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

PARSHAS LECH LECHA – IMO ANOCHI BETZARAH

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

When Hagar, the maidservant of Sarah, acted disrespectfully to her mistress, Sarah responded by treating her harshly. Hagar fled to the desert where three angels appeared to her. They consoled her and told her to return to her mistress. "And she referred to Hashem who spoke to her (through the angels) saying, 'You are the G-d Who sees' for she said, 'Could I have seen [angels] here after having seen them (in the home of Avraham)?'" (Bereishis 16:13). Rashi elaborates on Hagar's intent: "You are the G-d who sees the pain of those who have been shamed. Would I have expected to see Hashem's messengers even here in the desert after having been accustomed to seeing them in the house of Avraham?"

Rav Shimshon Pincus explains that the home of Avraham and Sarah was like the Bais Hamikdash. A candle burned continuously like the Ner Tamid in the Bais Hamikdash. There was a special blessing in the dough resembling the miracle of the Lechem Hapanim. There was a cloud over their tent denoting the presence of the Shechina. Living in such a home was an extraordinary opportunity for Hagar to see many angels. Now, Hagar was far from this holy abode and she was very surprised to see angels there.

Rav Pincus goes on to explain that Hagar discovered that there is yet another place where the Shechina resides: in the presence of one who is suffering. As it states in Tehillim (91:15), "Yikra'eini ve'e'eneihu, imo Anochi betzarah – He will call to Me and I will answer him; I am with him in his distress." Similarly, in Yeshaya (57:15) it states, "I am with the broken-hearted and humble, to revive the spirit of the lowly and the heart of the downcast." When one is suffering, he feels alone and abandoned. But the truth is that due to his plight he is really not alone. The Shechina, along with the kedusha of the Bais Hamikdash, is with him. Indeed, Chazal state, "The Shechina is above the head of one who is sick" (Shabbos 12b). And since Hashem is so close to someone in distress, there is a special opportunity to reach out to Him with fervent tefillos.

When Hashem appeared to Moshe in a lowly bush that was on fire, He conveyed this same message: "Imo Anochi betzarah. I am, so to speak, in bondage together with Bnai Yisrael." Regarding this very site He told Moshe, "For the place upon which you stand is holy ground." Imo Anochi betzarah does not mean, "I feel your pain". It means, "My Shechina is here with you in your pain."

The caravan to which Yosef was sold was carrying sweet-smelling spices. Rashi (Bereishis 37:25) comments that although the caravans usually carried foul-smelling cargo, such as naphtha and tar, for the sake of Yosef, Hashem arranged that this caravan had fragrant spices. The Meforshim ask what was the significance of such a kindness in light of the fact that the caravan was carrying Yosef into bondage where he could endure slave labor or even death? Rav Mordechai Gifter answers that this was Hashem's way of demonstrating to Yosef that "I am here with you; I have not abandoned you. I am going to accompany you into Mitzrayim."

Even in the darkest times of hester panim, Hashem lets it be known that He is very much with us. Klal Yisrael as a whole and each individual must realize that regardless of the severity of our plight, the Shechina is "suffering" with us. Therefore, He is waiting for our tefillos and He is ready to help.

HALACHA Q&A FROM RABBI YISROEL UNGAR

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

QUESTION: Outside on the sidewalk there are some frozen puddles. May I deliberately crack the ice with my shoe on שבת? There are icicles hanging from my house and shed, may I playfully knock them off on שבת? ANSWER: The מגן אברהם says that one may not crack the frozen ice that formed in a river or well. It is attached to the ground and it is the מלאכה of סותר to break it. The משנה ברורה brings that there are many that argue on the מגן אברהם and really it is okay, and it is not סותר, but one should defer to the opinion of the מגן אברהם and only crack ice if there is a צורך שבת. Ice that is stuck to the ground and icicles attached to a house would also be סותר. If the patches of ice or icicles present a סכנה, then it is מותר to crack and break them as that is considered a צורך. Playfully or absentmindedly breaking patches of ice or cracking off an icicle is not a צורך שבת and should therefore not be done. Rabbi Ribiat in his sefer says one should not crack ice on the ground nor crack off icicles. (Cracking ice cubes into smaller pieces is okay, as long as you don't crush it into a liquid.)

