

HASHGACHA PRATIS

Inspirational messages and contemporary stories of hashgacha
From the Hashgacha Pratis Hotline



Parshiyos Titzaveh - Ki Tisa 5781 ■ Issue 60

HEART TO HEART

Based on shiurim in
Duties of the Heart, Shaar Bitachon, given on the Hotline

The Punishment of the Simple Soldier

Rabbeinu Bechaye tells us six reasons for the phenomenon "*rasha v'tov lo*," that the wicked have it good in this world. The third "and possibly the main reason" is that the good in itself causes the wicked man's downfall and death, as it says, "wealth is guarded for its owner, to harm him."

There are two ways wealth can cause harm to a person. Sometimes it can actually destroy him; otherwise, it just causes him a lot of stress. He has to be worried about theft, losses, and other problems.

Haman is the best example. He was wealthy beyond imagination, and rose to tremendous power. As his pride grew, in heaven they were laughing at him, anticipating his imminent downfall! Let's see how Chazal tell his story.

The Midrash says he came from Eretz Yisroel to Paras and advised Achashveirosh to put a stop to the building of the Beis Hamikdash. This act already sealed his fate on High, but Hashem waited. Why? This can be compared to a simple soldier who cursed the prince. The king was furious at him, but realized that if he would just order the man killed, it wouldn't bring him any honor. Therefore, he first raised the rank of the soldier, who was promoted again and again until he ruled a whole section of the country. Then the king ordered his execution! In that way, he avenged his son's honor and displayed his great might.

So too, if Haman would've died right away for his sin, nobody would have noticed. Hashem gave him great power, making him second in command to the king – and only destroyed him, in a way so spectacular that we remember it forever.

When Haman wanted to build the gallows to hang Mordechai, the Midrash says, Hashem called together all the trees and asked who wanted to volunteer to become the gallows where Haman would be hung. Each tree claimed the right to this honor for its own reason. Only the thorn bush spoke quietly, forlornly, and pleaded to be used for the mitzvah. "All the other trees are used for good purposes, but I am scorned by everyone. They cut me and burn me. I'm a thorn and he's a thorn; let me be the one to get rid of him!" Hashem agreed with him. As it says in Tehillim, בפרוה רשעים כמו עשב, the wicked sprout like grass – in order that להשמדם עדי עד, they be destroyed forever.

This also explains why there are all kinds of damaging forces in the world. We wonder why Hashem made them at all. But Hashem knows the purpose of each one, as Koheles teaches, "There is a time for each thing under the heavens." Nothing exists without reason.

May we be zoche to be of benefit to the world!

(From shiur 68 in Shaar Habitachon)

The shiur is aired on Mon. and Thurs. - menu 4 (Yiddish and Hebrew)

FROM THE EDITOR

Shushan Habirah, 2386 years ago

The year is 3395. Elisha lives in Shushan, and King Achashveirosh puts up notices about his upcoming banquet, open to all. He even keeps his Jewish subjects in mind, and offers glatt kosher food for them! (Maharsha, Megilla 12)

Elisha doesn't really want to mingle with gentiles, but he feels that attending the royal banquet is his necessary hishtadlus in order find favor with the king. Plus, everything will be kosher! Nonetheless, Mordechai Hatzaddik sends a message to all: It is forbidden to go to the banquet! Let us trust in Hashem and keep the mitzvos carefully, rather than putting our faith in Achashveirosh! (Klausenberger Rebbe)

Well, Elisha goes anyway, and he is shocked along with everyone else when the king kills his own queen. A few years later, Esther is picked to replace her, and Elisha sees that as a good sign. He excitedly relays the news to his family. We now have a Jew representing us in the royal palace, Elisha sagely asserts.

Then Haman rises to power and orders that everyone bow to him. Once again, the Jews are in a quandary: It's not a good idea to upset the authorities! Once again, Mordechai refuses to go along, and defiantly flaunts his refusal to bow before Haman's very eyes. Why? People wondered. What is so terrible about a bit of logical hishtadlus? Or at the very least, why couldn't Mordechai avoid meeting Haman? Mordechai answered that he doesn't want to demonstrate any fear of a human being; only of Hashem! (Maharal, Ohr Chodosh Ch. 5)

Next thing you know, Haman makes a decree to kill all the Jews! It's all Mordechai's fault, fumes Elisha. Mordechai, however, claims that the decree has come upon them because they attended the royal banquet nine years earlier, instead of placing their trust only in Hashem.

