

Collection

# ***Toch HaNachal***

(Within the Stream)

Wonderful words which were spoken

*on Shabbat Parshas Vayigash 5771*

By the *Rav* and *Tzaddik*,

*Mohorosh Shlit"o*

Collected and Printed

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## Friday Night, Parshas Vayigash 5771

At the first meal, Mohorosh *Shlit"á* spoke inspiring words regarding the judgment which a person makes upon himself, based on the teachings of Rebbe Nachman in *Likutei Mohoran* part I, lesson 113.

Rebbe Nachman says, “It is brought down in the *Mishnah* (*Avos* 3:16) “Justice is exacted from a person with or without his knowledge.” I heard in the name of the Baal Shem Tov that before any decree is passed in the world, the entire world is gathered together and asked if they agree to this decree. Even the person himself upon whom the decree is to be made is also asked if he agrees. Only then is the decree passed. The reason for this is because if the person would be asked openly regarding himself he would surely disagree and claim that the judgment is not correct. Therefore, he is tricked and asked about a similar case, and when he passes judgment, the decree can be passed. We find this with David *HaMelech* (II *Shmuel* 12:5-6). When Nathan the prophet came to him and told him the story about the wealthy man who served his guest a lamb stolen from a pauper, he answered, “By G-d!... and the lamb he shall pay fourfold ...” Only then was the decree passed upon David as he himself had said. This is, “Justice is exacted from a person with his knowledge” – meaning, that is opinion is asked – however, it is still, “without his knowledge,” for he doesn’t realize that the judgment is about himself. How each person is asked [about himself] is a very complex matter. In all conversations and stories that a person hears, one can find relevant issues, so one must be very careful not to pass judgment until he has thought it through a second or third time, because one’s own life is on the scale. It is a fact of ancient wisdom that all conversations contain issues of great importance. This is alluded to in (*Berachos* 5b), [When Rabbi Chiyah ben Abba fell ill, Rabbi Yochanan went to visit him and said to him:] “‘Are afflictions precious to you?’ ‘Neither they nor their reward,’ answered Rabbi Chiyah. ‘Give me your hand’ He gave him his hand and healed him.” He meant to say, that if you do not want [suffering], then “give me your hand” [showing] that you really don’t want it. When he gave him his hand, he was able to heal him for he showed clear objection to the decree and was able to annul it.” (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman).

Mohorosh explained that Rebbe Nachman is teaching us an important principle in this lesson in that one must be extremely careful not to judge anyone else; being that he can be judging himself. Occasionally one is asked: What should be done with someone who did such and such? When most people hear about a certain injustice or improper deed which someone committed, they become enraged and

quickly jump to judge the person, stating that he deserves a severe and harsh punishment. Meanwhile, he doesn't realize that through this he's actually judging himself. For he too has done a similar act previously and it's only that he has forgotten about it and it seems to him as though he's free from any type of punishment for that improper act. However, Hashem is very patient and if the person doesn't make *teshuvah* (repentance) he'll eventually receive his punishment. However, prior to being punished by the Heavenly Tribunal, they ask the person his opinion on the matter and what he thinks should be done with such a person and what punishment he deserves. And because they don't ask him about himself outright, for then surely he'll respond with all types of claims and arguments. Rather, they ask him about a similar case regarding [what he thinks is] someone else. According to the verdict which he gives, so too they do with him, may Hashem spare us. Therefore, the wise ensure not to pass judgment and punishment on anyone; rather, they are always careful to say, "I don't know..." as our holy sages stated (*Berachos* 4a) "Let your tongue acquire the habit of saying, "I know not..."". For then he'll save himself all types of severe and bitter punishments and merit to make complete *teshuvah* in truth.

