

## **Song of Truth ~ Про Правду**

*This song is at the very heart of the kobzar tradition. It likely originated in the late 17th century, a time of widespread turmoil and social upheaval in Ukraine, but its message is universal and as fresh as the front page of tomorrow's newspaper in any country on the planet. I first encountered this song in Munich on a xerox copy of a handwritten copy by Zinovii Shtokalko of the Ostap Veresai version. I immediately hand-copied it into my notebook. A few years later, after learning to play a kobzars'ka bandura made for me by my friend Ken Bloom, I added it to my repertoire, recorded it on my first LP (Julian Kytasty: Ukrainian Bandurist, Yevshan Records, 1986), and have performed it ever since. The version on the Songs of Truth recording draws on both the transcription of Ostap Veresai (who was arrested by the tsar's police for singing it at the market place in Pryluky on his way home after performing for the Tsar's family in St. Petersburg), and on the performance of Heorhiy Tkachenko (1898-1993).*

~ Julian Kytasty, 2015, [from the liner notes for Songs of Truth](#)

*Lyrics in English translation by Julian Kytasty*

There is no truth in the world,  
Truth is nowhere to be found,  
Now evil Falsehood has started calling itself Truth.

Now Truth is kept waiting at the door,  
And Falsehood is invited to the table.  
Now Truth is trampled underfoot  
And Falsehood is wined and dined.  
Now Truth is cast into the deepest dungeons,  
And Falsehood sits in the councils of power.

For now it seems the end of the age is near,  
You must be wary even of your own brother.  
For now it seems that Truth is dead,  
And evil Falsehood has consumed the earth.

But he who respects Truth  
Shall receive blessings from heaven:  
    For God is Truth,  
    He shall crush Falsehood,  
    Chastise pride,  
    Raise high the Temple.

Нема в світі Правди, Правди не зіскати,  
Бо тепер неправда стала вже Правдою зватись.  
Що вже тепер Правда стоїть у порога,  
А вража неправда з панамі край стола.  
Що вже тепер Правду ногами топтають,  
А вражу неправду мед-вином напувають.  
Що вже тепер Правда, Правда у темниці,  
А а вража неправда з панамі в світлиці.  
Що вже кінець віка, кінець приблизився,  
Хоч рідного брата тепер стережися.  
Бо вже тепер Правда, Правда вже померла,  
А вража неправда увесь світ зажерла.  
А хто тую Правду буде поважати,  
Тому сошле Господь з неба благодаті.  
Бо сам Господь – Правда, сокрушить неправду,  
Сумирить гординю, вознесе святиню.