

As they journeyed from Eilim, and they came, the whole congregation of Bnei Yisrael, unto the wilderness of Sin... on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt. Then the whole congregation of Bnei Yisrael murmured against Moshe and Aharon in the wilderness. (16:1,2)

Kol adas Bnei Yisrael, the whole congregation of *Bnei Yisrael*, explains *Horav S. R. Hirsch, zl*, refers to the Jewish community in its entirety, in its highest meaning as a community united by its common mission. It is a community which is designated to be the “congregation” of Hashem. Thus, by using such vernacular to describe the Jewish People, the Torah implies from the get-go that the events to be recorded impact the interest of the general mission of the whole *Klal Yisrael* to the highest degree. It is for this reason that the Torah makes a point of underscoring the date: thirty days after this group left Egypt – where they had been enslaved for 210 years. The whole congregation of *Bnei Yisrael* “murmured”/complained. It was thirty days after they had been freed from the external chains that had bound them as slaves, persecuted, reviled, murdered – but now they were free! Slavery was no longer an issue. Now the issue was the anxiety of providing for their daily sustenance. This occurred through a national commitment to the institution of *Shabbos*.

With the gift of sustenance from Heaven, *manna*, Hashem announced the institution of *Shabbos*, which stands at the base of all Jewry and all Judaism. Through the daily miracle of the appearance of the *manna* (for forty uninterrupted years), Hashem introduced *Shabbos* to the Jews. *Pesach* transformed the slaves into a free people, committed to Hashem; *Shabbos* saw to it that they maintained this commitment.

The nation needed to be inculcated with the verity that Hashem provides our sustenance. Thus, He led them to a barren wilderness, desolate of life, a place where none of man’s bare necessities was obtainable, to demonstrate to them that He – and only He – would take care of them. Nonetheless, a mere thirty days after witnessing the greatest miracles witnessed by human eyes, they murmured/complained. Where was their faith, their trust in the Almighty G-d Who took them out of Egypt?

Horav Mordechai Schwab, zl, explains that perusal of the previous *pesukim* will show that the nation had experienced many previous *nisyonos*, trials: from the liberation, to being chased by the Egyptians, to crossing the Red Sea, to a lack of water. It was one thing after another, because this is what Hashem wanted to teach them: life is filled with *nisyonos*. If it is not one thing, it is another. There will always be *nisyonos*. The purpose of these trials is to set the stage, to segue to the next phase: *yeshuah*, salvation. Trial – faith/trust – salvation. It never stops. Even after thirty days of trial – faith – salvation – they had more trials. No water. No food – patience/faith.

Rav Schwab derives from here that the only approach to triumphing over *nisyonos* is patience/*shetikah*, silence, acceptance, prayer. Change is on the horizon. We must wait patiently for the salvation to arrive, but we must trust that not only is it on the way, it is present, waiting to be introduced. He quotes *Rav Hirsch's* commentary to Hashem's response to the people's murmuring for food, *Hineni mamtir lachem lechem min ha'Shomayim*, "Behold, I am about to make bread rain from heaven for you" (Ibid. 16:4). *Hineni* – behold – not just as a result of this dissatisfaction – but *Hineni* – "I am already prepared." Hashem was implying that this was all part of His masterplan. The people's complaining did not catalyze the response; it had always been there – prepared and waiting for the appropriate time to be revealed and implemented.

This is how we must view *nisyonos*. They are a part of our lives. We must sit patiently, and pray with faith as we wait for the *yeshuah*, which is prepared and waiting for the right moment, but it will come.