

# HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshs Noach - Lech Lecha 5785 ■ Issue 150

## HEART TO HEART

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

### Think About the Greatness of Hashem!

Let's imagine an enticing image of an orange – a large, orange-colored fruit with bumps and dimples on its surface. Near it lies a single segment of the fruit – a moon-shaped creation, sweet and juicy, in a lighter shade of orange. Both are arranged on a sparkling clean plate, which mirrors its contents. Whoever sees this picture is impressed – what a beautiful fruit!

This image magnifies the beauty of an orange. It's possible that the orange is actually in our home – we see it again and again, yet we aren't impressed at all. We don't stop to look at it. We just continue on our way and fail to see the wonders of the Creator.

This is just a small example to explain Rabbenu Bachyai's words. After speaking all about bitachon and giving clear instructions for maintaining bitachon under all circumstances, Rabbenu Bachyai discusses the things that diminish bitachon. Although we may know what is written in Shaar Habitachon on an intellectual level, in order to live by it in practical ways, we need constant chizuk and protection from those things that could diminish our bitachon.

Toward the conclusion of Shaar Habitachon, Rabbenu Bachyai discusses these things – the "mafsidei habitachon."

One of them is "disregarding the Creator and His good middos."

What is meant by disregarding? A person goes through life without thinking about the good middos of the Creator; how He directs His world and provides for us with constant kindness and mercy; how His mercy is upon all His creations; how all seven factors are present in His control of the world with perfection: 1) He knows all of history and all the future; 2) He is more merciful than any merciful creature in the world; 3) He knows everything about me from the first moment of my existence; 4) He knows exactly what is good for me; 5) There is nothing that can prevent Him from acting as He wishes; 6) He exists at all times, and therefore we can call out to Him at any time; and 7) He does everything with justice and only for the good.

It is not enough that all of this is written in Shaar Habitachon. In order for it to be inscribed deeply within our hearts, we need to be proactive! We need to bring the picture closer to us. We can set aside a few moments of thought to tell ourselves the ultimate truth, which is that our Creator does everything in order to do good to us.

Anyone who invests himself in these thoughts will see revealed chassadim and wonders in his life. We aren't talking about heavenly matters that aren't connected to us, but rather

about life here in this world. For example: A Yid planned something and arranged all the details, but then something was thrown off. One of his children did the opposite of what he wanted, bought what he should not have, lost his money, or spoke precisely when it would have been proper to keep silent. Now this Yid is facing the nisayon of anger.

If he spends some time learning the principles of emunah, if he focuses strongly on this sugya of bitachon, he will hold himself back from getting angry – and not just because his mechutan is sitting nearby and he must make a good impression on him. He doesn't hold back only because of the people around him and the possibility that they'll think he's not normal. He prevents himself from grinding his teeth not only because he doesn't want to be a laughingstock of his neighbors.

He asks for siyata diShmaya and overcomes his anger and says, aloud or quietly, "Gam zu l'tovah – This too is for the good," since he knows that the earth is filled with Hashem's honor. Hashem sees him now and is testing him with this nisayon. Thus he stops, and instead of letting himself be swept up in his angry nature, he says to himself: I believe that only Hashem did this, and this alone is a sign that this problem is the best possible thing that could happen to me; for Chazal say, "nothing bad comes from Above" (Midrash Rabbah, Vayeira).

He occupies his mind with the principle that the Creator of mankind knows all the thoughts of His creations. He believes that he is being "filmed" from on High now – how he's thinking thoughts of emunah, and strengthening himself in the knowledge that everything happens with hashgachah and that everything the Merciful One does is for the good. He recalls the good middos of the merciful King Who promised to reward those who keep His mitzvos, and then he is filled with great simchah for the fact that he merited to withstand the nisayon. True, he's a simple Yid. He can't guarantee that tomorrow again he won't get angry. But those precious times that he withstood the nisayon, kept his mouth closed, maintained serenity and acted with yishuv hadaas, through bitachon in Hashem, Who does only good to him, are wondrous lights! You too can experience them in your day-to-day life.

