

# HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshiyos Pinchas 5781 ■ Issue 68

## HEART TO HEART

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

### The Wealthy Need Bitachon Too

The mitzvah of bitachon is not just for poor people. We're used to hearing stories of those who desperately needed money and received it in wondrous ways at the last second. Rich people are not excluded from the mitzvah of bitachon!

Rabbenu Bechaye addresses the challenges of the wealthy in emunah and bitachon. When someone is blessed with a lot of money, it's easy for him to feel like he owns the whole world, and he can do anything he wants. Unless he learns about bitachon, it's difficult for him to be aware that Hashem is the only One in charge.

Especially difficult is maintaining the correct attitude when giving others money. A gvir could easily believe that his amazing wisdom and financial acumen earned him his money. Thus, the money is his by all rights, and when he gives some of it away, he wants a lot of recognition for his great deed. He wants a big plaque touting the praises of this magnanimous donor, who parted with his hard-earned cash out of the goodness of his heart. If he gives his mechutan more money than the other side put out, he expects to be given some major honor at the chasunah, maybe the last bracha under the chuppah, or at least the sixth bracha at the Shabbos sheva brachos. If he receives no such honor, he is angry and insulted to the depths of his soul. He may reprimand the other man, "I don't personally care about these silly things, but I just want you to know that it's a horrible lack of hakaras hatov..."

The correct outlook in life is that any money we have is directly from the

Creator of the world, "deposited by us for a limited time." Hashem owns all the money, and He dispenses it to people to use it in order to serve Him. No matter how much money a person has, and no matter how much effort he put into getting in, it's just a *pikadon*. With this mindset, a wealthy man can donate secretly so as not to embarrass the receiver. He can put a blank envelope with money into a needy man's mailbox, and feel happy that he was Hashem's shaliach to help him. He truly doesn't need the slightest bit of recognition from others.

When a person withdraws money from his bank account, and the teller hands him \$10,000, he doesn't shower the bank-teller with praises for his generous act. After all, the money belongs to the owner of the account, and the teller is merely doing his job! It's exactly the same thing when a wealthy man hands over \$10,000 to tzedaka. He's just the trustee for Hashem's money!

When a baal bitachon gives away money to help others, he "thanks Hashem who made him the intermediary to do good deeds." He doesn't do this in public, either. That wouldn't fit the picture. ("I thank Hashem for giving me the opportunity to donate this shul building.") It's not necessary. He thanks Hashem in private, appreciating the chance to be given the means to do mitzvos and thereby increase his reward in the Next World.

May we all be blessed with everything we need, and the outlook that will enable us to use it correctly.

(From shiur 17 on Shaar Habitachon)

## FROM THE EDITOR

### Focus on the Positive

Since Reb Dovid told over the story about Yaakov Perl, I take the discharge letter from the hospital with me wherever I go. The letter clearly records what happened to him and the miracle that followed. When people keep asking me if the story is true, I show them the letter!

I met a Yid who said that he doesn't waste time checking if things are true. He has simply begun working on thanking Hashem, and has already seen yeshuos as a result...

Many sefarim speak about the importance of thanking Hashem.

The Igra D'kalla on Parshas Korach asks: Why did Korach, who was a smart man, make such a grievous mistake? The answer, he explains, lies in the first words of the parsha, "Vayikach Korach" – Korach took. What did he take? He took something which in reality was nothing. He chose to focus on the negative.

Hashem does only good; His world is filled with blessings. Even our challenges are good for us.

Why did Korach, rather than, for example, some anonymous Yid from the tribe of Naftali, desire to be a Kohen or Nasi? Since Korach was already a Levi, he desired even loftier heights. For another Yid, the desire for such positions would be irrelevant. In essence, Korach, who himself was granted greatness by Hashem, had two options. He could choose to focus on what he had, or to dwell on what he didn't have. Instead of focusing on what he had, appreciating the gifts from Hashem as they are, he looked only to what he didn't have. That was his mistake. Had he focused on the good, he could have been saved.

The Igra D'kalla advises us to follow the advice of the students of the Baal Shem Tov. Whenever someone has a tzara, he should find some positive aspect in it and focus on that. Then, the difficult and negative will turn into positive! If my hand hurts – it shows I have a hand! If someone has a child in shidduchim for a long time, thank Hashem for the child. Struggles with parnassah? Baruch Hashem I have a family to support!

