

# WITH INFINITE PATIENCE

by Rabbi Label Lam

*Distance yourself from a false word; do not execute the innocent or the righteous, for I shall not exonerate the wicked. (Shemos 23:7)*

Distance yourself from a false word...R. Nosson says this is a warning that one should be separate from false ideologies. (Mechilta)

What is the inherent connection between the caution to be distant from a lie and the unjust execution of the righteous and the innocent?

There's a statement by one of the great American philosophers, William James that caught my attention. "There is no greater lie than a truth misunderstood." I would assume then that the greater the truth and the more subtle the misunderstanding the bigger the threat of the lie. There is no greater truth or reality than the truth of HASHEM. There is no greater source of truth than Torah. Any slight deviation or distortion of either would produce a horrific lie. If the teller at the bank makes a mistake with a small check the damage will be minimal. If a decimal point wanders on a big number check the results can be catastrophic.

When building a tower tall any slight error in calibration in the foundation creates an ever widening angle of inclination as the building rises in height. Eventually the weight of that ever so subtle error pulls the structure down. A one story structure can withstand wildly wrong calculations. To outlive history though really tests the entire integrity of the building. Truth is everlasting and like that building with endless stories it must be as straight as straight can be.

The Torah warns emphatically in the Ten Commandments, "Do not take My name in vain, because HASHEM will not cleanse one who lifts up His name for naught!" What's at stake here? With more and more business being done by electronic and cyber transacting, I think we can all appreciate nowadays the lurking danger and real fear associated with identity theft.

If someone steals a credit card it's worse than if a fixed sum of cash is lifted from the wallet. Practically speaking, printing counterfeit money carries a stiffer penalty than stealing even a larger quantity of cash. Why is that so? The answer is that producing false money reduces the credibility of all other currency in circulation. It threatens the entire banking system and the integrity of every transaction. Stealing a large sum is certainly not an honorable deed but it is many times less threatening than the act of counterfeiting even a single dollar.

When so many claim to be speaking in the name of G-d and then do ugly and reprehensible acts in the name of unqualified prophets, and when the Bible is hijacked and its intended meaning distorted beyond recognition the far reaching consequences by definition are predictably devastating.

"Truth lasts and falsehood does not", say the sages of the Talmud and so as the edifices of civilization stretch out over time, dare I say, towers of many types will eventually begin the not so pretty process of crumbling. We may be already witnessing the cruel conclusions of many a false premise, while that which is proven true persists with infinite patience. Text Copyright &copy 2006 by Rabbi Label Lam and **Torah.org**.