

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 BEREISHIS – WHO IS MAN AND WHO ARE WE?

Rabbi Shlomo Caplan

The great philosophers have always sought an expression or catch phrase that defines “man”. “Man is...” However, we don’t have to look further than the Targum Onkelos to discover the Torah’s definition.

According to Onkelos the pasuk which describes the creation of man (Bereishis 2,7) is translated as follows: “And Hashem, G-d, created man dust from the ground; and He blew into his nostrils a soul of life; and man became a talking spirit.” Thus, Man is a talking being. Rav Aharon Kotler explains that while what goes on in our minds may be genuine expressions of what we believe or how we feel, these expressions gain life and reality through their verbalization.

This is true for so many aspects of our lives. Among the 48 ways by which Torah knowledge is acquired is “articulate speech” (Avos 6,6). Rashi comments, “Words of Torah cannot be preserved without being uttered, as Chazal interpret

the pasuk in Mishlei (4,22) ‘For they (the words of Torah) are life to those who express them verbally.’” The words concretize the ideas, thus making a more indelible impression on our memories. And quite often the words, when spoken aloud, give us a sharper and deeper understanding of the concepts that were merely absorbed mentally.

The things we believe or feel very often come to life through speech. Prayer is not only a means of talking to Hashem. The more we say it the deeper we believe it. Through the articulation of Hashem’s greatness and kindness we clarify in our minds, albeit to a very limited extent, a perception of Whom we worship. This was what Dovid Hamelech meant when he said, “Va’ani Tefilla – I am prayer!” His personification of a “talking spirit” was through prayer.

Perhaps of even greater importance, this helps us crystallize the recognition that Hashem is the only power Who controls

our fate and the only One Whom we can turn to. Especially as members of Bnai Yisrael, we have a guarantee that He hears our prayers and cares deeply about us: “For which is a great nation that has a G-d Who is close to it, as is Hashem, whenever we call to Him?” (Devarim 4:7).

As I pen these words Eretz Yisrael in engaged in an ominous war against ferocious, merciless enemy sworn to annihilate us. Let us not underestimate the power of our intense words of Torah study and our passionate words of tefilla.

Who is Man? He is a creation of Hashem endowed with the capacity to speak and express himself. A talking spirit who can change his destiny with the power of speech. And who are we? A nation close to Hashem Who listens to our words of Torah and answers our prayers. May Hashem protect us and may He bring our ultimate redemption bim’heira beyamainu!

You can bring a zechus refua 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 THIEF'S TOOLS

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha makes a reference to the prohibition against stealing. The Torah says, "from all the trees of the garden you may eat." Our Sages teach, this is a reference to one of the commandments of the Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach, the prohibition against stealing. This leads us to the following true story.

Michoel, who lived in Israel, was once awakened by sounds coming from his garage. He quickly ran to the garage and peeked in the window. Looking into the garage, he saw a thief with wire cutters, lock cutters, and an electric saw, trying to break into his car. He quickly called the police. The police were very responsive and arrived within a minute. As soon as the thief saw the police, he dropped his tools and ran for his life. The police were much

faster, caught him, subdued him, and he was arrested.

After the thief was booked, Michoel learned that the thief was Jewish. The thief, a fellow Jew, had left these expensive tools in his garage. Among them were an expensive electric saw that could cut through locks and an expensive wire cutter. Did Michoel have a mitzvah to return the tools to the thief? Should Michoel keep them? Could he sell them and keep the money? What do you think? Did Michoel have a mitzvah to return the tools, or could he keep or sell them? See Upiryo Matok Vayikra page 61

Regarding last week's question about the hitchhiker who left the car to daven mincha, Rav Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Vayikra page 45) wrote

that the hitchhiker is liable to pay the fine. This is because the hitchhiker can be considered to be a shomer sachar, a paid watchman, who is liable even for a grama, an indirect damage. He is being "paid" to watch the car with the free ride. In addition, the hitchhiker, the paid watchman, stands in the place of the owner. Because the car was parked in a no-parking zone, and the hitchhiker was responsible for it while there, the hitchhiker is liable for any damage or fines that come because of the illegal parking. Rav Zilberstein wrote that the hitchhiker should have ideally told the car owner that he needed to daven mincha before the owner left, but if not, he should have stayed sitting in the car, and davened mincha alone, while sitting.

