

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshiyos Beha'alotcha - Shelach 5781 ■ Issue 66

HEART TO HEART

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

Who Really has it Good?

Before learning about bitachon, Rabbeinu Bechaye wants to clear our minds from obstructions that prevent our trusting in Hashem.

First of all, it's a waste of time to trust in people! Picture a fellow who has many uncles, each tops in his profession. One is a millionaire. Whenever he needs money he can just call him up and ask for a donation. That makes him feel calm. Another is a multi-specialist doctor. If anything is amiss in his body, he's immediately glad to help. A third uncle is a top psychologist; when he feels nervous or down, he treats him for free. And another one is an international businessman. He has connections in every industry and gets him whatever he wants.

This phalanx of "machers" is great, but they come with a price. He has to keep up his friendships with them, send gifts for their birthdays, attend their simchas, always making sure he stays on their good side.

The Chovos Halevavos introduces Shaar Habitachon with the comment that this is such a waste of time and effort! People invest years of effort to network and maintain connections in areas which are not guaranteed. You can have the biggest gvir, but if you annoy him, catch him at the wrong moment, or if he loses his wealth – you're finished!

The passuk says that "smart people get trapped in their wiles" (Iyov 5:13); if they believe in their own powers and do hishtadlus without trusting in Hashem, they will eventually find themselves trapped within a web of their own efforts. So too, Shlomo Hamelech declares (Koheles 9:11), "I have pondered and have seen under the sun (i.e., physical endeavors), and the swift do not win the race, nor do the mighty win a battle,

the wise do not have bread, the clever do not have wealth..." Just because Hashem gave a person natural abilities or circumstantial success, it doesn't mean he will come out ahead.

A man can invest all his time and energy to establish a business, when suddenly he turns around when he's fifty and realizes that he doesn't have much to show for his efforts. A bad investment here, a market drop there, dishonest partners make off with some more of the profits – and he's essentially a failure. The same goes for every area of gashmiyus advancement, even health, happiness and peace. There are no guarantees!

However – instead, he could simply rely on Hashem and have everything he needs. "כפירים רשו ורעבו, ודורשי ה' לא יחסרו כל טוב." [תהילים ל"ד] A *kfir* is a young lion. He should be the most well-off animal in the world! His father is the "king of the wild," the terror of the jungle. And yet, while all the other animals graze contentedly on their grass, he roams the woods looking for something he can bite into, still too young to attack. His digestive system takes three days to complete its work, because he doesn't get food that often. His pedigree notwithstanding, he may go hungry!

On the other hand, a person who "seeks Hashem never lacks for anything." This doesn't mean that he'll own a palace to live in and always have every item at hand. Hashem makes it easier for him by keeping his essential products in stores until he needs them, so he saves on storage space... He lives in peace and tranquility, knowing that his loving Father will provide everything in the right time, in the perfect format, precisely tailored to his requirements!

(From shiur 2 in Shaar Habitachon)

FROM THE EDITOR

Our Abba is calling out, "Have mercy on Me!"

I met a Yid who is a very successful *mezakeh harabim*. I noticed him in shul when his phone rang and he hurried outside to take the call. Seeing that I was watching him, he explained:

"I started being careful not to talk on my phone in shul in 2015. After the terrorist attack in that shul in Har Nof, I understood that Hashem wants me to improve my kavod for shuls, so I made this kabbalah."

He must have seen that I looked impressed, so he continued. "If I heard about the terrorist attack, there must have been a message in it for me. The Mishnah in Sanhedrin says Adam Harishon was created singularly, so that each person should say 'The world was created for me.' This is a responsibility – I carry the whole world on my shoulders, and whatever happens in it relates directly to me. Hashem is talking directly to me through the events in the world."

"Imagine a man who has just one child, let's say born after 25 years of waiting. He loves him more than anything in the world. Then he grows up and gets involved in some shady deals. The father bails him out, sells his house and whatever. But the kid doesn't get it, and keeps on getting in trouble. The father tries again and again to get him to stop, but he doesn't listen. So, with terrible shame and pain, he contacts the authorities so that they will deal with him. Believe me, as much as the son suffers from the law, the father is suffering even more!

