1st Seder Weekly Divrei Torah
A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

PARSHAS SHEMOS – GROWING UP IN MITZRAYM

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

Moshe Rabbeinu first appears on the scene in this week's Parsha. The Torah tells us of his mother hiding him among the bulrushes and his miraculous rescue by Paroh's daughter. After Moshe was weaned by his mother, the Torah states, "The boy **grew up** and she brought him to the daughter of Paroh and he was a son to her." In the next *pasuk* it states, "It happened in these days that Moshe **grew up** and went out to his brethren" (Shemos 2:10-11). Rashi notes the apparent redundancy and explains that the first "grew up" refers to his physical stature and the second to his political position; Paroh had appointed him to an official post.

Since the Torah can be interpreted in seventy ways, I would like to suggest an additional explanation. In the first *pasuk* it states, "The boy grew up"; in the second, "Moshe grew up." The first *pasuk* refers to his general growth like any other boy, while the second relates that he grew into Moshe – the unique personality of Moshe. Or put another way, the first refers to his physical growth and the second to his spiritual growth. This spiritual growth is demonstrated in the very same *pasuk*: "And he went out to his brethren and observed their onerous burden; and he saw an Egyptian man striking an Ivri, one of his brethren." His reaction was to risk his life to save his brother by killing the Egyptian. This was not only the beginning of his greatness, it was the very essence of his greatness – his selfless concern for his people with complete disregard for himself.

The path to greatness is through humility. The more one thinks of Hashem and of other people, the less he focuses on himself. Thus, ironically, the greater the person, the more humble he is. It is no wonder that that Moshe Rabbeinu, the greatest person and the greatest prophet, was the most humble person on the face of the earth. Thus you could say that the bigger the person, the "smaller" he is.

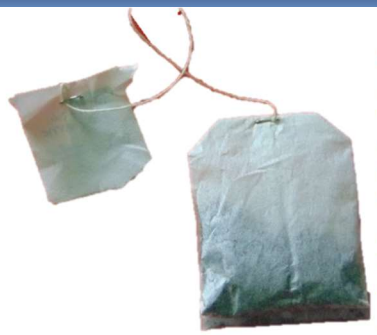
Rav Chaim Volozhin explains how Moshe achieved the highest possible level of prophecy. In Ruach Chaim he cites the Zohar which notes that when Hashem called, "Avraham, Avraham" the *trup* (the cantillation mark) called *pesik* separates the two names – like this: "Avraham I Avraham." However when Hashem called, "Moshe, Moshe" there is no *pesik*. Regarding Avraham, whose level of humility is described by the words "I am but dust and ashes", there was the slightest bit of ego separating the physical part of Avraham from the spiritual part of Avraham. Regarding Moshe, who said, "What are we!" – complete humility – there was no ego separating the physical from the spiritual. Thus Avraham's level of prophecy is called *aspaklaria she'eina me'ira* – seeing through a translucent film, while the prophecy of Moshe is referred to as *aspaklaria hame'ira* – seeing through a transparent film.

Spiritual greatness, which is really a greater level of closeness to Hashem, is directly proportional to one's humility, because it is our ego which separates us from Hashem. If you look throughout our history, you will discover that the greatest and, ironically, the most famous Torah figures were exceptionally humble. Starting with Moshe, to Hillel, to Rabi Yehuda Hanasi, to the Rambam, to name a few. In more contemporary times there was Rebbi Akiva Eiger, the Chofetz Chaim, the Chazon Ish (who published his magnum opus anonymously) and Rav Moshe Feinstein. While all great rabbis were exceedingly humble, these names stand out in my mind.

Each of us, from the time we grow out of childhood, the age characterized by selfishness, embarks on the path of our own spiritual growth. The path consists of looking beyond ourselves and focusing on others and on Hashem in particular. It is the path of humility and it is the only way to establish a true closeness to Hashem.

HALACHA Q&A FROM RABBI YISROEL UNGER

Please contact R' Ungar (Ymungar@gmail.com) with questions or comments



QUESTION: We make tea essence for שבת which we leave in a cup. We first make a כלי שני of hot water and then we add the tea essence. When the tea essence is running low, is it okay to empty out all the tea essence until the last drop?

ANSWER: A tea bag is a filter. When using a tea bag on שבת one may not remove the bag and hold it above a cup until the bag empties of the liquid. That would be an act of בורר with a כלי. A tea bag that is within a cup of tea essence is full of tea and as you pour out some essence, even though some of the essence from within the tea bag empties, however, that tea is replaced with more tea and that is not considered as if you are using a כלי to sort your tea. However, once you get down to the bottom of the cup when there is no essence left except for within the tea bag, at that point you may not continue pouring since you are using a כלי to separate tea from the tea leaves within the bag. The same is true if you are drinking a tea with a tea bag in the cup, when you get to the bottom of the tea, you must stop drinking so as not to cause the tea within the bag to come out. This is not דרך אכילה since the בורר is happening a step before you actually drink the tea. (Using a tea bag on שבת is possibly בישול unless it's iced tea or כלי שליש - ר' משה)

עי' סימן שי"ט סעי' י"ד ועי' מנחת יצחק ח"ד סימן צ"ט וקיצור הלכות שבת מלאכת בורר סעי' י"ז הובא בס' זכור ושמור הל' בורר דף

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 HIDDEN DIARY

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week's Parsha, Moshe says, "Surely the davar, the matter is known." Simply, it means that the fact that Moshe killed the Egyptian supervisor became known to the authorities. But our Sages teach that there is a deeper understanding. It means, "Now the reason for the exile is known; the davar, the evil speech, and lashon hara that Jews are talking, is the cause of the exile." This brings us to the following true story.

