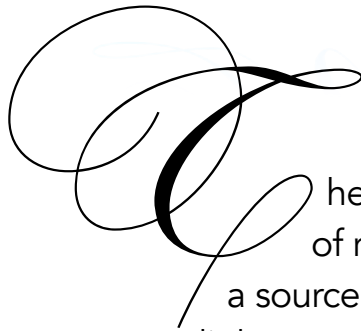


# Parashas

BEHA'ALOSECHA

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The Menorah is interesting for a number of reasons. In particular, the Menorah is a source of light, but we do not light it for the light:

[It says]: "Outside the curtain of the testimony [Aharon] will order [it from evening to morning before God continually; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations]" (Vayikra 24:3). But does [God] require its light [for illumination at night]? Didn't the Children of Israel, all forty years that they walked in the wilderness, walk exclusively by His light, [the pillar of fire]? Rather, [the lighting of the candelabrum] is testimony to mankind that the Divine Presence rests among Israel. What is this testimony? Rav said: That is the westernmost lamp in which the measure of oil placed was the same measure [of oil as was placed in] the others, and [nevertheless] he would light the [others] from it [each day] and with it he would conclude... (Shabbos 22b)

So, basically, we meticulously light seven candles each day so that one of them can burn supernaturally to show the world that God dwells among the Jewish People...even though it

burned in a place they could never enter and see it? Well, at least we can appreciate why we are not allowed to use the light of our menorahs for the duration of the mitzvah the eight days of Chanukah. The light is not the point. The testimony is.

But why the Menorah? There were so many other more visible mitzvos that already did this, that testified to God's Presence among the Jewish People. Jewish history itself testifies to mystical reality, as the famous American humorist and novelist Mark Twain and, believe it not, one of the greatest anti-Semites ever, Adolf Hitler ysv'z, noticed.

One of the most important messages to emerge from the story of the miraculous Chashmonaim victory over the might Greek army was, even more than seeing is believing, believing is seeing. How many times have our eyes "fooled" us? Every day people look at the world and don't "see" God, claiming to be atheists, or at least agnostics. As the Gemora laments, "Woe to those who see but do not know what they see!" (Chagigah 12b).

And yet, those who believe in God claim to be able to see Him in ways that their physical eyes clearly cannot behold. This is why the Greeks thought the war would be over before it even started, so outnumbering the Jewish army and being far more heavily armed.

The Chashmonaim for their part came armed only with their emunah, their belief in God...and won the war. They did not win with fire from the outside, but with fire from inside. They did not rely upon limited nature to do unlimited things. That would have been relying on a miracle, and you're not really permitted to do that (Shabbos 32a). They relied upon an unlimited reality to accomplish unlimited things.

That, essentially, is what Rebi Chanina ben Dosa told his

daughter who accidentally kindled vinegar for Shabbos candles instead of oil. She wanted to know if it counted as an unwarranted miracle, and he told his daughter only if she believed that oil burned naturally, as it appears to the eyes. It stopped being a miracle that moment she “saw” that it was God who made the oil burn each time.

In essence, that is what the continuously burning western candle did. It was a conduit between the infinite light of God and the infinite capacity of a Jewish heart to love and trust God. The ongoing miracle wasn't a testament to the miracle of the oil but the continuous and supernatural connection between the Jewish heart and God. As long as the western light burned continuously on the inside where only the kohanim could see it, it burned on the outside in the heart of the Jew on the outside where everyone could see it.

This is why the three branches on each side of the middle branch pointed to it, which in turn pointed Heavenward. This is a roadmap for every Jewish heart, and a testimony to how the Jewish People long to dwell with God forever, and how God reciprocates by dwelling among us.

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Sha'ar HaGilgulim, Version 3, VOLUME 2 is now available through Amazon and Thirtysix.org.

The “Sha'ar HaGilgulim Course” began, on April 27, and Session 5 is this week, b”H, with four more to go after that. For more information, go to: <https://www.shaarnunproductions.org/Shaar-HaGilgulim-Course.html>

Have a great Shabbos,  
Pinchas Winston