

## Therefore Bnei Yisrael are not to eat the *Gid ha'nasheh*, displaced sinew on the hip-socket,...to this day. (32:33)

When Eisav's angel saw that he could not best Yaakov *Avinu*, he made one last attempt at maiming the Patriarch by striking his *gid-hanashe*. To commemorate this battle, Yaakov's descendants are prohibited from consuming the nerves/sinew which are included under the rubric of *gid ha'nashe*. The commemoration of the miracle of Yaakov's triumph in battle over the forces of evil seems counterproductive. *Issur achilah*, prohibition from eating, is a *shev v'al taaseh*, passive form of celebrating the miracle, the direct opposite of the manner in which we celebrate the many miracles which are part of our continued existence. *Horav Moshe Feinstein, zl*, explains that while we have the ability, resolution and fortitude to withstand the vicissitudes and challenges of the exile which will undoubtedly generate much-deserved reward, we still pray to Hashem that we should not be challenged by the *nisyonos*, trials, associated with exile. Indeed, this is why we ask Hashem (*Birchos Ha'Shachar*), *v'al t'vienu... liyidei nisayon*, "Do not bring us into... the forces of challenge." Thus, the commemoration of the miracle is passive: We ask that we not be tested.

The *Rosh Yeshivah* also derives from here that it is more praiseworthy not to fall prey to prohibition than to perform a *mitzvah*. Sadly, there are those who complacently perform *mitzvos*, which has been their lifestyle since early youth. To refrain from executing an *aveirah*, however, to distance oneself from sin – specifically because this is the *ratzon Hashem*, the will of G-d – is more laudatory.