

פרה אדומה מכפר על חטא העגל הרב אליהו חקקיאן

Generally, *Parshas Parah* and *Parshas Ki Sisa* coincide. Moreinu HaRav Kulefsky, z"l, used to say that this is a *remez* to the *maamar* Chazal, "יתבא האם ותנקח את צואת בנה" - let the mother come and clean up the refuse of her son. The *parsha* of *Parah Aduma* is a *tikkun* for *chet ha'eigel*. HaRav Kulefsky wanted to say a *pshat* on this based upon a *vort* he heard from HaRav Yaakov Kamenetsky, z"l. He added that he later saw part of the *vort* printed in *Emes l'Yaakov*.

In the beginning of *Parshas Chukas*, when the Torah discusses *Parah Aduma*, Rashi explains the words, "זאת חקת התורה", as follows. The *Satan* and *Umos HaOlam* come to criticize Klal Yisroel over this *mitzvah*, questioning why we do such a thing. Therefore, the Torah calls it a "חק" to state unequivocally that there is no justification offered for it, nor is one needed, HaKadosh Boruch Hu commanded us to fulfill it and we have to excuse not to.

HaRav Kulefsky mentioned that the *Sefer Hachinuch* was written for the author's son's bar mitzvah in order that his son and friends should know a taste of the *taryag mitzvos*. The *Chinuch* writes that when he reached the mitzvah of *Parah Aduma*, his hands became weak and he was afraid to offer any logic or reasoning for this mitzvah. This is because Chazal say in *Midrash Tanchuma* that Shlomo Hamelech understood the logic of every mitzvah, but for the mitzvah of *Parah Aduma*. He thought he knew every mitzvah but he saw he was far away from it. HaRav Kulefsky explained that Shlomo Hamelech meant, "היא רחוקה ממני" really refers to the whole Torah, not just *Parah Aduma*. That *Parah Aduma* showed him that he really didn't understand the logic of any of the mitzvos which he thought he did. The *Chinuch* explains the reason *Parah Aduma* is so hard to understand is because while it is *metaher* those who are *tamei*, it is also *metamei* the ones who prepare it and perform the *tahara*. Secondly, although it is discussed the same way as any of the *korbanos*, its whole process is performed outside the *Bais HaMikdash*. The *goyim* look at it as seeming to be like *avoda zara*. This is why the *Chinuch* refrained from trying to explain *Parah Aduma*.

HaRav Yaakov Kamenetsky asks, the *Chinuch* himself admits that the reasons he gives for the other mitzvos are merely to give the children a taste, not necessarily the real reasons. What's the big deal to give a reason for *Parah Aduma* as well? We understand why Shlomo Hamelech said what he said, because he knew the real deep logic for the rest of the mitzvos until he came upon *Parah Aduma*, and realized he did not know the full depth of the logic of any of the mitzvos. But the *Chinuch* merely wrote his *sefer* as a platform for some level of understanding, not the full extent. What's wrong with giving a lesson type of *pshat* in *Parah Aduma* as well?

HaRav Yaakov says a *gevaldigge yesod*. The mitzvah of *Parah Aduma* is precisely for us to keep it without understanding. The reason this mitzvah was given in *Marah*, before *Matan Torah*, was because of the fundamental truth that we keep the Torah simply because HaKadosh Boruch Hu commanded us to and not because we understand the logic of the mitzvos. Therefore, any reason given for *Parah Aduma* defeats the purpose of the message of the mitzvah. This is why the *Chinuch* writes that he was scared to offer any logic for this mitzvah.

Based on this, HaRav Kulefsky wanted to say *pshat* in the *Midrash* that *Parah Aduma* comes to clean up the refuse of the *Eigel*. *Ramban* explains Klal Yisroel did not make the *Eigel* to serve it as *avoda zara*. They were not fools, they stood by Har Sinai forty days earlier and heard HaKadosh Boruch Hu speak to them. They were not going to make a golden calf and proclaim it to be their savior who took them out of *Mitzrayim*. Rather, *Ramban* says that they merely wanted an intermediary between Hashem and themselves. *Moshe Rabbeinu* was their connection and they thought they had lost him, so they wanted the *Eigel* to fill that void. They wanted to switch

from a man because they thought they lost, "משה האיש", maybe a man could not fill that role any longer. Aharon picked an *eigel*, which Ramban explains as representing the *tzura* of *shor* and *midas hadin* which is on the *Merkava*.

