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

PARSHA BEHAALOSCHA – MEMORIES

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

In most siddurim, a list of the sheish zechiros – six remembrances – can be found after the Shacharis davening. One of them derives from an event in this week's Parsha: Hashem punished Miriam for speaking lashon hara about Moshe. In Parshas Ki Seitzei Moshe commands us, "Remember what Hashem, your G-d, did to Miriam, on the way, when you left Mitzrayim" (Devarim 24:9). By remembering Miriam's punishment we will be cognizant of the severity of the sin of lashon hara and refrain from engaging in this terrible aveirah.

Another one of these zechiros is to remember the Exodus from Mitzrayim. The Ramban in Parshas Bo (Shemos 13:16) explains the significance of this Mitzvah. Hashem is not willing to perform miracles to demonstrate to every agnostic in every generation that He really does exist and that He is totally in control of the fate of the world and mankind. Therefore, He commanded us to maintain a perpetual remembrance of the miracles that He performed on our behalf when He redeemed us from Mitzrayim.

In our Parsha we also read about another collective memory of Bnai Yisrael, one which they brought with them from Mitzrayim. When they complained about the mon, they bemoaned, "We remember the fish that we ate in Mitzrayim free of charge" (Bamidbar 11:5). At the time of this complaint, Bnai Yisrael had already received the Torah, had built a Mishkan to bring the Shechina into their midst and were dining on the divine bread of the mon. Yet the memory of the fish they ate in Mitzrayim continued to influence their attitude. This is such a powerful message regarding the influence which old memories, even trivial ones, can continue to hold sway over us.

As individuals, we all have a myriad of personal memories, from our childhood until the present. It is these memories – both conscious and subconscious – which mold our personalities and help to define who we are. Every event that has occurred in our lives creates an imprint on our brain. Some are bold images and some are weak ones. Some are permanent and some are transient. Some are positive and some are negative. Nevertheless, we do have a significant degree of control over our memories. We can cognitively reinforce the positive ones and diminish or mitigate the negative ones. We can choose to focus on the memories which will enable us to grow emotionally and spiritually, and strive to let go of those that constrict and diminish us.

It is also extremely important to bear in mind that the events of today will become the memories of tomorrow. We should give a great deal of thought to how we react to these events and how we record them. Once I attended a reunion of cousins where they reminisced over events they had shared when growing up together. It was amazing to see the variations in the way they recalled these events. Each one had perceived the events from his own perspective and then formed his memory based on that. How we view events and how we react to them will create the memories that impact us for a lifetime.

Additionally, to a great extent, we can supervise the events and situations which we let into our lives. What we should see and hear. Where we should go and where we ought not to go. With whom we should have contact and whom we should avoid. Very often these are choices that we can make which will determine the memories that we will carry with us forever.

If what we remember has such a profound impact on our destinies in this world and in the next, we should try our very best to make them positive and productive memories.

HALACHA Q&A FROM RABBI YISROEL UNGAR

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

QUESTION: I have a vegetable chopper (an Alligator) that has two blades. One produces very small pieces and the other produces large pieces. Am I allowed to use it on שבת?

ANSWER: One is not allowed to cut vegetables into very small pieces on שבת as that is טוחן. Using a vegetable chopper is a כלי המיוחד לטוחן/specialized grinding tool, and is generally not allowed to be used. Even if you would use it for a food that there is no טוחן on, it is still not allowed to be used because it is עובדין דחול/weekday act. An Alligator has two different blades. One that chops very small pieces and one that chops big pieces. The small blade is NEVER מותר to use on שבת. The big blade could be okay since it is not טוחן. The only question would be, is it עובדין דחול to use this chopper? Rav Falk writes that a bread slicer may be used on שבת to slice vegetables since a bread slicer by definition is not a grinding tool since there is no טוחן on bread. The alligator is meant for both big and small sizes and perhaps one could say that it is not exclusively for grinding and maybe not an עובדין דחול if used to chop big pieces. I asked Rav Hillel David שליט"א and he was מסופק if this reasoning is enough to allow it. One should ask your local Rov before using it.

עי' או"ח סימן שכ"א סעי' י"ב ומשנה ברורה ס"ק ל"ו. עי' זכור ושמור טוחן Page 391

(Perhaps a bread slicer is different and מותר to use since it is primarily used and only meant for bread, as opposed to the chopper which is meant to chop both big and small pieces of vegetables, it is עובדין דחול even for big pieces.)

You can bring a zechus refuah 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 L'CHAIM

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Michael was a non-Jew who was very interested in learning about Judaism. He and his wife moved to Israel to learn about Judaism, to convert, and to join the Jewish people. Michael connected with a rabbi, Rav Yaakov, and under this rabbi's tutelage and guidance, Michael slowly became ready to convert. Finally, after years of learning and preparation, Michael was ready for the giyur (conversion) process.

