

"And Hashem said to Moshe. Behold I am about to cause to rain for you bread from the Heaven, and the people will go out daily to collect (their daily portion) so that I can test them if they will follow in My Torah or not." (16:4)

The Divine gift of *manna* was essentially the last of the great miracles which surrounded the Egyptian Exodus. These wonders were designed to illuminate our path and guide us in our belief in Hashem. Indeed, *Chazal* view the *manna* as the ultimate miracle which nurtured our *emunah* and stimulated our *bitachon* in Hashem. Hashem brought us through the desert in a long, circuitous way. He nourished us with *manna* from Heaven and water from the Well in order to imbue *Torah* into our bodies and souls.

Relying upon Hashem to provide "*parnasah*," livelihood, and believing in His "ability" to sustain His children is a challenge. Indeed, precisely at the moment that man is involved in the acquisition of his daily bread, he risks losing his last vestige of human dignity. One who does not place his trust in Hashem often falls prey to an insatiable greed that is unleashed by this desire to acquire his daily sustenance. The more idealistic concepts of working to live, living in sublime serenity, and awaiting the *Shabbos Kodesh* in which man spiritually elevates the whole week are lost in the search for daily bread. As *Horav Shlomo Breuer, z.l.*, writes, "In the struggle for his daily bread, man faces the danger of succumbing and sinking to the level of an animal. Few are those who emerge victorious from this struggle, being able to maintain their human dignity and Divine image."

Horav Breuer derives this thought from this *parsha*. *Klal Yisrael* witnessed the great miracles of the Exodus and were privy to the splitting of the Red Sea. When they were faced with the daily battle for nourishment, however, they panicked and suddenly forgot all the miracles. In their anxiety, they were even prepared to return to Egypt!

Chazal assert that maintaining the sustenance of man is more difficult than the splitting of the Red Sea. *Horav S. R. Hirsch, z.l.*, defines this hardship as one's deliverance from the foolish notion that the burden of sustenance rests solely upon the shoulders of man. The ability to shoulder the burden of threatening hunger and financial instability develops only through an awareness that man is called upon to do only what Hashem expects him to do.

The ultimate victory over this ominous threat, however, is Hashem's, Who sustains and nourishes all mankind. The most difficult orientation for man to accept is the acknowledgment that he is not in control, not in charge. It is Hashem who sustains and nourishes us. This was the educative lesson of forty years of *manna* sustenance. All the anxiety of the struggle for daily bread must be relaxed while the minds and bodies of *Bnei Yisrael* absorb the miracles and *Torah*. Their human dignity will thus be preserved in this most difficult battle.

We may advance this idea further. *Chazal* state: *Marriage is as difficult as the splitting of the Red Sea*. The anxieties that abound in man's quest for a mate are obvious. There is an aspect of this difficulty, however, which seems insurmountable to some. The added responsibility of a partner for life demands that an individual assume independence and readiness to support and sustain a family. One must place his trust and faith in Hashem, Who has sustained him until this point, to maintain His beneficence.

Unfortunately, a predominant cause of apprehension concerning *shidduchim* does not involve character traits or religious orientation. A major concern focuses on the ability to be sustained during one's tenure in *Yeshivah Kollel* following marriage. The maturation necessary to overcome this anxiety and to transcend material concerns for a spiritual quest is difficult to acquire. How regrettable are those who acknowledge Hashem's "ability" to split the Red Sea, but deny His capacity to support one who devotes himself to *Torah* scholarship. Those who embark on the road to matrimony, be it parents or young men and women, should trust that Hashem, Who miraculously redeemed us from Egyptian bondage, split the Red Sea, rained *manna* for forty years, and has sustained us throughout our tumultuous history, will continue to support and nurture those who have faith in Him.