

Friday Night, Parshas Shmini 5766

Friday night, at the first Shabbos meal, Mohorosh Shlit"va spoke inspiring words based on Lekutei Mohoran, Part I, Lesson 51, which discusses the subject of *Emes* (truth) and *Sheker* (falsehood).

Rebbe Nachman says: "The emergence of *Sheker*, which is evil, which is impurity, is made possible through being distant from 'one', for *Emes* is one. An analogy: When it is said of a silver vessel that it is a silver vessel, this is the *Emes*. But, when it is said that it is a gold vessel, it is *Sheker*. We find that *Emes* is one, since it is possible to say the *Emes* in only one way, i.e. by saying it is a silver vessel and nothing but a silver vessel. However, *Sheker* is many, for it is possible to say it is a gold vessel or a brass vessel, or any other type of vessel. We find that *Sheker* is an aspect of the verse (*Koheles*, ch. 7): 'They have sought many calculations.' Before creation, when the creation was in a potential state, so to speak, before Hashem brought it into actuality, it was all one, all *Emes*, all good, all Holiness; even the word *Tahor* (pure) was irrelevant and meaningless to say, for it is only meaningful when there is such a thing as *Tumah* (impurity), as it is written (*Yechezkel*, ch. 36): 'And you shall be purified (**tahar**-tem) from all your impurities (**tumo**-seichem).' But, when all is one, there is no category of 'many calculations', which is the root of evil and *Tumah*. *Taharah* (purity) is an 'intermediary' between *Kodesh* (Holiness) and *Tumah*, since it is through *Taharah* that *Tumah* is rectified, as it is written: 'And you shall be purified (**tahar**-tem) from all your impurities (**tumo**-seichem).' And *Taharah* is the category of *Bechirah* (free choice), which is an intermediary between two things. *Bechirah* was not applicable before creation when all was one, because with regard to 'one', *Bechirah* is irrelevant. And *Bechirah* is an aspect of *Taharah*. And when the Holy One Blessed is He brought the creation from potential to actual, the category of *Taharah* immediately came into being, for now there are two things: 1) The category of 'the one', and 2) The creation; and then *Bechirah* became relevant – *Bechirah*, which is the category of *Taharah*, which is the intermediary between "one" and creation. *Taharah* is close to 'one', but it has not yet reached 'many calculations', which is evil and *Tumah*. However, *Taharah* is a trace and a sign of the orderly unfolding of creation – the creation that can develop and reach the point where there will be evil and *Tumah*. We find that *Tumah* gets its main foothold from *Taharah*, which is

the category of *Bechirah*, as mentioned before. (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman.)

Mohorosh explained that Rebbe Nachman reveals to us in this lesson the secret of *Emes* and *Sheker* – the secret that *Emes* is only one and that all that is connected and attached to Hashem is *Emes*, for Hashem is the essence of *Emes*, as it is written (*Yirmiyahu*, ch. 10): “And Hashem G-d is *Emes*.” And *Emes* is called “one” because before creation there was only one thing, namely, the Being and Self-revelation of Hashem’s G-dliness, as we say in our morning prayers: “It was You before the world was created.” And all that is connected and attached to Hashem is “one”, as we continue to say in the same prayer: “It is You since the world was created.” Therefore, through attaching ‘after the creation’ to ‘before the creation’ and by recognizing that all that was created was and continues to be emanated from His G-dliness, the entire creation becomes one - one unit of G-dliness, and as our holy Sages have said (*Talmud Berachos* 6): “You [Israel] have made Me one entity in the world as it is said: ‘Hear, O Israel: Hashem is Our G-d, Hashem, the One and Only.’ And I [Hashem] will make you [Israel] one entity in the world as it is said: ‘And who is like Your people Israel, one nation in the Land.’ ” When the souls of Israel say ‘Hear, O Israel, etc.’ and they accept Hashem’s kingship upon themselves, they reveal that the entire creation is one unit of G-dliness. And the more a person reveals Hashem’s G-dliness from within every detail of creation, the more the entire creation returns to its original state. And the entire creation becomes one for this person and there is nothing for him but the reality of the life force of Hashem’s G-dliness. However, there is still the principle of *Bechirah*. Since it is already after the creation, and there is a physical world which appears to our eyes to be far from “one”, the power of *Bechirah* can now come into being - the *Bechirah* to perceive the *Emes*, which is Hashem’s G-dliness, in and through everything, and to attach oneself to Hashem by means of the G-dliness in everything; **or** the *Bechirah* to stray after *Sheker*, which is the physicality and materialism in everything, and to use everything to tear oneself away from being attached to Hashem, G-d forbid. When things are open and revealed to us, when we can clearly see the good and the evil in them, then it is very easy to make the correct *Bechirah* choices between good and evil, between *Kodesh* and *Tumah*, and there is not such a great danger of going astray after the evil and *Sheker*. However, the main *Bechirah* and *Nisayon* (test) take place in more subtle and delicate situations, in which the good and evil are to a large degree covered and hidden. Through a slight turning away from the *Emes*, one can begin to stumble on *Sheker*, thereby causing oneself to break away from being

