

Discourse 54

“Zot Chukat HaTorah... -
This is the decree of the Torah...”

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Chukat,
10th of Tammuz, 5725
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁹⁶⁴ “*HaShem*-יהוה spoke... This is the decree of the Torah... they shall take to you a completely red cow etc.” Now, Likkutei Torah⁹⁶⁵ explains the matter of the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*) about which the verse states, “This is the decree of the Torah,” that the *mitzvah* of the Red Heifer is the general whole of Torah. That is, the matter of Torah and *mitzvot* in general, is that through this a person comes to be in a state of “running” (*Ratzo*) and “returning” (*Shov*).

This comes to be expressed with full clarity and revelation in the *mitzvah* of the Red Heifer, the entire substance of which is the two aspects of “running” (*Ratzo*) and “returning” (*Shov*). (In contrast, this is not so of other *mitzvot*, for there are *mitzvot* the substance of which is only “running” (*Ratzo*), and there are other *mitzvot* the substance of which is only “returning” (*Shov*).)

⁹⁶⁴ Numbers 19:2

⁹⁶⁵ Likkutei Torah, Chukat 56a and on

[In the mitzvah of the Red Heifer,] the “running” (*Ratzo*) is the matter of burning the cow to ash, and the “returning” (*Shov*) is the matter expressed in the verse,⁹⁶⁶ “He shall put upon it living spring waters in a vessel.” This is why it is called “the decree of the Torah-*Chukat HaTorah*- חוקת התורה.”

However, we still must understand how this explanation aligns with the simple meaning, which is that when the verse states, “This is the decree of the Torah (*Chukat HaTorah*- חוקת התורה),” it comes to inform us that it is a decree (*Chok*-חוק) that cannot be understood intellectually.

[This is true both of the matter of the purification, in that through it the impure becomes pure but the pure becomes impure,⁹⁶⁷ as well as in the offering of the cow, which must take place outside the three camps,⁹⁶⁸ this being the opposite of all [other] sacrificial offerings that are specifically offered within.]

As Rashi explained, this is, “Because Satan and the nations of the world taunt Israel, saying, ‘What is this commandment (given to you)⁹⁶⁹ and what reasoning is there for it?’ This is why the word ‘decree-*Chukah*-חוקה’ is used in regard to it, to indicate that it is My decree and you have no right to question it.”

This is so much so, that even in regard to other *mitzvot* that also are in the category of decrees (*Chukim*), the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*) differs from all other decrees (*Chukim*), which

⁹⁶⁶ Numbers 19:17

⁹⁶⁷ See Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 19:5; Tanchuma Chukat 7

⁹⁶⁸ Rashi to Numbers 19:3; See Talmud Bavli, Yoma 67b

⁹⁶⁹ This is the version of the text as cited in the discourse entitled “*HaShem Lee b'Ozrai*” 5687 (cited later in Ch. 4 & Ch. 7 of this discourse).

generally, are within the parameters of intellect, except that there are [unanswered] questions concerning them etc. In contrast, the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*) is the only decree in which there is no room for intellect altogether.⁹⁷⁰

Because of this, “Shlomo said: In regard all these I was able to comprehend, but in regard to the Torah portion of the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*) I investigated, I asked, and I searched, ‘I said: I will become wise, but it is far from me.’”⁹⁷¹ It was to Moshe alone that, “the Holy One, blessed is He, said, ‘To you I am revealing the reasoning of the [Red] Heifer.’”⁹⁷²

This is as stated in Midrash,⁹⁷³ “About each and every matter that the Holy One, blessed is He, said to Moshe, He would tell him [how it becomes] impure and [how it becomes] pure. When He reached the Torah portion of, ‘Say to the priests,’⁹⁷⁴ Moshe said to Him, ‘Master of the world, if they become impure, by what will they become pure? And He did not answer him. At that moment, Moshe’s face turned pale. However, when He reached the Torah portion of the Red Heifer, the Holy One, blessed is He, said to him etc., ‘This is his purification: ‘for the impure [person] they shall take from the ashes of the burning purification.’⁹⁷⁵ Moshe said to Him, ‘Master of the world, is that purification?’ The Holy One, blessed is He, said to him, ‘It is a decree (*Chukah*-חוקה). I

⁹⁷⁰ As explained at length in the Sichah talk that preceded the discourse (printed in Likkutei Sichot Vol. 8, p. 124 and on).

