

# Parsha Ponders

Purim | March 15, 5782 | 13 Adar II 5782

## *The morning light*<sup>1</sup>

למנצח על אילת השחר מזמור לדוד

For the conductor, regarding a morning doe, a song of David<sup>2</sup>

Our Sages understood<sup>3</sup> the twenty second chapter of Psalms to have been composed by Queen Esther. It starts off describing a *אילת השחר*, literally translated as a morning doe<sup>4</sup>. What is this referring to? We are taught<sup>5</sup> that just like the morning is the end of the night, so too the story of Esther and Purim is the end of all miracles<sup>6</sup>. This comparison seems counterintuitive. Miracles convey a revelation to the Divine. Presumably, this would be allegorized as light. Yet, we are comparing the end of miracles with the beginning of the daytime, which is obviously associated with an increase in light, not a decrease. How are to make sense of this comparison?

Let's consider a parable. Someone is walking by themselves in absolute darkness. They are slowly feeling their way around. They don't know where they're going. All of a sudden, a thundershower begins. A giant bolt of lightning scares them to their core<sup>7</sup>. On the bright side<sup>8</sup>, they got a glimpse of the path before them. Now they have a better idea where to go. As they continue on their journey, they again lose track of where they're going. Suddenly, another bolt of lightning lights up the way. As this continues, the person is able to reach their destination.

When the Jews were first taken out of Egypt, they needed a lot of miracles. Their faith in Hashem was weak to non-existent. They had their doubts. Perhaps Hashem wasn't with them<sup>9</sup>? They were given miracles in order to inculcate into their psyche that Hashem is always there, taking care of them. This happened throughout our history. Whenever we had doubts, Hashem provided a miracle to bring us back on the right path. Our lack of clarity is symbolized by darkness.

The story of Purim marked the end of the darkness, the end of the night. The Jews were so overcome with gratitude for their salvation. Despite no overt miracles, it was clear as day to all that Hashem was responsible for everything. They renewed their commitment to the Torah<sup>10</sup>, and no longer had a need for miracles. The story of Purim marked the end of overt miracles, as they became no longer necessary. Just like the morning is the end of the night, so too the story of Purim was the end of their doubts.

Have a *freilichen* Purim!

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<sup>1</sup> Based on [Yearos Devash](#) § 3 by [Rav Yonasan Eybeschutz](#), beginning with s.v. *אמנם דברי הגמרא*. [Rav Eybeschutz](#) obviously develops these ideas much more in depth than presented here, but I thought I'd pull out what I thought was the main point

<sup>2</sup> [Psalms 22:1](#)

<sup>3</sup> See [Rashi ad. loc.](#) and [Megillah 15b](#)

<sup>4</sup> This seems to be the understanding of [Yoma 29a](#). Cf. [Rashi loc. cit.](#)

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> The *gemarra* proceeds to ask, "what about Chanukah?", and answers that the miracles of Esther were the last to be written down. [Yearos Devash](#) doesn't get involved in this part of the discussion

<sup>7</sup> The [Yearos Devash](#) says the person lights a torch every so often, but I heard from [Rav Zev Leff](#) the parable as referring to a bolt of lightning. Besides being more dramatic, it also is easier to understand, as why would the person need to keep relighting their torch?

<sup>8</sup> Pun intended

<sup>9</sup> [Exodus 17:7](#). These doubts are what caused Amalek to appear (see the subsequent verse with [Rashi](#)). Perhaps we can add that this is why Amalek was essentially defeated with the Purim story, as it coincided with the people's steadfast confidence in their *emunah* in Hashem

<sup>10</sup> [Shabbos 88a](#)