

SHAILOS L'CHAZARA

Review Questions

Sefer HaSichos 5752

ספר השיחות · תשנ"ב

Parshas Lech Lecha

פרשת לך לך

2 sichas in this booklet

Sicha 1: Go Beyond Yourself! · 11 Cheshvan 5752, §§1-15

Sicha 2: Bring the Pannes, Learn Chassidus! · 8 Cheshvan 5752, §§1-10

TEACHER'S EDITION

Answers are printed in italics on the answer lines, with the section (§) of the sicha.

★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

Each sicha has questions, a true chassidishe story, and a lesson for you.

Go Beyond Yourself!

לך לך מארצך

Sefer HaSichos 5752 vol. 1, sicha of Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha, 11 MarCheshvan 5752 (1991), sections 1-15 (translated from Yiddish).

The point: *“Lech Lecha” starts preparing for Matan Torah, and the Torah is given anew every day, so we need it every day. Avraham, already great at 75, went out of all his limits. He was promised ten lands (seven middos + three mochin), and with Moshiach we’ll have them all. So: use your hidden powers to make real chiddushim in Torah, and raise new students.*

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

- ★ Which events are in Parshas Lech Lecha, from beginning to end?

Hashem’s command “lech lecha,” Avraham’s travels in Eretz Yisrael, the promise of the land

(“lezaracha nasati” at the Bris Bein HaBesarim), and at the end the mitzvah of milah. (§1)

- ★★ What period began with Avraham, and what question does that raise for us?

“Two thousand years of Torah”: he began preparing for Matan Torah. But the Torah was already

given! What does preparing for it have to do with us? (§§2-3)

- ★★ How do the words “Nosein HaTorah” answer the question?

It is in present tense: Hashem gives the Torah every day, on a higher level each day. So we need

the preparation of “lech lecha” every day too. (§3)

- ★★★ The land was already given (“nasati,” past tense), and was conquered by Yehoshua and Ezra. So why is “lech lecha... el ha’aretz” still relevant?

Hashem gave ten lands, including Keini, Kenizi and Kadmoni, but so far we received only seven; the

three are for Moshiach (as with the three extra arei miklat). Also “kol yoshveha aleha” will be

complete only then, with all Jews of all generations. So we are still in the middle of acquiring

the land. (§§4-6)

- ★★ Why is this especially relevant in our generation?

“Kalu kol hakitzin”; the Frierdiker Rebbe said we already did teshuvah and “polished the buttons.”

Ours is the last generation of galus and first of geulah. And the three lands will come

peacefully: the nations will give them willingly. (§6)

6. ★★★ What was the main chiddush of Matan Torah?

Joining “elyonim” and “tachtonim”: G-dliness comes down into the world, and through mitzvos a physical object becomes holy, making a dirah for Hashem in the lowest world. (§8)

7. ★★ Avraham at 75 had already found Hashem, taught the world and been ready to give his life. Why doesn't the Torah tell us about those things?

They were human efforts with limits. “Lech lecha” was something new: going out of all one's limits, even a holy previous level, to a level beyond comparison, step after step (“haloch v'naso'a”). (§8–9)

8. ★★ What does “asher ar'eka” hint to, and how is Avram's name change connected?

“I will reveal you,” your real self. Avram was “av l'Aram”; Avraham became “av hamon goyim,” father of the whole world. He went both up (to Eretz Yisrael, revealing his true self) and down (getting the power to raise up the whole world). (§9)

9. ★★ Why is it fitting that Lech Lecha is the third parshah?

Matan Torah is connected with the number three (“oriyan tlisa'i,” a threefold Torah), and three stands for peace, joining spiritual and physical. Lech Lecha, the third parshah, begins exactly that joining. (§9, note)

10. ★★★ Why is bris milah different from the Avos' other mitzvos?

The other mitzvos of the Avos were “reichos” (fragrances); milah left kedushah in the body itself, like mitzvos after Matan Torah (that's why Avraham said “sim na yadcha tachas yerechi” for the oath). So it gives the power for all mitzvos after Matan Torah. After milah he became “Avraham.” (§10)

11. ★★ Inside us, what are the seven lands and the three lands?

