

# HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshiyos Korach - Chukat 5781 ■ Issue 67

## HEART TO HEART

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

### You don't have to understand the Rebbe

Strange and difficult things have been happening recently. Besides the physical and technical problems they caused, most people are walking around with the unspoken – or spoken – question: Why?

Rabbbeinu Bechaya already answered the question! In Perek 3, the 7<sup>th</sup> tenai includes that the ways Hashem conducts His world are more hidden, deep and lofty for us to fathom even part of them. When a person stands on the edge of a deep canyon, there's no chance he can reach down and pick up something from the bottom. This is the moshol for Hashem's judgments –

משפטיך תחום רבה.

In the middle of Eichah, describing the depths of suffering of the Churban, there are pesukim of chizuk. "ודשים" "חדשים" These messages of hope and emunah are so powerful, they've been made into songs of late. But what are they doing in the middle of Eichah?

This is the lesson they teach us – that even in the middle of suffering and difficulty, we must focus on the chasdei Hashem which surround us, and derive chizuk from them. Only emunah can give a Yid strength to withstand nisyonos.

To bring it down to our world, we find that throughout the ages, even the greatest Rabbis were submissive to those before them. Rava expressed it sharply, "If the earlier ones were people, we are donkeys."

The Talmid Yerushalmi records that someone wanted to ask a question on Rabbi Yosi, and Rabbi moaned, "We are pitiful! The difference between us and his generation is like the difference between the Kodesh Hakodashim and chulin" (Gittin, end of Ch. 6). This was Rabbbeinu Hakadosh, the arranger of the Mishnah, who was visited by Eliyahu Hanavi, who came to his family

after his petira every Shabbos night to make Kiddush for them. And yet, compared to an earlier generation he felt vastly inferior. Such is the outlook of our greatest Sages.

And the same thing continued in later times. The Chasam Sofer described his Rebbe, Rav Nosson Adler, in the most glowing terms. "I don't usually exaggerate, but there wasn't a malach in Shomayim who was more fluent in Heavenly pathways than my Rabbi." When he would tell his son something from his Rebbe, he was so overawed he would stand up in reverence.

The Vilna Gaon was unparalleled in his greatness and wisdom. He learnt with Eliyahu Hanavi and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai; even before his Bar Mitzvah he started working on creating a golem using Sefer Yetzira. But when he mentioned the Arizal, his whole body trembled from awe! He said that if the Ramchal were alive in his days, he would travel *by foot* across Europe to see him. When he received a copy of the Ramchal's Adir Bamarom, he donned Shabbos clothes. The Gr"a wrote commentary on the entire gamut of Torah – but did not comment on the Mesillas Yeshorim, of which he said he did not find even one extra word! And he lived only one generation before him!

So, if this is how great people relate to earlier Rabbonim, how much more so should we tread carefully when considering Hashem's conduct. A faithful student does not question his Rebbe's actions; he doesn't have to understand him.

The very first of the Ani Maamin's is that Hashem does everything that transpires in the world. We shouldn't imagine we can understand His ways, and our avodah is to increase our trust and submissiveness before Him.

(From shiur 205 in Shaar Habitachon)

## FROM THE EDITOR

### Say thank you!

A man from Yerushalayim shared with me an incident: He bought his son a gift of a book. It happens to be the first volume in a series. The boy reacted to the gift with, "What, you only got the first volume? Why didn't you get the whole set?"

As you can imagine, this made the father very upset. Here he had gone through so much trouble, picking out a book he thought would make his son happy, and it totally backfired. Not only that, but it was a terrible lack of gratitude. He certainly was not inclined now to buy him the rest of the set!

But then the thought hit him – he does the same thing, towards Hashem! Hashem gives us so many gifts, and all we can say back is "Give me more." We have to remember to say "thank you"!

The Alshich expresses this very idea, bluntly. "Hashem's way is that if someone does not give credit for the goodness He bestows upon them, He will not continue granting the goodness" (Vayishlach 35:1).

The Levush (46) writes that one hundred people were dying every day during the time of Dovid Hamelech, and he investigated the cause for it. From Heaven it was revealed that it was because people were not praising and thanking Hashem properly for all the kindnesses He gave them. Thus, he instituted 100 berachos every day and the plague stopped.

