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

ROSH HASHANAH – AIM HIGH

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz cites an awesome Medrash which comments on the pasuk in Micha (7,8), "Do not rejoice, my enemy; although (ki) I have fallen, I will rise, although (ki) I sit in darkness Hashem is a light unto me." The Medrash renders the Hebrew ki not as although, but as because - "because I have fallen." "Had I not fallen, I would not have risen, and had I not sat in darkness, Hashem would not have been my light." (Yalkut Tehillim 628). The sin itself can be an impetus to rise even higher. This is why "In a place that a baal teshuva stands, perfectly righteous people cannot stand."

Rav Chaim suggests that this is the pshat of the following pasuk: "Return O Yisrael, to Hashem your G-d, because you have stumbled in your iniquity." Chazal comment, "Great is Teshuva that it can reach all the way up to the Throne of Glory." Here, too, the word ki means because. Specifically because of the sin, one is able to do a Teshuva which will rise straight to Hashem's Throne.

Rav Chaim explains that it is the very shock and abhorrence at how low one has sunk that can propel him to the highest levels of Teshuva. However, it is not necessary to wait till we hit rock bottom to accomplish this. Through the sincere introspection generated by Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur one can derive the inspiration to bounce back even higher than before.

However, I believe there is another reason why one who does Teshuva can rise even higher than those who have not sinned. It is based on the Gemara in Menachos (29b) which sheds new light on the process of Teshuva.

The Gemara states that this world was created with the letter hei because the letter hei is open on the bottom, to symbolize that one who wants to drop out (to sin) is free to do so. The little opening near the top on the left side is for one who wishes to do Teshuva and come back into this world. The Gemara asks why the baal teshuva cannot re-enter through the opening through which he fell. The answer is that it won't work.

We need to understand why it won't work. The reason is that Teshuva is not a process of undoing the past by retracing your steps. That path would result in another encounter with the sin, and you don't want that. The key to mitigating the past lies in the future. Teshuva is the process of overriding the past by forging a new self who has risen above the sin. When you struggle and climb to the opening at the top, you have followed a totally new path and created an even higher level of closeness to Hashem. Therefore, those who never sinned, while they may have many more Mitzvos, cannot achieve that special closeness achieved only through Teshuva.

Had we not fallen so low by doing aveiros in the past year, we would not be able to rise high enough to reach Hashem's Glorious Throne. Rosh Hashanah is the beginning of Aseres Yemai Teshuva when Hashem is so near and the route to the Throne is even shorter. By acknowledging the lowness of sin, we gain the necessary thrust to climb to the top and propel our Teshuva all the way up to Hashem's Throne.

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.

CALLING THE REFERENCES

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Tzvi's son Aryeh was in his mid-twenties, working at a job, and was looking to get married and start a family. In line with a practice upheld in many Orthodox communities, Aryeh compiled a shidduch resume, a detailed account of his personal and religious background, designed to assist match-makers in finding him a compatible spouse. The shidduch resume also included five references who could attest to his character.

Aryeh, however, encountered repeated setbacks. Several prospective matches turned him down without even meeting once, leaving Aryeh and his father Tzvi perplexed and wondering if perhaps one or more of the individuals vouching for Aryeh were not speaking favorably or were insufficiently enthusiastic in their endorsement. Father and son grappled with the difficult decision of which reference to remove from the resume. They could not remove all references because they did not have a large number of references available.

In an effort to get to the bottom of the situation, Tzvi had an idea. He thought of approaching a friend who had a daughter of marriageable age, and ask this friend to pretend to be interested in setting up a shidduch with Aryeh, and to reach out to the references to gauge their genuine opinions. The friend could call all five of the references pretending to find out about Aryeh, and he could later report to them which reference was not saying great things.

However, Aryeh and Tzvi found themselves torn about whether this strategy was permissible. On the one hand, it involved dishonesty, because the friend was not really pursuing the shidduch. It might also cause one of the references to say lashon hara, sinful derogatory speech. The lashon hara would not be for a constructive purpose because there was no real shidduch under consideration.

On the other hand, however, it could shed light on the enigmatic reasons behind Aryeh's unsuccessful attempts so far, and provide them with an opportunity to revise the reference list. This would enhance the prospects of a successful shidduch for Aryeh in the future. What do you think? Would employing such a scheme be permitted according to the Torah?

Regarding last week's question about the man who asked for two packs of cigarettes specifically for Shabbos, and threatened to ruin the livelihood of the store owner, Rav Yitzchak Zilberstien (Upiryo Matok Shemos 436) responded based on a psak from Reb Yehoshua Leib Diskin the store keeper is not obligated to suffer a loss if the customer threatens to close him down even though an isur will be perpetrated. (see ב"ע ג מכתובות ראיה והביא ה"קנ אות א"קונ). Nonetheless, the shop owner should impress on the buyer the importance of not smoking on Shabbos and the severity of the isur.

DO YOU THINK THAT IN SHOMAYIM THEY'RE NOT DANCING RIGHT NOW?

One Erev Rosh Hashanah, a member of the Ofakim community, celebrated a siyum masechta in the shul. However, he forgot to bring any food to honor the occasion.

Rav Shimshon Pincus quickly ran home and returned with cakes and drinks, but even that wasn't enough. As soon as the man completed his siyum, Rav Shimshon grabbed him by the hands and pulled him into a spirited dance along with the other people who were present.

Another participant approached Rav Pincus and whispered awkwardly, "HaRav, it's a very serious day, should we really be dancing on Erev Rosh Hashanah?"

Rav Shimshon replied confidently, "What, do you think that in Shomayim they're not dancing right now to celebrate our siyum?!" He continued singing and twirling joyfully in honor of Torah.

From The Life of Rav Shimshon Dovid Pincus, Published By Feldheim, and Reprinted With Permission from Table Talk.

SAVE THE DATE!

Our annual online campaign will be held on October 15 & 16

Honoring

Drew and Holly Dorman

Zach and Yana Weiser

Jared and Regan Weiss.

Enter Aseres Yemai Teshuva with the zechus of joining the campaign today.

Pele Yoetz Mussar Sefer

Have you joined the 5-7 minute daily mussar shiur? We are currently learning Pele Yoetz on the topic of Brachos.

Please contact Rabbi Greenspan rabbigreenspan@firstseder.org to be added to the WhatsApp group.

1st Seder

A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Morning Track 1: Shiurim					
9:20 AM – 9:55 AM	Mishnayos Peah	Mishnayos Peah	Mishnayos Peah	Mishnayos Peah	Parsha HaShevua
	(R' Chesky Weiss)	*(R' Chesky Weiss)*	*(R' Chesky Weiss)*	*(R' Chesky Weiss)*	*(R' Yehoshua Levy)*
10:00 AM – 10:40 AM	Gemara Bava Basra	Gemara Bava Basra	Gemara Bava Basra	Gemara Bava Basra	Gemara Bava Basra
	(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)*	

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

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

Wishing everyone a *Gut Shabbos* and a *Kesiva Vichasima Tova*!