ע' משנה ברורה סימן ש"כ ס"ק ל"ו. ע' משנה ברורה שם ס"ק ל"ב.

You can bring a zechus refuah sheleima 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 Chafetz Chaim.

SELLING THE FREE BOOKS

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Avrohom decided to undertake a project to serve as an ilui neshama (an elevation for the souls) of his deceased parents. He purchased boxes of a popular new sefer (book) written by a renowned halachic authority and distributed them to various shuls across the city. On each box, he noted that the books were free for the taking and asked that people keep his parents in mind as they studied from the sefarim.

One of these boxes, placed in Yoni's shul, contained about 30 books. Yoni observed for two weeks as congregants picked up the books, only to put them back down. During that time, only one or two books were taken, while the rest sat untouched, gathering dust.

Seeing this, Yoni came up with an idea. He reasoned that the person who had placed these books likely intended for them to be used rather than left idle. So, Yoni took the remaining books and brought them to the largest Beis Midrash (study hall) in the city, where such books were in high demand. He placed a sign near the box that read, "Amazing price, only 50 shekels," and put the books up for sale. Within minutes, the books sold out like hot cakes, and Yoni made 1,500 shekels. He thought, "Now the books are being used as intended, and this will surely be an ilui neshama for the people in whose memory they were distributed".

When Yoni got home, he showed the money to his wife. She asked, "Are you sure you can keep the money? Perhaps you can't keep it. The books were meant to be given away for free, not taken and sold." But Yoni argued, "There was no specific rule saying I couldn't take them and sell them. Besides, what good were they doing just sitting in the shul? At least now they are being read and appreciated."

They decided to bring the question to a Rav. Was it permissible for him to keep the money, or should he use it in another way? What do you think he should do? See Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 437

Regarding last week's question about the meat delivery driver, Rav Mordechai Shuchatowitz answered that Donny had a responsibility to disclose the fact that he worked for Hatzalah to his employer when applying for the job. He should not have waited to disclose this after accepting a time-sensitive delivery that he could not guarantee to complete on time. Similarly, Rav Akiva Meister stated that the employer has the right to require a reliable driver for the job and is not obligated to continue employing someone who cannot be dependable.

THE IRS ORDERED THE FIRM TO PAY HIM THE OWED MONEY PLUS EIGHTEEN YEARS' WORTH OF INTEREST, WHICH AMOUNTED TO FAR MORE THAN THE PRINCIPAL

Rabbi David Ashear related the following story. Reprinted with permission of Table Talk.

A man told me that once his business was going through a difficult period, at the same time that his daughter was to be married. He said that he has always had bitachon in Hashem, and during that difficult period, too, he trusted that Hashem would take care of his family's needs.

He made a respectable, though not lavish, wedding for his daughter, and then the bills started coming. As he was going through the mail and trying to figure out how to pay the bills, there was one piece of mail that did not seem important and he was about to discard it. But then he decided to open it, and the envelope contained a check for nearly $23,000. The check was from a firm for which he had worked years earlier, in 1995.

The firm had recently been audited, and it was found that there was a certain refund due him that had never been paid. The IRS ordered the firm to pay him the owed money plus eighteen years' worth of interest, which amounted to far more than the principal.

Remarkably, eighteen years before the girl's wedding, when she was just an infant, Hashem was already arranging the means to provide the money for her wedding, and an audit took place eighteen years later so that the money would be there.

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 Shabbos (R' Chesky Weiss)	Mishnah Shabbos (R' Chesky Weiss)	Mishnah Shabbos (R' Chesky Weiss)	Mishnah Shabbos (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' David 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!

Please join us for shiurim – Mishnayos, Gemara, Halacha, Tefilla, Parsha, Tehillim, Mussar and more! M-F 9:20 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. To register or if you have any questions please contact Rabbi Uri Greenspan - Rosh Bais Medrash.
rabbigreenspan@firstseder.org
732-407-3178

Please Daven

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