

HERE, THERE, EVERYWHERE

When the brothers realized the implication of the words “I am Yosef” they were completely shaken by the truth that was now being revealed to them. They suddenly realized how they hadn’t seen the true reality until now that they were truly wrong about selling Yosef. And of this, *Chazal* say, “Woe to us from the day of judgment, from the day of rebuke.” If this was how they felt in front of a human ruler, we can only imagine what rebuke will feel like, on the great day of our judgment. In that great day of the future, everyone will be shown what the true reality is.

True growth is reached when a person keeps seeing the true reality on front of them. In addition to learning Torah with exertion, doing the mitzvos, and working on middos, a person needs to go even deeper and see the true reality before them, or else he remains at the same level for all his life and never grows inwardly. We aren’t talking here about reaching high levels or seeing Eliyahu, but about a kind of life which anyone who wishes to be a *ben aliyah* (aspiring, spiritual person) can uncover. It is possible for anyone to see a different world than the one we are unfortunately accustomed to.

The true way to view reality is that nothing should matter to us except for doing the will of Hashem, because Hashem’s will is the only true reality. Many events happen in our world, and if we maintain a deeper perspective, we can see everything as Hashem’s will. From the perspective of the truth, there is nothing but “His Glory fills the world.” The Chazon Ish writes that “Hashem’s reality is constantly revealed throughout all of His creations, and this is the secret of the world, which is concealed, from those who pursue This World.” Hashem is everywhere, but He is also hidden from anyone who pursues This World. This fact is hidden from anyone caught up in the nonsense of This World.

The goal of all *avodas* Hashem is to arrive at the “constant reality of Hashem.” When a person is

an infant, he sees everything as food. When he gets a bit older, he sees everything as a game. When he gets older, he sees that the world is more complicated. There are needs to worry about, there is the need for livelihood, health, child education. If he is more spiritual, he worries about he can improve his avodas Hashem. He thinks he understands reality. He knows that there are things to take care of, there are successes and failures in life, and that is how the world looks to him.

But the truth is far deeper. The inner layer of Creation is that Hashem’s reality fills all of creation. It is not only found with one who is very close to Hashem. The reality of Hashem exists throughout all of Creation as an ever-constant reality.

Why don’t people see this reality? The effects of aveiros, being attached to materialism and to the ego blocks a person from seeing it. But there is a straight path that a person can take, which enables one to see deeper into reality. He will then see different “worlds” with the deeper he gets. He will see that there is only the reality of the Creator, and that everything else on this world is like a giant levush (“garment”) which can either conceal the Creator from us, or serve as a means to reveal Him. (Just as a garment serves to cover a person, which is its practical and lower use, and it also serves a higher use, by being a status symbol of the person, which reveals its wearer). The countless amounts of creations in this universe, which Hashem has all created, are all details. The one point that binds all of reality together is that anything can either conceal the Creator from us or reveal the Creator to us.

When one is aware of this perspective—and not just as a knowledge, but as a perspective towards life which he has absorbed, which he views life with – he will see an entirely different Creation. He will see a Creation in which there is nothing except the reality of Hashem, so he won’t become confused or sidetracked by anything else in this world. Understandably, everyone has difficulties, but the difficulties don’t have to leave a person completely bewildered with life. The difficulties are certainly uncomfortable for a few moments, but it doesn’t have to confuse a person completely. A person will still have his ups and downs even after realizing the true reality, but at least he can leave the confusion and live with a very clear perspective about what life is about. He will be able to see that there is only one reality alone – the reality of Hashem, His will, which existed before Creation and which exists after Creation.

There are many things which can confuse us from seeing this truth, but if one is never aware of this truth in the first place, his life will be a constant war with all kinds of difficult things. When one absorbs the perspective, both in mind and heart, the simple fact that there is nothing in reality other than Hashem’s reality his

entire view towards life changes completely. This is not mere information, it is an awareness that transforms a person internally.

Avraham Avinu was on one side of the world, and the rest of the world was on the other. Simply speaking, Avraham separated from the idol worship of the world and chose to find the Creator. *Chazal* said that Avraham *Avinu* shined the light of *emunah* upon the world. He saw only one thing in the world which was the reality of Hashem, and that there was nothing else. That was all that he saw, and he realized that the rest of Creation was not the actual reality. He saw that there was only “Hashem *Echad* and no other reality.

