

SHAILOS L'CHAZARA

Review Questions

Likkutei Sichos Vol. 1

לקוטי שיחות · חלק א

Parshas Kedoshim (Part 2)

פרשת קדושים

2 sichas in this booklet

Sicha 1: Ahavas Yisroel Is a Business! · Kedoshim, p. 260, §§14–19

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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.

Ahavas Yisroel Is a Business!

כל תורה שאין עמה מלאכה

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Parshas Kedoshim, p. 260 (Hebrew edition pp. 246-249), sections 14-19. From the sicha of the second day of Shavuos 5718 (1958).

The point: *The Frierdiker Rebbe told of three teachings the Berditchever heard from the Baal Shem Tov; one: "Torah without melachah ends in nothing", where melachah means busying yourself with ahavas Yisroel. It shaped the Berditchever's whole life. That the story reached us shows it is for us: like Chassidus, ahavas Yisroel belongs to all Jews. Everyone must influence another Jew, and gains himself: "the poor man and the rich meet, Hashem lights both their eyes". Everyone is "rich" in something ("who is wise? one who learns from every person"). Without it, Torah ends in nothing. And not just love but hisasku's: like a businessman who opens a shop where people pass, hangs a sign, advertises and persuades. So too, work hard to do good for another Jew, teach him Torah, mitzvos and Chassidus, and make him a giver too: "yafutzu ma'yanosecha chutzah", a spring keeps flowing. Do physical kindness too, without conditions, as the Baal Shem Tov and the hidden tzaddikim did. If Providence brought you to a place with little Torah, it's your shlichus: "where there are no men, try to be a man"; it's pikuach nefesh, so don't run away. Rav and Rav Kahana came to Bavel and "fenced the valley". Tzedakah purifies the mind and heart a thousandfold and brings the Geulah.*

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

- ★★ What teaching did the Berditchever hear from the Baal Shem Tov, and what is "melachah"?

"Any Torah without melachah ends in nothing." Melachah means busying yourself with ahavas Yisroel.

It made the Berditchever spend his whole life on ahavas Yisroel. (§14)

- ★★ Why does this story concern us too?

Everything reaches us by hashgachah pratis as a lesson. Like Chassidus, which the Alter Rebbe said

belongs to all Jews (as preparation for the Geulah), ahavas Yisroel, the whole Torah, belongs to

everyone. (§15)

- ★★ How does influencing another Jew help the one who gives?

"The poor man and the rich meet; Hashem lights the eyes of both." Just as with money, so in

ruchniyus: when the rich gives to the poor, Hashem gives to the rich too. (§16)

- ★★ How is every person "rich" in something?

"Who is wise? One who learns from every person": everyone has something others can learn from him.

So everyone must give what he has to a friend who lacks it, and then he gets from Above what he

lacks. (§16)

5. ★★★ What does the Gemara say happens when the rich doesn't give?

The help from Above ("Hashem lights both their eyes") is missing, and even more: the rich becomes poor. So Torah without ahavas Yisroel ends in nothing. (§17)

6. ★★★ What does "hisasku's" mean, according to the Frieddiker Rebbe?

Like a business: a merchant doesn't sit at home waiting for buyers. He opens a shop where many people pass, hangs a sign, advertises his goods' value, and tries hard to persuade people. So too with ahavas Yisroel. (§17)

7. ★★★ When do you know your influence was really absorbed?

When the receivers become givers ("tofei'ach al m'nas l'hatpi'ach"), like "yafutzu ma'ayanosecha chutzah": a spring keeps flowing; a pool that stops isn't a spring. (§17)

8. ★★ Should physical help depend on the person becoming more religious?

No. Do good physically too, without any conditions. It is itself ahavas Yisroel and also brings him closer. This was renewed by the Baal Shem Tov in the path of the hidden tzaddikim. (§18)

9. ★★★ What should someone do whom Providence brought to a place with little Torah?

It's his shlichus, with the strength for it: "where there are no men, try to be a man". He may not say "I'll save myself and run", because it's pikuach nefesh, where such calculations are forbidden. (§19)

10. ★★ What did Rav and Rav Kahana do when they came to Bavel?

Some places there were lax in things like Shabbos and basar b'chalav (a "bik'ah", a low, breached place), and they "fenced the valley". The lesson: wherever you come, make it a place of Torah and mitzvos. (§19)

11. ★★ What does tzedakah, physical or spiritual, do for the giver and for the world?

His mind and heart become purer "a thousand times" (Torah Ohr); "you gave life to the poor man, tomorrow Hashem gives life to you". And spreading the wellsprings brings Moshiach. (§19)

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

The Rebbe's Partner in Tasmania

Yossi Gordon grew up in Newark, where his parents were shluchim. At fifteen he wrote to the Rebbe that every day he went to an old age home to help about six men put on tefillin. The Rebbe blessed him with success, and he felt that blessing all his life.

At nineteen the Rebbe sent him to the new yeshivah in Miami and told him at yechidus: "The success of your mission depends on you being a living example to others."

Later he once asked the Rebbe how to fix something he had done that wasn't up to standard. The Rebbe said, in essence: "As a shliach, when you fulfill your mission well, you fix any blemish, including what you wrote about."

In 1984 he went as the Rebbe's shliach to Tasmania, Australia, far from any big Jewish community. The Rebbe gave his wife forty Australian dollars toward settling in. "Ever since," he says, "I have felt that with this money the Rebbe made an investment in our mission. When I invite people for Shabbos meals or classes in our house, I feel the Rebbe is my partner in every endeavor."