Actually, the Sefer Hamanhig says Moshe Rabbbeinu already instituted it but it became forgotten and Dovid reenacted it.

We only gain by it! The Cuzari says this is the barest minimum of gratitude to Hashem, and the more we add to it the closer we get to Hashem. He emphasizes that thanking Hashem for every thing in our lives accentuates the blessings in our lives, and we'll feel surrounded by pleasantness!

So let's get back to our story with the book. Imagine if the boy reacted with enthusiasm, "Thank you so much, Abba! It makes me so happy!" And he sits down to read it. After a while, he may return to his father and ask politely, "Abba, it was so thoughtful of you to give this to me. I love it! Do you think it's at all possible to get more volumes of the set?"

The father would probably be happy to buy them. Let's say thank you to Hashem for everything, and we'll get every good thing!

Good Shabbos Pinchas Shefer

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# THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

## The power of forgiving

Our oldest son, Moishy, is a fine boy. For whatever reason, though, he wasn't finding his zivug. The years passed, he was already 25, and his younger siblings were of the age to enter the parsha. I asked my Rebbi, and he said not to wait but to hear shidduchim for the next children already. As uncomfortable as it was, we went ahead. Indeed, my daughter got engaged, but the simcha was mixed with the pain of Moishy still searching for his shidduch.

It was at the beginning of Teves when one day my thirteen-year-old son burst into the house after school, ran to his room, and slammed the door, locking it. We could hear his terrible cries and our hearts broke, imagining what may have happened to him. After a half an hour he calmed down and came out and I asked him what happened. He told me that one boy in his class takes advantage of his slight handicap and makes fun of him all the time. That day it was the absolute worst and my son couldn't take it anymore.

I empathized and commiserated with him, but then I had an idea. I told him that the boy who made fun of him needs a lot of rachmonus. What a handicapped boy *he* is!

"We have to daven for him. He's so pathetic, he can't even be nice to you. I'm sure he feels awful about it, and he's racking up aveiros all the time. Here's a chance to do a chessed for another Yid, and – be mochel him."

My son looked at me disbelievingly; how could he just forgive him for all the torture he did to him? I kept talking, gently explaining that the biggest thing a person could do is to rise above the situation and deal with it maturely.

Finally, my special son braced himself and said he's mochel him. Then I had another inspiration.

"You have an unbelievable koach right now – give a bracha that Moishy should find his zivug!"

He closed his eyes and spoke with an air of seriousness, "I give Moishy a bracha that he should become a chassan within a month. And then Raizy should become a kalla, and they should have children within a year of their weddings!"

I said amen with a lot of kavana.

And his blessings came true, exactly as he said them! Now, a year later, both Moishy and Raizy are proud parents. The Gemara describes the maaleh of "those who are embarrassed and don't embarrass back; hear their disgrace and don't respond." Here was a prime example!

(Sunday morning, Parshas Shelach, story 2 #19890)

## The best treatment

I work in schools as an educational advisor. Last year, I met a boy who suffered from severe problems with keshev and rikuz (attention and concentration), besides other behavioral issues. I spoke to his parents and recommended a certain institution which treats the problem. The parents were sincere and wanted to help their son but they didn't have any money to pay for it.

Then, corona closed down the center, and it wasn't an option anyway.

After a few months, we saw a huge improvement in the child! His rebbi

## If I would have the choice

Reb Yaakov Shpiatzky of Bnei Brak:

We enlarged the porch of our apartment sometime after we moved in. The law here is that the bars of the railing on porches cannot be more than 10 centimeters away from each other. What we didn't know was that, for some reason, in one place there was a space of 12 centimeters between the bars. But then we found out...

It was on a Friday that I resolved to end a certain argument that had been going on for a while between me and another fellow. As always happens, we each thought we were right, but that doesn't help anyone! So I decided to move towards him in a gesture of peace, and I forgave him with all my heart.