"That's what the Rambam says regarding a tzarah. He says you have to cry out to Hashem and do teshuvah, and if you don't, it's cruelty. If you don't cry, this can cause more tzaros to happen, and this is an act of cruelty to Hashem! He loves us more than we love ourselves, and He wants to give us only pleasant things, all the time. If we ignore His warnings to improve, He has to 'potch' us even more, and that causes Him great pain! We have to hear Him calling out to us – My precious children, come back to Me! Please! I'm waiting for you with open arms!

"That is why I try to listen to our Father calling out to me, and each time something happens I try to improve something in my avodas Hashem and come closer to Him."

Now I know why this man is so amazingly successful at what he does. He's constantly in touch with the messages from Hashem, so Hashem helps him at every turn!

He taught me a powerful lesson. Each thing that happens is directed at me. Corona was a message for me, the Meron tragedy was for me, what happened Erev Shavuot in the midst of a Chanukas Habayis was another message, the thousands of rockets directed towards Eretz Yisrael are intended to wake me up. It's time for me to answer my loving Father and work on drawing closer, even if in just a small way.

May Hashem help all of us get closer to Him, and thus bring about the ultimate yeshuah of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, speedily in our days.

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

The Dove that wouldn't Budge

Reb Yehoshua Kahana from Tzfas:

My father, Reb Yekusiel Tzvi z"l, was niftar on the last day of Pesach this year.

We sat shivah in his house. On the second day, after Minchah, a dove flew in through the open window and perched on a chair. We tried shooing it out, but it refused to budge. We gave it food, but it stayed put. We said to it "*machul lach*—you are forgiven," and everything else, but nothing helped! Finally someone picked it up, put it outside, and closed the window.

But it stayed right there, pecking on the window.

A while later, it got hot and stuffy, so someone opened the window, and the dove flew right back in. It was trying to tell us something, but we didn't know what!

B'hashgacha pratis, later that day a distinguished talmid chacham came to be menachem avel. We asked him what to do.

He thought for a moment and asked when the dove had first arrived. After Mincha, we told him. What did you do after davening? he asked. Nothing much... we sat around and schmoozed until it was time for Maariv.

He smiled. "Maybe he's telling you that there should be Mishnayos learnt during that time, as is the minhag. Mishnah (משנה) is the same letters as neshama (נשמה), and it helps the niftar's neshama."

He instructed someone to start Mishnayos, as printed in siddurim, and then we all said kaddish.

The bird flew right out the window.

(Bitachon Yomi in 5 minutes, Tuesday Parshas Bamidbar #173)

At the Right Moment

My son received a kind of flashlight for a learning initiative from the school. It flashes a bright blue light. On the way home one day, he forgot it in the car and I found it only the next morning, when I pulled out very early on my way to work. I put it in the dashboard so I would remember to give it to him, and so it shouldn't fall between the seats.

On one of the deserted streets, I noticed a car that seemed to be following me. Then it started coming closer and closer to me... I looked hard at the rearview mirror and saw hate-filled Arab faces sneering back at me! He was trying to hit me!

I broke out in a cold sweat and accelerated even faster. He put his own foot down hard on the gas He was gaining on me. I reached for my phone on the dashboard to call the police, but instead, my hand closed on my son's flashlight. My finger brushed the switch, and suddenly blue light flooded the dark car and surrounding road.

And the car behind me zoomed away in the darkness. I guess he thought I was a policeman!

If I would have tried calling the police, by the time they would have arrived on the scene, I might have already....chas ve'shalom.

I thanked Hashem for saving me in the nick of time.

The Brick Wall

This awesome story was relayed by Reb Avraham Mordechai Segal, who heard it from the famous baal chessed, Reb Chaim Tobi, who was niftar last year.

Reb Chaim: I once found myself in a small village in France, an hour from Paris. There's a tiny Jewish community there, and I stayed for Shabbos with the Rav of the town. Sitting in his dining room, I noticed something strange behind the curtain. It appeared as if there was no window there, only a brick wall! I asked my host about it. He became emotional and then began his astonishing tale:

I used to live in Eretz Yisroel and then I moved here to be mekarev Yidden. When I came here, the place was devoid of Jewish life. Nothing. B'chasdei Hashem, I started a shul, schools, and little by little people were coming back to their heritage. But one thing was still missing – a mikvah. The closest one was an hour away.

I decided to start a mikvah project. I couldn't find a better place, so I started building a mikvah in my backyard. It took a while, but eventually we had a mehudar mikvah available for the community. I would ask visiting Rabbis to check that it was built properly, and baruch Hashem the standard of tahara was raised tremendously.

