



# Likkutei Sichos

Volume 17 | Bechukosai | Sichah 1

## Toiling in Torah Study

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## 1.

### RASHI'S INTERPRETATION OF "IF YOU FOLLOW MY STATUTES"

At the beginning of this week's Torah portion, Rashi quotes from the verse the phrase,<sup>1</sup> "If you follow<sup>2</sup> My statutes," and comments:

You might think that the meaning is to uphold the *mitzvos*. Since the verse says, "and you shall keep My *mitzvos*,"<sup>3</sup> however, the upholding of *mitzvos* is addressed explicitly {by Scripture}. How then am I expected to fulfill the phrase, "if you follow<sup>4</sup> My statutes"? By laboring in the study of Torah.

The source for Rashi's interpretation is *Toras Kohanim*. In his commentary, however, Rashi only cites only those teachings of our Sages that are necessary to clarify the simple meaning of Scripture, as discussed many times. Perforce, this interpretation from *Toras Kohanim* is essential to understanding the straightforward meaning of the verses.

On this basis, we can understand Rashi's lengthy quote of the *Toras Kohanim*: "You might think that the meaning is to uphold the *mitzvos*; however, since the verse says...." Had Rashi just cited the crux of the **interpretation** that "*if you follow My statutes*" means "laboring in the study of Torah," we might have thought that Rashi meant that this was the simple {semantic and pragmatic} **meaning** of the phrase "**follow My statutes.**" But such a supposition would be incorrect because the correct {semantic} meaning of "statutes," in general, is *mitzvos*. Therefore, Rashi must preface, "You might think...." In other words, at first glance, one might think that this phrase means upholding the *mitzvos*. But since upholding the *mitzvos* is addressed further on in the verse, we are compelled to say that the preceding phrase, "follow My

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<sup>1</sup> {*Vayikra* 26:3.}

<sup>2</sup> {In the Hebrew original, "*teileichu*"; lit., "(if) you walk."}

<sup>3</sup> This follows the first printed ed. of Rashi's commentary and the majority of extant editions. In a number of printed editions, "etcetera," ׀׀׀, is added.

<sup>4</sup> {"Follow," literally, "walk," in this context is understood to connote doing so tenaciously, vigorously, with an intense focus.}

statutes,” does *not* mean {pragmatically} to uphold the *mitzvos*, but means “laboring in the study of Torah.”

The following points, however, are not understood:

- a) Rashi says that **here**, in our verse, the word “statutes” does not connote “*mitzvos*” but “Torah {study}.” Accordingly, Rashi should have quoted only, “if... My statutes,” and have explained, “You might think that the meaning is to uphold the *mitzvos*, but since the verse says, ‘and you shall keep My *mitzvos*,’ *mitzvos* are explicitly addressed.” This more concise explanation should have sufficed.
- b) The above question is even stronger: In *Toras Kohanim*, the source for Rashi’s interpretation, it actually does say, “You might think that the meaning is *mitzvos*.” Rashi revises the wording, adding, “...**uphold** the *mitzvos*.”
- c) We must say that Rashi intends also to preempt another possible misunderstanding, by writing **uphold** the *mitzvos*: {besides the word “statutes” not meaning *mitzvos*, but “Torah study” (since *mitzvos* are addressed explicitly), the phrase “following My statutes,” does not mean *upholding* the *mitzvos*, (since upholding the *mitzvos* are addressed explicitly), but} laboring (in Torah study). We need to clarify: The phrase, “you shall keep My *mitzvos*” only proves that “My statutes” does not {pragmatically} mean *mitzvos* but *Torah*. What is the proof, though, that it means, “**laboring in the study of Torah**”?<sup>5</sup>
- d) On the clause that follows, “and you shall keep My *mitzvos*,” Rashi then comments: “You shall labor in Torah study in order to keep and uphold

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<sup>5</sup> In *Gur Aryeh*, *Divrei Dovid*, and *Maskil le’Dovid* (et al), the authors suggest that the term “**walk**” suggests {sustained and ingrained compliance with Hashem’s commands. They aver that Rashi infers from the use of this unusual word in this context} that the Torah is alluding to **laboring** in Torah study, since the verb *walk* {idiomatically} cannot be used to refer to performing (upholding) the *mitzvos*. However, Rashi does even allude to this reasoning. Moreover, from the substance and wording of Rashi’s commentary here, it is clear that Rashi maintains that the simple meaning of the phrase, “**follow My statutes**,” is the **upholding of the *mitzvos*** – not Torah.

