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L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

PARASHAH

DRIVEN FROM ABOVE

Parashas HaMahn by Dov Weller

וילקטו המרבה והמעטה. וימזו בעמר ולא העדרו המרבה והמעטה לא החסיר איש לפניו אכלו לקטו
They gathered, he who took much and he who took little. Then they measured in an omer, and whoever took more did not have extra and whoever took less was not lacking; each one gathered according to his consumption (Shemos 16:17, 18).

No matter how much time was spent gathering the *mahn* or how large the quantity of *mahn*, upon arriving home, everyone had the same amount, no more and no less. We see from here that one's *parnassah* is not a result of his *hishtadlus*, it is not a result of hustle, effort, time spent working, or the type of job; it is all Divinely orchestrated. There are people who work sixty-five hours a week and barely make ends meet, and there are those who work just a few hours a week and are comfortable.

The miracle of the *mahn* teaches an eternal lesson: while we must go out and gather, there is no inherent connection between our physical efforts and the results we bring home.

The *Mesillas Yesharim* (Ch. 21) describes *hishtadlus* as a "tax" we must pay due to the sin of Adam. It is a box we are required to check, but it is never the source of our *parnassah* (livelihood) itself. Rav Mattisyahu Salomon observes that just as no one wants to overpay their financial taxes, we should seek to minimize our "tax" of effort to the appropriate balance.

The Alter of Novardok points out a striking irony: man often runs day and night after *hishtadlus*—which the Torah labels a curse ("By the sweat of your brow")—while treating *bitachon* as an afterthought, even though it is the true wellspring of blessing, as the verse tells us, "Blessed is the man who trusts in Hashem" (Yirmiyah 17:7).

Rabbeinu Bachya notes that the *mahn* fell while the Jewish people slept. This design proved that *parnassah* is ready for us from Heaven; our work is

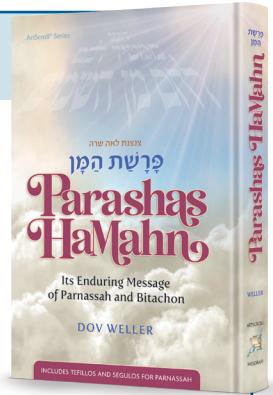
merely a technical formality required to access it. Realigning our perspective to prioritize trust over toil is the work of a lifetime.

The Pittsburgher Rebbe, Rav Yosef Leifer, was offered a ride in an unusual car: it had a steering wheel on the passenger's side, just like the one in front of the driver's seat. The driver explained, "You see, Rebbe, I have a young child who is quite rambunctious, to put it mildly. My sweet young boy is hyperactive and he loves to control the steering wheel. There have been many times that I was driving and he tried to take control of the steering wheel! It became dangerous to have him as a passenger, until I came up with this idea: I had the car dealership install the exact same wheel on the passenger's side. Now my son sits in his seat and 'drives around town,' turning here and turning there. He enjoys his 'driving' and has not attempted to take control of the real wheel since. This is the reason, Rebbe, you find yourself sitting in front of a second steering wheel."

The Rebbe said, "Hashem distributes steering wheels to each and every person. We all think that we are the drivers, turning this way or that, slowing or stopping. But the steering wheels we are given are just for pretending. We think we are making decisions, that we oversee our destinies, that we are the ones who make the decisions that guarantee our success. However, only Hashem controls the real steering wheel. He guides us and is in control of the directions we take. This is our ultimate test — to see that it is Hashem Who is guiding every aspect of our lives and to act accordingly." ☺



The Pittsburgher Rebbe



The Shabbos on which *Parashas Beshalach* is read is called *Shabbos Shirah*, the Shabbos of Song. There is a widespread custom to put out food for the birds on this Shabbos. Some of the reasons given for this custom are:

1. The *Maharal* of Prague instructed parents and teachers to gather children in the courtyard of the synagogue on this Shabbos, and describe to them in vivid detail the scene of the Jews crossing the Red Sea, and singing praises to Hashem for their salvation. One of the points they should mention is that the birds chirped and sang along with them, and to make a greater impression on them, the children should feed the birds kernels of wheat to encourage them to chirp and sing. (This was related by Rav Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch.)