Without absorbing this perspective, a person will have a superficial view of this world. He takes a look at the world today and he sees whatever he sees, but he doesn't see the actual reality. He sees that there are billions of people with so many difficulties and hardships and problems with living, etc. In our generation especially, a person can take a simple look around him and see how there is nothing but *tumah* (spiritual impurity) that fills the entire world, and how there are so many problems which don't allow a person to live truthfully with *emes*. The many events of the world today are bewildering and confusing. Our eyes, ears, and mind cannot tolerate the information about the world today. How can Creation continue this way anymore, when there are so many problems, so much pain and so much difficulty? How can things go on like this? Even physically the world cannot survive anymore the way things are going, and certainly it is falling apart spiritually, due to the many problems that exist which threaten any kind of true growth in *ruchniyus*.

What indeed is the solution to bypass all of today's difficulties? To try to wage war with all of the issues, and hopefully merit *siyata d'shmaya* (Heavenly assistance) to overcome all that has to be overcome? Certainly if a person tries his hardest to overcome the problems, he can get *siyata d'shmaya*. That is one way. But there is also another, different way, to deal with all that we are encountering. We can learn how to see an entirely different Creation, to see a truer reality than the one we see in front of us. First we can think about it and know of it, and then we can let it settle on

our minds, so that our minds are at peace with it and then we can internalize it.

It will be like the difference between the way a 3-year old views the world with the way a 70-year old views the world. If we keep penetrating further into the depth of life, through constant growth and awareness of the deeper perspective of reality, we will see a different world entirely. The main thing a person will be judged for on the great Day of Judgment is about how much a person drew himself closer to this perspective of seeing the true view of Creation, in which Hashem's reality is constantly revealed everywhere. This “secret of the world, which is concealed from those who pursue This World” as the Chazon Ish describes. There are people who pursue the materialism of This World, and there are others who know better than this and are interested instead in Torah and mitzvos, But they can also be entangled in This World if they don't see the true perspective. Of course, those who exert themselves in their learning and in doing mitzvos are much better off than those who don't and who pursue materialism instead, but this won't be enough to see the hidden and true reality. In order to see it, a person needs to get there through first increasing his Torah learning, dedication to the mitzvos, and purifying his middos.

But he also needs to have quiet times every day for contemplation, as the Chazon Ish writes in sefer *Emunah U'Bitachon*. If a person contemplates the true reality, amidst inner quiet, using the understanding of his heart he can slowly open a new ‘window’ that he can look into the world from, and he will see reality differently. He will become a new being entirely, as if he is reborn. This is an inner kind of vision, and it is impossible to describe it exactly. But it is a world which all our neshamos yearn for. It is a world where the truth is lived and realized. It is a world where a person lives with a palpable closeness with Hashem, at all times, an ever-constant reality.

One needs to bring his life to a level of constant growth, and then, at times, he will be able to see deeper perspectives of reality (which is so vast that it cannot be described in full detail). It brings a person to a life of “*nochach pnei Hashem*,” to live facing Hashem – for that is the entire reality that a person will see, when he finds it. One who reaches this will feel a certain bliss that he is heading closer and closer towards Hashem's reality. Rabbi Eliezer told his son on his deathbed: “Behold, I am going to bliss, with Hashem.” Those words of Rabbi Eliezer on his deathbed (“Behold, I am going to bliss, with Hashem”) is the yearning of every soul, to live life in this way. It is a life that is spent on This World with Hashem, and upon leaving the world, a person continues to live with Hashem in front of him, getting closer than before. And when one finally reaches the Great Awesome Day of Judgment in the future, where all hearts will be returned to Hashem, it will be felt simply and palpably that the entire reality of our life is nothing but being “*nochach pnei Hashem*,” to live with Hashem's Presence in front of us.

YOSEF, YEHUDAH & MORE

QUESTION The Sfas Emes says that the argument between Yosef and Yehudah during their confrontation in Egypt was concerning the paths of Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben Dovid: Yosef's path represents Torah, the mind, while Yehudah represents Tefillah, the heart. Where do we see that Yehudah emphasized the heart, tefillah? Though we find that Yehudah established a yeshivah in Goshen, which is Torah, we do not find how Yehudah emphasized tefillah. Also, where do we find that Yosef emphasized the mind/Torah more than the heart/tefillah?

ANSWER Yosef is called the trait of Yesod, which is also connected with *Chochmah*, deep Torah wisdom. The Torah says "These are the offspring of Yaakov, Yosef," because Yaakov gave over to Yosef everything (all of his wisdom) that he had received in Torah. Of Yosef it was said that he was the wisest ruler of the land, and this came from his great understanding in Torah that surpassed anyone else. In the blessing given to Yosef, he is called the "crown" of his brothers, he is the "head" – a symbol of the true mind, which is Torah. That is also what made him worthy also of receiving the firstborn status [because he is the "head," he received special wisdom of the mind, and the mind is represented by the head]. Yehudah, though, is from the word *hodaah* (thanking Hashem), which is *tefillah*. The last three blessings of *Shemoneh Esrei* are called *hodaah* and they are the most important aspect, the root, of the *Shemoneh Esrei*. [In terms of Kaballah], Yehudah represents *Malchus* or *Nukva*, the concept of feeling deficient and being in need of receiving from Hashem, which is the concept of turning to Hashem in tefillah. Yehudah established a "Bais Talmud," which actually refers to tefillah, because one needs to daven in the place where he learns, so that there should be Tefillah and Torah together in one place, as the Gemara says that "In the place where there is *rinah* (*tefillah*) there should be Torah."

QUESTION Why doesn't the Rambam (in *Hilchos Melachim*) mention "Mashiach *ben Yosef*"?

ANSWER According to the Gemara (Succah 52a), Mashiach *ben Yosef* will be killed in the final war, and also because according to the simple understanding, Mashiach *ben Yosef* is not the primary Mashiach [since he is followed by Mashiach *ben Dovid*].

QUESTION The Ben Ish Chai (in parshas Vayishlach) and also the Arizal say that during *Shemoneh Esrei* a person should have in mind by the blessing of *Es Tzemach Dovid* that Mashiach *ben Yosef* should not be killed in the final war. How can this be reconciled with the Gemara which states that there will be mourning over Mashiach *ben Yosef*'s death?

ANSWER It is not certain that Mashiach *ben Yosef* will be killed, because it is a "harsh decree that can become nullified".

QUESTION How will we know who Mashiach *ben Yosef* is and who Mashiach *ben Dovid* is?

ANSWER It will be just like how a person senses when it becomes day and when it becomes evening, which is a simple feeling that you just know about. That will be the case when Mashiach completely emerges from his potential state, from his hidden state to his revealed state. There is also a subtle differentiation between Mashiach *ben Yosef* and Mashiach *ben Dovid*. The Mashiach *ben Yosef* will emerge when he fully utilizes his potential, whereas the Mashiach *ben Dovid* will emerge when he stops being hidden and he becomes revealed.

QUESTION What specific evils do "Gog" and "Magog" represent?

ANSWER The role of Gog [and this particular force of *tumah*] fights against Mashiach *ben Yosef*. As a hint, Gog (גוג) has the letter ג twice in his name, which equals 3 and 3, for a total of 6, and Yosef is represented by the number 6, for Yosef is the sixth level of the 10 *Sefiros* [which is *Yesod*]. Reb Tzadok

HaKohen (Pri Tzaddik, Naso 15) says that Gog and Magog together will fight against Mashiach *ben Yosef*, and this is because Gog and Magog both represent *gaavah* (conceitedness), which is also the root of the *tumah* of sodomy [as written about by Rebbi Nachman of Breslev] which will be prevalent in the final generations. (The Gemara is Succah 52a also discusses the war of Gog and Magog against Mashiach *ben Yosef*). The role of Magog fights against Mashiach *ben Dovid*. The sefer Pri Tzaddik (Rosh HaShanah, 11) says, "The main evil of Gog and Magog is to counter the holiness of Mashiach *ben Dovid*." (See also Pri Tzaddik parshas Netzavim, 11.) Magog represents the particular evil of kefirah (denial of G-d). The sefer Shem M'Shmuel (Chol HaMoed Succos) states, "The concept of Gog and Magog is all about a rebellion against Hashem." If we analyze it more closely, this is actually the evil of Magog, because the sefer Shem M'Shmuel states elsewhere that "Magog" is all about "throwing away the yoke of Heaven."

QUESTION Can the war of Gog and Magog [within the inner dimension] also spread to the outer world and become the physical war of Gog and Magog?

ANSWER Certainly. It cannot "spread" to the outer world – it is already there! There have always been wars taking place in the final years of our world. But all of these wars are just the final outcome of something deeper and more internal. All of these wars have been the result of the internal "wars" that have been taking place in the souls of people. The "war of Gog and Magog" will be revealed outwardly [in our world] as it will be, and it should make no difference to a person how it will happen. If a person is busy thinking about it, he is wasting his time because he is not involving himself with priority. The war of "Gog and Magog" has already been unfolding throughout all the many wars in the world in this century.

QUESTION But we do not see any major war taking place today.

ANSWER “Gog and Magog” exists both internally as well as externally.

