

SHAILOS L'CHAZARA

Review Questions

Likkutei Sichos Vol. 1

לקוטי שיחות · חלק א

Parshas Va'eira

פרשת וארא

2 sichas in this booklet

Sicha 1: Hit the Coldness First! · p. 119, §§1-13

Sicha 2: The Arrow Has Left the Bow! · p. 125, §§14-18

Name: _____

Class: _____

★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

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

Hit the Coldness First!

והיו לדם

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Parshas Va'eira, p. 119ff, sections 1-13. From a sicha of Shabbos Parshas Va'eira 5718 (1958).

The point: *With all the great revelations, the Yidden couldn't hear Moshe; only the makkos began to break galus. The first makkah hit the Nile's water, its coldness toward kedushah, the root of all evil, and turned it into blood, warmth and life. The frogs, creatures of water, went into fiery ovens to cool off kelipah's excitement for this world. "What's wrong with not being excited?" Coldness leads to tumah, so hit the yetzer hara with "dam". From above, light comes first: lechatchilah ariber, and spreading P'nimiyus HaTorah brings the Geulah.*

Name: _____

Date: _____

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ Why must every detail of Yetzias Mitzrayim, even the makkos, be a lesson for us today?

2. ★★ Four advantages were there when Moshe brought the news of the Geulah. What were they, and what happened anyway?

3. ★★ What only began to break the strength of galus, and what is the lesson for every day?

4. ★★ Why was the first makkah on water? What is the nature of water and why is it the opposite of kedushah?

5. ★★★ What are the two kinds of coldness and the two kinds of water? Why were the waters of the Nile struck?

6. ★★ Why did the water turn into blood? What do we learn from “from the forest itself comes the handle of the axe”?

7. ★★★ Frogs came even “into your ovens”. What is special about that compared to lice or wild animals?

8. ★★ What job did the frogs have in breaking the kelipah? Why does kelipah have warmth at all?

9. ★★ Someone says, “What’s wrong if I’m not excited about Yiddishkeit? At least I’m not doing anything bad!” What is the answer?

10. ★★★ How does the yetzer hara try to cool you down even after an open miracle?

11. ★★ What is the normal order of avodah, and why were the makkos in the opposite order (blood before frogs)?

12. ★★★ What did the Rebbe Maharash say about “lechatchilah ariber”, and how does it connect to P’nimiyus HaTorah in our generations?

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

One Eye on the Camera, One Eye on the Clock

Reb Levi Yitzchak (Levi Itche) Frieden of Eretz Yisrael came to 770 for the Yamim Nora'im every year from 1975 on, and photographed what he saw. Every Erev Yom Kippur, moments before the holy day began, the Rebbe blessed the yeshivah bochurim. Levi Itche wanted to capture it. With one eye on his watch, because he would never shoot one second into Yom Kippur, and the other eye in his camera, he took picture after picture.

He threw himself into his work with such fire that the Rebbe once told him to pass a message to the bochurim learning in 770: if their enthusiasm for learning matched Frieden's passion for photography, things would look much better.

He brought the pictures home and made an exhibit called "770" in Tel Aviv. One journalist wrote in the guest book that the subject was "primitive darkness of the Middle Ages". The Rebbe saw it and said to praise the journalist's courage to disagree, but to tell him that not everything in the Middle Ages was dark, and today's news isn't so bright either. Then he gave Levi Itche a dollar for the journalist.

Source: *Eli & Malka Touger, To Know and to Care, vol. 1, "Enhancing Achievement" (Sichos in English)*

Think: Which makkah is the Rebbe's message to the bochurim about (§§4–6, 10)?

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Put your fire into Yiddishkeit ("dam"), and stay cool toward worldly excitement ("tzefardei'a"). Don't let the yetzer hara say "calm down, it's no big deal". And start from above: lots of light, and the darkness goes by itself.

For example: You can talk for an hour about the game last night but daven like you're half asleep. Before Shacharis today, think for one minute about Who you're talking to, and say Shema like you mean it.

My turn: One thing I get excited about that I can bring into my davening or learning:

The Arrow Has Left the Bow!

והבאתי אתכם אל הארץ

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Parshas Va'eira, p. 125ff, sections 14-18. From a sicha of Shabbos Parshas Va'eira 5714 (1954).

The point: *The fifth word of Geulah, "veheiveisi", said already in Mitzrayim, means the future Geulah began then. Like "isho mishum chitzav", the moment Hashem promised good it was done, and a good decree is never taken back, like an arrow that left the bow. So the Geulah already exists and only has to be revealed. The obstacles are only concealment; walk with strength and they vanish even to physical eyes.*

Name: _____

Date: _____

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ The four words of Geulah, "vehotzeisi, vehitzalti, vega'alti, velakachti", stand for what? What does the fifth, "veheiveisi", stand for?

2. ★★ What do we learn from Hashem saying the fifth word already at Yetzias Mitzrayim?

3. ★★ Rabbi Yochanan said "isho mishum chitzav" (his fire is like his arrows). What does it mean, and why is he liable even though at the time of the damage he can't stop it?

4. ★★ How does "isho mishum chitzav" prove that the Geulah of "veheiveisi" is already done?

5. ★★★ Why did Rabbi Yochanan want the fast on 10 Av, if the fire started on 9 Av and “all the damage is done when the fire is lit”?

6. ★★★ So how can we say the Geulah is already done, if Hashem can always change it?

7. ★★ What is the lesson for avodas Hashem from knowing that the Geulah, at its highest level, exists already now?

8. ★★ What are all the obstacles to Torah and mitzvos really, and why are they there?

9. ★★ When does the concealment disappear even to physical eyes?

10. ★★★ Connect the two sichos of Va'eira: "lechatchilah ariber" in §12 and "the obstacles are not real" in §18.

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

"They Won't Realize It's Him"

Reb Berke Chein taught Torah to Jewish children in Soviet Russia for years, so the KGB considered him a dangerous criminal. He was caught trying to escape, sentenced to death, and the sentence was changed to prison. Even after his release he was followed everywhere, and had to hide, never showing his face by day.

His family begged that at least his wife and daughter try to leave. His son, learning in 770, asked the Rebbe. The answer: Reb Berke himself should apply, for the whole family, with a brachah. "Should he use his real papers or false ones?" The Rebbe smiled and waved his hand: "They won't realize that it's Reb Berke."

The form warned: three years' prison for every false answer. Thirty photographs went to government offices. A year and a half later, a notice: accepted. Was it a trap? Holding on to the Rebbe's words, Reb Berke went to the visa office. The clerks handed over the passports without a second look. In Vienna an officer shouted, "Your papers are false!", checked, and came back: "You're lucky. The government seal is real." The Cheins ran to their plane.

Source: *Eli & Malka Touger, To Know and to Care, vol. 1, "Nerve Center for the World" (Sichos in English)*

Think: How does Reb Berke's story show §18?

THE LESSON FOR YOU

The Geulah is already “done”; it only has to be revealed. So the obstacles in front of you aren’t really walls. Don’t be impressed by them: walk forward with strength, and they will melt away.

For example: You want to start a daily Mishnah seder, but you think, “My schedule is too packed, it’ll never work.” Don’t let that stop you. Pick a time, start tomorrow, and watch the “wall” disappear.

My turn: An obstacle I will stop being impressed by, and walk through:
