

פרשת עקב

ויענך וירעבך ויאכלך את המן וכו' למען הודיעך כי לא על הלחם לבדו יחיה האדם כי על מוצא פי ה' יחיה האדם [ח,ג]. Rav Ahron Kotler, זצ"ל (משנת ר' אהרן עה"ת), explains this פסוק, that the message of the מן is for us to understand and realize that the ability for bread to satiate and satisfy is not something inherent in it. Just like the מן was able to miraculously sustain them through the direct beracha of Hashem, so it is with all food. It is על פי ה', through the direct kindness of Hashem, that gives it the capacity to satisfy. In fact, the Vilna Gaon (בראשית א,כט) explains that in wasn't until man was created that Hashem placed in fruit and grain the capability to satiate. A closer look at the פסוק indicates that in order to get this message across, there had to be a measure of difficulty. As the פסוק says וירעבך ויענך, and you were afflicted and hungered. Why was this necessary? From all the נסים that were present with the מן, this should have been self evident in the מן itself.

Rav Ahron explains, in order to internalize and appreciate what the מן signified, it wasn't enough to simply see the מן every day. Eventually they would just forget about it. There had to be a certain feeling of necessity, that without the מן they wouldn't survive. This way, they would always look forward to receiving the מן, and come to really appreciate it in a way that would always remain by them.

This is applicable to Torah learning as well. We have a מצוה not only to learn Torah, but to acquire and retain Torah knowledge as well. Rav Mordechai Gifter זצ"ל Rosh Yeshivas Telz used to say, that many gedolim known for their phenomenal memory, didn't necessary have a greater memory than us, they had a tremendous אהבת התורה, a love and desire to know ה' תורת ה', Hashem's Torah. To properly internalize and retain our Torah learning, we need to have a strong desire to know and understand. May we be זוכה to internalize all our learning and increase our knowledge of Torah.

Have a good Shabbos.

Rabbi Yitzchok Davis

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