בס״ד

SHAILOS L’CHAZARA

Review Questions

Likkutei Sichos Vol. 2

לקוטי שיחות · חלק ב

Parshas Re’eh

פרשת ראה

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2 sichas in this booklet

Sicha 1: Check the Signs, Then Check Again! · Re’eh, p. 375, §§1–7

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Name: _____

Class: _____

★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

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

SICHA 1 OF 2 · VOL. 2 · P. 375 (HEB. ED. P. 80) · §§1–7 · SHABBOS RE'EH 5715

Check the Signs, Then Check Again!

זאת הבהמה אשר תאכלו

Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, Parshas Re'eh, p. 375 (Hebrew edition pp. 80–83), sections 1–7. From the sicha of Shabbos Parshas Re'eh 5715 (1955).

The point: *This week's parsha tells us which animals we may eat and which we may not. The Torah gives two signs for a kosher animal: it chews its cud (brings its food back up to chew again), and it has split hooves. There are two kinds of signs in the Torah. Some signs are the cause: the animal is kosher BECAUSE it has these signs. Other signs only show us what is already true about the animal. But Chassidus teaches that even a sign that only "shows" is not random. Nothing in the world is an accident: a mashal comes from the idea it teaches, as that idea comes down into a lower world. So both signs are deeply connected to the animal being kosher. (§1) What does eating do? A person takes something from the world of the domem (things that don't grow), tzomeach (plants) or chai (animals), and when he eats it, it becomes his own flesh and blood. That is how the domem, tzomeach and chai reach their purpose: by becoming part of the medaber, the speaking being, the person. A person himself also has some ways in which he is like an animal (the Gemara says "in three ways he is like an animal"), and ways that make him a real "adam". His purpose is in the "adam" part, and the other parts of him, and all the things in the world that he uses, should follow it and become part of it. (§2) The real meaning of "Adam" is "adameh l'Elyon": a person is like the "Supernal Man" on the Heavenly Throne, so to speak. A person is joined with Him by carrying out His mission. This goes step by step: first "acharei Hashem Elokeichem teileichu", you walk AFTER Hashem, and in the end "uvo sidbakun", you cling to Him until you are one, like Moshe Rabbeinu, from whose mouth the Shechinah spoke. And the things a person uses go up with him. (§3) But an animal's spirit naturally goes DOWN. Lifting it up is a long road, and every road can be dangerous. So the Torah gave us two signs, to show a person whether he is doing his job right: is he using the physical world for Hashem, so it goes up ("this you may eat"), or only out of habit and desire, so it does not go up but the opposite ("this you may not eat")? (§4) The Torah Or says that Rabbi Chanina ben Tradyon did two deeds, one of chesed (kindness) and one of gevurah (strictness), both with the same energy. That proves it was not his nature but his avodah: by nature love and fear are opposites, and only serving Hashem can bring them together. That is also why Hashem told Avraham "Now I know that you fear Hashem" only at the Akeidah. His earlier tests were all on the side of chesed, which might have been his nature. The Akeidah was on the side of gevurah, and it showed that ALL his tests had been avodah. (§5) That is the sign of "split hooves". Someone who works on only one side (one leg to stand on) may just be following his nature. A kosher animal's hoof is split to both sides, right and left: the person goes beyond his nature and does whatever mission he is sent on. The halacha is that the split must go through top and bottom: it is not enough on the outside, it has to be inside too, all the way through. Even so, since he deals with physical things, he may not rely on himself. He needs the second sign too, "chewing the cud": checking again and again. (§6) The lesson: before eating meat we check the signs, and if they are missing we may not eat it. In the same way, before anything we are about to do in this world, we must check the signs and be sure we are not doing it just to fill our own desires. And even when it seems the sign is there, we may not rely on ourselves; we check once more. (§7)*

Name:_____ Date:_____

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ What are the two signs of a kosher animal?

2. ★★ What are the two kinds of signs in the Torah?

3. ★★★ Chassidus says a mashal is not random. How does that show that even a sign that only “shows” is connected to the animal being kosher?

4. ★ What happens to food when a person eats it?

5. ★★ A person also has some ways in which he is like an animal. So what is his purpose?