Think about all he good that the Creator yisbarach does with every detail of creation in general, and with your life in particular. Give thanks for all of it, praise Him for all of it. As the Rambam writes in hilchos berachos (10:26), "Whoever thanks and praises Hashem exceedingly – that is indeed praiseworthy."

## FROM THE EDITOR

### Who Has Strength for 151 Fasts?

"Listen here," the doctor tells the patient. "You have two options. Either you are hospitalized for two months and get injections five times a day, or you go home and take an orange-flavored pill every day."

How, in your opinion, would the patient react? He'd prefer the pill, correct? It's much easier, and it's even tasty.

We can understand this rationale regarding illnesses of the body, but when it comes to illnesses of the nefesh, things are much deeper and more complex. We are accustomed to thinking that only aveiros for which an explicit punishment is mentioned in the Torah can hurt a person, but the Ari reveals to us that even "light" aveiros can blemish our souls, and in order to erase the blemish they caused, a person needs to exert himself greatly!

How do we repair an outburst of anger? With 151 fasts!

The Baal Hatanya (Iggeres Teshuvah 2) goes on to cite the words of the Ari: And even regarding Rabbinic prohibitions like stam yeinam, he should fast 73 times. Likewise, regarding the annulment of a positive Rabbinic commandment, such as tefillah – he should fast 61 times....

And this is only a small part of the list. How can one deal with this? How many years must we live in order to actually get to all this fasting? And is it really not possible any other way?

Along comes the heilige Reb Meir of Apta zy"a, who composed the famous tefillah, "Ribono shel Olam, I know that I am in Your Hands alone..."; in his sefer Ohr Lashamayim he teaches a tikun that we can carry out even with our limited abilities.

He writes (Parshas Bo) that in previous generations, their tikun nefesh was through suffering, in order to break the kelipos and to get rid of the blockages that hamper the neshamah, but today, in the generation close to Moshiach's arrival, our tikun is easier and does not require excessive suffering. Our tikun is through emunah. Through emunah our generation will live.

Yes, you heard correctly. Not 151 fast days, not 73 fast days. You can eat and drink and be happy, but simply believe! Believe in the Master of the world, a simple, pure emunah, an emunah that gets stronger day by day. Repeat again again: I believe with complete faith that Hashem controls everything that has happened, that is happening, and that will happen. Everything the All-Merciful One does, He does for the good. No one can help or harm me without the Creator's permission.

This type of emunah repairs and purifies the nefesh and brings a person closer to the Creator of the world.

Gut Shabbat  
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# THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

## Whenever You Want

My name is Avraham. Baruch Hashem, my daughter is a kallah, and after we set a date for the wedding, we started talking to people who provide all sorts of services – the band, the photographer, the badchan, and so on. I contacted a well-known photographer who is very professional, in order to discuss matters with him, and afterward I said, “I would want to close with you now, but I must first speak to my mechutan.”

“No problem,” the photographer said. “I’ll wait till I get a final answer from you, and then we’ll close on this. At this stage I am not saving the date of the wedding for you, but you should know that it makes no difference. If min haShamayim it was decided that I should be your photographer, then it doesn’t matter when you decide to close with me, and if not – then nothing will help.”

“It sounds like you have very strong emunah,” I told him. “That’s why you’re so successful. You surely have stories about this.”

“Yes,” he said, and he told me something amazing: “You know that there are Yerushalmi families who are accustomed to doing things the way they were done in the distant past, and they set a date for the wedding only two weeks in advance. I know such a family. They want me to be the photographer at all their weddings, and you’ll be surprised to hear that I really am the photographer at all their weddings! They make up with me two weeks in advance, and it always works out for them that I’m available.

“And don’t think it’s only a photographer they manage to get. Even the hall is available for them. They always marry off their children in Tamir hall! Sounds strange to you that they succeed in finding an available date only two weeks before the wedding? To them it is not strange at all. They believe that Hashem will arrange it all for them, and He truly arranges it!”

Amazing.

## Less Work, More Money

My name is Aharon.

I was in shul. Don’t ask me what exactly I was learning and with whom; the beis midrash was simply my home. You are home, even if you’re not exactly learning. It’s the natural place for every Yid, and it was for me as well.

While I was in the beis midrash, the people there were celebrating a siyum masechta. The siyum aroused in me shades of kinas sofrim, because it wasn’t a siyum made by great talmidei chachamim

## With Emunah One Can Buy

Reb Shimon from Bnei Brak relates: I realize that my story is a bit unusual, because we all have the feeling that it’s no problem to get hold of, for example, shoes; it’s just that you have to pay for them. So naturally, a person concerns himself with getting money in order to buy shoes, with the understanding that once he has money, he’ll surely buy them.

I thought that very thing, until I discovered that we really needed shoes. My wife’s shoes had reached the point that they were torn, and now it was clear that she had to buy shoes. This was no luxury; even *Chazal* say that shoes are the most basic items.

I checked my bank account and discovered the secret I already knew: There was no money in the account. I told my wife, “Go shopping, and Hashem will help.”

I thought to myself that women never buy shoes in the first store they come to. They go in, check it out, move on to another store, look through it as well, check whether the shoes comfortable, ask about the price, and try to find out if perhaps in another store there are shoes that are less expensive or nicer or in a different color.

At that moment, this way of doing things suited me very well. It bought me more time.

She went out shopping, and I davened to Hashem to help me.

The merchandise in the stores was not bad, but the shoes were really expensive, and when there is no money you don’t buy. After my wife went to several stores, she went to visit her parents, and she mentioned to them that she was looking for shoes. “I recently bought shoes,” her sister said, surprising her, “and they don’t fit me well. Maybe they’ll fit you?”

She showed my wife the shoes, and wonder of wonders, they were exactly the shoes she was looking for! And they fit her like a glove.

That’s how Hakadosh Baruch Hu sent us shoes – no money, just *emunah* and *tefillah*.

## I Didn’t Even Ask Anyone

At one stage in my life I experienced real financial difficulty. I did not know where I would find the next shekel, and I davened to Hashem from the depths of my heart to send me a yeshuah. I had no idea how the yeshuah could come. I had not done any sort of work for which I could suddenly be repaid a salary from long ago. Nor could I come up with an idea for some sort of side income. I was simply facing zero, and I knew that only the Creator of the world could help me.

The yeshuah came in a way that I could not have imagined. I got a call from an organization for tutors, and the head of the organization told me, “Your brother was learning with one of our tutors, so we took 50 shekels a month from your parents. This past year your brother was no longer learning with the tutor, but we mistakenly continued taking the money from the account. I wanted to ask you – what should I do with the money? Should I leave it as a donation to the institute or return it to your parents?”

In response to my question of why he was talking to me rather than to my parents, he said that this was the number he’d found.

I discussed this with my parents, and they told me, “Let the organization return the money, and you take it.”

This was amazing! The sum I received came at exactly at the right time, and I believed that Hashem would help me further.

Indeed, one day my mother called me and told me her neighbor wanted to pay tuition for two children who are learning Torah. She wanted our bank information in order to pay tuition for two of my children, which came to 500 shekels a month. I continued davening, and my mother’s neighbor decided she wanted to pay for all my children, not only for two of them, and another 300 shekels were added to her monthly contribution.

It’s not that I had asked her for anything. Such an idea would never have entered my mind. Hakadosh Baruch Hu put it into her heart to contribute to me. I simply saw tangibly how tefillah from the depths of the heart is accepted. Baruch shomeia tefillah!

## On the giving end

A number of months ago we received a sizable monthly donation. The person who made it asked us to daven for his son, an older bachur, that he find his zivug this year. In the beginning of Elul we called him to suggest that he take part in the hashgachah pratis sefer, which was not yet in print at the time. The man responded that he needed to think it over and asked us to call him back in a few days. When we contacted him, there was noise in the background and we couldn’t talk. Later he called us back and related that we had called in the middle of his son’s eirusin. Indeed, the bachur had found his zivug within the year!

## On the receiving end

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the amazing content on your phone line – the shiurim, the lectures, the stories, and the songs. You have no idea how much it influenced me and how much chizuk it gave me. How would you know? Most people don’t reveal the hidden thoughts of their heart; in fact, it’s hard for me to express myself now, but I get so much chizuk from listening to the phone line, it literally gives me life and strengthens me and gives me koach to go on. Thank you, thank you!



