

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshs Ki Teitzei - Ki Tavo 5784 ■ Issue 147

HEART TO HEART

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

He Who Created a Day Created the Sustenance for It

People like to say with longing, "It used to be good"; "We used to be happy." We relate to the past as though the people who lived then did not make mistakes and did not suffer. They just sat near the burning fireplace in winter and sang songs. In truth, many people who lived long ago did this as well, but there were many other aspects to their lives. For example, each day they saved food for the next day.

The financial situation used to be very tight. Food was so scarce that having bitachon that Hashem would provide for us tomorrow was considered a very high madreigah of bitachon.

When a person bought bread, he would save it for the next three days. And then they would eat the old bread they'd purchased three days earlier. Who ate fresh bread? The fresh bread was saved for the next day, for who knew if there would be bread then? If food was still edible, we ate it, and we ate sparingly, so that there would be something left of it.

Thanks to Hashem, nowadays one can anticipate that Yidden – not only very great tzadikim – will trust in Hashem to send them food for tomorrow. May Hashem's Name be blessed – there is plenty of food. There are hundreds of flavors and types of food available to everyone, and every person can find what suits his palate. Trucks unload tons of food products every day, and the question is not whether there will be food, but rather how the food will get to us.

What is it that concerns us? Money. People worry about whether their money will all be spent and at some point they won't be able to buy food. Here is where we need to strengthen ourselves in bitachon, until we reach the seventh level of bitachon, as Rabbenu Bachyai wrote at the end of the fifth chapter: He who trusts in Hashem will not hoard. The word he uses comes from the root word otzar, meaning treasure. A person safeguards in his treasure house that which he has in order to use it in the future. A person who learns bitachon, however, will enjoy what he has at home today. He bought a new outfit for a wedding, and he continues using it for Shabbos and Yamim Tovim. What will he wear for the next wedding? His good Father will take care of it. He sent him his needs today so that he would enjoy them, and He will also send him his needs in the future so that he will enjoy them then as well.

If you were ever near a waterfall, you know

that the sight is simply amazing: The waters flow and flow, and the shefa continues constantly, without stopping! This is how the Divine shefa works, and more. The Creator of the world is mashpia all the time, and if so, what do we have to worry about? If you have money to buy a certain product, and you come to the store and see that it's on sale – "Buy three of these for a lower price each." If you have enough money at the moment, then maybe you should buy three; but if you have only enough money to buy one, don't feel bad. Enjoy the one that you needed right now, and be sure that the good King Who does good will provide for you in the future as well! Parnassah is not something that can be measured in terms of dollars and cents. The main thing is that you have what you require now.

The passuk in Parshas Hamann states: "The nation will go out to collect each day's portion on that day." Rabi Elazar Hamoda'i asks: Why is there a need to emphasize that they took "each day's portion on that day"? The Torah tells us clearly that the manna rained down each day and that Bnei Yisrael collected it and brought it into their homes!

His answer should be highlighted and posted on a sign for all to see: "He Who created a day, created the sustenance for it!"

Is there anyone in the world who goes to sleep at night agitated because he doesn't know whether the sun will rise the next morning? There is no such thing. Billions of people who live in this world are sure that the sun will rise at the time that is listed on the calendar. Why are they so sure of this? Who says there won't be some fluke in the sun's pathway?

The answer is that it states clearly in Parshas Noach, "[The cycles of] day and night will not cease." Regarding day and night, we have no personal experience on which to base our trust that this cycle will not halt, but regarding parnassah – we have experience. The difference is not in Hakadosh Baruch Hu's ability to provide for all our needs; rather, the difference is in our own emunah. We need to aspire to develop a strong emunah and clear bitachon in Hashem, that He will provide for all our needs, and we need to be as sure of this as we are sure that the sun will rise.

This is a joyous life, a life of peace and serenity, without any worries about the future. May we merit to be written and sealed in the book of parnassah and mercy, life, peace, and all that is good; amen.

FROM THE EDITOR

It's Critical to Repair the Rope

A person walks along a narrow bridge, holding onto a thick rope that stretches out to either side of him. He knows that if he lets go of the rope for even one moment, he could fall deep into the abyss.

