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

PARSHA 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 can 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 should "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 supplicator 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.

We all realize that not everyone's prayers are answered. Great Tzaddikim, who pray with greater *kavanah,* have much more influence with Hashem. And even such people do not always meet with success for many, many reasons. Nevertheless, with this new recognition of the nature and power of prayer, it behooves us to put more time and effort into davening – not only for ourselves but also for *acheinu kol Bais Yisrael!*

HALACHA Q&A FROM RABBI YISROEL UNGAR

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

QUESTION: If I hire a waiter to come to my house on שבת to help out by a kiddush I am making, am I allowed to pay him (after שבת) for the job? Does it make a difference if the waiter is a Yid or a goy?

ANSWER: There is an איסור of שכר שבת on שבת, which means, a Yid may not get paid for a job that was done on שבת. This applies only if the job is exclusively on שבת. If the job entailed weekday work as well, and you pay one lump sum for the whole job, then it is okay to pay the worker. The worker must be hired for both the weekday and שבת work in one hiring. If you want a local boy to come and help by your kiddush on שבת you must hire him t to do additional work before or after שבת and that additional work must entail an amount of work that one would normally pay for. Just taking out a garbage bag after שבת is not a job that one would pay for. If he comes to help before שבת for like 15 minutes to help set up, then you can pay him for both the waitering and the setting up in one lump sum. A goyishe waiter on the other hand is allowed to get paid even for a job that he only does on שבת, so if you hire גוים to waite, then you will not have any issues paying him.

עי' סימן ש"ו סעי' ד' ומ"ב ס"ק י"ט. עי' ארחות שבת פרק כ"ב סעי' צ"א

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 RECALL

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Akiva was in the market to buy a new used car. He saw an advertisement for a 2010 Volkswagen sedan, with the asking price of 20,000 shekels. Akiva was surprised because his research indicated that the going rate for a used car of that make, mileage, and age was really 40,000 shekels.

He called up the seller, whose name was Yakov, and expressed interest in buying the car. He then asked why the car was so cheap when the going rate was 40,000 shekels. Yakov answered, "I have to be completely transparent with you. There's a problem with the diesel injection system, which is very costly to repair. It will cost about 15,000 shekels to repair. Instead of selling it at the full price, I'm selling it for 20,000 shekels."

Akiva thought about it and decided he was going to buy it anyway to see if maybe he could repair it at a good price. He bought the car, and it worked for the time being.

A while after Akiva bought the car, he received a notice in the mail from the Volkswagen company, notifying him that there was a recall on the diesel injection system—a problem worldwide for all Volkswagens. He could bring it to any Volkswagen dealer, and they would fix it for free.

Sure enough, Akiva brought his car to the dealer, and they fixed the car up good as new. Akiva now had a 40,000 shekel car for the small price of 20,000 shekels. But now, Akiva wondered, was it okay for him to keep the car? The only reason the owner sold it was that he thought there was a major problem that would be very expensive to fix, but really, it could be fixed for free.

Akiva wanted to know if he had to mention this to the seller. Did he have to offer to return it, or could he just be quiet and go on his merry way without mentioning anything to the seller? What do you think? See Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 240

Regarding last week's question about the employee who stole away the customers from his boss and wanted to sell his own kitchen to these customers, Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Devarim, Page 236) answered as follows: It is forbidden for the employee to steal away the customer because he is taking away all the investment of effort and resources that the employer put into building the store. It was also forbidden for him to do that because he was paid to work for his employer, and instead, he was working for his own business. Not only is it forbidden for the employee to do this, but it would also be forbidden for the couple to buy the kitchen from him, even though it is much cheaper, because they would be facilitating his actions.

THE PERFECT TIME TO TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE

Rav Mordechai Schwab would talk to his newly-married students about the importance of helping their wives, who besides being busy caring for their children, usually had jobs.

In order to teach by example, Rav Mordechai would wait with a full garbage bag by his living room window, and when he spotted the yungerleit (young married men) on their way home, he would carry out the garbage bag specifically at that time, so they could see an example of how they should help their wives.

From Rav Mordechai Schwab; A Tzadik In Monsey, By Yehoshua Schwab, 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 Su, 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 Grosz)	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.