## Who Makes the Mute Ones Speak

My daughter, a young girl who is full of life, was playing, when she fell. This happens so many times, and baruch Hashem, just as we fall, we get up; but this time it was different. She fell and ended up in intensive care, and the situation was really unclear. There were problems with her liver function and with her heart, and we needed rachamei Shamayim.

In the meantime, she slept and slept, and we were beside ourselves with fear and worry.

One day, when I came home from the hospital after being with my daughter, I was in so much pain. It was not only her situation and the difficult challenge Hashem had sent her. It was something else. There was someone there who had treated me horribly. He spoke in a condescending tone and yelled at me about my lack of responsibility as a father, as though I was to blame for the situation. He threw an additional few pearls my way and then left me, sighing.

I had to pull myself together in order to travel home. With a heavy heart, I traveled and davened to Hashem to watch over me on the way. And indeed, Hashem sent me a good messenger: A friend called and asked how I was doing and how my daughter was. He spoke so pleasantly and returned life to my dry bones.

I wanted to tell him about what had happened to me, but then I said to myself: It's lashon hara! I bit my lip hard and continued to chat with him. I told myself in my heart: Ribbono shel Olam, You know how hard it is for me to keep my mouth closed now. Please have pity on me and, measure for measure, as I am closing my mouth from speaking lashon hara, please open the mouth of my dear daughter and bring her back to health and to leading a normal life.

When the phone call was over, I felt uplifted. I had been zocheh to withstand the nisayon.

A quarter of an hour later, my wife called me from the hospital. And what did she tell me? Our daughter had burst out crying!

Yes, she woke up and started to cry. It was an open miracle!

Baruch Hashem, after that she underwent a process of rehabilitation that wasn't simple, but today she is healthy.

Such is the power of overcoming an urge to speak and of guarding one's tongue.

## Ten Thousand Shekels Profit

Reb Yaakov relates:

I work as a cook. I have a very successful catering business, baruch Hashem. Hashem gave me the ability to prepare food that is tasty to those who eat it, to spice it as necessary, to cook it for as long as is needed – not too little and not too much, and I thank Hashem for sending me His blessing through a pipeline that enables me to participate in the simchahs of Yidden, in the beautiful and exciting parts of life.

It was on a Monday. I met my friend in the beis midrash, a friend to whom I'd wished a hearty mazal tov the previous week on the birth of his son. I knew him and knew that his means of covering the expenses of a seudah were not great. I did not anticipate that he would ask for my services at all. But I wanted to help him, so I went over and asked him, "Tomorrow there's a bris, no?"

"With the help of Hashem," he replied in a tone indicating that this was a tefillah.

"Do you want any help?" I asked.

To my good fortune, I meant what I said, because if I had asked only to be polite, I would have been shocked by his answer, because the father of the newborn answered me simply: "I ordered a caterer for the bris without portions of meat. Only side dishes. I wanted to ask – Are you willing to prepare the meat for the seudah?" I answered yes, and I was happy to help. This was to be a small seudah; he wasn't talking about large quantities.

It was already past 1 a.m. I was tired from the entire day, but a promise is a promise. I went to the commercial kitchen where I cook, in order to take meat out of the gigantic freezer, and what did I see? The freezer was unplugged. It wasn't working! The freezer had a huge quantity of meat in it, worth about 10,000 shekels. I had planned on opening it only the following night. What would have happened had I not come there in order to help my friend? The freezer would have remained unplugged, and all the meat would have defrosted and spoiled. The loss would have been tremendous.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu saved me from a major financial loss through the chessed I was doing for my friend.

I always knew that it was worth doing chessed, but such proof is a tremendous chizuk. I saw tangible proof of what I had been told long ago: When a person does something, he does it for himself!

or by some elite group of people who had committed to learn this masechta. It was a siyum made by many friends in the community who had committed themselves to learn following a specific schedule. I know this is standard practice in many places. There are communities where the members are instructed to learn an amud or a daf of Gemara every day, or an amud in Mishnah Berurah. There are all kinds of tracks and all kinds of subjects, and anyone, if he only wants to, can learn what his heart desires.

And I desired. I really, truly desired, but until that siyum, my desire hadn't ripened into a decision.