⁹⁷¹ Ecclesiastes 7:23; Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 19:3; Midrash Tanchuma Chukat 6.

⁹⁷² Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 19:6; Also see Likkutei Sichot Vol. 4, p. 1,057, note 6.

⁹⁷³ Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 19:4; Kohelet Rabba 8:1 (5)

⁹⁷⁴ Leviticus 21:1

⁹⁷⁵ Numbers 19:17

issued a decree, and no creature can comprehend My decree,’ as written, ‘This is the decree of the Torah.’” This emphasizes that the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*) differs from all other Torah *mitzvot*, (including the decrees (*Chukim*)). However, we must understand how this aligns with the fact that it represents all of Torah in general.

2.

This may be understood by prefacing with the explanation in Likkutei Torah,⁹⁷⁶ that the “decree-*Chukat*-חוקת of the Torah” is of the same root as “engraving-*Chakikah*-חקיקה,”⁹⁷⁷ referring to Torah as it is in its root and source, in which it is the aspect of engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*). This is a much loftier level than its manifestation in the written letters of the Torah.

This is like how it is physically, that letters written with ink on parchment are foreign and separate from the parchment, in that only when the scribe writes with ink on the parchment, do they become unified as one. In contrast, engraved letters (such as the letters of the Tablets (*Luchot*), [as the verse states],⁹⁷⁸ “engraved on the Tablets”) are from it and of it, such that they are one with the [precious] stone upon which they are engraved.

⁹⁷⁶ Likkutei Torah, Chukat; Also see Likkutei Torah, beginning of Bechukotai

⁹⁷⁷ In regard to the coming section also see Likkutei Sichot Vol. 8, p. 127 and on (from this discourse).

⁹⁷⁸ Exodus 32:16; See Likkutei Torah, Chukat 59c

More specifically, it is explained in *Hemshech* 5666⁹⁷⁹ that there are two kinds of engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*). There is regular engraving and there is engraving from one side [through] to the other side, such as the letters of the Tablets (*Luchot*). This is the verse states,⁹⁸⁰ “[The tablets were inscribed] on both their sides; they were inscribed on one side and the other,” and as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁹⁸¹ “The letters *Mem*-ד and *Samech*-ס of the Tablets (*Luchot*) stood there miraculously.”

The difference between them is that when it comes to engraved letters in general (not from one side through to the other side) even though they are part and parcel of the thing itself, unlike written letters that are something in addition to the parchment upon which they are written, that completely cover over and conceal the parchment beneath them,⁹⁸² nevertheless, since they take up some space in the stone, so much so, that it is possible to fill them with ink, they therefore give room for the existence of written letters that conceal completely and thus have some relation to written letters. This is because, to some degree, they too conceal, such that in the area where the letters are engraved, there is somewhat of a darkening of the brilliance and radiance of the precious stone, in that it no longer is as it is by itself, without the letters engraved on it.⁹⁸³

⁹⁷⁹ In the discourse entitled “*Ein Omdin*” 5667 (p. 483 and on)

⁹⁸⁰ Exodus 32:15

⁹⁸¹ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 104a

⁹⁸² Also see Likkutei Torah *ibid.* 59d

⁹⁸³ Also see Likkutei Torah *ibid.* 59c; Shir HaShirim 5a; *Hemshech* 5666 p. 474 and on.

In contrast, when it comes to letters that are engraved from one side through to the other side, there is no room for any hold on them whatsoever, and they are completely transcendent (and elevated) in comparison to written letters.