The only problem with this plan was HaKadosh Boruch Hu's command against making any statue—לא "לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה לָךְ אֱלֹהִים כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה לָכֶם" (שמות כ, כ). That means that all the *cheshbonos*, however logically sound they may be (and if Aharon Hakohen made the *cheshbon* we can assume it made sense), vanish when HaKadosh Boruch Hu says not to do so. In essence, *Chet haEigel* was acting upon logic against the *ratzon* of HaKadosh Boruch Hu. The *tikkun* of *chet* is precisely the mitzvah which is devoid of logic, which does not make sense to us. We do not perform mitzvos because we can logically justify them, we do them because HaKadosh Boruch Hu commanded us to. If we only rely on our own logic to keep the Torah, then we will lead ourselves to follow our logic and understanding in the wrong places. That is why *Parah Aduma* tells us, "גזירה היא מלפני", purely because HaKadosh Boruch Hu commanded us so, and that is how it is *mesaken* the *Chet HaEigel*.

Perhaps, this is also a connection to what occurred in the time of Mordechai and Esther. Esther came to Mordechai and told him it was not a good time to go to Achashverosh because she had not been called for thirty days; either because he did not like her and she would be putting herself in *sakana*, or he would soon call her so she can wait until that happens. To this logical calculation, Mordechai responded that she must still go. He told her that if she passes up this opportunity, Hashem would send salvation through someone else and she would lose her own chance and her father's house would also be lost forever—"...וְאֵת וּבֵית אֲבִיךָ תִּאבְדוּ". Mordechai was telling her that we must act and leave those *cheshbonos* aside. Her great-great-great-grandfather, Shaul Hamelech, also made *cheshbonos* in saving the fattest cattle from Amalek to use for *korbanos*. Shmuel Hanavi challenged him on this and told him, "הִנֵּה שָׁמַע מִזְבַּח טוֹב לְהַקְשִׁיב מֵחֶלֶב אֵילִים" (שמואל א' טו, כב)—listening to and heeding the command of HaKadosh Boruch Hu is more important and better than bringing *korbanos*. Chazal say the Shaul Hamelech made a *kal vachomer*: If we bring an *egla arufa* for one dead body, then certainly we should bring many *korbanos* for all the Amalekim we killed in battle. Yet, Shmuel tells him, throw out your own *cheshbonos* and just listen to the *ratzon* of Hashem *Yisborach*!

Mordechai told Esther that we got into trouble due to making our own *cheshbonos*. Now is the time to act for Hashem and to discontinue following our own logic. This is the chance to fix the mistake of "בית אביך", of Shaul Hamelech. Esther replied, if that is the case then tell everyone to fast for three full days, night and day, and I will as well. Can you imagine what she looked like after that three-day fast? And then she presented herself to the king to invite him to a party? That runs counter to any *hishtadlus* and logic, it just doesn't make any sense. But Esther said to do this because the time was to be fully *somaych* on the *hashgacha* of HaKadosh Boruch Hu, and all logic needed to be abandoned. Fasting for three days and *davening* to HaKadosh Boruch Hu was what succeeded.

Maybe this is why Chazal were *mesaken* the mitzvah of Purim to be, "עַד דְּלֹא יֵדַע". Since when do we have a mitzvah for a person to lose his *דעת*? Chazal say that one day a year we give up a little bit of our *דעת*, simply because Chazal said so, that is the *takana*. To understand that when it comes to HaKadosh Boruch Hu, we do not use logic to go against what He says, nor does it need to make sense to follow what He commands us to do.

Especially in this day and age, where everything needs to be explained and make sense, and with the outside world constantly hassling us about everything we do, does this message mean so much. There are times when our *chachomim*, the *Einei ha'Eida*, are telling us to do or not do things which we don't fully understand because our logic is slightly different, we must listen. The lesson we need to take for ourselves is the following. There is a trust we have in HaKadosh Boruch Hu to do the mitzvos, and there is a trust we have in *emunas chachomim* to follow their clear directives. Whether it makes sense to us or not, we need to accept it.

That is, perhaps, the message of *Parah Aduma*, the way HaRav Kulefsky said it, and *Chet HaEigel*, for us to internalize in our day and age. We must follow HaKadosh Boruch Hu's mitzvos clearly, regardless of our understanding, as well as following *da'as chachomim* with true *emunas chachomim*, exactly as they say.