

New Learning Initiative

SEMICHAT CHAVER PROGRAM



delivered by our very own

**Rabbi Aryeh
Lebowitz**



The **SEMICHAT CHAVER PROGRAM** is an exciting recently developed learning program for working professionals.

Shiurim run once a week, and begin with the ethical and philosophical meaning behind the halachos we cover. This is followed by a discussion of a number of cutting-edge contemporary questions. The questions are then answered by learning through the relevant Rishonim, Shulchan Aruch, and modern-day poskim.



Upon completion of each topic, and successfully passing a written exam, members will receive a certificate of accomplishment signed by HaRav Hershel Schachter, Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar and HaRav Zalman Nechemiah Goldberg.



second semester

HILCHOT

MA'ACHALEI AKUM

Tuesday nights · 9:00 followed by Maariv

beginning Tuesday, May 7th

655 Hungry Harbor Road, North Woodmere



Frequently Asked Questions About Semichas Chaver

1. Do I need to bring anything to the shiur on Tuesday night? Do I need to register for the program?

Source sheets will be provided but you should bring a Shulchan Aruch (יורה דעה חלק ב). If you don't have one, don't worry, copies will be provided for the first few shiurim. There is no cost for the program other than the investment in purchasing a Shulchan Aruch (which every Jewish home should have in any case). Registration isn't necessary, but I would appreciate a quick email to bknwrabbi@gmail.com to let me know if you plan on coming, so that I can make the correct amount of copies.

2. How long does the program run until completion?

The section on Ma'achalei Akum is expected to run until Sukkos. After each section there will be a written bechina and a certificate signed by Rav Hershel Schachter, Rav Zalman Nechemya Goldberg and Rav Shlomo Amar. The certificates will be presented at a siyum that will likely be attended by one (or more) of the three gedolim mentioned. We will then move on to other topics (e.g. Shabbos, niddah). There will be separate certificates for each topic.

3. Can I just listen to the recordings online and then take the bechina?

NO. One of the primary goals of the program is to create a chevra of lomdim. There is an interactive element and an energy created by a group learning together. This is not an online program.

4. Do I have to take the bechina if I come to the shiurim?

No - but you will probably want to. There is nothing like the feeling of having mastered a section of Torah, and having your knowledge put to the test.

5. Will the shiurim be recorded? How do I make up a missed shiur?

The shiurim will be recorded, but they will not be posted to yutorah or any other torah sites. We will have a whatsapp group for the chevra in the shiur and the recording will be posted to the group.

6. Do I need a chavrusa?

No - there will be no time during the shiur itself for chavrusa learning. Of course, it would be a great idea to get together with a chavrusa at some other time during the week to review the previous week's material. One of the comments we have gotten from many participants is that they wish they would have done more חזרה as we learned the material, and not waited until the end.

7. Where did the curriculum come from?

The entire program was created by Rav Elyada Goldwicht. He developed the curriculum, arranged for the rabbinic backing of the program, and recruited our shul along with many other American (and Israeli and South American) shuls, to launch the Semichas Chaver Program. Rav Elyada has been running it for over a year in Yerushalayim and Beit Shemesh, where he has seen the number of participants grow exponentially, and people really take to the learning in a serious way.

8. How long is each shiur? What is the format of the shiur?

We begin at 9:00 and maariv is at 10:15 so definitely no longer than an hour and fifteen minutes. It will be broken up into segments to make it feel less long. We will spend the first 10-15 minutes exploring some hashkafic element of kashrus, with an attempt to connect it to the week's parsha, so that each participant can share something from his learning at the Shabbos table. We will then pose a list of practical halachic questions, and then we will learn through the sources that should provide us with the ability to answer those questions. Occasional short video clips will be shown to help explain some of the metzius of the topics we will be learning about. Review questions will be sent out on the whatsapp group.

9. Is this real semicha?

No. This is a program geared toward educated lay people who want to be able to answer the most common kashrus questions that come up in the course of daily life. Paskening more challenging and involved questions takes years of full-time learning. You cannot use this to officiate at weddings or receive parsonage.

10. Will I be able to keep up if it's been a while since I have been learning seriously?

Yes, provided that you are willing to take it seriously. Every topic will be covered from the ground up and assumes no prior knowledge. This program is geared to intelligent people who want to grow in their learning.

11. Do I need to be a BKNW member to participate?

No. BKNW membership is a great way to support an amazing shul but is not a requirement for joining the shiur. Early indications are that we may have a dozen people from outside the shul participating. The more the better!

12. What is the role of whatsapp in the program? Can I participate without whatsapp?

We use the whatsapp group to send out materials including mekoros and recordings of the shiurim. More importantly we use the whatsapp group to discuss the shailos that have come up in real life relating to the topics we have learned about. This is a wonderful way to see how the Torah affects our every day life and how this learning will prepare us to tackle challenges that come up. Of course, if you do not have whatsapp ASHRECHA! and you can still join the shiur.