The Jews' only thread of hope is that Esther will intercede with the king to abolish the decree. They all fast and pray for her success, and she goes in to the king – and invites him and Haman to a feast! That's it! All their hopes are lost! Esther, it seems, has turned traitor and became a friend of the king and Haman! (Megillah 15b)

At this point, they completely lose faith in human intervention. As the Arizal says, the first letters of the words יהוה המלך יבוא spell Hashem's Name. When all hope seems lost, they rediscover their bitachon and realize that only Hashem could help them.

And that is how salvation came.

In our days, too, when a Yid lifts his eyes to the heavens and says, "Father in heaven! Only You can help me!" – this is the outlook that heralds yeshuos.

Good Shabbos
Pinchas Shefer

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• Kav Hashgacha Pratis for women
(Yiddish and Hebrew) - Menu 4

THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

Right on Time

Reb Zalman from Yerushalayim:

I own an apartment in Beit Shemesh which I rent out and I live in a rental in Yerushalayim. Every month I get money from my tenant, and I have to pay both rent and mortgage.

This month, my tenant paid me a couple of days before the mortgage payment was due; my rent was due the following week. I had to decide what to use it for – perhaps it would be better to save it for the rent and try to get the mortgage money some other way.

Then I said to myself, don't I listen to Kav Hashgacha Pratis? Hashem gives us everything we need, *when we need it*. I don't have to worry about next week, and if I owe money today, I should just pay it. So I deposited it in the bank for the mortgage.

The next week, I still needed 800 shekels to cover my rent. Then my wife said we need to buy new shoes for some of the children. I started to get nervous, and considered borrowing the money, but then I remembered the shiurim of Rav Shneebeal about avoiding loans. He quotes the Be'er Mayim Chayim that Hashem "gives our food in its time," and we should just trust in Hashem.

So I started davening to Hashem, asking for the money I needed, said some Tehillim and looked up the Be'er Mayim Chayim – it opened right to that piece! He says that just like the mann came each day as needed, so too we shouldn't worry about tomorrow, and Hashem will give us what we need each day. Then I went to minchah.

After davening, a man came over to me. He had a big smile on his face and handed me an envelope – with money.

A few months before, I had mentioned a shidduch idea for his son. He had said that someone else already suggested it. Baruch Hashem, they soon got engaged, and I forgot about the whole thing. What had happened now?

He told me that they didn't pursue the shidduch when the first person suggested it, but after I spoke to him with the same idea, his wife thought they should look into it again. Because of that, they met! He paid the first shadchan, but then thought about it some more and went to ask a rav if he owed me shadchanus pay as well. The rav said to give me a third of the price, and so now he was giving it to me.

I opened the envelope. It had 1200 shekels in it. 800 for the rent, and 400 for the shoes!

The Power of Simcha!

I have two stories for you – the first one gave me chizuk to deal with the second one.

23 years ago, I went with my father to Hadassah Hospital for Shabbos. He was admitted, and I went down to the shul to daven. Right after Kabbalas Shabbos started, the doctor working on my father poked his head in.

"We aren't feeling a pulse," he stated gravely.

I decided there was nothing I could do to help, so I thanked him and continued davening. Simcha brings yeshuos! So I davened with all my heart, filling my soul with thoughts and feelings of praise to Hashem and the holy Shabbos. I'll never forget that tefillah!

After maariv, the doctor returned. "He's fine now."

Two Shabbosos on Credit

A month ago, my friend Shlomo from Beitar related the following:

"I always used to buy chicken for Shabbos. One day, I was thinking about how Chazal tell us the money we spend for Shabbos is not part of the decree of Rosh Hashanah, and Hashem returns it to us. So I decided to buy real meat for Shabbos. I have some experience as a cook. I started buying meat every week for Shabbos." "Last week, we went to my in-laws, and at some point one of their kids asked mine what we eat on Shabbos. When the child responded that we eat meat, it placed me in an uncomfortable situation."

I told him a vort from Rav Shlomke Zviller zy"va, on the Gemara that "if only Yisroel would guard two Shabbosos, they would be redeemed immediately." He said "two Shabbosos" means that you buy what you need for Shabbos, and also for someone else. Rav Shlomka, it's well known, would distribute challos to many people, even when he didn't have much money in the house.

So Shlomo accepted my idea, and the next time he went to his shver, he brought some good quality meat for them to prepare for Shabbos. Everyone was happy.

