the men and women there were close to 500 people in the shul. Ari confidently strutted up to the bima as everyone watched. He went over to the Torah and picked it up as wide as he could, and loudly said "zos hatorah asher sam Moshe". Ari was quite impressed with himself, and was proud of the smooth and wide hagbah that he did.

But as soon as Ari picked up the Torah the whole synagogue opened up in an uproar "it's just chamishi!"

In a flash, Ari realized what happened. With the whole entire shul of 500 people watching, he did hagbah and lifted up the Torah when really it was the middle of

the Torah reading and he should have made an aliya, not done hagbah.

Ari realized that his error happened because he was distracted by talking during the Torah reading. He was extremely humbled by the experience. He truly took it to heart and never again spoke during the Torah reading.

Shimshon who caused this situation felt extremely conflicted afterward. On one hand, the embarrassment he caused to Ari stopped him from talking. But on the other hand, even if one is allowed to embarrass somebody to stop talking, are they allowed to go to this extent?

Shimshon sent this question to Rav Zilberstein, asking if he did the right thing or the wrong thing. What do you think? See Upiryu Matok Bereishis 294.

Regarding last week's question about the meal in the hotel, Rav Zilberstein wrote that it was not permitted for the man to take the meal. Even if it may go to the garbage eventually, the meal was the property of the hotel. The man should therefore pay the hotel for the food he ate.

No matter who the traveler is, young or old, observant or otherwise, when a Jew counts on HaShem, He answers

Last week, Rabbi Diskind shared a Parsha thought that highlighted the power of a prayer from a simple Jew who prays to HaShem out of total helplessness knowing that only He can answer. Yelena and Yefim, a family with whom Rabbi Diskind is very close, sent him an email reflecting their reaction to that Parsha thought.

Yelena grew up in the city of Kharkov, Ukraine. Although this was a very Jewish city, there were no observant Jews. All of her grandparents spoke Yiddish. For

most of them it was their mother tongue, even before Russian. This demographic was the result of the Communists anti-religion campaign. Given this background you will appreciate the import of Yelena's response.

"Many years ago, when I was 15 or 16 years old my dad was hospitalized with a massive heart attack. The doctors told my mom that they give a 5% chance for my dad to survive that massive heart attack. There was nothing else that I was able to do. Outside the hospital there

was a forest. I wandered in the forest around that hospital crying and praying to HaShem to save my dad. Not only did my dad survive but he lived another 31 more years after that! I never fully appreciated how much such strength was in my prayer."

Evidently, no matter who the traveler is, young or old, observant or otherwise, when a Jew counts on HaShem, He answers.

(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

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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!