attached to Hashem. Therefore, happy is the one who does not mislead himself, who toils and strives to always contemplate the spirituality and the inwardness of everything, and in this way, he will once again attach “after the creation” to “before the creation”, thus making the entire creation one.

All of the above ideas are actually the true definition and the essence of *Taharah*, as *Taharah* only applies once there is the possibility *Tumah*, which in turn is only possible after the creation, when *Sheker* and *Tumah* have come into being. When a person rises up from the valley of *Sheker* and *Tumah*, and contemplates only the *Emes*, he then merits *Taharah*. The attainment of *Taharah* would have been impossible if Hashem had only allowed us to attain the knowledge of “before the creation”, where all is *Emes* and all is “one”, and where the concepts of *Tumah* and *Taharah* do not apply at all; since *Tumah* has not yet developed through the unfolding of creation, there is also no *Taharah*. We find that now “after the creation”, the main service of Man is to discern and separate between *Tumah* and *Taharah* and to attach himself to *Emes*, which is the G-dliness within everything. And then he will merit to truly ascend from *Tumah* to *Taharah*, to cleave to the Life of life, may He be Blessed, which is the life of the World to Come in this world. Happy is the one who merits this. Happy is he and fortunate is his lot.

Mohorosh tied these ideas to our Parsha in the following way. It is written in the very last verse of the Parsha (*Yayikra*, ch. 11): “To distinguish between the *Tamei* (impure) and the *Tahor*, and between the creature that may be eaten and the creature that may not be eaten.” In our Parsha all of the laws of kosher and non-kosher creatures are presented in the Torah for the first time. We can ask why, after all of the laws of kosher and non-kosher creatures have already been presented, the Torah repeats itself in the very last verse of the Parsha and says: “To distinguish between the *Tamei* and the *Tahor*, and between the creature that may be eaten and the creature that may not be eaten.” Apparently, before we come to the last verse in the Parsha, the creatures have already been separated into kosher and non-kosher, *Tamei* and *Tahor*, as Rashi explains, “Is it necessary to say [that one should understand to distinguish between a non-kosher] donkey and a [kosher] cow? Have they not already been closely defined [as to their distinguishing characteristics]? But the meaning is: [that you should thoroughly understand to distinguish] between what is *Tameiah* for you and what is *Tahorah* for you – between the case of an animal only half of whose wind-pipe has been cut through by the knife, and the case when the greater part has been cut through (in the former case the animal is forbidden, in the latter it is permitted as food).” Perhaps we

can say that all of the words of Rebbe Nachman are hinted to here. The root of all of the mitzvos of the Torah is to bring a person to understand how to separate between the *Tamei* and the *Tahor*, that is, between *Sheker* and *Emes*. Before creation all was one and all was *Emes*, and there was no concept of *Tamei* and *Tahor* at all. But after the creation, when there was already (*Vayikra*, ch. 11) “the law of the animal, the bird, every living creature...” the main thing is to be able to recognize and separate between *Tamei* and *Tahor*, i.e. between *Sheker* and *Emes*, and to attach the entire creation to Hashem through keeping the mitzvos of the Torah. And the primary *Bechirah* and *Nisayon* concerns things that are subtle and delicate, where we cannot see in an open and clear way the *Tumah* and the *Taharah*. To distinguish between the non-kosher donkey and the kosher cow is not such a *Nisayon*. But to be able to distinguish the fraction of an inch that separates a kosher slaughter, which is *Tahor* for us, from a non-kosher slaughter, which is *Tamei* for us, is a very subtle and delicate matter, and great skill is needed in order to discern between the two. Likewise, with all of the details of one’s life, one needs extra wisdom to be able to distinguish between the *Emes* and the *Sheker* within everything and to attach oneself to Hashem from everything. Happy is the one who merits this in truth. And may Hashem help us merit the light of Truth that is in everything and to attach ourselves to Him, until we merit to ascend and be included in Him completely, now and forever. Amen v’amen.