Now, the particulars of these matters, as they are Above in *HaShem's* יהו"ה Godliness, are explained there. That is, the vessels (*Keilim*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) are analogous to written letters, for although they are not the existence of something separate, Heaven forbid to think so, being that they are Godliness, nevertheless, their existence is separate from the light (*Ohr*) [of the world of Emanation] etc.

The ten *Sefirot* of the Crown-*Keter* and Primordial Man (*Adam Kadmon*) are analogous to engraved letters that are not separate and apart from the precious stone, but even so, there is some room for a hold on the letters, in that it is possible to fill them with ink. That is, in the Crown-*Keter* and Primordial Man (*Adam Kadmon*) there is the existence of vessels (*Keilim*) etc., such that they are the aspect of the source for the vessels (*Keilim*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).

The engraving from one side through to the other side is the matter of "He engraved an engraving in the Upper Purity (*Tehiru Ila'ah*),"⁹⁸⁴ meaning,⁹⁸⁵ in the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He, before the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, in which novel existence is utterly inapplicable. This is the meaning of stating that there is no room for them there, and that they cannot be filled with ink, in

⁹⁸⁴ Zohar I 15a

⁹⁸⁵ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 10-11.

that they are not in the category of being a source for the worlds, etc.

Now, it should also be added and further explained based on the explanation in *Hemshech* 5672⁹⁸⁶ on the matter of the engraved letters, such as the letters engraved in a signet. That is, even though the letters are only the form on the signet, this nevertheless is an essential form (*Tzurah Atzmit*). That is, the form is essential to the substance of the signet, unlike the letters in the wax that has been impressed and formed by the letters of the signet. For, although the form and image is equal in them, in that it literally is like the letters of the signet, nonetheless, it is not the essential form, but only is the form formed by the form, and is separate from the form of the signet.

He continues by explaining the matter of the essential form (*Tzurah Atzmit*),⁹⁸⁷ that not only is the form essential, but beyond this, the essence is depicted by it. In other words, the form is the essence itself that is depicted by this form, and there thus is nothing additional here, but only the essence, not even a revelation (*Gilyu*) from the essence, but rather, the essence itself is revealed. He concludes that this matter only applies to levels to that transcend the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) etc.

From all the above, we can understand the great elevation of the “decree (*Chukat*-חוקת) of the Torah,” in that this is as Torah is in its root and source, in the aspect of the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*-אותיות החקיקה), up to and including the highest level, which is the engraving from one side through to the other side, within the aspect of the limitless light of the

⁹⁸⁶ *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1, Ch. 289

⁹⁸⁷ Also see *Sefer HaMaamarim*, *Kuntreisim* Vol. 1, p. 129a and on.

Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, before the *Tzimtzum* etc.

3.

Now, we should add and explain the matter of the written letters and the engraved letters as they are in the human soul. Through this we will also understand the connection and relationship between the engraved letters (“decree-*Chukah*-חוקה” as a term indicating “engraving-*Chakikah*-חקיקה”) and the matter of “decrees-*Chukim*-חוקים” in the literal sense.

The explanation is that human intellect is like written letters, which are something in addition to the parchment. This is because intellect (*Sechel*) is additional to one’s essential self (*Etzem*). This is evidenced by the fact that the intellect (*Sechel*) changes from immaturity (*Katnut*) to maturity (*Gadlut*), such that the intellect of a child is very small, and to the degree that he grows [and matures], his intellect grows with him. We also see that some people are intellectuals (*Ba’al Sechel*), whereas others are not as intellectual (*Ba’al Sechel*). It therefore must be said that intellect is additional to one’s essential self.

In contrast, engraved letters are the matter of the essential self of the soul, which transcends the intellect in an incomparable way etc. This is like the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, about whom it is explained in Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah⁹⁸⁸ that “He is millions of degrees to

⁹⁸⁸ Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah, translated as The Gate of Unity and Faith, Ch. 9.

no end, higher and exalted over the level of Wisdom-*Chochmah*.”

