

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshiyos Bamidbar - Nasso 5782 ■ Issue 90

HEART TO HEART

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

Hashem's Damage Control

Learning about bitachon is one thing, but feeling it real time is another thing altogether. You can learn all about bitachon, but at the moment of truth, when put to test, fear fills your heart. Then you get excited because someone who has the right connections offers his help, or feel let down because of those who refuse to help or do as we hoped they would. At times, we get angry at those who ruined things.

However, one who sees people or other creatures as responsible for his success or failure directs his hope and anger at them. One day, a war breaks out, and fear fills his heart – what's going to happen?

Two people hear the same air raid siren. One gathers his children hysterically, shoves everyone into the shelter and won't breathe before the door is secured shut. The other hears the siren and begins singing "**Ezreinu BeShem Hashem ose shomayim v'aretz.**" Calmly, he gathers his children, announcing that "No creature can damage or benefit us without Hashem's will", and helps everyone into the shelter.

When you see your neighbors religiously taping up their windows, you can laugh. What does he think – the tape will save him? You be the tape instead – glue yourself to emunah and bitachon, drive the message deep down into your heart: **nobody can help or damage you without Hashem's Will!**

This message must be absorbed in our bones, because it can change your life. Some people say *Im Yirtze Hashem* with Hashem very far from their minds. They are nervous – their son is getting married in a week and he needs to figure something out with his electricity. What should he do? He speaks to the friend of his neighbor's first cousin who knows someone in the electric company to convince them to give him the first appointment. So much energy is poured into making those connections and following up on them until the desired results are achieved. Isn't it much easier to just channel all that energy to one place, to He Who does, did and will do

everything? Daven and go stand in line. Trust Hashem to arrange it all just as it should be.

In this context, Rabbenu Bachye quotes the passuk from Tehilim (146:3): "*Al tivtecvhu b'nedivim* - Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help."

The Pas Lechem explains this passuk in two ways: trusting important people is futile because they cannot bring salvation. While sometimes providential messengers -- every so often you do meet the right person at the right moment – their power to help you is not his own. They are heaven-sent messengers and can only help if Hashem wills it.

And another explanation: Don't trust humans because as weak creatures they cannot even help themselves! Humans in This World are subject to so many storms, changes, and varying circumstances. If he can't help himself, how do you expect him to help you?

In Maseches Chullin (7b) we learn: "Rabbi Chanina said: 'One does not pierce his finger below unless it has been announced above, as it is written 'From the Lord a mighty man's steps are established' (Tehilim 37:23).'" Piercing one's finger is such a slight mishap. But even that can't happen without Hashem announcing it above. Remember it, sing it, memorize it day and night: Nothing and no one in this world can do anything to me without Hashem's will. From the smallest creature – a virus, bacteria – till the largest whale, elephant, truck, or terrorist – nothing and no one can do anything to me without Hashem's will.

And this is what Rabbenu Bachye writes in the end of the fifth condition: "**And in addition, when one feels that no creature can benefit or harm him without permission from Hashem Yisborach, his heart will stop fearing them or hoping for them, and he will place his trust on Hashem alone.**"

May we all live lives of emunah, peace, and happiness, worry and anxiety-free, amen.

(Excerpted from lesson 39 on Sha'ar Habitachon)

FROM THE EDITOR

The Secret

A Yid comes crying to his Rebbi, "Why do only I have to suffer so much? My neighbor has a wonderful parnassah; my brother has excellent children; my friend's kids all get married one-two-three, only *my* life is stuck!

"Why? Why? Why?"

His Rebbi opens and reads him the answer from three sefarim: Rabbenu Bachaye al HaTorah (Devarim 22:8); Toras Hamincha (Matos-Ma'sei, 64), and Chessed L'Avraham (Ma'ayan 4 – *nahar* 11). Three sefarim that speak in one voice.

Toras Haminchah writes:

And now, man, open your eyes and see; and with your ears, listen to this wonderous secret: Before one comes to the world he is shown his entire life. He is shown the difficulties along with the benefits to be gained from them. He is shown the benefit of wealth and the test in it, the positive and negative aspects of all his trials in life – health, shidduchim, children -- everything in the world. He also sees his spiritual challenges – talents, family, friends. He sees his physical dimensions – tall or short, whole or handicapped, weak or strong, beautiful or ugly. It all happens according to his choice. Every person wished for what he experiences, both good and bad.

"But I didn't know it would be so difficult!" says the man. "Had I known how hard it would be, I wouldn't have agreed to it."