{the *mitzvos*}.” Seemingly, this interpretation contradicts Rashi’s previous one. Rashi had said: “Since the verse says, ‘and you shall keep My *mitzvos*,’ upholding the *mitzvos* is explicitly addressed.” In other words, “keep My *mitzvos*,” refers to keeping and upholding the *mitzvos in general*, and is not meant to specify how the Torah is to be studied!

## 2.

TORAH STUDY IS ALSO INCLUDED BY THE PHRASE “KEEP MY *MITZVOS*”

The explanation is as follows:

Torah study is one of the 613 *mitzvos*, and a novice student of Scripture knows this from the fact that every morning, he recites the blessing over the study of Torah, “...who has sanctified us with **His commandments...**” Accordingly, to explain the phrase, “follow My statutes,” as meaning the study of Torah is, understandably, not possible, because {regular} Torah study is already included in the “keeping” of the *mitzvos*. The question remains: Since the upholding of *mitzvos* was already addressed by the phrase “keep My *mitzvos*,” how then do I understand the phrase, “follow My statutes”?

On this basis, Rashi derives that the phrase “follow My statutes” does not refer to the ordinary study of Torah. Rather, this phrase refers to an additional property of Torah study which cannot be derived from the phrase “keep My *mitzvos*.” And even without mindfulness of {and complying with} this property, we would still fulfill the precept of Torah study as such. This additional property is derived from the unusual wording, “if you *follow* {steadfastly},”<sup>6</sup> rather than just “if you keep” the study of Torah.

How is it possible to supplement our study of the Torah with something new, yet if the new property were missing, the Torah study as such would remain intact? If this property pertained to **quantity**, the length of time spent studying Torah, i.e., we should prolong the time that we engage in Torah study, this would still be an aspect of “keeping” the {basic} precept of Torah study. This

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<sup>6</sup> {In the Hebrew original, “*teileichu*”; lit., “walk” (3rd person, plural).}

{additional time} would then be similar to what the Torah says about wearing *tefillin*,<sup>7</sup> “it shall be a sign on your hand.” Whether one wears *tefillin* for a short or long time, either way, the directive, “it shall be for you a sign...” is fulfilled. Perforce, the verb “*follow*” in our verse, does not refer to the *usual* upholding of the *mitzvah*, but rather to a *qualitative* supplement. That is while fulfilling the commandment of Torah study, a person should study assiduously and intensely.<sup>8</sup> This crucial detail cannot be inferred from the phrase “keep My *mitzvos*,” since even without *laboring* in Torah study, one still fulfills the precept of “keeping” it.

### 3.

#### THE DIFFICULTY IN THE SYNTAX OF THE VERSE

In light of the above, however, the syntax of the verse is baffling: If the phrase, “keep My *mitzvos*,” also obligates the study Torah in the usual manner, ***le’migras*** {with the aim of covering ground}, then this phrase should come *before* the phrase “follow My statutes.” After all, this is the simple order of progression in one’s study of Torah: First, a person studies the Torah material straightforwardly, *le’migras*. Only afterward does the “labor” in Torah study begin — its in-depth analysis.<sup>9</sup> Studying a subject in-depth is impossible before learning it *le’migras*. Why, then, does Scripture first say, “follow My statutes” {implying in-depth study} and only *afterward*, “keep My *mitzvos*” {implying studying Torah *le’migras*}?

Had we interpreted “follow My statutes” as referring to ordinary Torah study, and “keep My *mitzvos*” as referring to upholding the *mitzvos*, then we could have rationalized the order: Since only “Torah study draws a person to practical *mitzvah* observance,”<sup>10</sup> the reference to Torah study is stated **first**. **Obviously**, to know what to do and how to do it, one first needs to study. But after we interpret “follow My statutes” as requiring “**laboring** in the study of

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<sup>7</sup> {*Shemos* 13:9.}

<sup>8</sup> In the terse Hebrew original, “*ameilim*,” in this context, translated as “assiduously and intensely,” although elsewhere translated more simply as “laboring” or “toiling.”

<sup>9</sup> See *Shabbos* 63a; *Avodah Zara* 19a.

<sup>10</sup> *Kiddushin* 40b; *Bava Kama* 17a; *Megillah* 27a.

Torah,” we can no longer posit that such study serves as a prerequisite to *mitzvah* observance.

