

SHAILOS L'CHAZARA

Review Questions

Likkutei Sichos Vol. 2

לקוטי שיחות · חלק ב

Rosh Hashanah

ראש השנה

1 sicha in this booklet

Sicha 1: The Shofar That Gets the Apple · Rosh Hashanah, p. 405, §§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.

The Shofar That Gets the Apple

מצות היום בשופר

Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, Rosh Hashanah, p. 405 (Hebrew edition pp. 109–110), sections 1–2. From the sicha of the second day of Rosh Hashanah 5716 (1955).

The point: *The Mishnah says about Rosh Hashanah: "The mitzvah of the day is the shofar." That is the avodah of the tekios, and it is accepted Above. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev gave a mashal: a child wanted an apple and his father refused to give it. The child quickly made a brachah on the apple, and now the father had to give it to him (so the brachah wouldn't be in vain). That is when the father does NOT want to give. How much more so when the father WANTS to give, and only holds back to test how clever the child is! Above, Hashem wants to give, even "more than the calf wants to nurse", and it says "You long for the work of Your hands": Hashem wants us to serve Him. When Jews make the brachah "shomea teruas amo Yisrael b'rachamim", "Who hears the teruah of His people Yisrael with mercy", think: by halachah, when in doubt about a brachah we don't say it (it might be in vain). So if the Men of the Great Assembly ruled that we say this brachah, they ruled that Hashem certainly DOES accept the teruah of His people, their cry, the tekios, with mercy. And because Hashem accepts our teruah with mercy, a flow of blessing comes to every single Jew in everything he needs, in ruchniyus and gashmiyus, in children, life and food. And since Hashem gives from His full, open, holy and generous hand, the children, life and food are "rvichei", plentiful. All this is included in the words "a good and sweet year", coming down into gashmiyus, "below ten tefachim", in good that is seen and revealed. (§1) The Friediker Rebbe loved summaries. The summary of all forty-eight hours of Rosh Hashanah is two points, a point below and a point above. The point below: a Jew binds himself to Hashem with kabbalas ol, accepting Hashem as King. The point above: Hashem binds Himself, as it were, to the Jews, and says, "I will give your rains in their time", and all the brachos in that parsha. (§2)*

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

- ★ What does the Mishnah call "the mitzvah of the day" of Rosh Hashanah?

The shofar. (§1)

- ★ Tell Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev's mashal of the apple.

A child wanted an apple and his father refused. The child quickly made a brachah on it, so the father had to give it to him. (§1)

- ★★ Why is it even more certain with Hashem than in the mashal?

In the mashal the father didn't want to give. Hashem WANTS to give (more than the calf wants to nurse) and only tests our cleverness. (§1)

- ★★ Which pasuk shows that Hashem wants us to serve Him?

"L'ma'aseh yadecha tichsof": "You long for the work of Your hands." (§1)

5. ★★★ How does the halachah of “safek brachos l’hakel” prove Hashem accepts our shofar?

When in doubt we don’t make a brachah. Since the Anshei Knesses HaGedolah ruled that we say

“shomea teruas amo Yisrael b’rachamim”, it is certain that Hashem accepts our teruah with mercy.

(§1)

6. ★★ What comes to every Jew because Hashem accepts our teruah?

A flow of blessing in everything he needs, in ruchniyus and gashmiyus: children, life and food.

(§1)

7. ★★ Why are the children, life and food “rvichei”, plentiful?

Because Hashem gives from His full, open, holy and generous hand. (§1)

8. ★★ What is included in “a good and sweet year”?

All of this, coming into gashmiyus, “below ten tefachim”, in good that is seen and revealed. (§1)

9. ★ What did the Frierdiker Rebbe love?

Summaries (kitzurim). (§2)

10. ★★★ What are the two “points” that sum up the 48 hours of Rosh Hashanah?

Below: a Jew binds himself to Hashem with kabbalas ol. Above: Hashem binds Himself, as it were, to

Yisrael: “I will give your rains in their time.” (§2)

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

The Official Waker

In the early 1940s, thirteen-year-old Meir Halberstam was a prisoner in a Siberian labor camp with his grandfather, the Rebbe of Zmigrad. Rosh Hashanah was coming, and the Rebbe grew sadder every day. He had his family's holy shofar, but how could he blow it without the guards catching him?

Two nights before Yom Tov, Meir wrapped cloth around his hands and feet to muffle his steps. When the guards fell asleep after drinking, he crept to the camp's giant wake-up bell, climbed the post, untied the rope, and let the bell crash to the ground in pieces.

In the morning the guards were furious: how would they wake the prisoners? Meir's uncle stepped forward: his father had an old "shepherd's horn" and could blow it every morning. The commander grabbed the shofar and blew, but no sound came out. So the Rebbe was appointed the camp's "official waker."

On the first morning of Rosh Hashanah, all the Jewish prisoners were up early. The Rebbe wept as he blew, the prisoners cried and davened, and the sound of the shofar filled the camp with hope.

Source: Chaya (granddaughter of Rabbi Meir Halberstam), "A Shofar in Siberia and the Young Boy Who Arranged It" (chabad.org)

Think: How was young Meir like the clever child in the Berditchever's mashal?

The child found a clever way to get the apple, making a brachah so the father had to give (§1).

Meir found a clever way to make the guards themselves ask for the shofar, and the mitzvah of the day was done. Hashem wants to give; He waits for our cleverness and effort.

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Hashem WANTS to give you a good and sweet year. Your part is kabbalas ol, and the shofar and your tefillos are surely accepted with mercy.

For example: On Rosh Hashanah you're tired and want to skip the second tekios. Remember: that cry of the shofar is the "brachah on the apple." Stand close, listen to every sound, and ask Hashem for a sweet year for you and your family.