

## PARSHAS MATOS - VOWS - ELEVATING CREATION

### THE NEDER\VOW: THE CONCEPT OF ELEVATING THE CREATION

The beginning of *Parshas Matos* discusses the laws of declaring a *neder*, a vow.

There is also a deeper root to this matter. Chazal state that when Hashem created Adam HaRishon, He first showed him all of Gan Eden and said to him: “See how beautiful My handiwork is. Give your thoughts to this, so that you don’t ruin and destroy My world.”<sup>1</sup> The Ramchal explains in *Mesillas Yescharim* that when a human being becomes spiritually elevated, the rest of Creation is elevated with him, and when a person has a spiritual descent, *chas v’shalom*, the rest of Creation descends with him. The human being, as well as the rest of the creations, can become elevated. A person has the task to elevate himself, and, simultaneously, he is also has the task to elevate the creations. These are the words of the Ramchal in *Mesillas Yescharim*: “The human being is a great elevator to the creations, when they [*the creations*] are used to serve the human being who is complete with the sanctity of the Blessed One.”<sup>2</sup>

### PART OF ELEVATING THE CREATIONS IS THROUGH THE CONCEPT OF NEDARIM, VOWS.

When one makes a *neder*, this does not simply mean that he has prohibited himself from the use of a certain object or another person, or that he has prohibited others from benefitting from his objects. Rather, a *neder* is about elevating the object that one has prohibited. Now that the person has elevated the object, it becomes prohibited for use, but by its very concept, the act of making a *neder*\vow is to elevate an object to a higher level.

The *Ran* in *Tractate Nedarim*<sup>3</sup> explains that a *neder* works similar to *hekdesh* (*consecrating property for use in the Beis HaMikdash*). When a person consecrates money as *hekdesh*, whether he consecrates the actual object itself or only the monetary value of the object, the money is called *mamon govoah*, “elevated money.” Simply speaking, such money, objects, or property are considered to be Hashem’s, and it is elevated above all other money that is in the possession of people. But there is also a deeper understanding. When a person consecrates an object as *hekdesh*, he elevates it to a higher level. Just as a person acquires an object through raising it, which is called *hagbahah*, so can a person raise an object to a higher level, through consecrating it as *hekdesh*. Through “raising” an object to a higher level, it becomes elevated – “*govoah*”.

“Elevated money”, *mamon govoah*, is called so because it has been raised, elevated and exalted to a higher level. Thus, such money, objects or property are on a higher level, and it is forbidden for a person to derive benefit from them, just as it is forbidden to derive benefit from *hekdesh*. Thus, a person is able to elevate the Creation in either one of two ways: (1) A person elevates the world with him with the more that he becomes an *adam hashaleim* (*spiritually perfected person*) as the Ramchal explains in *Mesillas Yescharim*. (2) Or, person directly elevates an object to a higher level, by consecrating it as *hekdesh*.

It is the same with making a *neder*. When a person declares a *neder*, he elevates the ordinary, raising it to a higher level than before. Just as it is forbidden for a person to derive benefit from something that is on a higher level than where his current one - which is the concept we find by *hekdesh* – so does it become forbidden for a person to derive benefit from that which he has vowed not to derive benefit from, because his vow has raised the object to a higher level than where he is currently, and he is not allowed to benefit from that which is on a higher level.

1 *Koheles Rabbah* 7:13

2 *Mesillas Yescharim* ch. 1

3 *Ran to Nedarim* 33a

## THE BEIS HAMIKDASH - A MEANS TO SEE THE CREATION AS AN ELEVATED PLACE

Let us understand more clearly how this concept applies to us on a personal level, and in our own *avodah*.

