

SHAILOS L'CHAZARA

Review Questions

Likkutei Sichos Vol. 1

לקוטי שיחות · חלק א

Parshas Vayikra & Zachor

פרשת ויקרא · זכור

2 sichas in this booklet

Sicha 1: Bring Yourself Close! · p. 205, §§1–5

Sicha 2: Don't Let Amalek Cool You Off! · Zachor, p. 208, §§6–9

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.

Bring Yourself Close!

אדם כי יקריב מכס

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Parshas Vayikra, p. 205ff, sections 1-5. Adapted from the maamar d'h Basi LeGani 5712 (1952).

The point: *"Adam ki yakriv mikem korban": why not "adam mikem"? Because the pasuk also teaches the inner korban. Hashem dwells "b'socham", in every Jew, so every avodah of the Mikdash exists in each of us. When a person wants to come close to Hashem (korban = kiruv), he must bring the korban "mikem", from himself: from his G-dly soul, and "min habeheimah", from the animal soul, which reaches even higher ("lirtzono lifnei Hashem"). Step 1: check the animal for blemishes, every corner of your mind, feelings, thoughts, speech and actions, "adaata d'nafshei", as a matter of life. Honest checking shows that old aveiros (even from before bar mitzvah) are still there. Not to despair: "mikem uvachem hadavar talui", and every Jew can say "when will my deeds reach those of my fathers". Step 2: "shechitah", taking the heat out of physical things, which stay whole and give strength for avodah, even become mitzvos. Step 3: the fire from Above, the love of the neshamah, until the animal soul also loves Hashem ("b'shnei yitzrecha").*

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★★ What is the question on the words "adam ki yakriv mikem"?

If it only means "a person from among you who brings a korban", it should say "adam mikem ki yakriv". Why is "mikem" after "yakriv"? (§1)

2. ★★ Why does every avodah of the Mikdash exist inside each Jew?

"V'shachanti b'socham": not "in it" but "in them", in each and every Jew. So all the avodos of the physical Mikdash exist in the spiritual Mikdash in each Jew. Even in the real Mikdash the korbanos were inwardly spiritual: the Kohanim in silence and will of the heart (drawing down), the Leviim in song (lifting up). (§1)

3. ★ How does the Alter Rebbe explain the pasuk?

"Adam ki yakriv": when a person wants to come close to Hashem (korban = kiruv of the kochos), "mikem korban": he must bring the korban from himself. (§1)

4. ★★★ What are the two parts of "mikem", and which reaches higher?

(1) "Mikem", from the G-dly soul. (2) "Min habeheimah", from the animal soul in the heart (bakar and tzon are its levels). The goal is refining the animal soul, and it reaches higher: the first says "korban laHashem", the second "lirtzono lifnei Hashem", as in "much produce comes by the strength of an ox". (§2)

5. ★★ What was the first step with a real animal, and what is it in us?

Checking that it has no blemish. In us: check every corner of the soul, mind, feelings and especially thought, speech and action, find what isn't right, and fix it. (§3)

6. ★★ Why must the checking be “adaata d'nafshei”, as if your life depends on it?

So it isn't done by rote, out of habit. When you know it truly affects the life of your soul, you check properly and actually make the fixes. (§3)

7. ★★★ What does an honest check show about old aveiros? How does he know his teshuvah wasn't complete?

“Chatasi negdi samid”: the aveiros of his whole life, even from before bar mitzvah, are still there. If his teshuvah had been complete, having been in a dry, dark place would have made him love Hashem more strongly, until sins became merits. Instead he sees he is still drawn to aveiros (“one aveirah brings another”). (§4)

8. ★★ If so, how can he bring a korban at all? What is the answer?

He asks: how can I be accepted when I'm full of blemishes? The Frierdiker Rebbe adds to “mikem”: “mikem uvachem hadavar talui”, it depends on you. Whatever your past and present, every Jew can say “when will my deeds reach the deeds of my fathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov”. (§4)

9. ★★ What is the “shechitah” of the animal soul?

Taking out the life and excitement it has for physical things. The things themselves stay whole, but without the “boiling blood”, used only to get more strength for serving Hashem, like “wine and fragrance sharpen the mind”, “b'chol derachecha da'eihu”. (§5)

10. ★★★ What is even deeper than using the physical “for the sake of Heaven”?

