Dvar Acher – Ve'ethanan
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My teacher Dr Revuen Firestone raises critical questions in his commentary on this week's Parasha; "Is there one "Truth" (with a capital "T")? Can there be multiple truths?"

He concludes, as our torah teaches that some truths are beyond our understanding, some answers will always allude us but we are duty bound as Jews to pursue them even if we are "striving after wind" (Ecclesiastes 1:14).

The question I wish to add to this important teaching is why? Why must we strive so relentlessly to know the truth of something?

An answer comes from Rebbe Asher Zvi the Magid of Ostroh, in his commentary on the Five Books of the Torah, Ma'ayan HaChochma published just before his death in 1816.

Rebbe Asher Zvi address the question, 'why must we strive to know the truth, even if it may be unknowable?' He writes, "The consequence of falseness is that that it is impossible to cleave to God. This is the meaning of the verse, '*Distance yourself from falsehood* (midevar **sheker** tirchak) (Ex 23:7) – through falsehood you will distance yourself from God, for God is truth and God's seal is truth. Therefore, one can only **connect** to the God by means of truth."

By using the word connect/kesher he draws our attention to the Hebrew verb root K-Sh-R found in the word **Kesher** (connection) and its related root Sh-K-R which is at the core of the work **Sheker** (to lie). The Magid points out that when we distance ourselves from falsehood in our unrelenting pursuit of the truth we are able to shift Sh-K-R to K-Sh-R and thereby **connect** ourselves to God.

Why pursue truth? Because in doing so we draw ourselves nearer to God, we make a connection with a power greater than ourselves. It is a lifelong effort this quest for truth, but its reward is a deepening of faith through connection even if the ultimate truth continues to allude us, we learn so much about ourselves and our Judaism along the way.