Chazal state that “*Eretz Yisrael* the most elevated of all lands.”<sup>4</sup> Yerushalayim is the most elevated place in *Eretz Yisrael*, and the *Beis HaMikdash* is the most elevated place of Yerushalayim. Yerushalayim is situated at a high place, *Har HaMoriah*, which is rooted in the word *ram*, exalted. That is where the *Beis HaMikdash* is, where *korbonos* were brought, where the mundane became sanctified. It is the highest place in *Eretz Yisrael*, both in the physical sense and in the spiritual sense.

The Gemara says that there are two names of the *Beis HaMikdash*. It is called “light of the world”, and it is also called “eye of the world.”<sup>5</sup> The simple meaning of “light of the world” is that it is a place from which light came forth to the rest of the world. However, from a clearer understanding, it means that just as light enables us to see that which cannot normally be seen, so did the existence of the *Beis HaMikdash* enable us to see a more spiritual reality. To illustrate the idea, we see that light does not create a new reality, it simply shows us that something exists, by illuminating it. (*There is also a deeper understanding of light, but this is the explanation that pertains to our current discussion*).

This is the deep definition of how the *Beis HaMikdash* was the “light of the world”. Simply speaking, this is because it is said of Yerushalayim that it was a place which ‘whitened’ [*atoned*] the sins of Yisrael<sup>6</sup>, and that a woman in Yerushalayim was able to sift wheat because of the light that came from the *Simchas Beis HaShoeivah*<sup>7</sup>. But the deeper understanding of how the *Beis HaMikdash* was “light of the world” was, because the power of the *Beis HaMikdash* made it possible to see reality in a higher and more elevated way.

The *Beis HaMikdash* was the most elevated point in the loftiest place in the world, and it was the “light of the world”, and the depth of this is, that the light of the *Beis HaMikdash* came from this highest place that is called *mamon govoah*, “elevated money”. This light extended outward to the rest of other world, and it showed people how to view reality in a higher way. This is how it was the “light of the world” and the “eye of the world”. There was a certain light that came from it, and a certain higher perspective came from it. It was a way to see, view and perceive the entire reality in front of us. It was a higher view of reality - and that is what the *Beis HaMikdash* was all about.

When the *Beis HaMikdash* was destroyed due to our sins, this did not just mean that we descended from the highest place in *Eretz Yisrael*, Yerushalayim, down to the nations of the world, to Babylonia. Rather, the depth of the destruction was that we lost the “light”, and the “eye”, of the world. We lost the higher perspective towards Creation, the way to see things from a higher viewpoint. Ever since then, all that we see is from a lower view – we see things from an earthly perspective, and not from a higher one.

## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN NEDARIM\VOWS AND THE BEIS HAMIKDASH

When the *Beis HaMikdash* stood, we were connected to the level of the *Beis HaMikdash* and the view it afforded us. We would bring *korbonos* there, and make vows, to offer *korbonos*. This meant that when the *Beis HaMikdash* stood, the concept of making a *neder*\vow was in its revelation. Certainly, one can make a vow even after the *Beis HaMikdash* is no longer here, but the primary manifestation of a vow was more apparent when the *Beis HaMikdash* stood.

4 *Kiddushin 69a*

5 *Bava Basra 4a*

6 *Gittin 56b*

7 *Succah 53a*

The existence of the *Beis HaMikdash* enabled people to see a higher perspective in the entire world around them. This also translated into action, through the three festivals when we trek to the *Beis HaMikdash*, which was called *aliyah l'regel*, “ascending to the festival”, for we would ascend on the festival to a higher level. We ascended on the festival because we received a higher perspective, a higher vision, as hinted to in the *korbon olas re'iyah* that was brought on the festival, which enabled us to have a higher *re'iyah*, vision, of the world, to see it as elevated money. That was the *Beis HaMikdash* offered.

Thus, the main manifestation of *nedarim* was in the time when the *Beis HaMikdash* stood, when people often made *nedarim* by vowing to donate a *korbon*. Though the laws of *nedar* are forever, their main manifestation was in the time of the *Beis HaMikdash*. Chazal said “It is better for a person not to make a vow, then to make a vow and pay it”, but in spite of this, the *Beis HaMikdash* was still based on the vows and donations of *korbonos*.