"On the contrary!" says the Rebbi. "Do you think it was *then* that you didn't know? Now you don't know! When you chose this life, it was with full awareness of what is truly good for you. Today you only feel the strain, but then you had the full picture, and you chose this life.

The Chessed L'Avraham concludes that "therefore, no creature can complain to his Creator about why his friend is beautiful and he – ugly, because it all depends upon his own choice."

"Say thank you to Hashem," says the Rebbi, "for the aches and pains, challenges, and tests. You chose them, and each one brings you closer to the ultimate eternal good.

As the Chessed L'Avraham continues: 'For one who is taller in his generation will be shorter after resurrection, and the same is with wealthy and poor, weak or strong, beautiful or ugly, and everything else.' (Chessed L'Avraham)

Hang it on your refrigerator. Repeat it again and again. Place it on your heart.

Give yourself an easier life. After all, you chose this life!

Good Shabbos Pinchas Shafer

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

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THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

The Tenth Man

I live in Yerushalayim and work in a yeshiva. Hashem has recently given me a nisayon and I was waiting anxiously for a yeshuah. I had heard of a segulah to merit a yeshuah: to make a meal and sing Hashem's praises for the future salvation. This segulah is hinted in the words "*sa'adeni v'ivashea* – Sustain me and I shall be saved" (Tehilim 119:117). First one holds a meal, then the salvation will come.

I decided to do this segulah. On a wintery day in the month of Adar I gathered nine boys from the yeshiva and asked them to help me arrange a meal. We'd go to the gravesite of a tzaddik near Beit Shemesh, eat a meal, and sing Hashem's praises.

We looked up a location, bought everything, and booked a driver. In the late afternoon we set out.

When we got to the area, we looked around but found no gravesite. We spent two hours searching, but it was nowhere to be found. By now it was already dark, so we decided to just find a picnic bench for our meal.

The bench was quickly found, and we set everything up, but since it was nighttime we needed to daven Maariv before eating. But we were only nine -- who would be our tenth man? One of the boys announced, "I have a kabbalah from the holy Ba'al Shem Tov: where there are nine Yidden, the tenth always comes."

We had nothing to do but wait for that tenth man. While it didn't seem likely for people to drive by our deserted picnic spot in the middle of a winter night, we waited.

Suddenly, seemingly out of nowhere, we hear the purring of a motor. Headlights on high, a car dove up to our clearing in the woods. Out of the car jumped a not-yet-religious Yid. He gave us the beaver-in-the-headlights stare, and we stared at him right back. He started the conversation first. "I was really tired, and decided it was unsafe for me to drive anymore, so I pulled up here."

I asked him if he'd be willing to join us for the minyan, and he readily agreed. He pulled a yarmulka out of his glove compartment, answered Amen and Barchu, and we prayed together.

After Maariv I thanked him, and told him what had happened.

"We were

Daddy, Please Give Me!

Twenty years ago, I was learning in the Mir Yeshiva in Yerushalayim. My father's business had hit a rough spot. It was so bad that he was forced to freeze his tuition to the yeshiva. "Son," he called me one day, "You can continue learning in the yeshiva, but I can no longer send you the hundred dollars for the dormitory. You'll have to figure that out yourself."

Up until then, I had been a worry-free yeshiva boy. I had no idea where I could get money, and I wasn't prepared to leave the yeshiva to find out. How did leaving the yeshiva to work to pay for yeshiva tuition make sense? I decided I would continue learning Torah and allow the One who gave the Torah to pay my stay.

The time passed quickly, and suddenly it was three days before the end of the month. I had not a penny to my name. Not in dollars, nor in shekels. And I needed one hundred dollars for the dormitory administrator, but where would it come from? I put my head down on my *shtender* and told Hashem, "Please! Only You can help me. Give me the money so I can go on learning in the yeshiva." I prayed for a few more minutes. There was no other way. I needed Hashem to save me.

When I lifted my head, I glanced down, and -- I kid you not -- there was a hundred-dollar bill sitting under my shoe. I lifted it up and looked around. The only person who could have dropped it was a tzedakah collector carrying a wad of bills, but he claimed he had nothing to do with that note.

I went over to the Rosh Yeshiva, Reb Nosson Tzvi Finkel *zt"l*, and asked him if I had to return the bill. He said the yeshiva was public property, and if I wanted to go beyond the letter of the law, I could hang a sign announcing my find and see if anyone would call.

I hung the sign up, but nobody called. I understood that the money was meant for me, and it covered my tuition for the month.

