



Parashat Chukat

In this week's Parasha, Hashem taught Moshe that a Jew who touches a dead body becomes impure. He must then count seven days. On the third and seventh day a Kohen sprinkles him with the ashes of a red cow that are mixed with water. The Midrash says that Moshe asked, "Why do the ashes of a red cow make an impure person pure?" Hashem said it is a secret to understand. When teaching this mitzva, Moshe warned the B'nei Yisrael that this mitzva is a 'chok', a law which does not give reasons. The nations of the world will ridicule you for keeping it. And even if you may ask, "Does this mitzva make sense?" there is no answer except that we must keep it because it is Hashem's command. Hashem will reward you for keeping it even though you don't understand it.

The Orach Chaim HaKadosh asks why does the pasuk say, "This is the 'chok' of the Torah"? It should have said, this is the 'chok' of the laws of tumah. The answer is that really this is a concept for the whole Torah. Even the mitzvot that we do understand, the reason we do them is not because we understand them. The reason we keep the entire Torah is because we are loyal servants to Hashem. Although we may understand the mitzva, the reason why we keep the mitzvot is not because we understand, but because this is the will of Hashem.

Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Roth

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