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

PARSHAS VA'EIRA – IT WAS A REAL KIDDUSH HASHEM

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

"And Mitzrayim shall know that I am Hashem when I stretch out My hand over Mitzrayim" (Shemos 7,5).

We generally tend to view the epic events of the Ten Plagues and the splitting of the Yam Suf as exclusively the process of Redemption of Bnai Yisrael and the punishment of the Egyptians. This pasuk presents a different purpose for the miracles. It was to demonstrate to Mitzrayim and ultimately to the world the existence and dominion of Hashem. This theme is repeated again and again throughout the Parsha. Before the plague of wild animals, Hashem instructed Moshe to tell Paroh, "And on that day I shall set apart the land of Goshen upon which my people stands that there shall be no swarm [of animals] there so that you shall know that I am Hashem in the midst of the land" (Ibid. 8,18).

Before the plague of hail, Moshe is told to say to Paroh, "For now I could have sent forth My hand and stricken you and your people with the pestilence and you would have been obliterated from the earth. However, for this I have let you endure to show you My strength and so that My name may be declared throughout the world" (Ibid. 9,15-16).

Even by the splitting of Yam Suf where the entire Egyptian army was destined to drown, Hashem explained the event in the same light. "I shall strengthen the heart of Paroh and he will pursue [Bnai Yisrael] and I shall be glorified through Paroh and his entire army, and Mitzrayim will know that I am Hashem" (Ibid. 14,4).

Indeed the vanquishing of Mitzrayim reverberated throughout the world. "Nations heard and were frightened; terror gripped the dwellers Pileshes. The chieftains of Edom were confounded; trembling gripped the powers of Moav, all the dwellers of Canaan melted" (Ibid 15,14-15). When the spies sent by Yehoshua came to the house of Rachav – forty years hence, she told them, "For we have heard how Hashem dried up the waters of Yam Suf for you when you went out of Mitzrayim" (Yehoshua 2,10).

Indeed the purpose of creation is for all of humanity to recognize and serve Hashem. The exodus from Mitzrayim was not merely a Jewish event. It was the greatest universal Kiddush Hashem that ever took place. At the time of Shlomo Hamelech, his greatness and the greatness of his kingdom also created a widespread Kiddush Hashem as other nations paid homage to Bnai Yisrael. Our role as the People of Hashem is to perpetuate this Kiddush Hashem. Whether we find ourselves in Eretz Yisrael or in the Diaspora, we should make every effort and seek every opportunity to be Mekadeish Sheim Shamayim.

Nevertheless we await the day of the ultimate Kiddush Hashem with the advent of Moshiach. "For the world will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem as the waters covering the sea bed" (Yeshaya 11,9).

HALACHA Q&A FROM RABBI YISROEL UNGAR

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

QUESTION: It is final's time in school and a neighbor of mine asked me to tutor their son four times a week. I charge $40 a session. If one of the times I tutor him is on שבת, may I charge for that session?

ANSWER: There is an איסור on שבת called שכר שבת. This means that one may not get paid for a job that was done only on שבת. The reason for this is: It is similar to מקח וממכר/business that is done on שבת which is not allowed. However, there is a concept called הבלעה which allows one to get paid for work done on שבת. This means, if you swallow up the payment for שבת together with payment from the weekday in one lump sum, then you are allowed to get paid. However, to get paid, you must also be hired in a way that you have one job which entails both a weekday and שבת. However, if you were hired separately for the weekday and separately for שבת then you still may not get paid. It must be one hiring and one lump payment. Also, one may not be hired on שבת. So, if you made up with your neighbor before שבת to tutor four times for the week, and you will get paid $160 in one lump sum, then it is מותר to take the $160 even though it includes payment for שבת.

עעי' סימן ש"ו סעי' ד' ומ"ב ס"ק ט"ז, י"ח

WEEKLY RIDDLE: Can you name the 9 נביאים mentioned in this week's Parsha?

