



## *Parshas Bechukosai 2019, an authentic connection*

*The Parsha Perspective Perspective is in honor of the complete and speedy recovery of Sasson Betzalel ben Batya, Shaul Ben Berta, Fayga Sarah Bas Gittel, and Dalit Bas Shoshana.*

*The Parsha Perspective is dedicated to the memory of Shlomo Ben Edward and Edward Ben Shaul. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.*

Our Parsha begins with the statement, *"If you follow my statutes and observe my commandments and perform them, I will give your rains in the correct time, and the Land will yield its produce, and the tree of the field will give forth its fruit."*

The Torah continues with the many blessings that will be bestowed upon the Jewish people if they keep the Mitzvos. But we are also told what can happen C"V if we do not follow G-d's commandments.

At the end of the third aliyah, it says that no matter how far the Jewish people are from G-d, he will never destroy us because he made a covenant with our forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.

The Abarbanel asks a question: At the beginning of the Parsha, it states, *"if you follow my Chukim and observe my Mitzvos,"* but by the curses, it says, *"If you do not listen to me and do not perform all these Mitzvos, and if you despise my Chukim."*

The Torah is usually exact and precise with its wording, so why did the Torah change the order from Chukim, then Mitzvos before the blessing, to Mitzvos and then Chukim by the curses?

The Ramban, Rav Moshe Ben Nachman, a leading Torah scholar in the 12th century, gives a deep and profound explanation. He writes that there are three general categories of Mitzvos:

Chukim are: "**Decrees**" laws that transcend rational reason.... such as the prohibition against wearing Shatnez, which is any clothing that contains both wool and linen. These are laws that are done just for the sake of G-d.

Eidos are: "**Testimonials,**" laws that commemorate or represent something, such as eating matzah on Passover or putting on tefillin. Without the Torah, we would not have thought of these... nevertheless, they are rational laws.

Mishpatim are: "**Judgments,**" rational laws that are necessary for a moral and ethical society, such as the laws against murder, kidnapping, and stealing. These are laws that, had we not been commanded to follow, we would have done anyway.

The Ramban explains that the Torah changes the order of Chukim and Mitzvos to teach us that when we follow the Torah, we must do it for the sake of G-d and nothing else. We must not do it for any spiritual or physical rewards. We must not do them for meaning and fulfillment in our lives but rather to connect to G-d.

Just like Chukim transcends the rational and is done for the sole purpose of connecting with G-d on the deepest of levels...which is far greater than any physical reward ... so too, it is essential that we observe each and every Mitzvah with the same mindset, to cultivate a connection with G-d that can transcend the physical, and achieve the ultimate purpose of creation.

In our daily life, it is imperative that we understand that when we follow the laws that are necessary to create an ethical and moral society, we must not expect any reward in return. Whether they are done in public or private, we must not expect to be compensated. However, what we will receive in return, is purpose and meaning in our lives, which is priceless.

***"Good deeds should be done with intention and not for attention."***

*Have a meaningful Shabbos!*

*Rabbi Sholom Yemini*