The Rosenbergs were an elderly couple who lived in a house for many years. Eventually, Mrs. Rosenberg passed away, and sadly, within a few months, Mr. Rosenberg passed away as well. They lived to the ripe old ages of 90 and 93. The family was, of course, devastated. After mourning, the children put the house on the market to sell. They cleaned out the house, took all the valuables out, anything that had any sentimental value, and they prepared and rehabbed the house to sell.

Zev saw the house listed and was interested in buying it. He looked at the house, and it looked good to him, and he was prepared to make an offer. The Rosenberg children told Zev they were happy to sell it, but on the condition that if in the course of the years he would ever find anything that belonged to their parents, he should please return it to them because everything that belonged to their parents had sentimental value. Zev, of course, agreed. He bought the house, and moved in with his family.

Several years later, Zev pushed back a bookcase in the home, and, to his surprise, there was a little nook behind the bookcase. There was a book in the nook. Zev opened the book to see what it was, and it appeared to be a diary written by Mr. Rosenberg, the previous owner of the house. It was a diary detailing the days of his life. Some of it was good, some were neutral things, but frequently there were references in the diary to arguments between Mr.Rosenberg and his wife and how he did not have Shalom Bayis, peace in the home. It was a very interesting and fascinating book. Zev thought that surely it would have sentimental value to the Rosenberg children. He understood that he made a condition when he bought the house, that he was going to return anything that belonged to the previous owners to the children. So, Zev showed the diary to his wife Chava and told her that he was planning to return it.

But Chava said, "How can we return it? It's full of things that say bad things about their relationship. That would certainly harm the reputation of the parents, and it will be a form of lashon hara, gossip. You can't return it." But Zev said, "What do you mean? How can I not return it? I made a condition, the condition of the sale, that I return anything that belonged to the parents. And also, there's a mitzvah of hashavas aveidah, returning lost objects. How could I not return it? This would clearly be sentimental to them."

But Chava did not agree; she felt that the sellers did not have in mind something like this in the condition of the sale, and they could not return it. They shouldn't even tell anyone about it, and they should just burn it because if anyone found it, it could bring reputational harm to the parents. Both agreed to bring this question to a Rav, and this question was brought to Rabbi Zilberstein.What do you think? Should Zev return it because this was the condition of the sale and because it would be a mitzvah, or was Zev's wife right that they could not return it because this would cause damage to the parents' reputation, would be lashon hara, evil gossip, and therefore cannot be returned?

Regarding last week's question about the robbers who stole the cakes and left the money, Rav Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Vayikra Page 56) said that the man left holding the money would not be allowed to keep the money. This is because it is called a Hefker BeTa'us, a mistaken abandonment. This is because they didn't mean to abandon the money, and because they never would have agreed to give so much money for two cakes. Instead, the man should keep enough money to compensate himself for the stolen cakes, and the balance of the money should be donated to a free loan gemach that serves the public until the thieves possibly return to claim the money.

EIN MERAVIN SIMCHA BESIMCHA, ONE MAY NOT MINGLE ONE JOY WITH ANOTHER

Reb Asher, a relative of Reb Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, related the following story. He had once come to Premishlan to spend the Yomim Noraim in the presence of Reb Meir of Premishlan, and had stayed there until the end of Sukkos. During that period, Reb Meir's daughter was so dangerously ill that by the time Simchas Torah came around, she was at the point of death.

The tzaddik, as always, was dancing exuberantly on Simchas Torah, when a group of chassidim rushed into the beis midrash with an outcry, imploring that he do something to call down the mercies of heaven on his daughter. The tzaddik, Reb Meir (who, out of unfeigned humility, used to refer to himself in the third person, by his diminutive nickname, as "Meir'l"), walked into his daughter's room. He saw at once how matters stood. He came out of her room and said: "Master of the Universe! You commanded us to blow the shofar on Rosh HaShanah – and Meir'l blew; You commanded us to fast on Yom Kippur - and Meir'l fasted; You commanded us to dwell in the sukkah during the festival - and Meir'l dwelt in the sukkah; You commanded us to be happy on Simchas Torah - and Meir'l is Bsimcha, is happy.

But now You've gone and caused Meir'l's daughter to be sick. Meir'l, for his part, has to accept this state of affairs Besimcha, joyfully, for the Mishnah teaches us, 'A man is obliged to bless his Maker for sad tidings in the same way as he does for glad tidings.' And the Talmud explains that this means, 'to accept joyfully.' Meir'l therefore is accepting his lot joyfully.

"But Ribbono shel Olam - Master of the Universe! Does the Halachah not establish the law that Ein Meravin Simcha Besimcha, 'one may not mingle one joy with another'? ..."

Immediately after this tefillah, news came from his home that his daughter's fever was subsiding, and she recovered. From "A Treasury of Chassidic Tales on the Festivals," by Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin, published by Artscroll Mesorah and reprinted with permission from Table Talk.

Volunteer

You can help spread Torah around the world
Would you like to volunteer to help the 1st Seder Bais Medrash grow and spread more Torah around the world? Volunteer opportunities are for men and women. For more information, please contact Rabbi Greenspan rabbigreenspan@firstseder.org

Navi Shiur

Join us for an interactive Navi Shiur on Seder Yirmiyahu Monday and Wednesday 12:45 PM - 1:15PM given by Rabbi Baruch Lichtenstein.

1st Seder
A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

Good Shabbos!

Do you have a flexible schedule?

Join us at the 1st Seder Bais Medrash any time between 9:20 AM and 1:15 PM. Come for one shiur or all of the shiurim. May your participation serve as a zechus for Acheinu Bnai Yisroel!

To register for these shiurim or any of the learning opportunities, please contact Rabbigreenspan@firstseder.org **or 732-407-3178. To sponsor the 1st Seder Weekly, please contact** office@firstseder.org.