

Seudah Shlishis, Parshas Mishpatim, 5765

At the third Shabbos meal, Mohorosh Shlit"va spoke inspiring words based on Lekutei Mohoran, Part I, Lesson 51, which discusses the virtues of Truth and of keeping away from falsehood.

Rebbe Nachman says, "Falsehood harms the eyes, physically and spiritually, and this is an aspect of the verse (Yeshayahu 3): '*U'misakros einayim* [literally 'winking eyes', but it is spelled the same way as 'lying eyes']. For when the eyes are weak they 'lie', since they don't see a thing the way it really is, i.e. something big will appear small, or one object will appear to be two. Furthermore, impurity of the blood comes about through falsehood for it is impossible to speak falsehood until one has polluted his blood. And it is impossible to speak the Truth unless one has first purified his blood. Falsehood, which is evil and impure, comes about as a result of being far from 'One' – for Truth is 'One'. An analogy: To say that a silver vessel is silver is the truth, but to say that it is any other type of vessel is false. We see that the Truth is 'One'. For it is only possible to state the truth in "one" way. But falsehood is many: It is possible to say that it is a vessel of gold or brass or any other material. So we see that falsehood is in the category of "many", as alluded to in the verse 'They have sought "many" calculations' (Koheles 7). Accordingly, in the future, evil and falsehood will be annihilated, for everything will be "One" unity. This is an aspect of the verse (Zechariah 14): 'On that day, Hashem will be One and His Name One.'" (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman.)

Mohorosh explained that Rebbe Nachman reveals to us in this lesson the great power of Truth as well as the great disgrace of falsehood. For the Truth comes from being attached to the One Hashem as well as by purifying one's blood from its impurities by fulfilling the will of Hashem through the mitzvos of the Torah. This causes one's eyes to shine with the light of Truth and helps one to ascend and cleave to Hashem, Who is the very essence of Truth, as it is written (Yirmiyahu 10): "Hashem G-d is Truth". Our Sages teach us (Shabbos 55a) that Truth is the seal of Hashem, and a seal symbolizes a name. Hashem and His Name are One, as it is written (Zecharia 14): "Hashem is One and His Name is One"; and He is one with the Torah, as it is brought in the Holy Zohar (Bereishis 24a): "Hashem and the Torah are one." Therefore, the more

a person attaches himself to the Holy Torah and fulfills the mitzvos of the Torah, the more he is attached to Hashem Who is the essence of Truth. And then, the status of the world “before creation” or “after creation” will be no different to him, i.e. whether he has money and honor and other material possessions or whether he has none of them, it makes no difference to him. For just as before the creation, Hashem was One, and there was absolutely nothing else besides Him, so too after the creation, Hashem is One and there is no absolute existence at all other than Him. Therefore, a person like this is not fazed by anything at all. And because he only wants Hashem and nothing else, he automatically has it all, for “Hashem is good for everything” (*Tehillim* 145) and “The seekers of Hashem will lack no good” (*Tehillim* 34). This is not the case for one who is far from the Torah and mitzvos and is distanced from Hashem. He is being held tight in the grips of falsehood and his polluted blood, which is caused by his sins, blinds his eyes from seeing the Truth. He falls into the category of (Yeshayahu 3): “*Misakros einayim*” and it is very difficult for him to see the Truth. Also the aspect of “Many calculations” hovers over him, as it is written (Koheles 7): “G-d made man straight, but they seek 'many' calculations,” which means that he has all kinds of plans and desires for amassing money and honor and other vanities of this world, but in actuality he is always lacking very much. Because he has distanced himself from the Truth, which is the divine unity of all creation where there is no need for anything other than Hashem, therefore all he has left are many plans for obtaining all of the vanities of this world, and he forgets his eternal goal completely. Therefore, the word Truth – *EMeS* – (spelled *Aleph-Mem-Saf*) is the acronym: *E-Mes*, i.e. I remember that “I will be dead (*mes*)” and will have to give up this physical world and return to Hashem Who is the essence of Truth. And the closer a person brings himself to the Truth, the more he clings to Hashem’s Oneness. And then he lacks nothing at all, for with Hashem there is everything, which is not the case with one who pursues falsehood. Into this man of falsehood enters *Sinah* (hatred), *Kinah* (jealousy) and *Retzicha* (murder), the first letters of which spell *SheKeR* (falsehood). Because he has distanced himself from the Truth, therefore, hatred, jealousy and murder against the people of truth – the *Tzaddikim* – enter into him and he simply cannot tolerate them; they are thorns in his eyes. He is like a blind man groping in the dark and it seems to him as if there is no light at all. He has no comprehension whatsoever of the virtues of the *Tzaddikim* who cling to the light of Hashem Who is the essence of Truth. Therefore, happy is the one who doesn’t mislead himself at all, who merits reaching the light of Truth, the light of the *Tzaddikim* who cling to the