On Shabbos, I again had a nisayon, when two people right next to me said things to rile up the fight again. I fought back my negative thoughts and kept repeating "gam zu l'tovah," and b'ezras Hashem was able to stay calm. Hashem runs the world and there's no reason to get upset over anything that goes on.

When I came home later, everyone in the family was excited. "Boruch Hashem – what a ness!" my daughter gushed. What happened?

My one-year-old daughter had discovered the one spot in the railing where the gap was slightly larger than the rest, and she checked if she could fit between the bars. She squeezed her way in – and she fit! And there she was, suspended five floors above the street –

At that very moment, my wife was saying Tehillim with our other children, including Mizmor L'sodah and chapter 138, which is full of pesukim of hodaah to Hashem. And then my oldest daughter looked out the window and saw our little girl, and ran out to save her! As it turned out, it happened at the exact same time as I was in shul struggling to stay calm and trust that Hashem is in charge. I felt strongly that it was in that zechus our daughter was saved!

I like to imagine if someone would have asked me if I'd prefer to suffer a few seconds of embarrassment and the challenge to not take a comment personally – or, chas v'sholom, to lose...

We don't know what our efforts accomplish.

(Bitachon Yomi in 5 miutes, Thursday, Parshas Behaalosecha #186)

## 30,000 diamonds

A few months ago, my wife took our baby in for a regular checkup at Tipat Chalav. We thought our son was perfectly healthy, but the nurse saw something that made her suspicious. She advised we go to a specialist. And that is when our troubles started. The

To listen to stories press

report from that examination was that our one-year-old needed an urgent operation!

We suddenly were thrown into a storm of hospitals, doctors, medical processes, and the emotional strain that go along with it all. Calling, discussing – it took over our lives. And the operation itself was frightening and obviously not pleasant. We tried to stay strong and trust in Hashem.

We contacted the surgeon and made an appointment for an examination prior to the surgery.

The day before the appointment, I was in Kolel and noticed one fellow seemed totally out of it. Usually he was one of the best learners, and today he was spaced out. I went over and asked him if something was bothering him, and he replied that he needed a large amount of money immediately and had no clue how to get it. I felt bad for him. I asked him how much and he said 30,000 shekels. I thought about it, and concluded that I could lend it to him. I told him I might be able to give it to him, but first had to ask my wife.

I came home that night and mentioned it to my wife, but she was hesitant. Who knew if he would be able to pay it back? We couldn't afford to lose that much money. I didn't want to pressure her, especially at this stressful time, so I left it.

On the way out the door to night seder, I passed by a parsha sheet lying around, and I glanced at it and noticed a story there. I paused to read it:

A man and his son were walking along, holding a basket with five rolls of bread. A poor man approached them and asked for food, so the father gave him two rolls. After he left, the father asked his son, "How many rolls do you think we have left?" "Three, of course." "That's where you're mistaken. Really, we have two! The physical rolls we have will soon be eaten and nothing will remain of them, but the ones we did a mitzvah with will stay with us forever! They are like ruchniyus diamonds, our eternal assets."

I felt like this was talking directly to us! I went back to the kitchen and showed my wife the story. I told her, "If we lend this avrech the money, we're actually gaining 30,000 diamonds!" She agreed with me and gave her consent.

I called the man right away to tell him the good news. He was so grateful; he was feeling crushed by the pressure of owing the money. He showered us with brachos, and I hung up feeling good that I did the right thing.

Then I added a fervent tefilla to Hashem for our son to have a refuah sheleima, especially in the zechus of this mitzvah. I asked that he shouldn't even need to have the surgery.

The next day, my wife took him to the examination, and called me excitedly from the doctor's office – in the end he didn't need to have the operation! The problem solved itself, the specialist said. Boruch Hashem!

I thought of the Beraisa we say every morning, "אלו דברים, אלו דברים, אדם אוכל פרותיהם בעולם הזה, והקרן קיימת לו לעולם הבא. ... גמילות חסדים." We got to see the "fruits" right away!

(Tuesday morning, Parshas Emor, story 2 #19228)

told me that he called the parents to update him on the great news, and he asked what treatment they did in the end. The father surprised him. The problems had been going on for several years, getting worse with time and now they had received the recommendation for expensive and lengthy treatments. They couldn't afford it, so what could they do? They were mekabel to sit down and say Tehillim for a half an hour every day for him!