It thus is utterly inapplicable to ascribe to Him any matter that is ascribed to Wisdom-*Chochmah*, even in a way of great elevation and exaltation, such as to say about Him that, “it is impossible for any created being, whether the upper and lower beings, to grasp His wisdom or Being etc.” A person who says about Him that “it is impossible to grasp Him” is like someone who says about a very lofty and deep wisdom that, “it is impossible to feel it with one’s hands because of the great depth of the concept,” such that whoever would hear him would laugh at him etc.

The same is so of the soul, in that it transcends intellect (*Sechel*) in a way that is beyond all measure of comparison, only that the soul subsequently manifests within the intellect (*Sechel*), such that it is called “the intellectual soul” (*Nefesh HaMaskelet*).

From this we can also understand this as it relates to our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in that the matter of engraved letters is the fact that every single Jew has a natural desire to fulfill the will of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.⁹⁸⁹ This nature stems from the essence of his soul, which transcends intellect, and primarily comes into revelation in *mitzvot* that are decrees (*Chukim*-חוקים). For, in regard to *mitzvot* that are testimonies (*Eidut*-עדות) and ordinances (*Mishpatim*-משפטים), since there are intellectual reasonings for them, therefore the desire stemming from the essence of the soul as it purely is, is not expressly pronounced in them, being that intellect (*Sechel*)

⁹⁸⁹ See Mishneh Torah of the Rambam, Hilchot Gerushin 2:20

is additional [to the soul] (especially since it is an inner manifest power that unifies with the intellectual soul) which conceals the essential desire (at least to some degree). It only is in *mitzvot* that are decrees (*Chukim*-חוקים), in which there is no composition of intellect and reasoning, that the essence of the soul is revealed.

Based on this, we can explain the relationship between the decrees (*Chukim*-חוקים) and the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*-אותיות החקיקה).⁹⁹⁰ That is, the superiority of the decrees (*Chukim*-חוקים), over and above the testimonies (*Eidut*) and ordinances (*Mishpatim*), is similar to the superiority of engraved letters, over and above written letters, in that they are not something in addition to the precious stone, and therefore do not conceal it.

More specifically, in regard to the two ways of engraving, regular engraving and engraving that is from one side through to the other side, when it comes to decrees (*Chukim*-חוקים) in general, in those that have a certain hold in the intellectual understanding, the intellect conceals over the essential desire, at least to a some degree, such that the essence of the soul is not revealed in them to such an extent. These are like the letters that are engraved on a precious stone, which darken the brilliance of the precious stone to some extent, so that in the place of the engraving it is not as brilliant.

In contrast, “This is the decree (*Chukat*-חוקת) of the Torah,” (the Red Heifer – *Parah Adumah*), which entirely transcends the intellect, is comparable to letters that are engraved from one side through to the other side, in which there

⁹⁹⁰ Also see Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 4, p. 1,056.

is no room whatsoever for any hold [on them] and they affect no concealment whatsoever.

4.

Now, in Likkutei Torah, in explanation of [the words], “This is the decree (*Chukat*-חוקת) of the Torah,” it states that through the *mitzvah* of the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*), which is a decree (*Chukah*-חוקה), we affect a drawing Above of the aspect of the engraved letters of the Torah, so that there literally is a drawing down from there into the aspect of the written letters [of the Torah] etc.

This is because the *mitzvah* of the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*) is the general totality of the Torah etc., (as mentioned in chapter one). From this it is understood that even the matter of decrees (*Chukim*-חוקים) in the literal sense, as it pertains to “This is the decree (*Chukat*-חוקת) of the Torah,” in that “it is a degree from Me and you have no right to question it,” must be drawn into all the *mitzvot* of the Torah.