6. ★★ Why is a person called “Adam”?

7. ★★★ What is the difference between “acharei Hashem teileichu” and “uvo sidbakun”? Who was on the highest level?

8. ★★ Why did the Torah give us signs? What do they tell a person?

9. ★★★ Rabbi Chanina ben Tradyon did a deed of chesed and a deed of gevurah, both with the same energy. Why does that prove it was avodah and not his nature?

10. ★★ Why did Hashem say “Now I know that you fear Hashem” only at the Akeidah?

11. ★★ What does the sign of “split hooves” teach? Why must the split go through top AND bottom?

12. ★ Even with “split hooves”, why do we need “chewing the cud”? What does this teach about everything we do?

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

Dancing Before the Shabbos Table

The Baal Shem Tov once spent Shabbos in the town of Kolomaya. On Friday night he sensed that somewhere in the town there was a holy soul giving off a great light, so he went out for a walk to find it.

As he passed a certain house, he saw the light coming from inside and heard singing and dancing. The door was open a little, so he stepped in. There was Rabbi Yaakov Koppel, dancing with great joy in front of his Shabbos table, which was full of good food.

Rabbi Yaakov Koppel sang and danced for a long time. When he finally stopped, he noticed the Baal Shem Tov and welcomed him warmly.

The Baal Shem Tov asked him, "Why do you sing and dance like this before you eat?"

Rabbi Yaakov Koppel answered, "Before I eat the physical food, I first stand in front of the table and take in the food's spiritual side. Sometimes I become so excited that I sing and dance."

What is the food's "spiritual side"? It is the G-dliness in it. He was thinking about how Hashem creates this food and keeps it alive every single moment, and how Hashem made it to feed HIM. That thought filled him with joy.

Source: *"The Table" (chabad.org)*

Think: How did Rabbi Yaakov Koppel make sure his eating was "kosher" in the way of the sicha, so the food goes up?

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Before you do something, check the signs: Am I doing this for Hashem, or just because I feel like it? And then check once more. Don't only do what comes easy to your nature.

For example: You love sharing; giving comes easy to you. Then a friend asks to copy your answers on a test. Saying "no" is hard for you, but that is your "split hoof": doing the side that is not your nature, because Hashem wants it.

My turn: Something I will check twice this week:

SICHA 2 OF 2 · VOL. 2 · P. 378 (HEB. ED. P. 83) · §§8–10 · SHABBOS RE'EH, MEVARCHIM ELUL 5714

The King Is in the Field!

המלך בשדה

Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, Parshas Re'eh, p. 378 (Hebrew edition pp. 83–84), sections 8–10. From the sicha of Shabbos Parshas Re'eh, Shabbos Mevarchim Elul 5714 (1954).

The point: *The Likkutei Torah (by the Alter Rebbe) gives a mashal for the difference between Elul and Tishrei. Elul is like the time when the king is out in the field, before he comes into the city. Tishrei is like the time when the king is in his palace. When the king is in his palace, not everyone can come in, and many preparations are needed. But when the king goes out to the field, to the people, even though he is not in all his glory as in the palace, there is a special advantage: anyone may speak to the king himself, and the king receives every person with a smiling face and grants his request. In Elul, Hashem appears before every Jew, and each one can give Him his request. But when the king is in the field, you need EXTRA care. The person is standing as he is, in his own state, and still the king comes to him and smiles at him. So he might make a mistake and think that he should stay just as he is, and even think the proof is that the king came to him like that! In the palace there is no room for this mistake: only someone who finished all the preparations is let in, and only as far as he is fit for, as the Gemara says: "Whoever is fit for the courtyard, to the courtyard; whoever is fit for the garden, to the garden; whoever is fit for the inner room, to the inner room." In the field it is easy to make this mistake, so extra care is needed. (§8) So too in Elul. Hashem appears before every Jew, no matter what state he is in, and shows him a smiling face. That is a huge advantage: every Jew can feel G-dliness. But exactly because of this, we must be extra careful not to think we can stay as we are. Elul is not a Yom Tov; a person is busy with weekday work, the 39 melachos, and still he is given from Above the revelation of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, as the Gemara says that Hashem "wrapped Himself like a chazzan" and taught Moshe the Thirteen Attributes. These come from a level of Hashem far above the whole order of the worlds. (§9) The Pri Etz Chaim says that the words "Ashira laHashem vayomru leimor" ("I will sing to Hashem… and they said, saying") make the letters of "Elul". Two questions: what does this pasuk have to do with Elul? And why "leimor", "to say to others", when all of Bnei Yisrael were there? The answer: "leimor" means for all generations. In every generation there must be "Ashira laHashem ki ga'oh ga'ah". The Targum explains "ga'oh ga'ah" as: Hashem is exalted over the proud. There are "proud ones": the heavenly princes and the way nature runs. But when a Jew gives himself over to Hashem, Hashem makes the whole world and all the princes bow before him, and everything is under him. That is the avodah of Elul: giving yourself to Hashem, which is teshuvah, and from it comes joy and song, "Ashira". This also affects another Jew ("vayomru leimor"), and it is for all generations. Then the Jew becomes a master over the world, as the Gemara says, "a king's servant is a king": a servant of Hashem, the King. (§10)*

