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 MATTOS-MASEI – THE POWER OF PRAYER

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

The Torah dictates that if someone accidently kills a person, the unintentional murderer must flee to an Ir Miklat – a city of refuge. "And he shall dwell in it until the death of the Kohen Gadol" (Bamidbar 35:25). The Mishna (Makkos 11a) states that the mothers of the Kohanim Gedolim would provide food and clothing to the "murderers" so that they would not pray that their sons should die. The Gemara questions how such a prayer could succeed in causing a blameless person to die. The Gemara answers that the Kohen Gadol is not blameless since he should have prayed that such a tragedy as an accidental slaying should not have occurred to begin with. Rav Meir Tzvi Bergman observes that had the Kohen Gadol prayed, he could have actually prevented the accidental death, despite the fact that it occurred only due to the negligence of the "murderer". Additionally, the prayer of the "murderer" could have precipitated the death of the Kohen Gadol. The Yerushalmi goes as far as to suggest that prayer for the death of the Kohen Gadol could have succeeded even if the Kohen Gadol were blameless. Rav Bergman concludes that it is evident that Hashem must have created the world with a provision that prayer has the ability to control every outcome and can even change the course of nature. Prayer can be effective not only to the detriment of a guiltless person, but it can even cause a wicked person to do Teshuva. This was the case of the ruffians who caused great anguish to Rebbi Meir (Berachos 10a). His wife Beruria suggested that instead of praying for their death, Rabbi Meir should pray that they should do Teshuva. He took her advice and they did Teshuva. How astounding that prayer can even affect the free will of another person.

The Meforshim discuss how prayer has the power to change one's fate. How is it that one who is poor, childless or sick can pray to Hashem and anticipate that Hashem could "change His mind"? Many maintain that intense prayer changes the spiritual state of the pray-er. His *emunah* in Hashem's omnipotence and compassion are strengthened through prayer. One's closeness to Hashem has increased. Thus Hashem decides that the supplicater is now worthy of a new, better fate.

This approach is more difficult to defend when it comes to praying for others, especially for those who may be unaware of the prayer offered on their behalf. Or what about prayers for someone who doesn't believe in praying? The response might be that the prayers are answered for the sake of fulfilling the desire of the one who prays and not for the sake of the one whom he is praying for. However, Rav Bergman obviously disagrees with this approach. Prayer is a phenomenon ordained by Hashem. There is no other explanation.

Rav Bergman adds that since prayer is so powerful, if one has the ability to pray and he doesn't, he will be held accountable. Chazal ask why the Mabul – the great flood – is referred to in Yeshaya (54:9) as *mei Noach* – the waters of Noach, and they answer that Noach shared in the blame since he did not pray for the people of his generation. Similarly, Rashi (Bereishis 15:5) states that when Sarah said to Avraham, "The injustice done to me is due to you," she was assigning blame to him for having prayed for children only on his own behalf and not also on her behalf.

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 SOFT-HEARTED THIEF

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week's Parsha, Matos Masei, the Torah discusses how the Shevatim, (tribes) divided the land of Eretz Yisrael. The Torah says, "one prince from each tribe will be chosen to acquire land for their tribe." Our Sages in Kidushin 42a teach that this means the courts will appoint an apotropus, an administrator, on behalf of the needs of orphans. This leads us to the following story that happened in Eretz Yisrael:

There was a woman named Ilana, who had recently been widowed. She was left with two children, an older daughter and a young son. They were a poor family and struggled to make ends meet. Their financial situation was further strained by the impending wedding of Ilana's daughter, for which they could barely save. Ilana made great sacrifices, slowly but surely saving money for the wedding. She kept all the savings in an envelope, protected and treasured.

One fateful night, a masked robber broke into their home. Somehow, he deduced where the cash was hidden. He crept to that spot, found the envelope, and stealthily slid it into his pocket, preparing to leave. As he began his exit, he turned to find a seven-year-old boy staring directly at him. This was Ilana's brother. The boy stared at the thief and confidently spoke, "I see you stealing the money for my sister's wedding. You should know that my mother is a poor widow and we live in desperate poverty. If you take this money, you're going to break my sister's heart and my mother's heart. Can you live with that?" His innocent yet potent words managed to penetrate the thief's heart. Feeling a pang of guilt, he apologized and returned the stolen money to the boy.

The thief then made his way to the door, but before leaving, he turned around. He pulled out a thick wad of cash from his pocket and handed it to the boy, saying, "Here is some more money for your sister's wedding. I wish to participate in this mitzvah of Hachnasas Kalla, helping a poor orphan get married."

The following morning, the young boy showed his mother the returned envelope and the extra money. Overjoyed, Ilana now had enough money for the wedding. But she was left with a conundrum: could she keep this money? It was, after all, given to them by a thief and most likely stolen. Was it permitted to use this potentially stolen money for the wedding? Or should they not keep the money and donate it to a public charity instead, washing their hands of it? What do you think? See Upryo Matok Shemos Page 307.

Regarding last week's question of the smashed camera, Brooklyn Posek Rav Moshe Yosef Weiner answered that neither of the people in the story would be obligated in Beis Din court to pay for the camera. However, it would be a midas chasidus, a matter of piety for either of them, or all of them, to pay for it.

HAVE YOU EVER PULLED ME OVER TO COMPLIMENT MY DRIVING?

A talmid chacham once came to speak with Rav Dovid Feinstein, and he was immediately confronted by this unexpected sight. Reb Dovid Feinstein was restocking the soda machine in the yeshivah's front hallway. This was a common occurrence, but the visitor was shocked to see it. The visitor was stunned and tried to do the task, but Reb Dovid didn't let him. "It is my mitzvah," he said simply, not understanding why the other person would try to take it.

"But it is not appropriate for the Rosh Yeshiva!" the visitor argued.

"What's your mekor, your source, that this is called 'eino l'fi k'vodo'?" Reb Dovid asked. "It brings in money for Torah, so to me it's a great kavod."

(From Reb Dovid, By R' Yisrael Besser, Published By Artscroll Mesorah and Reprinted With Permission from Table Talk.)

Pele Yoetz Mussar Sefer

Have you joined the 5-7 minute daily mussar shiur listened to around the world?

Please contact Rabbi Greenspan rabbigreenspan@firstseder.org to be added to the WhatsApp group. We are currently learning about Achim, the proper relationship brothers should have.

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

Good Shabbos!

***Daf HaShavua* Chabura is learning Kesubos Daf מ"ה**

Shemiras Halashon from the Chofetz Chaim

You can join this 5 -7 minute daily shiur by contacting Rabbi Greenspan 732-407-3178. We just started the second perek discussing "What is a person's craft in this world?"

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