

J.L.C. Connections

The Jewish Learning Connection's Weekly Newsletter



Parsha Chukas
July 12, 2024 / 6 Tamuz 5784
Volume 29, Issue 39
Candlelighting: 8:43 pm

Waxman Torah Center · 2195 S. Green Road · University Heights, OH 44121 · (216) 691-3837 · www.clevelandjlc.com

Friday, July 12

7:15pm Early Mincha / Maariv
8:43pm Candlelighting
8:45pm Mincha / Maariv

Shabbos, July 13

8:45am Shacharis
Kiddush is available for sponsorship
7:35pm Pirke Avos
8:35pm Mincha / Shalosh Seudos
9:50pm Maariv

Sunday, July 14

9:15am Parsha Class
(R. Nisenbaum)
10:00am "The 613 Mitzvos"
(R. Stoll)

Monday, July 15

8:00pm "Ten Commandments":
False Testimony
(R. Nisenbaum)

Tuesday, July 16

8:00pm Tanna d'vei Eliyah
(R. Stoll)

Wednesday, July 17

8:00pm Nach Still Speaks –
Tehillim (R. Stoll)

Thursday, July 18

10:15pm Parsha Class
(R. Nisenbaum)

Torah Podcast

Listen to Rabbi Nisenbaum's "Torah Podcast" at Spotify, Apple Podcasts, iHeartRadio, and more, or download at www.maverickpodcasting.com

New episodes twice a week!

Weekday Minyanim

7:00am Shacharis (M-F)
8:00am Shacharis (Sun)
10:00pm Maariv (Sun-Th)

Class Connection

R. Nisenbaum:

425-436-6200 #352171

"The Torah Podcast" weekly at all podcast locations

R. Stoll:

Zoom: 876-619-3551
Audio: 669-900-9128

Parsha: Chukas

The *Parah Adumah*, or Red Heifer, was used in the purification process of a person who was defiled by coming in contact with a human corpse. This person could not partake of any sacrifice or even enter the Temple area, until he was purified.

The Red Heifer had very specific requirements. It had to be totally red-haired. Even two black hairs would disqualify it from being used. It could not have any blemishes on it, nor could it ever have carried anything on its back.

The cow was slaughtered and its flesh burnt. The ashes were then mixed with cedar wood, a low-growing plant, crimson thread, and spring water. This mixture was sprinkled on the impure person on the third and seventh day of the purification process. He would then immerse in the mikveh and become purified.

There was something else quite unique about the Red Heifer. Although it was used to purify those who were impure, the *kohanim* who were involved in its preparation, themselves became defiled. The Torah refers to *Parah Adumah* as the classic example of a *chok*, a law that seems to be illogical. How could something that purifies one person, contaminate another? Yet, the Jew must be willing to accept all of G-d's commandments, whether he understands their rationale or not. Ultimately, it is

the acceptance of the irrational mitzvahs that shows a person's true commitment to G-d.

In the fortieth year of the Jews' trek through the desert, Miriam and Ahron died. The Jews had drunk from a miraculous well in the desert throughout the forty years. This well had come in the merit of Miriam, and when she died the well dried up. The people complained and G-d instructed Moshe to speak to the rock. Moshe hit the rock and the water returned. Although the people were deserving of all their needs being met in the wilderness, Moshe showed a bit of impatience at their constant complaints. As punishment he was forbidden to enter the Promised Land. The Jewish leader must be able to master total control over his nature under all circumstances.

Shortly afterwards, Ahron died. The Cloud of Glory that protected the Jews throughout the past forty years, had come in Ahron's merit, and disappeared with his death.

People often do not appreciate the value of the righteous. They may be accused of being preoccupied with their own deeds, and not contributing much to society. This is a big mistake and is sometimes only realized after the righteous have passed on and their loss is truly felt in many, previously unknown, ways.

Insights: Chukas

...and the person who touches him shall be contaminated...Miriam died there...

(Num 19:22) A young Torah scholar passed away and his wife was inconsolable. She complained bitterly to a Rosh Yeshiva, "My husband was such a great man. How could G-d take away such a precious and holy soul?" The sage looked at her compassionately and gently said, "The Talmud (Mo'ed Katan 28a) explains that the juxtaposition of Parah Aduma, the Red Heifer, to Miriam's death teaches that just as the Red Heifer atones, so does the death of the righteous atone. Now just how do the Red Heifer and death of the righteous atone?" he asked. "The Red Heifer is the quintessential *chok*, a mitzvah that has no clear rationale behind it. I think it means that when we accept the mitzvah of the Red Heifer, despite our inability to understand its meaning, that trust in G-d serves as atonement. The death of the righteous is also difficult to fathom. But when we accept G-d's judgment, despite not understanding it—that brings atonement to the Jewish people!"

Did You Know?

Although when the Temple stood in Jerusalem, immersion in a mikveh was required for a variety of impurities, today it is only required for three situations: to permit a woman to her husband after menstruation; for a conversion to Judaism; and for certain new metal or glass utensils that were purchased. Many men follow the custom of immersion weekly before Shabbos, or even daily, for additional purification purposes. Before the required immersing, it is necessary to make sure there is no dirt or other intervening substances anywhere on the body, even under one's finger and toenails, or between one's teeth. One's hair must be carefully combed, as tangled or knotted hair may also be an intervention, thus disqualifying the immersion. Utensils must also be free of any stickers or dirt.

Thought for the Week: Often it is because we have been told time and time again that we refuse to obey. (A Candle By Day)