2. The *Shaar Bas Rabbim* and Rav Meir of Premishlan said that Dasan and Aviram hatched a wicked plot to try to prove that the *mahn* fell on Shabbos, contrary to what Moshe said. They clandestinely spread some *mahn* from their portions in the fields, and planned to show it to others on Shabbos, pretending that it had fallen then. Their plot was foiled, however, by the birds, who ate the *mahn* they had set out, ensuring that they found nothing when they went out to gather it on Shabbos. As a reward for this, we feed the birds on this Shabbos, when we read the *Parashas HaMahn* (*Taamei HaMinhagim* 531:98).

3. The *Chasam Sofer* writes that we are trying to internalize the lesson of the *mahn*: the Jewish people are compared to birds, and just as birds find their food without undue toil, so, too can we be sustained directly from Hashem's Hand if we but turn our attention to learning His Torah and following His commands (*Ohr Pnei Moshe*).

This ancient custom is debated among the *poskim*,

as it is generally forbidden to feed non-domestic animals on Shabbos, since they do not rely on humans for sustenance. Accordingly, the *Magen Avraham* (324:7) and *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* rule that one should refrain from feeding birds on Shabbos.

The *Levush*, however, defends the custom, explaining that Shabbos Shirah falls in the winter, when food is scarce, rendering birds effectively dependent on human assistance. Rav Chaim related that his father, the

Steipler Gaon, followed this practice on Shabbos Shirah. When his brother-in-law, the Chazon Ish expressed objection, the Steipler deferred and instead placed food out after Shabbos, apparently considering this sufficient for fulfilling the custom, as the sanctity of Shabbos extends until after *Melaveh Malkah*.

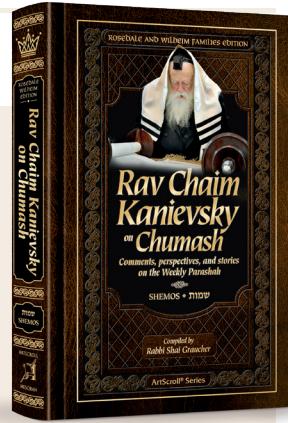
Rav Chaim's brother-in-law, Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein, offers an ingenious method by which one can follow both opinions. In his *sefer Aleinu LeShabei'ach*

he proposes putting out the food for the birds before Shabbos with a plate covering it. On Shabbos, he may then remove the plate to use for his Shabbos meal, thus indirectly making the food available for the birds' consumption on Shabbos.

It is worthwhile to mention here that the *Shemiras Shabbos KeHilchasah* (27:21) rules that one may shake crumbs off a tablecloth outside even though the birds will eat them. The reason one may not feed non-domestic animals is because one may not exert himself unnecessarily on Shabbos; in this case, his exertion is needed for his own purposes, in order to clean the tablecloth. The fact that the birds will then eat the crumbs adds no effort, and is not cause to forbid this action. 



The Chazon Ish



	SHABBOS JANUARY 31 יג שבט	SUNDAY FEBRUARY 1 יד שבט	MONDAY FEBRUARY 2 ו' שבט	TUESDAY FEBRUARY 3 ל' שבט	WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 4 ז' שבט	THURSDAY FEBRUARY 5 ח' שבט	FRIDAY FEBRUARY 6 ט' שבט
BAVLI	Menachos 20	Menachos 21	Menachos 22	Menachos 23	Menachos 24	Menachos 25	Menachos 26
YERUSHALMI	Beitzah 10	Beitzah 11	Beitzah 12	Beitzah 13	Beitzah 14	Beitzah 15	Beitzah 16
MISHNAH	Temurah 2:1-2	Temurah 2:3-3:1	Temurah 3:2-3	Temurah 3:4-5	Temurah 4:1-2	Temurah 4:3-4	Temurah 5:1-2
KITZUR	55:2-56:5	56:6-57:5	57:6-58:7	58:8-59:1	59:2-8	59:9-19	59:20-60:5
ORAYSA	Yevamos Chazara 24a-25a	Yevamos 25b Chazara 25a	Yevamos 26a Chazara 25b	Yevamos 26b Chazara 26a	Yevamos 27a Chazara 26b	Yevamos 27b Chazara 27a	Yevamos Chazara 25a-26a

