

Then Yaakov took a vow, saying, "If Hashem will be with me, will guard me on this way that I am going; will give me bread to eat and clothes to wear. (28:20)

The *Midrash Tanchuma* notes that Hashem responded to all of Yaakov's requests, with the exception of his request for *parnassah*, livelihood. Hashem said that He would be with him, protect him from his enemies, and guarantee his safe return home. He did not acquiesce to Yaakov's simple request for bread and clothes, explaining, "If I guarantee his food, what will he pray for?" In other words, Hashem "held back" His assurance regarding Yaakov's livelihood, to ensure that Yaakov would continue to supplicate Him for it.

This is an incredible statement when you consider that Yaakov *Avinu* was not requesting luxuries. He simply desired basic sustenance so that he could devote himself completely to spiritual pursuits. Hashem, however, desires that His servants constantly trust in Him to provide for subsistence. Once one is assured of his daily bread, he will not readily turn to Hashem. Necessity motivates prayer. This idea applies to the *b'chir ha'Avos*, select of the Patriarchs, as well. *Mussar HaTorah* infers a valuable lesson from *Chazal*. When we are lacking something, it is because Hashem desires that we pray for it. One should never say, "I have enough; I need no more." Hashem waits for our prayers. By turning to Him, we circumvent those times when we need to be reminded of the Source of our good fortune.