The mother and father turned to the Creator of the world, and after a short time, the boy had improved tremendously! It's the best, most effective treatment there is.

(Wednesday night, Parshas Behaalosecha, story 1 #21599)

## The right number

I used to be well off, but the wheels of fortune have turned against me for some time now. It was extremely hard to hold up, but I tried to always strengthen my emunah in Hashem. And I saw Him helping me in different ways, in those difficult days.

For example:

I received a letter from a lawyer, demanding immediate payment of a very large sum of money. I had to respond or they would take legal action against me, so I wrote a fax detailing whatever resources I could manage at the moment, and sent it off.

A few minutes later I received a phone call from the father of one of my son's classmates.

"You just sent me a fax?" he asked me.

No... I was embarrassed not only by my blunder but that now he knew about my bad financial situation. But he responded with the utmost sensitivity, and – he said he'll cover it!

I saw how Hashem arranged my mistake to help me out.

(Sunday morning, Parshas Shelach, story 1 #19891)

## The sense of smell

Dovid from Bnei Brak:

Last year I lost my sense of smell along with many other corona sufferers. Even after I recovered from the virus, I still couldn't smell anything. It's very annoying to walk around like in a bubble, cut off from one of the five senses. Everywhere I went, everything I came near all seemed the same to me. I never realized how important smell is!

I tried all sorts of eitzos to help myself, like smelling bleach, lemons, drinking certain mixtures – but nothing worked. I davened to Hashem a lot, yet I remained smelling-less.

After the tragedy in Meron, I read somewhere that we should improve our berachos. So I tried to focus on what I was saying when I made a beracha, thinking that it brings me closer to Hashem. We address Hashem directly, "Boruch attah."

After a few days of feeling Hashem's closeness more and more, the long-awaited yeshuah arrived. I suddenly could smell! I was overjoyed! I delighted in the amazing sensations of differentiating between all kinds of smells, even bad ones. I loved them all, now! I wanted to make a Kiddush to thank Hashem; instead I decided to buy a container of snuff and give it out in shul for others to enjoy Hashem's gift of smell.

But then, one Sunday morning I woke up feeling odd. I couldn't smell anymore! I plunged into despair; did I lose it forever this time? Why did it happen now? Then I started thinking that it came back when I was mitchazek in kavana in berachos. The day before I had said a few berachos without proper kavana. That must be the message! So I resolved to be more careful, and then my smell came back again! Boruch Hashem!

(Bitachon Yomi in 5 minutes, Wednesday Parshas Behaalosecha #185)

# Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

I am in need of a yeshuah. But I'm uncertain what to do - should I do teshuvah, daven for it more, or maybe do more hishtadlus? Or, alternatively, maybe I should accept the situation as is? **Q #20** D.L., Beit Shemesh

All the answers are right

"A wise question is already half the answer." **Reb Efraim Savarsky (Ashdod)** agreed that whatever can be done, should be done, be it tefillah, hishtadlus, or teshuvah. But don't give up, urged **Reb Shlomo Shimon Rothman (Beit Shemesh)** and **Reb Shlomo Eisenbach (Beitar)**.

Another opinion: **Reb Aharon Nachman (Nof Hagalil)** advises to devote some time each day to efforts to help the situation, but the rest of the day, accept it as it stands in the meantime.

**Reb Menachem Mendel Fine (Yerushalayim)**: If it's a gashmiyus thing, one certainly may be "someiach b'chelko" and leave it.

**Reb Yosef Astenbuli (Modiin Illit)**: It's hard to know if you should accept it; it depends on the whole picture. Either way, once you did all you could think of doing to help it, you're pattur from doing more. Davening always helps, though, and there's no end to that.

Gratitude

**Reb Dovid Leifer (Yerushalayim)**: I see that you're thinking about a lot of fronts, but you don't mention thanking Hashem. So if you're not devoting so much time to it yet, that's a good place to start. The seforim say that thanking Hashem brings yeshuos even above the laws of nature.

