

Friday Night, Parshas Netzavim Vayelech, 5766

Friday night, at the first Shabbos meal, Mohorosh *Shlit"á* spoke inspiring words about the rectification of the *Bris* and the sanctity of thought, based on *Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 36.

Rebbe Nachman says: “The rectification of the *Bris* depends on the sanctity of thought, as it is brought in the Zohar (*Parshas Mishpatim* 110): ‘The attribute of *Yesod* (the *Bris*) reaches up to the intellectual faculties, which are called *Abba* and *Imma*.’” (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman.)

Mohorosh explained that in many places in the books of Rebbe Nachman we find the teaching that the essence of the sanctity of the *Bris* depends on the sanctity of thought and that if a person purifies his mind to think only good thoughts, then his *Bris* will also be in a healthy and rectified state and he will be protected from blemishing the *Bris*. And these are the words of the Zohar mentioned above: “The attribute of *Yesod*” – which is the holy *Bris* – “reaches up to *Abba* and *Imma*” – the holy intellectual faculties of *Chochma* and *Bina*, which are called *Abba* and *Imma*, respectively. For through the sanctity of thought, the sanctity of *Yesod* is rectified.

However, when a person abandons his mind to thinking foreign and evil thoughts, G-d forbid, this is the opening which leads to the blemish of *Yesod*. And the blemish of *Yesod* leads a person to become literally mad, G-d forbid. This sin only comes from a spirit of folly, as our holy Sages have said (*Talmud Sota* 3a): “‘*Ish ki sisteh* (Bamidbar, Ch. 5)’ – a person does not sin unless a spirit of folly enters him.” Moreover, all of the lusts that suddenly come to a person to do what should not be done stem from this blemish. Therefore, Rebbe Nachman mentions in this lesson that physicians say that a cure for madness is castration, since this lust literally makes a person mad, G-d forbid. Therefore, the main thing is to guard one’s thoughts, as Rebbe Nachman once remarked to Reb Nosson (*Lekutei Mohoran*, Part II, Lesson 114): “It would seem that a person needs to guard himself very much from evil thoughts”, for this is the opening to defilement and impurity.

On the other hand, when a person merits to sanctify his thoughts, then his mind and intellectual powers are opened up to perceptions of G-dliness, to the

degree that he is able to ascend to the *Nukva d'Pardashka* (“the supernal opening of the nose”, so to speak), which is the window to the upper worlds. And before his eyes will shine the combinations and unifications of the Holy Names of Hashem, which together add up to the same *gematria* as the word *Pardashka* (*Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 2), for everything depends on the degree to which a person sanctifies his thoughts. And where a person’s mind is, that is where the entire person is (*Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson, 21). Therefore, happy is the one who merits to sanctify his mind and thoughts at all times, for then the heavens will open up for him, and before his eyes will shine the name of Hashem (*Yud-Kay-Vav-Kay*) in all of its letter combinations. And he will get a taste of the World to Come in his lifetime. Happy is he and fortunate is his lot.

Mohorosh connected the above ideas of Rebbe Nachman to our parsha in the following way. It is written (*Devarim*, Ch. 30): “It is not in heaven for you to say, ‘Who can ascend to heaven for us and take it for us, so that we can listen to it and perform it?’” And it is brought in the Baal HaTurim as well as in the *Tikkunei Zohar* (*Tikkun* 6): “ ‘*Mi Ya’aleh Lanu Hashamaymah* (Who can ascend to heaven for us)’, the first letters of these words spell ‘*Mila (Bris)*’ and the final letters spell Hashem’s four-letter name *Yud-Kay-Vav-Kay*.” We need to understand why the hints to *Mila* and Hashem’s name are found specifically in this verse which speaks about ascending to heaven. Perhaps we have an answer according to this lesson of Rebbe Nachman.

It is precisely through the sanctity of the *Bris* (the guarding of the holy Covenant), which comes about through the sanctity and guarding of thought, that a Jew merits to ascend heavenward even during his life in this world, to the extent that his entire mind will be bound to the upper worlds and to the various letter combinations of Hashem’s divine names. In other words, the first letters of this verse which spell *Mila* and the final letters which spell *Yud-Kay-Vav-Kay* allude to the fact that one thing depends on the other. That is, to the degree that one has sanctified and purified the *Mila* – which is the sanctity and purity of thought – one will merit the revelation of the name *Yud-Kay-Vav-Kay*, blessed is He. And it is for this reason that we travel to Tzaddikim on *Rosh HaShanah* – in order to merit sanctity and purity of thought (*Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 211). May Hashem help us to be at Rebbe Nachman’s *tzion* in Uman on Rosh HaShanah and we will drawn down upon ourselves sanctity and purity of thought until we merit to be attached and bound to Hashem in truth and to receive a good and sweet year, a year of redemption and salvation for all of Israel. *Amen v’amen*.

