



DVAR TORAH

MATOS/MASSEI



By: Rabbi Aryeh Gitlin

Living by the Word of Hashem

In this week's parsha, the Torah reviews all the journeys of Bnei Yisrael in the desert. When it describes their encampment in Rephidim, it states that "there was no water for the people to drink" (Bamidbar 33:14). Yet it never mentions that Hashem miraculously brought forth water from the rock. Nor does it mention the mann that sustained the nation for forty years.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, in *Dorash Moshe*, asks why the Torah records the lack of water but omits the miracle that followed.

Rav Moshe explains that Bnei Yisrael's requests for bread and water reflected a deficiency in emunah. Their complaints suggested doubt that Hashem could provide for them in the wilderness.

Even so, why omit the miracles?

Rav Moshe gives a remarkable answer. Ideally, Bnei Yisrael were never meant to need food or water in the desert at all. Just as Moshe Rabbeinu remained on Har Sinai for forty days and nights without eating or drinking, sustained solely by the will of Hashem, so too the Jewish people could have lived through the wilderness entirely through Divine sustenance.

He cites the verse in Devarim (8:3): "He afflicted you and made you hunger... to teach you that man does not live by bread alone, but by everything that emanates from the mouth of Hashem."

Rav Moshe explains that the hunger came because they assumed they needed bread in order to survive. Their worry reflected an incomplete recognition that life itself is sustained only by the word of Hashem. Bread is merely the means through which Hashem usually provides that sustenance.

The very next verse reinforces this lesson. Throughout the forty years in the desert, their clothing never wore out and grew together with them. Since they never worried about clothing, Hashem provided for that need miraculously. Had they displayed the same level of trust regarding food and water, Hashem would have sustained them without bread or water as well.

Accordingly, the mann and the water from the rock are omitted from the Torah's summary because, in the ideal state, they would never have been necessary.

One of my rebbeim, Rabbi Yitzchok Zev Golembeck, shared a powerful illustration of this principle. A talmid of his was very sensitive to cold temperatures. His wife was very sensitive to heat. He constantly wanted the air conditioning off while she wanted it on. This became a source of tension in their shalom bayis. The husband realized he needed to change his perspective. After hearing this teaching of Rav Moshe, he began reminding himself, "Is it the temperature that makes me comfortable, or is it the word of Hashem? Certainly it is the word of Hashem." As he internalized this idea, the air conditioning no longer bothered him. More importantly, the tension disappeared and their shalom bayis flourished. Most importantly is the lesson we can learn and apply to every area of our lives: our quality of life is not determined by our circumstances. Rather, it is determined by our recognition that everything comes directly from Hashem.

May we merit to internalize this priceless lesson, strengthen our emunah and bitachon, and live with the awareness that "not by bread alone does man live, but by everything that emanates from the mouth of Hashem."



By: Rabbi Chaim
Yeshaya Freeman

SUMMERTIME HALACHOS

THE 3 WEEKS



4 Restrictions of the 3 weeks:

- 1.) Joyous activities - weddings (Rema O.C 551:2), singing, dancing, music, etc.
- 2.) Haircuts or shaving (Rema O.C 551:4)
- 3.) Reciting the bracha of "She'hechiyanu" (S.A O.C 551:17)
- 4.) Dangerous activities (S.A O.C 551:18)

Defining the terms-

1.) Weddings and festive gatherings-

- According to the letter of the law it is permissible to have a wedding during the Three Weeks. However, being that it is a time of bad mazel, the minhag is to refrain from having a wedding during this period (Mishna Berura 551:14).
- Engagement parties are acceptable even with a full meal (Mishna Berura 551:19). Singing is allowed, but no music or dancing (Mishna Berura 551:16).
- Bris, Bar Mitzvah - Dancing and singing are allowed at a bris as well as at all other seudos mitzvah, but no music (Kovetz Halachos 4:22).
- Sheva Berachos - Dancing and singing are allowed, but with no music (Moedei Yeshurun pg. 129 citing Rav Moshe. However, the Chazon Ovadia bein hamitzarim pg. 151 permits even music).

Music-

- Even recorded music is not permitted (Igros Moshe O.C 1:161)
- Music not for the sake of enjoyment is permitted (Moadei Yeshurun pg. 128 citing Rav Moshe) such as: elevator and office music, exercise music for rhythm, crib mobile or car music to calm children, teacher dancing with young school children, a musical ring tone on a phone.
- If one's livelihood is to play music for non-Jews or to give music lessons, he may do so until the week of Tisha B'Av (Shiurei Halacha Rav Felder pg. 11).
- Music lessons for children - permissible until Rosh Chodesh Av (Kovetz Halachos 4:11).

2.) Haircuts and shaving-

- Cutting nails is permitted until the week of Tisha B'av. A woman can cut her nails for the mikva even during the week of Tisha B'av (Mishna Berura 551:20).
- The accepted minhag is for women not to cut their hair during the Three Weeks (Pri Megadim 551:13). However, there are some exceptions: For tznius reasons, to remove chatziza, hair on other parts of her body (Mishna Berura 551:79), fixing and cutting a shaitel until Rosh Chodesh Av (Shiurei Halacha pg. 14).
- The custom is to not give haircuts to children of any age (S.A O.C 551:14) .
- A Baal Habris may shave during the Three Weeks (Shiurei Halacha pg. 13).
- A chasson and kallah may get a haircut and shave during the week of Sheva Berachos (Shiurei Halacha pg. 14).
- The father of the child at a Pidyon Haben and a Bar Mitzvah boy may not take a haircut in honor of the simcha (Shiurei Halacha pg. 14).
- Until the week of Tisha B'Av one is allowed to shave for work not to incur a loss. If no loss will incur, he may not shave even if it is uncomfortable (Igros Moshe C.M 93).

3.) Reciting the bracha of "She'hechiyanu"-

- The beracha of "Hatov V'Hameitiv" may be said (Kovetz Halachos 5:2).
- She'hechiyanu for a mitzvah is permissible (ex: Pidyon Ha-ben) (S.A O.C 551:17) .
- One may say She'hechiyanu on Shabbos (Mishna Berura 551:98).
- If one has purchased or owns a new fruit and it will be spoiled by Shabbos, he may eat it with the She'hechiyanu bracha (Rema O.C 551:17).

4.) Dangerous Activities-

- This includes elective surgery or swimming in rivers or deep water.

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