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 NOACH – GOING UP?

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

"Noach, the man of the earth, debased himself and planted a vineyard. He drank from the wine and became drunk…" (Bereishis 9:20,21). The Medrash Rabba (37:3) comments, "Moshe is more beloved than Noach. Originally Noach was referred to as a 'righteous man' and subsequently he is called a 'man of the earth'. Moshe was originally referred to as 'an Egyptian man' and subsequently he was called a 'man of G-d'." Rav Shach asks how was it possible for a righteous man like Noach, who witnessed so many miracles during the flood, to sink to such a low level?

He answers that every human being is a multifaceted personality. We all have many latent capacities within; some of which tend to be good and some tend to be bad. If one is not careful it is possible for some of the negative tendencies to rise to the surface. This is what happened to Noach. Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz refers to this phenomenon as ha'or vehachoshech sheb'adam – the light and darkness that exist side by side in a person. He cites a number of examples of this. Here are two of them.

Kayin brought a sacrifice to Hashem before his brother Hevel because, as the Ramban explains, he understood on his own the profound significance of sacrifices. He was a great man with lofty ideals and Hevel merely copied Kayin. However, despite his greatness, he brought inferior produce as a tribute to Hashem. Although at this time all the farmland belonged to him and there was plenty to spare, he couldn't bring himself to share it with Hashem. This is a manifestation of the light and darkness which coexisted in Kayin and coexist in all of us.

Another example offered by Rav Chaim is the behavior of Bnai Yisrael in the Desert. Chazal say that when Bnai Yisrael saw the Egyptian army pursuing them they cried out to Hashem emulating the behavior of their Forefathers (Rashi Shemos 14:10). Yet in the very next pasuk, they said to Moshe, "Were there no graves in Mitzrayim that you took us to die in the desert?" We find expressions of emunah (light) and heresy (darkness) emanating from the same people almost simultaneously.

The Gemara in Berachos (29a) quotes the Mishna in Avos (2:4), "Do not believe in yourself until the day you die." Since anyone can be tempted to sin one should not be smugly confident regarding his present state of piety. The Gemara cites the extreme example of Yochanan Kohein Gadol who served as a Kohein Gadol for 80 years and in the end became a Sadducee. No one has a guarantee that he himself will not go "off the derech". There are numerous stories of great Torah scholars who strayed for one reason or another: Doeg Ha'adomi (Dovid's adversary), Achitophel, Geichazi and Rebbi Elisha ben Avuya, to name a few.

You may ask, if this is true for great men, what are we lesser people to do? Rav Aharon Kotler suggests that the only way to prevent slippage is to keep going up spiritually. Once you stop, you automatically regress. Without a counter force, the negative latent drives are more likely to rise to the surface.

Perhaps we could say that traveling through this world is like walking up a down escalator. If you don't keep moving upward, you may find yourself in the basement.

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.

SELLING CATS

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha teaches us that the Mabul was decreed in response to gezel, rampant theft in the world. This leads us to the following true story.

Ari was a successful antique dealer. He once went to a Jewish neighborhood to purchase different antiques. It was an area that had many antique shops. There was one antique shop that was unassuming and tucked into a corner. He realized he had never been in it. Ari went in and looked around. It was a small shop with many dusty antiques. But out of the corner of his eye, he spotted a silver bowl that he recognized. He pulled out his antiques catalog and realized that this bowl was a very limited edition and it was worth more than $200,000. Ari wanted to buy it, but he also wanted to get the best price for it.

Ari watched as the store owner opened a bottle of milk. To Ari's great shock, the owner poured the milk into this rare, expensive antique silver bowl. Then, a cat, presumably the owner's pet, came and drank from the bowl.

This gave Ari an idea. It was clear that the store owner had no idea how valuable this antique was; he was simply using it as a dish for milk. Perhaps now, Ari thought, he could get this antique for an extremely cheap price. He could later sell it at the going rate and get rich from the profits.

So Ari turned to the store owner and said, "Your cat is adorable. Can I buy it?" The owner said, "Well, it's my cat, my pet. I won't sell it for anything."

But Ari pressed him. "Please, I'll give you $1,000 for it." The owner said, "I won't sell it for less than $5,000." Ari realized that $5,000 was a very steep price. But he also knew that if he paid the $5,000, he might easily get the owner to throw the bowl in for free. So Ari took out his wallet and paid him $5,000.