On the outer level, the war of Gog and Magog is as follows. *Klal Yisrael* is the root that presides over all the 70 gentile nations, and they are called the “secret of oneness.” Branching out from the root are two main branches presiding over the 70 nations: Esav and Yishmael. The exile of “Edom” (Esav) refers to Western society and its influences, and the exile of “Yishmael” refers to the Muslim society and its influences. In the end of days, it becomes revealed that both Edom (Esav) and Yishmael are rooted in Amalek, and to be more precise, they are both rooted in the “*Erev Rav*.” This allows for the union of Edom and Yishmael, where both Western and Muslim cultures are becoming mixed together. That explains “Christian Arabs,” and on the other end of the spectrum, there are also Muslims in Saudi Arabia and other Arabic countries who are joined with America, in the fight against Iran. Islam (Yishmael) divides generally into two sects, and part of it is joined with Western society. Even Edom (Esav) is called “Western” society, and west in Hebrew is *maarav*, from the word *taaruvos*, “mixture,” which is a hint to the mixing together of Islam and Western culture. And the Muslims themselves are called *Aravim* (Arabs), which is also from the word *maarav*, from the word *taaruvos*/mixing. [Additional insert, from a recent response: “The Afghan refugees who were taken in by America to become integrated with American society is linked with the end of days, in which there will be a union between Esav and Yishmael, which is forming the root of the war of Gog and Magog, which will lead to a war within the nations themselves, besides for how they be will fighting against *Klal Yisrael*.”]

On the inner level, the “war of Gog and Magog” is when all [of one’s inner] forces are clashing and “warring” with each other (all of them without exception). It is when each force contradicts another force in the soul and an internal war

is created. This is because the light of individuality is right now radiating in each person’s soul, due to the light of the “*Yechidah*” level of the soul which is more easily accessible with the closer we are to Mashiach. When one’s individuality is being revealed more strongly, even though this is all taking place on an unconscious level, it brings out the differences between all of the contradicting forces between one and another. Therefore, everything [every single force of the soul] is at “war” with one another. All of the inner contradictions in the soul [which cause people to clash with each other] are rooted in the trait of *gaavah* (conceitedness). At the root of all contradictions and clashes is *gaavah*, conceitedness. This concept of Gog/ *gaavah*/conceit is the evil that fights against Mashiach *ben Yosef* [to prevent his arrival]. And the *tumah* of media/ internet is the particular evil that fights against Mashiach *ben Dovid* [to prevent his arrival]. The media/ internet is a collective force that includes every *tumah* in it, an evil “oneness,” and its presence is a force of *tumah* that counters the Individual One of the world, Who is the only true One. The internet and the media is also a giant repository of denying Hashem. The Megaleh Amukos (*parshas* Noach) says that the war of Gog and Magog against Mashiach ben Dovid is all-inclusive of all of the 4 kings who fought against Avraham. [In our generation,] all of the forces of *tumah* of the world who are represented by all the nations, with all of their *tumah* is contained in the media/ internet. Thus it is the final war that fights against Mashiach ben Dovid by denying that Hashem runs the world. Everything in Creation currently contains good and evil mixed together within it. A clear example of this is the device (*kli*) which houses media/ internet, which contains good and evil (*divrei* Torah and *kedushah*, together with every *tumah*) mixed together in it in a very disturbing manner. It is through these internet-devices that the entire world is being fought against – it fights against every

person, no matter what his issues and desires and wishes are. And this is all a “light” that can be seen clearly, in which there are wars, physical suffering and emotional suffering, and troubles from every direction which are all the outcome of the *tumah* of internet devices. Therefore, this is all the war of Gog and Magog. Corresponding to this war of Gog and Magog is the *ohr*, the revelation, of *ahavah*/love as the internal and deep connection of the soul, in which the hearts of people can become opened, to deeply unify with each other. It also manifests as a revelation of simplicity (*imimus*), an earnestness and simple *emunah*.

QUESTION How does using Internet damage the five levels in our soul - the *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah*, *Chayah*, and *Yechidah*?

ANSWER It damages the *Nefesh* level of the soul (their actions) by causing people to become frozen to their computers, making them unable to get away from them. It damages the *Ruach* level of the soul (their movements) by causing people to lose all desire to move to do anything else. It damages the *Neshamah* level of the soul (the level of thought) by weakening the power of thought, because it causes people to experience all their information through visuals, so that they cannot think of anything unless they can see it, and it also causes people to become heavily focused on other things. It damages the *Chayah* level of the soul (vitality) because it means that one is getting all of his vitality from others, causing one to lose his own inner source of vitality. Finally, it prevents a person from accessing the *Yechidah* level of the soul – the deep connection and oneness that the soul has with Hashem. The Internet connects a person to a place where everything is gathered together as an evil “oneness,” which counters the holy oneness since the internet becomes a person’s all-inclusive “everything” that satisfies all his needs, instead of recognizing Hashem as the true “Everything.”