

THE HARRY H. BEREN TORAH WEEKLY

A project of the Denver Community Kollel

Parshas Beshalach

January 26, 2018

A Taste of Torah

Sweet Price

by Rabbi Yaakov Zions

How often is it that we are enticed by free offers? We are bombarded by companies that promise the world, literally, on a platter. We all know, however, that you (usually) get what you pay for. In spiritual matters, as well, this idea holds true, as this week's parsha illustrates.

The Torah tells us about the manna which the Jews ate throughout their sojourn across the desert. The verses tell us just a few details about this miraculous food. We are told that it was a white, coriander seed-shaped food which fell from heaven each weekday. A very crucial question is in order here. The Torah is not a history book, and, in fact, much of our early history is not recorded at all. Only items of importance to the mission of our Torah-nation were preserved for posterity. What significance is the manna in this regard?

One possible answer is based on Rashi (Beshalach 16:32), who explains that Moshe was commanded to tell his brother, Aharon, to store one portion of manna in the Holy of Holies. Rashi tells us that this was intended for future use. When the prophet Yirmiyahu was rebuking the people saying, "Why do you not engage yourselves with the Torah?" they answered him, "Shall we leave our work and engage ourselves with the Torah? From where shall we earn a living?" Yirmiyahu showed them the jar of manna and said to them (Yirmiyahu 2:31), "See the words of Hashem!" It does not say "Hear the words" but "See," as he displayed the manna to the people. "This is what your fathers were fed with (when they followed Hashem's wishes)." This seems to be the primary lesson of the manna

(see Devarim 8:3, which supports this idea, as well), and is definitely a lesson we need to constantly drive home.

However, there may be an additional lesson involved for us. Rabbi Shimon Schwab (1910-1995) was privileged to spend one Shabbos (the week of Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei 1930) with the saintly Chofetz Chaim (1839-1933). Years later, he would relate many amazing anecdotes from that visit.

One item relates to our subject. On that Friday night, the Chofetz Chaim spoke to those assembled in his home: "Our Sages say (Shemos Rabbah 25:3) that the manna tasted like whatever a person desired and thought about as he ate it. One might wonder: What did the manna taste like if the one who ate it thought nothing?" He looked around, awaiting an answer, but everyone remained silent. "I'll tell you what it tasted like." He paused. "If one thought nothing, it tasted like nothing. If one didn't think, the manna had no taste at all! The more thought that goes into something, the more satisfaction one will derive from it. For example, if someone concentrates deeply when learning Torah so that he understands properly, he tastes its sweetness." At that moment, the Chofetz Chaim put his fingers together and kissed them, to demonstrate the Torah's sweetness. "Therefore," the Chofetz Chaim continued, "we pray every morning (in the blessing on Torah study) please make [the Torah] sweet. However, if a person sits in front of a *sefer* and mumbles the words unthinkingly, his learning has no sweetness at all."

The Chofetz Chaim then added, "The same thing will happen when Mashiach comes. A person who yearns

Because Torah Is for Every Jew

Stories for the Soul

Fruits of Labor

Based on a story on revach.net

Every year on Tu B'shevat, the table of Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac of Zidichov (1805-1873) would be surrounded by many chassidim and guests, and the Rebbe would distribute fruits to everybody present.

One year, more visitors arrived than usual, and even the huge amount of fruit which had been prepared was not enough to be distributed to everyone surrounding the table.

The Rebbe looked up and discerned what had happened. He then told the assembled, "Is it fruit that you want? Come close and I'll tell you where you can find them. Our Sages teach us, 'These are the precepts whose fruits a person enjoys in this world, but whose principal remains intact for him in *Olam Haba* (the World to Come)... and Torah study is equal to all of them.' Go and occupy yourselves with Torah, and you will find numerous fruits without any crowding, besides for the principal which will remain for you in *Olam Haba*!"

Our Sages teach us that the attack by Amalek was enabled by a process that began because the Jewish People did not properly apply themselves to studying the parts of Torah they already had in their possession. Torah study is a vital part of our lives, and it provides for us in both this world and the next.