{Why?} Because to properly observe a *mitzvah*, a person doesn't necessarily require the knowledge acquired through assiduous study — “laboring in the study of Torah.” To know how to carry out a practical ruling, it suffices to learn the subject *le'migras* from books of Jewish law.<sup>11</sup>

This above line of reasoning itself compels Rashi to maintain that *how* a person *labors* in Torah study is an important consideration: Even when *laboring* in its study, the intent must be to observe and uphold the *mitzvos*. (That is, one must have this purpose in mind not only when studying *le'migras*.)

Regarding this overarching requirement, Rashi quotes, “As it says,<sup>12</sup> ‘You shall study them, and uphold them through their practice.’” Meaning, all Torah study, including in-depth study, must be carried out to “uphold and observe them.”

Accordingly, we understand why Rashi's comments on the phrase “keep My *mitzvos*” — “laboring in the study of Torah...” — do not contradict what he had said earlier about this phrase, that it means upholding the *mitzvos*. Because Rashi's comment here is (not on the phrase “keep My *mitzvos*,” but) on the phrase, “follow My statutes”: Earlier Rashi explained *only* the semantic meaning of these words, that they mean “laboring in the study of Torah.” Afterward, Rashi explains why this instruction is given before the phrase “keep My *mitzvos*”: To teach us that labor in Torah study must be in order “to uphold and observe the commandments.”

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<sup>11</sup> Noteworthy (halachically) are the two approaches to deciding matters of Jewish law. (See “Law of Torah Study,” of the Alter Rebbe, ch. 2, “*Kuntres Acharon*,” sub-par. 1.) *Rambam* maintains that *halachah* may be decided *without* understanding the underlying rationales. In contrast, *Rosh*, et al, opines the one *must* understand the underlying reasons. However, to understand the underlying reasons of a *halachah* doesn't necessitate a person to *labor* in Torah study.

<sup>12</sup> *Devarim* 5:1. In the 1st ed., Rashi doesn't conclude “as it says....”

## 4.

WHY NOT SAY IT MEANS “STATUTES” AND “JUDGMENTS”?

However, we still need to understand:

From Rashi’s phraseology, “You might think that the meaning is to uphold the *mitzvos*,” it appears that the simple meaning of the phrase, “follow My statutes” is to uphold the *mitzvos*. Only because of proof from the next phrase, “keep My *mitzvos*” (“upholding the *mitzvos* is explicitly addressed”) must we say that the phrase “follow My statutes” means — **laboring in the study of Torah.**

The following needs to be clarified: As known, there are several categories of *mitzvos* (testimonies {*eidos*}; statutes {*chukim*}; and judgments {*mishpatim*}). *Chukim* are decrees of the King, as Rashi already explained in *parshas Acharei*. As such, the question arises: Why can’t we simply say that the term “statutes” refers to the category of *mitzvos* called “*chukim*,” which are superrational commandments (this is how this term is rendered as it used in numerous places in Scripture), and the phrase “keep My *mitzvos*” comprises **rational** *mitzvos* (*mishpatim*)?

We could try to answer simply as follows: Had the Torah, with the phrase “keep My *mitzvos*,” wanted to refer to just to one category of *mitzvos*, *mishpatim*, it would *not* have used the {generic} term “My *mitzvos*,” which could also comprise **all** the commandments. Rather, Scripture would have said, “My judgments {*mishpatai*},” as in the verse,<sup>13</sup> “These are the statutes, the judgments {*mishpatim*}, and the laws {Torahs}.” When the Torah wishes to specify the particular categories of *mitzvos*, it (later) refers to the category of *mitzvos* with the specific name *mishpatim*, and not simply *mitzvos*. Consequently, since the verse here uses the term “My *mitzvos*” {and *not* the specific term *mishpatim*}, this usage proves that the reference is to *all mitzvos*.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Vayikra* 26:46.

<sup>14</sup> *Malbim*, ad loc, explains similarly.

However, seemingly this answer falls short because **earlier** in Scripture, we find another verse that demarcates the *mitzvos* according to their respective categories: “Because Avraham heeded My voice and observed My restrictions, My *mitzvos*, My *chukim*, and My Torahs {laws}.”<sup>15</sup>

And there, Rashi explains: “*My mitzvos* — those divine directives, which had they not been given, deserved<sup>16</sup> to be commanded,” namely, rational laws. “*My chukim* — matters that are challenged by the Evil Inclination and the nations of the world.” “*My judgments* — this includes also to the Oral Law” (because “judgments” is plural; thus, this term alludes to both the Oral Law and the Written Law).

