

Beshalach

When I was an Israelite in the desert, I was scared, nervous, confused, and honestly- really, hungry.

In answer to our need for sustenance, God provided Manna- this sort of white, coriander seed honey wafer type stuff that appeared after the dew burned off. We were commanded to collect exactly what we needed for one day and no more (the one exception being Fridays when we collected twice as much to portion out for Friday and for Shabbat) because anything saved until the next day would spoil and could not be eaten. We're human so of course some of us DID try to take more than was needed for one day, only to find the food spoiled the next.

At every Passover seder we read in the Haggadah about our obligation to view ourselves as if we PERSONALLY went free from Egypt.

If I had to guess what type of an Israelite I was in my past life? I'd for SURE *want* to stockpile manna, being terrified there wouldn't be any the next day, but I'm also super afraid of doing anything wrong because I know I'll get caught. So, unfortunately, (and I'm not proud of it, but I own it) I think I'd have waited to see what happened to the *other people* who squirreled away their manna before I tried to do it.

There is a debate as to whether Shabbat elevates and sanctifies the days of the week preceding it, or whether it elevates and sanctifies the days of the week that follow.

According to the Zohar, In the spiritual world Shabbat gives blessing to the days that follow it (much like a mother- shabbat- nourishes her children (the days of the coming week week) from day to day.

According to the Talmud, In the physical world all the days of the week PREPARE for Shabbat, thus elevating and sanctifying those that came the previous week.

There was one thing upon which the rabbis of the Talmud and the sages of the Zohar agreed; each day of the week contains a spiritual 'portion' from God, which elevates and sanctifies it.

Each day is a new opportunity to appreciate the moments, learn what we can from our mistakes, and cherish what we have because THIS day is a blessing. Should today be an unfortunate one, you have a whole new chance tomorrow; a day with new possibilities, new challenges, new miracles, and new opportunities to learn and discover.

So, what does this mean to this manna hoarding goodie goodie? As someone who stresses out, procrastinates, takes on too much, and can become easily overwhelmed), I frequently fail to STOP. SLOWDOWN. and APPRECIATE the little things.

Waking up each day with a sort of a 'restart' button is kind of a relief. That I'm allowed to tackle one day at a time creates a sense of control. I can handle 24 hours. And I think I can even find time to stop and breathe in that one 24-hour period.

This shabbat, may we aspire to LIVE every moment of every 24-hour day, one day at a time. May we have the strength to set boundaries and the confidence to allow ourselves the down time we need to care for ourselves. Only then will we fully appreciate what this world has to offer.

And should you happen to be in my neighborhood, come be part of one of my crazy, unique, stressful, beautiful days and let's elevate it together.

Shabbat Shalom