Motzei Shabbos, a man came over and offered him a job cooking meat for his upscale catering service! The pay was great, and it wasn't too much work.

Shlomo told me this with deep feelings of gratitude to Hashem. He had honored both his wife's parents and the Shabbos, and had seen the reward right away!

(Bitachon Yomi, Thursday Parshas Mishpatim #98)

To listen to stories press

Paying a Debt after 40 Years

Rav Aryeh from Yerushalayim:

I was invited to speak in a shul in Har Gidon. I spoke about common *ribbis* problems and gave an example of changing currencies. "If, let's say you borrowed lirot from someone 40 years ago, you have to figure out exactly how much it comes to in today's shekalim, so it shouldn't be *ribbis*."

One of the men there stood up and announced, "Rabbi, I have to tell you a story about that!" And he began his amazing tale:

My name is Mordechai Ben Baron. 27 years ago, I started working as a teacher in a school. I met the maintenance worker there, and when I said my name, he was startled.

"Are you from Tunis?" he asked.

"Yes I am. Why?"

He continued, "Are you a grandson of Mordechai Ben Baron from there?"

"Sure – I'm named after him."

"I worked with your grandfather in a factory when we made *aliyah*. I was living with my grandmother in an immigrant colony, and we barely had what to eat. One Friday, we had nothing special to eat for Shabbos. My Savta was sad. I went out looking for something, and finally I found a chicken walking around in the fields. I took it and ran to the shochet – your grandfather – to *shecht* it. It was close to Shabbos, and he had already packed up his tools. I begged him to *shecht* it, and he agreed. But I didn't have any money, and it cost ten agurot for the *shechitah*. 'Don't worry,' he said with a smile, 'you can pay me when you can.'"

"That was forty years ago," said the worker. "I never paid him! Here, let me pay you."

I told him my grandfather's *yahrtzeit* was in another two days, and he could get an *aliyah* and make a *misheberach* for him.

It cost him ten shekels, which is equal to ten agurot of forty years ago!

I didn't work long at that school, and I never saw him again.

I knew it was in the *zechus* of my efforts to be *b'simcha* that we had the *yeshuah*!

Last year, I had to make use of that lesson again.

I was with my children's family for the Seder night, and suddenly their year-old baby fell out of her highchair! She bumped her head on the floor, and wasn't responding. They called an ambulance and she went off with her parents. I was left alone with the rest of their children, who were obviously shocked and frightened. I acted.

"Children, tonight's *leil haSeder*, and Hashem wants us to be happy! Let's talk about *yetzias Mitzrayim*!" And I started telling them all the stories of the *hagaddah*. I didn't let any unhappy thoughts come into my head. *Baruch Hashem* everyone else was swept along with the beautiful atmosphere. A few hours later, my son-in-law walked in. He was radiating joy. "A miracle! She's fine! Everything is fine."

I am publicizing these stories to show the incredible power of *simcha*.

"Abba, Did they Call Yet?"

This is Bentzion from Modi'in Illit. My friend told me this amazing story:

My sister just got engaged, at age 28. We were davening for her for years, of course. A month beforehand, my son came home from *cheder* one day, all excited and anxious.

"Abba, did they call yet?" he burst out.

What? Who?

"Did they call to tell you that Aunt Malki is a *kallah*?"

Why should they call me now?

"Today in *cheder*, a boy insulted me. Instead of answering, I went to the side and davened that it should be a *zechus* for Malki to get married."

I was speechless. What a pure *tefillah* from a sweet, pure boy!

And that day, she got a *shidduch* offer, which eventually became her husband! His *tefillah* had reached the heavens.

A Good Investment

Rav Asher Kovalsky *shlit"a*:

An *avreich* told me the following story:

Two years ago, I was going to go to Meron for *Lag Baomer* with my wife. We bought tickets for the 4:00 bus. Then we got busy, and at 3:30 I remembered that I hadn't davened *minchah* yet. By the time we'd get to Meron, it would probably be too late. I went to the *shteiblach*, and the first *minyana* had just started *ashrei*. But at my wedding I had taken upon myself to always daven the entire *korbonos*. I went to the other rooms, but they were all in the middle of *mincha*. I knew I wouldn't be able to finish *mincha* before 4:00. It was hard, but I held firm. I called my wife and told her to go on ahead without me. I would buy another ticket.