The mikvah being in my yard, we were very, very careful to make sure the door was locked, for the safety of our children.

We were blessed with nine boys, and hoped for a daughter, to fulfill the mitzvah of "be fruitful and multiply" fully, but our tenth child was also a boy. No matter; we loved little Shloimi with all our hearts. In fact, we felt a special affinity towards him, a stronger love than all the other children.

One Shabbos afternoon, we realized that we hadn't seen Shloimi for a while. My wife searched the house, then went outside... and found the mikvah door open. To this day, we have no idea how it could have happened. And that is where she found our sweet little Shloimi...

I was absolutely broken. We had a special connection with him, he had a special kedusha about him. Not only that, but how could

To listen to stories press

it be that the mitzvah I put so much effort into, built with my own hands and money, could harm us? The Gemara says Nechuniah Chofer Shichin used to dig wells for the *olei regel* to drink from. His daughter once fell into a well, and Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa said it's not possible for her to be harmed by the mitzvah her father had dedicated himself to doing. So how could it happen to me?

I went to speak to the biggest Rabbanim in France and they empathized with me, but none of them could soothe my aching heart.

Until one night, in my dream, I saw a man with a long white beard and a shining face. He said, "Abba, be comforted!"

"Who are you?" I asked him.

"I am your Shloimi!" the old man responded.

"I was one of the Baalei Tosfos, and I was killed al Kiddush Hashem. When I went up to Shamayim, they let me into all the chambers and levels, except one. I asked why I couldn't go in there, and they said only people who had a taharah before they were buried could enter. I, who was thrown into a grave with my bloody clothes, was barred entry from this level. I asked them what I could do in order to be able to enter, and they said the only way was to go down to the world and toivel in a mikvah. The malachim in charge looked around for a Yid who was special enough to merit helping me, and because of your mesiras nefesh in building a mikvah, you were chosen! Now that I went into the mikvah, I can enter every chamber in Shamayim!

"You should know that it was very difficult to come back down to tell you this, but I did it for three reasons. First of all, as hakoras hatov for raising me. Second, so you should realize how great is the merit of *zikui harabim*. And thirdly, to be mechazek anyone who has questions about Hashem's ways. Everything He does is with a plan and for the good!

"And so you shouldn't think this isn't real, I'll prove it to you. When I was eight months old, I fell dangerously ill and the doctors gave up on me. Then I suddenly recovered. Also, if you'll be careful with the mitzvah of hafrashas challah, you will be blessed with a baby girl."

I woke up from the dream in shock. Then I saw my wife was equally shaken – she had had the same dream!

We started being more careful with challah, and within a year, we had a daughter – she is now four years old!

I put those bricks there to remind me that we don't see what we think we are seeing, and to stay strong in my emunah.

(Bitachon Yomi in 5 minutes, Tuesday Parshas Emor #161)

Father of Orphans

It was 28 Iyar when my friend called me up, asking if I want to join him in a trip to Teveriah, to the kever of the Shelah, and then Meron. I made up with him to leave Netanya at 6:00 PM.

At 5:30 I went to the Tzanzer shul for Mincha and a boy came over to me. His father had unfortunately passed away a few months earlier, and it was now two days before his Bar Mitzvah. I said hello and he responded that he hadn't gone to Meron for Lag Ba'omer this year.

"I'd really like to go now. Do you know any way I could get there?" I was speechless. Of all the people in shul, why had he chosen to come over to me, and at this precise moment? I told him that I would be going in half an hour, and we'd be happy for him to come along. I gave him my phone to call his mother for permission, and off we went.

I was astonished at the hashgachah, and how right the Yaaros Devash was when he said that orphans receive special assistance from their Father in Heaven since they don't have a physical father.

(Sichas chaverim #2)

A Good Deal

I lived in Vienna for a time. One day a Yid offered me a shofar to buy. I told him I wasn't interested; shofar-blowing was not one of my talents. But he wouldn't let up. He spoke convincingly about how handy it is to have an extra shofar available, and how it's not hard to learn how to blow it... He was a really good salesman and won me over. By the end of our exchange, I was the owner of a shofar.

What was I supposed to do with it? It was Elul, after all, so I decided to try my hand at blowing it. I caught on fairly easily, and practiced all Elul, just in case it would be of service.