A *nedar* is therefore more than just a vow. It was not just a way for a person to make a prohibition on himself, but a way to elevate something to a higher level, “*mamon govoah*”. It enabled a person to see a higher perspective in the mundane. As a hint, the word “*nedar*” (נדר) is from the words “*nun dar*” (נדר), “The “50<sup>th</sup> should dwell”<sup>8</sup>, to dwell in an elevated place, a more spiritual plane, mimicking the 50<sup>th</sup> day after the exodus, when the Torah was given. That is the depth of the concept of a *nedar*.

## THE LIGHT OF THE BEIS HAMIKDASH SPREAD OUTWARD TO THE REST OF THE WORLD

To explain this in clearer terms, the *Beis HaMikdash* was called the “light of the world” and also the “eye of the world”, because it revealed a certain perspective, a certain spiritual “light”, which also enabled one to “see” the entire Creation in a different manner. What was the perspective that it revealed? It was the realization of the verse, “*All has been called in My Name, for My glory I created it, fashioned it and also made it.*”<sup>9</sup> The innermost place of the *Beis HaMikdash* was the *Kodesh HaKodashim*, which was on the level of the *Kisei HaKavod* (*Throne of Glory*).

This “light” that came forth from the *Beis HaMikdash* - the realization of the verse “*All has been called in My Name, for My glory I created it*” - came specifically from the *Kodesh HaKodashim* (*the Holy of Holies*), the particular place where revealed Hashem’s glory was revealed. There, the Kohen Gadol would enter on Yom Kippur, wearing the honorable *bigdei kehunah*, special white garments, which were worn “*l’kavod u’litaferes*”, “for glory and for beauty”. There was a revelation of “*The glory of Hashem hovers above him*” upon the *Mishkan*, and this was especially true about the *Kodesh HaKodashim*.

The perspective that views all of Creation as *govoah* (elevated) was, essentially, that a person was able to see that Hashem’s glory was contained in anything. When one sees anything in Creation and he sees that it serves a higher purpose, and that it is meant to “honor” something that higher than it – that it is the perspective of “*govoah*”. When one sees an object and simply sees it as it is, it appears as if he and the object are in the same realm. But this comes from the lower perspective, borne out of the *shiflus* (*lowliness*) that has taken over ever since the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*. In contrast, when one sees an object and he realizes that it only serves to reveal a higher purpose, that it is the depth of the perspective of seeing everything as *govoah*. That was the perspective which the *Beis HaMikdash* offered to the world.

“*All is called in My Name, for My glory I created it, fashioned it and also made it*” – this was the light that come from the *Beis HaMikdash*. It did not just remain as a light for the *Beis HaMikdash* alone; it spread outward to the rest of the world. From there it spread outward, and the *Menorah*’s light took it even further and spread it more outward to the rest of the

8 *Shem M'Shmuel parshas Vayeitzei*

9 *Yeshayah 43:7*

world, as the Gemara says, “Is it need for its light? Rather, it is testimony to all those who enter the world.”<sup>10</sup>

What exactly was this “light” that spread outward to the rest of the world? It was the perspective that everything can be seen with a higher perspective. Simply speaking, this perspective means that a person sees an ordinary object and he says, “I see it in a more elevated purpose in this object.” That is true, but there is a more precise definition. It means that a person sees anything in Creation and understands that it is nothing but a revelation of the glory of Hashem. Whenever sees any object around him, he can see it as an object that belongs to Above. When one sees the entire Creation with this perspective, he sees how everything is really *mamon govoah*, “elevated money” – objects that are all part of revealing Hashem’s glory.

### **THE DEPTH BEHIND MAKING A NEDER\VOW: THE AWARENESS THAT ALL OF CREATION IS ELEVATED**

When one makes a *neder* and he is not aware of this perspective, of him Chazal said, “It is better not to make a vow, than to make a vow and not pay it.”<sup>11</sup> There is an argument in Chazal if it is better to make a vow and keep it, or to not make the vow at all, and in what circumstance. The same argument is found concerning one who becomes a *nazir*, if it is better to become a *nazir* and fulfill the laws, or if it is better not to have accepted *nezirus* at all. The depth of the argument is as follows.

If a person is found at the higher perspective towards Creation and he views everything as *govoah* \elevated, because he sees how all of Creation serves to reveal the glory of Hashem, then he is on the proper level to make a *neder* or become a *nazir*, whereas if a person is found in the lower, more worldly perspective and he makes a vow or accepts *nezirus*, he is not raising anything to a higher level, and he is simply forbidding himself to benefit from it. In the case of *neder*, either a person is forbidding the object upon him, or he is forbidden himself towards the object. This is in contrast to making an oath (*shevuah*), where person is placing a prohibition upon himself, without elevating the object in question.

Thus, one who is at the proper level of making a *neder* is one who is able to have the higher perspective towards the entire Creation, where the *neder* not only prohibits the object upon him, but also raises the object to a higher level [*because he is aware that all of Creation is elevated, for it all serves to reveal the glory of Hashem*].

There are famous words of the Ramban on the verse “*Awake, and awaken the love, until you desire*”<sup>12</sup>, that one should internalize every awakening and desire [*of love for Hashem*] until it becomes like an object he has acquired into his possession. When one has the higher perspective towards Creation as described here, and he has awakened it and he also wants to internalize the perspective, he makes sure to acquire it well, like acquiring an object.

This was the perspective when the *Beis HaMikdash* stood, when there was a place that revealed the glory of Hashem.

### **THE GLORY OF HASHEM UNIFIED ALL OF CREATION TOGETHER**

The Kohanim guarded the *Beis HaMikdash* not only to protect it from vandals, but also to honor it. When the *Beis HaMikdash* was destroyed, its honor (*kavod*) was diminished with it.

To give a more precise definition, when the *Beis HaMikdash* stood, its stones were attached and connected with each other. When it was destroyed, this unity was broken apart, and the stones were separated from each other, just like a house and attic owned by two people that is demolished, where each of the owners takes his own stones.

10 *Berachos 22b*

11 *Chullin 2a, Menachos 81a*

12 *Shir HaShirim 5:3*

*Kavod*, glory, is about revealing the glory of the King. It is to show that all parts of Creation are “*All is called in My Name*”, that each part of Creation serves to reveal the glory of Hashem. Everything in the Creation is connected together because they are all parts that reveal Hashem’s glory. This was the perspective at the time of the *Beis HaMikdash*. It was not simply another stone and another stone which formed the *Beis HaMikdash*. That was but a result. All of the stones were parts of the glory of Hashem. After the destruction, each stone stands apart, and the glory of Hashem is not recognizable. Instead, there are disparate parts.

Compare to this when we see a wise Torah scholar, who knows all of *Chumash*, *Mishnah*, *Gemara*, *halachah*, *agadta*, *maaseh beraishis*, *maaseh merkavah* and all the other parts of Torah. The glory of Hashem is revealed more through a Torah scholar, as stated in the verse, “*The wise inherit honor*”.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, a child says one verse and another verse, but he does not reveal the glory of Hashem, because all of the words of Torah he is saying is not connected. When someone knows all of the Torah, he is revealing the glory of Hashem, because it is all together. Contrast with this with a child’s learning, where each word of Torah learned is separated from the other and the child doesn’t see the connection. This kind of Torah learning doesn’t reveal the glory of Hashem (*though the father is certainly teaching his child Torah*). This gives us an idea of the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash* – a scattered state which doesn’t reveal the glory of Hashem, because everything has become disparate.

Thus, the perspective of the *Beis HaMikdash* is that many stones are connected together, and that the many stones reveal the glory of Hashem. The destroyed *Beis HaMikdash* is the perspective that a person sees scattered parts, another part and another part, where there is no complete picture. The light of the world, the eye of the world, is absent.

In clearer terms, when a person sees the world with a higher perspective – as we see from the concept of *neder*, where a person elevates an ordinary object to a higher level – he sees something else entirely in the Creation. He sees that there is a Creator, there are His creations, and all of His creations are nothing but a revelation of the glory of Hashem – and nothing else.

This is true even about the lowest realm in Creation, the realm we dwell on. In the higher worlds, there are even higher levels than this. But even on this world, one is able to see how “*All is called in My Name, for My honor I created it, fashioned it and also made it*”. One can see the general picture of the entire Creation, how all of the details connect, and that they are all nothing but the revelation of the glory of Hashem. This view is gained by one who is attached to the Torah, as implies by the earlier quoted verse, “*The wise inherit honor*”, and it is a view where one sees how all of the world is like a sanctuary (*Heichal*) of Hashem, as in the verse, “*The sanctuary of Hashem, are they*”<sup>14</sup>. That was the level which the *Beis HaMikdash* afforded us.

But ever since the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*, a person sees an endless amount of creations, and he doesn’t see the connection. One may be able to see that there are some parts which can be used for *mitzvos*, he can see a *lulav* and understand that it is possible to fulfill a *mitzvah* with it in the proper time, and he can see the same with *matzah*, *tzitzis*, *tefillin*, etc. These acts of *mitzvos* are certainly ‘sparks’ of revelation of Hashem on the world, but the person still sees a huge world in front of him with an endless amount of creations, and he doesn’t see how they are all tools to reveal the presence of the Creator. He doesn’t see how they all give honor to Hashem.

That is the “destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*”, in terms of the soul.

13 *Mishlei 3:35*

14 *Yirmiyah 7:4*

### *A Personal Rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash*

Chazal state, “Whoever doesn’t have the *Beis HaMikdash* built in his days, it is as if it was destroyed in his days.”<sup>15</sup> This destruction also takes place on an inner level, in one’s own soul [*when he is missing the perspective that all of Creation is meant for a higher purpose: to reveal the glory of Hashem*].

When one reveals the perspective that all of reality serves to reveal the glory of Hashem, of him it is said, “*And I will dwell amongst them*”<sup>16</sup>, which means that Hashem dwells in every individual<sup>17</sup>, and this is because a person can become a resemblance of the *Beis HaMikdash*. Chazal state that one can merit a level in which it is considered ‘as if’ the *Beis HaMikdash* was built in his days<sup>18</sup> – meaning that the person is living on the level of the *Beis HaMikdash*. (*It is only ‘as if’, though, because it is a private revelation, and not a collective revelation.*) This means that that one can merit it even in the present [*and not just in the future*]. This is true when one has become more of an *adam hashaleim* (*one who has attained spiritual perfection*), where he is living on the level when the *Beis HaMikdash* is actually built and standing.

If one doesn’t merit to see the *Beis HaMikdash* rebuilt in his time, it means that he doesn’t have the elevated perspective of the *Beis HaMikdash*, and instead, he sees many scattered details and parts around him, an endless amount of creations – and with a scattered perspective like this, the *Beis HaMikdash* is considered to be ‘destroyed’ in his lifetime. All he can see is how there are “*Foxes walking in it*”<sup>19</sup>, and how “*Sacred stones are scattered, at the heads of every street*”<sup>20</sup>, he sees and thinks about the many stones of the *Beis HaMikdash* that have become separated and scattered from each other [*he sees a disparate state in Creation, and he doesn’t see how all the parts of Creation connect together to reveal Hashem’s glory*]. And even though he knows they are all holy stones, the *Beis HaMikdash* is still destroyed in his lifetime, because he has only the lower perspective that comes from after the destruction.