The next month, the money was sent to me via a friend. He told me he had received a donation and had some extra money. Did I have anything to do with \$86?

"Certainly," I told him, and that's how I had most of the money. The rest I got pretty easily.

Every single month I received money for tuition directly from Hashem. This went on until my father's financial situation got back on track and he was able to cover my living expenses again.

Twenty years have passed since, and every time I experience financial difficulty, I recall those special days when I saw Hashem's helping hand clearly. The recollection strengthens me and reminds me that Hashem will send me just what I need, exactly when I need it. There's no need to worry.

Honest or Dishonest?

Ever since he was widowed, my wife goes to help my father-in-law. One of her weekly jobs is sorting through his papers. My father-in-law loves the printed word and brings home every vort or printed d'var Torah he sees. The paper gets put onto his pile in case he'll need to refer back to it one day. Whenever he bumps into a pile of Torah newsletters, he takes them all home just in case he'll one day need to quote a story or vort from one of them. This pile needs weekly weeding so it doesn't take over the house. Every week, my wife goes through the pile and discreetly sends stuff to *sheimos* and the garbage.

Once, she decided to clean up a little more thoroughly. She went through the newsletters and also a pile of old letters and forms. A lot

went into the garbage, and the pile shrank considerably. Suddenly, she noticed a wad of bills stuck in the pile. It was currency salad: there were dollars, euro, and shekels, all in all amounting to nearly 8000 NIS.

Our financial situation at the time was very tight. Our daughter was engaged, and the house was empty. We didn't even have money to buy her a pair of shoes. While eight thousand shekels aren't enough to make a wedding, they could be of great help. My wife thought perhaps she could take the money for herself... after all, it belonged to her father, and her own situation was so desperate... her father would surely agree. Maybe she could take it as a loan?...

But my wife has *yiras shamayim*. She stopped those thoughts in their tracks and called out to her sister on the other side of the house, "Look what I found!"

There. Now that her sister knew about the money, she would withstand the temptation.

They placed the envelope in a safe place where their father would see it and decide what to do with it. Then she came home and told us about the test she had withstood.

One week passed, and we get a phone call. On the line was a representative of a chessed organization we'd never heard of. They were calling to inform me that they were depositing money in our account to cover the wedding expenses. How much would they be depositing? Guess!

That's right. Exactly NIS 8000.

Reb Yeshaya'le's Miracle

You'd think miracles with Reb Yeshaya'le are a thing of the past, coming on a backdrop of tiny Hungarian villages, waddling geese, and ignorant farmers? Think again.

This miracle took place in modern day Beit Shemesh. We have Arab construction workers running around doing all kinds of work in our newly-constructed area. Those Arabs are natural vacuum cleaners – they suck up anything of value. If you forgot your bag, stroller or tricycle outside, it's as good as gone.

I live on the first story of a six-story building. Since the elevator is not yet working, the neighbors on the upper floors keep their strollers locked on the first floor, praying that the Arabs don't break the chains. One day, my 6th floor neighbor knocks anxiously at my door. "I just got home, and I schlepped the baby up, but forgot to chain in my stroller. Now, the stroller with the bag strapped on it are both gone! That bag had my wallet, important forms, and cash which I had just gotten from the bank. My cell phone was also in the bag. Can I use your phone to see, perhaps it was just a nice neighbor who saw it and took it in?"

He breathlessly took my phone and dialed his cell. It rang and rang but no one answered. I shook my head sadly. It must have been stolen like everything else that disappears in the neighborhood.

Ten minutes later, my phone rang. My neighbor's phone number was on the screen.

The person on the other side introduced himself as a policeman. "Did you lose a carriage?"

"Yes!"

A short time later, the carriage, along with the bag, forms, cash and all, came knocking at my door. And this was the officer's story:

"I was cruising along near the entrance to the city, near the Tze'elim River, when I spotted a group of Arab construction workers. One of them was pushing a nice-looking carriage. I pulled up and asked him where he got the stroller.

"I found it in the garbage."

"I knew better, but had no reason to stop him. I was still standing there when the cell phone in the bag strapped onto the stroller broke out in Yossi Glick's popular ringtone: 'Reb Shaya ben Reb Moishe *poilet far Klal Yisroel...*'. What was this distinctly chassidish ringtone doing on an Arab's phone? I asked him to open the bag. Rabbi Yeshaya'le really was *poel* for you a yeshuah."

only nine here in the forest, and one of the boys said he had a personal *kabala* from the Baal Shem Tov that whenever there are nine Yidden, the tenth will certainly come. And here you came, the tenth man sent from heaven, just as the holy Ba'al Shem Tov said."