Name:_____ Date:_____

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ In the Alter Rebbe's mashal, what is Elul compared to, and what is Tishrei compared to?

2. ★★ What is special about the king in the field, compared to the palace?

3. ★★ What does “Whoever is fit for the courtyard, to the courtyard…” teach about the palace?

4. ★★★ Why do we need EXTRA care when the king is in the field? What mistake could a person make?

5. ★★ How do we see in Elul that Hashem comes to us even while we are busy with weekday things?

6. ★ Which words make up the letters of “Elul”, according to the Pri Etz Chaim?

7. ★★ Why does the pasuk say “leimor” (to say to others) if all of Bnei Yisrael were there?

8. ★★★ How does the Targum explain “ki ga’oh ga’ah”? Who are the “proud ones”, and what happens to them when a Jew gives himself over to Hashem?

9. ★★ What is the avodah of Elul? Why does it bring “Ashira”, song?

10. ★★ How do the words “vayomru leimor” show that your teshuvah reaches other people too?

11. ★★ “A king’s servant is a king.” What does this mean for a Jew in Elul?

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

The Villager Who Didn't Stay the Same

About two hundred years ago, a simple Jew in a Russian village hired a talmid of the Alter Rebbe to teach his children. Shortly before the Yamim Nora'im, the teacher said he was leaving for the season: he was going to his Rebbe.

"Your rebbe has a rebbe?" wondered the villager. The teacher explained what a chassidishe Rebbe is: a tzaddik who cares for every Jew like a shepherd. The villager decided to come along, and they set out together in his wagon.

At the Alter Rebbe's shul, everyone crowded around the teacher with joy, but nobody greeted the villager. Then the guests lined up for yechidus. When the villager came into the room, the Alter Rebbe and he looked at each other in silence. Then the Alter Rebbe said, in a sing-song: "Sometimes a Jew sins. He does this sin, and that sin…" and he listed every one of the villager's wrongdoings.

The villager stormed out and fired the teacher: "You told him everything about me!" The upset teacher asked the Alter Rebbe to clear his name. The Alter Rebbe called the villager back: "When did I say YOU did those things? I only said a Jew might do them."

Those words shook the villager. "Rebbe, it's all true about me!" The Alter Rebbe wrote him a path of steps to grow, and in time he became one of the Alter Rebbe's closest chassidim.

Source: *Asharon Baltazar, "How the Simple Villager Changed His Ways" (chabad.org), from Rabbi Rephael Nachman Kahan, Shemuos V'Sippurim*

Think: The Alter Rebbe received the villager just as he was. How did he make sure the villager didn't "stay as he was"? How is this like the King in the field?

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Hashem comes close to you as you are, especially in Elul, and smiles at you. Use that closeness to grow, never as a reason to stay the same.

For example: Your rebbi says, "Hashem listens to every boy's davening, even with mistakes." That's great news! But don't think, "So I don't have to try." Pick one thing to make better, like saying Shema slowly with your finger on every word.

My turn: One thing I will grow in, instead of staying the same: