

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshs Ve'etchanan - Eikev 5784 ■ Issue 145

HEART TO HEART

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

People of the Ninth Ma'alah

A Yid once said: The older I get, the more I let go of different aspects of running the world. It's not as if someone ever informed me of this process. I believe this is like a baby's cognitive development:

Initially, a baby feels that everything is in his control. He cries, and his food immediately comes to him; he truly feels that he is doing this! But as he develops, the baby understands that there are people around him, and they are the ones bringing him food and the rest of his needs. When he grows even more and is zocheh to a good chinuch, he discovers the truth. Even those who take care of him have no abilities of their own, and everything comes from the wide-open Hand of the Creator of all worlds.

This world is confusing. Hashem created the nature of the world, with millions of seeming means of providing for a person's needs, so that we would be zocheh to believe that He is the Source of all the strength in the world and He is the Navigator of all circumstances.

Toward the end of Shaar Habitachon, Rabbenu Bachyai lists ten levels in bitachon, each higher than the previous level. He describes this gradual rising in levels of bitachon as "when his awareness is strengthened more and more regarding the Creator's compassion toward His creations." While the tenth level is only for unique individuals, the ninth level is achievable for everyone, if they only want it. Anyone who invests himself in it and exerts himself can get there. Obviously, it doesn't happen in one day; it is a process that continues on and on, through learning and constantly reviewing, again and again, inyanim of emunah and hashgachah pratis.

One of the levels that a person reaches when he is zocheh to strengthen himself in bitachon is that he "will not want anything other than that which Hashem wants for him." When you ask him, "What do you want?" initially he will answer that he wants all sorts of good things – health, parnassah, no debt, nachas from his family... He wants all these things and many more.

But what happens when there is a nisayon? What happens when things don't go according to plan? One who strengthens himself in bitachon feels that this is completely fine. True, it's not according to his plans, but it is in accordance with His plans! The belief that Hashem wants to do only what is good for him is so strong that he can declare with full confidence: If this is what Hashem wants, then this is what I want as well! Rabbenu Bachyai goes on to describe the ninth level: "...and he is totally devoted to Hashem." Hashem gave us freedom of choice, and He

wants us to act responsibly – to be "wise men who anticipate the future," and we achieve this through constantly learning about bitachon, because only someone who works on himself constantly can be totally devoted to Hashem yisbarach.

"And surrenders his nefesh and his guf" – nefesh refers to a person's desires. While someone with less bitachon will be afraid of losing out if he doesn't fulfill his own desires, one who invests time in learning bitachon is zocheh to peace of mind, for he believes he will not lose out on anything. Bitachon is the middah that will assist us in fulfilling the more difficult mitzvos with joy, despite opposition from the guf. Anyone who believes and has bitachon will have an easier time getting up early and jumping out of bed, saying Krias Shema on time and davening properly, and also forgoing all sorts of foods that are not in accordance with Hashem's will.

"And he will not believe that one means [of gaining his livelihood] is better than another." If he is happy with his current job and suddenly hears that he could make more money through another profession, he will not leave his current job. He will not attach any significance to the means by which he tries to attain parnassah, because parnassah comes from Shamayim and not from the type of hishtadlus he uses. No matter what he does, he will still receive only that which was determined for him from Above on Rosh Hashanah.

If he used the logical mind Hashem gave him and decided to set out on a specific route, and precisely on this route he met up with endless traffic – he won't start calculating, "Why did I do that?" or "Why didn't I think of that?..." He won't be busy thinking that the alternate route would have been better than the route he took, because he remembers that Hashem directs man's steps, and if it is decreed he will encounter delays, then this is what will happen. And the same applies in every area in life. All circumstances are equal in his eyes, because he knows that they are only circumstances, and the One Who is really in charge of everything is a good Father Who does good, and He is the Reason and Purpose behind everything, and everything the Merciful One does is for the good.