I found myself sitting among the excited chassanim of the siyum and enjoying some of the food they were giving out for the kavod of Torah, and the sweet taste of the cake was a bit sour for me, because in the depths of my heart I knew that I too could have made such a siyum. And then I met an acquaintance – a Yid on my own level, who keeps busy earning a living; exactly my type. I asked him with much more than a bit of jealousy, "Are you making a siyum too?"

"No," he told me. "I just happened to be here; I really don't know what I'm doing here." And I could hear his pain, which mirrored my own pain. "I don't know either," I answered him, "but the truth is, there's no reason why the next time, we should not be part of this event as well. What do you think of the idea of arranging a shiur and starting to learn the next masechta?"

We're both busy with parnassah, both of us have a hard time setting aside the time, but with siyata diShmaya, we gave each other the strength and made the decision, this time for real. "Who will give over the shiur?" my friend asked me.

"One of us," he answered, "and maybe we'll meet more Yidden who want to join."

Hashem helped, and when we left the beis midrash we met an avreich who is a talmid chacham, and we suggested that he become our maggid shiur. He agreed, and at that moment a new shiur was set to begin, right in the middle of the day, at 2 p.m. Every day at that hour I leave my workplace and go to my friend's workplace, where we meet our maggid shiur and learn together for about forty minutes. Forty minutes of Gan Eden in this world.

This story could conclude right here, but Hakadosh Baruch Hu showed us how much he loves our new shiur. It's not that I wasn't koveia itim before; I learned every day in the evening. But learning in middle of the day – that was the chiddush. Until a short while ago, I used to work hard, and the salary wasn't enough for me. And now, in the short time since I started the shiur, I got a call from a Yid who was interested in my work, and he wanted me to do something much easier, with a significantly higher salary!

I thought that I would be limiting my means of parnassah for the sake of learning Torah, but what actually happened was exactly the opposite. In the zechus of learning Torah, the brachah came.

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## Hashgachah Pratis in Sifrei Kodesh

### Hashgachah Pratis in the Sefarim Hakedoshim

#### Rain Falls Through Tefillah

Why did [Hashem] not bring rain? Because man did not yet exist to work the earth and recognize the need for rain. And when man came and knew that rain was necessary for the world, he prayed for it and it rained, and the grass and trees grew.

*(Rashi, Bereishis 2:5)*

#### The Bounty from Above Awaits the Hopes of a Person Who Trusts in Hashem

All the creations of the world were created imperfectly, in order that they would do what they could to bring down the bounty that will lead to their perfection – either through their good deeds or their tefillos, or by singing praises to Hashem. Grass did not sprout until Adam Harishon asked for it; the moon receives [its light] from the sun. The bounty Above awaits someone who will long and yearn for it, thus causing it to sprout on earth. One must truly anticipate its coming, an anticipation based on true bitachon – faith in Hashem's hashgachah, rather than all the other false faiths in the power of one's hishtadlus. Bitachon in Hashem is true bitachon...and for anyone who hopes and anticipates Hashem's response, his tefillah rises up without any intermediary, not via an angel. As it says, liyshuas'cha kivisi – I hope and anticipate salvation directly from You, Hashem, and not through any intermediary.

One who anticipates Hashem's salvation is always happy. Even if the salvation is delayed, his hopes keep him alive. And for one who does not anticipate it, hope dies, and he remains very distant from Hashem, and he is punished for the fact that he does not trust in Hashem. A person who anticipates feels that even when he sits in darkness, Hashem is his light – only Hashem – Liyshuas'cha kivisi.

*(Otzros Ramchal, drush regarding anticipation, p. 246)*

#### Through Tefillah He Reveals His Belief in His Creator

Davening properly is a tikun for the world...because with tefillah a person usually asks Hashem to give him what he is lacking. Just as when one makes a brachah over food, he acknowledges Hashem's ownership of heaven and earth; likewise when davening, a person reveals his belief in Hashem – that everything is in His Hands and that everything comes from Him. This is acceptance of the yoke of Hashem's Kingship. As a result, Hashem gives him all his needs. It was through tefillah that [Adam] caused rain to fall, and therefore the earth is able to fulfill its task of bringing forth fruit, which the world needs.

