



Parshas Beshalach 2021, the test of faith

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Refuah Shlema of HaRav Amitai Ben Shoshanna, Shaul Ben Berta and Lior Gabay Ben Michal.

This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Leah Mintche Bas Ya'akov Yosef, Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

Our Parsha begins with Pharaoh regretting his decision to free the Jewish nation; he decides to chase after them and finish his Jewish problem. As the Jewish nation approached the Yam Suf - the sea of reeds, they noticed the Egyptian army quickly approaching from behind and trapping them against the water.

They panicked and cried to Moshe, *"why have you taken us out of Egypt?"* Moshe Rabbeinu responded, *"Don't be afraid! Stand firm and see the salvation that G-d will do for you today. G-d will fight for you and just remain silent."*

G-d told Moshe to stretch out his stick over the water to split for the Jewish nation. Moshe did as G-d instructed, and a strong wind came from the east and split the water creating a dry path for the Jewish people to pass through.

As they finished crossing the sea, the waters immediately came crashing down on Pharaoh and his armies.

Moshe and his sister Miriam led the Jewish people in song and dance as the water spat out the deceased Egyptians. They thanked and praised G-d for the incredible and awesome miracle that had just occurred.

As they traveled through the desert, some Jewish people turned to Moshe and complained about the food situation. They said, *"If only we had died in Egypt when we were full of bread rather than dying of starvation in the desert."* G-d responded by raining Mon - heavenly bread upon the Jewish camp each day to satisfy their hunger.

However, a question comes to mind: One of the many miracles that we have in our Parsha is the Mon, the heavenly bread. It was a spiritual substance that tasted like anything a person desired it to be. Each morning it would rain down from the sky, covered in two layers of dew to protect it from the elements.

As G-d said to Moshe (16:4), *"I will rain down bread from the sky, and the people shall go out and gather each day's portion. And I will test them through this to see whether it will follow My commandments or not."* What test was G-d giving the Jewish nation by providing them with the Mon? What impression or notion was G-d trying to verify with the heavenly bread?!

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh on this Pasuk writes that G-d gave them the Mon ready to eat without further preparation. And now, G-d wanted to see how the Jewish people would spend their newly found extra time.

Would they waste their time complaining about what they don't have or how it was different in Egypt. Or would they spend their time learning how to serve G-d as His chosen people? The test was to know whether or not the recently freed people were leaving behind the Egyptian mentality.

However, the Kli Yakar (*Rav Shlomo Ephraim Ben Aaron*) gives a deeper and more powerful explanation. He writes that the Mon's test was to see if the Jewish people would follow the Mon's laws.

For only a certain amount was supposed to be gathered each day, it was not meant to be left overnight. And on Friday, they were meant to gather and collect a double portion for Shabbos.

The Kli Yakar explains that the Mon's test was extremely profound, for it was to show if the Jewish people believed that G-d would provide for them anew every day.

They were just freed from slavery and did not know when their next meal would be. So if they gathered extra Mon to have just in case, it would show that they did not fully trust G-d to provide for them.

If they only collected and gathered the amount allowed, it would prove to G-d that they believe He will give them what they need each day. That they had changed their outlook and mindset from not trusting Moshe when he first came to redeem them; to completely believing in G-d and His faithful servant, Moshe.

In our daily lives, it is imperative that we recognize that many of our actions each day are the foundation for long-term success. Whether our goal is to be financially stable or to create a family, it calls for a long-term vision with a short-term drive.

It requires that we trust the process even if we don't see its benefits. For it is how we conduct ourselves daily that will determine the results in the future.

This lesson is ever especially prevalent, for this week, we celebrate the New Year for Trees, Tu B'shevat. To grow a large, beautiful, and strong tree, you must help it survive the stages when it's most vulnerable to shriveling up and dying. It takes real dedication and commitment for it to grow into a tree that can last many generations.

“It is not about having the skill to do something. It is about having the will, desire and commitment to give it your best.”

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*