Then Ari said, "Now that I have this cat, I need a bowl. Would you be able to throw in the cat's bowl?" The store owner refused. Ari persisted, "Okay, I'll give you $1,000 for the cat's bowl." The store owner still declined. "How about $2,000?" "No." "$10,000?" "No."

Ari, perplexed, asked, "I don't understand. I'm offering you $15,000 for both the cat and the bowl, and $10,000 for just the bowl. Why won't you accept it?"

The owner looked at Ari straight in the eyes and replied, "I'll tell you why. You see, I'm not in the business of selling antiques. I'm in the business of selling cats. To antique dealers like you who want to try to rip me off. Every day I sell a cat just like this one to someone exactly like you. Antique dealers think they can rip me off and cheat me out of my bowl."

Ari paused to let the words sink in, then said, "Okay, in that case, if you're not selling me the bowl, can you please give me my money back? I don't really want a cat for $5,000." But the man retorted, "You understood the value of the cat and paid with full awareness. You can't back out from the deal."

What do you think? According to the Torah, can Ari get his money back because he paid much more than the cat was worth, or was it not a faulty sale?

See Upiryo Matok Vayikra Page 51.

TZITZIS IDENTIFIES WHO YOU REALLY ARE

An Israeli army officer, Guy Marder, lives north from where the terrorists attacked, and was celebrating Simchas Torah in Kiryat Gat, a 30-minute drive from Re'im. Hearing about the terrorist incursion, Guy got in his car and hurried south, carrying only his personal pistol.

Arriving in the region of Re'im, Guy saw a badly wounded Golani soldier and took him into his car. At the same time a Hamas terrorist shot at his car, but Guy maneuvered away and managed to shoot the terrorist dead. Taking the soldier's gun, Guy killed another five terrorists on motorcycles.

Having transferred the soldier to a field hospital, Guy joined a policeman travelling southward and once again they were attacked by terrorists. Guy and the policeman were injured in their legs and the car careened off the road. Guy was left in a ditch but still managed from there to eliminate more terrorists, after placing a tourniquet on his injured leg. He lay in the ditch for two hours with tens of dead terrorists nearby until the arrival of IDF forces. Unfortunately, they thought that he was one of the terrorists as he was wearing civilian clothes.

Guy cried that he was a soldier but was already weak from loss of blood. At the last minute one of the soldiers said: 'Don't shoot! He has tzitzis!' and thus his life was dramatically saved.

Guy was taken to Beilinson Hospital where he was operated on and is now being treated.

(Reprinted With Permission from Table Talk.)

Condolences

We extend our sincere condolences to the Wood family on the petira of Aryeh Wood (a"h), a long time member of the 1st Seder Bais Medrash.

Calling All Men

Join us for learning at the First Seder Bais Medrash and help bring the zechusim to Acheinu Bnai Yisroel!
Come for one shiur or all shiurim. Choose what works best for you.

1st Seder
A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

First Seder Weekly Schedule

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Morning Track 1: Shiurim					
6:20 AM – 6:50 M, Th 6:55 Tu, W, F	Dirshu Amud Yomi Gemara *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Dirshu Amud Yomi Gemara *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Dirshu Amud Yomi Gemara *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Dirshu Amud Yomi Gemara *(R' Uri Greenspan)*	Dirshu Amud Yomi Gemara *(R' Uri Greenspan)*
9:20 AM – 9:55 AM	Mishnayos Demai *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Mishnayos Demai *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Mishnayos Demai *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Mishnayos Demai *(R' Chesky Weiss)*	Parsha HaShevuah *(R' Yehoshua Levy)*
10:00 AM – 10:40 AM	Gemara Bava Basra *(R' Daniel Baltuch)*	Gemara Bava Basra *(R' Daniel Baltuch)*	Gemara Bava Basra *(R' Daniel Baltuch)*	Gemara Bava Basra *(R' Daniel Baltuch)*	Gemara Bava Basra *(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)*	

Good Shabbos

Join us in the Pele Yoetz Mussar shiur. In this 5 – 7 minute shiur, we are currently learning about the importance of Brachos! For men and women; please contact Rabbi Greenspan to join.

New Shiur

Dirshu Amud Yomi Gemara shiur (Sunday 6:45 AM; Mon thru Fri 6:20 AM)

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