

PARSHA WITH

Rabbi Shmuel Brazil



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תשפ"ד רב בראזיל פארשאס בעהאלוסחה RAV BRAZIL PARSHAS BEHAALOSCHA

## THE MANNA TRANSPARENCY

One would naturally think that the nation of *Am Yisrael*, although journeying through the desert, nevertheless had access to the most fanciest and exquisite cuisine available in the history of mankind. The manna that they ate daily presented them with an extraordinary magical menu of food to fit every palate, connoisseur, and taste bud at every meal. What could go wrong with such a delicacy? Yet the Torah itself describes the Manna Experience as an affliction **ענותך** למען במדבר מן המאכלך (Devaarim 8,16). What agony is the *passuk* talking about?

The *gemarah* in Yuma 74b expounds on two reasons what triggered the nation's complaint of (Bamidbar 11,5) "We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt for free, the cucumbers the watermelons the leeks the onions and the garlic. Now our souls are parched for there is nothing except the manna before our eyes". Chazal explain that satisfaction derived from eating includes more than the food one eats. When one eats yet he doesn't know where he will get his next meal from creates anxiety. The Manna Experience needed a renewal every day. Secondly, the Manna didn't quite fit the landscape of the food you desired to eat. If you pictured a good juicy steak with French Fries or Schnitzel, every mouth watering choice looked the same generic semblance, a round like a coriander seed and which appearance was like a crystal.

People don't eat only with their mouths but also with their eyes. As soon as one sees food his bodily enzymes start to flow which aid in the digestion process. I remember when Coke came out with a new Clear Coke absent of caramel coloring, and when Fanta came out without the orange look. It was a complete short lived fiasco. The *gemarah* says that Rav Yosef remarked from the complaints of *Am Yisrael* relating to the Manna Experience we see that blind people cannot attain full satiation from eating.

Thirdly, the Manna Experience would also not go over well with our culture because our generation would become so frustrated because we are so weight conscious of every morsel of food and drink we consume and there is no way to count the calories and fats in a Coriander Bar.

Up until now we spoke about the physical explanations of discontentment with the Manna. However there also existed a spiritual reason why the *Yidden* were dissatisfied with the Manna. The Torah calls the coriander seed **גד** which is defined as to tell, like in the word **הגדה**. This means with every Manna Experience there was included a story to tell. The Manna revealed the spiritual status and *madraigah* of the individuals to whom it was delivered. The Manna of *tzadikim* was delivered at their door step. The *Beinonim* those with compromised *Hashkafa* and *emunah* in Hashem, had to go out and collect their meals. The wicked had to go yet even further in order to bring home their family's sustenance.

Just imagine how embarrassing for a respected member of the *Kehillah* who one night lost self control with an anger burst, and in the morning there is no Manna by his doorstep. He will have to go out amongst the compromised *Yidden* and collect with them. What a *busha*! From that day on until he does teshuva, he will not be called up for the *kovid* of *Shlishi* anymore, nor be the *Baal Tefillah*. He lost his prestigious position in the *tzibbur*. But it is not only about the loss of *kovid* alone for he must now borrow utensils such as a grinder from his neighbor which will process the Manna which was not a necessary ritual to do previously. Not only that, but when the children see that *Tatti* went out of his tent to get the Manna and this morning they have to wait until the breakfast is prepared, he will lose face in the eyes of his children as well.

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We can now understand why *Am Yisrael* in the desert complained about the agony they received from Manna Food. The Manna made everyone spiritually transparent. One can fool and deceive people but not the Manna. One's true colors and identity was revealed to everyone, and eating suddenly became a very uncomfortable and trouble some experience.

One mistakenly thinks that behind closed doors all the spiritual skeletons in the closet are safe, secure, and sound. How long does one think he can keep up his masqueraded image of refined character and level of religious piety? Even silver plated objects over time show their real inner essence with blackened stains.

However, people of spiritual growth get over the initial *busha* and then embrace the personal shame, for it brings to them an about change and upgrade in daily living. In the יהי רצון that we *daven* when we bench *Rosh Chodesh* we repeat the request of יראת שמים. The first time is ויראת חטא and the second time is ויראת שמים. Why the double request? The Gateshead Rosh Yeshiva Rav Aryeh Gurevitz ztl answered that the second time that it is repeated is referring to the love of *Yiras Shamayim*. It is to be read with the word אהבת referring to both the love of Torah **and** *Yiras Shamayim*. One should not run away from *mussar* and chastisement but rather embrace it for the alterations in one's attitude, conduct, and understanding in *Hashkafa Middos* and *Mitzvos*, will transform one into forming a closer relationship בין אדם למקום ובין אדם לחבירו. This is what life is really about. It is better to make Purim only one day a year and not every day of the year.

Rav Brazil,

Gut Shabbos