I if I’d seen the parting of the Red Sea, then I’d also believe in G-d! If G-d wants me to believe in Him, why doesn’t He reveal Himself to me like He did to the Children of Israel at the Red Sea? Sounds familiar?

After the Six Day War, you couldn’t get a pair of tefillin in Israel. Boxes of second-hand tefillin were sent from the States. Everywhere there was a sense of a miraculous delivery.

After the Gulf War we rushed to tear the plastic sheeting from the windows of our ‘sealed rooms.’ It was Shushan Purim, and the ‘coincidence’ was striking: Haman and Saddam, defeated on the same day!

Taxi drivers quoted verses from the Prophets about sealed rooms. Everyone saw the Hand of G-d. And yet... Two or three weeks later, the glow had faded and what had been an unforgettable encounter with Divine Providence had been replaced with the usual bickering in the supermarket.

At the Red Sea the humblest member of the Jewish people — a maidservant — had a greater vision of the Divine than the prophecy of the prophet Yechezkel. And Yechezkel saw the mystical workings of how Hashem runs the world.
And yet, a few short weeks later, these same Children of Israel had fallen prey to an idol. How was this all possible? A maidservant remains a maidservant, and a taxi driver a taxi driver, unless...

One of the lessons that we can learn from the incident of the golden calf is that miracles by themselves don’t change you. Unless we take the inspiration of the moment and turn into concrete changes in our behavior we will stay who we are, with the same limited vision that we had before the miracle.

Shabbat Shira - The Sabbath of Song - when we read the Song that the Children of Israel sang after crossing the Red Sea is on 17th Shevat / January 25th.

Crown of Torah
Eating / Taste
Time of Delight / Chrysolite
Pure Olive Oil
House of joy / Friends
Making Happy / Asher / Bless
Time of clear rational thinking
Time of spiritual and intellect revolving
Time of selfless giving and serving. Shevat.

Who were these princes that visited Ginnosar? They were the aristocracy of the Torah world — its Torah sages, who would journey there to partake of its fruits. The Talmud relates that Rabbi Abahu ate of these fruits until a fly would slip off his forehead. Rashi explains that he became exhilarated when he ate, and his face shone to such an extent that a fly would slip off his smooth forehead.

The fly is a symbol of impurity and sin. It is repelled by someone of intense holiness. The prophet Elisha was recognized as a holy man “because no fly ever flew over his table.”

When Rabbi Abahu ate of the fruits of Ginnosar, quite possibly on Tu B’Shevat itself, he experienced a heightened spirituality which brought a spiritual sheen to his ‘forehead.’ His wisdom and holiness were so intense that they repelled the dark forces, symbolized by the fly.

You are what you eat

Sources: ‘This Month’s Skin’: Bnei Yissaschar; Ruach Hachaim; ‘You Are What You Eat’: ‘Fruit for the Soul’ by Rabbi A. C. Feuer in The Jewish Observer, Jan. 1986; ‘Seeing and Believing’: Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz

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