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

Mazel tov to the participants of the 3 chaburas that learn Dirshu Amud Yomi on the siyum of Meseches Shekalim! Now is the time to join for Meseches Yoma!
For more information on times of the shiur or sponsorship opportunities, please see the back page.

PARSHAS EMOR – PLEASE DON'T CURSE

From the Archives of Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

"And the son of the Israelite woman [and the Egyptian man] pronounced the Name [of Hashem] and he cursed" (Vayikra 24,11). In our Dvar Torah of 5763 on this Parsha we explained how this man became so unhinged as to blaspheme. After being told by the Bais Din that he could not pitch his tent in the camp of Dan – his mother's camp – and he was not entitled to a camp paternally since his father was not Jewish, he had no place to go – so he "lost it".

However, we still need to understand why he felt compelled to curse Hashem. If he no longer believed in Hashem, then there was no one for him to curse. If he did believe in Hashem, what sense did it make to curse Him? (See Ma'ayan Bais HaShoeva for Rav Shimon Schwab's explanation.)

I think there might be some mentality here that we can, unfortunately, relate to. There are many people who go around complaining all the time. They have lots of problems. It may be their health or their lack of wealth. Or perhaps their parents or their spouse or their children or their job. Others may just feel that it is too hard to keep all of the Mitzvos. There are too many of them and each of them has so many intricate *halachos*. Why can't we have a more accommodating religion that doesn't present so many conflicts and tests? Life is just not fair! Now, they all fervently believe in Hashem and that He put them in the exact position in life in which they find themselves, and that he gave them these Mitzvos. So it must be G-d's "fault". Deep down – although they won't admit it – they are angry at Hashem. It may be an anger that has been accumulating over years – becoming more and more intense with the passage of time. What happens when this anger reaches its climax? It erupts into blasphemy. Thus this man whose identity as a Jew was called into question his whole life, who may have suffered all forms of shame and discrimination through no fault of his own, finally reaches the boiling point – they tell him, "Get lost!" His anger at Hashem finally finds its verbal expression.

How many people are walking around with the unspoken complaint: "It's not fair"? How many have harbored a persistent sense of frustration with their lot, their family, their Mitzvah obligations? How many people are angry at Hashem?!

If we feel that we might just fit this description, the time to address it is now. Now, before it continues to percolate. Now, before it finds some form of verbal expression, *chas veshalom*. Now, before it totally ruins our lives.

First, we need to remind ourselves of Rebbi Akiva's dictum which is *paskened* in Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 230,5): "A person should always be accustomed to say, 'All the Merciful One does is for the good'." We don't need to understand why – we usually can't understand why – but we need to say it and believe it. Hashem is *tov* and all that He does is *tov*. It often has very little to do with what we think is fair or reasonable.

Second, we need to reiterate Rebbi Chananya ben Akashya's dictum (found at the conclusion of each chapter in Pirkei Avos): "Hakadosh Baruch Hu wanted to confer merit on Yisrael therefore He gave them Torah and Mitzvos in abundance." All the Mitzvos, all the Halachos and all the challenges are only for our good.

While Hashem never promised anyone a bed of roses, He did assure us that he cares about us and has our best interest at heart. There is no reason for complaints or resentment. So don't get mad, get going!

HALACHA Q&A FROM RABBI YISROEL UNGAR

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

QUESTION: Is it okay to measure food on שבת? If I won't be able to make the recipe will that change the answer? Can I use a measuring spoon but not in an exact way?

ANSWER: מדידה/measuring is not allowed on שבת even if you can't make your recipe. It is an עובדא דחול/weekday act to measure things on שבת. Therefore, one may not use a measuring cup, a tape measure, a scale, a ruler, etc. to measure anything on שבת. Tools that are used to measure non-foods are מוקצה and may not be moved at all. Digital items are obviously מוקצה, and even manual scales may not be used. Therefore, a manual food scale may not be used to measure food. However, measuring devices used for food are not מוקצה and may be used in a way that is not considered measuring. For example, one may use a measuring cup or spoon in a non-precise way to approximate the amount of an ingredient needed. As long as you don't smooth off the food in the cup or spoon and it is being done imprecisely, it is okay. Also, for a מצוה one is allowed to measure. For example, to measure temperature with a manual thermometer is allowed. Measuring wine for kiddush or מצה on ליל פסח is מותר. Measuring medicine for a sick person is allowed since it is a מדידה של מצוה.

עי' סי' ש"ו סעי' ז' ומ"ב ס"ק ל"ד, ול"ו. עי' הלכות שבת במטבח דף 257.

THE HOVERBOARD

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

There was once a young boy named Avi Burger. One day, his mother, Mrs. Burger, made an incentive program with him: if he got ready for bed on time every day for 30 days, he would win a prize worth up to one hundred shekels.

Avi was very motivated to win the prize, and sure enough, after a month, he had filled in all the days on his chart and was able to claim the prize. His mother was very happy, so she took him to the nearby toy store around the corner to buy a toy.

