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 EMOR – GUARDING THE MITZVOS

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

"You shall guard my Mitzvos and perform them" (Vayikra 22:31). The Meforshim note the seeming ambiguity of guarding Mitzvos. Additionally, it would suffice to state, "You shall perform my Mitzvos."

Rashi quotes the Toras Kohanim that "guard" refers to Mishnah – learning about the Mitzvos, which is a prerequisite to performing them.

Rav Chizkiyahu Eliezer Kahan suggests another interpretation of "guarding" Mitzvos. We find that when Yaakov heard Yosef's dream about the sun, the moon and eleven stars bowing down to him, the Torah states, "His father guarded the matter" (Bereishis 37:11). Rashi interprets the term guarded as anticipated. Yaakov believed that the dream was true and that he and the other sons would one day bow down to Yosef. Thus, Yaakov guarded and anticipated the fulfillment of the dream.

In our pasuk we can render guarded in the same connotation. The Torah exhorts us not only to perform Mitzvos, but also to look forward to doing them. This means pausing before we actually do the Mitzvah to contemplate it. Why is this Mitzvah so important? What is its reward? How will it bring me closer to Hashem? By this we can create some degree of anticipation which will enable us to relish doing the Mitzvah and not view it as a burden.

Rav Shach offers yet a different interpretation. To guard the Mitzvah is to protect it. We should not be preoccupied merely with our own performance of the Mitzvah; we should also care about the Mitzvah being performed by others. We must think of Mitzvos as Hashem's will, that should be performed by all Jews. This is also the implication of "*Veshamru Bnai Yisrael es Hashabbos*." Bnai Yisrael must guard the Shabbos and prevent its violation. This is accomplished by our ability to influence others. Whether we can encourage people to learn Torah, daven or keep Shabbos it is all part of our obligation to guard the Mitzvos. This does not refer only to being *mekareiv* non-observant Jews, but also to inspiring frum Jews to strengthen their Mitzvah observance.

In truth all three interpretations are very relevant. As Rashi explains, we must learn the halachos of the Mitzvos so that we can perform them properly. Rav Kahan's *pshat* is so vital to enhancing our attitude toward Mitzvos and serving Hashem *besimcha* – with joy. And Rav Shach's approach reminds us of the intrinsic bond that all Yidden share. We must not merely do the Mitzvos, we must guard them too.

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.

MATCHMAKER'S MATCH

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Our Sages teach that Ben Shemona Esrei Lechupa. A Man should start to look to get married at the age of 18. The halacha teaches that a man can delay this up until age 25 if he wants to continue to pursue his Torah learning. The Baal Haturim in this week's Parsha says that we find a remez, an allusion, to the concept of a man starting to look to get married at 18.

In the context of talking about the Kohen Gadol the Torah says:

והוא אשה בבתוליה יקח באיג:

Simply, this means that a kohen should marry a besula, a woman who was not yet married. But on a deeper level, the word והוא is the gematria of 18. Therefore the verse can be read as "At 18, a man should take a maiden for a wife". The mitzvah to get married leads us to the following true story.

Gavriel was a wealthy man. He had a cousin, Shoshana, who had no parents and he wanted to help her get married and start a family. He set up a meeting with Mrs. Katz, a local shadchan. "Mrs. Katz", he began, "as you know, the going rate for shadchanus, (the fee that one pays to a shadchan after a successful shidduch), is $2000. But my Shoshana is really a very special girl. She is extremely frum and she needs a very special, unique boy. She needs a real yarei shomayim (G-d fearing person). If you find a real yarei shomayim for Shoshana I will pay you double the shadchunus, $4000.

Mrs Katz was excited about the prospect and she pledged to get to work right away. She looked into her files and found a young man who she thought might fit the bill. The young man's name was Chaim. Mrs. Katz met with Chaim and she was impressed with how Chaim constantly talked about his strong emunah in Hashem, and how he wanted to devote his life to bringing nachas to Hashem. To Mrs. Katz he seemed like a real yarei shomayim. Mrs. Katz then did a bit of research. She asked Chaim's friends if they would consider Chaim a yarei shomayim and they each enthusiastically affirmed that he was a yarei shomayim.

With those facts in hand, Mrs. Katz proceeded to arrange the shidduch. Shoshana went out with Chaim once. Then again, and then again. The two seemed extremely happy with each other and before long, Chaim asked Shoshana to marry him. Chaim and Shashana were ecstatic. Mrs Katz was extremely pleased. She was also looking forward to getting the special bonus for the shadchanus.

Sure enough, Gavriel appeared at Mrs. Katz's home with an envelope. and handed it to her. Mrs. Katz opened it up and saw $2000. "Ahem", she cleared her throat. "Thank you so much for this. But I thought we agreed that you would give me, double, $4000, if I found Shoshana a yarei shomayim. I think it's clear that I fulfilled my side of the bargain. Look how happy she is with Chaim".

Gavriel responded, "Yes I was greatly hoping that Chaim was a yarei shomayim. But I have been keeping my eye out on him. I have been watching him and I see that very often he comes late to davening . And very often he rushes to the end of davening. To me, that is a clear sign that he is not a yarei shomayim. I look at people's actions, not what they say."

But Mrs. Katz retorted, "You can't make that assumption. I asked all his friends and they all said he is a yarei shomayim. I spoke to him and his yiras shomayim practically oozed out of him. How can you judge him because he came late to davening? How can you judge what is really going on in his heart? But Gavriel said, "To me, coming late to davening is a sign of a lack of yiras shomayim and that is what I meant when I made my deal with you. If he does not come on time to davening that does not meet my definition of yarei shomayim and therefore I am sadly unable to pay the bonus".

Both Mrs. Katz and Gavirel agreed to bring the question to a Rav. What do you think? Should Mrs. Katz get the bonus because on the outside it appeared that Chaim was a yarei shomayim and that is the best that anyone can really do? Or should she not get it, because it was clear that the metric for yarei shomayim in Gavriel's eyes, was coming on time to davening? It was clear that that is what he intended. Or can we argue that we don't care about the definition that Gavriel had in his heart, the main thing is what the term Yarei Shomayim means objectively?

See Upiryo Matok Bereishis Page 194

Regarding last week's question about the office summit, Rav Zilberstein answered based on a similar psak from Rav Elyashiv, that if it is a one time thing, then it would be better to get the cheaper hechsher and use the money for something that might have a deeper impact.

To clarify the answer shared last week about the driver paying the fine, the reason why the driver had to pay the fine and not the others, is because for the others it was a "gramma rechoka" but he was the one who directly caused the fine.

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To sponsor the 1st Seder Weekly, please contact office@firstseder.org. For more information or to register for First Seder, contact Rabbi Uri Greenspan at RabbiGreenspan@FirstSeder.org or 732-407-3178.

Good Shabbos!