



THE LIGHT, LIFE & LEGACY OF R' MICHOEL FORSHLAGER ZT"L



Issue 6

Parshas Ekev

The Light

And he fed you the Manna to teach you that man does not survive on bread alone but rather on all things from his mouth (Devarim 8:3).

The Arizal writes that this verse sheds light on a famous question; The body contains a soul which is a purely spiritual entity, and yet despite its status, it cannot survive without being sustained by physical food. How can physical food be nourishing to the spiritual soul?

This is answered with the idea that God created food with a spiritual force which then gives the food life. That spiritual force is what the soul accesses in order to sustain itself.

The verse thus reads as follows: **“And he has fed you Manna”** - a purely spiritual food. So that you will know that *all* foods sustain *only* through their spiritual components, **“for not on bread alone does a man live”** - the earthly part of bread, **“but rather on the utterance that arose from God’s mouth”** when he created the food **“does man live”** (Likkutei Torah).

An individual can elevate the experience of eating if the intention is placed on receiving the spiritual nourishment of the food. The Baal Shem Tov says that when a person eats, they should think that the sweetness of the food comes from its lifeforce and the sweetness of God who gives it life (Medrash Riba’sh).

This lesson goes beyond food, since we know that everything in this world was created for a higher purpose. Even inanimate objects have a spark of holiness and spirituality that gives them life. Particularly when people utilize them in an elevated way, the spiritual light within those things is revealed and they achieve their ultimate purpose. When a person lives life in this way, all their day-to-day activities are no longer mundane but rather an expression of Godliness manifested in the physical world.

This is what the Manna teaches us. God, for that one time in history, stripped away the apparent physicality and earthliness in food and showed us what food is truly about. He showed us that food contains divine energy and is often guised in its external appeal. The work we need to do here, is to avoid being blinded by the externality, but rather to apply intentionality to the act of eating and connect directly to the divine energy that we receive each and every time we eat.

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