That the physical things themselves become mitzvos and holiness: eating on Shabbos and Yom Tov, tzitzis from real wool, tefillin from real parchment. (§5)

11. ★★ What is the fire on the mizbeach inside a person?

The neshamah's love for Hashem, “like the fire Above”. The body and animal soul are included in it, until the animal soul too loves Hashem: “with all your heart”, “with both your yetzarim”. (§5)

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

“Plenty of Time to Become a Torah Genius!”

Dovber Klein studied social anthropology at the University of London and travelled through Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, where people kept asking about his religion and he didn't know what to answer. In 1971 he came to learn at the yeshivah in Kfar Chabad, and in 1974 he went into yechidus with the Rebbe, carrying a letter of five or six pages of questions.

One question was how much he should sleep each night. He wanted to use his time exactly right. The Rebbe answered: “How much sleep one needs depends on one's constitution. Most people need between six and eight hours. You can ask your doctor, but you might need eight hours.” Then the Rebbe did a little calculation: “Even if you need eight hours of sleep, and an hour and a half each day for meals, and another hour and a half for other things you must take care of, you still have plenty of time left over to become a Torah genius!”

He had worried that becoming a chassid meant giving up who he was. He walked out relieved: the Rebbe “respected me as an entire person”, wanting him to take care of himself while making sure not to waste time.

Source: Dovber Klein, “Retaining One's Individuality”, *Here's My Story* (JEM, My Encounter with the Rebbe / chabad.org)

Think: How does the Rebbe's answer match the “shechitah” and the “korban” of §5?

The physical things (sleep, meals) stay whole, not cut off, but they are measured and used to give strength for Torah, not for indulging. And the korban is “mikem”, from yourself: the Rebbe built on who Dovber really was.

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Bring yourself close to Hashem: check yourself honestly, don't despair (“it depends on you”), and make your eating, sleeping and playing into fuel for Torah and mitzvos.

For example: Make a real schedule: enough sleep, meals, sports. Then see how much time is left for a chavrusa or a seder of Mishnayos by heart. It's more than you think.

Don't Let Amalek Cool You Off!

אשר קרך בדרך

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Parshas Zachor (in the Vayikra section), p. 208ff (Hebrew edition p. 196), sections 6-9. From the sicha of Purim 5716 (1956).

The point: *Amalek fought the Jews four times: right after Mitzrayim, at the end of the midbar (disguised as a Canaanite), after Shaul became king, and in the generation of Moshiach. History has two periods: the midbar (no contact with the physical world) and from entering Eretz Yisroel until now (making the world holy). Each period has an open Amalek at the start and a disguised one at the end, so in our generation he comes in disguise. The first: "asher korch", coldness: "I'm also from Avraham and Yitzchak; learn, but why the wild excitement? First understand, then do." He accepts "yoshev ohalim" but not "ish tam", naaseh before nishma. Coldness leads to "keri", our strengths serving kelipah; the "yode'a tzayid" ends up an "ish sadeh". The second, disguised as the Canaanite king of Arad: "keep your Torah, but in business and daily life act like the nations." Behind it hides the Amalek who wanted to destroy us. Today: "do business like everyone, forget hashgachah, kochi v'otzem yadi." The answer: temimus and Torah, "toras chaim", which is life even for the body.*

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ List the four wars of Amalek.

(1) Right after Yetzias Mitzrayim (Refidim). (2) At the end of the 40 years, disguised as a Canaanite. (3) In the first period in Eretz Yisroel, after Shaul was made king (king, Amalek, Beis HaMikdash). (4) In the generation of Moshiach. (§6)

2. ★★ What are the two periods of Jewish history?

(1) The midbar: no contact with the physical world; food, clothes and shelter came from the man, the well and the clouds. (2) From entering the land until today: dealing with the world and making it holy, turning the land of the seven nations into Eretz Yisroel and, in galus, preparing all lands to become Eretz Yisroel. (§6)

3. ★★★ How do we know Amalek comes in disguise in our generation?

In the first period, the war at the start was open and the one at the end was disguised (as a Canaanite). So in the second period, the start (after conquering the land) was open, and at the end, in Moshiach's generation, ours, he comes disguised. (§6)

4. ★★ What does "asher korch" mean according to the Midrash?

