

## COUNTERING KELIPAS YAVAN

*Parshas Mikeitz*, records several dreams of Pharaoh. In the previous parshah the Torah describes the dreams of Yosef, the dreams of the sar hamashkim (the butler of Pharaoh) and the sar ha'ofeh (the baker of Pharaoh).

What are dreams all about? We have our intellect, which can see reality as it is, and we also have a power of imagination, which sees fantasies. The Gemara says that "The night was not created except for sleep." When people go to sleep, the imagination dominates in their dreams. The Gra says that during a dream, a person's intellect is weakened, and his imagination is dominant.

We know that there are also dreams contain meaning. Dreams can reveal things to us, and on a deeper and spiritual level, dreams were the vehicle by which Hashem would communicate with the prophets. There is intellect/thought, which is countered by imagination. Imagination has no substantial bearing on the reality on this world, but when a person goes to sleep, although his intellect is weakened and his imagination is dominant, some of his intellect still remains. This imprint of the intellect that is still left can fuse with the imagination. The intellect then becomes subservient to the imagination. All dreams contain meaningless things, but there are also truthful points contained in dreams. This is because the intellect

fuses with the imagination, and therefore there will be some truthful points that a person can see, via his intellect. The more a person has purified his spiritual level, his intellect becomes even clearer when he sleeps, and the more truthful his dreams will be. The stronger a person's ability of thought is, although his imagination will overtake his intellect when he sleeps, he will still be able to see truthful things in his dreams. His intellect will still play a very active role even as he sleeps, since it is strengthened during the day.

On a subtler level, when a person has a strongly developed intellect, his dreams will show him revelations from Heaven, through the imagination. Where the intellect ends and cannot perceive, that is where the imagination can jump past all the limitations of the intellect, and perceive higher things that the intellect cannot. This is only true when one has a strongly developed intellect, which purifies the imagination and turns it holy. But when one hasn't yet purified his intellect, his imagination will also not either be holy, and it will fantasize about things which aren't connected to reality.

The more one purifies the imagination, although his dreams will still contain meaningless things due to the lower parts of the imagination which will always be unfixed, the higher parts of his imagination which are pure will be

able to break past the limitations of the intellect and receive Heavenly revelation and understanding. This can only happen through a strongly developed intellect, which can see reality as it is.

Chazal compare the Greek exile to "darkness," because they "darkened" the eyes of the Jewish people. Simply speaking, they "darkened" our power of intellect, our power of thought, by battling the holy power of intellect of the Jewish people. Even more so, the Greek "darkness," which is simply understood as a war of secular wisdom versus the holy wisdom of the Torah, can also be understood as a war between the view of the imagination against the view of the holy Torah.

Simply speaking, a person has a time where he is asleep and a time where he is awake. But going deeper, the initial state of man was sleep. Adam was put to sleep, so that Chavah could be created from his body, and a great slumber descended upon him. The Torah does not say that Hashem awakened Adam from this slumber. The state of slumber remained with Adam. If he would have gone straight into Shabbos, he would have awoken from this state of slumber. But with the sin with the Eitz HaDaas, he remained with this state of slumber, which was the imagination. The Eitz HaDaas, according to the Sforno and the Vilna Gaon, is identified as a tree that produced medameh/imagination. As soon as Adam

and Chavah ate from the Eitz HaDaas, they remained with their imagination.

Within imagination itself, there is a state of being awake and a state of sleep. Compare this to the difference between a person having a dream that he is having a dream, and a person having a dream that he is awake. They are both dreaming and within their imagination, but the person dreaming he is awake is “awake” within his imagination, while the person dreaming that he is sleeping is “sleeping” within his imagination. But they both exist within their imagination. That is the level we exist in.

Of the future, we will say, “Then, we were like dreamers.” (Tehillim 126:1) In the imminent redemption, may it come speedily, we will see that our current era of 6,000 years is like one big dream. We will return to our root, through teshuvah, and then we will see that we were living in a dream all along.