Seven lands = working on the seven middos (now the mind mostly serves the feelings). Keini, Kenizi, Kadmoni = the three mochin (chochmah, binah, daas) for their own sake, in the future: “malah ha'aretz de'ah es Hashem kamayim layam mechasim.” (§13)

12. ★★★ What is the Rebbe's hora'ah? What is a REAL chiddush?

"Lech" in Torah: every Jew must make chiddushim, even if he learned a lot, because Torah is infinite. A real chiddush comes from hidden powers you don't know you have. And raise many NEW students, teaching ideas that make them use their own hidden powers. This gives a taste of the Geulah and brings it closer. (§14)

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

The Teachers on the Hill

The Frierdiker Rebbe wrote in his diary about a summer trip with his father, the Rebbe Rashab, from Lubavitch to the village of Serebrinka.

On the road they saw two melamdim from Beshenkovitz, Reb Peretz and Reb Menachem Mendel, resting on a little hill. They had taken off their coats, shoes and hats. With eyes shut tight, Reb Peretz was reviewing a maamar in the special Chassidus tune, waving his hands as he explained a deep idea, while Reb Menachem Mendel listened. They didn't notice the Rebbe's coach at all.

For 33 years these two had walked to Lubavitch for Shavuos, and now they were walking home, reviewing the maamar the Rebbe had just said.

Later the Rebbe Rashab said: "For 5,661 years, nine months, thirteen days and so many hours, this piece of land waited for Peretz and Mendel to come, sit on it, and review words of Torah, and so fulfill the Divine will hidden in creation. The chassidishe melamdim are the true lights of the Jewish home. They are the 'Avrahams' of their generations, who spread G-dliness into Jewish homes."

Source: From the diary of the Frierdiker Rebbe, "The Schoolteachers of Beshenkovitz" (chabad.org)

Think: How did these melamdim do what Avraham did in Lech Lecha?

They joined heaven and earth: their Torah made a physical hill into a dirah for Hashem, and as melamdim they "raised many students," spreading G-dliness like Avraham.

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Lech Lecha means: don't stay where you are, even if it's good. You have hidden kocho's you don't even know about. Use them to find something NEW in Torah, and share it so that others start thinking too.

For example: This week, find a real question on Rashi in the parshah, and don't look up the answer right away. Think it through yourself. Then say your chiddush at the Shabbos table, or explain the question to a younger brother and let him try to answer it.

Bring the Pannes, Learn Chassidus!

ויברכהו ויאמר ברוך אברהם

Sicha of Wednesday night of Parshas Lech Lecha, 8 MarCheshvan 5752 (1991), after Maariv, sections 1-10. Text: Toras Menachem 5752 vol. 1 (an unedited transcript, "bilti mugah"). Included as a companion to the Shabbos sicha of the same week.

The point: *That day's aliyah ends with Malki-Tzedek's brachah to Avraham. Next comes the brachah of ten lands, which we'll get with Moshiach. The three extra lands are the mochin: the avodah of the mind for its own sake. So we must begin now: learn the deep ideas of Chassidus with broad understanding ("rechovos hanahar"), and farbreng about them b'simchah.*

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ How does that day's section of the parshah end?

Malki-Tzedek, king of Shalem, brings out bread and wine and blesses Avram: "Baruch Avram..."

Avraham gives him maaser from everything. (§1)

2. ★★ What two things did Malki-Tzedek give Avraham? What was special about the brachah?

Bread and wine, as is done for people tired from war, and also a brachah. It was the brachah of a

kohen ("v'hu kohen l'Kel Elyon"), from the source of brachos. (§1)

3. ★★ What is the chiddush of the Bris Bein HaBesarim? Where else in halachah do we see it?

"Ten nations are here": but so far we got only seven; Keini, Kenizi and Kadmoni are for the

future. The Rambam: in the days of Moshiach three more arei miklat are added (nine in total), in

those lands. (§2)

4. ★★★ How is the Geulah hinted in the double words "Lech Lecha"?

Chazal: five letters are doubled (final forms) and all are language of geulah; "kaf-kaf": Avraham

was redeemed from Ur Kasdim ("lech lecha"). The Rebbe Maharash explained it in his famous maamar

"Lechatchila Aribet." (§3)

5. ★★ What is special about 7 Cheshvan? What hint is in the days from 7 to 10 Cheshvan?