From the above, we see that even when a verse uses the word *mitzvos* unqualified, if the verse also mentions *chukim*, this proves that these two different terms refer to two particular categories of *mitzvos*. If so, why couldn't we apply this explanation in our case as well?

## 5.

AFTER MATAN TORAH, ALL MITZVOS ARE HASHEM'S COMMANDS

To explain: The word “*mitzvos*,” מצוות, derives from the word “command,” ציווי. They are Hashem's **commandments**. Understandably, then, **this** term is appropriate for only commands given **after** *Matan Torah*, when Hashem gave all the *mitzvos*. Before *Matan Torah*, however, the reality of divine commandments did not yet exist {and therefore did not apply} concerning the category of *mitzvos* about which it says,<sup>17</sup> “because **Avraham** heeded....” It turns out that the term “*My mitzvos*” used in connection with Avraham Avinu, **before** *Matan Torah*, cannot semantically denote divine commandments, as such, because as explained, we are speaking of a time before the advent of divine commands.

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<sup>15</sup> Bereishis 26:5.

<sup>16</sup> {In the succinct Hebrew original, “*re'uim hein le'hitztavos*.” In other words, these precepts were so sensible that even then, they warranted to be given.}

<sup>17</sup> {Bereishis 26:5.}



Therefore, we must say that over there {concerning Avraham}, the phrase “My *mitzvos*” {pragmatically} means those things that had “**deserved to be commanded**” even **then** since intellect mandated their observance. And these things were then also called *mitzvos*, commandments, because **intellect** deemed them to be imperative.

In contrast, the term “My *mitzvos*,” in our context, is used in reference to the commandments after *Matan Torah*. Since the word *mitzvos* now encompasses *all* the commandments {regardless of their respective categories}, since they all are divine commands,<sup>18</sup> we would be hard-pressed to posit that its use {in the phrase, “keep My *mitzvos*”} is intended to mean specifically *mishpatim* and excludes those divine precepts included in the phrase, “My statutes,” used earlier in the same verse. Rather, we must understand the phrase, “keep My *mitzvos*” as embracing *all* the commandments. This being the case, we naturally have to conclude that the {preceding} phrase, “follow My statutes” means to labor in the study of Torah.

## 6.

STATUTES MUST ALSO CONNOTE “LABORING IN STUDY OF TORAH”

A deeper explanation:

True, Rashi’s proof — that the clause, “if you follow My statutes,” connotes “laboring in the study of Torah” — is *not* from the semantic meaning of the clause itself but from an inference drawn from the clause that follows, as Rashi explained: “...since the verse says, ‘and you shall keep My *mitzvos*,’<sup>19</sup> upholding the *mitzvos* is *explicitly* addressed.” Nevertheless, we have to say that the lesson of having to labor in Torah study is *also* alluded to in the {meaning of the} *words*, “follow My statutes.”

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<sup>18</sup> This dovetails with the deeper explanation of the word, מצוה. Namely, it is related to the {Aramaic} word, צוותא, denoting attachment (*Likkutei Torah*, “*Bechukosai*,” 45c; et al), which is the general function of *mitzvos* after *Matan Torah* — to serve as a bridge between Man {creation} and the Creator. In contrast, before *Matan Torah*, this connection was not possible, because the divine decree responsible for the {infinite} gulf between the **Creator** and the earthly realm was not yet rescinded. And clearly, the 7 Noahide commandments did not serve as this bridge, since they were given to humanity only for the sake of the world’s preservation.

<sup>19</sup> This follows the first printed ed. of Rashi’s commentary and the majority of extant editions. In a number of printed editions, “etcetera,” וְגוֹי, is added.

[The wording itself must allude to this lesson because all Torah matters are themselves luminous and illuminate everything else, as it says,<sup>20</sup> “Torah is a **light**.” Understandably, Torah (and, how much more so, Scripture)<sup>21</sup> is worded in such a way that the point of a verse is clear. Had the term “My statutes” not referred **at all** to Torah (but only to *mitzvos*), then a different term should have been used. Instead of using the term “My statutes,” the term, “My law” {תורת, lit., “My Torah”}<sup>22</sup> could have been used, or the term “My laws” {תורות lit., “My Torahs”}<sup>23</sup>. Either of these two terms would convey clearly the meaning of “Torah.” However, since Scripture uses specifically the term “My statutes,” בחוקותי,<sup>24</sup> this choice proves that this particular word underscores the idea of laboring **in Torah study**.]