I brought it to shul on Rosh Hashanah; what good would it do, sitting at home? When we finished davening at three in the afternoon, the Rav asked if perhaps I could help out another Yid. There was a man from Eretz Yisroel living on the fifth floor of an apartment building, who had broken his shoulder and couldn't come to shul. Would I be so kind as to go up and blow shofar for him?

Of course – this is what I had been waiting for! I went up to his apartment, and in a moment of inspiration, told him that since davening ended far earlier here than back home in Yerushalayim, I had extra time. I told him to say La'mnatzeiach seven times like they do in shul, and the other pesukim recited before shofar-blowing. The whole thing took over half an hour, and then I left, wishing him a good new year and feeling great about having done a mitzvah with my shofar.

As I was leaving the building, a man was trying to come in. He was bareheaded, but when he saw me with my bekeshe and tallis, he asked me where he could go to hear shofar!

I couldn't believe it! I went with him to a nearby shul, gave him my kippah and had him say the bracha. I pronounced each word and he repeated after me, until he broke down crying from emotion. I was pretty emotional by then, too, and sobbed along with him. I was overwhelmed about how Hashem had orchestrated everything, from the pushy salesman to these two Yidden who had nobody else to blow for them.

I blew the tekios for him; he asked if he could keep my kippah so he could daven afterwards. I hope his Jewish spark, fanned aflame that day, continues to blaze in avodas Hashem!

(Sichas chaverim #2)

Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

Internalizing Bitachon

The truth is that the question is not really relevant, because bitachon must be honest and sincere, otherwise, it won't work as a segulah, either. **Reb Mordechai Malachi from Beitair** put it succinctly: Avodas bitachon isn't like other mitzvah activities – you do it either lishmah or not. Bitachon by definition is internalizing deep into our souls that Hashem accompanies our every step in life. So, once you achieve this, it's bitachon, and it doesn't matter if it's lishmah or not.

Reb Yehuda Gewirtzman from Beit Shemesh added that without internal work, bitachon will not go in, is not considered true bitachon, and will not bring about the results we seek.

Reb Mani Darchi from Ramat Gan retorts that using bitachon for a segulah means that you trust in the segulah, not in the Creator!

Reb Dovid Yisrael from Beit Shemesh: Emunah and bitachon are mitzvos we have to work on; the segulah is a side point.

Reb Shlomo Shimon Rothman from Beit Shemesh: Even though bitachon is a segulah, if you want to feel the tranquility and peace of mind it brings, you have to really work on it sincerely. Otherwise, it's like taking painkillers for a disease – it doesn't solve the issue, just brushes over the symptoms.

Do Mitzvos without Expecting Reward

We are supposed to do Hashem's will not for the rewards they engender. **Reb Dovid Leifer from Yerushalayim**, quotes the Mishnah in Pirkei Avos which teaches this, and bitachon is no different than any other mitzvah. If someone wants to trust in Hashem anyway, then he's no worse than a wicked person, who can merit to receive Hashem's blessings if he trusts in Him.

Reb Yehoshua Cohen from Yerushalayim: You can't get to the inner room until you first cross the outer room. Having bitachon as a segulah will help you get to the real version of bitachon.

Reb Shlomo Bindiger from Bnei Brak compares this to a father who promises his child a candy if he behaves nicely. The goal

Many people strengthen their bitachon as a segulah to have a yeshuah. Being that bitachon is an important midah for every Jew, is it appropriate to use it as a segulah?

Q #19

D. P., Haifa

is obviously not the candy, but it's an incentive. The same applies to the segulah of bitachon.

Not only that, but **Reb Moshe Deutch (Elad)** and **Nosson Dovid Green (Kiryat Tzanz)** point out that once someone experiences the power of yeshuos that bitachon brings, it will strengthen his trust in Hashem and he'll come to trust Him sincerely. Lack in our lives brings us closer to Hashem when we realize that only He can help us.

It has to be real, though – **Reb Chaim Schwartz from Bnei Brak** concludes.

A Complete Tzaddik

Reb Yosef Mimon from Tzfas: Every Yid has to work on bitachon. The Rema opens Shulchan Aruch with "שׂוֹתֵי ה' לְנוֹגְדֵי תַמִּיד", which characterizes bitachon. Yet, Chazal say that if someone gives tzedaka so his son will get better, "he is a complete tzaddik."