Suddenly, he sees that the rope seems a bit slack. He fears that in another moment the rope will tear, and it's better not to think about what could happen next. The one and only thing he needs to do now is to repair the rope. That is the most urgent and critical thing now, because without the rope there is no chance that he will survive.

During the days of Elul and Tishrei, we say the twenty-seventh perek of Tehillim: Hashem Ori v'Yishi – "Hashem is my Might and my Salvation; whom shall I fear..."

The Malbim explains that Hashem's hashgachah comes when a person cleaves to Him. When a person is attached to Hashem, Hashem will safeguard him from all harm, and thus the person's heart can rely on this, and he will not fear any evil.

He says something amazing: It's impossible for something bad to happen to someone when he is davuk to Hashem. In his words: "No evil can occur to the tzaddik, except during the moment when he lets go of his dveikus and his avodas Hashem." Therefore, he continues, among all the requests that a person makes, it is fitting that he focus on one request, through which he will receive all his other requests – he should ask to be close to Hashem at all times. This principle is brought in sefer Toldos Yaakov Yosef (Parshas Mishpatim) in the name of the holy Baal Shem Tov: When a person has bitachon he cannot be punished from on High, and when they want to bring pain upon a person, they take his bitachon away from him. And the Baal Shem Tov says, "Therefore, it is appropriate to daven to be strong in bitachon."

The whole world is a narrow bridge, and the rope that we hold onto is emunah and bitachon. When a person feels some sort of weakness in bitachon, he knows that his life is in danger.

These are days of teshuvah and of examining our deeds. It's frightening to think about the Day of Judgment, which is coming closer, and everything that this day includes, but what is amazing is that the Judge of the entire world is also our Anchor and our Source of strength.

We are like a child who feels that his father is angry at him. He knows that he has nowhere to escape, and so he cries and runs into his father's outstretched arms. This is the only safe place for him.

Reb Shlomo ibn Gabirol expressed this in his monumental piyut, "Kesser Malchus," which is recited in Sephardic communities during the night of Yom Kippur.

"I escape from You – to You, and I conceal myself from Your wrath – in Your shade!"

Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave us these Days of Judgement, and He calls out to us: Escape to Me! I am always here to accept you with warmth and love.

Gut Shabbat Pinchas Shefer

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THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

He Accrued Merits Many Years Ago

A Yid from Kiryat Sefer relates: One day I went to visit my father shlit"za, and I heard something truly amazing from him.

"Your brother was here yesterday, and he gave me regards from my old friend from yeshivah," Abba told me. "He told me that this friend was zocheh to establish a beautiful mikveh tahorah in a certain city, which services all the people of the city. This is true zikui harabbim every single day! "I told your brother the beginning of the story":

The yeshivah where I learned when I was young was located in a small village abroad, where there were barely any Yidden. During bein hazmanim, when the talmidim went home, one could not even find a minyan there. This friend of mine was scrupulous about going to the mikveh before davening every day, but what could he do if in this small village of ours there was no mikveh? The only way to go to the mikveh was to travel to the closest village, and so my friend would get on a bike and travel every day for a quarter of an hour each way in order to immerse himself in the mikveh. It was not easy. It took time and energy, but he would not forgo his practice.

After a while, one of the neighbors informed him that there was supposed to be an underground well in his yard. This was truly a newflash, because if he had a ma'ayan near the yeshivah he wouldn't have to make the trek to the neighboring village every day. But in order to make the place suitable for tevillah, he would have to work. My friend was not fazed by hard work. He got hold of tools, and with his own two hands he dug in the area near the wellspring until he reached the water. He made himself a pit of water, and thus there was now a mikveh near the yeshivah. Of course, no one heated the water or cleaned it up or put in tiles, as in the regular mikva'os that you and I know. It was not a great pleasure to be tovel there, but he was scrupulous about doing so, with mesirus nefesh, each day.

Now, when I hear that he was able to establish a mikveh tahorah and garner tremendous zechuyos as a result, it's clear to me that there is a connection between this great zechus and his mesirus nefesh as a young man to immerse himself in the mikveh and purify himself before davening. The reward for a mitzvah is another mitzvah. When we do mitzvos with devotion and with such consistency, we are zocheh to many mitzvos.

In Another Three Hours

An avreich kollel relates: My chavrusa sells baby carriages. As we all know,

An Hour's Meeting

From the moment our baby came home after his bris, we had no rest. The baby was crying all day. Nothing could calm him down. He would eat, doze, and immediately wake up crying. Eat again, doze again, and once again burst out with screams. It was obvious that something was hurting him, and we didn't know what it was. The problem upset all of us, and all sorts of advice started coming our way: You should go to this or that type of counselor, alternative doctor, or expert healer. Check for allergies, or see an energetic healer... All these professionals were prepared to see our baby for a high cost and much effort on our part. I was confused by the onslaught of thoughts and advice coming my way.

I said to myself: I'll set up a meeting with the Healer of all flesh. I'll dedicate at least an hour to the meeting, no less, just as I would if I were meeting with some professional. This decision did not come easily to me. I put off the meeting time after time, until I decided that this was the best hishtadlus. It did not mean I wouldn't go to a doctor or a chiropractor afterward; it was possible that this was Hashem's will. But certainly after a meeting with Hashem, whatever I did would bring about a yeshuah.

I prepared for the meeting. I put on my hat and jacket, and just like that, in full garb, I sat at the table and said Tehillim. Yes, an hour's meeting with the greatest Doctor of all. While I was at the meeting, my mother-in-law called and told my wife about a new idea she'd just heard. A simple piece of advice that we could carry out right away.

As I was still saying Tehillim, my wife acted on the advice, and immediately, quiet reigned in the house! The baby calmed down and fell asleep for several hours, and since then he has been calm and happy; he eats and is satisfied. The problem was resolved!

This is absolutely true. It's exactly what happened after a direct meeting with the Creator of all healing.

Rare Story, Regular Hashgachah

An avreich from Beit Shemesh relates: I have a job to tidy up and organize the beis medrash in honor of Shabbos. One Thursday as I was working, moving objects around and putting them in their proper places, I heard a conversation between two people who were sitting and learning. One of them, whom I will call Shmuel for the purpose of this story, told his friend: "The electric company was very considerate of me lately and didn't send me a bill for several months. The problem is that one day they remembered, and now I received a big bill for that whole period of time, amounting to 6,000 shekels." "And what are you planning to do?" his friend asked.

"I'm debating if I should ask the electric company to allow me to pay in installments. The fact that they want me to pay in one shot is because of their mistake."

It wouldn't have been polite for me to continue listening in to their conversation, and I had to prepare the shul for Shabbos; and so I did not hear the end of the conversation. I hoped, for Shmuel's sake, that he'd find a solution easily, but I could never have envisioned what would happen an hour later.

The other people who had been learning left for home, and the beis medrash slowly emptied out. At 11 p.m. only the two of us were left – me and Reb Shmuel, who was still learning diligently.

Suddenly, there was loud banging on the door. "Is someone in here? Can you open the door?" a voice called from outside. I went over to open the door, and I found two avreichim standing there together with an American who spoke only English. "Is there someone learning here?" they asked.

"Yes," I assured them. They came inside, and the American went directly over to Reb Shmuel, took a thousand dollars out of his pocket, and put them into the shocked avreich's hands.

"We were at a business meeting with him," the avreichim explained, "and he suddenly stopped us and said he felt that he must give a thousand dollars to someone who is sitting and learning. He literally begged us to take him to a beis medrash in the area that very moment. We told him that on Thursday nights one can find Yidden learning in shul until very late at night, so perhaps it would be better to first conclude our meeting with him – but he insisted. He said must give the money that minute. "Now, without delay!" There was no point arguing about it, because either way, the business meeting had come to a halt, and so we hurried here, to the first beis medrash we could find."

