

HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

Rashi brings from the Midrash that the nations make fun of us because of the *chukim* that we do, since these have no logical reason behind them. Rav Laib Gurvitz ZT"l asked that there is a seeming contradiction in the *pasuk* in Vaeschanan: **ישמעון את החוקים האלה כי היא חכמתכם ובינתכם לעיני העמים אשר**, that the nations attribute our wisdom and understanding precisely to the practice of *chukim* which do not follow any human logic! The answer is, that initially, they mock at us because of these practices, but after they see the result of those who follows those seemingly foolish practices, how B'nai Yisrael become elevated morally and spiritually, they must admit that there is wisdom behind them.

One is not allowed to follow the ways of the idol worshippers; some Rishonim learn this from the *pasuk* of **ולא תלכו בחקות הגוי** (Rambam SH"m Lo Sa'ase 30 and Chinuch 262), while others count it as two *lavin* because of **בחוקותיהם לא תלכו** (B'hag, Yeraim 313). Shulchan Aruch (YD 178) writes that one is not allowed to wear clothing that is specifically worn by the *goyim*, and Ram"i explains that that is referring to clothing that they use for the intention of *pritzus* (immorality), like wearing red clothing. The Shach says that it is not the way of *tzni'us* to wear red clothing, and brings from the Maharik that black is a color of humility. Wearing specific clothing that is just an arbitrary custom, without any special reason, may fall under the category of *darchai haEmori* and may have to do with their idol worshiping. However, if it has a benefit, for example, all doctors should wear white clothing for identification, it is fine (Ra"ma). One who finished eating and left over some pieces of bread on the table may not bring a loaf of bread to the table because that was the custom of the idol worshippers (YD 178:3). If a loaf was left on the table, though, some say that one does not need to remove it (Shach 5), while others hold that one should remove it (Magen Avraham 180:2), but on Shabbos everyone agrees that it is not necessary (MB 5). There were places that had a custom to set a table with food the night after a Bris Milah, and that falls into this prohibition, because idol worshippers also had this practice (Ra"ma ibid). Shach (6) says that to make a *se'uda* the night before the Bris Milah is permitted, as a *minhag*, but it is not considered a *se'udas mitzvah* (MB 551:62). There are many more practices that fall into this category. The Chinuch (262) holds that it is prohibited to go to circuses and theaters because of **בחוקותיהם לא תלכו**, and Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky ZT"l said that this refers also to our circuses (B'mchitzas Rabainu pg. 96). One is not allowed to slaughter and spill the blood into a pit, because this was done for *avodah zarah* (YD 12:1). Many who fast on *erev* Rosh Hashanah are careful to eat before *alos hashachar*, to avoid the practice of the *goyim* to fast on the eve of their holiday (Ram"i OC 581:2). One should not specifically request a white rooster for *kaparos*, but if he is given a white one, it is fine (MB 605:4). There are those who say that walking without one's head covered is **חקות הגוים** (Bach and Taz OC 8:3, and MB 2:11); even those who argue, agree that doing a *mitzvah* with the head uncovered is **חקות הגוים** (N'ta Sorek OC 2), and Chasam Sofer (CM 191) writes that to *daven* with the head uncovered is **חקות הגוים**. To play musical instruments in *shul* during *davening* is prohibited because of **בחוקותיהם** (Maharam Shik YD 165, Melamed L'hoel OC 16). The *bimah* must be in the middle of the *shul*, not in the front, bec. of **בחוקותיהם** (Divrai Malkiel 5:234, Lvushai Mordechai OC 2:86). A *sh'liach tzibur* should not wear a black robe (Mirkeves Hamishne, Hakdamah). Some prohibit making a *chupah* in *shul* bec. of this reason (Yehuda Yaale OC 38). Flowers in a *bais hakevaros* (Minchas Elazar 4:61, Minchas Yitzchak 1:31) and *availim* wearing black (Gesher Hachayim 1:161) are also considered **חקות הגוים**.

THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ... By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (*Shoftim 1:1-33*)