This may be understood based on what his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, said on the 12th of Tammuz of the year of his redemption,⁹⁹¹ [after prefacing that that the *mitzvot* of *HaShem*-יהוה are called by various names, such as “testimonies” (*Edut*), “decrees” (*Chukim*), and “ordinances” (*Mishpatim*), and explaining that “ordinances” (*Mishpatim*) are *mitzvot* that accord to the intellect etc., whereas “decrees” (*Chukim*) are those that do not accord to reason, but

⁹⁹¹ In the discourse entitled “*HaShem Lee b'Ozrai*” 5687 Ch. 3 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5687 p. 203).

are decrees of the Torah, and as stated in Rashi (on the verse, “This is the decree (*Chukat*-חוקת) of the Torah”), “Because Satan and the nations of the world taunt Israel... and this is why the word ‘decree-*Chukah*-חוקה’ is used etc.”], is that our toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is that [even] *mitzvot* that accord to intellect must specifically be fulfilled through accepting the yoke [of *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה kingdom], just like the *mitzvot* that are decrees (*Chukim*). In other words, [in regard to] *mitzvot* that can be grasped intellectually, we do not fulfill them because they are necessitated by our intellect, but because they are *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה commandments etc.

It can be said that this is the inner reason for citing Rashi’s explanation of the verse, “This is the decree of the Torah (*Chukat HaTorah*-חוקת התורה)” [in addition to the fact that this is the weekly Torah portion and is juxtaposed to the matter of redemption]. He explicitly writes the words, “This is the decree of the Torah (*Zot Chukat HaTorah*-זאת חוקת התורה),” the translation of Targum of which is, “This is a decree in Torah-*Da Gzeirat Orayta*-דא גזירת אורייתא,” hinting that it is a decree **on** Torah, as brought in holy books],⁹⁹² in that his intention here is to bring proof for what he states in the continuation of the matter, that even *mitzvot* that are intellectually understood must be fulfilled by accepting the yoke, in the same way as [*mitzvot* that are] decrees (*Chukim*).

For the explanation that the words, “This is the decree of the Torah (*Chukat HaTorah*-חוקת התורה),” mean that the *mitzvah* of the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*) is the general

⁹⁹² See Tanya cited in Magen Avraham to Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, end of Siman 580.

totality of the Torah, demonstrates that all the *mitzvot*, these being the particulars, must be fulfilled out of accepting the yoke (in a way that completely transcends intellect) just as we fulfill the decree (*Chukah*) of the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*), which is the general whole. This is because the particulars come from (and are like) the general whole.

The explanation is that even though the division of the [*mitzvot* into] three categories is according to Torah itself, in that the Torah tells us that there are *mitzvot* that have no reason and are called “decrees” (*Chukim*-חוקים) and there are *mitzvot* that have reason and are called “testimonies” (*Edut*) and “ordinances” (*Mishpatim*) (in the Torah) and we thus find that *HaShem*’s-ה' יהו will in the Torah, is that the fulfillment of *mitzvot* that are “testimonies” (*Edut*) should be in a way that they attest to various matters,⁹⁹³ and that the fulfillment of *mitzvot* that are “ordinances” (*Mishpatim*) is because they necessitated intellectually,⁹⁹⁴ nonetheless, this very fact itself, that *mitzvot* that are necessitated by intellect must be fulfilled out of reason, must be by way of accepting the yoke, meaning,

⁹⁹³ **As is expressly stated** in the Torah (Exodus 31:13), “However, you must observe My Shabbats, for it is a sign etc.”; (Leviticus 23:43), “So that your generations will know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in Sukkot (booths) etc.,” and elsewhere. – For further elucidation, see Ba”Ch and Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe at the beginning of Hilchot Sukkah, and similarly Tzitzit and Tefillin etc.

