

## **"Your life will hang in the balance, and you will be frightened night and day, and you will not be sure of your livelihood." (28:66)**

*Rashi* explains that in exile the Jewish People will be so insecure that they will never be safe from impending violence. Regarding their livelihood, they will be compelled to rely on daily purchases, never confident that the markets will be available to them the next day. In the *Talmud, Menachos 103b*, *Chazal* explain that this *pasuk* refers to a situation in which one has less and less to eat, in which he is relegated to go out daily to seek his bread. This is considered the epitome of unhappiness, not knowing whence one's daily bread will come, living in constant fear of what tomorrow will bring.

We must endeavor to understand this curse describing the nadir of depression in light of the following statement of *Chazal*. "The students of *R'Shimon ben Yochai* asked him, 'Why didn't the *manna* fall once a year, enabling the people to gather a full year's supply at one time?' He replied with a parable. 'A king who had one son provided him with food once a year. This posed a problem since the son would visit his father only once a year. As a result of this, the king began providing his son with his due on a daily basis, so that he would be with his only child everyday. So, too, was *Klal Yisrael*. A father who had many mouths to feed would be concerned daily that perhaps there would be no *manna* for his family. Consequently, all of *Klal Yisrael* would turn to Hashem in prayer, entreating Him for their daily sustenance.'"

According to *Chazal*, the need to turn to Hashem for one's bread on a daily basis is not a curse, but a blessing. This situation strengthens his bond with Hashem through his constant communication with Him. Obviously, the generation that received the *Torah* on *Har Sinai* was not subject to the harsh curses which are enumerated in this *parsha*.

*Horav Chaim Shmuelevitz, z.l.*, makes a profound observation in responding to this question. The *Torah* does not mention a lack of food as a potential curse. It merely states that the fear and insecurity revolving around our daily sustenance will be overpowering. The dread of not having anything to eat and to feed one's family will become unbearable for the man of little or no faith in Hashem. Indeed, an individual who does not learn to rely on Hashem as the only source of blessing can become overwhelmed with uncertainty and diffidence in his daily "wait" for bread. This lack of faith causes the individual to be divested of self-confidence and become enveloped by fear. The suspense of "what will tomorrow bring" is terrifying for the man of little faith.

The one who has trust and faith in Hashem, on the other hand, views such a situation as the optimal source of blessing, for it engenders a closer relationship with Hashem. Suddenly, his daily bread takes on a new image; it becomes imbued with the essence of *manna*. The ability to trust in Hashem and not worry about tomorrow can transform the harshest of curses into a blessing.