We begin asking for rain ("v'sein tal u'matar") in Eretz Yisrael. From 7 to 10 ("ha'asiri yihyeh

kodesh") hints at going from seven lands to ten: the complete brachah of Eretz Yisrael in the

Geulah. (§4)

6. ★★★ We ask for tal (dew) even though dew never stops. What does that hint?
Added brachah that comes purely from Above (isarusa d'l'eila), higher than what comes in response to our own efforts. (§4)

7. ★★ What does “umipnei chata’einu” mean in our time?
“Chet” also means lacking: not, chas v’shalom, lacking in mitzvos, but lacking the full perfection fitting for a Jew, Hashem’s only child. (§5)

8. ★★ Which learning must be added now as a “preparation” for the Geulah?
Torah topics about Moshiach and the Geulah, and above all pnimiyus haTorah with understanding, joined with nigleh into “one Torah,” as begun in Tomchei Temimim. (§5)

9. ★★★ What does the Rambam add at the end of Hilchos Melachim that he didn’t write in Hilchos Teshuvah?
The end of the posuk, “kamayim layam mechasim,” which refers to the second period of Moshiach’s days. So we already need to learn Torah topics of that second period too. (§5)

10. ★★ The seven lands and the three lands: what do they mean in avodah?
Seven = middos (the main avodah now, “b’chol levavcha”); three = mochin. Now the mind mostly serves the feelings; in the future the mind will work for its own sake. Since we’re so close, we start that now. (§6)

11. ★★ Whose maamarim does the sicha mention, and what are they called?
The Mitteler Rebbe’s, who is “rechovos hanahar” (the broad river) of Chassidus; some were printed only recently. Learn Chassidus with breadth of understanding. (§7)

12. ★★★ What is the practical hora’ah, and how does “lech lecha” apply to it?
Add in learning deep Chassidus with broad understanding, and in Chassidishe farbrengens b’simchah, with “dibbuk chaveirim” (learning with friends). Each reading of Lech Lecha in the week is a step beyond the one before (Shabbos Minchah, Monday, Thursday, Shabbos), so each step must be beyond comparison to the last. And tzedakah, like Avraham’s maaser. (§§7–10)

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

Chassidus with Pannes

All winter long, the shul in the town of Dokshitz was a warm and happy place, especially on Motzaei Shabbos. A samovar of “pannes” (a hot drink of boiling water, vodka and sugar) was set up, everyone warmed up, and then the chassid Reb Aharon (“Reb Areh”) of Dokshitz gave a shiur in Chassidus.

Once a year Reb Areh traveled to Lubavitch, to the Rebbe Maharash. Once the Rebbe said to him: “I hear that in Dokshitz you learn Chassidus with pannes. What does Chassidus have to do with a samovar of pannes?!”

So when Reb Areh came home, he announced: from now on, Chassidus only, no pannes. The next week fewer people came, and all winter the crowd kept shrinking.

A year later the Rebbe asked him, “What’s doing in Dokshitz?” Reb Areh had to admit that the shiur now drew only a small part of the old crowd.

“Nu,” said the Rebbe Maharash, “so bring back the pannes. As long as they learn Chassidus...”

Source: *Told by the Frierdiker Rebbe, “Spiked Chassidism,” adapted by Yanki Tauber (Once Upon A Chassid, Kehot 1994; chabad.org)*

Think: What did the Rebbe Maharash care about most? How does this connect to farbrengens and learning Chassidus in a way people enjoy?

That as many Jews as possible learn Chassidus. A warm, joyful farbrengen (b’simchah, with friends)

brings people to learn pnimiyus haTorah.

THE LESSON FOR YOU

We are right before the Geulah, so start living the way we’ll live then: use your mind for learning about Hashem, especially Chassidus, and understand it well, not just say the words. And do it with friends, b’simchah.

For example: Make a weekly Chassidus chavrusa with a friend, say Motzaei Shabbos or Friday night, with a l’chaim of grape juice and some snacks. Pick one maamar or one perek of Tanya and try really to understand it, explaining it to each other.