Therefore, the main thing which Rebbe Nachman wants us to take from his words is that a person should be very careful in all his actions and not cause any suffering to anyone; for he will receive like kind in return – measure for measure. Therefore, it is proper to be extremely careful to not pass any judgment or punishment over anyone; for by doing so he's actually judging and sentencing himself, measure for measure. Therefore, it is better to begin being very careful about this so that he won't come to cause any type of suffering to anyone. In this way, he won't come to any punishment or suffering and he'll live a good, sweet and eternal life. Happy is he and fortunate is his lot.

Mohorosh connected the above concepts to our *parsha* in the most wonderful way. All of Yosef's behavior towards his brothers – prior to making himself known to them and afterwards – was in order to teach them to be very careful about causing any type of suffering to anyone. For they will receive like kind, measure for measure, as with the case of Yehuda who said to Yaakov (*Bereishis* 37:32) "**Identify please**: is this your son's tunic or not?" Tamar answered him measure for measure saying (*Bereishis* 38:25) "**Identify please**: whose are this signet, this wrap and this staff." This is as our holy sages stated (*Bereishis Rabbah* 84:19) "The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Yehuda: "You said: 'Identify please'; so it is only proper that Tamar should respond to you: 'Identify please'." All of this is encompassed in Rebbe Nachman's words above regarding someone who passes judgment on himself with or without his knowledge. Because when Yehuda said to his father

“Identify please,” he was actually judging himself, resulting in Tamar also telling him “Identify please”; receiving his own suffering and punishment with these very words, measure for measure.

This also happened with Yehuda’s promise of returning Binyamin to his father. Because Yehuda became a guarantor for Binyamin, as it is written (*Bereishis* 44:32) “Because your servant took responsibility for the youth from my father saying, ‘If I do not bring him to you then I will have sinned to my father for all time’.” Rashi explains this verse saying, “And if you will ask, why is it that *I* enter the controversy more than my other brothers? [The reason is because] They are all on the outside, but I bound myself up [in this matter] with a tight knot, to be banished from both worlds [this world and the World to Come] if I don’t bring him back.” For even in this he passed judgment on himself, because he removed himself from both worlds; and for this reason his bones turned over in his coffin throughout the forty years in the desert until Moshe prayed for mercy on his behalf (*Sotah* 7b). We find that in every word which a person speaks he should be very careful not to pass any negative judgment, either on himself or others. For his very words could come to pass, as Rebbe Nachman says (*Likutei Mohoran*, part II, lesson 1) “Whenever a person sits to speak about another person, this corresponds to *Rosh HaShanah*, which is the Day of Judgment. Therefore, one must be extremely careful and look into oneself deeply to see if he is capable of judging another person.” It is specifically at the moment when a person judges his fellow that he is really judging himself. Therefore, it is proper for him to be extremely careful in this.

Now, Yosef *HaTzaddik* wanted to show his brothers the great principle of guarding themselves from causing anyone suffering. Therefore, he told them prior to their travelling out of Mitzrayim (*Bereishis* 45:24) “Do not become agitated on the way” – that they not become angry and blame one another regarding their selling him. He did not want them to experience additional suffering for having sold him, as Rashi explains, “He was worried that they would argue on the way over having sold him, by arguing with one another saying, ‘*You* were the reason why we sold him. *You* spoke evil words against him and caused us to hate him’.” Yosef also hinted to them with his words how they should likewise be very careful of causing suffering to anyone else during their travels, as the *Baal HaTurim* states (verse 24) “‘Do not become agitated’ – as if to say, ‘Do not use my credentials to offend people saying, ‘Our brother is the highest official in the land, and that grants us permission to mistreat others’. Rather, while you are on the way, ‘do not agitate others’ by walking across someone’s sown field.’” For even though their brother was a high official; nevertheless, they must respect others. Causing others suffering is a very grave sin and eventually is punished like kind, measure for measure. And

may Hashem grant us the merit of always being careful regarding other people's honor, judging them favorably. For then we in turn will be judged favorably by the Heavenly Tribunal and we'll merit seeing the salvation and redemption of all *Am Israel*, soon and in our days. *Amen v'amen*.

