

**Good Shabbos Everyone.** In our portion this week *Chukas*, Hashem commands us to perform one of the most puzzling mitzvahs of the Torah, the ritual of the *parah adumah* - the red heifer (cow). Hashem commands that a red heifer, perfect in its redness, be slaughtered and burned. Its ashes are then mixed in a special container with spring water, and sprinkled on anyone who was ritually impure as the result of coming into contact with a dead body. (see Bamidbar 19:2 to 19:22) The procedure of the red heifer served to purify a Jew and allow him to return to communal life.

There are many mitzvahs in the Torah for which Hashem gives us the reason, such as *Tzitzis* to remember the mitzvahs and Shabbos as a reminder that Hashem created the Universe. There are several mitzvahs however, such as the red heifer, which are a total mystery. There seems to be no logical connection between the actions of the mitzvah of the red heifer and the purpose of the mitzvah, to purify the impure.

**One of the foundations of Jewish belief is that we perform all the mitzvahs even though we may not understand them.** A father asks his son to do certain things. The son does not necessarily understand why he has to do what his father asks him. However, the good son does what his father asks him to do. The Torah tells us, "*You are children to Hashem, your G-d...*" (Devarim 14:1) Thus, when Hashem commands us to do a mitzvah, we do as a good son would, without asking for a reason why we have to do it. As the verse tells us: "*The hidden are for Hashem, our G-d, while the revealed are for us and our children, forever, to carry out all the words of the Torah.*" (Deuteronomy 29:28) Again, the verse teaches us that although we may not understand all the mitzvahs of the Torah, we still must do all of them.

If we could look behind the curtain which covers the spiritual world, we would understand the secrets of the Universe. However, Hashem hides the secrets of the spiritual world. Sometimes however, Hashem opens the curtain a little and gives us a peak of the hidden mystical world.

Dreams are often a time when the hidden is revealed. The Sages in fact tell us that dreams have a power equivalent to one-sixtieth of prophecy. In the following incredible true story, Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser tells about one amazing dream in which a little bit of the hidden was revealed...

It was well past midnight on a particularly warm June night. Having had a busy week, I was intent on making sure that my sleep would be uninterrupted. As I drifted off, I became oblivious to the conscious world. A few hours later I began dreaming, but the dream was frighteningly real.

I dreamt that I was riding in the passenger side of a car with a man whom I had never met. As he barreled down the highway, I noticed that his eyes had closed and he had fallen asleep. To make matters worse, we were quickly approaching a sharp curve in the highway. With the speeding oncoming traffic approaching from the other side of the median, I immediately shouted, "*Wake up! Wake up!*" However, the driver, whoever he was, lowered his head slightly and seemed to descend into an even deeper sleep. Desperately, I shouted the first thing I could think of- "*Wake up! For G-d's sake, wake up!*"

With those words, I woke up in a cold sweat. Somewhat relieved that I had been dreaming and was not actually in the car, I calmed myself with the words, "*It's only a dream!*" I looked at the clock on my night table. It was exactly three a.m. Needless to say, the dream was a horrific experience. I decided to give tzedakah and thank the Almighty that this event had not really happened.

The next morning, I bumped into one of my closest friends. He startled me by saying. "*You will never believe what happened last night. My brother called me shortly after three a.m. He was driving his car on the Long Island Expressway, returning from North Carolina. I guess the trip was too much for him and he fell asleep at the wheel.*"

*All of a sudden, he heard a voice screaming, 'Wake up! For G-d's sake, wake up!' Thank G-d he did! Boruch Hashem, he tricked the Angel of Death by executing a harrowing maneuver, steering his car around a dangerous curve on the highway. My brother-who as you know is not a religious man-instantly became a believer. He called me to ask if there was anything special that he should do to thank G-d for sparing him. I explained to him that it would be appropriate for him to donate money to charity."*

I was stunned by my friend's story. I still vividly remembered my dream and was a little shaken up because of it. I related my dream of the previous night to my dear friend; we both were astounded. (from *Stories of Inspiration*, p.81 R. D. Goldwasser) Everything is real: the soul, Hashem, Torah and mitzvahs.

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