*(Eish Das, p. 145)*

#### Tefillah Symbolizes a Person's Turning His Eyes to Hashem

Herein lies the content of prayer, which is not necessarily only making a request, but rather is the recognition of a person's dependence on his Creator, and the knowledge that all his needs are in His Hands. The expression of this is tefillah, which is not a request for something specific but is rather an expression of turning one's eyes to Hashem. That is how Hashem yisbarach created us – that we must turn our eyes to Him and accept all our needs from Him.... And there is no room to question the essence of tefillah – whether because of the fact that everything Hashem does is for the good, or because of the greatness of the Creator yisbarach and the smallness of His creations – since tefillah is, essentially, not an expression to Hashem of the desires of His creations, but rather it is how a person turns his eyes toward Hashem. Thus man was created, so that all his needs are given to him through his acknowledging and expressing his dependence on the Creator.

*(Birkas Tzion 12, p. 157)*

#### By Safeguarding One's Speech on Shabbos, One Can Bring Blessing to the World

Hashem's intention in creating the world was for His goodness and kindness to be drawn into this world through the deeds performed here, through an "arousal from below." As it says, "And Hashem took Adam and placed him in Gan Eden to develop it and to safeguard it." According to Hashem's initial intent in creation, this did not require any actual deeds on man's part, for it would have been enough for him to pray and ask Hashem...and this would have the power to bring shefa down into the world from on High....

Likewise today, the tzaddikim have this power. As in says in the sefer Ma'or Vashemesh in the name of the holy Rebbe of Neskiz zy"l: Even though a person's parnassah requires hishtadlus, this [hishtadlus] could also take the form of Torah and tefillah. After the sin of the Eitz Hadaas this power was diminished, and it became necessary for a person to make an "arousal from below" specifically through his actions...but this still exists for Am Yisrael through the holiness of Shabbos. By safeguarding their mouths on Shabbos from speaking of mundane matters, they reveal their desire for kedushah, and thus they gain the power to bring down blessing from on High in the way Hashem intended for them to do when He created the world.

*(Nachal Eisan, Parshas Bo)*

#### They Turn Their Eyes Toward Heaven

Rabi Chanan of Tzipori said in the name of Rabi Shmuel bar Nachman: For four reasons, Hashem made the earth get its moisture from above... so that all should turn their eyes upward. As it says (Iyov 5), "He brings rain upon the earth...to bring lowly ones up high."

*(Bereishis Rabbah, 13:9)*

#### A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on Kav Hashgacha Pratis

In Parshas Bereishis we learned about the birth of Noach. "And Lemech lived one hundred and twenty-eight years, and a son was born, and he called his name Noach, saying: This one will relieve us of our hard work and of the weariness of our hands, from the earth that Hashem cursed." Rashi explains that until Noach was born, there were no plows. The earth would bring forth thorns and thistles when they planted wheat, because of the curse of Adam Harishon. But in the days of Noach, the earth rested.

These words beg explanation. How did they already know when Noach was born that the earth would rest due to his efforts? The Rashbam explains that they said this as a tefillah – they davened to Hashem that this child would bring them peace and serenity.

Hashem created the world perfectly. All the needs of mankind were available to him without any toil. When Adam sinned, he was cursed by the decree, "By the sweat of your brow you shall

Excerpts from the popular shiur by Harav **Beirish Shneebalg** shlit"l from Lakewood

#### Be Calm and Be Blessed

eat bread." The earth was ruined, and it would bring forth only thorns and thistles.

The birth of Noach took place at a time when Adam Harishon left the world. Hope descended upon the world at that time that perhaps now the decree was over. Perhaps now the world was to be rebuilt.

They expressed this hope practically, by calling the child who was born Noach, and they also expressed their hope that "this one shall comfort us," or, as per the Rashbam's explanation, they davened for peace.

They davened and spoke words of comfort, and this indeed stood by them, and plows and tools were invented to work the land.

This is a lesson for us not to be overwhelmed, but rather to be calm and relaxed, to depend on Hashem and hope for the good, to say that "it will be good," and, b'ezras Hashem, it will indeed be good.



# Listen in to the line And you'll get it

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