Is making a vow a profitable thing to do? The Yalkut (247:68) on our Haftara comments that one who makes a vow can never be sure of its outcome. Chana, for example, gained from the vow she made and merited that Shmuel HaNavi be her son; Yiftach is cited as the archetype of one who vowed and lost out. Yiftach's vow, made before going out to battle Amon, was that the first thing that would exit his house to greet him upon his victorious return would be brought as a sacrifice to Hashem. Unfortunately, it was his daughter ran out to meet him before anything else. Yiftach wished to be true to his word and was ready to sacrifice his daughter, and she was willing to "do the right thing". What actually happened to her, though, is much disputed. Many *mefarshim* (Radak, Ralbag, Ibn Ezra and Abarbanel) say that it is unthinkable that she was actually killed by Yiftach; rather, she was sequestered away with no human contact save for four days a year, thus fulfilling his vow through her "*prishus*". This opinion clearly contradicts the Medrash Tanchuma, which states that Yiftach actually slaughtered and sacrificed her, an act that "earned" him the epithet "Am HaAretz" and sharp criticism from Hashem. How could Yiftach have come to such a conclusion? Chazal say that Yiftach was unsure of what to do, and his daughter suggested that he go to the *gadol hador*, Pinchas the Kohen Gadol, to see if he could find grounds to absolve Yiftach of his vow. Yiftach was willing to consult Pinchas, but felt that, as he was leader of the nation, Pinchas should come to him! Pinchas, who heard of Yiftach's predicament, was willing to absolve him of the vow, but felt that, as he was Kohen Gadol, Yiftach should go to him! Neither yielded; and an innocent girl died. For this arrogance both were punished: Pinchas lost the position he so jealously protected, and Yiftach contracted a disease that caused his limbs to fall from his body one by one until he died. The price of pride is indeed high!

ON LANGUAGE... By R' Moshe Orlian

The water-ashes mixture from the *פרה אדומה* is referred to as **מי נדה** (B'midbar 19:9). Rashi explains that the root of **נדה** is **ידה**, meaning "to throw", referencing the fact that the mixture is sprinkled. A similar usage is found in Eicha (3:53) – **יִדְדוּ אֲבוֹנֵי בֵי**. According to this, the **נ** of **נדה** is not a root-letter and furthermore, through the interchangeability of the **ד** with a **ז**, it appears to be related to the root **זדה**, which actually means "to sprinkle". Others, Ibn Ezra included, claim that **נדה** is from the root **נדד**, "to distance". The association here is that the **מי נדה** is sprinkled on a **טמא**, who is distanced from the *kahal*.

SHABBOS SCHEDULE - KNESSES YISRAEL

שבת			ערב שבת			
מעריב	מנחה	סוּזְק"ש	שחרית	שקיעה	מנחה	הדלק"ג
9:22	6:15/8:02	9:11	6:50/8:30	8:32	6:44/7:00/8:17	7:07/7:15/8:14
<i>SHACHARIS</i> Sun 7:45, Mon-Fri 7:00; <i>MAARIV</i> Mon-Th 9:30; <i>MINCHA/MAARIV</i> Sun-Thu 8:19, next Fri. 6:45/7:00/8:18 (candles 7:08/7:15/8:15)						

KNESSES NEWS

HAMAKOM YENACHEM Mrs. Aliza Weinberg on the *petirah* of her father
MAZEL TOV! to Mr. and Mrs. Yosochor and Malkie Heinemann on the birth of a grandson, to Binyamin and Malka Rena Heinemann;
 Mazel Tov to the great-grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Julius and Gita Behrend (and on the marriages of their grandchildren)
MAZEL TOV! to Mr. and Mrs. Naftoly and Adele Katzenstein on the recent marriage of their daughter Aliza to Heshel Teitelbaum
MAZELTOV! To Mr. and Mrs. Hershel and Elka Lorenz on the Bas Mitzvah of their granddaughter Tova
PEREK IN THE PARK shiur for women, Shabbos 4:15-5PM, at Frank (backyard) 691 Union Rd., children welcome

COMMUNITY CORNER

PIRCHEI in the Shul 2:30-3:30
MIKVAH OF NEW HEMPSTEAD, 109 Brick Church, is open on Shabbos/Yom Tov, please call 669-0861
MINCHA at Tefilla L'Moshe, Sun. 1:30; S-Th 15m<shki'a; **שבת** 1:30/הדלק"ג; **MAARIV** M-Th 40m>shki'a/8:15/9:45
DAILY SHACHARIS at Kehillat New Hempstead 6:00; **SHACHARIS** at Tefilla L'Moshe Sun. 7:30/8:30; M-Fri 6:25/7:00/7:30
MINCHA at Zichron Yehuda (2 Kakiat Ln) Sun. 1:40/6:30; **MAARIV** daily 8:00/9:15PM; **SHACHARIS** Mo-Fr. 6:40; Sun. 6:30/7:30
MINCHA daily 6:30PM; **MA'ARIV** at **KNH**, Mon-Thurs 8:30PM

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FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS and any other inclusions to this publication please contact Moshe Orlian at: 364-0572, or morlian@verizon.net