On the day of his immersion in the mikvah, Rabbi Yaakov prepared a special expensive liqueur to celebrate the occasion of Michael's joining the Jewish people. Rabbi Yaakov explained it was a special chocolate mocha liqueur made in Israel that had milk in it, and so the liqueur was dairy. After Michael finished the conversion, Rabbi Yaakov said, "Mazel tov! Let's make a l'chaim with this delicious drink."

Michael was about to drink it when his wife reminded him, "Wait, wait, Michael. This afternoon for lunch you had a corned beef sandwich. You're fleishig!"

Michael thought about it and said, "That's true, but the truth is when I ate it, I wasn't Jewish. Now I've converted. Now I'm Jewish. So maybe it's OK that I ate meat because it doesn't count when I wasn't Jewish."

His wife countered, "But the reason why we wait six hours is because there might still be oils or meat from the sandwich in your mouth. Why should it make a difference if you were Jewish or not?"

Michael said, "I don't know. Once you convert, you're like a whole new person. Maybe I'm a whole new person, and I wouldn't have to wait anymore."

This question was brought to Rav Chaim Kanievsky. Was Michael allowed to have the dairy liqueur even though he was still fleishig from before he was Jewish? What do you think?

Regarding last week's question about the person who began a competing store against his landlord, Rav Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 133) wrote that there is a clear understanding an Umdenah, that a person does not want to lease his property to somebody who will compete against him and affect his business. Therefore, if the new grocery does affect the business of the landlord, the landlord is allowed to break the lease.

"THIS IS MY MITZVAH! YOU GET YOUR OWN GARBAGE!"

Rav Yaakov Moshe Kulefsky was the previous Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Yisrael. For a year and a half, one of Rav Kulefsky's talmidim lived with his wife and family in the same building as the Kulefskys, in "401," as it is known in Yeshiva Lane. This talmid had many encounters with his esteemed neighbor, some of them humorous, but all memorable and meaningful. One Erev Shabbos, the talmid drove into the parking lot of 401 just as Rav Kulefsky walked out the back entrance, holding a bag filled with garbage. The talmid quickly jumped out of his car and ran over to offer to take the trash bag and throw it into the dumpster. But Rav Kulefsky pulled it away from him and declared with a twinkle in his eye, "This is my mitzvah! You get your own garbage!"

The rebbetzin did not drive a car. Although Baltimore has buses, the system is not as user-friendly as in other cities. Rav Kulefsky took it upon himself to drive his wife to the grocery store each week and to any other stores she had to shop at. He did this happily and graciously. Many talmidim, as well as other Baltimore residents, remember seeing Rav Kulefsky sitting in his car (which did not have air conditioning for many years) in the parking lot of the local supermarket, learning from a huge pile of sefarim as he calmly waited for his wife to complete her purchases. Some took advantage of the chance to talk to him in learning right then and there in the parking lot. At times, he even gave oral semichah tests while waiting in the car. If circumstances warranted, it was not unusual to meet him in the store on his own.

From Rav Kulefsky, By Yisroel Besser, Published By Artscroll Mesorah, Reprinted with permission from Table Talk.

Did you know?

You can now listen to Rabbi Greenspan's Dirshu Mishna Berura Shiur (Hilchos Shabbos) on the OU's All Halacha website: https://allhalacha.org/series/8525

or

Join us live as we are learning Mishna Berurah Chelek Gimmel (Hilchos Shabbos) M-F 10:50AM--11:20AM and S, T, and Th 7:30PM-- 8:10PM

First Seder Weekly Schedule

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
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	Mishnah Maiser Sheni (R' Chesky Weiss)	Mishnah Maiser Sheni (R' Chesky Weiss)	Mishnah Maiser Sheni (R' Chesky Weiss)	Mishnah Maiser Sheni (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 – 11:15 AM	Dirshu Mishna Berurah (R' Uri Greenspan)	Dirshu Mishna Berurah (R' Uri Greenspan)	Dirshu Mishna Berurah (R' Uri Greenspan)	Dirshu Mishna Berurah (R' Uri Greenspan)	Dirshu Mishna Berurah (R' Uri Greenspan)
11:15 AM – 11:50 PM	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)
12:00 PM – 12:40 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)	Pele Yoetz followed by Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim Hashkafa -Parsha (R' Uri Greenspan)
12:45 PM – 1:15 PM	Navi Shiur Sefer Yirmiyahu (R' Baruch Lichtenstein)	Pele Yoetz followed by Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim Hashkafa -Parsha (R' Uri Greenspan)	Navi Shiur Sefer Yirmiyahu (R' Baruch Lichtenstein)	Pele Yoetz followed by Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim Hashkafa -Parsha (R' Uri Greenspan)	

Good Shabbos!

Volunteer

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
732-407-3178

Please Daven

For Mr. Drew Dorman – Avrohom Gedaliah ben Sarah Sofia -- who is in need of refuah sheleima.