The long, dark nights of Teves eventually give way to the glimmers of hope that radiate from the month of Shevat, whose name can be interpreted as an acronym for *shenisbaser besuros tovos*, may we hear good news. R' Hutner often taught us that for the Jew there are no minor matters. Every moment is important, every second a new opportunity. And so, Shevat, which seems to contain only one, seemingly minor Yom Tov, actually offers profound potential for personal growth and spiritual advancement. Let us turn to the master of the months, the *Bnei Yissaschar* of Dinov (*Maamarei Shevat* 1), to put us on the right road.

The great Dinover Rav reveals a cryptic fact about the upcoming month. Every *chodesh* has a *mazal*, or physical representation that identifies the essence of the month. The *mazal* of Shevat is *d'li*, meaning pail or bucket. Yet the *Bnei Yissaschar* informs us that the *chiddush* is that, far from the *d'li* being a minor symbol, the bucket also represents the *mazal* of Klal Yisrael itself. This synonymity indicates that the month of Shevat has a basic affinity with Am Yisrael, to the point that this can be a time of *aliyah* for anyone seeking to attain a higher level in one's Yiddishkeit.

The *Bnei Yissaschar* explains that *d'li* is the emblem of Klal Yisrael itself because the *d'li* is the venue for drawing forth water, and "water is the metaphor for Torah" (*Bava Kamma* 17a). Therefore, since the essence of our nation is drinking and benefiting from Torah, our *mazal* is *d'li*. The *Bnei Yissaschar* also references the well-known *pasuk*, "Hoy kol tzamei lechu lamayim — Ho, everyone who is thirsty, go to the water" (*Yeshayah* 55:1). We may add that the halachah is that when it comes to drinking water, one recites a *berachah* only

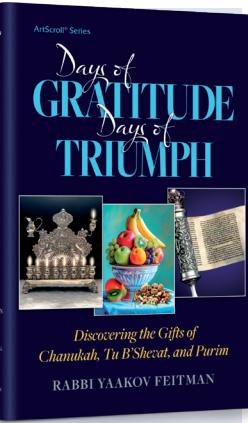
if he is thirsty. All other beverages require a blessing even if one is only drinking to swallow a pill or upon doctor's orders; water alone depends upon one's need to quench his thirst (*Shulchan Aruch* 204:14). Torah, too, will be granted only to one who is thirsty for its teachings. As the *Bnei Yissaschar* continues, the Torah testifies that it was on Rosh Chodesh Shevat that Moshe Rabbeinu began teaching the Torah afresh, to

the generation who would enter Eretz Yisrael (*Devarim* 1:3-5). This is the day when Moshe lowered the *d'li* to a nation thirsty to hear the word of Hashem directly from Moshe Rabbeinu.

It is still winter and the trees are yet bare and forbidding. But down deep, the sap begins to run, just as the pail goes deep to bring up Torah and Divine wisdom. As the Rebbes of Rizhlin, known for their dedication to the celebration of Tu B'Shevat, used to add, "The pail indeed goes deep but it is not meant to stay down there. It is meant to ascend with the precious and life-giving water. Klal Yisrael, too, sometimes lowers itself to bring up the sparks of holiness that have been lost and must be retrieved." This is perhaps one reason why Moshe Rabbeinu began teaching Torah to the new generation on Rosh Chodesh Shevat. As the nation looked toward exciting but difficult times, perhaps a long winter of *galus*, Moshe Rabbeinu taught them the great lesson of Shevat. You must lower the pail and dig deep inside your personal well of *emunah* and *bitachon*, of *kedushah* and *taharah*, no matter what the trees look like. Spring is coming and the *geulah* is not far behind. ☩



