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 NASSO – AN EYEWITNESS REACTS

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

This week's Parsha describes the procedure of *mei sotah* – the ritual water administered to a woman suspected of adultery. If a husband has sufficient grounds to suspect that his wife has been unfaithful, he may bring her to the Bais Hamikdash. If she confesses to having committed this sin, she must accept a divorce from her husband and her punishment will remain in the hands of Hashem. If she insists that she is innocent, she must drink the *mei sotah.* If she really did commit adultery, then upon consuming the water she will die a very unpleasant death.

Rashi cites the Gemara (Sotah 2b) which asks, "Why did the Torah place the laws of *nazir* right after the portion of *sotah?* To imply that one who sees the degradation of the unfaithful wife when she meets her terrible fate should become a *nazir,* thereby foreswearing the imbibing of wine." Rashi (ad. loc.) explains that too much wine is often a catalyst to promiscuity.

The Meforshim are perplexed: "Why, of all people, should the one who witnessed the grave consequences of sin have to take such extreme measures to avoid the temptation to sin?" Here are two different approaches.

The first approach maintains that this person is really not being singled out as needing any greater protection from falling prey to temptation than anyone else. The Torah is teaching us a very important lesson. There are times when we all experience remarkable inspiration and great spiritual arousal. However, these very special and meaningful emotions tend to dissipate very quickly. The way to concretize these strong feelings is to invest in a major decision and undertaking. One must make a resolution to accept a certain mode of behavior which will help to keep him in check. Therefore, the one who has taken the lesson of the *sotah* to heart should attempt to assure that this message remains with him by becoming a *nazir.*

There are two very common and practical examples of employing this concept. The first is the Yom Kippur experience. This phenomenal day uplifts us in almost a supernatural way and imbues us with many good intentions. But we all know how quickly these intentions can evaporate. What can we do? Make *kabbalos* – resolutions outlining the steps we will take to improve and thereby accomplish a lasting Teshuva. And write them down! (A word of caution: overly ambitious resolutions are generally doomed to failure and often lead to retrogression. So, we must be careful and judicious.)

The other example is when we slip up and do an *aveirah.* We must do Teshuva. But no matter how bad we feel and how much we regret our foolish actions, we must do something concrete. Teshuva requires a commitment, a practical resolution to prevent a repeat performance

However, there is another even deeper explanation of the Gemara in Sotah. According to this approach this person is indeed being singled out. Exposure to illicit behavior, even when it is framed in a very negative setting or when it is decried and disparaged, is still exposure. Thus, the person who witnessed the *sotah's* fate came face to face with someone who committed a very serious *aveirah.* He must therefore take action to make sure that it doesn't rub off on him.

The practical application of this might be literally before your eyes: television, internet and movies and even radio. Those who claim that these venues merely mirror the real world, are not living in the real world. The truth is that, to no small extent, the real world mirrors them. Indeed, this is the psychology of copycat crimes. Although most people are not inclined to copy a murder, there are plenty of *aveiros* and inappropriate things on these venues that many people do copy. Caveat emptor!

The message of the Gemara resonates on two levels. If you want an experience to endure, concretize it in a resolution. If you specifically don't want some sleazy event to strike a chord with you, then don't experience it to begin with. And if you already did, climb fast to higher ground.

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.

THE KIMPETURIN HOME

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha, Nasso, teaches us that if the Sotah is found innocent, she will be blessed with a new child. This leads us to the following true story.

Sarah served as the administrator for a Kimpeturin Home, a convalescent home dedicated to supporting new mothers during their postpartum recovery. One day, Sarah received an anonymous phone call. It was from a blocked number, providing no indication of the caller's identity. The caller, a woman, queried, "Is there a Mrs. Cohen staying with you? I've heard she's facing financial difficulties, and I'd like to cover the cost of her entire stay."

