

Friday Night, Parshas Vayakhel - Pekuday Shabbos HaChodesh 5764

Friday night, at the first Shabbos meal, Mohorosh Shlit"ta spoke inspiring words based on Lekutei Mohoran, Part II, Lesson 68, which discusses the nature of the Tzaddik and how he is found "above and below".

Rebbe Nachman says: "The essential wholeness of the Tzaddik is that he can be above and below, that he can show the one who is elevated and who thinks he is on a high level, that it is just the opposite. Likewise, for the one who is on the lowest level, literally in the earth, the Tzaddik will be able to show him that, on the contrary, he is near (*samuch*) to Hashem. And this wholeness is necessary for the Tzaddik to have, and without it, he is not a Tzaddik at all." (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman.)

Mohorosh explained that Rebbe Nachman reveals to us in this lesson a very important idea about the nature of the Tzaddik, namely, that the true Tzaddik is "above and below" simultaneously. He is flying in the upper worlds of lofty thoughts and perceptions. He is an expert in the most exalted knowledge. But he is also below in this world. He leads a household with a wife and children. He is an expert of the human condition. And he is able to give people good advice in numerous areas of life. There is no perfection at all in always being bound only to the upper worlds without knowing how to bring oneself down to human beings and how to infuse them with perceptions of G-d. For in this case, he is a "Tzaddik for himself", but not for others. This is not a *Tzaddik Emes* (a true Tzaddik). A *Tzaddik Emes* is one who can bring himself down from all of his lofty spiritual perceptions in order to engage with people down in this world and offer them good advice so that they too can elevate themselves. This was the level of *Moshe Rabbeinu*, about whom it is written (Shemos 19): "And Moshe went down from the mountain unto the people." He was able to bring himself down from his powerful cleaving to Hashem he had achieved on Mt. Sinai – "forty days and forty nights, bread he did not eat, and water he did not drink" – and immediately he was able to reach the most simple among the people, to listen to their concerns and to (Devarim 1) "judge between a man and his brother or his litigant". However, most people cannot comprehend this. It seems to them that a Tzaddik needs to be, for the

most part, removed and separated from more “mundane” human activities. And if he does work with people and happens to be an expert in human nature and current events, then this is a sign that he must not be a Tzaddik, as is the custom among some leaders and famous people, that they have very limited dealings with human beings, and their assistants and secretaries do not allow people to make contact with them. And this is wrongly considered by some to be a sign of the Tzaddik’s perfection. However, Rebbe Nachman reveals to us in this lesson that this is not so. It is actually just the opposite. The essential perfection of the Tzaddik is measured according to his ability to bring himself down to human beings – to be “above and below” simultaneously, i.e. it is measured by two criteria: a). His ability to make known to those who “dwell above” (those who have achieved and believe they have reached very high levels in the service of Hashem) that they know nothing, and b). His ability to make known to those who “dwell below” (those who believe they are on the lowest level) that Hashem is very close (*samuch*) to them. And only a Tzaddik with these two abilities can be called a “true Tzaddik.”

Mohorosh explained that this was the flaw of Korach and his assembly. They could not comprehend how Moshe and Aharon could maintain these two levels simultaneously. For how was it possible for *Moshe Rabbeinu* to be on Mt. Sinai and reach awesome spiritual perceptions, and immediately afterwards come down and judge between people and be deeply involved in their physical needs? And how was it possible for *Aharon HaKohein* to enter the Holy of Holies, burn the incense and perform the other services, and afterwards step outside and immediately engage in making peace between a man and his wife and between a man and his friend, which for the most part required Aharon to lower and disgrace himself to the extreme, all for the sake of making peace between people? And this is the explanation of the verse which speaks about Korach’s assembly (Tehillim 106): “The were jealous of Moshe in the camp [and] of Aharon, the holy one of Hashem.” The jealousy of Korach’s assembly stemmed from Moshe’s being “in the camp”, i.e. how was it possible that Moshe could be on Mt. Sinai and reach the highest spiritual levels and then immediately come down and be “in the camp” – i.e. (Shemos 19) “from the mountain to the people”? And they were jealous of Aharon for the same reason. For how could the “holy one of Hashem”, who performed the service inside the Holy of Holies, immediately involve himself with making peace between a man and his wife and between a man and his fellow? How could these two levels be harmonized? This is very hard for people to understand. But, Rebbe Nachman reveals to us that it is precisely this double quality, two things that are really one, which is the perfection of

the Tzaddik and without it, he cannot be called a true Tzaddik at all. Happy is the one who merits to come close to a Tzaddik like this.