The depth of exile, and especially the Greek exile which is compared to darkness, is that we are in exile within exile within exile. Exile means that our entire experience and perception is through a state of being “asleep,” through a dreamlike state. We can see that babies sleep a lot, and children also sleep more. As we get older, we need less sleep and we are able to be awake more. The depth of this is because our beginning state is mainly sleep. A baby sleeps for most hours of the day, because our very perspective which we view the world with, when we come into the world, is through sleep/imagination. Even when we get older and we mature,

it is like being “awake” in a dream – it is still a dream, and it is not as dreamy as being “asleep” in a dream.

Going further with this, if there is anything we cannot perceive, because it is on a higher level than our understanding, we are “asleep” towards it. We can “imagine” it – but we cannot actually grasp it and understand it. This is the imagination – when one cannot understand something, the imagination will get to work and imagine it through an example of something on this world. This is the concept of moshol (parable) and nimshal (lesson). The moshol is within my understanding, while the nimshal is above my understanding. When one cannot understand the nimshal, he uses a moshol to understand it, which is a use of the imagination. His understanding of the nimshal will be through the imagination. That is the depth of exile.

Shlomo HaMelech, the wisest of all people, wrote Mishlei, which reveals the wisdom of the Torah, by means of moshol, parables. The Greek exile counters the wisdom of the Torah, and as is well-known, the Greek exile is called “wisdom of the body” (chochmas haguf). What is the depth of this? Let us examine how people connect to the spiritual. How do people connect to the spiritual, when they have never seen it and they cannot sense it physically? By means of a moshol (parable), which speaks to the body. That is a use of Greek wisdom. It is a wisdom which uses the means of moshol, parables, which is a use of the imagination. The Torah also

speaks to the language of people, and the Torah also uses parables. If there would be no exile, a person would hear the moshol and immediately understand the nimshal. But in exile, we keep hearing the moshol, and we do not absorb the nimshal. Even worse, there are many people who love to hear a moshol but without understanding the nimshal – they would rather remain with the moshol. That is the “Greek exile”! The redemption will be that people will understand the nimshal of every moshol. In the exile we are in, we have a perspective in which we see only the moshol in things. If we remain only with the moshol, that is an even more total state exile. Many times people remember the moshol and they don’t remember the nimshal. When people live only in the moshol, this is “exile.” An even subtler form of exile is when a person absorbs the nimshal, but he only perceives it on a level of moshol. That is the “exile” that comes from the imagination. When we begin to understand something, we need a moshol, in order to understand. But when we try to live by the moshol, we need to understand reality not through moshol, but from seeing reality as it is. That is how we can leave behind the “exile of the imagination.” This is an avodah for all of one’s life. One must first understand things through moshol, absorbing the nimshal through the moshol, and then purify himself further, so that he can see reality as it is. He doesn’t need moshol to understand things. He can live by the nimshal even without using the moshol.

The Greek exile, which was the

“wisdom of the body,” is essentially a state of being exiled by the “body.” It is when one can only understand inner and spiritual matters by way of moshol, which speaks to the body. When a person cannot identify directly with spirituality, and he needs parables from this world in order to identify with the spiritual, this is the Greek exile! If a person merely goes through this stage as part of his spiritual development, this is the ideal way to mature, but if a person remains at that level, it is the depths of the exile.

The Ramban says that whatever the Greeks could not comprehend, they denied. This was said of Aristotle, the greatest Greek philosopher. This meant that their imagination could not comprehend spiritual or Heavenly matters. Whatever they understood, they understood, and whatever they didn't understand, they could not relate to, so they denied it. This is the depth of all of the exiles in general, and the Greek exile especially.

The way to come out of the perspective of “Greek exile,” then, is that we need to see ruchniyus, the spiritual world, as no less real and tangible than the physical world in front of us. Even if a person learns Torah and does mitzvos and makes sure to do the will of Hashem, he may still be in one big state of “slumber,” because he doesn't know what the “real” world is. Surely, Hashem will reward every person for all of his actions in any case, but the person will still remain in a perspective of exile, until he changes his perception. The Geulah will essentially be a change of perspective, the realization that

there is a reality which we never knew existed.

