

Parshat Beshalach Flask Focusing on Faith

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles
Summary by Channie Koplowitz-Stein

One of the great miracles that the generation of the exodus experienced was the *manna* that fell from heaven. On the first day it fell, Moshe tells *Bnei Yisroel* "the thing/word" that Hashem commanded, to collect an *omer* of *manna lemishmeret*/for safekeeping so that future generations will know [and have physical evidence] of this miracle, and place this jar before Hashem [in the Ark]. Moshe then repeats the command to Aharon and then the *Torah* records its fulfillment.

Interestingly, the Oznaim LaTorah points out that while one usually takes a memento at the end of a journey, here Hashem commanded Moshe to take the *manna* on the first day of the journey. And if this was to be a reminder, why was it put in the Aron Kodesh where no one would see it? If Hashem commanded Moshe, why then did Aharon actually fulfill this mission?

The Ohr Hachaim asks, why are the instructions that Moshe tells *Bnei Yisroel* repeated almost verbatim to Aharon. He explains that Hashem's word to Moshe required interpretation. Moshe, in relaying the command to Aharon, filled in the blanks. From the word *mishmeret*, Moshe understood that this *manna* must be kept safe both from theft and becoming impure. The place to protect it would be in the *Aron Kodesh*, alongside the *luchot*. Since this command had been given before the *Mishkan* was built, Moshe understood that it needed to be performed by Aharon who was destined to be the *kohen gadol*, adds Oznaim Latorah. Because the command was first given to Moshe and then relayed to Aharon, "As Hashem commanded Moshe," precedes the fulfillment of the command by Aharon.

The message of the *manna* is relevant for every generation, notes *Le'ovdecha B'emes*. For those who truly dedicate their lives to Torah study, Hashem will always provide their sustenance, just as he did for the generation in wilderness. All others must use the path of praying fervently for their sustenance. One

need not have reached the goal of living a completely spiritual life, continues the *Meshech Chochma*. One can be at the beginning, as *Bnei Yisroel* were upon leaving Egypt, but if one resolves to live a Torah life, Hashem will provide for him. In fact, it is at the beginning of the journey, that enthusiasm is at its highest. It is for this reason, suggests *Vetalmudo Beyodo*, that the *manna* was to be collected when it first fell, and the wonder of it, awed *Bnei Yisroel*. Further, the *manna* was placed alongside the *Sefer Torah*, writes Rabbi Pam referring to Rabbi Bachye, to teach us that our job and workplace must also be conducive to living a *Torah* lifestyle.

Most of the people had to go quite a distance to collect the *manna*. In effect, they had to work for their sustenance just as most people need to go to work today, writes Rabbi Belsky. However there needs to be a balance between our own effort and our reliance on Hashem, knowing that our effort is the conduit through which Hashem will provide for us. Anyone who understands this and puts his complete trust in Hashem, even though he does major sins, says the *Gr"a*, is better than the *Torah* scholar whose faith is weak. The *manna* teaches that relying on Hashem will provide for us through all the generations.

Our connection to Hashem and His to us is a pipeline, says Rav A. Kotler. When the parts are connected properly, the waters flow smoothly. Otherwise, it may be obstructed or spray out uselessly. If you think you are in control, you are blocking the pipeline from Hashem down to you. The jar of *manna* was meant to be a concrete reminder of our reliance on Hashem and that He gives each of us according to our will, just as the *manna* tasted like whatever the taster imagined. Additionally, each got according to his personal needs each day, whether he was able to collect more one day or less the next day.

The students of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai asked, would it not have been more efficient to send the full ration of *manna* once a month or

once a year instead of every day? Rabbi Schlesinger explains, there was no guarantee that there would be food each day. Each night, when the food had been completely consumed, the father would teach the child to have faith that Hashem would provide for them again the next day. Similarly, we also do not know what tomorrow will bring. In this regard, it is harder for someone on a fixed salary to develop full *bitachon* than for someone self-employed who cannot know what he will earn the next day. Hashem wants to connect with us, and therefore He asks us to approach Him in prayer three times a day.

