

# 1st Seder Weekly Divrei Torah

A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

**FIRST SEDER BAIS MEDRASH** established in 2012 by Rabbi Uri Greenspan, provides a unique learning program for men with diverse schedules, ages, and backgrounds. Since its inception, the daily learning programs of Gemara, Mishnayos, Tanach, Halacha, and Jewish ethics, have provided hundreds of First Seder participants with a rich, challenging, and authentic Bais Medrash experience. The wide range of subjects and the varying levels of difficulty allow for the participants to choose which learning track best fits their individual needs, enabling them to truly take their learning to the next level.

## DAILY SCHEDULE:

9-11:30am: Gemara in-depth and B'Chavrusa

9:10am-1pm: Classroom Learning

Monday 9-9:45pm: Dirshu Mishna Berura Shiur

Tuesday 8:45-9:45pm: Daf HaShovua Gemara Shiur

**TO JOIN:** Contact Rabbi Uri Greenspan at 732.407.3178

Office@FirstSeder.org, Lower Merion Synagogue

## PARSHAS EIKEV – NO GREATER JOY

*Rabbi Shlomo Caplan*

"He afflicted you and let you go hungry [then] He fed you the *mohn*... in order to make you know that man does not live by bread alone, rather man lives by whatever Hashem dictates" (Devarim 8:3). The *mohn* was a once in history phenomenon. The whole occurrence was totally miraculous. It was a spiritual food from heaven which was capable of sustaining physical existence. While it did not fall on Shabbos, a double portion fell on Friday. No matter how much one exerted himself to collect it, he ended up with no more than one *omer* per family member. Although any *mohn* left overnight would be swarming with worms the next morning, the *mohn* that was left over Friday night remained fresh and was not infested. All this served to impress Bnai Yisrael with Hashem's omnipotence and his remarkable compassion to provide for over two million people for forty years.

Why did Hashem first afflict Bnai Yisrael and cause them to go hungry before providing the *mohn*? Did they not fully realize that "man does not live by bread alone?" Rav Aron Kotler explains that although the message of the *mohn* was

clear and convincing, it had to be emotionally absorbed. There had to be an intense hunger and anticipation that preceded the miracle of the *mohn* for its message to have the ultimate impact.

Chazal (Yoma 76a) assert that every day each person was worried whether he would find the *mohn* tomorrow. "The students of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai asked him why the *mohn* didn't fall just once a year and provide an annual supply of *mohn*. He replied with a *mashal*: A king had just one son. Initially he provided him with an annual budget for all his needs and he visited his father only once a year. Consequently, the king changed the budget to a daily supply and then the son came to see his father every day. This is why Hashem caused the *mohn* to fall every day instead of once a year. This way everyone was worried that perhaps this miracle would not continue unabated, and he and his family would eventually die of hunger. It was this phenomenal concern and anticipation which was necessary to etch in their minds that "man does not live by bread alone, rather man lives by whatever Hashem dictates."

Every fact that one knows becomes more absorbed and appreciated in direct proportion to the passion and anticipation that accompany it. Whether contemplating some complex issue or studying Torah, the more bothered one is by the question and the more intensely he struggles to find a resolution, the more he will appreciate and understand the answer. This is the reason for the well-known aphorism, "*Ein simcha kehataras hasefeikos* – there is no greater joy than the resolution of one's doubts." (See Metzudas Dovid Mishlei 15:30.) Indeed, the hallmark of a great Talmid Chacham is his pining to understand a difficult Gemara or the words of a complicated Tosafos. The sweat and toil that he invests in his learning ultimately yield the deepest comprehension and the greatest sense of relief and joy when the elusive answer is finally found. Thereby he bonds with the Torah and the One Who gave it to us.

In a world that is bent on trying to make everything easier and faster, we Yidden must realize that the harder something is and the more effort it takes, the more worthwhile and meaningful it is.

You can bring a zechus refua shelaima for Sandy Bruck - Shalom ben Tila Leah - 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 WRAPPED GIFT

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha opens up with the phrase, "And it will be if you observe the mishpatim then Hashem will safeguard for you the covenant and kindness that he swore to your forefathers". We know that Mishpatim are the mitzvos between man and man, the interpersonal mitzvos. This leads us to the following true story.

Elisheva had a friend, Zehava, who was engaged to get married. Elisheva wanted to buy Zehava a nice engagement present. She went to a gift shop and looked around. She saw many beautiful gifts on display. Then Elisheva noticed an expensive bottle of perfume that she knew Zehava wanted. The perfume had a price tag of \$250. That was way out of her budget.

Just then a voice came on over the loud-speaker. "Everyone is reminded that all gifts today are 50% off". Immediately Elisheva realized that the gift was

within her budget. She picked up the bottle of perfume and brought it to the counter.

"Can you please gift wrap this perfume?", Elisheva asked the clerk. "I'm giving it as a present."

"Of course", answered the clerk and asked, "Would you like us to take the price tag off the item?". "It's ok, it's not necessary", Elisheva answered, "you don't have to take it off". The clerk nicely wrapped the gift and handed it to Elisheva. Elisheva happily paid and walked out with the gift in a bag.