WHY HE REFUSED TO HELP ALL THE WAY

Reb Chaim Soloveitchik would often take walks in the streets of Brisk, engrossed in a sugya. He would not walk with his rabbinic frock. Rather he would dress like an ordinary Jew, wearing his long coat, with his big yarmulke on his head. His route took him to the riverbank on the other side of the city. Sometimes Rav Simcha Zelig (the Dayan) would accompany him and they would sit down on a bench, engrossed in an atmosphere of holiness.

One day when Reb Chaim was out walking alone, he met a Jew who was not a resident of the city. The man, unaware of whom he was addressing, asked him how to get to a certain place. Reb Chaim gave him directions, but he saw that the man was unsure and he was afraid he would lose his way. Reb Chaim therefore decided to accompany the man to his destination, which was on the other side of the city.

They had been walking together for a while when the man stopped, apologizing that his bag was very heavy and he could not go further. He asked whether Reb Chaim would be so kind as to carry

it for him to his lodgings. Reb Chaim carried the suitcase for quite a while.

"Perhaps you'll take a turn for a few minutes?" Reb Chaim asked when he felt he needed a break. "I have no strength for it," the man answered, explaining that he had come a very long way, adding, "It won't hurt you to help me a little bit with my burden." The dialogue repeated itself several times until they were very close to the end of their long walk.

At that point, Reb Chaim put down the suitcase and pointed to the house, turning to leave. "Nu," said the man, "if you've already taken me this far, perhaps you will take the bag into the house?" But Reb Chaim refused, said goodbye and left. Only the next day did the visitor learn why his benefactor had not finished the job. His host had suggested that he go meet the rav of the city and pay his respects. When he came into the rav's house, he was mortified, wishing the ground would open up and swallow him. The man whom he had taken advantage of and had shleppeled his

suitcase was none other than the revered rav of the city. The visitor immediately asked forgiveness for the terrible dishonor he had shown to the rav, but Reb Chaim only smiled, unperturbed, as if he had not been involved in the events at all.

Now the visitor could not hold himself back from asking why he had refused to carry the suitcase the last few steps. Reb Chaim answered him, "Indeed, I really should have completed the mitzvah, but I was concerned that your host might see us coming in and yell at you for having the chutzpah to trouble the rav of the city. I decided that it would be better to leave you some distance from his home than to expose you to terrible shame."

(From Reb Chaim Brisker, By R' Shimon Yosef Meller, Published By Feldheim, and Reprinted With Permission from Table Talk.)

New Shiur

Dirshu Amud Yomi Gemara shiur starting this Sunday morning (6:45 AM – 7:25 AM). See schedule for other times during the week.

Calling All Men


Join us for learning at the First Seder Bais Medrash and help bring the zechusim to Acheinu Bnai Yisroel!

Come for one shiur or all shiurim. Choose what works best for you.

1st Seder

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First Seder Weekly Schedule

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Morning Track 1: Shiurim					
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	Mishnayos Demai (R' Chesky Weiss)	Mishnayos Demai (R' Chesky Weiss)	Mishnayos Demai (R' Chesky Weiss)	Mishnayos Demai (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 – 11:25 AM	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar (R' Uri Greenspan)	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar (R' Uri Greenspan)	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar (R' Uri Greenspan)	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar (R' Uri Greenspan)	Dirshu Mishna Berurah + 5 minutes of Mussar (R' Uri Greenspan)
11:30 AM – 12:10 PM	Practical Timely Halacha (R' Mordechai Shain)	The Life and Torah of our Leaders (R' David Gross)	Blur Tefilla (R' Yoel Zeffren)	Sefer Tehillim (R' Uri Greenspan)	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa -Parsha (R' Uri Greenspan)
12:15 PM – 1:00 PM	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa -Parsha (R' Uri Greenspan)	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa -Parsha (R' Uri Greenspan)	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa -Parsha (R' Uri Greenspan)	Shemiras Haloshon from the Chofetz Chaim/Hashkafa -Parsha (R' Uri Greenspan)	

Please join our annual online campaign honoring:

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To sponsor the 1st Seder Weekly, please contact

office@firstseder.org.

For more information or to register for First Seder, contact RabbiGreenspan@FirstSeder.org or 732-407-3178

Good Shabbos