

RICH RICHER RICHEST

Background

For forty years in the desert, the Jewish Nation subsisted on *mon*. It had remarkable properties to it. It tasted as one wished it to taste, and it came down each day in the perfect amount for each person. Additionally, it was the perfect food, completely absorbed into the body without any waste product. The Gemara in *Avodah Zarah* (5b) explains: Since there were no outhouses in the desert, anyone needing to relieve themselves would have to travel outside of the encampment of the Jewish people. The camp was so large that it would have involved a considerable walk. To spare the people the hassle of a long walk, HASHEM arranged an additional miracle: the *mon* was completely absorbed in the body, and therefore no one who ate it needed to use the bathroom. The Jewish people misunderstood this and viewed the *mon* with great suspicion, saying, “Something enters the body and nothing goes out. Eventually we will burst from eating it.”

Questions

It is clear that the Jewish people made an error; they looked at *mon* and misunderstood its miraculous properties. We might therefore say they were guilty of reaching an erroneous conclusion, perhaps not judging HASHEM favorably... but how does the word “ingrate” fit here? Adam HaRishon was an ingrate: he blamed his mistake on the woman that HASHEM gave him for his own benefit. But the Jewish people here are guilty of ignorance, not ingratitude. Why is this labeled as ingratitude?

ספר במדבר פרק כא

(ה) וַיְדַבֵּר הָעָם בְּאֵלֵהִים וּבַמֶּשֶׁה לֵאמֹר הֲעֲלִיתֵנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם לָמוֹת בַּמִּדְבָּר כִּי אֵין לֶחֶם וְאֵין מַיִם וְנַפְשֵׁנוּ קָצָה בַלֶּחֶם הַקֶּלֶקֶל:

5) *And the Nation spoke to HASHEM and to Moshe, saying, “Why have you brought us up from Egypt to die in this desert? There is no break, and our souls are dry from this peculiar bread.”*

רש"י על במדבר פרק כא פסוק ה

בלחם הקלוקל - מד (ע"ז ה) לפי שהמן נבלע באיברים קראוהו קלוקל אמרו עתיד המן הזה שיתפח במעינו כלום יש ילוד אשה שמכניס ואינו מוציא

Rashi- Peculiar bread- *Because the mon was completely absorbed into the body, they called it peculiar. “This mon will explode our innards in the future. There is nothing a man eats that doesn’t eventually come out.”*

תלמוד בבלי מסכת עבודה זרה דף ה/א

אמר להן משה לישראל כפויי טובה בני כפויי טובה כפויי טובה דכתיב ונפשנו קצה בלחם הקלוקל בני כפויי טובה דכתיב האשה אשר נתתה עמדי היא נתנה לי מן העץ ואוכל

Moshe said to Yisroel, “Ingrates, the sons of ingrates! Ingrates because you accused HASHEM of giving you peculiar bread. The sons of ingrates, because as Adam said to HASHEM, “The woman that you gave to me, she gave me to eat.”