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 VAYECHI – MALCHUS SHAMAYIM

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

"Yaakov called upon his sons and said, "Gather together and I will tell you what will befall you at the End of Days" (Bereishis 49:1). The Gemara (Pesachim 56a) states that Yaakov had intended to tell his sons when Mashiach would come to redeem Bnai Yisrael, however the Shechina departed from him, and he was forced to change the subject. He said to them that perhaps the Shechina left because not all his sons were worthy. They replied, "Shema Yisrael, Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem Echad – Hear [our father] Yisrael, Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is One." Yaakov then responded, "Baruch Sheim Kevod Malchuso L'olam Va'ed – Blessed be the name of His glorious Kingdom for ever and ever!"

What exactly did Yaakov suspect might have been lacking in their Emunah? Also, what did Yaakov mean by his response of "Baruch Sheim…"? And lastly, why do we add this sentence to our recitation of Shema? I would think that since it is not really part of the Shema, it would constitute an interruption.

Rav Meir Tzvi Bergman explains that the pasuk of Shema is not merely an expression of Emunah, but also – and perhaps primarily – an acceptance of Malchus Shamayim – Hashem's absolute Kingship and control over all of the world. This is why the Shema is counted as one of the ten pesukim of Malchios (Kingship) on Rosh Hashanah. However, throughout our long and bitter galus, when our enemies and tormenters have persecuted us, tortured us and killed millions of us, it is often difficult and sometimes almost impossible to perceive that Hashem indeed runs the world and is the ultimate King. Rebbi Akiva stands out as one such person who did perceive Hashem's sovereignty even during the horrific times. Indeed, the Gemara states that when the Romans were torturing Rebbi Akiva to death, he accepted Malchus Shamayim by reciting the Shema.

Yaakov knew that the End of Days would be a painful period for Klal Yisrael before the actual Redemption would take place. This will help us understand why the Shechina departed, and Yaakov could not reveal the keitz to his sons. He questioned his sons about their Emunah, and they responded, "Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad." Yaakov's reaction was that this was sufficient for now, when there is no persecution, but not for the End of Days. You must be prepared to accept His Malchus under all circumstances. That is what he meant when he told them, "May the Name of His glorious Kingdom be blessed for ever and ever."

Therefore, when we recite the Shema it is appropriate to add, "Baruch Sheim.." declaring that we are prepared to acknowledge His Malchus not merely now, but at all times and in all situations. May we all merit to be relieved of chevlei Mashiach - the birth pangs of Mashiach – and greet him bimheira beyamenu!

You can bring a zechus refua shelaima for Sandy Bruck - Shalom ben Tila Leah – and for all who need a refua sheleima 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.

CAT & BIRD

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha compares Yehuda to a lion, Yisachar to a donkey, Dan to a snake, Naftali to a gazelle, and Binyamin to a wolf. Here is a true story about two animals. Basya was walking down the street near her house. She saw a very beautiful bird standing on the grass. She stopped to look at it when she suddenly saw a large orange cat nearby, crouching and looking like it was about to pounce. It became clear to Basya that the cat was about to attack the bird. It was either going to eat the bird or at least attack it to practice its hunting skills. Basya's first impulse was to scare away the cat to protect the bird. "How mean of the cat to attack such a beautiful bird," she thought to herself. It would be a mitzvah of preventing tzar balei chayim, preventing pain to the bird. But then she wondered if perhaps scaring away the cat would be the wrong thing. She would be causing harm to the cat both by scaring it away and by denying it its ability to eat. But then she thought that the cat could get food from other sources, like from garbage cans or from kind people. The cat didn't have to kill a magnificent bird to eat, so maybe it was the right thing to scare away the cat. She was unsure what to do, so she didn't do anything. This question was later sent to Rav Zilberstein. What is the Torah perspective in such a case? Should you scare away the cat to protect the bird, or should you be passive and let the cat hunt for its food? See Upiryo Matok Shemos 49 Answer to last week's question Regarding last week's question about the burned wall, Rav Zilberstein said that it would be better not to remember the miracle with something that is not respectful to the shul. In shul, we don't even do the regular zecher lachurban of leaving an amah unplastered. Therefore, it would be best to remember the miracle with a Seudas Hoda'ah. See Upiryo Matok Shemos 58

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IS MOSHIACH COMING THIS YEAR?

Reb Yaakov Kamenetsky was a Rav in Toronto from the late 40's into the early 50's. In 1950 a rumor was being spread that Moshiach was coming that year. One of Reb Yaakov's constituents approached him with the following question. "Tell me, Rebbe, is Moshiach really coming this year?" Reb Yaakov asked him what difference it made whether Moshiach came this year or a different year. The man explained that he owns a retail store and because of his situation he is unable to close his store on Shabbos. "But if Moshiach is coming this year, I do not want Moshiach to catch me with the store open on Shabbos." Therefore, if he knew Moshiach was coming he would shut the store on Shabbos. Reb Yaakov responded to him that the chances of Moshiach coming this year are the same as his coming last year or next year. Reb Yaakov explained to me that although this fellow would have closed his store on Shabbos for the entire year, nevertheless, if Moshiach would not have come, after the year he would return to opening the store on Shabbos and would have lost his hope of the arrival of Moshiach.

Now, he has trust in the arrival of Moshiach and is even concerned about being caught as a mechalel Shabbos! As told to Paysach Diskind, Reprinted with permission from Table Talk.

1st Seder

A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

You are invited to join us for Mishnayos Meseches Nida. The shiur meets at LMS upstairs 9:20-9:55 M-Th.

The Maharal shiur will take place this Motzai Shabbos 8:45 at Rabbi Greenspan's house 113 Grasmere Rd. We will IYH be starting the second Perek of Tiferes Yisroel.

Join us for the Dirshu Mishna Berura shiur as we begin Hilchos Tefila. The shiur, given by Rabbi Greenspan, meets 10:00 - 10:40 M-F.

First Seder Weekly Schedule

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	Morning Track 1: Shiurim				
9:20 AM – 9:55 AM	Mishnayos Tohoros *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Mishnayos Tohoros *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Mishnayos Tohoros *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Mishnayos Tohoros *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Parsha HaShevua *(R' Yehoshua Levy)*
10:00 AM – 10:40 AM	Gemara Gittin *(R' Daniel Baltuch)*	Gemara Gittin *(R' Daniel Baltuch)*	Gemara Gittin *(R' Daniel Baltuch)*	Gemara Gittin *(R' Daniel Baltuch)*	Gemara Gittin *(R' Daniel Baltuch)*
10:45 AM – 11:25 AM	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar *(R' Uri Greenspan)*
11:30 AM – 12:10 PM	Practical Timely Halacha *(R' Mordechai Shain)*	The Life and Torah of our Leaders *(R' Dovid Gross)*	Biur Tefilla *(R' Yoel Zeffren)*	Sefer Tehillim *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa - Parsha *(R' Uri Greenspan)*
12:15 PM – 1:00 PM	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa - Parsha *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa - Parsha *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa - Parsha *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa - Parsha *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	

To sponsor the 1st Seder Weekly, please contact office@firstseder.org.

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

Gut Shabbos!