Most people recognize the spiritual world and recognize the Creator is only through their imagination. How does a person recognize the Creator? With one person, it is because his father and grandfathers told him. Another person has recognition of the Creator because he is an intellectual, and knows that it's logical that there has to be a Creator, because the Creation itself testifies to a Creator. That is a true reflection to make. But one can recognize the Creator through simply sensing the reality. One can simply sense reality when he realizes that just as he can sense the physical reality, so can he sense the reality of the Creator.

Our own existence is entirely a power of imagination which can recognize the Creator. That is why man is called adam, from the word medameh (imagination). The existence of the Creator is the only absolute Reality that exists. There is no reality other than Him. Our own existence is only a form of imagination, and our entire existence serves to recognize the reality of the Creator. But if we view ourselves as our own reality and we try to recognize the Creator within our own reality, this is an imagined perception, and it will not be a true recognition of the Creator. We are not speaking here of those who are in the category of “tinok shenishbah” (Jews who are born and raised irreligious). Rather, even most believing Jews, who know about the Creator because that's how they were raised and educated to believe, do not have a kind of

emunah (faith) that is alive and palpable. Their emunah in Hashem is just intellectual knowledge, in the same way that a person knows (l'havdil) that there's a country called France. And if a person believes in the Creator because he has arrived at this understanding intellectually, because he sees that the Creation testifies that there is a Creator, this can just be emunah on an intellectual level, and not necessarily a reality that a person is in touch with.

Only through palpable emunah does a person have true “recognition” of the Creator. What is the way to reach it? We are not speaking here of people who don't believe in Hashem and people who are skeptical about the reality of ruchniyus. Even for those who are exerting themselves to attain recognition of the Creator, it is an issue. Even the few people in the world who have devoted their lives to recognizing the reality of the Creator struggle with it. How can even these few reach it? Recognition of the Creator can be reached through receiving our mesorah (tradition), and through hisbonenus (reflection), and from all other ways which our Sages revealed to us. But most people have reached it on an “intellectual” level alone. They see that if there is a functioning world, there must be Creator behind it. Yet, this is actually a perception of imagination. Why? Because the person looks at this world, the lower dimension, and deduces that there must be a higher world. This is imagination, because imagination seeks to understand the higher world through the means of this

lower world. If one uses this only as a stage in his spiritual growth, that is wonderful, but if he remains at this level, he is still in “exile”.

In the redemption, it will be revealed that one’s recognition of the Creator is not through intellectual perception or through imagination, but by recognizing the reality of the Creator because He exists, because He is the only reality! The Creator is reality! This is what the Chovos HaLevovos describes. True, complete recognition of the Creator is the state of the Geulah.

What is the exile (Galus) and what is the redemption (Geulah)? The main aspect of exile is not that most Jews are not living in Eretz Yisrael today. The Greek exile took place in Eretz Yisrael so there is something deeper about exile that isn’t dependent on being in Eretz Yisrael. The main aspect of exile is also not our subservience to the nations of the world and the tremendous suffering that our people have gone through. It is not even defined by the troubles which pursue us daily, or from the anti-semitism from the nations of the world. And it is not even from the Erev Rav who make decrees us on in Eretz Yisrael in the final days. Rather, the main aspect of our exile is the absence of true, clear, and absolute recognition of the Creator. The exile obscures us from clearly sensing the reality of the Creator, and the redemption will reveal His Presence clearly to us.

In the Geulah, when we will clearly recognize Hashem’s Presence, that recognition itself will bring all shefa (Heavenly sustenance and blessing) to the world completely, and all

of the suffering and troubles will then vanish. Awaiting the Geulah is therefore not about awaiting anything else that will come to the world other than the absolute recognition of the Creator which will be revealed to the world. That is what we are waiting for!

As long as we are in exile, whether in the collective exile or our own personal exile, we have a perspective of imagination, which can only understand the spiritual in terms of moshol, parables. Even more so, it means that we are only having a sense of recognition of the Creator by way of moshol — the imagination. But the more a person elevates his level and strengthens his intellect, his imagination becomes purified, and his sense of recognition becomes purified as well. The Ramchal and others have said that one can leave his own “personal exile” even during his lifetime.

We have no comprehension in the Creator, of course. All we can do is recognize His existence, which is to recognize the reality as it is: Hashem exists! To recognize that He exists is essentially the level of complete emunah. Thus, the main part of exile is the absence of emunah, and the Geulah is mainly about emunah.