It's not like we had any extra money, learning as I was in *kollel*, but I knew it was what Hashem wanted me to do. I davened *mincha* properly, then took a later bus.

At a rest stop, the man sitting next to me asked if I could get him some *mezonos* from the store. I was happy to do so. When I came back to the bus with cookies for him, we started *schmoozing*.

"I want to make a deal with you," he said, in his obviously American accent. Deals? I'm not a businessman; I learn in *kollel*.

"That's what I mean," he said. "I want to make a *Yissacher-Zevulun* deal with you. I'll support you and get some of the *zechusim* of your learning."

And that is what happened. This man started sending money every month, and even helped me get into a very prestigious *kollel* in Yerushalayim.

All this occurred when I held firm to my resolution about *mincha*! *Parnassah* is from Hashem, and in this case, it came in a way that showed me He approved of my actions.

(Interview with Rabbi Asher Kovalsky)

Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

We say in shemoneh esrei, "And [You] reward all who trust in Your Name, with truth." 1) Why do we ask for reward specifically for bitachon? 2) What does it mean to trust in Hashem "with truth"? Is there any other way? 3) Why specifically regarding bitachon do we ask Hashem to "put our lot with them"?

M. A. S., Yerushalayim

Q #14

Why Bitachon?

Reb Shmuel Blau from Yerushalayim; Reb Shlomo Shimon Rothman from Beit Shemesh: Bitachon is the root of all the mitzvos, says the Gr"a. "Chavakuk came and stood all the mitzvos on emunah." Bitachon enables you to do all the mitzvos better, with calm and tranquility. That's why we ask to have a share with *baalei* bitachon.

Grant a Goodly Portion

Reb Yisroel Katz from Yerushalayim; Reb Yishai Tzeber from Modiin: Bitachon has the power to give the person everything he needs from Hashem. We are liable to think that there is no reward, however, for the actual bitachon. That's why we emphasize that indeed, there is reward for putting one's faith in Hashem.

Reb Yaakov Masband from Yerushalayim: The sefer *Iyun Tefilla* explains that "goodly schar" doesn't refer to reward in the world to come, but rather to yeshuos in this world.

Those who trust in Your Name, in truth

Reb Avraham Aryeh Elefant from Beit Shemesh; Reb Moshe Brown from Bnei Brak; Reb Moshe Shpitzer from Netanya: Rav Moshe Leib MiSassov *zt"l* said this refers to great tzaddikim who nullify their desires completely to Hashem's will. They don't even think to ask for anything they themselves need in this world, so this prayer ensures that the rest of Klal Yisroel will daven for them!

Reb Yaakov Akiva Rabinowitz from Beit Shemesh adds: That's why we add after this, "and put our lot with them" – so that no one should think they aren't acting properly.

Reb Yaakov Cohen from Yerushalayim; Reb Shmuel Yisraeli from Bnei Brak: The Brisker Rav *zt"l* said there are two levels of bitachon. Some people do hishtadlus along with the bitachon, feeling as if both work together. The higher level is to understand that hishtadlus is nothing but a decree, and Hashem does everything. This is what "in truth" means.

Reb Shlomo Zalman Baum from Yerushalayim: We don't want to be like those who talk about bitachon, but when a nisayon comes, they forget it all. We want it to have true bitachon, even when challenged.

Put our Lot with Them

Reb Chaim Meir Daskal from Elad: A *baal* bitachon has a good and happy life. He accepts everything that happens

with trust. That's why we ask to be like them.

Reb Mordechai Malachi from Beitar Illit: It's like someone who wants to see the king, but they don't let him in. What does he do? He follows closely behind one of the royal staff, and slips into the king's chamber with him. So too, we ask to join those who have bitachon, even if we are not on their level.

Reb Chaim Kahana from Brachfeld: Rabbeinu Bechaya says in *Parshas Pinchas* that only a person who has bitachon is called a tzaddik. We're asking to be included among the tzaddikim; bitachon is their defining midah.

Commentators

Reb Mordechai Eliyahu Shefer from Yerushalayim: The R"i ben Yakar, explains that the brachah mentions four groups: tzaddikim, chassidim, geirim, and everyone else. For the first three groups, we ask to give them reward; for the rest of us, we ask to be included with them, as a free gift.

