

Friday Night, Parshas Vayishlach, 5761

Friday night, at the first Shabbos meal, Mohorosh *Shlit"a* spoke inspiring words on the subject of “elevating the *Shechinah* (the Divine Presence of Hashem that rests in the world)”, based on *Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 89.

Rebbe Nachman says: “It is written (*Tehillim*, Ch. 8): ‘And You have made him [man] lack, it has [so to speak] diminished G-d's glory [*Elokim*]; and with honor and splendor You have crowned him.’ It is known that whatever a person is lacking spiritually or physically, this lack is in the *Shechinah*, as the *Shechinah* rests within each and every person. And if ‘You have made him lack’ – then there is a lack in the *Shechinah*. However, when a person knows this, that the lack is not only below in the physical sense but also Above in the *Shechinah*, he will surely have great pain and sadness and he will not be able to serve Hashem with *simcha*. Therefore, he needs to tell himself: ‘Who am I and what is my life worth that the King Himself should tell me what He is lacking? This is a tremendous honor for me!’ And from this, he will come to great *simcha* and his frame of mind will be renewed and rejuvenated. And this is the meaning of the rest of the verse: ‘with honor and splendor You have crowned him.’ This means that from the honor and glory that one has because the King Himself tells him what He is lacking, ‘You crown him’ with a new mind. (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman.)

Mohorosh explained that the tremendous level that a Jew can attain is impossible to describe or estimate at all. His makeup is composed of aspects from all of the worlds. He has a holy and pure *neschama* that comes from the highest world - *Olam HaAtzilus* (The World of Emanation). Therefore, the entire creation is dependent upon him. And if he has some pain or lack, whether it is spiritual or physical, the pain and lack is also in the holy *Shechinah*, for the dwelling place of the *Shechinah* is within each and every member of Israel, as it is written (*Shemos*, Ch. 25): “They shall make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell within them.” And our holy Sages have said (brought in the Shelah on tractate *Taanis* 60): “‘It doesn’t say ‘within it’, but rather ‘within them’. This teaches us that Hashem rests His *Shechinah* within each Jew. So we find that if there is some lack in an individual Jew, the lack

is in the *Shechinah*. And the *Shechinah* grieves over the pains of Israel, as it is written (*Tehillim*, Ch. 91): “I am in pain with him.” And it is also written (Isaiah, Ch. 63): “In all of their distress *He* is in distress.” Therefore, this is the explanation of the words of our verse: “And You have made him lack” – if one has a certain lack, this causes a lack in the *Shechinah* which is called “*Elokim*”. The revelation of the *Shechinah* within Nature is referred to as “*Elokim*” for “*Elokim*” has the same gematria (86) as the word for Nature – *HaTeva*. Although it might appear to our eyes as though the pain and lack are only Nature, chance and *mazal*, the truth is that G-d is hidden within the pain and lack, for the holy *Shechinah* is found there and it grieves together with Israel in their pain. We must fill the *Shechinah*'s lack.

When a person has this knowledge, and it has become crystal clear to him that whatever happens to him also happens to the holy *Shechinah* (as he recognizes the level and holiness of his *neshama*, which is actually a part of G-d above, and that there is no such thing as independent forces of Nature at all), then he will surely feel great pain and sadness when he experiences some lack, for it is not enough that he must bear this suffering and lack himself, but the holy *Shechinah* Itself also grieves over this suffering with him. This thought can make a person so broken that he will be unable to serve Hashem with *simcha*. And the wholeness of one's divine service comes about only through *simcha*, as it is written (*Devarim*, Ch. 28): “Because you did not serve Hashem, your G-d, with *simcha* and goodness of heart despite an abundance of everything.” So how can one ever raise his state of mind and attain real *simcha*?

A person needs to tell himself: “Who am I and what is my life worth, that the King Himself should tell me of His lack?” When a person sees himself with a certain pain or lack, Hashem is telling him that this very lack is actually in the holy *Shechinah*. This is a tremendous honor for a person that the King Himself would confide in him and tell him what He is lacking. The King would only share His pain with someone who is truly close to Him. He would certainly not share this with a commoner. So we see, by telling himself these things, a person can come to great *simcha*. For this is a very awesome *simcha* that the King would tell him about His pain. And through this *simcha* his mind becomes renewed and rejuvenated. And with this *simcha* itself all of his lacks are filled. For when a person is in a state of joy and recognizes with clear and true knowledge that there is no absolute existence at all besides Hashem, he thereby lacks nothing, as it is written (*Devarim*, Ch. 2): “[This forty year period] Hashem, your G-d, was with you, you did not lack a thing.”

And so our holy Sages have said (*Talmud Nedarim* 41a): “You have acquired wisdom, what do you lack?” With this recognition, one crowns oneself with a new consciousness and mindset, which is an aspect of the words “with honor and glory You have crowned him”. And this is the essence of “elevating the *Shechinah*”. It turns out that he has transformed the ultimate fall into the ultimate elevation. For from the sadness and the pain, he has come to *simcha* and pleasure and he has brought himself very close to Hashem. And this is the true basis of cleaving to Hashem. Happy is the one who merits to attain this!

Mohorosh said that we need to be so very careful to ensure that the *Shechinah* is able to rest in our shuls and *batei medrash* (study halls); that there should be no lack or blemish in these places, G-d forbid, for in this way we shame and disgrace the Holy *Shechinah*, G-d forbid, as it is brought (*Zohar, Parshas Trumah* 131b) "Woe is the person who profanes the *Shechinah* by degrading the sanctity of the *Beis Haknesses* (shul)". We need to be very careful not to speak idle chatter in shul or the *beis medrash* and how much more so forbidden words, G-d forbid, for this is a very great blemish. Even "gezundheit" is forbidden to be said in the *beis medrash* (*Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah*, 246). In a place where the *Shechinah* rests we must be exceedingly careful not to cause any pain or lack to the *Shechinah*. The Ariz"l has already revealed to us that the honor of the synagogue is very much needed for the perfection and wholeness of a man and for acquiring understanding, as it is brought (*Shaar Hakavannos, Drushei Kavannos habrachos, hakdama aleph*): “One who enters a synagogue needs to detain himself a little at the doorway before entering and to show that he is filled with awe and trembling to enter the chamber of the King of the world. Doing this greatly helps a person to acquire perfection (*shleimus*) and understanding.” Therefore, happy is the one who merits to always be careful with the holiness of the synagogue and the *beis medrash*.

Mohorosh recounted that in his youth he merited to know one of the great Breslover Chassidim who was a kabbalist and a great expert in the books of the Zohar. Once Mohorosh noticed that this great man was about to enter a certain synagogue but before he walked through the door he became filled with trembling and fear; his entire body was literally shaking and his face turned white. Afterwards he entered the shul. Mohorosh understood that what had happened was that this kabbalist exerted himself to fulfill the words of the Ariz"l mentioned above. And this made a great impression on Mohorosh.

Mohorosh also recounted that once he prayed in a Breslover shul in Jerusalem and one of the Chasidim stood by the door and motioned to Mohorosh with his hand to leave the shul and come outside with him. It turned out that this man had something to tell Mohorosh. But Mohorosh did not want to leave the shul at that time. Therefore, Mohorosh motioned back to him with his hand that he wasn't ready to leave yet. After a short time had passed Mohorosh left the shul and encountered this man standing outside. The man spoke words of honor to Mohorosh and gave him thanks and acknowledgment for his holy books, how they are his whole vitality and strength. And then he asked Mohorosh for forgiveness for having signaled to him with his hand to leave the shul, but that because of his great desire to speak with him and because he had accepted upon himself for many years already not to speak in shul, he had to motion to Mohorosh to leave the shul. Mohorosh said that it was very clear to him how much care this man took not to speak in shul – not even proper and important speech. Therefore, happy is the one who merits to treat the holiness of the shul with the proper care.

Mohorosh connected all of these ideas to our parsha in the following way. We find in our parsha the episode of Dina, the daughter of Yaakov, and how Shechem the son of Chamor violated her. This was an atrocity that certainly caused great pain to the holy *Shechinah*. For whatever occurred in Yaakov *Avinu's* household, which is the root of the souls of Israel, has an effect throughout history on all of the souls of Israel in general and on the holy *Shechinah* in particular. Therefore, it is written (*Bereishis*, Ch. 34): “And Yaakov's sons came in from the field when they heard; the men were distressed and were very angry because he [Shechem] had committed an outrage in Israel...” They were in very great pain after hearing what had happened. And this caused them sadness and anger for they felt intensely not only the pain of their sister Dina but also that of the holy *Shechinah*. But afterwards, they employed the advice mentioned above that we must certainly serve Hashem with *simcha* and that we must repair and fill the lacks of the *Shechinah*. Therefore, they immediately decided how they would take revenge against the people of Shechem, and the plan was fulfilled specifically through Shimon and Levi as it is written (*Bereishis*, Ch. 34): “Two of Yaakov's sons – Shimon and Levi, the brothers of Dina – each took his sword and came to the city confidently...” For Shimon and Levi allude to the two categories mentioned above – feeling the pain of the holy *Shechinah* and feeling it's happiness and consolation. For Shimon means “hearing” which is (*Bereishis*, Ch. 29): “For Hashem has heard (*shema*) that I am unloved [when Leah named her son Shimon]. So “Shimon” alludes to “hearing” and

understanding the pain of the holy Shechinah. And Levi means attachment and cleaving, as in (*Bereishis*, *ibid*): “This time my husband will become attached (*yi'laveh*) to me...” Therefore, “Levi” alludes to attaching and binding oneself to the holy *Shechinah* through *simcha*; i.e. a person makes himself happy by realizing that the King feels so close to him that He would tell him about His lack. And there is no *simcha* greater than this. And in this way one merits to bind oneself to Hashem to a very great degree and to come to a state of renewed and expanded consciousness. Therefore, the revenge taken against Shechem was specifically through Shimon and Levi, for both of them together allude to the two categories mentioned above of empathizing with and sharing the pain of the *Shechinah* as well as rejoicing together in its *simcha*. May Hashem help us to be bound to him in truth and to fill the lack of the *Shechinah* at all times until we merit to see the redemption and salvation of Israel swiftly in our days. *Amen v'amen*.