Rabbi Yaakov Feitman



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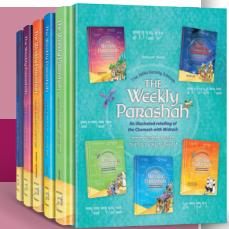
THE WEEKLY QUESTION

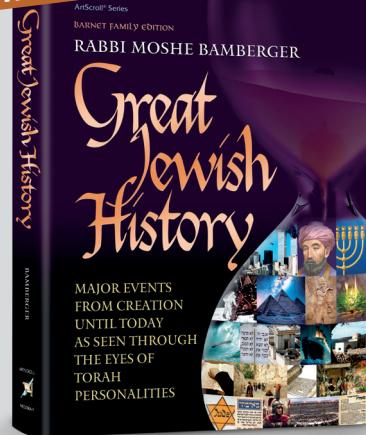
Name the three incredible gifts that traveled with the Jews in the desert.

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name, city, and contact info. Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in *The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah*.

The winner of the question for Parshas Vayechi is: BROCHA MUNK, Lakewood, NJ

Question for Vayechi was: What gift did Yaakov give Yosef for agreeing to bury him in Eretz Yisrael?
Vayechi Answer: The city of Shechem.



NEW!

Great Jewish History

2448 - 1313 SPLITTING OF THE SEA FINALIZES REDEMPTION; JEWS PRAISE GOD IN EUPHORIC SONG

Following the Ten Plagues, Pharaoh, under duress, sent the Jews from his land. Yet shortly after their departure, Pharaoh regretted his decision and persuaded his elite army to join him in pursuing the Jews. Six hundred elite chariots, along with all the chariots of Egypt, feverishly raced after the Jewish people. Finding themselves trapped between the advancing Egyptian forces and the Sea of Reeds, the Jews panicked and cried to Hashem. God told Moshe that the time for prayer was over; the people must prove their faith and plunge into the sea. Moshe stretched out his staff over the sea, and it miraculously split, allowing the Jewish people to cross between the seawalls on dry land. Then Moshe stretched out his staff, and the seawalls cascaded upon the pursuing Egyptian army, drowning them. Upon witnessing the Egyptian bodies wash up on the seashore, the Jews' faith in God — as well as in His servant Moshe — was strengthened. *Krias Yam Suf*, the miraculous "Splitting of the Sea," finalized the nation's freedom from Egyptian servitude, prompting Moshe and the Jewish people to join in a spontaneous outpouring of prophetic song to God — the *Az Yashir*. The Jewish women, led by Moshe's sister Miriam, engaged in song and dance to God.



TORAH VIEWS AND NEWS

An Allusion to the Revivification of the Dead

When **Rabbi Aharon of Belz** (1880-1957) reached Eretz Yisrael during World War II, a group of chassidim gathered to spend the first Shabbos with him in Chaifa. The Rebbe sensed that the chassidim — many of whom had narrowly escaped the German onslaught themselves, having lost many members of their families — were in no mood to sing *zemiros*. He posed the following question to them: Chazal (*Sanhedrin* 91b) note that with the words *Az Yashir*, the Torah alludes to *techiyas hameisim* (revivification of the dead). The question is, why does the Torah allude to *techiyas hameisim* specifically here, at the Splitting of the Sea? Try to put yourselves into the shoes of those who had crossed the Yam Suf, having recently survived all the horrors of the Egyptian exile, the Belzer Rebbe answered. Some had lost family members when Pharaoh was drowning babies in the Nile; others had witnessed their own children being used as bricks in walls. When Moshe Rabbeinu said, "It's time to sing *shirah* for having survived," some of them undoubtedly thought, "Sing? How can we sing?" That's when Moshe decided to start the *shirah* with the words "Az yashir," alluding to *techiyas hameisim*. "It's true that you don't see your relatives now," Moshe was intimating, "but there will come a day when your relatives will rise again." This idea consoled the Jewish people who stood at the Yam Suf, and they were able to say *shirah*.



Rabbi Aharon of Belz surrounded by young chassidim in Eretz Yisrael