

## **"Why did you bring us up from Egypt, to die in the desert? For there is no bread and no water, and our soul is sick of the unsubstantial food." (21:5)**

With this *pasuk* we are introduced to a rare form of ingratitude. *Horav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch Z"l* points out that *Bnei Yisrael's* discontent turned directly against Hashem. They did not doubt the authenticity of Moshe's mission, but rather they felt that Hashem's guidance was inadequate. In complaining about the *manna*, the miracle food from heaven, they were undoubtedly not complaining about a lack of nourishment. Their grievance lay in the fact that they weren't eating "natural" food in the ordinary human way. The effortless, albeit miraculous, way of receiving bodily sustenance had become monotonous and tiresome.

Instead of appreciating the unique qualities and nutritive value of the *manna*, they protested the simplistic way it was provided to them. In fact, they distorted its unique qualities, which they exploited as a pretext for protest. As the *Psikta* states "ke ojk", it was a light, easily digestible food. In fact, *manna* was so easily digestible that it was totally "absorbed by the body", completely assimilated such that there was no leftover residue. It was all transformed into the energy necessary to reproduce the bodily tissues.

Twisting of the truth and perversion of Hashem's beneficence is no longer unique. Man's ingratitude to Hashem unfortunately knows no bounds. Sadly, it is not exclusively limited to moments of hardship and misfortune. We tend to gripe even when we are showered with blessings, by either complaining about insufficiency or an unsatisfactory form of "delivery". When one does not make a living, he complains. When he is blessed with a form of livelihood, he complains of a lack of excitement in earning it. We seek challenge and diversity, glamour and sensationalism. We do not realize that the stability with which Hashem affords us existence is in itself a great source of blessing. We must learn to appreciate not only Hashem's gifts but also the manner in which He bestows them upon us.