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

SHABBOS HAGADOL – A FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

There are numerous explanations why the Shabbos before Pesach is called Shabbos Hagadol. The most well-known is the explanation of the Tur Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 430). On the tenth of Nissan, which was also Shabbos, Bnai Yisrael took lambs in preparation for the Korban Pesach. Although the Egyptians considered these animals to be deities, miraculously, they stood by idly without attacking the Jews: they did not even protest. Therefore, we commemorate this miracle every year on the Shabbos before Pesach. (The *meforshim* address the question why this event is celebrated on Shabbos and not on the tenth of Nissan, which is the day of the month that was designated by Hashem to take the lambs.)

However, Rav Moshe Feinstein offers a completely different approach. He notes that the Yom Tov of Pesach commemorates the great miracles of Yetzias Mitzrayim which demonstrated clearly that Hashem is in total control of the world. The Ramban cites a number of pesukim that emphasize this very point. (See Ramban's commentary to Shemos 13:16). Even Paroh's sorcerers acknowledged that the plagues were "the finger of G-d" (Shemos 8:15).

However, belief in Hashem has an even more vital component than just acknowledging His mastery over the world. It demands that we view Him as the Creator and the only Creator. He is the One who created the world ex-nihilo – *yesh mei'ayin*. The Rambam in the beginning of his epic Mishneh Torah (Yesodei Hatorah 1:1) states clearly that our belief in Hashem requires that we must recognize Him as the Creator of everything. This. indeed, this is the message of Shabbos.

In contrast there were pagan societies that believed that Hashem manages and maintains everything in the world, yet they thought that some other god created the world. Some philosophers believed in eternal matter, and yet others propose a spontaneous Big Bang theory.

In the piyyutim that are said on Shabbos Hagadol there is a remarkable phrase: "Before they were freed You gave them the gift of Shabbos." This implies that before they could celebrate the miracles of their redemption which demonstrated Hashem's absolute control over the universe, they needed to absorb the message of Shabbos: "Bnai Yisrael shall keep the Shabbos…It is an eternal sign between Me and Bnai Yisrael that in six days Hashem made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested" (Shemos 31:16,17).

In his commentary on Parshas Tazria, Rav Moshe cites the Medrash (Vayikra Rabba 27:10) that one of the reasons a Bris Milah takes place on the eighth day is in order for the child to pass through a Shabbos. Rav Moshe explains this rationale with basically the same approach. Before the child can be entered into the Covenant of Avraham Avinu, his father must realize that the first lesson in chinuch should be the theme of Shabbos. One cannot serve Hashem unless he believes that Hashem created the universe.

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

TOIVELED

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

As we prepare for Pesach, many of us will buy new pots and dishes. We know there is a mitzvah to toivel new vessels in a mikvah to sanctify them before use. This leads us to the following true story:

Chanah was visiting Miami, an area with a significant Jewish population, and went to the store, Burlington. In the clearance section, she found a box filled with pans and metal utensils. She wanted to purchase the box but noticed that the word "toiveled" was written in permanent marker on the box. It seemed that someone had bought the box, toiveled it, and then returned it. Chanah wanted to know if she could rely on the text that said it was toiveled.

On one hand, why would anyone write "toiveled" if they didn't actually do it? Perhaps she can buy it and not toivel it at all. But on the other hand, maybe someone toiveled it but didn't do it properly. In that case she should toivel it like any normal purchase. Another question was, if she would toivel it, should she toivel it with a bracha? Perhaps If she did make a bracha and it had already been toiveled, it would be a wasted bracha. So, there were three options: to toivel it like a regular vessel, to toivel without a bracha, or to simply rely on the words on the box, and not toivel at all. What do you think she should do? This question was asked to Rav Tzvi Berkowitz.

Regarding last week's question about the candy sale, Rav Tzvi Berkowitz answered that since the girl is only 10 years old, her vows are not binding. Therefore, in this case, she can drink the soda.

AWARE OF HIS SURROUNDINGS

Rabbi Moshe Juravel was known throughout the Baltimore community as the one to contact if you need a Megillah reading for one person or for a tzibur. He was committed that no Jew should be left behind. He trained many people to lain and he and his mitzvah men made sure that every person heard the Megillah by night and by day.

Mr. Morris Baronoff had suffered three debilitating strokes from which he became uncommunicative for his five final years of life. Although the doctors encouraged his wife to place him in a nursing home, Mrs. Baronoff refused because she was convinced that her husband was still comprehending his environment.

For five years Mrs. Baronoff asked Rabbi Juravel to blow shofar for him on Rosh Hashanah and read the Megillah for him on Purim and of course he did.

One year when Mrs. Baronoff called before Purim, R' Moshe decided that it would be best if he went himself to lain rather than sending one of his mitzvah men. He knew that Mrs. Baronoff appreciated his personal touch. As R' Moshe walked in that morning with Megillah in hand, he approached Mr. Baronoff who was propped up in bed and in a loud cheerful voice wished him a freilichin Purim. Mr. Baronoff returned his greeting with a blank empty stare. Pretending that he was speaking to someone who was actually aware of what he was saying, R' Moshe continued "I am now going to read the Megillah for you. First I will recite the brachos for the reading."

As he began reading the Megillah R' Moshe thought to himself "Maybe the others were right; Mr. Baronoff does not even realize that I am here reading the Megillah." However he continued reading. When he reached the first mention of Haman, R' Moshe thought he heard a tapping sound. He looked up and saw Mr. Baronoff's right index finger gently tapping on the table in a light rhythmic beat! "No!" thought R' Moshe "Surely this is a coincidence." He continued reading and as he soon reached the next Haman he once again saw Mr. Baronoff tapping his finger. He could not believe his eyes, Mrs. Baronoff was right! He was totally aware of his surroundings. R' Moshe stopped for a moment and with a tear in his eye went on reading the rest of the Megillah.

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Daf HaShavua

Chabura is learning Kesubos Daf ל"

Have you joined the new Mussar shiur? We are learning the sefer Pele Yoetz. Please contact Rabbi Greenspan to join the daily 5 minute shiur.

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.

1st Seder

A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

First Seder Weekly Schedule

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Morning Track 1: Shiurim					
9:20 AM – 9:55 AM	Mishnayos Tevul Yom *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Mishnayos Tevul Yom *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Mishnayos Tevul Yom *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Mishnayos Tevul Yom *(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)*	

Bain Hazemanim Schedule

Bain Hazemanim will run from Sunday, August 1st through Sunday, August 16th. We will resume on Monday, April 17.

***Maharal Shiur* will not meet this Motzei Shabbos.**

Good Shabbos – Chag Kasher v'Sameach !