He enjoyed what I said, and, now invigorated, announced he no longer needed to sleep. "Davening with you really woke me up. I can continue driving. Goodnight to you all." And he drove off.

A few minutes later, he was back. "I thought about what you said," he said. "A few days ago, one of my relatives told me we are descendants of the Ba'al Shem Tov. I didn't arrive here by mistake. It must be my holy grandfather who sent me here. I feel I was his messenger. Maybe this means something."

I was excited for him. We exchanged phone numbers, and we've been in touch ever since. This holy Yid is making progress in his mitzvah observance, small, slow, but steady steps. And this is another kabala we have from the Ba'al Shem Tov – every Yid is precious to the Ribbono Shel Olam at least like a firstborn baby, born after seventy years of waiting.

New Baby, New Job

My wife works as a nurses' aid. She works with old ladies at home -- a job which can be easy and relaxing, or hard and demanding, depending on the lady she's working with.

In the months prior to giving birth, my wife worked for a nice old lady. They both enjoyed the relationship, and it was a peaceful time for them. Then, my wife gave birth and the agency sent in a substitute.

When her paid vacation was up, my wife wanted her job back, but the substitute didn't want to leave. She, too, had fallen in love with the nice old lady, and decided to stay.

Instead of making a fuss about it, my wife set out to start over, from the beginning. She called several agencies, but there was nothing suitable available. Frustrated, she started to get angry at the substitute who took her job, but then she strengthened herself in bitachon and decided she was not going to get angry. Whatever it was, was from Hashem, and she didn't want to take anyone else's parnassah. Hashem would send her what she deserved. That afternoon, my wife got a call from another agency with a new offer – a nice lady who needed daily help. This was a better job than the previous one since the lady deserved more hours from the agency, and was located much closer to home.

It was clearly in merit of her emunah in Hashem that my wife merited a better, easier and closer job.

Disclaimer: All opinions mentioned here are presented for discussion only. For practical ruling, please consult with your Rav.

The Geulah is Near

Rabbi Gamliel Hakohen Rabinovitch from Bnei Brak:

The passuk in Tehilim reads (147:8) "Who covers the heavens with clouds, Who prepares rain for the earth, Who causes the mountains to sprout grass" – when the sky fills with clouds that's a sign it's about to rain. And after the rain: "the mountains to sprout grass" – the earth produces beautiful fruit. The same is true in world affairs: when the world appears menacing and gloomy, when everything seems terrible, it's a sign that a new, bright light is about to shine. May we merit the final geulah, *b'karov*.

Rabbi Nachman Goldberg from Yerushalayim: Before a candle dies, it's light gets very bright for a short movement. This, seemingly, is the process we are witnessing now in the world: the *galus* seems to be in its death throes. The *tzaros* are picking up a little because soon, very soon, the bright light of Geulah will shine forth, may it be speedily in our times, *amen*.

Rabbi Shimon Rotman from Beit Shemesh: Our forefathers in Egypt were scheduled to remain there for four hundred years, but the intensity of their suffering shortened it. The same is true for us – every challenge, every painful occurrence, brings the *galus* closer to its end.

Rabbi Yosef Dushinsky from Haifa: The Gemara in Maseches Makos (24b) tells of the *chachamim* who were walking along with Rabi Akiva. When they reached Mount Scopus and beheld a fox coming out of Kodesh Hakodashim the sages burst into tears, but Rabi Akiva laughed. And he explained his laughter: "When we see the prophecy of the land becoming desolate come true, we can be assured that the prophecies of redemption will also be realized." Now, seeing the prophecies of exile coming true so precisely, we can be assured the other prophecies of redemption will also come true.

Be strong and Encourage Others

Rabbi Nir Yishai, Kiryat Malachi: The Lubavitcher Rebbe wrote once that by bringing others closer to Torah, one will come closer to Torah himself. This can be a lesson for us here: if you feel dejected and depressed, give others encouragement. Spread emunah and joy around you, and you'll be changed.

Rabbi Yitzchak Dov Friedman, Yerushalayim: Yeshayahu the prophet tells us (33:14): "Sinners in Zion

were afraid" – when there's sin, there's fear. One who strengthens himself in *yiras shamayim*, fears nothing else. **Rabbi Natan Levi, Beitar Ilit:** Yeshayahu Hanavi chastises his people: "And the people has not returned to the One Who smites it." (9:12) When we see *tzaros* we must turn to Hashem. And when we return to Hashem, He will help us.

