

SHAILOS L'CHAZARA

Review Questions

Likkutei Sichos Vol. 1

לקוטי שיחות · חלק א

Parshas Tetzaveh & Purim Katan

פרשת תצוה · פורים קטן

4 sichas in this booklet

Sicha 1: Oil That Soaks In Everywhere · p. 170, §§1-4

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Sicha 4: A Wide Mind Is Always Happy · Purim Katan, p. 175, §§14-20

Name: _____

Class: _____

★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

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

Oil That Soaks In Everywhere

שמן זית זך כתיית למאור

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Parshas Tetzaveh, p. 170f, sections 1–4. Compiled from sichos of Simchas Beis HaShoeivah 5712 (1951) and Chanukah 5719 (1958).

The point: *The Menorah needed the “first oil”. In Torah, nigleh is water, its secrets are wine, and the secrets of the secrets are oil, which floats above wine; and within the oil, Chassidus, there are water, wine and oil too. Oil has a special quality: it “spreads through everything”. Nigleh alone can leave a person and his Torah as two separate things, but Chassidus soaks deep inside until they are one, like engraved letters. And since Chassidus too is grasped by the mind, there must also be “oil within oil”: the bittul it brings, especially after davening.*

Name: _____

Date: _____

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ What do Chazal say about “shemen zayis zach kasis lamaor”?

2. ★ Why do we look for this in our own avodah?

3. ★★ What are water, wine and oil in the Torah?

4. ★★ What three levels are within the “oil” itself?

5. ★★ What is oil's advantage over water and wine?

6. ★★★ What does that mean in a person's avodah?

7. ★★ What is the difference between "engraved letters" and written letters? How does it fit here?

8. ★★ How do nigleh and pnimiyus haTorah differ regarding yeshus (a sense of self)?

9. ★★★ Why is "oil within oil" still needed?

10. ★★ Put it together: what path do the three “oils” describe for a person’s learning?

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

Their Souls Understand

At the direction of the Tzemach Tzedek, Reb Hillel of Paritch spent a great deal of time traveling to the Jewish farming colonies of the Kherson district, in today’s Ukraine, to teach Chassidus to the simple Jewish farmers there.

Once Reb Hillel asked the Tzemach Tzedek: what was the benefit of reviewing Chassidus before simple Jews whose understanding was so limited that they understood nothing?

The Rebbe answered that he should keep reviewing Chassidus aloud before them, because their souls understood it.

Reb Hillel was careful in every detail of his avodah. On these trips he took along a group of ten men so that he could daven with a minyan the whole way. He was a Levi, and he always made sure that one of the group was a Kohen, so the minyan would have all three: Kohen, Levi and Yisrael.

Source: *Hillel Zaltzman, Samarkand, “R. Mordechai Yoel’s Stories” (chabad.org)*

Think: How does the Tzemach Tzedek’s answer show that Chassidus is like oil that “spreads through everything” (§3)?

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Learn some Chassidus every day, even a little, even when you don't understand all of it. It soaks in like oil until you and the Torah are one, and after davening, let it bring you to bittul.

For example: Your class learns Tanya for ten minutes in the morning and you tune out because it's hard. Stay with it, and review one line on the bus home; let it soak in.

My turn: My daily dose of "oil" (Chassidus):

Only You and Hashem

מזבח הזהב

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Parshas Tetzaveh, p. 171, section 5. From a sicha of 5 Adar 5715 (1955).

The point: *Why does the golden mizbe'ach appear at the end of Tetzaveh and not with the Shulchan and Menorah in Terumah? To hint that the purpose of all the Mishkan's avodah was the ketores: only the kohen and Hashem were there, not even angels, and there the Shechinah rested. In our avodah too, the purpose and completeness is Torah and mitzvos, and tzedakah especially, done without publicity, no pictures in the newspapers, matan beseser: only the person and Hashem.*

Name: _____

Date: _____

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ What does the Torah command at the end of Parshas Tetzaveh?

2. ★ Which keilim stood together in the Ohel Moed?

3. ★★ What do the commentators ask?

4. ★★ What does the Torah hint by putting it last?

5. ★★ What was special about the ketores?

6. ★★ Where did the Shechinah rest?