⁹⁹⁴ This may be further elucidated by Shemonah Perakim of the Rambam, Ch. 6 (cited in Derech Mitzvotecha 84b), that in regard to those matters that are [even considered] evil according to the intellect, one must say “I do not desire them.” See at length in Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 7 p. 17-18; Vol. 16 p. 248. It is with this in mind that we can understand what our sages, of blessed memory, stated (in Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 100b), “Even had the Torah not been given (Heaven forbid*) we would have learned modesty from the cat, and [that] stealing [is objectionable] from the ant etc.,” whereas at first glance, what difference would it make? [* See Torat Menachem – Reshimat HaYoman, p. 337.]

solely because the Holy One, blessed is He, **decreed** that the fulfillment of these *mitzvot* must be done with reason.⁹⁹⁵

The same is so of the *mitzvot* themselves, in that even *HaShem* 's-ה"ה יהו"ה Supernal desire for *mitzvot* that are “testimonies” (*Edut*) and “ordinances” (*Mishpatim*) is the essential desire (*Ratzon Atzmi*) of *HaShem* 's-ה"ה יהו"ה, blessed is He, that transcends Wisdom-*Chochmah*, except that (this too) “is My decree” that His desire for these *mitzvot* should also manifest within reason and intellect.”

This then, is the inner reason for the statement, “This is the decree of the **Torah** (*Zot Chukat HaTorah*-זאת חוקת התורה), (even though the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*) is the general totality of the *mitzvot*, the matter of which is *HaShem* 's-ה"ה יהו"ה Supernal will (*Ratzon*), blessed is He, whereas Torah is Wisdom-*Chochmah*). This is to emphasize that the matter of the decree is not only with respect to the ***mitzvah*** of the “testimonies” (*Edut*) and “ordinances” (*Mishpatim*), but even with respect to the **Torah** of them, meaning that they are drawn forth into wisdom and intellect (and even the intellect of them itself). That is, this is a matter of a decree (*Chukah*-חוקה), [and] “is a decree from Me.”

⁹⁹⁵ Thus, even in regard to “**ordinances**” (*Mishpatim*) it states, “[These are the ordinances (*Mishpatim*) that you shall set before them (*Lifneihem*-לפניהם) meaning], “before them, and not before non-Jews, even [if you know that in the case of a particular law] they will decide it in the same way that Torah law would.” (Rashi at the beginning of the Torah portion of *Mishpatim* [Exodus 21:1].)

However, we still must understand how it can apply for a matter of intellect to be [done] out of accepting the yoke. This is because intellect and accepting the yoke are two opposites. The explanation is that about this the verse states, “This is the decree (*Chukat*-חוקת) of the Torah,” this being the matter of an engraving that is from one side through to the other side (as discussed in chapter three).

To preface, the superiority of an engraving that is from one side through to the other side, over and above a regular engraving, is not just in regard to the engraved letters themselves. (That is, in an engraving that is from one side through to the other side, there is no room for any hold etc.) Rather, it also is in regard to the thing that is engraved itself. For, in a regular engraving, such as letters engraved on a precious stone, the engraving only affects the external part of the stone. In contrast, in an engraving that is from one side through to the other side, the entire being of that which is engraved is completely penetrated by that which is engraved in it.

From this it is understood that the relationship between, “This is the decree (*Chukat*-חוקת) of the Torah,” and an engraving (*Chakikah*-חקיקה) that is from one side through to the other side, is not just because of accepting the yoke of the decree (*Chukah*-חוקה) of the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*), which has no room at all for intellect (as explained above), but also because of the Jew himself, within whom the matter of

accepting the yoke in engraved, such that the engraving (*Chakikah*-חִקִּיקָה) penetrates his whole being.

The explanation is that [in a regular engraving], that which is engraved in a person is comparable to letters that are engraved in a precious stone. That is, even though it is engraved **in him**, (and thus is unlike written letters, which are written **on** the parchment), nevertheless, it does not actually reach the essential self of his soul. Therefore, just as the [letters] do not reach his innermost depth, they therefore are also not fully absorbed and embedded in the external powers [of his soul].