ANSWER: The nine נביאים mentioned in this week's Parsha (וארא) are 1) אברהם 2) יצחק 3) יעקב 4) אהרן 5) משה 6) פנחס 7) אסיר 8) *אלקנה 9) *אביאסף *בני קרח

SOURCE: Emailim Batorah

LOOKING TO BE A SANDEK

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Avi was the happy father of a new baby boy. Like many of his colleagues, he was planning to ask the head of his kollel to be the sandek (the person honored with holding the baby during a bris) at the bris. But a few days before the bris, he saw an advertisement in the newspaper that caught his eye. It read:

"Dear friends, I am looking to be a sandek at a bris on Wednesday. This is because Wednesday is a fast day, and fasting is difficult for me. However, I don't want to not fast and rely on another heter. Therefore, I am seeking to be a sandek, because it says in the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 568:7) that a sandek is exempt from fasting. If someone is willing to allow me to do this mitzvah, I will pay $1,000."

Avi read this and thought, "$1,000 could be a huge help right now!". He had a new baby and all the expenses that come with it. The money sounded very appealing. But on the other hand, he felt uneasy about giving the honor of being the sandek to a random person from a newspaper ad, even if the man was willing to pay for it. It felt wrong not to give the honor to his rosh kollel, someone prestigious and deserving.So, he brought two questions to a Rav, which were then asked to Rav Chaim Kanievsky: Is the person looking to buy the rights to be the sandek to exempt himself from fasting doing the right thing or the wrong thing? Is it acceptable to "sell" the sandek rights to someone willing to pay a lot of money, or should he forgo the money and give the honor of sandek to his rosh kollel? What do you think? See Upiryo Matok Dvarim Page 31

Regarding last week's question about the dog that chewed the tefillin, Rabbi Zilberstein (Chashukei Chemed Bava Kama Page 49) wrote that the full $2,000 must be paid because this is an example of shen. This is because the Gemara in Beitza (15a) says that dogs want to eat tefillin. Rav Zilberstein explained that this is because they see it as an animal carcass..

WHEN THEY BUY A HOUSE OF THEIR OWN, THE ACCUMULATED MONEY WILL MEAN SOMETHING TO THEM

The young couple was ecstatic to finally move into their very own home. After years of living in a cramped basement apartment, they had saved diligently and purchased a modest house that, to them, felt like a palace.

Their previous landlord, BMG Rosh Chabura, Rav Boruch Ber Ziemba, had been more than just a landlord—he had been like a wise and caring uncle. His warmth and genuine interest in their lives had left an indelible mark on them. But now they were starting a new chapter, eager to build a space that was all their own.

Shortly after they moved in, a knock came at the door. The husband opened it, surprised to find Rav Boruch Ber standing there, his familiar kind smile lighting up his face. In his hand was a plain envelope.

"Rav Boruch Ber! What a surprise!" the young man exclaimed, quickly inviting him inside.The Rav handed the envelope to the couple. "This is for you," he said simply.

"What is this?" the husband asked, opening it hesitantly. Inside was a stack of crisp bills—several hundred dollars.

The Rav, sensing his confusion, smiled. "Let me explain," he began gently. "When you lived in my basement, I noticed something special about you two. Any time something needed fixing—whether it was the leaky faucet or the cracked window—you insisted on paying for the repairs yourselves. You always said, 'The rent is cheap enough, it's only fair that we cover the costs of repairs ourselves.'" The husband nodded, remembering the countless discussions they'd had about it.

"But I didn't agree," Rav Boruch Ber continued. "I always felt that as the landlord, it was my responsibility to take care of those things. You were paying rent; you didn't owe me anything extra. We argued about it more than once, but you were so adamant that I finally stopped trying to convince you."

He paused, his eyes soft with recollection. "One night, after yet another disagreement about who should pay for a repair, I turned to my wife and said, 'What's the point of fighting over a few dollars? Let's put the money into an envelope, and when they buy a house of their own, the accumulated money will mean something to them.'

"And so, every time you paid for a repair, we set that amount aside in an envelope. I have now come to give you back 'your' money." Based on a story in Chayeinu Magazine.

Good Shabbos!