Moshe called the container in which the *manna* was stored a *tzintzenet*. Rabbi L. Eiger sees in this word the word *tzon/sheep* repeated twice. *Bnei Yisroel* are My sheep, the sheep I shepherded in the wilderness (Tehillim 95), for if I look to Hashem as my Shepherd, I will never want/lack [for anything]. (Tehillim 23). And we know that it is not by bread alone that we live, but by that [word] which emanates from Hashem's mouth. (Devarim 8:3) It would be Aharon who put Hashem's word into the Ark, and so Moshe deduced that it should be Aharon who would put the *manna* into the Ark alongside Hashem's word, showing that both come directly from Hashem. Not just food, but all our necessities come from Hashem.

The *manna* was such a spiritual entity that it was truly meant to be only in the strict spirituality of the *kodesh kadashim*, writes Rabbi Sternbach. By putting the *manna* that Hashem fed us in the desert in the *aron kodesh*, Hashem show us that He is always just as concerned with our physical needs as He is with our spiritual needs.

This jar of *manna* was not destroyed, writes the Ohr Hachaim. It was saved for generations. Just as the Prophet Yirmiyahu took it out to show to the people at that time, so will the Prophet Eliyahu show it to *Bnei Yisroel* at the arrival of Moshiach.



Traveling the Journey of Life Tehilim 17 Part II

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Leah Kohn

In Tehilim, Chapter 15, David Hamelech asks, "Who will ascend the mountain of Hashem.. the one who did his friend no harm..." We usually like to benefit our friends, not cause them suffering. What does this mean? The Alshich explains that this refers to acts where we might not even realize we are doing something wrong. The first example he brings is giving charity from money that was not earned honestly. I might think I'm helping my friend but in actuality I'm not, because deriving benefit from money that wasn't earned honestly, even if one doesn't know about it, is not good for a person and is considered evil. The second example is more subtle. This is when a person is asked to give charity to a cause and decides to fund the entire cause himself. If the intention is to take the whole mitzva for himself so that others

won't have a share in it, it's considered committing evil against others. If his intention is to do Hashem's will, he can take the same amount he intended to give and share it with other people and in this way enable others to do good. If a person understands that giving is not just a means to earn credit, but rather a mitzvah Hashem want us to do, he'll be happy if others are involved too because it's not about him but about bringing more spirituality into this world.

In order to climb the mountain of Hashem, a Jew must work at excelling both in *mitzvot* between man and man and between man and Hashem. One without the other won't work. If we truly love Hashem we will want everyone to serve Him. So too, every Jew is a child of Hashem. We want to treat them as such knowing that Hashem wants us to love His

children.

David Hamelech speaks about not committing evil and not speaking *loshon hara* against others. Isn't *loshon hara* part of doing evil against others? Why is it mentioned separately? We find that the Torah places tremendous emphasis on the obligation not to speak *loshon hara*. It's also underscored in *Tehilim* countless times, as well as in many other sources. More than this, we know that our sages say that *loshon hara* is worse than idol worship, adultery, and murder. These are the three cardinal sins that we must give up our life for. The punishment for *loshon hara* is not death but still we are told that it is worse than these sins. This is because it causes damage to us and affects the world on a much greater level.

Mishlei: The Fifth Perek Part II

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller-Gottlieb

"For the lips of a strange woman are sweeter than honey, and her palate is smoother than oil." This refers to an evil woman. At the end of Mishlei, Shlomo Hamelech extolls the *ishes chayil*, the woman of valor. A woman was created to be an *ezer kenegedo*, a helper parallel to her husband, someone who will aid him in becoming the person he wants to be. No one goes through life alone. You need someone to be part of the process, of making you who you are meant to be. The beginning of Mishlei talks about the *isha zarah*, the

woman who seems to be helpful, who seems to want for you what you want for yourself. In reality, she is manipulative and selfish. This is a euphemism for the *yetzer hara*. Picture yourself in a moment of temptation. The *yetzer hara* becomes like your lawyer and best friend. You have this overwhelming urge to yell at the storekeeper for delivering the wrong items and the *yetzer hara* eggs you on- "Express yourself, don't hold it in, all this repression will kill you." Recognize this as the voice of the *isha zara*, the woman trying to destroy you.

Her words are sweet as honey and smooth as oil. Interestingly oil is also used as a metaphor for wisdom. Don't trust your mind too much because your *yetzer hara* knows how to manipulate it. Know what the *Torah* says and submit to it, whether it sounds right to you or not, these are the words of Hashem Himself. If the *Torah* is ambivalent about a specific issue, then consult daat Torah. A Rav, whose intuitive knowledge stems from a lifetime dedicated to *Torah*, will surely guide you along the straight path.