

פ' חוקת

זאת חוקת התורה The Meforshim question as to why the Torah refers to the mitzvah of Parah Adumah as חוקת התורה, a חוק of the Torah. It would seem more accurate to write חוקת הטהורה, the חוק of becoming טהור? The Ohr Hachaim explains, we find that there are differences, in regard to טומאה, between a Jew and a goy. If a Jew touches a מת, a dead body, he becomes טמא. A goy, however, does not become טמא. Similarly, the dead body of a goy does not give טומאה like a Jewish מת. When did this transformation take place? When Klal Yisrael received the Torah they became elevated to a whole new מדרגה, and are now more affected by the laws of טומאה. This is why the Torah refers to it as חוקת התורה. It is because of the Torah that we received that causes us to be affected by things that are טמא.

Perhaps we can explain this further. Rav Elya Dessler, זצ"ל, explains in his Michtav M'elihu (vol. 5 pg. 253) that the reason a dead body becomes טמא, is because the purpose of mankind is to be מקדש שם שמים to sanctify Hashem's name in this world. As long as he is alive, every person has that potential. When the body is lifeless, it has lost that ability entirely to bring Kiddush Hashem. Something that has lost all connection to קדושה is considered טמא, and all who come in contact with it become affected by that טומאה. Klal Yisrael are the ones who actively sanctify Hashem's name in this world through their mitzvos and Torah study. When they come in contact with a מת, they are affected by the טומאה. Similarly when their bodies are no longer able to function in that capacity, there is a greater void of קדושה and have a greater טומאה. A goy on the other hand is not someone who is actually מקדש שם שמים, rather he was created to serve as a helper for others. Thus he is not affected by that same contact.

We see from here how essentially different Klal Yisrael is from the rest of the world. Our very being is to bring forth קידוש שם שמים. As the Kuzari writes, just as there is a great difference between an animal and a person, so too is the difference between a Ben Yisrael and a goy. If we bear this great responsibility in mind all the time, whether we are doing mitzvos or in our dealings with others, we will surely accomplish this goal of being מקדש שם שמים.

Have a good Shabbos.

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