

Impact of Limud HaTorah

How Sweet It Is!

By: Rabbi Avrohom Berzansky

The manna that fell in the desert which miraculously sustained the Jewish people could taste like anything you wanted. Which is why the complaint of some of the Jews, recorded in this week's parsha, is perplexing.

"We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt free of charge; the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic. But now, our life is parched, there is nothing; we have nothing to anticipate but the manna!" (Bamidbar:11,5-6)

What was the complaint?! The manna could have tasted like fish as well!

As a student on his way back to America from studying in Europe, Rabbi Shimon Schwab spent a memorable Shabbos in Radin, Poland with the saintly Chofetz Chaim. The lessons learned on this Shabbos were frequently repeated throughout Rabbi Schwab's long tenure as a Rabbi. One lesson was from a question raised by the Chofetz Chaim at the Shabbos table: "What would the manna taste like if someone ate it mindlessly, without thought?" When no one responded the sage said, "I'm not sure, but I presume it was completely bland, with no taste at all."

With this story, Rabbi Yaakov Galinsky zt"l explained the complaint of the Jews in the desert. True, the manna could potentially taste like anything, but only if you wanted it to. Some Jews in the desert really pined for their old life- free of responsibility to Hashem- and never fully embraced the manna. As such, it was completely bland.

Rabbi Galinsky then developed this thought deeper. In many places

throughout the Torah, the manna represents the Torah itself. Just like the manna would only taste sweet to those who desired that sweetness, the same is true with the Torah.

Perhaps this is why the Torah places the complaint about the manna immediately after describing how the Jews left Mt. Sinai. Many commentaries explain that the Jews "ran away" from Sinai and the Torah. Immediately afterwards, they complained of the bland manna. The Torah is telling us that this attitude, which makes one unable to enjoy the Torah's sweetness, is like complaining about the sweetest, most enjoyable food.

In Parshas Ki Savo, the Ohr HaChaim vividly describes the sweetness of the Torah: *"There is nothing truly good other than Torah."* (Avos 6:3) *Were people to sense the sweetness and pleasantness of Torah they would go crazy and run after it. A world full to the brim of silver and gold would be meaningless because the Torah contains every possible goodness in the world!"*

The Torah is the sweetest thing in the world if we allow it to be. Two people can eat the same manna and have opposite experiences- so it is with Torah study. If we approach our learning with a dull, forced attitude it will be a dull endeavor. If, however, we approach our learning with yearning for a sweet and memorable experience we will truly get to taste just how sweet it is!

Have a good Shabbos.



Then



Now





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Alumni Profile

Rabbi and Mrs. Avrohom Berzansky

October 2005 - August 2008



*Yosef Dov, 12, Yehudis, 11, Shmully, 9,
Chesky (born in Minneapolis), 7,
Sarah Rivka, 5, Shragi, 1*

Personal Reflection

Although we left Minneapolis almost 7 years ago, I'm still in touch with some of my *night seder chavrusas*. Some were *balei batim* in the community, while others were from the broader community. In addition to learning *Chumash, Mishna* or *Halacha*, we experienced the enjoyment & sweetness of Torah learning. For many of us this was a real highlight of the week.

This concept was embodied by our highly respected & cherished Rosh Kollel, Rabbi Gibber, who has so much joy & enthusiasm for learning & teaching others. I can't think of anything that excites Rabbi Gibber more than relating one of his *chidushim!* (Except perhaps squeezing someone's hand off while conveying his *chidush!*)

Our years spent in the friendly Minneapolis community were an integral part of our family's growth and we are left with many warm memories.

Highlights

- We moved back to Lakewood almost seven years ago.
- Our boys go to Yeshiva Toras Aaron, and our daughter is in Bais Faiga.
- We will be making a Bar Mitzvah for our oldest son, Yosef Dov, iy"h in a few short weeks.

Keep in touch with the Berzanskys

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