The word “*neder*” is from the words *nun dar*; “the 50th should dwell”, which is a hint that it a *neder* is a way for a person to see what kind of dwelling this world is. It represents the perspective where a person sees the entire Creation as elevated, how it is all a revelation of the glory of Hashem.

### **REACHING OUR NESHAMAH’S DESIRE TO REVEAL THE GLORY OF HASHEM**

In order for a person to attain the perspective described here, one must be aware that the depth of every single Jew’s *neshamah* (*Divine soul*) has a great yearning and demand for the recognition of the glory of Hashem in the world.

When there is nothing but *chilul Hashem* (*profanity of Hashem’s Name*) in the world, of this it is said, “*In the concealed places, my soul weeps.*”<sup>21</sup> The *neshamah* weeps, together with Hashem, so to speak, over the lack of this recognition in the world. One “joins with the pain of the *Shechinah*”, when one is bothered at the absence of the revelation of Hashem’s glory on the world. This is the simple nature of a Jew’s soul, which desires to reveal the glory of Hashem. The soul of a Jew is in pain and it suffers and it cries, over the situation of *chilul Hashem* on this world.

But when the soul comes down onto This World, it joins with a physical body in this world – described in other terms, the *neshamah* joins with the *nefesh habehaimis* (*the animal level of the soul*) – and what happens to the yearning of the soul

15 *Yerushalmi Yoma 1:1*

16 *Shemos 25:8*

17 *Alshich HaKadosh (sefer Toras Moshe) and Shelah HaKadosh, ibid*

18 *Berachos 33b*

19 *Eichah 5:18*

20 *Eichah 4:1*

21 *Yirmiyah 13:17*

to reveal Hashem's glory? The soul will demand glory and honor, but not the honor of Hashem. The true desire to reveal Hashem's glory will become concealed by the soul's lower, unrefined layers (*the nefesh habehaimis*). The *neshamah* desires to reveal Hashem on the world, but the *nefesh habehaimis* will demand honor for its own sake.

This is the deeper reason why a person demands to be honored by others. It is a result of the destroyed *Beis HaMikdash*, where all the stones are scattered, when one is stuck in pursuing his own personal glory and he isn't interested in revealing the collective glory, the glory of Hashem, on the world.

As long as a person is demanding honor because his *nefesh habehaimis* wants to experience personal honor, he is stuck in his own honor and he doesn't desire to reveal the collective honor, the honor of Hashem. Instead of being on the level of "They all declare [His] glory", the person demands his own personal honor. This is the perspective that results from the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*! This personal demand for honor conceals the deep yearning of the *neshamah* to reveal the honor of Hashem in the world.

When one merits shedding his *nefesh habehaimis* – at least he refines it, and he weakens his desire for personal honor – the deep desire of the *neshamah* will surface, and he will feel the yearning to reveal a higher kind of honor, the honor of Hashem. This is what it means to desire the rebuilding of the *Beis HaMikdash*.

## THE AVODAH OF BEIN HAMITZARIM - TO LESSON OUR PERSONAL HONOR AND REVEAL THE HONOR OF HASHEM

These days, as explained in the words of the *Poskim*, especially the day of *Tisha B'Av*, are days where one should lessen his own personal honor. The source of this is clear in *halachah*, and the depth of it is what we are explaining here.

As long as a person isn't lessening his personal honor, his desire to reveal the honor of Hashem will remain hidden and concealed. As a general definition, the *nefesh habehaimis* conceals the light of the *neshamah*. To be more precise, the *neshamah* demands the revelation of the glory of Hashem, while the *nefesh habehaimis* desires personal honor. The desire for personal honor is a result of the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*, disparity, an absence of the big picture. When that is the case, one is certainly living his life for *shelo lishmah* (not for the sake of Heaven) and *l'garme'i* (self-serving motivations).

