



RABBI GROSSMAN ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA



A Test of Faith Parshas Beshalach

"May You send sustenance to Your entire nation...so that we may worship You and study Your Torah, as You have sustained our forefathers in the dry and desolate desert."

I heard Rabbi Shlomo Gurevitch recite the prayer in a sweet voice at the empty synagogue, early Shabbos morning. I knew that he recited the prayer daily, as it is tradition that one who reads the verses of *parshas Haman*, which appear in our weekly parasha, will not be lacking, as Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Riminov has advised us.

Rabbi Gurevitch loves this practice so much that he makes sure he is called to the Torah on Shabbos when the verses are read out in the synagogue. He is even willing to pay for the special honor. Now, in Miami Beach, he passed on the honor.

We were being hosted together by Rabbi Sholom Ber Lipsker. Rabbi Lipsker held a special Shabbos for the Jews serving as commanders in the US Armed Forces. They converge from their various posts around the globe to participate in the special weekend.

I entered the synagogue and saw Rabbi Gurevitch reading the verses. I knew his love for the custom and told him that he would certainly be called to the Torah as he liked, that no one would take it from him. He smiled and said he would forgo the honor, as there were many important rabbis present. I told him: why give up? If you believe it's yours, it will be yours. Only believe.

During the Shabbos meals I spoke of issues pertaining to the Israelites' belief during their low points in the desert.

Moments after leaving Egypt and its 49 gates of impurity, after leaving 210 years of bondage, the Israelites were finding it hard to believe they were on the way to a great light and redemption.

Even after exiting Egypt, Pharaoh and his armies gave chase to recapture them. They were in great fear – will they see the end?

Their faith was tested in these low moments. Moshe split the sea, only after the Israelites began to tread through it, in a display of faith.

After proving their faith, then "Israel saw the great hand, which the Lord had used upon the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in Moshe, His servant." (Shmos 14:31)

Then the sea split and they were given their lives as a gift. Even after ascending from the sea, they would still face a long road ahead until arriving at the Promised Land. They were tested with 40 years in the desert, during which they ate the Mana. The Mana was a sign of complete faith and self-deprecation.

In a regular circumstance, man goes out to work for his sustenance. The toil for achieving the substances can be calming as he knows he is set for the days to come.

In the desert, the Israelites lost their choice to go out and seek sustenance and were given food from the Heavens. One had to have a strong faith to believe that the Mana would in fact come in the next days. This was a test of faith.

Faith, the Baal Shem Tov teaches us, is a form of *Hamshacha*, continuation, in which the believer makes himself worthy of receiving the Heavens' abundance.

Therefore, some recite the verses of the Mana every day, to clarify and internalize this point that only through faith does one merit sustenance.

When one goes out to seek sustenance he should know that someone provides him with abundance every morning, and when he believes, he continues upon himself this heavenly giving process.

Hundreds of us subsequently gathered at the synagogue for morning prayers.

Rabbi Lipsker chose the seven individuals who would be called to the Torah.

When *Shishi* came, the time to read the verses pertaining to the Mana, Rabbi Gurevitch was called up. He accepted the honor gladly.

No one could not understand why he was bestowed with the honor.

It turns out that one of the sextons made a mistake and thought that Rabbi Gurevitch was an important rabbi from Jerusalem who merited the honor.

One receives that which is coming to him, and no one can take that from him. Faith creates a process of continuation, and Rabbi Gurevitch merited for his withstanding the test of faith.