ONGOING SHIURIM

Daf Yomi: 1 hour before Shacharis (R' Adler)/ 9:45PM (R' Becher) at Knesses Yisrael
Maseches Makkos (by R' Apter) daily 1 hour before Shacharis; **Ahavas Chesed** (by Rabbi Schabes) Tues. 9:10PM, at Knesses Yisrael
Hilchos Shabbos chabura, Shabbos, after the early minyan; **ארחות שבת** (by Rabbi Schabes) after the 2nd minyan; **חומש**, Shabbos 8AM
Navi Melachim for men, by Rabbi Shmuel Moeller, Sundays 8:30-9:15, at Tefilla L'Moshe
Minchas Chinuch Sun. 8:30PM by R' Bronspigel at Zichron Yehuda
Gemara Shiur, Shabbos, 7:50 AM, at KNH; **Mishna Berura**, Rabbi Kerner, Mon. 7:50PM; **Inyanei Tefilla**, Rabbi Staum, Wed. 8:50PM
Maseches Sukkah, Sun. 9:15AM; **Basar B'Chalav**, Thu. 8:45PM, by R' Saperstein; **Daf Yomi** 8:30PM; at Ohaiv Shalom, 18 Bridle
 Ladies Shiurim: Shabbos 5PM, by Rabbi Eliyahu Kersh, at Grossman, 6 Manchester Dr.
 Sundays 10:30AM, Tefilla, by Mrs. Chani Juravel, 5 Holland Lane (Wesley Hills)
 Mondays 8:40PM, **Sefer Shoftim**, by Mrs. Aviva Orlian, at Levy, 29 Fessler
 Wednesdays 9:45AM, Emunah and Bitachon, by Mrs. Chani Juravel, at Ohr Sameach's Beit Shvidler
 Wednesdays 10:45-11:45AM, **Pareshas Hashavua**, by Mrs. Sussi Brecher, at Lazar, 2 Tracey Ct. (corner of South Gate)

PARSHA PEARLS: **לֹא הֵאֱמַנְתָּ בִּי:** The words used in condemnation of the 'sin' of Moshe and Aharon are harshly damning; "You didn't believe in me!" We find similarly horrific descriptions elsewhere: **אֲשֶׁר מְרִיתֶם פִּי**, "You rebelled against my words"; **אֲשֶׁר מְעַלְתֶּם בִּי**, "You committed a trespass against me" and others. And what was the great and terrible sin for which the greatest leaders in our nation's history are so severely castigated? **לֹא הֵאֱמַנְתָּ בִּי הַקִּדּוּשׁ הַשֵּׁמִי**, "You failed to perform a *kiddush Hashem*". Not *chas v'shalom* that they caused a *chillul Hashem*; Moshe and Aharon could never be responsible for desecrating His name. Rather, *they failed to perform a Kiddush Hashem!* How often do we encounter situations where we can make a *kiddush Hashem*, and fail to do so? How often do we unfortunately even cause a *chillul Hashem*? **מִה נִדְבָר מִה נִצְטָדֵק?** How careful we must all be in each of our actions!

"A GIGANTIC LITTLE SECRET" ... By Rabbi Yosef Schwab

הַחֹק הַתּוֹרָה - What is unique about the *mitzvah* of *parah adumah* that it is referred to as "the *chok*"; after all, there are other *chukim*, such as *sha'atnez*, *eglah arufah*, et al? A *chok* by definition is a precept that defies rational explanation. Shlomo HaMelech, the wisest of all men, was able to comprehend all the *chukim*, except for *parah adumah*. Only Moshe Rabbeinu, who reached the highest level humanly possible, was able to understand the paradox of *parah adumah*, and that is its uniqueness.

MORE PARSHA PEARLS: **וַיִּשְׂרַח יִשְׂרָאֵל:** The well had been with them for nearly 40 years, and not once did the Jews sing its praise, *until it was taken from them and then returned*. Rabbi S. Gold, a RA"m in Yeshivas RSRH, once commented how a multitude of people would likely rise to witness the dawn if they were told that the sun would rise in the west that morning, yet few do so to witness the sun rise in the east each day – though surely it is no less a miracle of Hashem! How unfortunate it is that we take the miracles which we encounter daily for granted, and fail to adequately offer thanks for them. We must not wait until they are taken from us before we recognize their worth. Proper gratitude should be expressed each and every day.

LESSONS FROM OUR GEDOLIM: A man once came to R' Eliyahu Lopian and said, "I did something terrible to you and I've come to ask your forgiveness." R' Eliyahu replied: "I can say the standard **לְךָ מַחֲוֹל**", if you wish; but since you claim to have done something terrible, I'm afraid that wouldn't suffice. I suggest that you come back again in two weeks." The man returned at the appointed time; R' Eliyahu greeted him enthusiastically, saying, "I forgive you with my full heart and soul!" Perplexed, the man asked what had changed in the two weeks. R' Eliyahu explained: "During these weeks I increased my study of *Mussar* on the subject of forgiveness and the evil of bearing a grudge or harboring ill will. This enabled me to forgive you with total sincerity!"