## 7.

### THE CONNECTION BETWEEN *STATUTES* AND *ENGRAVING*

To better understand how linguistically, the word בחוקותי (when used to mean Torah study) connotes the meaning of laboring in Torah, we must first explain a nuance of the noun *chukim*, when used in the context of *mitzvos*.

As known, aside from the word *mitzvos*, a generic term for all commandments, each category of *mitzvos* has its own distinct name: *Eidos*, *mishpatim*, and *chukim*. “*Eidos*” refers to the category of commandments that serve as testimonials about certain things {facts, events or relationships} — the creation of heaven and earth, the exodus from Egypt (as do the precepts of Shabbos and *tefillin*), and so on. “*Mishpatim*” {judgments} comprise all the commandments that human “judgment” {reason} would compel, had the Torah not been given. And “*chukim*” are those commandments that communicate

<sup>20</sup> *Mishlei* 6:23.

<sup>21</sup> Unlike the Babylonian Talmud, concerning which it says (*Eicha* 3:6), “He has made me dwell in darkness” (*Sanhedrin* 24a).

<sup>22</sup> {The word “Torah,” in Hebrew, is also used frequently to mean “law,” aside from being used in a more general sense to refer to Hashem’s revealed will and wisdom in both the Oral Law (Talmud, etc.) and the Written Law (Scripture).}

<sup>23</sup> {Which would mean the same thing, except that the noun is in the plural.}

<sup>24</sup> {Since a *statute*, in Hebrew, חוק, is related to the verb “to engrave,” לחקוק.}

edicts of the King: they possess no intellectual foundation either in the sense of *eidus* or in the sense of *mishpatim*. Rather, they are {suprarational, divine edicts, as Hashem declares } “I have enacted a statute; I have issued a decree.”<sup>25</sup>

In the Holy Tongue — a language neither devised nor shaped by human consensus<sup>26</sup> — all elements are precise. Accordingly, since suprarational mitzvos are called *chukim*, חוקים, derived from the word חקיקה (as elucidated in “*Likkutei Torah*,”<sup>27</sup> concerning the word “*Bechukosai*”), perforce, a *statute*, חוקה, which is beyond our ken, is correlated substantively to the underlying idea of *engraving*, חקיקה.

The explanation:

The general difference between engraving and writing is that the former requires more energy. *Speech* is called a “minor action”;<sup>28</sup> while *writing* is a complete action. Still, *writing* does not require as much energy and effort as *engraving*. Understandably, then, it follows that those *mitzvos* that are only “decrees of the king,” called *chukim*, cognate to *chakikah*, engraving, require hard work. They require hard work because keeping them is not rational — in fact, it is **irrational**. As such, these observances are much more taxing to uphold than those that conform to human reason.

On this basis, we can appreciate why when the term “My statutes” is used about Torah: It means (not *ordinary* Torah study, but) *intensive* Torah study, i.e., **laboring** in the study of Torah. Because *chukah*, related to the word *chakikah*, entails hard work — **labor**.

When a person studies Torah intensely — with the sort of toil necessitated by the act of engraving — such study, in turn, *engraves* a person’s heart. Even should one’s heart be made of stone, when a person labors in Torah, his toil in

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<sup>25</sup> {*Bamidbar Rabbah* sec. 19, par. 1, 8; et al. In the original Hebrew, the two clauses appear to be misordered. A Heavenly *decree* implies an inscrutable edict, not subject to human scrutiny or divine revocation.}

<sup>26</sup> {As its name implies, the Holy Tongue (Hebrew) is a linguistically unique, divinely constructed language.}

<sup>27</sup> Beginning of our *parshah*.

<sup>28</sup> See *Sanhedrin* 65a; *Kreesus* 3b.