Source: Yossi Gordon, "Inspiration for Tasmania", *Here's My Story* (JEM / chabad.org)

Think: Which ideas of this sicha does Rabbi Gordon's life show?

Hisasku's in ahavas Yisroel from a young age (tefillin in the old age home); being sent to a place

with little Torah as a shlichus (Tasmania); and that working for others purifies the giver

("fulfilling your mission fixes every blemish").

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Treat ahavas Yisroel like a business: go out, "advertise", and make others into givers. Wherever you find yourself, it's your shlichus.

For example: On a family vacation or at the dentist's office, you're the Rebbe's shliach there: ask a Jewish man if he's put on tefillin today, or give a kid a Shabbos candle booklet for his mother.

Everyone Has a Share!

כל ישראל יש להם חלק

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Parshas Kedoshim, p. 262 (Hebrew edition pp. 249-250), sections 20-23. From the sicha of Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5712 (1952).

The point: *Pirkei Avos*, learned on the Shabbosos between Pesach and Shavuos to prepare for Matan Torah, opens with “Kol Yisrael yesh lahem chelek l’Olam Haba” and “Moshe kibel Torah”: the first preparation is ahavas Yisroel. Someone may argue: why spend my time on others when I could sit and learn? “Kol Yisrael yesh lahem chelek”: you can’t know who is higher. This world is “upside down”; in the clear world to come it may be the reverse. Judge others favorably; about yourself there’s doubt, since self-love covers all faults. If you bring another close and become his rebbe, then in Olam Haba he will say “I can’t be without my rebbe”, and they’ll bring you out of Gehinom for his sake. Today you needn’t wait 120 years: Moshiach is coming any moment, so he may repay you in this world. But don’t think “my strength did this”: it is the power of Moshe, the lover of Israel, passed on to Yehoshua, the elders, and the Rebbeim of every generation (the extension of Moshe in each generation).

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★★ Which two mishnayos open Pirkei Avos, and what do they hint to?

“Kol Yisrael yesh lahem chelek l’Olam Haba” and “Moshe kibel Torah mi’Sinai”. Avos is learned before Shavuos to prepare for Matan Torah, and the first preparation is busying yourself with ahavas Yisroel. (§20)

2. ★★ What argument might a person make against spending time on others?

“Why give my time to someone else, when it’s better for me to sit and learn?” (§21)

3. ★★★ How does “kol Yisrael yesh lahem chelek” answer him?

You can’t know who is higher. This world is an “upside-down world”, so he thinks he’s above the other and calculates it isn’t worth it, but in the “clear world” to come it may turn out the reverse. (§21)

4. ★★ Why must you judge others favorably, but be doubtful about yourself?

Every Jew you deal with surely has a share in Olam Haba. About yourself there’s doubt, because “love covers all faults” (self-love) and “don’t trust yourself”. (§21)

5. ★★★ How can the student you brought close repay you in Olam Haba?

“He’s in Gan Eden and his rebbe who taught him Torah is in Gehinom?!” He will say “I can’t be without my rebbe”, and they will bring the rebbe out of Gehinom and seat him in Gan Eden. (§21)

6. ★★ Why don't we need to wait 120 years for this repayment today?

Moshiach "is standing behind our wall" and can come any moment, and even the oldest will see him in his lifetime, so the other can repay the kindness in this world. (§22)

7. ★★ What must a person beware of when doing kindness for others?

Thinking "my strength and the might of my hand did this". (§23)

8. ★★★ Whose power is it really, according to the mishnah?

The power of Moshe, the lover of Israel, who passed it to Yehoshua, Yehoshua to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and on to the Rebbeim of every generation: "the extension of Moshe in each generation". (§23)

9. ★ In one sentence: what is the first preparation for receiving the Torah?

Busying yourself with ahavas Yisroel. (§20)

10. ★★ Why does the mishnah say "kol Yisrael", all of them?

Every single Jew has a share, so no Jew may be written off or seen as not worth the effort. (§§20–21)

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

Yankel the Master of Sins

In Vilna in the mid-1800s there was a big, rough Jew everyone called “Yankel Baal Aveiros”, Yankel the master of sins. The chassidim of Vilna were nervous when Yankel started showing up at their farbrengens. He didn’t disturb; it even seemed he was listening. But he hadn’t stopped sinning.

Some younger chassidim told him: “Yankel, you’re a great guy, but our children might be influenced...” Yankel kicked over the table and stormed out.

Then Yankel wrote to the Tzemach Tzedek, crying as he wrote: “All day long my yetzer hara burns inside me like a baker’s oven, screaming ‘Sin, Yankel!’ I finally found one way to quiet it: I sat at the farbrengen, and I didn’t sin! And now they have taken even this away from me!”

Soon the chassidim got a furious letter from the Rebbe. Its message: “You have no idea what this Yankel achieves sitting at your farbrengens. All your learning, meditation and prayer are like nothing compared to the revolution he makes Above when he sits there and does not sin!” And Yankel was brought back.

Source: Tzvi Freeman, “The Glory of Not Sinning: The Story of Yankel, the Master of Sins” (chabad.org), as heard from Aryeh Prager of Crown Heights

Think: How does this story show “you can’t know who is higher” (§21)?

The chassidim thought they were far above Yankel and calculated he wasn’t worth keeping. The Rebbe revealed that in the “clear world” Yankel’s struggle was greater than all their avodah: this world is upside down.

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Never say “he’s not worth my time”. Every Jew has a share in Olam Haba, maybe higher than yours. Spend time on others, and remember the strength comes from the Rebbe.

For example: The kid in your class whom everyone ignores, the one who “isn’t into learning”: be his chavrusa for ten minutes, or just include him at recess. You don’t know who he really is.