The next day, as Elisheva was driving over to Zehava's house to give her the present, she had the following thought: Was she allowed to give the gift that had a price tag of \$250 on it if that was not the price that she paid? One on hand, \$250 was the original price, she just happened to get it during a

sale. But on the other hand, Elisheva would be giving the impression that she spent much more for her friend than she really did. Perhaps that was being deceitful. Perhaps that was geneivas da'as. Perhaps she would be making Zehava much more indebted to her than she really ought to be.

What do you think? Was Elisheva allowed to give her the gift with the price tag that was double the amount that she paid? Did she have to tell her what she really paid for it?

Regarding last week's question about the money that was placed in the danishes, Rav Zilberstein wrote that the woman who paid would have to pay again. This is because if the recipient did not know she got paid, it is like she did not get paid.

## GENUG, YOU SHOWED THEM WHAT WE HAVE HERE

Rav Shlomo Freifeld was a master at building people. Eli arrived in the Yeshiva after a long and difficult yeshiva career. Early on, he had been diagnosed with severe learning disabilities, and even as a teenager, he was unable to read English or Hebrew. The whole yeshiva experience had been a nightmare for him and he arrived in Shor Yoshuv with very low expectations. From the outset, Reb Shlomo treated him differently than he had ever been treated before. He spent hours with him, listening to his attempts to read and understand. One day, Reb Shlomo turned to him with a smile. "Eli, I don't think that you realize this, but even though you have difficulties reading, you are a tremendous lamdan with a razor-sharp head. We are going to make you into a talmid chacham." Reb Shlomo found suitable chavrusos for Eli, and they would learn with him each day, working on his understanding of the sugya, not the actual reading. As he began to understand the sugyas, he would memorize the words by heart so that it seemed as if he could read. It was a difficult road for Eli. There were times when he grew completely despondent as he realized that people who did much less work than him were progressing much faster. He would exert himself three times as much as his friends would with little to show for it; they were completing whole masechtos and he was finishing

lines. Every time he felt like he couldn't go on, he would speak to his rebbi. Reb Shlomo invested him with an appreciation for his unique challenge and a confidence that he would ultimately triumph. After years of hard work, he had mastered the first seven blatt in masechta Chullin, word for word, Reb Shlomo had tested him on each and every line and knew that he knew it perfectly.

And then Reb Shlomo decided that it was time that Eli taste the sweet fruits of his labors. It was at the engagement party for one of the bachurim, a "Shor Yoshuv vort." The celebrations were traditionally held in Reb Shlomo's dining room and he was the host; it was always his show, as he would lead the speeches and spirited singing, enlivening everyone with his contagious joy. The room was jammed with people: talmidim, guests and mechutanim. There were several distinguished rabbanim in attendance and they were speaking with Reb Shlomo about the Yeshiva. Reb Shlomo's eyes gleamed. "We have bachurim here who are literally geonim, true geniuses," he said. The illustrious guests looked on with interest as Reb Shlomo searched the room with his eyes. His gaze rested on Eli. "Eli, come here," he instructed. Eli stood near Reb Shlomo, and Reb Shlomo studied him. "Eli, start to say a gemara. Let's see, how about masechta Chullin!" Eli

closed his eyes and began to recite the words that had become his through blood, sweat and tears. "Hakol shoachim vshchitaso kesheira", he started, gathering confidence as he continued, rattling off line after line, kushyos and terutzim. The room grew completely silent as the chasan, the rabbanim and all the guests watched the spectacle before them. Daf beis became daf gimmel, and still he was going strong.

Minutes passed and Eli was showing no signs of faltering, saying each word clearly and lovingly. The rabbanim were visibly astonished by this American boy who could recite gemara as fluently as an old Polish gaon, and they were respectfully silent.

A full fifteen minutes passed with Eli gathering steam, until he suddenly approached the end of daf ches, the extent of his knowledge. Just as he said the last word that he knew, Reb Shlomo held up his hand. "Genug, enough — you showed them what we have here." As Eli recalled, "Those fifteen minutes erased fifteen years of humiliation and suffering".

(From Reb Shlomo, By Rabbi Yisrael Besser, Published By Judaica Press, Reprinted With Permission From Table Talk.)

**NEW** - Listen to Rabbi Greenspan's weekly shiurim via podcast. For complete podcast information go to <https://jewishpodcasts.fm/rabbiurigreenspan>

### First Seder Bais Medrash's Mishnayos Shel Chesed Program

Thank you to all the learners who are currently learning for Ilan ben Kalman a"h (Ilan Naibryf was niftar in the Surfside collapse) and Shmuel Zavel ben Yisrael a"h (Yona Zaslav's father).

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For more information or to register for First Seder, contact Rabbi Uri Greenspan at 732-407-3178 or [RabbiGreenspan@FirstSeder.org](mailto:RabbiGreenspan@FirstSeder.org)

**Good Shabbos!**