From "kar", cold: Amalek's war was to bring spiritual coldness and indifference. (§7)

5. ★★★ What did Amalek claim on the way to Matan Torah?

"I don't want to stop Matan Torah, I'm also from Avraham and Yitzchak. But this hasty excitement is unnecessary. You're smart; how can you accept laws you don't know? First understand, then decide if you can keep them." He agrees to "yoshev ohalim" (learning) but not "ish tam", temimus, naaseh before nishma, like Eisav the "yode'a tzayid". (§7)

6. ★★ Where does coldness lead?

To the other meaning of korchah, "keri": the strengths Hashem gave to conquer the world for kedushah end up serving kelipah. The "yode'a tzayid" ends up an "ish sadeh", running from the tents of Torah. The way is "Yaakov ish tam": "tumas yesharim tanchem". (§7)

7. ★★ How did Amalek fight the second time, and what did he demand?

Disguised as a Canaanite, hiding that he came from Avraham. He didn't interfere with Torah and Yiddishkeit, he "allowed" it. He only demanded that in physical, everyday matters ("Eretz Canaan", the 39 melachos) the Jews learn from him and act the Canaanite way: "it's hard to make a living, keep Shabbos and educate your children without the secular ways." (§8)

8. ★★★ What does the captured maidservant teach?

The Canaanite king of Arad captured only one Canaanite maidservant, something the Jews had themselves taken captive. He doesn't take what belongs to Jews by nature (Torah and mitzvos); he only wants a say in worldly matters. But the Torah reveals that behind it hides Amalek, the same one who in the days of Purim wanted to destroy all the Jews. (§8)

9. ★★ What does the "Canaanite" say to a Jew today?

"Want to do business or get a job? Act like the nations: ignore hasagas gvul, avak lashon hara, ribis; take time off Torah to succeed. First of all, forget hashgachah pratis, 'kochi v'otzem yadi'." (§9)

10. ★★ Why is Torah the only way to protect even the body?

A Jew is whole in body only when his soul is whole. Torah is "toras chaim" and mitzvos are "vachai bahem", life in this world too: 248 mitzvos aseh for 248 limbs, 365 lo sa'aseh for 365 sinews.

(§9)

11. ★ When should it be seen that "the eyes of Hashem are upon it"?

Not only at Ne'ilah, on Shabbos and Yom Tov, or during davening and learning, but "from the beginning of the year to the end of the year", in every place. (§9)

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

"Go Whole, the Way You Are"

Meir Bastomsky was born in Vilna in 1941. His stepfather, a descendant of the Baal Shem Tov, had become a Communist, and Meir grew up in Haifa, studied mechanical engineering at the Technion, and slowly came closer to Torah through Chabad friends. Putting on a yarmulke was hard for him; his friends asked whether someone in his family had died.

In 1967 he went to learn in 770. After nine months the Rebbe told him to go back to Eretz Yisroel, and Meir was worried. He had left with a small, neat beard and a knitted kippah; now he had a full beard and a black hat. His father had a heart condition. Should he trim his beard a little so as not to upset him?

The Rebbe said he should not touch his beard under any circumstances, and explained what the beard is in halachah and in Kabbalah. "Go whole, the way you are," the Rebbe said, "because the minute you begin to be half-and-half, there will be no end; you will be forced to compromise more and more. And regarding your father, with Hashem's help he will have complete health and a long life!" His father lived to 82.

Source: Meir Bastomsky, "Fulfilled Employment", *Here's My Story (JEM, My Encounter with the Rebbe / chabad.org)*

Think: How is "half-and-half" like the Canaanite king of Arad?

The Canaanite asks for "just a little" in outside matters, and that one maidservant is how Amalek gets in. The Rebbe taught: go whole, with temimus, because once you start compromising there is no end.

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Stay whole. Don't let anyone (or your own smart-sounding thoughts) cool off your excitement for Torah, and don't do "just the outside things" like everyone else.

For example: On a trip with boys from another school, everyone skips Mincha and says "no one's counting". Go whole: daven Mincha anyway, even alone in a corner. Usually someone ends up joining you.