



## A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

by Ilan Cohn



There is an idea in Judaism that different times of year carry different energies. That the reason we celebrate the Festival of *Pesach* on *Pesach* is because there is something special about the month of *Nissan* that necessitates the celebration of such a holiday, and that the energy that *Hashem* put into that time of year is the reason that the events of which we know occurred on those days, not the other way around. This explains many of the strange occurrences of similar events happening in different years on the same date in Jewish history, such as the multiple tragedies that occurred on the 9<sup>th</sup> of *Av*. Therefore, when we commemorate Chanukah in our *Davening*, we say “*ba-yamim hahaym, bazman hazeh* - in those days, at this time,” in order to remind ourselves that there is a special energy to these times.

But what exactly is that energy connected with the time of Chanukah? The winter is likened in its energies to the night time, as there are much fewer daylight hours in the winter, and more of our time is spent in the dark, as during the night. At night, when it is dark, our vision is often hazy; it is difficult to “see” *Hashem's* imminence and participation in every event. For this exact reason in our Friday night *Davening* we state “it is good to thank *Hashem...* to relate your kindness in the dawn and your faith in the nights.” At night, it is not always quite so clear that this is all *Hashem's* will, and therefore at night we must speak of the faith we must have in Him in order to remind ourselves that *Hashem* truly runs the world, even when our human frailties make it difficult for us to see that.

During the times of the miracle of Chanukah, the Jewish people were being heavily oppressed by the Greeks, the Temple was converted to a pagan temple, and our rituals were all but outlawed. But then, miraculously, the Jews won battle after battle against the Greek army, The Superpower of the world. Afterwards, as if to show the Jews that although they might possibly have thought that this war was won because of their efforts, *Hashem* created the miracle of the oil in order to show that this was all the Divine Will. That miracle of the oil is the message that we must carry through into these times, that no matter how bad nor how good our lives may appear to us, it is our job to bring the light of *Hashem* into the world, and to know that everything is part of *Hashem's* plan.

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*His favourite part of Orayta is: "How no question is out of bounds. The Rebbeim seek to answer all of our questions and don't try to skirt around any issues. Also, the amount of serious study devoted to a number of Torah subjects is phenomenal. Its great how everyone is accepted no matter of their background or views. We all try to grow together."*