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(Adapted From Introduction To Sefer Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh on Chanukah)

Chanukah was essentially a war between the *chochmah*\wisdom of the holy Torah (which is called "*Torah Ohr*", the Torah of light) vs. the wisdom of the Greeks. However, it was a different kind of war than the other wars fought.

It wasn't just about defeating and getting rid of our enemies. It was about taking their evil and sanctifying it.

The Greek nation (Yavan) descended from Yefes, the son of Noach. Yefes was blessed by his father that he would receive beauty; our Sages said that "the beauty of Yefes should join the tents of Shem",^[1] and the Sages also said that "Believe that there is wisdom found among the nations",^[2] and this is referring in particular to the wisdom of the Greeks, for they are the root of all secular wisdoms.

The depth of the above statement of Chazal is that when we "believe" that the Greeks contain wisdom, this is how we sanctify the Greek essence; in other words, we are supposed to *believe* that the secular nations contain wisdom, but we must not go and actually *learn* their wisdom. The fact that the Sages said that "Wisdom is found among the nations" does not mean, *chas v'shalom*, that we can be permitted to study their wisdom. We can *believe* that they have wisdom, but that does not permit us to go and study their wisdoms. Thus, the Sages were careful to say only that we can *believe* that there is wisdom among the nations; they did not tell us to *learn* of their secular wisdom.^[3]

The spiritual light of *chochmah*\wisdom has fallen [into the Side of Evil], and that is why the secular nations possess [a degree of] *Chochmah*\wisdom. The way we rectify this fallen light is through using our power of *emunah*, to "believe" - in this case, to *believe* that they have wisdom, precisely *without* engaging in the study of their wisdom.

This is how we bring light into the "Greek darkness" [and thus rectify it], for the Greeks are referred to as "darkness".^[4]

It is written, "*Your faith at nights.*"^[5] Darkness is precisely the time in which we are meant to bring in the light of *Emunah*\faith in Hashem.

This is the inner reason behind why the Menorah is lit only after it is dark. The light of the Menorah is a different kind of light - it does not resemble sunlight; rather, it represents the light of Hashem which is present with us even as we are in darkness. As it is written, "*As I sit in darkness, Hashem is a light*

unto me.”^[6] The “light of Hashem” is when we have *emunah* (faith in Him); this is also known as the “light of *emunah*.”

It was the spiritual light of the holy Torah that defeated the Greeks, and that light was essentially being empowered by the light of *emunah*.

The eight lights of the Menorah symbolize the level that is above [the normal] seven [dimensions]. *Chochmah* (Wisdom) is in the dimension of seven, while *emunah* is the dimension that is higher than *Chochmah* (wisdom), for *emunah* is really the source that all *chochmah* (wisdom) is drawn from; as it is written, “Wisdom is found in *ayin* (nothingness)” [and *ayin* refers to *emunah*].

The halachah is that the Menorah is lit outside and not inside, because the Menorah is an “*Ohr Makif*” (a “surrounding spiritual light”), as opposed to being an *Ohr Penimi* (“internal spiritual light”), because the lights of the Menorah represent the light of *emunah*, and *emunah* is not just a light that radiates inwardly; it shines outward.

For this reason, there are some opinions in our Sages that Chanukah will not cease in the future, based on the concept that “The purpose of knowledge is to know that we do not know” – in other words, *emunah* is the purpose of all *Chochmah* (wisdom). This is also known as the “light of the redemption”: the light of *emunah*. The other festivals, by contrast, are all within the dimension of *Chochmah* (wisdom), therefore they will all cease in the future [because in the future there will be no need for *Chochmah*]; whereas Chanukah and Purim are the festivals that are within the higher dimension, *emunah* – which is above all *Chochmah* – and that is why these two festivals will not cease in the future.

^[1] Megillah 9b

^[2] Eichah Rabbah 2:13

^[3] See ***Tefillah #042- What It Means To Have Good Middos*** and ***Tefillah #094-Seeking Advice*** ; see also the derasha “***Avoiding The Secular Influence***”.

^[4] Beraishis Rabbah 1:1

^[5] Tehillim 92:3

^[6] Michah 7:8