

## And you will go insane, from what your eyes will see. (28:34)

This is a difficult punishment. Losing one's mind and the ability to be a rational human being is a frightening punishment. The *Torah*'s text however, is puzzling. It adds, "from what your eyes see." One who becomes insane suffers an emotional breakdown as a result of all the suffering, pain and affliction. The enslavement and degradation ultimately wear him down until he no longer can take it. Physical and emotional anguish can torment a person to the point that he loses his mind. But what does the *Torah* mean when it says you will go mad from what your eyes see?

*HoRav Akiva Eiger, z"l*, explains that the word, *eineinu*, translated as eyes, has a different connotation in this *pasuk*. He supports this from the *tefillah* we recite daily, *V'haeir eineinu b'Sorasecha*; "and illuminate our eyes in Your *Torah*". How can that refer to our personal vision? This prayer is recited by all *Jews*, some of whom have had no connection whatsoever with *Torah* learning. Many cannot even read *Aleph Bais*. *Torah* is very distant from them, almost intimating that this *tefillah* is unrealistic. How can this be?

Thus, he explains that *einayim* refers to the *einei ha'edah*, the eyes of the congregation, the spiritual elite, leadership, who guide us in our spiritual endeavors. They "see" far beyond what we common folk are able to perceive. The *rabbanim*, *poskim* and spiritual leaders are able to navigate life by using the *Torah* as their lodestar to illuminate the path.

We pray that *Hashem* illuminate the *einai ha'edah*, the *gedolim*, with His *Torah*, so that no obstacle causes them to stumble in their interpretation of the law. The curse is when we see *einai ha'edah*, leadership, who call themselves spiritual leaders- when in fact, they are neither leaders nor spiritual. Their belief in *Hashem* and His *Torah* is at best questionable, their demeanor certainly does not align with *Torah* dictate. The advice and direction they issue 'and their followers' do not contribute to *Torah* and *Jewish* destiny. When we see such *einei ha'edah* leading *Jews*, it is definitely a reason to become so filled with pain and anguish that it can affect one's cognitive reality.

Furthermore, when we see *Jewish* children and adults straying from the path of *Torah*- the vision alone can cause deep heartache and despair. If it does not, then the person's problem is far beyond insanity. It is smug indifference to the plight of fellow *Jews* who are spiritually dysfunctional.