**1.    What is morality?**

1.       L’tzaref es habriyos – (L.S v17) – to create a social order.

2.       V’shochanti b’sochom

3.       Dira b’tachtonim

4.       V’holachto bidrochov

5.       Mitzva – tzavsa v’chibbur - ***alignment***

6.       Aveirah – ha’avarah m’rshush l’rshus - ***misalignment***

7.       Talmud vs. maaseh [y’mos hamoshiach, maalas haguf] – (L.S v25 Vayigash)

8.       Olam koton – odom  (Towards a Meaningful Life) (kuzari? Chovas halevovos?)

9.       Mistakel b’diftro’os upinkso’os

10.   Istakel b’Oraiso uboro almo – Sichas Eikev 5748

11.   Is Torah a moral book? Is there a machlokes between the chokrei yisroel about this, whether Torah was given letzaref es haberiyos, laasos sholom b’olam (Rambam end of hilchos Chanukah), or is it primarily a divine entity (chemdoh genuzah)? Perhaps connected with the demand of the angels that the Torah belongs to them (Shabbos 88b). Perhaps connected with Dovid being punished for calling Torah “zemiros” since the Torah is atzlo uman, shashuim lefonov (Tanya Kuntres Acharon Dovid Zemiros Koriso Lehu. Ayin Beis around chs. 140’s).

12.   Rambam end of Hilchos Me’ileh, Temurah (?), that though Torah is l’maaleh m’sechel, we can learn moral lessons from every halacha.

13.   Shabbos 30b, Tanya 32 – Love (mah d’olech soni etc.) zuhi kol haTorah, also between man and G-d – bcs the entire Torah (even bayn odom lamokom) is to create dominance of spirit over matter.

14.   Free Will – Yesod chozoe v’amud godol – Rambam Teshuvah xxx.

**2.    Is morality an absolute or a relative term?**

L.S. v6 hosofos P’ Yisro – b’inyan “Onochi”

Hayom yom: man made laws vs divine laws

*Orly: So morality is an absolute state, that is independent  of human’s state of mind? In other words, can we  assume that on the metaphysical sphere, morality exits regardless of human connectedness ( or lack thereof) to it?*

-k’gavno (kabolas Shabbos)

**3.   What is the Torah view on levels of morality?**

Pirkei Ovos – milso d’chasiduso

Maaseh Ovos siman l’bonnim

Mosai yegiu maasay l’maasei…

Revav al begged T”Ch

Moshe Rabeinu – hitting rock

R’ Chiyah didn’t buy on credit…

Chanukkah – mehadrin min hamehadrin – now higher world, higher standard for everyone

R’ Zusha m’Anipoli

Perek echod shacharis… vs v’hogiso bo yomom v’laylo

**4.    What is the Torah view on how people should develop, or strengthen their moral behavior?**

Yedias machalo chetzi refuo

Takmud godol shemevi liydei maaseh

Chabad nikreu imos umokor l’middos ki hamidos hein tuldos Chabad

Tanya Ch. 16,17

Letter from Tz.Tz – MyLife Ep 5

Cognitive vs Emotional vs Behavioral (Article on MeaningfulLife.com “faking it”, Rambam hilchos geirushin)

What is the role (if any) of reward and punishment -- as a motivation or deterrent -- in moral conduct according to the Torah? (Rambam holchos teshuvah; shaloh – 2 opinions: is reward a punishment seguli or cause and effect; yiras ha’onesh, yiras ha’retzuah; if morality is the essence of a human being (rambam hilchos geirushin end ch. 2), af al pi she’chotoh yisroel hu, why the need for reward and punishment. Etc. etc.

**5.    What guidelines should a person follow to ensure moral conduct, especially in ambiguous situations?**

*1. Consult the shulchan aruch -- code of Jewish law and ethics.*

Consult the blueprint:

Kusho Brich Hu istakel b’Oraiso uboro almo

Bar nash mistakel b’Oraiso umekayem almo

*--  (is this talking more about limmud haTorah lishmo as opposed to leida es hamaaseh…?)*

*2. Always consult an objective mentor or friend for guidance and direction (aseh lecha rav, k'nei licho chaver).*

Aseh lecho rav – meforshim?

Mashpia – 5737 19 kislev, 10 shvat, 15 shvat

Ein chovush matir es atzmo…

*3. Bear in mind that we are accountable to G-d and to each other.*

Pirkei avos

*4. Always seek to serve in fulfilling our higher calling, instead of choosing the easiest approach.[OC1]*

Ani nivreisi l’shamesh…

Kol mah shaboro … l’chvodo

*5. In love you seek the highest standards of behavior, not the minimum you can get away with[OC2] .*

60 days – 3 types of love

Mischased im kono

**Note:**

Create a document addressing her comments

[OC1]So here I see several levels- let me know whether this makes sense:

1. Consult the “manual”

2. Since the above may not address  the particulars of the specific issue, consult a mentor.

3. In order to truly accept the guidance of the mentor, remember that there is a divine power that we are accountable to.

4. Translate the recognition of the presence of the divine power into actions- recognize our own divine  purpose  and live by it.

This last point brings me back to point 1- what is the purpose of existence according to the Torah?

[OC2]Hmmm…. This is a bit esoteric for me- l would like to learn more about this.