

SHAILOS L'CHAZARA

Review Questions

Sefer HaSichos 5752

ספר השיחות · תשנ"ב

Parshas Vayigash

פרשת ויגש

2 sichas in this booklet

Sicha 1: Light Up the Street! · 2nd day RC Teves, §§1-2

Sicha 2: A New Sefer Lights Up the Old Ones! · Eve of 5 Teves, §§1-2

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.

Light Up the Street!

עד דכליא רגלא דתרמודאי

Sefer HaSichos 5752 vol. 1, sicha of the 2nd day of Rosh Chodesh Teves (the 7th day of Chanukah), week of Parshas Vayigash 5752 (1991). Sections as in the Sichos in English edition (vol. 51).

The point: *The Chanukah lights shine outside until even the Tarmudim's influence is cancelled and turned into pleasure, and the avodah of galus will be seen as what brought the Geulah. Every moment of a Jew's life is eternal; Yaakov reached 147 and still wanted to go higher. Yehudah approaching Yosef = joining Geulah to tefillah. Give tzedakah and Chanukah gelt, and may Hashem give us the Geulah as Chanukah gelt.*

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ Where must the Chanukah lights be lit, and until when must they burn?

"At the outside of the entrance to one's home", burning "until the foot of the Tarmudim leaves

(tichleh)" from the marketplace. (§1)

2. ★★ Who were the Tarmudim, and what does their name hint at?

Tarmud has the letters of "moredes", rebellion; historically, they were servants of Shlomo

HaMelech who rebelled against him. They stand for rebellion against Hashem. (§1, note)

3. ★★ Does the Chanukah light cancel the reshus harabim (public domain)? What does it do?

No. It stays a reshus harabim, with all its Shabbos laws. But the light and influence of the

Chanukah candles are felt in it, and the influence of the Tarmudim is cancelled, even their

"feet", the farthest extensions. (§1)

4. ★★★ What does the word "tichleh" add, besides "cancel"?

It is related to "kilayon", longing and pleasure ("vayechulu", "filled with Shabbos pleasure").

Not only is the bad influence cancelled, it is turned into pleasure. (§1)

5. ★★ What darkness do the Chanukah lights stand for? When will the advantage of this avodah be seen?

The darkness of galus: most of our history we lived outside our land. With the Geulah it will be

revealed how the Yidden's avodah in the Diaspora, revealing Hashem's oneness, was what brought the

Geulah (like the opinion that Moshe's Sefer Torah was outside the Aron). (§1)

6. ★★ Even after 70, 80 or 120 years, what can a Yid still hope for? What does 147 (Yaakov's years) stand for?

Every moment of a Jew's life is eternal, and he can still hope for long life, like Yaakov's 147

years, a full life. 100 = Keser, 40 = a double level of intellect (the avodah of the Geulah), 7 =

the middos. (§2)

7. ★★ Yaakov reached 147, so why did he still want to be buried in Eretz Yisroel, even troubling Yosef the king?

Even after reaching that great level, he wanted to go up higher still. Eretz Yisroel would bring

him to an even higher level, so it was worth troubling Yosef. (§2)

8. ★★ How does "Vayigash eilav Yehudah" connect to tefillah and the Geulah?

Chazal connect Yehudah approaching Yosef with "semichas geulah litefillah", joining the brachah of

Go'al Yisroel to Shemoneh Esrei. We have just davened; may we go straight on to the Geulah, since

this is the last generation of galus and the first of the Geulah. (§2)

9. ★ What will hasten the Geulah, according to the end of the sicha?

Giving tzedakah ("tzedakah brings the Geulah near"), and giving Chanukah gelt, so Hashem will give

the Geulah as Chanukah gelt to the Yidden ("Yisroel is a youth and I love him"), and the simchah

of Chanukah. (§2)

10. ★★ What did the Rebbeim do about Chanukah gelt, and what did the Rebbe tell anyone who hadn't yet given it?

They gave Chanukah gelt to their household, even to married children with their own children.

Whoever hasn't yet should give it now, in the hours of Chanukah that are left, to bring simchah,

which the Rambam writes is part of Chanukah. (§2)

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

A Phone Call at Four in the Morning

Rabbi Shabsi Katz, the rav of Pretoria and chaplain for South Africa's Jewish prisoners, had yechidus a few days before Chanukah. The Rebbe asked, "Can the prisoners light Chanukah candles?" You can't imagine, the Rebbe said, what warmth and hope a menorah brings to a man alone in a dark cell.

Rabbi Katz promised to work on it for next year. "And what about this Chanukah?" the Rebbe asked. "Use the phones in the office." "But it's four in the morning in South Africa!" "On the contrary," the Rebbe said. "When the general sees it's so important that you called from overseas in the middle of the night, he will be impressed."

Rabbi Katz called General Sephton, the prisons' religious director, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. The general was moved: that morning he sent a telex to every prison in South Africa. All the Jewish prisoners lit that Chanukah.

Next morning the Rebbe asked "Nu?", smiled broadly, and gave him a new job: New York was the one state where prisoners couldn't light. That very day, with Rabbi J.J. Hecht's help, New York agreed too.