On the receiving end

I wanted to thank you for your newsletter. Everyone knows that if they want to give me pleasure, they should bring me the Hashgachah Pratis newsletter. For four years I've been enthusiastically devouring the words of your newsletter – all the columns. The graphic design of the newsletter is also so nice. In our family, it goes from person to person. Everyone reads it and learns from it, and there is always someone who says, "Perhaps I should do the same things as the person who told this story!" Thank you! May you go from strength to strength!

On the giving end

We pledged a monthly donation toward the dissemination of these newsletters for an entire year. A few months later we decided to double our donation, as a zechus for our son who is dealing with a complex medical problem. After we sent the order form to the bank to arrange the monthly donation, we called to reserve a place in a hotel where we planned on being for the Yamim Tovim in Tisrei – something we've been doing for several years. This time, we decided to ask if there was a discount for a child dealing with a medical issue, who is officially registered as being disabled. Our request was transferred to the manager, and he decided that our son did not have to pay at all. We thought we would get a small discount, but in the end we got a discount worth \$3,000! It's so amazing that within an hour of giving the donation we got back several times the amount of the donation, and it came to us precisely in the zechus of the child for whose benefit we had made the donation.

As they were talking, I saw that the American still wasn't satisfied, and he took out another few hundred shekels and gave them to Reb Shmuel. They left. Reb Shmuel – who had been so desperately in need of money just then to cover his electric bill – and I, remained there, amazed to the point of tears by the incredible hashgachah pratis we had just experienced. Two minutes later, two other avreichim arrived and sat down to learn. Hakadosh Baruch Hu had arranged the precise moment when Reb Shmuel was learning alone in the beis medrash, so that he would receive the sum that was meant especially for him.

On the Fortieth Day She Started Talking

Last winter we were dealing with a complex nisayon. My mother caught pneumonia, and complications ensued. The infection was especially aggressive, and she lost consciousness. Hatzalah was called, and they hurried to take her to the hospital, where she was hooked up to an ECMO machine – a machine that does the work of the heart and the lungs. Whoever knows what an ECMO is understands that her situation was not at all simple. It was critical, and my mother is relatively young. She was in intensive care for a month and a half, while we davened for her refuah, and from there she was transferred to rehab. Throughout this period, my greatest desire was for her to come back to life and good health, and I thought about what I could do to arouse Heavenly mercy.

On the fifteenth of Kislev, when I arrived in kollel I put up a notice with a special request that each person should take upon himself not to talk at all during davening, for forty days. My friends heeded my request for the sake of my mother's refuah and accepted upon themselves not to talk during davening.

Only two weeks after I hung up the notice, the situation began to stabilize. Ima started to get back to herself. The head of the department called us and said that Ima could already breathe on her own. It was too early to rejoice, however, because even if she lived, we did not know if her brain was damaged. The head of the department prepared us for the worst.

On the twenty-sixth of Shevat, something incredible happened: My brother informed us all that Ima had started talking! The next day, when I was taking my shift with Ima, the nurse came over and gave her a yogurt as a first trial to see if she could eat, and Baruch Hashem, she ate and digested it properly.

Only several days later did I notice the significance of the timing: Exactly forty days after my friends had accepted the commitment not to talk during davening and krias haTorah, my mother started talking! Today she is also walking, baruch Hashem!

I am relating this miracle so that people will know how much Hashem loves this kabbalah, and so that they will be mischazeik in this mitzvah as a zechus for her complete recovery.

If Only I Could Be Someone's Miracle

There are many stories about good people whom Hashem chose to be His messengers. I think it's important to publicize the story I'm about to tell, so that we will understand that the zechus of being able to help others is not a given.

In our kollel there's an avreich who has difficulty with parnassah. He learns b'chavrusa with an avreich of means, but he usually does not ask for his help, since this chavrusa has a rule: He loans money only to someone who knows clearly how he is going to return it. Since this avreich is not in that category, he doesn't even try to borrow money from his chavrusa.

Last Thursday he got into a bind, and although he knew his chavrusa's rule, he told him, "I don't have a way to buy food for Shabbos. Can you please lend me 350 shekels?"

