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 VA'EIRA – IT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAY . . .

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

Hashem instructs Moshe to tell Bnai Yisrael that He has heard their cries of distress and He will take them out of Mitzrayim. Therefore, He commands Moshe, "Go speak to Paroh, King of Mitzrayim [tell him to] send Bnai Yisrael from his land." Moshe responds with a *kal vachomer*, "Behold Bnai Yisrael have not listened to me, so how will Paroh listen to me? And I have sealed lips" (Shemos 6:11-12). In Pasuk 29 Hashem tells Moshe, "Speak to Paroh, King of Mitzrayim, all that I speak to you." Again, Moshe responds, "Behold I have sealed lips, so how will Paroh listen to me?" However, this time Moshe does not repeat the *kal vachomer*. Why not?

Rav Chaim Kanievsky asserts that Moshe originally failed to understand the nature of his mission. The Gemara (Makkos 11a) states that when the Torah uses the term *"dibbur"* it is referring to stern or harsh speech, while the term *"amirah"* refers to a soft, pleasant tone. Initially, when Hashem spoke to Moshe (Shemos 6:6) he instructed him, "***Emor*** *livnai Yisrael* – speak to them softly." However, the Torah relates, "***Vayedaber*** *Moshe kein el Bnai Yisrael"* – he spoke to them in harsh tones and that is why they did not listen. Thus, Hashem explained to Moshe how he erred, as the pasuk states, "And He commanded them regarding Bnai Yisrael". Rashi explains that He commanded them to guide Bnai Yisrael gently and be patient with them. Now Moshe understood why Bnai Yisrael were unwilling to accept his words. The problem was with **his** approach, not with **their** attitude. Thus, the *kal vachomer* no longer made sense.

However, it is noteworthy that at Har Sinai the opposite approach was required. Rashi (Shemos 19:4) explains the words *"Vesagaid Livnai Yisrael* – You shall convey to Bnai Yisrael" that Moshe should speak firmly and harshly about the severity of the Mitzvos. Why the change of approach? When Bnai Yisrael were suffering terribly and feeling hopeless this was no time for harsh words. They needed encouragement. At Har Sinai, after their miraculous redemption and their rising up through the forty-nine levels of purity, they had the fortitude to hear and commit to the strict demands of the Torah. Nevertheless, in regard to addressing the women, Moshe was told *"Ko somar Levais Yaakov* – Speak softly to Bnos Yisrael." The best approach to convey Mitzvah observance to women, even when they are on a lofty level, is gently and pleasantly.

How often does it occur that we have the right idea but fail to get our message across? Whether speaking to our spouse, our children, our friends or our students, are we focusing on our personal perspective or on what they are prepared to hear? Here are a few points to ponder.

- Is the idea that you want to communicate for your benefit or theirs?
- Have you tried to get this point across before? What was the reaction?
- What do you know about this person's temperament?
- How can you demonstrate that your idea will benefit them?

At the end of the day: It's not what you say, but how you say 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 LIGHT RAIL

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha talks about how the dust of the ground was transformed into lice for the plague of kinnim. This leads us to the following true story.

Israel's light rail system was an exciting and transformational project. Construction was underway in many parts of the country. The light rail was set to be built adjacent to the city of Ramat Gan. The construction went on every day. Unfortunately, the construction brought up an enormous amount of soil and dirt. The residents of Ramat Gan who lived on Hakablan Street lived closest to the construction site. Whenever anyone on the street would open their windows, large amounts of dust would go into their apartments. It was the summer and keeping all the windows closed was not feasible. The residents were really suffering and frustrated. Many people of the Ramat Gan community began to object to the construction project because the dust was so problematic.

In response to the uproar, the construction company made an announcement that a new, complimentary air conditioner unit would be allotted to each apartment on Hakablan Street in order to help them for the summer. The air conditioning units would cool down the apartments during the summer, and they would also filter out the dust. The company said it was the least they could do for the inconvenience and frustration of the residents. In a short time, hundreds of brand new air conditioner units were distributed, one to each of the apartments on the street.

Leah lived in one of the Hakablan street apartments. She didn't own the apartment but rented it from Mrs. Green. Leah, like everyone else on her street, got one of the brand new air conditioning units from the construction company.