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

FROM THE EDITOR

Learn It Again

I've learned Shaar Habitachon twenty times already, said Mizmor L'sodah a hundred times, and davened for forty days. I've done everything, and the yeshuah still hasn't come!

This is the big question, a question that has been asked by countless people, each in his unique way. A talmid chacham once shared with me that when this question arises, he sees it as a sure sign that he needs to learn about bitachon yet again. If this still doesn't resolve the issue, he simply davens to Hashem to give him emunah and bitachon. He knows that if he genuinely had emunah, he would have no questions.

I often meet up with Yidden who are dealing with challenges that have no natural solution. They live with difficulties every day, yet the smile doesn't leave their faces. When we meet up with such Yidden, we want to know the secret key to their happiness. How can a person for whom every day presents a new challenge walk around as happy as the wealthiest millionaire?

And the answer is always the same: emunah.

People who live with emunah have no questions.

This is similar to someone who has been granted permission to enter a gold mine for two months, and whatever he succeeds in taking is his to keep. During those two months he'll work around the clock. He'll hardly sleep, day or night. He won't see the light of day. He'll barely eat or drink.

When we ask him, "How do you have the stamina to work so hard?" he won't understand the question. "Look," he'll say, "I'm mining for gold here, and no difficulty will stand in my way."

When a Yid lives with emunah in the Creator of all worlds, he knows that everything Hakadosh Baruch Hu does is for his good, and the more difficult it is, the better off he will be. He feels that he is mining for gold all the time.

This is the power of emunah and bitachon. This is what keeps people going in every situation and at all times.

Gut Shabbat

Pinchas Shefer

THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

I Asked and Received

An avreich from Modi'in Illit relates: I have the zechus of running a chessed organization, for which I often need to transport large things from one place to another. Various people who had trailers that attach to a car had agreed to lend me theirs, and each time I used a different one. At one point I realized that I could not continue this way, since I now needed to transport things for several days at a time. My organization had grown and needed its own trailer for permanent use. The time had come to buy one. The sum I was able to put aside for this was only 6,000 shekels.

I found someone who sells such trailers, and as it turned out, the amount I had put aside was truly laughable. The seller did not agree to go down from the price he'd demanded, and several days after our conversation I understood that my only option was to purchase the trailer for the full asking price and figure out afterward how to cover the debt.

I had misplaced the seller's number, so I called a friend to ask him for the number. "What do you need such a trailer for?" my friend asked.

"For the organization," I answered him.

"Ask Hakadosh Baruch Hu to send you one," my friend advised after he'd heard my problems. "For example, one morning I was standing in the kitchen of my kollel, and I asked Hashem, "Please send me hamantaschen with poppy-seed filling; and what happened just moments later? My chavrusa arrived with poppy-seed-filled hamantaschen! Believe that Hashem can do anything and can send you everything. Just ask Him to do so."

My friend's words truly gave me life. They reminded me that I am not alone in this battle; my organization belongs to Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and He would certainly help me. I started davening to the Creator, Who is kol yachol, to send me a trailer for free.

A week later, once again I was looking for a trailer. I found one for sale and called to ask the seller about it. "I thought of selling it for 11,000 shekels," the seller said, "but my son said we could put the price down to 9000 shekels."

"I have 6000 shekels," I answered the seller.

It seemed the conversation would continue as it did with the previous seller, but this time something else happened. The seller asked me, "What do you need this type of trailer for?"

I told him about my organization.

Don't Cry over Spilled Milk Shake

A Yid from America relates: I have an Israeli friend who is on the path to coming closer to Torah and mitzvos. He came to a shiur that I give in Kol Aryeh, got a taste of Yiddishkeit, and experienced how good it was. Ever since then, from time to time he calls me and suggests, "Let's learn Daf Yomi together"; and I hurry to the beis midrash to meet him and learn.

One evening he called asking me to learn with him, and he asked if I wanted ice cream or a milk shake.

"I'm standing here near the store," he explained, "and I want to buy myself ice cream, but I prefer not to eat alone. Can I get you something as well?"