Seudah Shlishis, Parshas Netzavim Vayelech, 5766

At the third Shabbos meal, Mohorosh *Shlit" a* spoke inspiring words about the power of the Tzaddik to be above and below, based on *Lekutei Mohoran*, Part II, Lesson 68.

Rebbe Nachman says: “The essence of the wholeness of the Tzaddik is that he can be above and below at the same time. He can show the one who is above and who imagines that he is on a very lofty level that it is actually the opposite. On the other hand, he can show the one who is way down below at the lowest level, literally in the earth, that he is right next to Hashem. And this is one of the reasons a person needs to leave children and students behind in the world. This seems surprising, for isn't the main goal to break away completely from physicality? If so, then why is it an obligation to leave behind children and students in this physical world who will take his place? But in truth, the main perfection is to be above and below, in heaven and on earth, for being in only one world is no perfection. And when he has children and students in this world, it is considered as if he is both above and below.” (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman.)

Mohorosh explained that Rebbe Nachman reveals to us in this lesson a very great innovation, namely, that a true Tzaddik is above and below at the same time. On the one hand, he is always cleaving to very loft perceptions of G-dliness. He knows what is going on in the upper worlds and his mind is completely attached to Hashem. On the other hand, he is below in this world, and he knows very well what is going on here. He is able to run a home and raise a family with a wife and children. He is also capable of bringing himself down to all types of people in order to help them with all of their myriad needs. All of this is a very great innovation, as the majority of people do not know how to connect these two things together and it seems to them that if a Tzaddik is cleaving to the upper worlds, then he must be unable to bring himself down below. And if he is below amid the physicality of this world, then he must be unable to be above cleaving to Hashem. However, Rebbe Nachman reveals to us that it is just not so, that there is no contradiction between these two things at all. Only the true Tzaddik is able to be above and below at the same time. In fact, the more he cleaves to the upper worlds, the

more he can bring himself down into this world, to reveal Hashem's compassion even to all those who are the most fallen.

And even after his departure to the life of the World to Come, he still remains below in this world. In fact, he is then found below to a greater degree than during his physical lifetime, as it is brought in the Holy Zohar (*Parshas Acharei* 71b): "A Tzaddik, even though he has passed from this world, is found in all worlds more than during his normal lifetime." For as long as he is still clothed in a physical garment, he is confined to only one place, but after he takes off his body and puts on a spiritual garment, he can literally be everywhere, as we have seen with respect to all of the true Tzaddikim, that after they passed from this world, they left behind holy books that reveal and publicize Hashem's G-dliness throughout the entire world. Through their books they were left behind in this world, for the face, intellect and *neshama* of the Tzaddik is found within his books (*Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 192).

So we find that although he has ascended from the world we are in, his passing is only with respect to the physicality of his body, but his face, intellect and *neshama* are still found below in this world, and especially if he has left behind children and students who continue to perpetuate his teachings after him. For then, it is considered as though he were literally alive, as our holy Sages have said (see Rashi at the end of parshas *Vayeilech*): "He who leaves behind a student...it's as if he were alive", and as we see with regard to Rebbe Nachman, that from the time of his passing almost 200 years ago, the number of those who have been drawing close to his teachings, and those who go to his holy *tzion* (gravesite) in Uman, are increasing from year to year. And may they continue to increase! For the teachings of Rebbe Nachman remain alive and enduring in this world through his books and through his holy students. Therefore, more and more people are coming close to his teachings all the time.

Reb Nosson *zal* – Rebbe Nachman's chief disciple – was the one who began to perpetuate Rebbe Nachman's books in the world. When Reb Nosson began to reveal and publicize Rebbe Nachman's teachings in the world after Rebbe Nachman's passing, he aroused tremendous excitement among Rebbe Nachman's followers to learn Rebbe Nachman's books and to travel all the time to Rebbe Nachman's *tzion* in Uman, particularly on Rosh HaShanah. This also provoked great opposition against Reb Nosson from other Chassidim, for if a person can attach himself to a Tzaddik even after the

Tzaddik's passing through learning his holy books and through going to his holy *tzion*, then all of the importance of traveling to "live" Tzaddikim, seems insignificant, for it is possible for one to attach himself to a Tzaddik who is in the World to Come. But Reb Nosson's goal was to perpetuate Rebbe Nachman's teachings and to show the world that they are very much alive until this very day. In the same spirit, it is brought in the holy *Sefer "Yismach Lev"* (on tractate Shabbos) by the holy Rav, Rabbi Nachum of Chernobyl, may his merit protect us, that one can accomplish the act of prostrating oneself on the graves of the Tzaddikim by prostrating oneself on their holy books. So we find that even though the Tzaddik has passed from this world, it is precisely then that he is found very much in this world and he is revealed to whoever will attach himself to him. Therefore, happy is the one who merits to be close to a true Tzaddik who is always found above and below, for then his attachment to the Tzaddik will be a constant attachment in this world and the next world forever. Happy is he and fortunate is his lot.

