

1st Seder Weekly Divrei Torah

A BAIS MEDRASH PROGRAM FOR MEN

PARSHAS VAEIRA – 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: May one spill out the excess water from tuna in a can? May one spill out fat from the top of soup? May one spill out excess liquid from a watery cholent?

ANSWER: When it comes to בורר there has to be a תערובות/mixture in order for there to be an act of בורר. If we establish that there is no mixture, then there won't be any issues of sorting. ערוך שלחן ערוך tells us clearly that when one has a barrel of wine and there is sediment that settled to the bottom, all the wine that is above the sediment is not considered mixed with the sediment. Therefore, even if one is taking wine not for immediate use, one may pour out wine and continue pouring until the wine starts to come out slowly from between the sediment, since all the wine that flows nicely is not considered mixed with the sediment. At the point when the wine starts to drip out slowly, that wine is considered mixed with the sediment and you must stop pouring. In a tuna can, soup or cholent, the excess liquid that pours out freely in a nice stream is not considered mixed with the food and is not subject to בורר, and therefore is allowed to be poured out. While pouring out water from tuna, once the stream of water turns to droplets, you must stop pouring.

על סימון ש"ט סני' י"ד ומ"ב ס"ק נ"ג (וכל הסעי') זכור
ושמור דף 328 - 332

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BURNING IPHONES

Questions for discussion at your Shabbos table by Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This past week, Rav Matisyahu Solomon passed away. Rav Matisyahu was instrumental in bringing awareness to the Jewish community about the potential harm that smartphones can bring to our mental and spiritual health. Interestingly, last week, January 6th, the New York Times ran a story by technology reporter Kashmir Hill, who wrote about the harm that smartphones have brought to our mental health and family life, and the benefits of using a basic phone. This leads us to the following true story.

Akiva lived in a small town in Israel. He was successful in reaching out to young Israeli boys from less observant backgrounds and created a vibrant learning group of about 30 students. One year, in the middle of Sukkos on the holiday of Hoshana Rabba, Akiva led a learning program where the boys learned all night. They learned with great alacrity and enthusiasm. At the end of the learning, Akiva spoke to the boys about the importance of Hoshana Rabba and how it is the conclusion of the judgments of Yom Kippur. He spoke about the spiritual benefits that come with not using a smartphone, and using a basic phone instead. He said it would be a tremendous merit if for Hoshana Rabba, every one of them would give up their iPhone and put their iPhones in a box. Akiva's words which emanated from his heart penetrated his students' hearts, and as he passed around the box, every single student took out their iPhone and put it in the box.

Akiva told them that the plan was that the morning after they daven and after they beat their aravos they were going to burn the box with all the iPhones inside of it. It would be an expression of their commitment to living lives of greater holiness. The next morning, after the prayers, they took the box and saw that there were only two phones in the box. Twenty-eight of the phones were missing. They burned the box but with a great feeling of dismay at the missing phones.

A few days later, what happened became clear. One of the boys in the group, named Yoni, decided that the whole purpose of this group was just to give up their phones. If they were planning to burn them, what did they care if the phones were burned or gotten rid of some other way? He took most of the phones and went to a nearby phone dealership, and sold them for \$100 apiece. So, for the 28 phones, he was able to make \$2,800. He figured, why do they have to burn them? They could burn two of them, what do they need to burn all of them for?

When word got out to the group, they were very upset at Yoni. They demanded that Yoni give them the \$2,800, the money for their phones. But Yoni retorted, "What do you mean? You were planning to burn them. You gave them up. They were hefker. Your whole purpose wasn't to sell, your purpose was to get rid of them. What difference does it make to you whether they were burned or

sold? But they argued, "If it was worth it for you to sell, then we should get the money." So then Yoni conceded and said, "OK, I think that I should get the money, but even if you're right that the money goes to you, at least I should be able to get a cut, a significant percentage of it, because I was the one who brokered the deal. I was the one who made the effort and found a buyer and arranged the deal. So, OK, maybe I'll give you part of it, but I should be able to keep a good percentage of the money, maybe 20% or 30%."

They brought this question to Rav Zilberstein. What do you think? If they were planning to get rid of the phones, was Yoni allowed to sell the phones? On one hand, you could say that since they were planning to burn them, what do they care if they were sold? On the other hand, they specifically wanted to burn them. If he had no right to sell them, and he did sell them, he has to give them the money, and he should not be entitled to any amount. See Upiro Matok Vayikra Page 208

Regarding last week's question about the diary, Rav Zilberstein (in Upiro Matok Vayikra 202) writes that if the diary has no positive purpose for anyone, the diary should not be returned, rather burned. This is because it is lashon hara and the children therefore never inherited this diary.

A MEAL AND PHOTOS FROM THE WEDDING DELIVERED TO THE MOURNERS

I'd like to share a touching story about Rav Matisyahu Solomon, highlighting his concern for others. In 1997, Rav Matisyahu arrived in Lakewood to serve as the mashgiach, having relocated from Gateshead. He settled on 6th Street, next to Rav Shimon Epstein and his family. Rav Shimon was a respected figure in Lakewood, and both he and Rav Matisyahu had large families, including daughters of the same age. A year after Rav Matisyahu's move, Rav Matisyahu's daughter became engaged, much to the delight of her close friend, the Epstein girl, who eagerly anticipated dancing at the wedding.

However, tragedy struck two weeks before the wedding when Rav Shimon Epstein passed away, plunging his family into mourning (Aveilus). In their Aveilus, they could not attend or participate in the Solomon's wedding festivities.

On the wedding day, the Epsteins returned home from work to find a heartfelt note from their neighbors, the Solomons. In the note, the Solomons expressed sorrow for their absence at the wedding. The Solomons insisted the Epsteins not worry about dinner, as a meal from the wedding – including dishes from the smorgasbord, main course, and dessert – would soon be delivered to them. True to their word, the caterer

from the wedding sent the exact meal being served at the celebration, allowing the Epsteins to partake in the joy from their home.

Furthermore, Rav Matisyahu arranged for the photographer at the wedding to quickly develop photos of the Bedeken and Chuppah and have them delivered to the Epstein family. As they dined, they were able to view these images, symbolically sharing in the celebrations. Thinking about the other person; that's greatness! Told by Rav Paysach Krohn. Reprinted With Permission From [Table Talk](#).

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Good Shabbos!