Truth, for then he will merit a good and pleasant life in this world and the next. Happy is he and fortunate is his portion.

Mohorosh tied these ideas to our Parsha in the following way: A warning about falsehood is written in our Parsha (Shemos 23): “Keep far away from a false thing (*M’davar sheker tirchak*), and the innocent and the righteous do not kill, for I will not exonerate a wicked person.” We can ask, why is this warning written in this particular way: “*M’davar sheker tirchak* (keep far away from a false thing)”, rather than simply “Do not speak falsehood (*Lo ti’daber sheker*)”, which is the way the other negative commandments of the Torah are written? Another question: what does the second part of the verse – “and the innocent and the righteous do not kill, etc.” have to do with the beginning of the verse – “*M’davar sheker tirchak*?” According to the words of Rebbe Nachman we can understand it very well. The Holy Torah reveals to us the great disgrace of falsehood and how “speaking falsehood” (“*M’daber sheker*”) “distances” (“*tirchak*”) a person from Hashem [note: the word “*M’daber*” – “to speak” – is spelled exactly the same way as the word “*M’davar*” – “from a thing”]. By speaking falsehood the person distances himself from Hashem’s Oneness – Hashem being the essence of Oneness. And the closer a person brings himself to falsehood, the more he distances himself from Hashem Who is the essence of Truth. And this causes him to argue with the *Tzaddikim* and to curse them, G-d forbid, which is alluded to in the end of the verse, “the innocent and the righteous do not kill, etc...”, for falsehood causes hatred, jealousy, and murder to enter into a person, as mentioned above. And then he is liable to commit all of the evils in the world, G-d forbid. Therefore, we must distance ourselves completely from the trait of falsehood and draw closer only to Hashem Who is the essence of Truth, as well as to the *Tzaddikim* who are attached to Hashem in truth. In this way, everyone can merit to the Truth and live a *truly* good life forever.

And this is likewise alluded to in the verse (Shemos 23:1): “Do not accept a false report (*shema shav*), do not help a wicked person by being a false witness for him.” And Rashi explains it to mean: “This is a warning against accepting gossip [*Loshon Harah*]; it’s also a warning to a judge that he should not hear the claims of one litigant before the other litigant arrives; and it warns all of us not to help a wicked person by being a false witness for him against the other litigant.” We need to understand why the commentators explain the words “false report (*shema shav*)” to mean *Loshon Harah* and why they say that a judge who hears one side without the other side being present is committing a falsehood? We know that *Loshon Harah* includes

even a report that is true! And the prohibition against a judge hearing only one side even refers to a judge who hears a true report! So why do the commentators refer to these “true” things as being “false?” But according to the words of Rebbe Nachman we can understand it very well. As soon as a person is prepared to hear *Loshon Harah* or to listen to one litigant without the second one being present, he thus demonstrates that he is far from Hashem’s Oneness Who commanded us concerning these prohibitions. So we see that this person is attached to falsehood and is therefore prone to accept *Loshon Harah* about the *Tzaddikim* who are attached to Hashem in truth. He will justify the wicked who pursue the *Tzaddikim*, G-d forbid, or he will listen to the one who is pursuing the righteous litigant without both parties being present together. Such a judge is already unfit to make a true judgment. This is why the cases in our verse (Shemos 23:1) of "*Loshon Harah*" and "a judge hearing one side" are both explained to be referring to falsehood – *sheker* – and why they are both included in the prohibition "*M'davar sheker tirschak*" – the command to distance ourselves from falsehood completely. For falsehood causes a person to distance himself from Hashem, G-d forbid. May Hashem help us to acquire the trait of Truth in all our ways, and may we merit to ascend and cleave to His light until we are included in Him completely, now and forever. Amen v'amen.