They went, browsed through the store, and saw a very high-quality hoverboard marked at 80 shekels. Mrs. Burger was surprised that it was so cheap, but she bought it, and Avi loved it. He was so excited about his prize and used it constantly for two days.

Mrs. Burger's neighbor saw the hoverboard and said, "Wow, where did you get that?" She replied, "I got it at the corner toy store, and it was actually relatively cheap, it was only 80 shekels."

So the neighbor went into the store and wanted to buy one for herself. But she saw that the sticker price on the toy was actually 300 shekels. She

spoke to the woman store clerk and asked, "Wasn't it 80?" The clerk said, "There must have been a mistake, the price is 300."

So the neighbor went back to Mrs. Burger and said, "I spoke to them. They said it must have been a mistake. The price is really 300 shekels."

Now Mrs. Burger realized that she must have underpaid. So she went back to the toy store and said, "I bought this for 80 shekels, but I now hear that the real price is 300 shekels. What would you like me to do about the difference?"

The clerk said, "Well, the real price is 300. If you could bring in the extra 220 shekels when you can, I'd be very grateful." Mrs. Burger replied, "I never would have bought the toy for 300 shekels. The only reason I bought it was because it was 80. My whole budget was one hundred. If you'd like, I can return the item, give it back to you, and you can refund my money."

The clerk weakly said, "No, please don't return it. If you return it, my boss will see that we now have a used, open-box item and will ask about it. Even though I was not the one who put on the wrong sticker, I'll get in trouble, and I'm afraid I may lose my job. So please don't return it. Instead, I ask that you keep it for now, and over time, whenever you have a little extra money, please put it aside and maybe bring it back to us."

Mrs. Burger said, "I don't think that's my responsibility. I'd either like to return it and get my money back, or I'd like to keep it. And if you're afraid of losing your job, maybe you should pay the difference yourself."

The clerk said, "No, I'm really afraid of losing my job. I beg you, please just keep it for now, and when you have a chance, please pay the difference."

Mrs. Burger was unsure what to do, so she brought the question to Rav Zilberstein. So, what do you think she should do? Does she have the right to just keep it without paying the difference at all? Does she have the right to do what the clerk said, to keep it for now and pay later when she can? After all, she is keeping it even though she has not fully paid for it. Should she return it and get her money back, even if that risks causing the clerk to lose her job? Should she insist that the clerk pay the difference? Or maybe you have another suggestion. What do you think the right thing to do is? See Chashukei Chemed Bava Kama Page 605

Regarding last week's question about the letter bought by the collector, Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (Chashukei Chemed Bava Kama 601) answered that while the seller should have destroyed the letter as soon as he was done with it, after the fact, since this is many years later, the letter can no longer be credibly misused. Therefore the letter is now hefker and if the seller sold the letter, he can keep the money himself.

MY FATHER TAUGHT ME THAT ONE MUST 'BREAK DOWN WALLS' TO HELP OTHERS.

R' Menachem Porush told over the following story:

One Friday, I was called to come to the Brisker Rav's home. When I arrived, he told me of a certain talmid chacham who was in very difficult financial circumstances. He had called me to ask me to find a way to help him out of his crisis.

"I have no rest over this," he said. We discussed various solutions to the problem, and afterwards I went home. About half an hour before Shabbos, I received another urgent message to come to his home, and of course I made my way there as quickly as possible. The Brisker Rav then told me that he had just thought of someone who might be able to help in the matter, and that we should write him a letter requesting help. I sat and began writing, taking dictation from the Brisker Rav.

When I finished the job, I could not resist asking him: "Please explain, Rabbeinu. There are only a few minutes left before Shabbos. It is clear that we won't be able to send the letter now, since the post office closed hours ago already. Why, then, did you find it necessary to call me now? If I would have come and written the letter immediately after Shabbos, it would have been delivered at the same time!"

The Brisker Rav raised his eyebrows at the question. He looked at me with eyes full of warmth and kindness. "R' Menachem, I am surprised at you. Am I so sure I will live until tomorrow?! Everything I am able to do, I must do immediately, without delay." And then he added, "My father taught me that one must 'break down walls' to help others."

From The Brisker Rav, Volume Two, by R' Shimon Yosef Meller, published by Feldheim Publishers, page 426. Reprinted With Permission from Table Talk.

Please join:

- ***any of the 30+ First Seder weekly shiurim (Mishnayos, Gemara, Halacha, Tefilla, Parsha, Tehillim, Mussar and more! M-F 9:20 AM-1:15 PM),***
- ***the First Seder Daf Hashavua Chabura which meets every Sunday morning at 7:45 AM and Tuesday evening at 8:30 PM,***
- ***any of the First Seder Dirshu Amud Yomi Chaburas which meet Su-F at 6:45 AM, M-F at 11:20 AM, and Su-Th at 9:45 PM, and/or***
- ***First Seder WhatsApp groups on Pele Yoetz, Shemiros Haloshon, and Tehillim – Life Lessons.***

If you have any questions, or to register, sponsor or donate, please contact Rosh Bais Medrash Rabbi Uri Greenspan at rabbigreenspan@firstseder.org 732-407-3178

GOOD SHABBOS!