

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
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PARSHAS SHELACH – YOU CAN KEEP YOUR TWO CENTS

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

The Torah lists the names of the men who were selected for the mission to spy out the Land of Canaan. The Ramban suggests they were listed in the order of their spiritual greatness. Since Calev is listed third and Yehoshua fifth, this gives us an idea of the high caliber of the men chosen for this mission. Additionally, the Torah refers to them as “*anashim*”. Rashi comments that the term *anashim* implies men of distinction who at the time of their appointment were *kesheirim* – upright. However, Rashi in pasuk 13:26 states that just as they returned with a negative approach, they also embarked on their expedition with a negative approach. This appears to contradict the previous statement that they were initially *kesheirim*.

The Steipler (Birchas Peretz) explains that originally when Moshe called upon them to serve, they were truly great people. They believed in Hashem and trusted Him to deliver Eretz Canaan into their hands despite any obstacles. However, once they assumed their new positions, it went to their heads, and they became haughty. They soon adopted the notion that their mission

was not merely a fact-finding pursuit, but they were also entitled to present their own opinions and feelings.

There is a strong inclination for those whom Hashem grants positions of power or authority to feel a sense of self-aggrandizement. It is this arrogance which will ultimately lead to their downfall. Another case in point: Rechavam, the son of Shlomo Hamelech, who ignored the advice of the elders to see himself as a servant of the people. His arrogant reaction caused him to lose control of his empire and the kingdom of Yisrael split in two; half was ruled by Rechavam and half by Yeravam. Conversely, the great leaders of Klal Yisrael, beginning with Moshe Rabbeinu down to Rav Moshe Feinstein, were all very humble people.

There is yet another very important message from the Steipler's approach. Very often people who were never asked for their advice and whose advice was not sought feel motivated to offer their opinion. Perhaps the most common form of such behavior is committed by many a journalist.

In a manner which is often very subtle, they are guilty of gross author intrusion – presenting their own views as facts that they are merely reporting. Through their tainted lenses and biases, they color facts and stories. The use of certain adjectives or metaphors can greatly slant the accuracy of their articles. An astute reader will always study the article with appropriate discernment.

On a community level there are also many examples of this behavior. The wealthy donor feels entitled to offer advice to the institution that he supports and to have his advice accepted. The parents of married children often feel that the young couple could use their unsolicited advice. Another example is the Mitzvah of *bikkur cholim*. This Mitzva has two parts: to inquire if there is anything one can do to help and to pray for the *choleh*. Offering unsolicited medical advice is not part of the Mitzvah and should not be presented unless it is requested.

Take-away: If no one asked for your advice, don't give it.

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 Unedited CDs

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha talks about how the Meraglim, the spies, violated the prohibition of lashon hara. This leads us to the following true story.

Rabbi Weiss was a very popular high school maggid shiur. His shiurim were renowned for their "geshmak" and excitement. One day Rabbi Weiss's talmidim decided that they would collect all of the shiurim from the past ten years and have the shiurim copied to CDs and then distributed to many of the shuls in the area and sent to all of the alumni.

The talmidim ordered 5000 labeled CDs. After the talmidim brought the completed boxes of CDs to Rabbi Weiss, he asked to listen to a few of the recordings at random. He listened for a few minutes and was very pleased. But then he came to a part of the class that disturbed him. In the recording, there was a question asked by a student. The class burst out laughing at the student's

question. In the recording Rabbi Weiss said, "Chaim Schwartz, I asked you many times not to make jokes in the middle of class. This cannot be tolerated, please pack up your things and leave the class".

Rabbi Weiss turned to another part of the CD from a different day's lecture. Once again there was a disruption, and Rabbi Weiss called out Chaim Schwartz by name and rebuked him for disturbing the class.

The truth was that Rabbi Weiss was very close to Chaim Schwartz. Chaim was a hyperactive student in high school but in twelfth grade, he turned his life around. He was now married with young children and he was known as a budding Torah scholar.

Rabbi Weiss wished those disruptions would have been edited out of the lectures. But now that 5000 CDs were already printed he was very torn. Was he

allowed to distribute the disks? On one hand, it would likely be embarrassing to Chaim to widely publicize his disruption and his public rebuke. But on the other hand, perhaps people would realize that it was a long time ago and things might be different now. Also, was Rabbi Weiss required to throw out all 5000 CDs to prevent a possible embarrassment? Also perhaps people would realize that it was done in the course of educating the students and it would not be lashon hara.

What do you think? Was he allowed to let the CDs go out? See Upiryo Matok Bamidbar page 186

Regarding last week's question about the Hagbah, Rav Zilberstein wrote that an individual is not permitted to take the initiative to embarrass someone to that great extent without the express permission of a Beis Din.

HE KNEW WHERE WE WERE COMING FROM, HE GOT THE CHALLENGES WE FACED OUT THERE, BUT OUR PLACE WAS INSIDE

Rav Dovid Trenk was a mechanech, a teacher who was able to connect with his talmidim, especially teenagers, on their level and understood their challenges and needs. His talmidim understood that their rebbi — the rebbi with the hoarse voice and exuberant nature and total dedication to learning Torah — was also their friend. It was a time when this wasn't taken for granted, and they reveled in it. And somehow, without compromising his own lofty levels, he let them know that he got their reality.

One morning he came into the classroom and wrote two words on the blackboard:

POT and LSD. The boys were shocked into silence at their rebbi's reference to the drugs, so popular on the streets of New York at the time. They knew precisely what the substances were, but how did he? And what did he mean by writing those letters on the board?

He waited for a bit, then innocently remarked, "Boys, you know what this means, of course you know. P.O.T stands for 'Put On Tefillin,' the way we start our day with such a rush of kedushah, being connected to the Ribbono shel Olam Himself. But sometimes people waste time, they push off davening, so we have

L.S.D, which stands for 'Let's Start Davening.' Don't delay. Use every minute of tefillah to really talk to HaShem."

The message, recalls a talmid, was clear. "Rebbi was telling us that he knew where we were coming from, he got the challenges we faced out there, but our place was inside; there was enough in the beis medrash to keep us from feeling lost."

(From Just Love Them, The Life and Legacy of Rabbi Dovid Trenk, By Rabbi Yisroel Besser, 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



For more information or to register for First Seder, contact Rabbi Uri Greenspan at 732-407-3178 or

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Good Shabbos!