Mohorosh connected the above ideas of Rebbe Nachman to our parsha in the following way. It is written (*Devarim*, Ch. 31): "Moshe went and spoke these words to all of Israel." We need to understand the meaning of the words "Moshe went" as the verse does not say where he was going. Also, what is the connection of "Moshe went" to "And he spoke these words to all of Israel"? Let's try to answer these questions according to the words of Rebbe Nachman.

The words "And Moshe went" hint to the passing of Moshe *Rebbeinu* on that very day to the life of the World to Come, as it is written in the very next verse: "I am 120 years old today." Precisely on the day of his passing when he ascended higher and higher to the upper worlds he was also found below among the souls of Israel even more than during his normal lifetime. Therefore, it is written "And Moshe went", that is, he went to the life of the World to Come. But it was precisely then that "he spoke these words to **all** Israel", for his holy words were able to reach every soul of Israel for all generations. Because he went and ascended above, he had even more power to descend below and to cause all of the souls of Israel to inherit the teachings of the holy Torah to the end of all generations.

The most essential teachings of the Tzaddik are his teachings about *emunah* (faith) – the *emunah* that we have inherited from our holy forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, the first people to reveal and publicize *emunah* in the world. And our forefathers received the inheritance of the Land

of Israel, the place where *emunah* is manifest to the greatest degree, as it is written (*Tehillim*, Ch. 37): “Dwell in the Land and be nourished by *emunah* (*Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 7).” In the Land of Israel *emunah* is revealed to a greater degree than in any other place in the world, for in the Land there is a special revelation of Divine Providence, as it is written (*Devarim*, Ch. 11): “A Land which Hashem, your G-d, seeks out; the eyes of Hashem, your G-d, are always upon it from the beginning of the year until year’s end.” And there sparkles the light of the merit of our forefathers, the first ones to receive the inheritance of the Land of Israel (*Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 55).

Moshe *Rebbeinu* brought down the Torah for us and showed us how *emunah* is treasured away within each and every mitzvah of the holy Torah, as it is written (*Tehillim*, Ch. 119): “All of Your mitzvos are *emunah*”. Through fulfilling the Torah, we attach ourselves to our holy forefathers who revealed *emunah* and who received the inheritance of the Land of Israel - the place of *emunah*. Therefore, the words of the *Baal HaTurim* at the beginning of our parsha (verse 1) concerning the juxtaposition of the two parshas *Nitzavim* and *Vayeilech* are understood very well. The words immediately preceding parshas *Vayeilech* are “...to Avraham, to Yitzchak and to Yaakov, to give them (these are the last words in parshas *Nitzavim*).” And immediately following these words are the first words of parshas *Vayeilech* – “And Moshe went” - he went out to the Children of Israel to tell them that Hashem is fulfilling his oath and He will now bring the people of Israel into the Land (*Baal HaTurim*). At first glance, it is not clear what the connection is between these two verses. But according to what we have explained before we can see the connection. Moshe *Rebbeinu* with his passing caused us to inherit the holy Torah which is the light of *emunah* and he also bequeathed to us the sparks of the merit of our forefathers which is most revealed in the Land of Israel. Therefore, on the day of his passing, when he was found in this world more than during his normal lifetime, he was very much connected to our forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, and he revealed to them that now their children have merited to receive the light of *emunah* to the highest degree.

And now in these days before the holy *Rosh HaShanah*, it is upon us to make an accounting of our souls, and to do *teshuva* on everything we have blemished during the past year. And the main thing is concerning sins between man and his fellow. When it comes to sins between man and Hashem, everyone begs for pardon, forgiveness and atonement and they

return in perfect repentance. However, when it comes to sins between man and his fellow, it is the way of people to treat them lightly and not to seek atonement for them. On this our holy Sages have said (*Talmud Yoma* 85b): “Sins between man and his fellow, *Yom Kippur* does not atone for them until the sinner has appeased his friend.” And so we conclude the prayer of *Neila* – which is the deadline for pardon and forgiveness for all our sins – with the prayer “so that we can withdraw our hands from oppression and return to You”, which means that we will return in repentance for having wronged and harmed our fellows. And if a person had caused any financial damage to his fellow, there is no forgiveness or atonement for this until he appeases his friend and reimburses him the damage. Therefore, it is upon us to judge ourselves as to whether we have inflicted any damage against our fellow’s honor or against his property, and to return in complete repentance for this. May Hashem help us return in complete repentance and may we receive a good and sweet year, a year of redemption and salvation for all the souls of Israel. *Amen v’amen.*