Mohorosh connected the above ideas to our Parsha in the following way. Our Parsha records the building of the Tabernacle by Betzalel and Oholiav, as it written (Shemos 35:30-33): “See, Hashem has called by name, Betzalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Yehuda. He filled him with the spirit of G-d, with wisdom, insight and knowledge, and with every craft – to weave designs, to work with gold, silver and copper; stone-cutting for setting, and wood-carving – to perform every craft of design.” And immediately afterward it is written (Shemos 35:34-35): “He gave him the ability to teach, him and Oholiav, son of *Achi-samach* of the tribe of Dan (once again the word *samach*, which has a few meanings: to support, to lay one’s hands on, or to be near; and “Ahi” means “my brother”); He filled them with a wise heart, etc.” First, Hashem commanded it should be made by Betzalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Yehuda, and the Torah recounts his praises in great detail (“He filled him with the spirit of G-d, etc”). The very next verse after Betzalel was commanded to build the Tabernacle says that Oholiav should join him, as it is written: “He gave him the ability to teach, him and Oholiav, son of *Achi-samach*, of the tribe of Dan; He filled them with a wise heart, etc.” Rashi has already explained this verse (Shemos 35:34): “He [Oholiav] was of the tribe of Dan, of one of the lowest of the tribes, of the sons of the handmaids and yet the Omnipresent equated him with Betzalel with respect to building the Tabernacle even though Betzalel’s tribe, Yehuda, was among the greatest of all the tribes, in order to fulfill what is says in the verse (Iyov 34): “He regarded not the rich more than the poor.” We need to understand why Hashem commanded that the Tabernacle should be built in this fashion. In other words, why was it necessary to join Oholiav to Betzalel in the building of the Tabernacle? According to the words of Rebbe Nachman we can understand it very well. The perfection of the Tzaddik is precisely when he is “above and below” with the power to connect the greatest one in Israel to the smallest one. And this is exactly the idea of erecting the Tabernacle. It was in order to prepare a place for the *Shechinah* (Divine Presence) to reside near each and every Jew, from the greatest of the great to the smallest of the small. Therefore, at the very beginning of the construction of the Tabernacle, we find the command to Betzalel to build the Tabernacle; Betzalel, one of the elite of Israel, of the tribe of Yehuda, one of the greatest of the tribes, who was called Betzalel because he was so close to Hashem that Moshe said to him (Talmud Berachot 55a), “You must have been in G-d’s shadow (*b’tzel el*),” and of whom it is said, “He [Hashem] filled him with the spirit of G-d.”

And immediately after appointing Betzalel there was the command to join to him Oholiav son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, one of the lowest of the tribes, to teach that it was necessary at that very time to be “above and below” as well as to bring near all those who were still below “in the earth”. These people are in the category of the camp of Dan, who is called (Bamidbar 10): “The rear guard [literally, the gatherer] of all the camps,” who were partly composed of those who were ejected by the cloud (see the Baal Haturim on Bamidbar 10:25). For the completeness of the “Tabernacle of the Tzaddik” is built upon these two categories and one alone is no perfection at all. For the Tzaddik needs to teach the most elite that they are just “b’tzel el (in the shadow of G-d)”, that they still have room to go higher and higher; and to teach those who are on the bottom floor and who think they are far from Hashem, that “*li av* (‘I have a Father’, from Oho-*li-av*), that Hashem is the Av Harachaman (the Father of Compassion), and that He is *samuch* (next to) and very close to them, and He is ready to support them (li’*smoch* – to support) in all of their falls. And this is *Oholiav* son of *Ahisamach*. Therefore, through building the Tabernacle in this fashion there will be space for each and every Jew, on whatever level he may be, to enter within the bounds of holiness, and to attain divine perceptions according to their level and situation. And Hashem should help us be close to the true Tzaddikim and to enter the wondrous Tabernacle that Hashem is building for the souls of Israel, until we merit to return in perfect repentance before Him, to be included in Him completely, now and forever. Amen v’amen.



Seudah Shlishis, Parshas Vayakhel - Pekuday Shabbos HaChodesh 5764

At the third Shabbos meal, Mohorosh Shlit”a spoke inspiring words based on Lekutei Mohoran, Part I, Lesson 155, which discusses the importance of Emunah and patience.

Rebbe Nachman says: “Sadness is very harmful. And a person’s not traveling to the Tzaddik is due to sadness and lethargy. Also, his not praying properly comes from sadness and laziness, specifically from a deficit in Emunah. Certainly, if a person has perfect Emunah and believes that Hashem stands over him and listens to every word that comes from his mouth and pays

attention to the sound of his prayer, then, surely, there would be no sadness, laziness or lethargy in his prayer and he would certainly pray properly. However, the main confusion in prayer comes from a deficit in Emunah. Therefore, laziness and sadness fall upon him and confound his prayer. For the main cause of sadness and laziness is a lack of Emunah. And this is an aspect of “*erech apayim* (being slow to anger)”, that is, not being afraid of anything, and not obsessing over any lack or confusion he may have in his service [of Hashem]. Rather, he only does what he has to do. And one can merit all this through Emunah. (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman).

Mohorosh explained that the root of the foundation of life is Emunah – to believe with clear and pure faith that there is no absolute existence other than Hashem and everything that a person goes through, either for good or the opposite, all is from Him alone. For there is no small movement that is not guided by the providence of Hashem and there is no absolute existence besides Him. And with this knowledge, a person is redeemed from all of his suffering, because Emunah infuses a person with great patience to be able to endure whatever he goes through in life. And it also puts happiness into his heart to give him courage to withstand whatever happens to him. This is not so for the one who has no emunah. He is constantly filled with sadness and laziness, and depression overpowers him due to the tribulations that pass over him. And he has no consolation from all of his suffering, for he eats himself up from all of the troubles he has to endure. He is also angry with Hashem, G-d forbid, because he can't understand why he has so many problems in his life. This is the difference between a *lev nishbar* (broken heart) and *atzvut* (sadness). A broken heart is when a person truly feels the huge chasm between himself and Hashem and so he prays and pleads with Hashem that He should bring him near to His service. And then he is like a child who longs for and constantly strives to see his father, as he feels the pain of being separated from him. All he wants is to be close to his father. This is not the case with sadness. Sadness derives from anger towards Hashem, G-d forbid, when a person has difficult questions in his heart about why he has to go through what he has to go through. And he just cannot make peace between himself and the reality of life and accept that this is the will of Hashem. Therefore, he falls into laziness and sadness and becomes unable to serve Hashem at all, for it seems to him that his prayers are worthless and that Hashem is not interested in hearing him at all. But this is a very grave error, since it is certain that Hashem yearns for the prayer of every creature and He wants to help a person at every moment of his life. But Hashem does examine whether a person will strengthen himself with more Emunah and recognize

that his entire hope and salvation is in Hashem's hands alone. And then, as soon as a person strengthens himself with Emunah and has patience no matter what he goes through, then Hashem reveals Himself to him and saves him from all of his suffering. Therefore, happy is the one who strengthens himself with more Emunah and doesn't become downhearted at all from what passes over him in life. Instead, he will bring a powerful happiness and patience into himself and tolerate whatever comes his way. For then he will merit to live a good and sweet life in this world and the next, forever. Happy is he and fortunate is his lot.

Mohorosh connected these ideas to our Parsha in the following way. Our Parsha describes the construction and erection of the Tabernacle, as it is written (Shemos 40:17): "It was in the first month of the second year on the first of the month that the Tabernacle was erected. Moshe erected the Tabernacle; he put down its sockets and emplaced its planks and inserted its bars, and erected its pillars, etc...So Moshe completed the work (verse 33)." But, the very next verse says (verse 34): "The cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of Hashem filled the Tabernacle. Moshe could not enter the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud rested upon it, and the glory of Hashem filled the Tabernacle." We need to understand what is the significance of the cloud covering the Tabernacle until even Moshe Rabbeinu was not able to enter the Tent of Meeting. And what does this teach us immediately after the Torah has described in great detail the entire order of the setting up of the Tabernacle? According to the words of Rebbe Nachman we can understand it very well. It is explained in the Holy Zohar (Introduction to the Tikkunim) that the entire anatomy and physiology of the human being is patterned after the structure and composition of the Tabernacle and the Tent of Meeting. The Tabernacle had within it the Holy Ark, the Ark Cover, the Partition that separated between the Holy and the Holy of Holies, the Menorah and the Table. And all of this is reflected in the human being himself, as it is written (Shemos 25): "They shall make a Sanctuary for me, so that I may dwell **b'socham** ('among them', but also means 'within them'). "*B'socho* (within **it**)", it doesn't say, rather "within **them**", which means within each and every Jew, for the Shechinah rests within each one, and with even greater intensity within the Tzaddikim who diligently work on themselves to sanctify and purify all of their limbs and organs until they actually become sanctified with the holiness of the Tabernacle, as it is brought in the words of Rabbi Moshe Kordovero zal that there are Tzaddikim in every generation within whom the Shechinah rests as it was in the Tabernacle and

the Temple. And when people travel to them, it is literally like going to the Tabernacle and the Temple.

The life of a person is certainly filled with many tests in terms of what passes over him in life. On the one hand, Hashem reveals Himself to him and the holy Shechinah rests within him. On the other hand, all sorts of difficult and heavy tests pass over him, and Heaven tests him as to where he is holding in his Emunah. Therefore, immediately after Moshe had completed setting up the Tabernacle, the holy Torah reveals to us that the cloud covered the entire Tent of Meeting all around until even Moshe was unable to enter it, for the cloud represents the concepts of “holding back” and hiding. The cloud and thick fog were a form of "*choshech*" (darkness) and *choshech* is the language of “holding back”, as it is written (Bereishis 22): “You [Avraham] have not held back (*chasachta*) your son, your only one.” But a person who has the “knowledge of Moshe”, knows that also within the obstruction and the cloud rests Hashem, as it is written (Shemos 20): “And Moshe approached the thick cloud where G-d was.” The person who has this “knowledge of Moshe” approaches the thick cloud, for he knows that Hashem is also there (Lekutei Mohoran, Part I, Lesson 115). And the Tzaddikim know very well that it is precisely when they ascend and draw close to perceptions of G-dliness, that they need a cloud and a covering with which to cover their eyes, that they should not see too much and blind their eyes, G-d forbid. This was the level of Moshe Rabbeinu – the more he rose upwards to higher and higher levels, he was able to find Hashem there (Lekutei Mohoran, Part II, Lesson 82), because he had the very great wisdom to know how to “cover his eyes” in order not to be “blinded”, G-d forbid, by the abundance of light, as sadly happened to Elisha ben Abuya - that it was precisely through his ascending all the way up to Heaven and entering the "Spiritual Gardens", that he became confused and fell into heresy (Talmud Chagiga 14b). Because he came too close to the light, his eyes became damaged and blinded, like a person who gazes directly into the sun damages his eyes. Therefore, the cloud and the covering are great benefits for the Tzaddikim, for this protects them from the abundance of light. Therefore, it is brought in the words of Rebbe Nachman (Lekutei Mohoran, Part II, Lesson 5) that the word for cloud - “*anan* (*Ayin-Nun-Nun*)” are the first letters of the verse (Tehillim 47): “*Nidivei Amim Ne’asafu* (The nobles {converts} among the peoples gathered, {joining} the people of the G-d of Abraham).” For the person who has a giving heart and strengthens his heart with added Emunah, and is careful not to fall into sadness and bitterness, which could shatter his heart, G-d forbid, is the one who is able to enter into the *anan*, i.e. foggy and dimly lit situations where the

light of holiness is very weak. And he is blessed with the ability to gather up all the sparks of holiness dispersed among the nations and bring them to faith in Hashem. Therefore, it was precisely after the Tabernacle was erected, which hints to the resting of the Shechinah within each and every Jew, that the holy Torah reveals to us that surrounding the Tabernacle certainly rests a huge cloud, until even Moshe Rebbeinu at first could not enter into the Tabernacle. But in the end it is written (Bamidbar 7): “When Moshe entered the Tent of Meeting,” and as Rashi explains on the verse (Shemos 40:35): “And Moshe was not able to come into the Tent of Meeting: ‘As long as the cloud rested upon it, he was not able to enter the Tent of Meeting, but as soon as the cloud lifted he entered and spoke with Hashem.’” For the person who has this “knowledge of Moshe”, knows not to run away from the “Tent” because of the “cloud”, but he approaches and faces the thick cloud where Hashem is, and he will find Him also within the cloud and the obstruction. And then the cloud will lift and the Shechinah will be revealed to an even greater extent than before. And Hashem should help us merit clear and pure Emunah until we find Him within each and every detail of life, and from this will come the redemption that should be revealed speedily in our days, and then holy emunah will be revealed to all who walk the earth. May Hashem let us see it with our own eyes, speedily in our days. Amen v’amen.