

Chukas

June 18-19, 2021

8-9 Tamuz 5781

Chukas appropriately follows from Shelach and Korach, whereby the surface narrative in the parsha shows of deviant behavior that was punished. Staying on the theme of assuming that the Jews knew better, Chassidus explains, that the actions of those in Shelach and Korach, were administered incorrectly, but their intentions were likely in a good place. They just missed the point. Furthermore, evidence of this, is the fact that in the parshas where there is a surface action that seems incorrect, there is another truly incorrect behavior or law that is taught in relation to true deviant behavior, quantitatively, versus qualitatively.

It is therefore appropriate, continuing the theme that everything comes from Hashem, and divine providence wills the world, the next parsha after the 'events' of Shelach and Korach, is to state unequivocally that our service to Hashem is for Him because He says so, in the form of absolute faith, and not for any other reasons.

There are 3 categories of mitzvosh, Chukim, Mishpatim, and Eidos. Mishpatim are laws that have sound reason (such as do not kill, do not steal), Eidos are laws relating to events that took place (such as Shabbos, or pesach etc.) Chukim, are the category of laws that have no reason, and one cannot make up a reason (although people do try to associate rationale to the laws), other than because Hashem told us to do these things. Laws such as Para Aduma- the red heifer, for which we have no rational, or historical reasoning, other than Hashem telling us to do so.

This reminder of the chukim therefore appropriately follows Shelach and Korach, that one ought not disrupt the order of things, as intended by Hashem. Alternatively, that one ought to remember that we are in a faith that requires a leap, and belief, even when we don't understand all the time, as the Meraglim, and Korach, inappropriately thought. As well, since the Torah is meant for this world, and to make a dwelling place for Hashem, then it stands to reason that we want to work as hard as we can at all times to draw Godliness down into the world, instead of cleaving to Hashem like we are in the heavens, i.e., trying to isolate ourselves in the world without taking into account the physical nature of the world, we must act "down here" as the servants of Hashem, seeking out his will. (Medrish Rabba says about the Para Aduma that Hashem said to Moshe that no one can comprehend My decrees, meaning part of the will of Hashem is vested into the commandments, and therefore, they connect to Hashem on the level of Ta'anug, and not just Chochma.)

Chukas also includes the death of Miriam, and the errors of Moshe and Aaron with regards to the lack of water. Chabad seems to sing the niggun Al Haselah Hoch, Vyetizu Mayim, even though Moshe wasn't supposed to hit the rock, because the result was nevertheless water. Meaning even if we do something wrong the outcome should still

Chukas then continues about wars with Amalek, which is a physical manifestation of what truly limits us as people, the Amalekite attitude (and physical threat), not whether we truly understand the mitzvos and their meaning.

Good Shabbos