7. ★★ What is the purpose and completeness of our daily avodah?

8. ★★ What practice does the Rebbe say not to follow? What should it be instead?

9. ★★★ Why is the hidden mitzvah the “purpose”, like the ketores?

10. ★★ Give an example of “ketores avodah” in a 13-year-old’s life.

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

The Eviction That Didn’t Happen

Rabbi Chessed Halberstam told this story. The Rebbe had asked him to take the Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka to a park on Long Island, where she liked to feed bread to the birds.

Once the highway was closed, so they took a detour through slow, crowded local streets. They passed a house with a group of people gathered outside, some of them crying. After they passed, the Rebbetzin told Chessed that her father, the Frierdiker Rebbe, had taught her that everything one sees is hashgachah pratis, and she asked him to go back.

They found out that a poor Russian family was being evicted because they were behind on the rent. “How much do they owe?” the Rebbetzin asked. About \$8,000, the marshal answered. If she wrote a check for \$8,000, would they let the family stay? Yes. The marshal called the bank, and the bank approved the check.

The Rebbetzin wrote it, and asked that the same men who had carried out the furniture bring it back in. Then she left quickly, before the family could find out who had helped them, and told Chessed not to tell anyone. Only after the Rebbetzin’s passing did the story become known.

Source: *Nissan Dovid Dubov, To Love a Fellow Jew, ch. 11 “Seven Stories” (Sichos in English, chabad.org), as told by Rabbi Chessed Halberstam*

Think: How was the Rebbetzin’s tzedakah like the ketores on the golden mizbe’ach (\$5)?

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Do your mitzvos, especially tzedakah and favors, quietly, for Hashem alone, not for likes or praise.

For example: You hear a classmate can't afford the class trip. Instead of telling everyone, give your rebbi an envelope from your savings with no name on it.

My turn: A mitzvah I'll do this week that only Hashem will know about:

Throw the Gold into the Fire!

נתקשה משה במנורה

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Parshas Tetzaveh, p. 172ff, sections 6-13. From a sicha of Chanukah 5716 (1955).

The point: *Moshe found the Menorah hard, and Hashem told him to throw the gold into the fire. How can physical things become a Mikdash for Hashem's very essence, revealed in the Kodesh HaKodashim ("the place of the aron took no space", "nimna hanimna'os"), when "the heavens cannot contain You"? Because "terumah... dekula chad": physical things come from His essence, only hidden, and Jewish souls, in whom it is revealed, can uncover it. The Menorah had to light up the darkness from gold, which a person can't do; he only throws the gold into the fire and Hashem makes the Menorah. So too, Hashem wants a Mikdash from our gashmiyus: throw your "gold" into the fire of your heart.*

Name: _____

Date: _____

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ What do Chazal say about Moshe and the Menorah?

2. ★★ What two questions does this raise?

3. ★ What general introduction does the Torah give before the Mishkan?

4. ★★ What is the question about making a Mikdash from physical things?

5. ★★★ Why is it even harder to understand?

6. ★★ How was Atzmus seen openly in the Kodesh HaKodashim?

7. ★★★ What is “nimna hanimna’os”, and how was it revealed there?

8. ★★ Why do all tefillos pass through the Kodesh HaKodashim?

9. ★★ What did Shlomo HaMelech wonder?

10. ★★★ How do “veyikchu li terumah” and “daber el Bnei Yisrael” answer this?

11. ★★★ So why was the Menorah alone hard for Moshe?

12. ★★ What is the lesson for every Jew?

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

A Menorah from an Onion

"There I was, sitting in a Soviet prison without the slightest possibility of lighting Chanukah candles," said Reb Berke Chein, a chassid who spent years in prison after a failed attempt to escape across the border.

Prisoners were interrogated often, and if even the smallest item was found on them, they could be charged with treason. As Chanukah came closer, Reb Berke worried: how could he get oil, wicks and matches in a sealed cell, and how would he hide them?

He was friendly with his cellmates. A few days before Chanukah one of them, a burly, hardened non-Jewish Russian prisoner, asked why he looked so down, and Reb Berke explained. "What exactly do you need?" "Oil, a little cotton for wicks, something to hold the oil, and most of all, matches." "No problem."