Reb Shlomo Gutman from Modiin III: Rav Chaim Volozhiner writes that focusing on "Ein od milvado" can save you from harm (Nefesh Hachaim 3:12). He says it's a "segulah nifla'ah"! This clearly shows us that bitachon can be used as a segulah.

Reb Chaim Kraus from Yerushalayim: The Zohar expounds on the passuk **בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה יִבְרַח אִישׁ אֶת אֲרִיזוֹ** "בטח בה' ועשה טוב שכן ארץ תמידי" – "a person should be careful to always cleave to his Creator, and his heart should be bound with emunah in Him, and then nobody can harm him" (Behar 110b). We see from here that one can trust in Hashem, so that he won't be harmed. Anyway, **Reb Eizik Stern (Rechovot)** notes that bitachon works as a rule of nature, as the passuk says **וְהָיָה כִּי יִבְרַח אִישׁ אֶת אֲרִיזוֹ** "הבוטח בה' חסד חסד" – bitachon surrounds you with kindness, no matter the intention!

Reb Chaim Meir Daskal from Elad: We see gedolim having bitachon as hishtadlus for parnassah.

Question for issue 68

We know that "no bad comes from Heaven." Yet we see things that seem to be totally bad, like someone's children going off the derech. How could this be good?

A. G., Haifa

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

Email: s023011300@gmail.com | Fax: 02-659-9189 - Until Sunday Parashat Korach

Replies must include your full name and city Names of questioners are printed with initials and city

A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on Kav Hashgacha Pratis

Many people contact me with the following message. "Your stories are very nice, but they don't work!" "I decided to stop dealing with gemachim/credit cards, and nothing changed."

My answer is: It works to make changes. Perhaps people don't always see results because they don't fully and truly trust in Hashem.

The Chovos Halevavos says that when someone has bitachon, he has tranquility. Imagine a rich man promised to pay all your bills. Would you be calm and relaxed? Of course! Yet, when you try to fulfill the passuk, "Throw your burden onto Hashem and He will sustain you," you're still a little on edge. Will it really work? When? How?

Lack of bitachon holds back the abundance of blessings that Hashem wants to give us. The Be'er Mayim Chayim states that anything you borrow from people could have come to you as a free gift. When you have true, deep bitachon you'll get everything you need, albeit sometimes at the last second.

The Beis Halevi says this also, in the Kuntress Habitachon. "Lack of bitachon is a big sin, and causes a person to stumble. As it says, "Man's anxieties place a trap [before him], but one who trusts in Hashem is fortified." Being afraid of things and not trusting in Hashem can place stumbling blocks in a person's path. Having bitachon, in the

Excerpts from the popular shiur by Harav Hatzaddik R' Beirish Shneebalg shlit"a
The neighbor called - "I have an envelope for you"

other hand, will save him even from problems he already has."

"I decided I'm finished with gemachim and automatic bank transfers," a Yid told me. "But although I made a kabbalah, I forgot to cancel the monthly bank withdrawals. The date arrived and \$1000 would be taken out, but I didn't have it. What could I possibly do? I went to one corner of the room, my wife to another, and we kept repeating **לִישׁוּעָתָךְ יְיָ הַשֵּׁם**". We said it hundreds of times, strengthening our resolve that only Hashem can save us.

"Then the phone rang. My neighbor from across the street called to tell me he has an envelope for me, an envelope containing \$1000. A Jew from Chutz La'aretz usually sends me some money Pesach time, but this year it didn't come. Somehow, my neighbor got it and decided to tell me about it at that moment when I needed it..."

Another person told me this week about his resolution to stop using gemachim. But then it was time to pay up a loan. How should he pay it? The manager of the gemach called him up... and told him that a donor gave him a lot of money to help cover people's loans. His was one of them.

Unbelievable? I told you, resolving to change and trusting fully in Hashem works.

The shiurim of Harav Shneebalg are delivered weekly in Yiddish and Hebrew alternatively. Dial 2 then 3 (after language preference)

Effects on Two Ends

On the receiving end

You saved my life! The only thing that kept me going through these recent tragedies was the Hashgacha Pratis line. The line draws me closer to Hashem, and gives me strength to accept everything as His will.

A.R., Beitair III

On the giving end

I needed a big yeshuah for parnassah. I pledged to donate to the Machon and saw a clear yeshuah from Hashem!

B.K., Modiin III

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