

Friday Night, Parshas Tzav, Shabbos HaGadol 5764

Friday night, at the first Shabbos meal, Mohorosh Shlit" a spoke inspiring words based on *Lekutei Mohoran*, Part II, Lesson 77, which speaks about sweetening harsh judgments through the holiness of eating.

Rebbe Nachman says: "Through eating with holiness and fear of Heaven, the pain that passes over a person everyday is sweetened. For every Jew, even a great Tzaddik, must have some pain everyday. But through eating with holiness and fear of Heaven a sweetening is accomplished, so that the pain should not grow too strong, G-d forbid. For through eating with holiness, the mouth enters the category of 'the stature of *Adam* (the first Man)', which is an aspect of (*Shemos* 4): 'Who gave *adam* (man) a mouth'. For one whose eating is not done with holiness, G-d forbid, his mouth is literally like an animal. But, when he eats with holiness, his mouth causes him to enter the category of 'the stature of *Adam*', and in this way the judgments are sweetened." (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman.)

Mohorosh explained that Rebbe Nachman reveals to us in this lesson the great power of eating with holiness and with awe of Heaven. For when a person eats with holiness and in a dignified manner, he takes on the stature of "*Adam*", which is the category of (*Shemos* 4): "Who gave man a mouth", since it is the mouth that makes him an "*adam*". And then he receives a holy mind which enables him to sweeten the pain and suffering that could pass over him, G-d forbid. Against one's will, some pain and suffering pass over a person everyday. For due to a person's freewill as well as having to go through tests in life, Hashem sends every person every day some pain and suffering in order to arouse him to repent and to correct his deeds. And when he eats with holiness and in a dignified manner, he draws upon himself a holy mind and he sweetens his pain and suffering so that he is not harmed by them, G-d forbid. But, if a person does not eat with holiness and dignity, he takes on the form of an "animal" that has no knowledge, that pounces, tears and eats, and then much pain and suffering are drawn upon him, G-d forbid. Therefore, one needs to be very careful to eat with the proper holiness, and then all of the pain and suffering will be sweetened for him completely.

The first requirement of eating with holiness is to be very careful about the *kashrus* of the food. There should be absolutely no doubts about its *kashrus*,

for through eating forbidden foods, G-d forbid, a person's mind is badly damaged, and he becomes like an animal. So this is the first requirement. Next, even when he eats perfectly kosher food, he needs to eat with holiness and with great dignity, and he should picture in his mind that an important person is sitting at the table and watching him eat. As Rebbe Nachman one said (*Chayei Mohoran* #515): "Regarding the holiness of eating, it is necessary for a person to imagine that an important person is sitting at the table, for then he will certainly be very careful to eat in a very dignified way." And when a person eats slowly, with deliberation and with dignity, he draws upon himself a holy mind that can extinguish all kinds of pain and suffering. And then, he can also merit to be illuminated by the greatest desire, which is to yearn for Hashem with a very powerful longing (*Lekutei Mohoran*, II, Lesson 7). It is precisely through eating that he will merit to ascend and cleave to Him in truth. Therefore, happy is the one who merits to eat with the proper holiness and with great dignity, for all types of pain and suffering will be sweetened for him and he will merit to cleave to Hashem with a true and eternal attachment. Happy is he and fortunate is his lot.

Mohorosh connected these ideas to our Parsha in the following way. It is written (*Vayikra* 6): "*A permanent fire shall remain aflame on the altar; it shall not be extinguished.*" We can say that perhaps the words of Rebbe Nachman are hinted to in this verse. Our holy Sages have said (*Talmud Menachos* 97a): "A person's table is like the *mizbe'ach* (the Altar in the Holy Temple). When the *Beis Hamikdash* (Holy Temple) was standing, the *mizbe'ach* would atone for him. And now that the *Beis Hamikdash* is not standing, a person's table atones for him." But this is only when he eats with the proper holiness and purity. And this is the verse "**A permanent fire shall remain aflame on the altar**"; that is, a person will always kindle a holy fire in his heart when he sits down to eat at his table which is compared to the *mizbe'ach*. In this way, all of the *klipos* (negative spiritual forces) will be burnt and consumed and all of the harsh judgments will be sweetened for him. "**It shall not be extinguished**" from the Altar - through not extinguishing the holy fire (the holiness and dignity) on the *mizbe'ach* (a person's table), that is, by always eating with the proper holiness and purity, he will draw upon himself all types of blessings. Moreover, through eating with holiness, he becomes illuminated with the greatest desire, i.e. the powerful yearning for Hashem. We find that the "fire of the *mizbe'ach*", which is eating with holiness, helps to ensure that the fire of holiness in our hearts will "not be extinguished". Instead, it will always burn for Hashem with tremendous enthusiasm. May Hashem help us attain the proper holiness in our eating and

may He sweeten for us all of our pain and suffering until we merit to cleave to Him in truth and simplicity all the days of our lives, now and forever. Amen v'amen.