"Sure," I answered. "You can get me a milk shake."

While I was making my way to the beis midrash, my friend was coming from the other direction with the ice cream and milk shake, one in each hand. But the minute I entered the beis midrash he greeted me with a crestfallen, apologetic expression. "I feel so bad," he explained. "Your milk shake spilled."

"It's all min haShamayim," I told him. "There's still a quarter of the cup left, and that's more than enough." While he went to get paper towels to clean up the area, I held the cup with the milk shake and looked at it for a moment. The cup had the word "Rita" on it – this was the nearby ice cream store. As far as I knew, the hechsher there was not a reliable one.

"Tell me," I asked him, "is this milk shake chalav Yisrael?"

"I don't know," my chavrusa answered. "I'll call and ask them right now."

He called, and they told him that if a customer doesn't specifically ask for chalav Yisrael, they give him chalav nochri.

And I am so careful about this!

How good it is that the milk shake spilled, and I had time to notice and ask about the milk. When a Yid takes on a good kaballah, Hakadosh Baruch Hu helps him keep it.

Honesty Is the Best Policy

Baruch Hashem, I am marrying off a son. This is a tremendous simchah, and I even included Yidden in chutz la'Aretz in the simchah, by traveling to them to enable them to take part in hachnassas kallah □. While there, I hooked up with a driver who earns his livelihood by transporting meshulachim from one philanthropist to another.

At one point I joined a group of Yidden, each of whom had come with his own good reason to raise money, and the driver took us to the home of a specific gvir, located somewhere, it seemed, at the ends of the earth.

"You go in last," the driver said.

"Why?"

"Because I don't want to ruin it for anyone. This gvir, you see – it's important to him to know that the people got to him on their own, not with the services of a driver. You need to be careful not to mention my name, because that could cause you to lose out."

I agreed. I did not exactly know what anyone else had said, but each of the people who went in before me left with a few hundred dollars. When my turn came, I went inside. The wealthy Yid asked me how I'd gotten to him, and I did not answer his question. He insisted on knowing, and then I told him, "I came for hachnassas kallah. If you want to contribute to that, brachos will come your way."

I don't know what his cheshbon was. My behavior probably did not find favor in his eyes. Maybe he understood that I had come with someone else, and this did not suit his "rules." Whatever it was – I left not one penny richer than I'd come.

After traveling back to my host, I met a fellow meshulach. He smiled and told me, "I met a friend today. He greeted me nicely, and we spoke about how difficult it is to leave home and go into galus in order to collect money. This friend gave me a large sum of money, and afterward he took out that same sum and said, 'Give it to another Yid who traveled here in order to collect money.'"

"And so," my friend took out the money and put a bundle of bills into my hands, "this money is for you."

This was an uplifting moment. I saw with my own eyes how Hakadosh Baruch Hu was pleased with my honesty. I was happy that my friend remembered me and also acted honestly, by not taking someone else's gift for himself. Both of us were Yidden in a strange land who were zocheh to he'aras Panim. It was so exciting, and both of us, the "mechutanim" who performed "V'kabtzeinu yachad," burst into a dance of thanksgiving.

On the giving end

I want to donate 126 shekels," a voice was heard from the other end of the line, "as a zechus for my dear son, who has an entrance exam to yeshivah. It's very important to us that he get into a high-quality yeshivah. When he is accepted I'll donate again." Two days later he called again, this time to donate 180 shekels, "to give praise and thanks to Hashem that my son was accepted in the yeshivah."

On the receiving end

I want to thank you with all my heart for the phone line with such incredible content. In your zechus I strengthen myself in emunah and bitachon. I especially want to thank you for the shiurim of Rav Nachman Neuhaus shlit"a, which shed light on the topic of bitachon with all its facets and details.

Something Small from Novaradok.