Unexpectedly, his chavrusa answered, "You know that in general I don't lend money to someone who has no foreseeable way of returning it, but you are accustomed to miracles, and from time to time you've told me how Hashem sent you your needs in incredible ways. Therefore, I'll lend you the money." The chavrusa took 350 shekels out of his pocket and gave the money to his friend as a loan.

The chavrusa who gave the loan related the end of this story:

Before davening Minchah that day, a spirit of generosity came over me. I thought to myself: So many miracles happen to my friend! Today I will be his miracle. I planned on taking an additional 350 shekels out of my pocket, giving it to some other avreich, and asking him to give the money to the borrower, so that he'll immediately have a way of returning the loan.

I decided to hurry and do this right after Minchah, but to my surprise, right after Minchah the borrower came over to me and returned the money he had borrowed before Minchah. "Someone already gave me money," he told me.

I stood there, amazed. Hakadosh Baruch Hu took care of my friend and sent him the money through another messenger. And I probably need to strengthen myself in order to be zocheh to be someone else's miracle.

one does not purchase a baby carriage every day, and when there is a happy reason to make the purchase, the buyer does not necessarily have cash on hand. Some customers pay by check or by credit card, and every form of payment has its disadvantage. The best and most rare form of payment is cash.

So you'll understand how tempting it was when my chavrusa received a call in the beginning of seder. The caller told him, "Listen, I need a baby carriage. If you sell it to me now, I'll pay in cash immediately."

But my chavrusa decided that he would not make any sort of deal at the cost of his learning. "Right now I cannot come to bring you the carriage," he said in a calm voice. "Talk to me in another three hours."

That same day, at 12 p.m., he called me and told me, "Remember that call I got in the beginning of seder?"

"I remember."

"I generally sell this type of carriage about once in two weeks. Today I sold three such carriages. I've never had this many sales in one day!"

I was amazed. My friend withstood the nisayon of not dealing with other things during learning hours, and not only did he not lose out, but he gained threefold. While we have no promise of seeing such a quick revelation of hashgachah from Above, this he'aras Panim is simply moving.

I Got a Refund

My grandfather suffers from a certain health issue for which he requires a type of medical apparatus that costs 440 shekels. The members of the family started looking into this equipment and checking whether it was possible to be reimbursed by his health insurance. When I asked if they had bought it, they told me that we probably would not get a refund, and they were thinking about what to do.

"What's there to think about?" I said. "Saba is suffering; we have to help him. If there's something else to be done, you do it. I'm buying the machine."

At that specific time, I had the money, and I purchased the machine. The money was meant to be used for the needs of my home, but I understood that this was not a time for making cheshbonos. I felt that buying the machine was the right thing for me to do, and regarding the near future – Hashem would help, at least like He had helped Saba and sent him the machine through me.

Yesterday, a Yid came over to me and gave me one hundred dollars, which, according to that day's exchange rate, is worth 370 shekels. Another Yid gave me 200 shekels, and thus, after I took off a fifth for ma'asros, I had 440 shekel in hand, plus an additional fifteen shekels – the sum I had paid the delivery man to bring the machine to Saba's house.

So exact. Such hashgachah.

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Hashgachah Pratis in Sifrei Kodesh

Hashgachah Pratis in the Sefarim Hakedoshim

Be Fully Conscious of the Fact That Hashem Hears and Listens

When you daven, know before Whom you stand. There are three things that a person needs to think about. First, that he is literally standing before the Creator yisbarach and exchanging words with Him. Even though his eyes cannot see Him, and it is difficult to conjure up an image of this truth in his heart, because there is no sense that helps him with this process, with a bit thought and attention a person of average intellect can establish this truth in his heart. He can become conscious of the fact that he is standing before Hashem Himself, and he is actually beseeching and asking Him for his needs. It is Hashem Himself Who hears and Who is listening to his words just as a friend hears and listens when you speak into his ear....