But how can a person thank Hashem when he is in a tzara? **Reb Dovid Gross (Bnei Brak)** and **Reb Moshe**

**Dovidovitz (Ofakim)** explain that every situation, for every person, is essentially good, because Hashem does only good. Focus on this idea, and it can bring yeshuos and improve things even more.

Doing teshuvah

**Reb Yehuda Gewirtzman (Beit Shemesh)** begins: First of all, improvements should be made from the exact place Hashem put you in. Accept it, accept yourself! Then, ask yourself what message is Hashem sending you. If you don't first accept yourself, it's hard to make real changes.

**Reb Chaim Meir Wasserman (Bnei Brak)** quotes the Sefer Ha'ikkarim (4:8): Teshuvah helps a rasha in that he thereby becomes a different person, so the gezeira will no longer apply to him. Tefillah and improvements in deeds help that then he can receive shefa, or nullify decrees against him. If you prepare your heart to daven and rectify your ways, without doubt you will be saved from tzaros!

**Reb Yaakov Neiman (Beit Shemesh)** echoes this: When a person davens to be saved from a tzara, that makes the tikkunim necessary for the yeshuah to come.

## Question for issue 69:

With all the tzaros Klal Yisroel has suffered recently, I have a dilemma. If I try to feel their pain, it makes me very sad. What is Hashem's will?

Y.Y.S., Yerushalayim

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

Four years ago, a man called me for advice about his son. He was fourteen at the time, and whenever he came home, it was Gehennom! He terrorized the other children, ran around the house breaking things; just a wild child. The father was considering calling the police!

I told him not to worry, the day will come when he'll have lots of nachas from him. I spoke to him for a while about being positive.

Four years later, he calls me back – the boy is today a chosheveh bochur, learns shtark; when he comes home he brings light into the home!

This is the power of thoughts – thoughts of hope, emunah, bitachon. When you think good, it will be good!

Another time they asked me to go visit a guy who had a terrible illness. I went there, and he's lying in his bed, just awaiting the end. He was busy thinking about his funeral, worrying how his yesomim will manage. He had given up already. I tried telling him that he could simply get better, but he refused to hear it. He even showed me in the medical books where they described his symptoms and that they meant he was on the way out.

His family sat around him, crying.

I said to him that he probably assumes I'll be empathetic to him, feeling his pain along with him. Nothing doing! "I want you to get better – completely! And the only way that can happen is if you believe that you're not really sick! It's made up!"

Excerpts from the popular shiur by Harav Yehuda Mandel shlit"a from Lakewood

Right before Shabbos, he calls me up: "Rabbi Mandel, you're right!"

I told him about Rav Moshe Dovid Valli, a talmid of the Ramchal, who was also a doctor. He wrote, "The job of a doctor is to convince the patient that he's healthy." They say he did experiments with groups of people with the same Machala. Some of them he told them that they had only a few left – and they died!

Most people I visit improve after I give them this "treatment." But this fellow was stubborn. He refused to hear it. So I did my best and left.

A few days later, right before Shabbos, my phone rang. It was him.

"Rabbi Mandel, you were right! Another doctor checked me today, and he said it was a mistake! It's not that machala, but a much lighter one. I'm not going to die!" And he told me that as soon as he heard that, all his pains vanished.

Of the Four Sons of Leil Haseder, the best is the Tam – to not be too smart, to be simple and not know too much. Instead of reading up all the gory details of a sickness, it's more productive to work on emunah and bitachon. Anyway, sometimes sicknesses start only when a person goes to be checked...

Someone told me recently that he thinks he got corona. He wanted to go be tested. I stopped him. "It's better to learn inyanei bitachon." A few hours later he called me back that the symptoms went away!

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

Recently I had a very hard nissayon. I feel that my consistent reading the chizuk pamphlet is what gave me the strength to handle it.

Y.Z.G., Bnei Brak

Last Shabbos, my son got burned so severely he was hospitalized, anesthetized and sedated. By Tuesday, his condition got worse, until I remembered Kav Hashgacha Pratis. I donated – and within hours, his condition improved!

Message on the hotline

On the giving end

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