When this becomes a person’s main perception, his entire life changes, and this is the personal redemption of one’s soul. When one can only get a sense for the spiritual and the Creator through hearing meshalim/parables, he is trying to understand a higher realm by the means of this lower realm. This is the use of the imagination, which

seeks to understand the higher realms through the lower realms. With this level of perception, one will sometimes forget about His reality, and sometimes remember it. But when one has recognition of the Creator because he is aware that this is reality as it is, he never forgets it. This is the meaning of שְׂוִיית ה' לנגדי תמיד “I place Hashem opposite me, always.”

True recognition of the Creator does not come through merely “reminding” yourself of the Creator, or any other means which may or may not be helpful. It is simply to recognize reality as it is. Then all of the “darkness” of the Greek exile will not feel “dark” at all, and at that level, the Greeks cannot have any effect at all. Redemption from the Greek exile is to recognize reality as it is, a reality which is always revealed, all the time. When we leave the collective exile and merit the collective redemption, and when we merit specifically to leave our personal exile and merit personal redemption, to leave the “darkness” of the Greek exile during these days [of Chanukah], it is an actual recognition of the reality of the Creator, beyond the perception that comes from our imagination.

The more one that penetrates into this place of the soul and sees reality as it is, he receives this level of recognition on a permanent level, as a gift from Hashem, where he can recognize the true recognition that there is a Creator who made this world, and even more so, to recognize His very reality, with nothing else besides Him. שִׁחַת

השבוע 047 מקץ



## THE CHANUKAH EXPERIENCE

### LIGHT OF CHANUKAH: SPIRITUAL OR PHYSICAL?

Let us learn here about Chanukah in a way that is not just about something that we go through, but as something that really can affect us.

All of the festivals contain ohr, spiritual light, but Chanukah in particular is the epitome of ohr. In the other festivals, the light is purely spiritual, but on Chanukah, although the light is also spiritual, it manifests also as a physical light that we empower, through the eight lights that we light on Chanukah.

The lights of Chanukah seem to be lit through a wick and oil, but the inner way to understand it is that the light revealed during Chanukah is what is lighting the wick. The wicks, the oil and the flame that we see are [merely] the physical ‘garments’ that clothe the spiritual light that is Chanukah. Of course, it looks like we are lighting it. But it is really the light [revealed during] Chanukah which is shining through the physical wick.

This is the depth behind the halacha that it is forbidden to benefit from the light of Chanukah: we may not use spirituality for This World. When we light [the menorah], a spiritual light emerges [from the hidden realm of spiritual light]. Our physical eyes just see a candle, but our soul sees spiritual light in it.

Although though our soul sees spirituality, one needs to have a revelation of his soul in order for the soul to see spirituality. With our physical eyes, all we see are just candles burning; therefore we need

to actually connect our soul to the spirituality of the hidden light that is revealed on Chanukah.

### SEEING THE LIGHTS FROM OUR SOUL

The neshamah (Jewish soul) is described as, “Ner Hashem Nishmas Adam”, “The flame of Hashem is the soul of man”. A ner (flame) is composed of a kli (vessel), oil, and the fire. Thus, the neshamah is called “ner”; our neshamah is also called “ohr” (light), whereas the “kli” that holds the neshamah is the guf (body).

The neshamah is called “ner”. Our physical body is created from earth, whereas the soul comes from the “breath of Hashem”. Hashem is entirely ohr, so to speak. The earth which our body comes from is a dark material, thus our body is “dark”, whereas our soul is taken from “light”.

What is man comprised of? Man is made of a body and soul; he is a combined existence of darkness and light. Every person is essentially a light contain within a darkness. There is a statement, “A little light can push away a lot of darkness” – we see that a small light can light up a dark room. When our soul is concealed from us, we grope in the dark. When it is revealed, there is a great light.

When a person hasn’t yet revealed his soul, he lives in darkness. He experiences life through a dark lens. When a person begins to merit a revelation of his soul, his soul begins to shine, and he experiences a light. These are the two kinds of lenses through which we experience life: either we see through a dark

lens, or we see life through a lens of light.

