

"Therefore the Bnei Yisrael do not eat of the sinew of the thigh muscle." (32:33)

We may question the manner in which we commemorate Yaakov *Avinu's* miraculous triumph over Eisav's angel. One would think that such an extraordinary achievement would be remembered through a positive act, rather than a negative one. *Horav Moshe Feinstein, z.l.*, infers a valuable lesson from the manner of eternalizing Yaakov's monumental success over adversity.

The abstention from eating the *gid ha'nasheh* addresses the fact that throughout history we are confronted by difficult situations which require Hashem's interventions which is always there. Nonetheless, we would rather not be tested with such ordeals. In our daily *tefillah*, we implore Hashem "*Do not bring us to any ordeal.*" The *gid ha'nasheh* prohibition serves as a "reminder" that we fear *nisayon*, ordeal. Great reward is in store for those who undergo *nisyonos*, who confront and withstand pain and suffering -- nevertheless, we still entreat Hashem to please not test us. It is not that we do not seek reward, rather we simply fear that particular venue for its attainment.

We may suggest another reason for this "negative" approach to commemoration. There are those who believe that inaction -- or passivity -- is a negative response. They feel that by not "doing anything" we demonstrate weakness and cowardice. This is not true. We are taught here that at times not doing something may be considered a positive response. On certain occasions, the most significant response is to do nothing. Battling the *yetzer hara*, directly taking him "head on" is not an effective technique. Avoiding a confrontation with the *yetzer hara* is a negative act which essentially produces a positive response.