The more we merit to remove from our souls the desire for personal honor, and we can truly rejoice when we experience shame, it can then be revealed in us the deep demand in our *neshamah* for the glory of Hashem, for "All is called in My Name, for My glory I created, fashioned and also made it". This reveals the deep pain of the soul about the concealment of Hashem's glory on this world, and then we can truly desire the coming of Mashiach, the rebuilding of Yerushalayim, may it return speedily in our days.

In the depths of one's *neshamah*, there is a yearning for the rebuilding of the *Beis HaMikdash*, for the revelation of the glory of Hashem. To the degree that one merits to connect himself with the soul's demand for the glory of Hashem<sup>22</sup>, a person will merit a personal rebuilding of the *Beis HaMikdash*, as if it was built in his own times. Even more so, may we merit that this year should be the rebuilding of the *Beis HaMikdash* in its completion. Amen, and Amen.

שיחת השבוע 070 מטות.נדר

22 Editor's Note: The concept of desiring to reveal the glory of Hashem on the world is elaborated upon at length in *sefer Daas Tevunos of the Ramchal*

## GOG & MAGOG & AMALEK TODAY

QUESTION 1) Is the “war of Gog & Magog” [*the final war in the End of Days*] the same thing as Amalek’s war against G-d?

ANSWER At the root, the war of God and Magog is a war against G-d, and this branches out into a war against the Jewish people, just as the war of Amalek is. Amalek is the evil “wind” which includes all evil forces in it, and Gog and Magog is the container [*earth*] which holds it and actualizes it.

QUESTION 2) What is the final rebellion against G-d all about (*both the war of Gog and Magog and the war of Amalek*)?

ANSWER It is about fighting a war against G-d from all directions.

QUESTION 3) What is “Gog” about and what is “Magog” all about?

ANSWER Same answer as before.

QUESTION 4) Why will Gog and Magog merit burial? Does that mean they will do teshuvah before their deaths?

ANSWER Gog and Magog represent the element of earth [*on the side of evil*], because they are the “container” [*for the war of Amalek against G-d*], and therefore they will be buried in the earth.

QUESTION 5) Will Amalek be erased before Mashiach comes or after Mashiach comes?

ANSWER I don’t know of an explicit source which discusses this. However, the “light of Mashiach” has already begun to wage war against Amalek. It seems that both will take place simultaneously: The destruction of Amalek, and the coming of Mashiach, will probably take place at the same time.

QUESTION 6) The Rav said that from 5760 and onward, the power of “Amalek” began to dominate the world. How exactly do we see this? Is it referring to the dominance of the media?

ANSWER Yes.

QUESTION 7) Amalek is all about “My strength and the might of my hand”, and this arrogance seems to characterize the most powerful countries of the world, such as America, Russia, China, North Korea, and Israel, who all boast of their power. Are all these countries a branch of “Amalek”?

ANSWER The countries of chutz l’aretz (*outside Eretz Yisrael*) are a branch of Amalek, while Israel is entirely under the exile of the “Erev Rav”.

QUESTION 8) When America defeated the Germans in World World II, was this a degree of erasing Amalek, since Germany is synonymous with Amalek? If that’s the case, then America can’t be a branch of Amalek, since it was America defeated “Amalek”. Or perhaps America is still a branch of “Amalek” because they did it for their own interests, and it was all about showing their power, which would still categorize America as “Amalek”? ANSWER Amalek is able to be at war within itself [*hence different countries of “Amalek” are able to wage war against other countries of “Amalek”*]. Part of the “war of Amalek” includes the war of “Esav” against the Jewish people, and the war of “Yishmael” against the Jewish people.

QUESTION 9) Amalek’s main characteristic is leitzanus, they mock G-d because they think they are powerful and they represent a life where everything is about “me” and not about submitting to the authority of G-d. Since the world today is centered on pursuing pleasure and self-gratification, would that place all of the nations of the world under the category of Amalek?

ANSWER At their root, all of the nations are included in Amalek, each nation in a different way.