Torah chisels away his stone-like heart — just as stones are eroded by dripping water.<sup>29</sup>

## 8.

### *JUDGMENTS ARE ALSO STATUTES*

In Torah, everything is intentional and extremely precise. Since toiling in Torah study is referred to by a term related to *chukah*, the same term that is used in reference to suprarational *mitzvos*, this itself proves that the reason that laboring in Torah study is called a *chukah* (not only because it entails painstaking effort, as explained, but also) on account of it being an activity that is related to something beyond comprehension:

True, the study of the Oral Law, in particular, requires understanding and comprehension.<sup>30</sup> If a person does not grasp what he studies, he may not recite the Torah blessing for such “learning.”<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, toiling in the study of the Torah shares a connection with that which *transcends* the mind. And on the contrary, specifically its aspect of בחוקותי — of what lies beyond our ken — conveys the idea of “laboring in the study of Torah.”

This is true in two respects:<sup>32</sup>

- a) One’s labor in Torah study must {be so intense and rigorous that it will} subvert a person’s *prima facie* understanding of a subject. If one studies just enough to satisfy his intellectual curiosity, then this does not constitute appropriate *labor*.

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<sup>29</sup> See *Avos d’Rabbi Nassan*, ch. 6, *mishnah* 2 {regarding the story of how Rabbi Akiva was encouraged to begin his study of Torah, despite his age, by his gleaned a lesson from a rock that was gradually worn by water dripping on it incessantly.}

<sup>30</sup> See *Zohar* on our *parshah*, p. 113a, whether “if you follow My statutes” refers to the Oral Law. *Divrei Dovid*, by the *Taz* (on v. 14), opines that laboring in Torah study applies {specifically} to the Oral Law. Note the commentary of *Ohr Hachaim* on the beg. of this verse.

<sup>31</sup> “*Hilchos Talmud Torah*,” end of ch. 2, by the Alter Rebbe.

<sup>32</sup> The first point concerns the process, the *avodah* entailed by toiling in Torah. The second point concerns the **outcome** of such study.

b) One's labor in Torah study leads him to the tenet and understanding that even those matters that can be understood intellectually, in truth, are beyond understanding.

(This idea is consonant with the adage,<sup>33</sup> “The *objective* of knowledge is {the realization} that You cannot be known.” Just as this statement is said of Hashem, similarly, it is true of His wisdom, the Torah, since He and His wisdom are one, as explained by *Rambam*.<sup>34</sup> Consequently,<sup>35</sup> “just as fathoming one's Creator<sup>36</sup> is beyond the ability of any created being, so, too, fathoming” His wisdom is impossible. As it says,<sup>37</sup> “It is hidden from the **eyes** of every living being.”

And if a person imagines that he has attained this objective of Torah knowledge, this {presumptuousness} proves that his labor in Torah study is deficient.)

As the Previous Rebbe said — comprehensible matters must also be {approached} as *chukim*.

In the light of what was explained, we will appreciate that the phrase, “follow **My *chukim***,” is accurately used to refer to the study of all Torah subjects, not just to matters concerning *chukim*, but also to matters concerning *eidos* and *mishpatim*.<sup>38</sup> Because by laboring in Torah study, one comes to the realization that *mishpatim* are actually also *chukim*.<sup>39</sup>

- From a talk delivered on Shabbos *parshas Bechukosai*, 5725 (1965)

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<sup>33</sup> See *Bechinot Olam*, vol. 7, ch. 2.; *Sefer Ikarim*, discourse 2, end of ch. 30; *Shelah* p. 191b {first ed.}.

<sup>34</sup> *Rambam*, “*Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah*,” ch. 2, par. 10; “*Hilchos Teshuvah*,” end of ch. 5. See “Guide of the Perplexed,” vol. 1., ch. 68; *ibid.* vol. 3, ch. 20; *Shemoneh Perakim*, ch. 8.

<sup>35</sup> See “Gate of Unity and Faith,” ch. 4; *ibid.*, ch. 8.

<sup>36</sup> See *Rambam*, “*Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah*,” ch. 1, par. 10; ch. 2, par. 8, et al.

<sup>37</sup> *Iyov* 28:21. Cf. *Tanya*, “*Kuntres Acharon*,” end of the section beginning with the words, “*Dovid, zemiros....*”

<sup>38</sup> Particularly, this is true when we consider that the number of *mitzvos* in the category of *chukim* is relatively small, compared with the number of *mishpatim*. In addition, since we are speaking here about toiling in Torah study, this is called upon mainly for {probing and understanding} the reasons for the {*mitzvos* of the} Torah (and not to the understanding of the *halachos* themselves), which concerns specifically the part of Torah dealing with *mishpatim*.

<sup>39</sup> {I.e., there is an unfathomable and suprarational dimension to even so-called rational *mitzvos*.}