In deeper terms, there is ayin ra, a “bad eye”, and ayin tov, a “good eye.” Ayin ra comes from the view of the body, and ayin tov is the view from the soul. They are different lenses in a person. It is not simply that there are different personalities of either ayin ra or ayin tov that some people have positive personalities and some people have negative personalities. Rather, ayin tov and ayin ra are perspectives of how we experience life – from the body, or from the soul.

Ayin ra is not simply dark, and ayin tov is not simply light. Ayin ra represents the body’s viewpoint, which is dark and materialistic, thus it does not offer a clear view. Ayin tov is a view of light, which is pleasant and calming.

These are root concepts of the soul. The world we are in is a mix of light and darkness, a mix of good and evil. It is mostly dark. What is the world looking like right now? What is it calling out? It is calling out darkness, unhappiness, pain, and difficulty. It is not a place of mostly good, purity and holiness and happiness.

A person sees from the place in himself that he is at now. If you view life through dirty glasses, even if you see something clean you see dirtiness. Therefore, when a person sees others, he usually doesn’t see people that he can connect to; he usually just sees the thick materialism of others, and as such, he relates to others as bodies, not as souls.

But when a person reveals his soul

he sees others through a clear lens, and then he sees joy, purity, and cleanliness. This does not mean that he is naïve and that he's not aware of reality. He is well aware of reality, but he has a clean view of others.

For example, when he speaks with others, for example when asking someone for directions, he understands that he is speaking with a soul, not a body. He asks questions to others from his soul. When a person speaks from his soul, the soul of the other picks up on it, because the soul is receptive to the sound of another soul.

Where you speak from is what the other person will hear; if you speak from your body, the other person hears your gruff body talking, and when you speak from your soul, the other's soul hears words coming from your soul.

The world today doesn't have that much speech coming from the soul. When a person meets another and greets him, does he really mean it that the other should have a good day? "Good morning" has become more like a mannerism. The Alter of Slobodka would practice saying "Good Morning" to himself, because he held that it was giving a beracha (blessing) to others.

This is different view on life totally.

### **SPEAKING AND ACTING FROM WITHIN YOURSELF**

Where he is speaking from in himself when a person speaks? A person can either talk from the most external part of himself, or from his most innermost part of himself that he identifies with.

Most natural speech flows from the external part of the soul. The more inner a person's speech is, the more it reflects the statement "words

from the heart enter the heart." This should not just be limited to when a person says "I love you", or "I feel your pain". It is referring to how a person speaks all the time – all the time we really need to speak from our innermost place that we currently identify with.

Most people live from their body and speak from their body, and the person hearing him hears it from his body. But when a person speaks from his soul it can go into another's soul.

Chanukah is not just a time to light. Chanukah shows us that our soul is in our body. Other festivals are also a light, but they don't take on physical form. The light of Chanukah takes on a physical form – it shows us that spirituality can be clothed by physicality. These are not mere intellectual definitions, but a practical view of life to have every day of your life. We do many actions throughout the day. A person washes his hands. How does he do it? His brain allows it. When a person tells "Good Morning" to his children, does he do so with feeling, a little more than when he washes his hands? Yes, he does.

But how many times a day, or a week, or a month, or a year, though do we act from an inner place in ourselves? How much do you act from the deepest place in yourself?

Most people do not access their depth. An inner kind of person is someone who lives with his inner depth all the time. He lives always with the deepest place in himself. We all use the sink many times a day. So too, an inner person uses his deepest place he knows of all the time.

A person usually accesses his depth in extreme situations of either joy

or sadness. A person usually cannot take that depth he reached into his daily life. He remembers the pain he felt from his sadness, but not the depth of his emotions that he reached.

The depth that we do recognize, though – how much are we in touch with it on a daily basis...?

### **RECOGNITION OF OURSELVES**

Of course, the purpose of everything is to recognize Hashem. But if we do not recognize ourselves, we can't recognize Hashem. Skipping self-recognition prevents recognition of Hashem. From recognizing ourselves, we can come to recognize Hashem.

