

The Morris M. Horowitz Kollel

732 813 0682 / morrismhorowitzkollel@gmail.com

R' Yitzchok Blau  
Nasi Hakollel

Moshe Rothenberg  
Rosh Kollel



## Parshas Chukas / פרשת חקת

“זאת חקת התורה...” במדבר יט:ב

“This is the edict of the Torah...” Bamidbar 19:2

The **אור החיים הקדוש** at the beginning of the Parsha asks why the mitzvah of the **פרה אדומה** (Red Heifer) is referred to as representing the law of the Torah as a whole. The pasuk may have expressed this mitzvah as “זאת חקת הטומאה” or “זאת חקת הטהרה”, which would refer to the purification process associated with the **פרה אדומה**. The **אור החיים** anticipates the potential answer that the **פרה אדומה** was necessary in order to purify one who wished to learn Torah. This theory is quickly debunked, as we do not find any source that tells us that someone who is **טמא מת** (ritually impure as a result of contact with a corpse) is not allowed to learn Torah. To the contrary, the Gemara in Maseches Brachos states **דברי תורה אינן מקבלין טומאה** – the words of Torah cannot contract impurity.

Hence the **אור החיים** explains in beautiful fashion that we know from the Gemara in Maseches Nazir, (see also **רמבם** in **פרק א** of **הלכות טמא מת**) that **כותמים** are not **מטמא למת**. They cannot contract impurity from contact with a dead person. The differentiating factor that elevates Bnei Yisrael over the rest of the nations is our **קבלת התורה**, our acceptance of the Torah. If not for our **נעשה ונשמע**, we would be no different from the world at large. This is why Hashem said specifically by **פרה אדומה**, “זאת חקת התורה” – these laws of **טומאה** (impurity) and the prerequisites for purification all stem from our unique connection the Torah. Through **קבלת התורה**, the Bnei Yisrael became a people that **טומאה** yearns to cling to, in the hopes that we will help to elevate it. If we touch a **מת**, the **טומאה** sticks to us and does not let go without the tremendous power that Hashem instilled in the mitzvah of **פרה אדומה**.

We are special because we have the ability to become impure. We have gained this ability by accepting the **תורה הקדושה**. “זאת חקת התורה” these laws of **טומאה** and **טהרה** exist because we accepted the Torah. Our separation from the other nations is because of our **קבלת התורה**. We have accepted its yoke upon ourselves in place of the yoke that shall not grace the neck of the **פרה אדומה**. There is only one way to foster our connection to the Torah, the connection that disconnects us from the other nations. Delve into it. Jump into the deep end. “זאת התורה אדם כי ימות באהל” – the Gemara learns out that Torah is gained only by the one who “kills” himself in pursuit of understanding its secrets. This is the key to our survival.