

Parashas

CHUKAS

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Da'as is the main topic from the beginning. From the Torah, it seems incidental that the tree of test and stumbling block for all mankind was an Aitz HADA'AS Tov v'Ra, but that is very untrue. Da'as was, is, and always will be the key issue for man, and it continues to direct the history of the world.

The problem is that Da'as is one of those things we take for granted being such a part of everyday life. Well, yes and no. Some aspects are but others are not. We learn many new things every day, or more about old things. That's just a part of conscious life. But whether or not that knowledge goes the full distance or not depends upon a couple of factors.

But first of all, what does "go the full distance mean?" It means that many ideas can be understood on different levels, and appreciating the impact an idea can or should have on your life

I dedicate this week's parsha in loving memory of my father,

Jack Winston

Yisroel Ya'akov *ben* Tzvi, z"l
niftar Tammuz 8, 5772

Not every son has the merit to have a father as a mentor, and fourteen years after my father's passing, I am as just as grateful, if not more, for all my father taught me and helped me to accomplish, b"H. May my father's *Nesbamab* have *aliyah* after *aliyah*, and may he be a *meilitz yosbar* for all of *Klal Yisroel*.

usually depends upon how deeply you understand it. As the Gemora laments, "Woe to those who see but know not what they see!" (Chagigah 12b).

It's a problem when people lack information. It can be a much bigger problem when people lack information but think they have enough of it. That's where the saying, "A little bit of knowledge is a dangerous thing," came from. With no knowledge, people rarely take a stand on something. With a little bit, they can be convinced that they know enough to take their stand.

The world is filled with people who think they understand ideas they do not, or think they understand more than they do. They are making what they believe to be "informed decisions" when these are anything but informed. And, as a result, they are letting the wrong people off the hook and endangering people who should be protected, including themselves a lot of the time. History is filled with the countless regrets of such people who often only realized their mistake when it was too late to do anything to fix it.

I don't know if anyone points this out, but the letters of "Korach," which are Kuf-Raish-Ches, can be rearranged to spelled "Cheiker" (Ches-Kuf-Raish), which means a "systematic and in-depth study of a subject; a thorough examination or examination." "Korach," means "bald," and "kerech" is "ice," as if to say that an ill-informed person is "bald" of the truth is "cold" to it.

Maybe that is why some of the mitzvos are chukim—statutes, mitzvos that supposedly are beyond human grasp. They are rooted on levels of reality that most people do not and cannot access, and so they can't relate to the logic of the mitzvah. Instead, such people tend to mock them, if not outright, then at

least in terms of their attitude towards them.

A self-honest person instead says, "Well, if there are mitzvos that I cannot understand, how do I know that I fully understand the mitzvos I think I do? Have I done my due diligence and conducted a thorough investigation into what seems obvious to me? If yes, then great. If not, then let me investigate more."

If you do that, then you are relevant to what Dovid HaMelech wrote and the Gemora quotes on occasion, "The secrets of God to those who fear Him" (Tehillim 25:14). God has secrets, but He likes to share with people He deems worthy, and nothing makes a person more worthy of the secrets of God than admitting your intellectual limitations and making the decision to reduce them.

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Series Two of the "Sha'ar HaGilgulim Course" will begin this coming week, b"H, on June 22. For more information or to register, go to: <https://www.shaarnunproductions.org/Shaar-HaGilgulim-Course.html>.

Have a great Shabbos,
Pinchas Winston