**Class #29–Parshat Chukat – “Are you Woke or Fake Woke?”**

Advanced Fellowship Parsha Class - Sponsored in memory of Alice Toby Barbanel *Z”l*

Rabbi Pinny Rosenthal - prepared collaboratively with Rabbi Yoni Sacks

**The Story of Rabbi Sacks and the Mock Trial team’s journey to Wyandanch.**

Schools On Long Island Deal With Less State Aid <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmTQ5uAISF8&t=120s>

1. In which district will a student have a better shot of getting into a better college and a better job?
2. Is funding school districts via property taxes a fundamental example of systemic racism?

**Are you Awake, Woke, or doing the Work?**

<https://youtu.be/zchNiU4oPig?t=32>

1. When is a person “Awake”?
2. When is a person “Woke?
3. When is a person “doing the work”?
4. When is a person being “fake woke”?
5. Do you think the parents at Half Hollow Hills are asleep, fake woke, awake, woke or doing the work?
6. Can you explain why so many people stay asleep? What would it take to wake people up from their sleep?
7. What mitzva do we violate in being asleep to the problem of the injustice of systemic racism?
8. At what point do sleeping people REALLY understand systemic racism: when they are awake, woke or doing the work? Why is it impossible for the self-centered sleeper to conceive justice?
9. Can a person be asleep regarding cheyt in other mitzvot besides injustice? How so?
10. Does the spectrum of asleep, fake woke, awake, woke and doing the work apply to these other areas of cheyt? Give examples of “fake woke” from dieting going to gym etc.

**Bamidbar 19:2**

זֹ֚את **חֻקַּ֣ת** הַתּוֹרָ֔ה אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּ֥ה יְהוָ֖ה לֵאמֹ֑ר דַּבֵּ֣ר ׀ אֶל־בְּנֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֗ל וְיִקְח֣וּ אֵלֶיךָ֩ פָרָ֨ה אֲדֻמָּ֜ה תְּמִימָ֗ה אֲשֶׁ֤ר

אֵֽין־בָּהּ֙ מ֔וּם אֲשֶׁ֛ר לֹא־עָלָ֥ה עָלֶ֖יהָ עֹֽל׃

This is the decree [chok] that the LORD has commanded: Instruct the Israelite people to bring you a red cow without blemish, in which there is no defect and on which no yoke has been laid.

**Rambam, Laws of misappropriating consecrated articles, Ch. 8:8**

“……The judgments [**Mishpatim**] are those mitzvot whose motivating rationale is openly revealed and the benefit of their observance in this world is known, e.g., the prohibitions against robbery and bloodshed and honoring one's father and mother. The decrees [**Chukim**] are the mitzvot whose motivating rationales are not known…”

**Exploring the Chok of the Shofar**

The first day of the seventh month shall be a sacred holiday to you when you may not do any mundane work. It shall be a day of sounding the horn . [Bamidbar 29:1]

1. From the plain reading of the posuk, is the Shofar a mishpat or a chok? Why?

**Rambam, Laws of Teshuva, Ch.3:4**

Even though the sounding of the shofar on Rosh HaShanah is a decree of the scripture [chok], it contains an allusion. It is as if [the shofar's call] is saying:

Wake up you sleepy ones from your sleep and you who slumber, arise. Inspect your deeds, repent, remember your Creator. Those who forget the truth in the vanities of time and throughout the entire year, devote their energies to vanity and emptiness which will not benefit or save: Look to your souls. Improve your ways and your deeds and let every one of you abandon his evil path and thoughts.

1. How did the Rambam know what the allusion [**remez**] behind the shofar was?
2. Why isn’t the allusion the same as the reason?
3. How will a “fake woke” person understand the Rambam’s allusion of Shofar? In what way is the “fake woke” response to Shofar similar to the “fake woke” responses to injustice?
4. Why doesn’t the Torah help the sleeper by explicitly giving him/her the reason for the Chukim? Why must the reason for chukim be discovered as part of “doing the work”?