Trust In Hashem

Rabbi Aharon Beifuss from Rechasim: When we see things work out miraculously, we attribute it to Hashgacha Pratis, but let's not forget – everything in the world is Hashgacha Pratis! Both the good and the bad are Hashgacha Pratis! So whenever anything happens around us, we must remind ourselves – it didn't happen by mistake. It's all purposely done, exactly as it is.

Rabbi Yehuda Gweirtzman from Beit Shemesh; Rabbi Yair Chaim Cohen from Beit Shemesh: We see the Jewish nation continues its march throughout history despite being tormented and persecuted more than any other nation under the sun. Our survival is the greatest testimony of Hashgacha Pratis, a miracle of historic proportions – Hashem preserves His people, and their survival testifies it.

Rabbi Efraim Fischel Rabinovitch from Yerushalayim: When a war breaks out, the king and ministers are the ones shouldering the responsibility. The regular citizens have nothing to worry about – there are people higher up doing that for them. So, friend, why are you worried? Why the distress? There's a King managing this world, let go! Don't worry – Hashem is doing that for you. He's in charge.

Rabbi Chaim Meir Daskal from Elad: "Even when I walk in the valley of darkness, I will fear no evil for You are with me." (Tehilim 23:4) There's nothing bad or evil around you when you walk with Hashem. Everything will turn out alright.

Question for Issue #92

I've been in shidduchim for years, and still am. Could the reason for my belated yeshuah be linked to something in my interpersonal relationships or my mitzvah obligations to Hashem? How can I figure this out?

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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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

Talk to Hashem. He listens and helps! Just talk to Him, in your own simple words. You need a cure, "Hashem, please make me healthy." Everything you need, even just to make it to work on time. Ask Hashem. It works!

There was once a family whose mother wasn't too smart and didn't really know how to run a house. She didn't know anything about chinuch either, and neither did her husband. The house somehow stayed afloat, and the children were quite neglected.

The father saw what was happening, and did what he knew how to do – he spoke to the Ribono Shel Olam. He said, "Hashem, please raise my children, lift them up, give them strength, health and good middos. Give them wisdom, a healthy stable nefesh. They should grow up to make You proud." And indeed, all the children in that family grew up to be normal, upright, talmidei chachamim.

And another story about a woman whose husband, *lo aleinu*, stopped keeping mitzvos. The couple got divorced, and their only child, a boy, stayed with his father. Her pain was indescribable. Like any Jewish mother, she desperately hoped her son would continue the chain of Torah-true Jews, but she had nothing to do. In her pain she cried out to Hashem day and night – "Please! Raise my son as a Torah true *yid*, I can't do it myself."

The years passed, and the boy grew up. Now, over eighteen, he could go visit his mother for the

Excerpts from the popular shiur by Harav Yehuda Mandel shlit" a from Lakewood Daven. Just Daven!

first time. His mother was pleasantly surprised: her son was a gentle yeshiva bachur, fully mitzvah observant. How did he turn out like this?

This was his story:

"I spent my years with a father who disregarded everything holy. I was not religious at all. One day, I was in school when Hashem sent an outreach Rabbi to stand right at the entrance. From our first conversation I felt a magnetic pull to Torah and mitzvos. Slowly I took on more and more, until here I am today, fully mitzvah observant."

There is an *avreich*, totally broken-hearted, who likes to hear me speak. My speeches must inspire him because he keeps on coming. One Erev Shabbos he called and told me he was so broken, he just had to come to me for Shabbos. But that Shabbos I was totally booked up, and there was no way we could fit him in. I apologized and told him I couldn't have him this Shabbos.

I felt really bad for that poor fellow and so I prayed to Hashem over Shabbos, "Hashem, you always put words in my mouth to strengthen other Yidden. This Shabbos I can't be with so-and-so to strengthen him. Please, Hashem, You talk to him." On Motzaei Shabbos I called him up to apologize again, and I asked him how Shabbos went. He told me that all of Shabbos he felt much more cheerful. He had no explanation, but he felt as if he were constantly getting *chizuk*. Take these words to heart. Just daven.

Effects on Two Ends

On the receiving end

I wanted to thank you from the bottom of my heart. In your *zechus* I am able to get closer to Hashem. I love your daily emunah message! May you be *zoche* to continue spreading the light of emunah. What a wonderful nation we belong to, what a great King we have!

I was unsuccessful at my current job and was looking for a new one. I promised to donate my *ma'aser* from the first three months' salary towards printing the Hashgacha Pratis newsletters. I found a new job right away.

On the giving end

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