However, since the matter of accepting the yoke (*Kabbalat Ol*) is engraved in a Jew through and through, from one side to the other side, meaning, in the totality of his essential being, it therefore is even drawn into his most external powers. This is because all the powers of a person are related to his essential self.⁹⁹⁶

This then, is the matter of the engraving through and through, from one side to the other side, meaning from the innermost depth [of his being] to the most external level [of his being]. This is why accepting the yoke (*Kabbalat Ol*) even affects the power of intellect,⁹⁹⁷ (such that even in the understanding of *mitzvot* that are “testimonies” (*Edut*) and “ordinances” (*Mishpatim*), the intellect is not seen as an

⁹⁹⁶ See what is similarly stated in Kuntres HaAvodah, Ch. 5 (p. 33), that it is specifically the aspect of the *Yechidah* [essence of the soul] – though it is completely divested from, and there is no hold on it whatsoever by the inner manifest powers, nevertheless, it is found within all the powers and even has an effect on the coarse powers of the animalistic soul (which is not the case with the aspect of the *Chayah* [level of the soul]). See there at length.

⁹⁹⁷ And on the contrary, it is specifically in the fact that the acceptance of the yoke (*Kabbalat Ol*) also influences the intellect that it becomes pronounced that it is engraved in essence in his soul.

existence unto itself, but it rather is because “it is a decree from Me”), being that the essential self the soul includes all the powers [of the soul] and acts upon them.

6.

The same is so of the *mitzvah* of the Red Heifer itself, about which the verse states, “This is the decree (*Chukat*-חוקת) of the Torah,” this being the matter of an engraving (*Chakikah*-חקיקה) through and through, from one side to the other side. That is, its fulfillment (is not just with one’s power of action, stemming from accepting the yoke, but) in a way that the faith (*Emunah*) and acceptance of the yoke (*Kabbalat Ol*), which transcend intellect (*Sechel*), also act upon his intellect, in that he does not question it (“you have no right to question it”),⁹⁹⁸ such that he fulfills it with vitality and joy, just as with a *mitzvah* that he understands intellectually.

Based on this, we can say that the matter of the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*) being the general principle of the whole Torah, is not just because it is a “decree” (*Chukah*-חוקה), but also because accepting the yoke affects the intellect. Only that in regard to the *mitzvah* of the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*), as it is, in and of itself, since it does not manifest within reason, the effect of accepting the yoke (*Kabbalat Ol*) over and above intellect, is generally (by way of negation), in that he does not question it. From this, it subsequently is drawn into the particulars of the *mitzvot*, so that the acceptance of the yoke

⁹⁹⁸ See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 3, p. 898.

(*Kabbalat Ol*) has an effect on the intellect (*Sechel*) too, such that he grasps according to *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal will.

This is also aligned to the particulars of the decree (*Chukah*-חוקה) of the Red Heifer (which differs from the other decrees (*Chukim*), as discussed in chapter one), in that it has two opposites. That is, it is done outside of the three camps, but together with this, “He shall sprinkle [some of its blood] toward the front of the Tent of Meeting (*Ohel Mo’ed*).”⁹⁹⁹ That is, because of the essential self of a Jew, this being the matter of the engraving (*Chakikah*-חקיקה) through and through, from one side to the other side, even when he is outside the three camps, he nevertheless “directs his attention and sight to the opening of the Sanctuary.”¹⁰⁰⁰

Now, we can connect this to the explanation in Likkutei Torah, that the statement about the Red Heifer (*Parah Adumah*), “This is the decree of the Torah,” stems from the “running” (*Ratzo*) and “returning” (*Shov*) in it, (as explained in chapter one).

That is, the “running” (*Ratzo*) desire to leave the parameters of the vessels and the intellect, is like accepting the yoke, which transcends reason and intellect, this being the matter of “toward the front of the Tent of Meeting.” The “returning” (*Shov*) is the matter of drawing down into the intellect, that “he does not question it” (from which it is drawn to the other *mitzvot*, so that even the intellect itself agrees, as explained before), until he even affects refinement “outside the three camps,” and purifies the impurity contracted from a

⁹⁹⁹ Numbers 19:4

¹⁰⁰⁰ See Rashi to Numbers 19:4

corpse, which is even lower than the shiny husk (*Kelipat Nogah*).¹⁰⁰¹

7.