Kollel Happenings

PUT TO THE TEST: THE ETHICAL ISSUES OF PRE-NATAL SCREENING

Join Dr. Reid Goodman, MD, obstetrician and gynecologist, Mile High OB/GYN and Rabbi Akiva Stern, Associate Scholar for the Denver Community Kollel, as they explore the ethical issues of pre-natal screening. Wednesday, February 7th, at 12-1:15 p.m. at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$25. RSVP info@denverkollel.org.

RABBANIT MIZRACHI AT THREE LOCATIONS!

The Women's Division of the Denver Community Kollel present a video for women, *Planting the Seeds* Three Locations & Times! **Sunday**, Jan. 28 at Aish Denver, 9550 E. Belleview Ave. **Monday**, Jan 29 at Beth Jacob High School, 5100 W. 14th Ave. **Tuesday**, Jan 30 at the Halpern Home, 210 S. Oneida St. Doors open at 7:45 pm, presentation at 8 pm. Sponsored by Kathy Kaufman in honor of the birth of her first granddaughter, Devorah Kaufman, to the proud parents Adam and Shaindy. No charge, suggested donation of \$5 to help cover costs of future video presentations.

WINTER GARDENS WOMEN'S NIGHT OUT FEB. 12TH

The Kollel Women's Division 6th annual Women's Wellness Workshop, *Winter Gardens Women's Night Out*, will be held Monday, Feb. 12, 2018, and will feature noted speaker Esther Wein. Discover, taste and connect at the most unique event of the year! For more info or to reserve, visit denverkollel.org, email info@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855.

Increase Your Jewish IQ

By Rabbi Yaakov Zions

Last week we asked: The *Shir Shel Yom* (daily psalm recited each morning) is generally preceded with the statement: "Today is day ___ for which the Levi'im recited the following (psalm) in the *Beis Hamikdash* (Temple)." Why do we recite this, and what is its source?

A: The first recorded mention of this custom is *Kitzur Sh'la* (published in 1683) quoting Arizal and his disciples. Interestingly, the reason given has nothing to do with the *Shir Shel Yom*. Rather, we endeavor to fulfill

the commandment to remember Shabbos. According to Ramban (commentary to Shemos 20:8), this mitzvah can be fulfilled throughout the week by referring to the days of the week according to their distance to Shabbos. Thus, the day following Shabbos is "*yom rishon b'shabbos*," "the first day following Shabbos," and so on.

This week's question: How many times each day was the daily psalm of song recited in the Temple?

To submit an answer to Rabbi Zions, email ryz@denverkollel.org.

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Yonasan Eybeschutz - Part IV

Rabbi Eybeschutz also used his connections and reputation on other occasions to intervene with the government in Vienna on behalf of the Jews of Prague and Bohemia.

In 1741, Rabbi Eybeschutz was appointed rabbi of Metz, which had a large and prominent Jewish community. War had broken out between Prussia and Austria-Hungary, and the French army, which was supporting Prussia, invaded Bohemia. Rabbi Eybeschutz was held in high esteem with the French, and they provided him safe conduct from Prague to Metz in 1742. Nonetheless, he left most of his possessions behind in Prague.

Later, the French withdrew from Prague, and the reinstalled Austro-Hungarian government viewed the actions Rabbi Eybeschutz had carried out with the French occupiers as treasonous. Though he was already safely in Metz, he was unable to return to Prague, and the property he had left there was confiscated.

In 1745, hostilities again broke out between Prussia and Austria-Hungary. The Austro-Hungarian soldiers marched into various Jewish communities in Bohemia and Moravia and treated them very badly. To make matters worse, an expulsion order was issued by the government for the Jews in these areas.

A Taste of Torah

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to behold Hashem's revelation upon Mashiach's arrival will experience incredible sweetness. On the other hand, if a person doesn't invest any thought into the events surrounding the coming of Mashiach, Mashiach may come and the salvation might take place, but this person will never know that it happened." This is an amazing,

yet frightening, concept in Judaism.

Spiritual rewards are great, but we must do our fair share in order to appreciate it. Would you give a glass of expensive and rare wine to someone who never tasted wine previously? What a waste that would be! Let us yearn for the redemption and merit to taste its rich sweetness!