(Mesillas Yesharim ch. 19)

How Wonderful It Is to Express Your Worries to Hashem

A bit of advice that applies to every person I know: Hashem's Presence and Existence is consistent in this world, and this is the secret of the world that is concealed from those who are swept up in the flow of physical and material life. It is a fact that a person has the ability to direct his heart Heavenward and that anyone who constantly rejects falsehood and instead conjures up an image of truth in his heart can connect to

the Source of all existence. Hashem is close to all those who call out to Him, and this closeness to us brings Him pleasure.... How wonderful it is that a person has the ability to express all his worries to the Master of the world as though he is speaking to a friend, and that Hashem calls him His beloved child. When a person davens while in pain, as Hashem commands us, this connection becomes a constant source of aid and healing, which gladdens his heart and enlightens him.

(Kovetz Igros Chazon Ish Vol. 2 #2)

Like a Person Speaks to His Friend

Rav Pinchas says, in the name of Rav Yehuda bar Simon, that idols seem close but in actuality are very far (as explained in Yeshayahu 47). A man's idol can be with him in his home, but he could cry out to it until the day he dies, and the idol doesn't hear him or save him.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu, in contrast, seems far but in actuality is very close.... The distance between earth and the highest level of Heaven is a distance of seven thousand years.... And Rav Berachia and Rav Chalbo add in the name of Rabi Aba Samuka that there is an additional distance of 515 years above the highest level in traversing merely the hooves of the heavenly chayos....

Thus, Hakadosh Baruch Hu, Who is above all the heavens and all the celestial beings, is vastly distant from us. And yet, a man can enter a beis Haknesses, stand behind the amud and daven quietly – and Hashem listens to his tefillah.... At that moment he is like a person who is speaking into his friend's ear; that's how Hakadosh Baruch Hu hears him. Is there a god closer than this One, Who is so close to all His creations?!

(Talmud Yerushalmi, Brachos 9:1)

Translate This Into Enthusiasm in Avodas Hashem

The distance between the Kisei Hakavod and a person standing here in this world is millions of years! Those years are only metaphors to express the distance in madreigah and power. And despite this vast distance, Hakadosh Baruch Hu is close to us, "like a person who is speaking to his friend – like the distance from his mouth to his friend's ear"; and moreover, He is with a person "inside his heart"!

These are not mere philosophical ideas, for they can be translated into avodas Hashem, into excitement and enthusiasm.... Yidden in the past used to be mis-

pa'el. Not to mention the Avos and Moshe Rabenu, who felt this reality tangibly and did not lose their focus on it for even one second...including when they ate and when they slept – at every moment of their lives.

(Nefesh Shimshon B'inyanei Emunah, by Rav Shimshon Pincus)

A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on Kav Hashgacha Pratis

Every person has his "peckel," his package in this world. This peckel contains both the good things that one experiences and the less-good things. Our job is to focus on the good things in the package and to ignore the bad things. But people do exactly the opposite: They focus on what is not good and see all the good only in their friends' packages – something that causes them unnecessary suffering throughout the years of their life.

Once, an important rav came to Lakewood, and I was zocheh to serve as his aid. Anyone who wanted a brachah and a yeshuah came to me and made his request. Many people revealed to me the secret pains of their hearts. I had known a lot of these people for many years, and it always seemed as though their lives were wonderful. Suddenly, I was made aware of how much they were suffering, and this applied to so many people.

I was amazed. Suddenly, I understood how prevalent it is that people think the grass is greener on the other side, and how much they desire another person's life. In Parshas Ki Seitze the Torah allows marriage to an

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

Your Peckel, Your Gift

"eishes yefas to'ar." The reason for this is that "the Torah speaks to the yetzer hara." But Chazal revealed to us that ultimately, the person who took this wife will end up hating her.

This is a great principle in life!

There are many things that seem to be "yefas to'ar." My friend has a fancy car, abilities, success...and I desire them.

We need to know that each person has his own peckel, tailored to his specific measurements. Hakadosh Baruch Hu knows exactly to whom He gave what, and why He did so. Whatever we did not receive would not be good for us.

If all the packages were exchanged – if you had a fancy car like your friend, if you had the house you so desired – not only wouldn't you like it, not only wouldn't you be satisfied, but you would even hate it. As Chazal tell us: "Ultimately, he will hate her."

See all the good you've received. If you're not capable of doing this, learn some mussar about humility and being happy with one's lot. In this way you will have a happy, joyous life.



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