About a year after the light rail construction in Ram Gan was completed, Leah found a new apartment, which she planned to buy, in a new city. Mrs. Green, Leah's landlord, came to say goodbye to Leah on the day she moved out. Mrs. Green saw the air conditioner being loaded into the moving truck.

"Is that the air conditioner that was given by the construction company because of the light rail dust?" Mrs. Green asked Leah.

"Yes," Leah answered. "It works really well and I'm grateful that they gave these free air conditioners to all the residents on the street. It is really the least they could do for all the suffering we endured during the constriction. Before the air conditioners were given out we had so much dust in our lungs".

"I don't think you can take that," Mrs. Green said quietly. "The construction company gave one to each apartment. You can't take the unit with you when you leave", Mrs. Green said.

"What do you mean?" Leah replied. "It was given to the resident of the apartment, not to the apartment itself.

"I don't agree. It was given to the owners of the apartments and you were not the owner."

They both agreed to bring this question to a Rav. What do you think? Can Leah keep the air conditioner? On one hand, you can argue that it should go to the one who actually lived there and who actually suffered from the dust. In that case, it should go to Leah. But on the other hand, perhaps they were given to the owners of the apartments, and in that case it should go to Mrs. Green.

What do you think? See Upriyo Matok Shemos 112

Regarding last week's question about the parking lot, Rav Zilberstein wrote that he should not allow people to park there on Shabbos. This is because it gives the impression that he doesn't care that Shabbos is being violated.

I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO BE SELF-CONSCIOUS

When Rav Yosef Tendler first came to Ner Yisrael to teach, he applied for a twelfth grade position. Rav Tendler, who had never stood before a classroom to teach, was told By Rav Yaakov Weinberg to prepare three days of shiurim for the twelfth grade.

When he arrived in Baltimore, however, Rabbi Weinberg asked him to present his sample shiur to the tenth grade instead. Rav Tendler was taken aback by this, but didn't question Rabbi Weinberg. He delivered the shiur, yet no one from the administration had come to the classroom to observe him. He was perturbed because he had left his wife with two young children and traveled so far for a trial lesson that was seemingly ignored. He was also disturbed by having been given the tenth grade class to teach, although he was applying for the twelfth grade position.

Rav Tendler discussed the matter with Rabbi Gershon Weiss who was similarly puzzled. Rabbi Weiss spoke with Rabbi Weinberg, who reassured him that there was nothing to worry about.

The next day was a repeat of the first. Rav Tendler was scheduled to meet after that second shiur with Rabbi Weinberg. Before they spoke, Rabbi Weinberg took him to the tenth grade room, and showed him a vent in the wall.

Rabbi Weinberg then explained his mysterious behavior, "That vent goes straight to the administrative offices. I knew that you had never been in front of a class before, and didn't want you to be self-conscious. To alleviate that pressure, we chose the tenth grade room so that I could sit behind the wall and listen to every word."

Rav Tendler was hired and the rest is history.

Reb Nachum Velvel Dessler inherited his father's (Rav Eliyahu Dessler) power of speech, especially his power of vivid description. He was once asked to speak at a simchah after a distinguished talmid chacham from Vilna. The preceding speaker had spoken very poorly. Reb Nachum Velvel absolutely refused to speak after the Rav, despite numerous entreaties. He later explained to his family that he feared that he would embarrass the previous speaker.

From I Am Your Servant, By Rabbi Akiva Tendler, and From Rav Dessler, By Rabbi Yonason Rosenblum, Both published by Artscroll Mesorah and reprinted with permission from Table Talk.)

Tehillim – Life Lessons

Join more than 1100 people around the world and learn the meaning, depth and historical context of each Perek of Tehillim. This week we continue with פרק ה "ואני ברוב חסדך" - Appreciating the opportunity to enter Hashem's house! The 10-15 minute audio shiur is sent out every Sunday via WhatsApp. Please contact R' Greenspan to join.

Kli Yakar Chabura

The Kli Yakar Chabura will meet Friday night at 8:30 PM in Rabbi Greenspan's home, 113 Grassmere Road, Bala Cynwyd.

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NOW IN OUR 10TH YEAR!

For more information or to register for First Seder, contact Rabbi Uri Greenspan at 732-407-3178 or RabbiGreenspan@FirstSeder.org

Good Shabbos!