In the beginning of the summer zman, I was broke. I had no money – not in the bank and not available in my credit cards, and I had to pay my son's babysitter and buy a sefer that I needed for my learning in kollel. Then I came across the newsletter with the words of Rav Yehuda Mandel shlit"א, one of the mashpi'im on the phone-line. He spoke about complete bitachon in Hashem and brought all types of examples from Yeshivas Novaradok. I said to myself, Maybe I should try this. Although I am not on the level of Novaradok, I could certainly take something small from there nonetheless.

I kept thinking deeply that Hashem is kol yachol, and I trusted that He would send me the sums that were so necessary for me. Hashem knows exactly what I need, and I was sure He would send it; it didn't matter exactly how. I started walking in the direction of a bookstore to buy the sefer I needed, even though I had no money, but then I realized that it was almost 3:30 and I had to hurry to kollel. I switched directions and headed for kollel. When I arrived, the rosh kollel came over to me and gave me a sum of money that was enough to both pay the babysitter and buy the sefer!

It had never before happened that I received my kollel stipend at the beginning of the month. I saw tremendous hashgachah pratis here!

Salt, and the Pain Is Gone

It was thursday afternoon. Shabbos preparations were well under way when suddenly my son came in crying bitterly. "What happened?" I asked him.

"My tooth hurts," he cried to me.

Everything stopped, and my wife started calling dental clinics, asking them for an emergency appointment for a first-aid treatment for my son.

In the first clinic they said there was no chance of fitting her in between appointments, in the second clinic they were not taking anyone, the third one had already closed, and the fourth would not open until later. In the fifth clinic, the dentist herself picked up the phone, but she said she'd already finished working and had gone home.

And in the background – crying. The boy was in pain, suffering, crying, crying...the tears alone could make a person go crazy.

After that last phone call, my wife suddenly received a call from a woman she didn't know. "Your sister sent me to you," the woman said. "She said you would know where I could get secondhand clothing."

"Secondhand clothing? My wife could barely recall her own name with all the crying from my son, so she really had to strain to recall details. But she answered patiently. The woman on the other end asked a few more questions, and my wife answered those as well.

It sounded like some sort of choir. A child crying, the mother stroking him and talking on the phone, the whimper dying down and then getting stronger again, and once again the mother saying something softly. Instead of telling the woman on the line that it was impossible for her to talk this way, my wife continued answering her detailed questions as best she could.

"Who's crying so much?" the woman finally asked my wife, and my wife told her about our son's terrible toothache and the relentless crying.

"Listen to me," the woman said. "Put salt into the cavity in the tooth, and you'll see that the pain will pass!"

The conversation concluded, the salt was put into the tooth, and indeed – it was amazing. The pain stopped! The child stopped crying, and peace returned to our home even before we found a dentist who agreed to meet our son.

We saw how, in the merit of my wife's patience and desire to help a bas Yisrael, the yeshuah came.

So That It Shall Be in Your Mouth

An avreich from Modi'in Illit relates: On Shabbos kodesh I felt that my mouth was simply screaming – not the type of screams you hear, but the type you feel. I was in such terrible pain, and I could not identify the source. Was it coming from my teeth or from my jaws? It felt like everything together. I thought to myself: What extra mitzvah could I commit to perform so that in its zechus the pain will pass? I remembered that there was a small tear in my tefillin straps. Each time I donned tefillah, I would notice the tear and tell myself that soon I'd go and exchange the straps. But afterward I put the tefillin into its bag and forget about it all until the next day. This time, I decided to take action. Who knew – perhaps there was a connection between the pain and the kashrus of my tefillin straps? Regarding tefillin it says, "so that Toras Hashem shall be in your mouth."

That Sunday morning I went immediately to someone who deals with tefillin and asked him to change the strap on my tefillin shel rosh. He did this quickly, and afterward he checked the straps on the tefillin shel yad and told me that their time had come as well, and it would be appropriate to switch them.

The tefillin received the refurbishment they needed, and when I awoke on Monday morning I said Modeh ani with extra joy. The pain had disappeared.