Reb Yehuda Gewirtzman from Beit Shemesh adds another explanation: If you count each phrase, there are seven kinds of people in the brachah. The first is tzaddikim, the last is "all who trust in Your Name." This covers the whole gamut of Klal Yisroel, so we then ask to have a portion with them. The last group may refer to reshaim, who at least trust a little bit in Hashem. We daven for them to be rewarded, so that they should do complete teshuvah.

Reb Dovid Leifer from Yerushalayim quotes several meforshim: We ask for reward for *baalei* bitachon so that others will see that nobody loses by trusting in Hashem. Since bitachon is hidden in the heart, we add "with truth." It says that if someone doesn't have bitachon, his reward is taken from him, so we ask that "our portion" of reward should be kept with the *baalei* bitachon.

Question for issue 62

We all know "everything Hashem does is for the good." If so, why should we ever daven when in pain? If the pain is for our good, why would we want things to be different?

D.T.P., Moshav Chazon Yechezkel

To send in questions or answers: Leave a message on the Hotline at 02-301-1300 menu 3 ext. 5 (Yiddish or Hebrew) |

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A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on Kav Hashgacha Pratis

The first time I met my Rebbi, Rav Gershon Libman *zt"l*, he was praising a certain Rosh Yeshiva very highly. He spoke warmly about his midos, Torah knowledge, and diligence. Afterwards I found out that he had a dispute with this Rosh Yeshiva. Rav Gershon was speaking well of him in order to develop his own ability to see the good in others.

Someone once saw him searching the ground for something. He inquired what Rav Gershon had lost, and Rav Gershon responded that he was searching for someone who was doing better than he is, in order to develop his *ayin tovah*.

An *ayin tovah* purifies the heart! People have heart problems, and they don't know that it's reflective of the state of their spiritual heart, which is filled with jealousy and anger at others. They should work on their *ayin tovah*, be happy for other people's success, and then their heart will feel better.

I once went to speak to Rav Shimshon Pincus *zt"l*, and he told me he repeats to himself the *passuk* "לב כלוקים" hundreds of times a day! I later heard that Rav Nosson Wachtfogel would do the same thing. Having a pure heart means rejoicing for other people.

There is a joke about the fact that in the tefillah *Unesaneh Tokef*, when people say "Who will become rich?" they cry. Why? They're thinking about the possibility of the other guy becoming rich. So much stress comes from this, from not being happy when

Excerpts from the popular shiur by Harav Yehuda Mandel *shlit"l* from Lakewood
Think Well of Others - It Pays!

others have it good.

In Slabodka they put a big emphasis on this. Rav Moshe Chodosh told me that the Alter would speak about this all the time. Perhaps this was the secret to the success of Slabodka! So many Yeshivos were spearheaded by talmidim of Slabodka. I asked Rav Boruch Mordechai Ezrachi *shlit"l* how to acquire an *ayin tovah*. He said – talk about it all the time, and then it goes into the heart, eventually.

I once had a nisayon of jealousy. I asked Rav Ozer Shwartz *zt"l* what to do about it. He said that one who is happy about other people's success will receive a breastplate of jewels for his *ayin tovah*. That's how Aharon Hakohen got his *choshen*. In fact, he was doubly rewarded for seeing the good in others. He's compared to Moshe Rabbeinu, and he's buried on Har Hahar – a double mountain, to show that he gets rewarded for the success of others as well.

During the tenth plague, the firstborns of prisoners from other nations in Mitzrayim died as well, as punishment for the fact that they were happy that the Yidden were suffering. On the positive end, Hashem will doubly reward those who rejoice in the successes of others. Isn't that a great "business deal"?

In Navhardok, if someone had reason to be angry at another, he was instructed to do him a favor instead. When something upsets you, it's an opportunity to work on your midos. Instead of senseless hatred, extend yourself in a gesture of gratuitous love.

Rav Mandel's shiurim are broadcast on Kav Hashgacha Pratis weekly in all three languages - Hebrew, Yiddish and English

Effects on Two Ends

On the receiving end

Some days I miss breakfast – but I never miss the morning chizuk from the Hotline! I can't start the day without it, it gives me koach for the whole day!

Bentzion Gross, Yerushalayim

Message on the hotline:

I saw that you printed the story of a man who sponsored the pamphlet and then immediately found his zivug. I decided to do this segula too – if I get engaged in Shevat, I'll donate. Boruch Hashem, I am sending in my donation!

Mazon tov, chassan! May you build a beautiful bayis ne'eman b'Yisroel and have siyatta dishmaya in everything you do.

On the giving end

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