Source: *Eli & Malka Touger, To Know and to Care, vol. 2, "Jewels in the Streets" (Sichos in English)*

Think: How did the menorah reach "the outside" (§1)? Who is like the Tarmudim turned to good?

It reached the darkest "reshus harabim", prison cells. The non-Jewish general, who could have been an obstacle, became the one who sent the telex.

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Bring your light outside, into the "street", until even the darkness turns into light and pleasure. And never settle: even after reaching a lot, go higher.

For example: Your family lights the menorah at home. This year, offer to help at the public menorah lighting or bring a menorah to a neighbor who doesn't have one.

A New Sefer Lights Up the Old Ones!

מצוה גוררת מצוה

Sefer HaSichos 5752 vol. 1, sicha of the eve of the fifth of Teves 5752 (1991), week of Parshas Vayigash. Sections as in the Sichos in English edition (vol. 51).

The point: *One mitzvah leads to another, and a resolution carried out brings real change. As Go'al Yisroel leads straight into Shemoneh Esrei, may we go straight from tefillah to the Geulah. A new sefer adds to all the sefarim before it. 5 Teves is the day the sefarim were redeemed; those still captive should return, and all together go up with the Geulah.*

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

- ★ What does the Mishnah teach, "One mitzvah leads to another"? What is special about learning Mishnayos?

Every mitzvah pulls the next one after it. And Mishnayos are connected to the Geulah: "in the merit of the Mishnayos we will leave galus" (Torah Or). (§1)

- ★★ Why is a good resolution worth so much, and when does it bring real change?

When the resolution is carried out in practice, Hashem sees it was real, and it brings actual change, especially when made in a holy place: a house of tefillah, of Torah study and of good deeds. (§1)

- ★★ What did the Rebbe say about "semichas geulah litefillah" in this sicha?

Like right after the brachah Go'al Yisroel we go straight into Shemoneh Esrei with no interruption, not even holy ones like Torah or other tefillos, so may we go from our tefillos straight into the Geulah. (§1)

- ★ What did the Rebbe give out, and how was it to be used?

Two dollars: one for tzedakah and one to do with as you wish. And may the tzedakah be given in Eretz Yisroel with the Geulah (if not, give it where you are). (§1)

- ★★ Sefarim belong to which sefirah? What happens when a new sefer is added to your shelf?

Chochmah, the holy wisdom of Torah. A new sefer adds to all the sefarim you had before: the new knowledge adds to what you learned from the others, and makes learning them again even richer.

(§2)

6. ★★ What is the fifth of Teves associated with?

With the freeing and “redemption” of holy sefarim that were held captive (Didan Notzach, 5747).

(§2)

7. ★★★ What does the Rebbe say is still left “in captivity”, and where should it be returned?

A group of sefarim and manuscripts still waiting to be redeemed and returned to their owner, the

Frierdiker Rebbe, and to his building, his shul, beis midrash and house of good deeds, “the house

of our master in Bavel”. (§2)

8. ★★ How does the sicha picture the sefarim at the Geulah?

All together, those returned and those not yet, with the manuscripts, will go up “on the clouds of

heaven” with all the Yidden, young and old, to Eretz Yisroel, Yerushalayim and the Beis HaMikdash.

(§2)

9. ★★★ How do “one mitzvah leads to another” and “a new sefer adds to all the old ones” resemble each other?

Both teach that adding in holiness is never alone: a new mitzvah or a new sefer adds to everything

before it and pulls more good after it. (§§1–2)

10. ★★ What can you do to hasten the return of the sefarim and the Geulah, according to the sicha?

Add good resolutions and carry them out, increase in tzedakah and other good activities, and learn

(and value) holy sefarim. (§§1–2)

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

“Because My Father Belonged to the Chassidim”

The Frierdiker Rebbe's library held thousands of rare sefarim and the writings of the Rebbeim, passed from generation to generation. He refused to leave Russia without it, and it survived fire and war. In the 1980s, hundreds of rare volumes were secretly taken out of the library and sold, by someone who claimed they were his private property. If that were true, it would mean the chain of the Rebbeim had ended with the Frierdiker Rebbe.

The case went to federal court in Brooklyn. During the trial, the Rebbe went to the Ohel five days a week instead of twice a month, fasting until he came back.

One turning point was the testimony of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, the Frierdiker Rebbe's daughter. A recording was played in court: “The books belonged to the chassidim,” she said simply, “because my father belonged to the chassidim.”

On 5 Teves 5747 (January 6, 1987), the judge ruled: the library was not private property, but was held for all of Chabad. Joyous dancing broke out at 770 and lasted seven days. Then the Rebbe told the chassidim to celebrate the deeper way: by learning more Torah, and buying new sefarim.

Source: Dovid Margolin, “A Festival of Jewish Books” (chabad.org)

Think: What did the Rebbe ask after the victory, and how does it fit §2?

To add in learning and buying sefarim. Every new sefer adds to all the old ones (§2), and

redeeming sefarim brings the Geulah closer.

THE LESSON FOR YOU

One mitzvah pulls another; one new sefer makes all your old ones richer. Make a good resolution, carry it out, and connect your tefillah straight to the Geulah.

For example: For 5 Teves, use your Chanukah gelt to buy a new sefer for yourself, like a Mishnayos or a Chumash with Rashi, and learn a page of it the same night.