"If so," the seller responded, "I want to be your partner in all the zechuyos of that tzedakah. I'm going to lend you the trailer, and you can use it for an unlimited amount of time. I don't think I'll ever need it back."

And that's how it happened. I got the trailer for free, with the power of simple emunah and true tefillah to the Creator of the world.

The Money Waited for the Correct Moment

Shortly before Pesach I got a call from the bank. "If you don't deposit money right now," the teller said, "we'll have to place restrictions on your account."

A restricted account is a problem I can't allow myself. I took all the cash I had and deposited it into the account. What next? I had no idea. How would we buy what we needed at the grocery store tomorrow? Good question. How would we prepare for Pesach? An even better question.

I was back in the midbar, knowing that all the mann was going to be used up and that I had nothing on hand to feed my children tomorrow. Tomorrow we would see; tomorrow there would be mann from Shamayim again. Indeed, right after I made the big deposit that emptied my wallet down to the last penny, an avreich called and told me, "I transferred money to your account."

I was very happy, but I did not see the money in my account – not that day and not the next day. I called the avreich and asked where exactly he had deposited the money. "Into the Bank Discount account," he said. I don't have an account in Bank Discount. I called my son.

"Do you have an account in Bank Discount?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Someone told me he put money into a Bank Discount account for me. Perhaps the money was deposited in your account?"

Within moments, the hashgachah pratis was revealed in all its glory:

This avreich has been depositing money for me regularly for the past two years. He thought the Bank Discount account was mine, and he was sure I was receiving the money. In truth, the money was going into my son's account, and he, being impeccably honest, did not understand how he was receiving that money, so he did not use it.

Now, the source and the purpose of the money were revealed, and so my son transferred the entire accumulated sum into my account at once. It was amazing to see how Hakadosh Baruch Hu had saved this sum for me for when I would need it badly, so I could prepare for Pesach with all my needs amply met.

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Hashgochah Pratis in Sifrei Kodesh

Hashgachah Pratis in the Sefarim Hakedoshim

When One Genuinely Trusts, Hashem Will Provide

The *yetzer hara* convinces us that we need a large dowry in order to live after our wedding. This is the meaning of the *passuk*, "Cast your burden on Hashem, and He will provide." This is like a poor man who went out carrying a heavy sack of food. He met up with a generous man traveling by wagon, who offered him a ride. The poor man quickly put some items from his sack into a smaller sack, which he placed in the wagon, holding the rest of the food on his shoulders. His benefactor was astounded. "Do you think those remaining few pounds of food make a difference to me?! Put your entire sack onto the wagon, and I'll take you wherever you need to go!"

This is exactly how it is with us. When you ask one person, "How much of a dowry did you

get?" he'll say, I got a large dowry. *Baruch Hashem*, this will give me enough *parnassah* for three or four years, even if I don't have any business to earn money." And then if you'll question the man further: "What will you do for the remaining 44 or 45 years of your life – until you're 70 years old, which is the average length of a person's life?" he'll answer, "I trust that Hashem will send me some sort of business to provide me with *parnassah*."

And because in the end a person will need to trust in Hashem to provide for him and his household for the rest of his years, he can trust in Hashem *yisbarach* already now! Even if he gets just half the dowry he expected to receive, Hashem will provide for him for the additional two years.

This is the meaning of the *passuk*, "Cast your burden on Hashem" – don't leave over even a small amount of your burden for yourself to carry. Ultimately, a person has no choice but to come to trust in Hashem for everything, and then, when you genuinely trust in Him, He will certainly provide for you. As the *passuk* states (*Yirmeyahu* 17:7), "Blessed is the man who trusts in Hashem, and Hashem shall be his Source of confidence."