Sarah quickly checked the registry and confirmed, "Yes, we do have a Mrs. Cohen, but her stay has been fully paid for." This news seemed to upset the caller, who hung up abruptly.

However, only two minutes later, Sarah discovered her error. Upon inspecting the ledger more closely, she realized there were two Mrs. Cohens at the Kimpeturin home. While one had indeed paid in full, the other had not. It dawned on Sarah that the latter was probably the woman the anonymous benefactor had intended to help. Due to Sarah's mistake, this woman had potentially missed out on a $2,000 gift.

Regret flooded Sarah. She questioned whether she was obligated to cover the cost herself, given she was the one who had caused the woman to lose the benefit. On one hand, it was an innocent mistake, and she didn't cause Mrs. Cohen the loss, she just accidentally prevented her from getting a benefit. But on the other hand, she did cause a needy person to lose 2,000 dollars.

What do you think? See Upiryo Matok Shemos Page 305

Regarding last week's question about the car that was repossessed, Rav Zilberstein wrote that the owner of the car did the wrong thing by not telling his friend that the car may be repossessed. Nonetheless, the owner of the car is not obligated to pay for the money, as it is not usual to leave so much money in a car.

THE BUILDER

Upon arriving in the Holy Land after having gone through indescribable suffering in Auschwitz and other concentration camps, Harav Yechezkel Shraga [Lipshitz] Halberstam settled in the city of Ramleh, prior to his eventual move to Yerushalayim. Despite the fact that his stay in the city was temporary, and notwithstanding his frail frame and poor state of health, he resolved and succeeded to build, with his own hands, a mikvah that conformed to all the stringencies of his great-grandfather, the Divrei Chaim, the renowned Sanzer Rav.

Why did he have to build it himself? He did this because of a miracle that occurred on the very first day of his arrival in Auschwitz. Standing in line, waiting for his turn to be scrutinized by the arch-murderer, the notorious beast Dr. Mengele, an S.S. officer passed through the line trying to verify who among the new arrivals was an experienced craftsman in any of several fields — construction, electric, plumbing, etc. Needless to say, everyone wished to qualify, realizing that it would provide them with more of a chance to be directed to the right, rather than to the gas chambers. Unfortunately, few succeeded, since the S.S. officer posed technical questions to weed out the pretenders.

Reb Yechezkel Shraga decided to claim expertise in the field of construction. He persuaded a young man standing alongside him, who was actually employed in that field, to teach him any simple concept that comes to his mind regarding the building trade. The man readily agreed and taught him the basics of constructing a ninety-degree angle.

When the S.S. officer passed by, Reb Yechezkel Shraga claimed to be a building tradesman, and miracle of miracles, the very question the officer posed was the formula for creating a right angle. The strategy succeeded; he was taken from the line and assigned to a building brigade.

Remarkably, the officer commented, "All you dogs are liars. This fellow is the only honest man in the group, an experienced construction tradesman." At that moment Reb Yechezkel Shraga vowed that if Hashem would spare his life and he would see the light of freedom again, he would do everything within his power to utilize his "new professional building skills" to construct a mikvah with every halachic requirement, including those stringencies of his great-grandfather.

And so, that is why the mikvah in Ramleh was built by the great architect, Harav Yechezkel Shraga [Lipshitz] Halberstam, to the pride and joy of all the city's residents.

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Daf HaShavua

Chabura is learning Kesubos Daf ל"ט

The Mussar shiur is currently learning the sefer Pele Yoetz on the timely topic of Ahavas Re'im. You can join the internationally enjoyed shiur either via WhatsApp or podcast. Please contact Rabbi Greenspan for more information.

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)*	

Sifrai Chofetz Chaim

Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim. Have you joined the daily shiur? You can listen via WhatsApp, podcast or online! You can also listen to archived shiurim from the Sefarim of the Chofetz Chaim of Ahavas Yisroel, Kavod Shamayim, Sfas Tamim, Zechor L'Miriam.

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.

Good Shabbos!