Now, it can be said that this also is the connection between the Torah portion of Chukat and the holiday of redemption of the 12th of Tammuz, which is why (in many years) it is read on the Shabbat (from which all the days of the week are blessed)¹⁰⁰² before the 12th of Tammuz, or at least in juxtaposition to the 3rd of Tammuz, when the redemption began (and he was granted freedom), to such an extent that even in the very first discourse of the 12th of Tammuz, he cites Rashi on the verse, “This is the decree of the Torah,” (as mentioned in chapter four).

The explanation is that, as known, all the days of the life of his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, whose joyous day of redemption we are celebrating, were imbued with service *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a way of actual self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), and simultaneously, all his matters were in a settled way (*Hityashvut*) of ultimate tranquility.

Even “the great toil that I endeavored in spreading Torah and strengthening the faith,”¹⁰⁰³ as a result of which the imprisonment before [his release on] the 12th of Tammuz was caused, even though according to intellect there was no room for this toil, not even according to intellect of the side of

¹⁰⁰¹ See Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 28; Derech Mitzvotcha 111b

¹⁰⁰² Zohar II 63b; 88a

¹⁰⁰³ See the letter of the Rebbe Rayatz in his letter celebrating the first occasion of the 12th of Tammuz, of the year 5788 (printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5708, p. 263, and subsequently in his Igrot Kodesh, Vol. 2, p. 80).

holiness, and came into revelation by serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with actual self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) that utterly transcends the limits of reason and intellect, even so, his toil and service was with the utmost orderliness, (even though the nature of man is that when he is in a motion of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), there is no room in him for calculations and the like), such that it was calculated and ordered in such a way that the spreading of Torah and the strengthening of the faith would be in the most optimal measure possible.

Now, based on Rashi's statement in our Torah portion,¹⁰⁰⁴ that "Moshe is Israel and Israel is Moshe, thus telling you¹⁰⁰⁵ that the leader of each generation is equal to the whole generation, in that the leader is the whole," it is understood that this power was granted by his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, to all Jews, including those who (only) are called by the title Jew.¹⁰⁰⁶ Thus, when we trod on the path that he paved for us, we have a guarantee that

¹⁰⁰⁴ Rashi to Numbers 21:21 – See at length in Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 33 p. 134 and on.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Seemingly the words "thus telling you [that the leader of every generation is equal to the whole generation, for the leader] is the whole" are not relevant to understanding the simple meaning of the verse. However, it is with this that he explains why the verse **changed** [its terminology], and this is the meaning of "thus telling you," – which even includes "a five year old" – that this is likewise the way the matter is **according to the simple** way of things (in the physical world – which corresponds to the simple and literal (*Pshat*) meaning of the Torah) – that "the leader of the generation etc." With this in mind, we can understand the question, for at first glance, Rashi could have concluded with the example of "Israel is Moshe." However, based on the above, it is understood that in this [example] it will not always make a difference **to you** (that this is how it is **in actuality**) [such that you might say that] even though the Jewish people of the generation of knowledge (*Dor De'ah*), the generation of Moshe – are Moshe – this is not so of the leader of [subsequent] generations.

¹⁰⁰⁶ See the language of the Rebbe Rayatz in his above-mentioned letter; Also see Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 8, Hosafot p. 329 and on.

the verse,¹⁰⁰⁷ “May *HaShem*-יהוה our God be with us as He was with our forefathers, may He not forsake us nor cast us off,” will be fulfilled and “for all the Jewish people there shall be light,”¹⁰⁰⁸ both spiritually and physically.¹⁰⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰⁷ Kings I 8:57

¹⁰⁰⁸ See Exodus 10:23

¹⁰⁰⁹ As per the words of the Rebbe Rayatz – 3rd of Tammuz 5687 (printed in Sefer HaSichot 5687 p. 169 and on); See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 8, p. 336, note beginning “*Yehi*-יהי.”