(*Machaneh Yisrael*, by the Chafetz Chaim)

A Hint in the Torah to the Mitzvah of Bitachon

"You shall fear Hashem your G-d and attach yourself to Him" (*Devarim* 10:20). In my opinion, this is a *specific* mitzvah that applies to every individual of our nation, each according to his level; but this is something that the Torah only hints to. It is

the mitzvah of *bitachon*. Yirmeyahu expounded on this concept and cursed anyone who places his trust in flesh and blood, and Dovid Hamelech discussed it so many times in *Tehillim*: "In Hashem I trusted"; "Beis Yisrael trust in Hashem"; etc. And Yeshayahu said (*Yeshayahu* 26:4), "Trust in Hashem forever and ever."

There is a logical type of trust, like the *bitachon* a nation has in its king that he will take care of all their needs; and there is a natural trust, such as a wife's trusting in her husband that he will take care of what she is lacking. And there is also the stronger *bitachon* of the king's son, trusting that his father the king will take care of him and provide for all his needs just as he takes care of things for himself. All these relationships merge when it comes to trusting in Hashem *yisbarach*. He is our King and He is our Father, and so we can be certain that He will take care of us.

The basis of *bitachon* is that Hashem cleaves to His creations, preparing all their food and other needs and protecting them from illness and difficulty and from lacking things they need. He feels for each person more than the person feels for himself. He is pained by the pain of His creations, and he is the One and only One Who is forever able to help, and thus He wants our good more than we ourselves want it. Therefore, a person should feel secure and relaxed and should not feel compelled to do anything more than that which the decree of the Creator demands of him, as is discussed at length in *Shaar Habitachon*. This is what is called "and to Him you shall cleave" – since when a person pictures in his mind that he is cleaving to the *hashgachah* of Hashem *yisbarach*, and he feels Hashem involved in everything that happens to him, and that Hashem feels his pain even more than he feels it himself...then a person is secure and relaxed and does not worry even a little...for what will his abilities help at all in comparison to the abilities of the Creator, to Whom he is attached and Who is fully aware of his needs?! This is called *deveikus*, and this is the specific mitzvah that applies to every member of *Am Yisrael*, everyone on his level.

(*Meshech Chochmah*, *Parshas Va'eschanan*)

Not to Worry at All

Dovid Hamelech teaches, "Cast your burden on Hashem, and He will provide for you" (*Tehillim* 55:23), meaning that you should be like an infant who does not even know how to worry about his own sustenance; he just casts his burden on his parents. This is how you should cast your burden on Hashem.

(*Divrei Yisrael Modzhitz*, *Parshas Vayigash*)



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A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on Kav Hashgacha Pratis

The navi commands us to look! Lift your eyes up to the heavens! But most people do not have time for that.

Look, and think about the incredible galaxies in the heavens. Think about the sun, the moon (see Mishnah Berurah 426:13 regarding staring at the moon), the countless stars.

Rambam explains (*Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah* 2:1) that a person will come to love and fear Hashem when he looks at His deeds and at His incredible great creations. He will then see the limitless wisdom in them, and he will immediately "love and give praise and glorify, and greatly desire to know the Almighty Hashem."

The same applies when we look at the ocean – waters that have no end – mountains and hills, trees and plants, and large and small animals. Stop, think, and see! Who created all these? (Perhaps you can do this during *bein hazmanim*, when you go out a bit and see the wonderful world of the Creator!)

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

Lift Your Eyes up to the Heavens, and See Who Created These

Looking at all this fills a person with joy and brings him close to Hashem, which is our entire goal in their world! You can also be filled with awe by thinking about the wonders of the human body – how everything works and is arranged with so many parts and details. In our two hands alone there are some 70 components, and in our two feet there are several hundred components. Everything works together in the most incredible way, with the whole system of the brain and the heart, and with the digestive system, which the Chovos Halevavos discusses at length.

In order to be *zocheh* to achieve true *bitachon*, it is recommended that one learn *Shaar Habechinah*, which deals with thinking about creation, how "You made everything with *chochmah*," and to speak constantly about Hashem's greatness and goodness, which fill the entire world. We should say Thank You to Hashem *yisbarach* for every single thing He does!