Surely, the deepest thing possible is to connect to Hashem, but before we get to that stage, one has to know himself well and identify the deepest place in himself. How can it be that a person is not in touch with the deepest part of himself? We can memorize many phone numbers. How can it be that we don't recognize our own self?

If we really want to live a true life, we need to know what our deepest point is in ourselves which can take a long time to know. After that, one needs to ask himself if his depth has deepened from before. The way we identify ourselves has to mature as the years go on.

We can say in general how deep the soul is, but you on your own need to uncover the depth of your own soul, and then you need to know how to live with it all the time. At least once a day, make sure that you are using it. That is what Chanukah is all about.

### **THE DEEPEST POINT IN YOURSELF**

I will try here to explain what

the deepest point of the soul is, but it will be hard to understand it, both intellectually as well as emotionally, because each person is at a different point.

The deepest part of the soul, the deepest experience your soul can know of is to experience your very existence (havayah). (There is really a higher experience, which is to experience the reality of the Creator, which is reached through emunah and d'veykus with Hashem. That is an experience above the "I", however. Here we are describing the experience that is within the "I".)

One's very existence is his deepest experience. It is not the will of a person, it is not aspiration, it is not giving, it is not enduring suffering, and it is not joy. Those are all deep experiences, but the deepest experience is to experience one's existence.

A person needs to be able to remove all the external layers covering the soul, and then he can experience himself. It is not a place of any desires, because it is above all desires. When a person purifies himself through doing the mitzvos, through attaining a state of purity, and through correcting his middos, then he calms the soul. He can then experience the soul. When he experiences his own soul, he can feel his existence then and be able to live it on a daily basis.

All day, people are running around, and this causes people not to be in touch with the soul. This refers to internal running as well, in which people are running all the time with their desires. They are not calm inside, and they never reach their soul. Therefore, people wonder what the deepest experience is. But the

deepest experience is: to experience your own self!

You can't live from your depth if you haven't accessed it yet. When you do access it, you need to then live with it all the time – sensibly, of course. This will reveal more and more depth to you as time goes on. In order to get to your own depth, you first need to live daily with the deepest point in yourself – you can think about it and can feel it throughout the day.

These are not ideas or opinions – it is about life.

May we merit from Hashem to know our souls and to realize our depths, our existence, and from there, to reach d'veykus with Hashem.

#### Light of Emunah

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", (*Megillah 9b*) and the Sages also said that "Believe that there is wisdom found among the nations", (*Eichah Rabbah 2:13*) 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.<sup>1</sup>

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". (*Beraishis Rabbah 1:1*)

It is written, "*Your faith at nights.*" (*Tehillim 92:3*) 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.*" (*Michah 7:8*) The "light of Hashem" is when we have *emunah*/faith in Him; this is also

<sup>1</sup> See the Rav's drashas- 1) *Tefillah #042- What It Means To Have Good Middos*; 2) *Tefillah #094- Seeking Advice*; 3) "*Avoiding The Secular Influence*".



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.

## Q&A 5781

**QUESTION** How do we see a “striking of the firstborn” today?

**ANSWER** Every rosh (every “head” - every point that is at the lead) will fall, just like in Egypt when the oldest child in every house fell at the final plague. That will reveal Who the true Rosh-Head is, Hashem, as it is written: “I am the First.”

**QUESTION** Also, which strike is this being directed against and what is the purpose of it?

**ANSWER** That is the goal of

this striking down – to remove all evil “heads” [all those who think they are in charge and anything which is deemed prestigious in world], and to reveal Who the true “Head” is.

**QUESTION** What is the next stage after this “striking of the firstborn”?

**ANSWER** After the plagues came the splitting of the sea [another plague upon Egypt], and when the people came to the sea and they wanted to daven, Hashem said to them, “Now is not the time to daven. Now, it is b’Atika talya milsa, now it depends on Atik (just

trust Hashem).” This will be the stage when the level known as “Atik” will be completely revealed.

**QUESTION** And where do we see the previous nine “plagues” that came to the world before this?

**ANSWER** The first 9 plagues corresponded to the first 9 of the 10 “Sefiros,” which span the Sefiros of Malchus through *Chochmah*. Each of the previous plagues that came to the world corresponded to one of these particular Sefiros.