When Chanukah came, he brought what he had found: an onion cut in half for a menorah, butter saved from Reb Berke's daily rations instead of oil, and a few threads from his worn prison uniform for wicks.

But matches? Being caught with matches could mean the end. The prisoner took a few more threads and rubbed them hard against the stone floor with the sole of a shoe, again and again, until they began to glow and smoke. Soon the menorah was burning in the Soviet darkness.

Source: Aharon Loschak, "Chanukah Lights in Soviet Prison" (chabad.org), as told by Reb Berke Chein

Think: How did Reb Berke "throw the gold into the fire" (§§12-13)? What made it shine?

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Give Hashem your "gold" too, your physical things, money, talents and time, and throw them into the fire of your heart. Hashem makes them shine.

For example: You're great at drawing. Instead of keeping it for yourself, make the posters for the shul's Purim event, or use your bike to deliver mishloach manos to elderly neighbors.

My turn: My "gold" that I'll turn into a menorah:

A Wide Mind Is Always Happy

וטוב לב משתה תמיד

Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Purim Katan, p. 175ff, sections 14-20 (numbered on from Tetzaveh). From a sicha of Shabbos Parshas Tisa, Shushan Purim Katan 5717 (1957).

The point: *The Rama rules to add a little in the meal on Purim Katan and ends "vetov lev mishteh tamid": whenever there is any reason for joy, be joyful. "Tov lev" is one whose mind is broad, and so happy with his lot in every situation. "Your people's needs are many because their mind is short": chasing extras costs even the necessities (like a garment too big for you), and comes from not judging your own worth. To a broad mind gashmiyus takes up no room; only Torah and mitzvos, which are truly limitless. And whoever is generally in a broad mind draws down all his needs, so even when he falls, he is always "tov lev".*

Name: _____

Date: _____

QUESTIONS ★ easy ★★ medium ★★★ harder

1. ★ What does the Rama rule about Purim Katan?

2. ★★ Which two views exist on this ruling, and which does the Rama's wording support?

3. ★ Where does this conduct lead?

4. ★★ What are the two explanations of "vetov lev", and how do they connect?

5. ★★ What question does this raise?

6. ★★★ How does the Rebbe Maharash, quoting the Alter Rebbe, explain “merubim tzarchei amcha veda’tam ketzarah”?

7. ★★ What is the first point: what happens to someone who chases extras?

8. ★★ Where does this come from?

9. ★★★ What is the second point? What does the Rambam say about Moshiach?

10. ★★ What did the Rebbe write to a chassid who became too absorbed in business?

11. ★★★ Why do we still ask Hashem to fill “the many needs” that come from a short mind?

A CHASSIDISHE STORY

What You Are Needed For

A chassid who had been wealthy and lost his entire fortune came to the Alter Rebbe. "If Hashem has chosen to make me poor," he wept, "I accept it. But how can I live with not being able to repay my debts, or give my daughter the dowry I promised for her wedding? I have never gone back on my word. Why is Hashem humiliating me like this? Rebbe, I must repay my debts! I must give what I promised!"

The Alter Rebbe sat with his head in his arms, in deep dveikus, and listened. After a long pause he lifted his head and said with great feeling: "You speak of all that you need. But you say nothing of what you are needed for."

The words pierced the chassid's heart, and he fainted. He was carried out and revived. From then on he spoke to no one; he threw himself into Torah and davening with such devotion that he forgot everything else. Though he fasted every day, he was always full of joy.

Several weeks later the Alter Rebbe called him in, blessed him with success, and told him to go home to his business. In time he regained his wealth, paid his debts, married off his daughters, and gave tzedakah even more generously than before.

Source: *From the writings of the Frierdiker Rebbe, adapted by Yanki Tauber, "The Needy and the Needed" (chabad.org)*

Think: How did the chassid go from "many needs, a short mind" to a "broad mind" (§§16–19)? What happened to his needs?

THE LESSON FOR YOU

Think about what you're needed for, not only what you need. Be happy with what you have and chase extras less, and you'll be "tov lev" always.

For example: Half your class got the newest gadget and you feel you "need" it too. Ask yourself what you're needed for today, then use the time to help a friend who's stuck on his Gemara.

My turn: Something I'll stop "needing", and what I'm needed for: