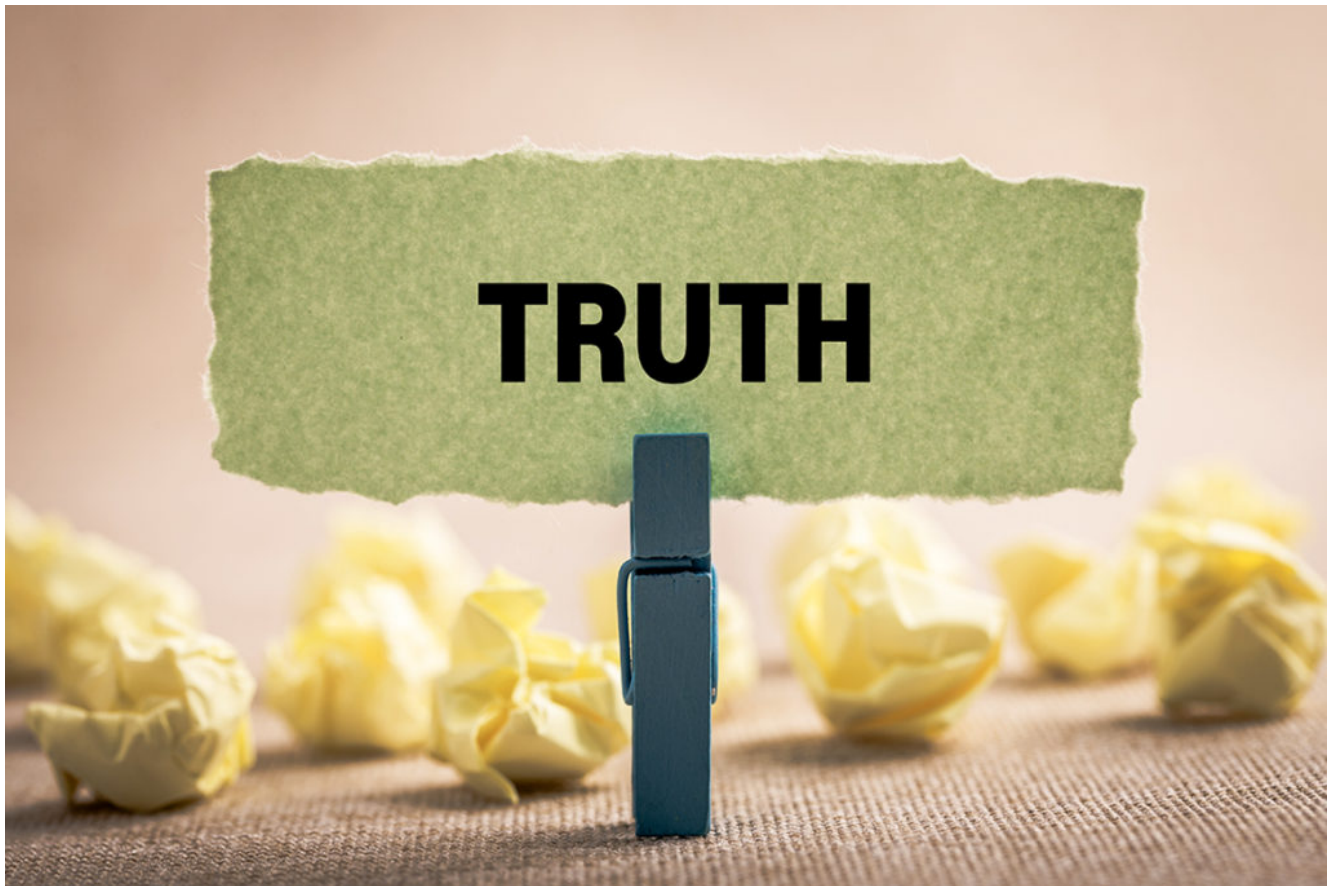


ONLY ONE TRUTH; THE REAL TRUTH

written by Chaim Kramer
May 2, 2021



What is truth? This should be the easiest of questions to answer, yet it is probably one of the most difficult.

The seal of God is truth (*Shabbat* 55a).

There may be many lies, but there is only one truth (*Likutey Moharan* I, 51).

* * *

What is truth? This should be the easiest of questions to answer, yet it is probably one of the most difficult. The truth is one, only one, so the truth should not be at all difficult to locate. All we need is to look for “one.” But,

what is that one?

“Sh’ma Yisrael... Hear O Israel, God is One” (Deuteronomy 6:4). We know that God is truth, He is One. But there exist other truths too. “*Torat emet*, the Torah of truth...” (Malakhi 2:6). There are also True Tzaddikim. And there is truth within each and every one of us.

However, the truth really is *only* one. This is the concept of simplicity. If we find ourselves in a web of complications, we are distant from the truth. The more simply we approach life, the clearer our perspectives are, the closer we are to truth. And the closer we come to One, to God, the more we can see that all these truths are one.

* * *

The Midrash relates: When God came to create Adam, the ministering angels split into different factions, for and against his creation. Kindness said: “Create man for he will perform acts of kindness.” Truth argued: “Do not create man, for he will be full of lies.” Righteousness said: “Create man, for he will perform righteous deeds.” Peace said: “Do not create man, for he will be full of strife.” What did God do? He took Truth and cast it down to the ground. The ministering angels asked: “Is Truth not Your seal? Why did You cast it upon the ground?” God then said: “Let Truth rise up from the ground” (*Bereishit Rabbah* 8:5).

Reb Noson asks: What happened here? Why did God cast Truth down to the ground? Even more puzzling, how was it that of all the Divine qualities, Truth disagreed with God? Seeing that in the end God did make man, then that is the truth, man should be created. How could Truth have argued against that? Also, God Himself is truth! How can Truth argue against truth?

The more simply we approach life, the clearer our perspectives are, the closer we are to truth. And the closer we come to One, to God, the more we can see that all these

truths are one.

There are many lies, but only one truth. Where there is *many*, there is a concept of falsehood. Where there is only one, there is truth. Man was created. From him came forth the world's population, the "many." We are now faced with a difficult question, where is the truth? Which one of us has the truth, *the real truth*, within us? We are many. How can one discern what is the truth? Who is right? Which is the right path?

God's ways are very deep and hidden from us. Even the angels cannot fathom God or His truth. The angels understood that God wanted to create man to serve Him. How would corporeal man, with his physical body and living in a physical world, be able to understand this truth? Impossible! so they thought, and therefore argued against man's creation. God knew otherwise. He knew that man would have the wisdom, intellect and ability to rise to the challenge – to recognize truth and choose it over falsehood.

* * *

There is truth and there is the real truth. The angels were correct in stating that man is full of falsehood. He has "many" thoughts, "many" ideas, within himself. He must be constantly occupied in seeking and searching for the truth. If he does, he will find it. But is the truth which man finds the real truth, the ultimate truth? Or is it just a form of truth, a partial and therefore incomplete truth? The answer is that everyone has within himself a measure of truth and the ability to search for truth. At the same time, we must understand that everybody's truth is different – formulated by such factors as disposition, environment, schooling, etc. So much depends on "where you are coming from." Because of this, man's truth, while true, is only partial. And it was this truth, each person's individual truth, which argued against the Creator.

It was this truth that God cast down to the ground.



God's ways are very deep and hidden from us...

God has a higher understanding. His is an Ultimate Truth which transcends even the most "obvious" truth. The True Tzaddikim have come to this truth, and we, the "many," can also attain this truth. How? By accepting that an ultimate truth – a truth greater than our own – exists, and that we must search for it. Then, the truth, the real truth, will rise from amongst us all (*Likutey Halakhot, Ribit 5:16-20*).

Reb Noson said that a person must always beg and plead with God to lead him on the path of *His* truth. With our own truth we can deceive ourselves, but God's truth is the real, the Ultimate Truth (*Siach Sarfei Kodesh 1-502*). Reb Noson added, "How can you know the real truth when you see it? If you know in your heart that you really desire the truth (only the real truth), and you ask God to let you be worthy of His truth and give all your actions entirely over to Him, then, however He guides you will be the ultimate truth" (*Likutey Halakhot, Beheimah v'Chayah Tehorah 4:24*).

* * *

There was a time when Reb Noson was being pressured by his father-in-law to take a job as the official rabbi of one of the local districts. He was certainly qualified and such a prominent position would also provide him with the livelihood he so sorely needed. Yet, Reb Noson found himself in a quandary over what to do. He was not sure that this was the true way to for him to serve God – that this was what God wanted from him. He turned to Rebbe Nachman for advice.

“Take the position,” the Rebbe told him. “Why not? Being an official rabbi would be a good thing.”

“But is it the truth? Is it the true thing to do?” Reb Noson questioned.

“Yes,” answered the Rebbe. “Who else is as qualified as you are?”

But Reb Noson was not totally convinced. “But is it the *real* truth?” he pressed on.

“You want the real truth?!” the Rebbe answered. “The real truth is that you should not take the job.” (The Rebbe understood that the responsibility would stunt Reb Noson’s spiritual growth.) Reb Noson was always very thankful that he pressed the Rebbe for the real truth. Having refused the position he was able to serve God and spent his life spreading Rebbe Nachman’s teachings (*Siach Sarfei Kodesh* 1-175).

* * *

Rebbe Nachman also teaches: Where there is truth there is peace (*The Aleph-Bet Book*, Truth A:22). When one comprehends the Ultimate Truth – knowing that each of us is different and yet still seeks out the One God – then one can achieve peace (*Likutey Halakhot*, Ribit 5:20).

(Taken from the book, [*Crossing the Narrow Bridge: A Practical Guide to Rebbe Nachman’s Teachings*](#); chapter 4: Truth, pp.

49-52).