Spiritual challenges are the same. Non-Jews don't face challenges in ruchniyus because they don't have the special kedusha we enjoy. We can thank Hashem wholeheartedly for the joy of being a Yid!

This is the best thing to do when faced with challenges. When we thank Hashem, the challenges are transformed into revealed good.

Good Shabbos Pinchas Shefer

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

## Etzbah Elokim

It was a regular day at the printing shop where Yaakov Perl works, in Maalei Adumim. Yaakov is a 25-year-old fellow from Batei Ungarin, and one worker couldn't make it that day, so they asked him to take over a different machine than the one he usually manned. Then something happened to change his life.

A sefer fell between the parts of the machine, and Yaakov bent down to retrieve it. He wasn't fully familiar with this particular machine, and before he knew it, his hand got caught in the rapidly spinning teeth of the printer – and it chopped off two of his fingers!

Here is where the surprises began.

As the blood flowed, as excruciating pain shot through his body, Yaakov responded – by saying Mizmor L'sodah! He calmly, happily accepted the new situation and thanked Hashem for 25 years of healthy fingers and for what had just happened.

A fellow worker wrapped up the remainder of his fingers and drove him to the hospital. He called Yaakov's mother on the way, and she made her way there as fast as she could. What did Yaakov say to his mother? "Our Tante in Heaven gave me ten healthy fingers until now, and He took two of them back now." Yaakov kept saying Tehillim-words of praise to Hashem, and thanking Hashem for all the wondrous parts of his body. He also davened for his fingers to be restored.

At the hospital, the doctors prepared to do their usual treatment in such situations. The middle bones of his fingers were severed, and they told him they were planning to cut out the rest of the bones and put skin over the incision. But Yaakov refused.

"I didn't ask you to injure me! Hashem decided to do exactly what He wanted with my fingers, but you have no permission to cut any more of them! He can very easily give me back my fingers, so don't you go cutting them."

The doctors were sure he wasn't of sound mind as a result of trauma. They spoke to his mother, explaining that Yaakov was saying crazy things. Fingers don't just grow back! They said they would give him a tranquilizer to calm him down, so he could face facts.

Yaakov turned around and repeated himself, more forcefully this time. The doctors pressed on, shoving him a

consent form for the operation and urging him to sign. "Absolutely not! Just do whatever you can to close up the wound, and leave it alone!" The doctors were stymied and frustrated.

Meanwhile, ex-rays of his fingers were sent to other hospitals in Israel, and they received a message that one surgeon had developed a new technique to deal with such things, a technique which didn't involve cutting the bone. It was still new, and Yaakov would have to agree to it without liability. He readily agreed. They carried out the procedure with lots of medical students watching. Not only was it a new sort of treatment, it was an eye-opening view of a ba'al bitachon. Throughout the painful procedure, Yaakov kept saying Mizmor l'sodah, kept thanking Hashem with a smile on his lips. It was a tremendous display of Kiddush Hashem.

Yaakov came home with bandaged fingers, absolutely certain Hashem would answer his tefillos.

Yaakov is part of a group of young people who get together for chizuk once a week, and during the weekly get-together, everyone saw his bandages. He told them what had happened. One guy made a joke, "How are you going to cut your nails on Erev Shabbos, when you can't do בודאג"ה?" (The Shulchan Aruch states that nails should be cut out of order and writes an acronym to remember the order, with this word.)

Yaakov wasn't fazed: "You'll see, Hashem will help me and I'll cut the nails just like the halacha. הסר דאגה מליבך," he rejoined in pun.

The other fellows couldn't get over his firm assertion. Was he really expecting a miracle? Was he dreaming? He saw their reactions and repeated that they would yet see Hashem's Hand helping him as he asked.

For two months, Yaakov went to have the bandages replaced and the area cleaned. He suffered a lot of pain during this time, but *never once complained!* It's now a year later, and as he told over his story to Reb Dovid Kletzkin, it seemed too fantastic to believe.

"How did you handle it like that?" Reb Dovid asked.

Yaakov smiled and explained that he had begun learning Shaar Habitachon every day, six years beforehand. Also the sefer Shomer Emunim, maamarim habitachon v'hahizchazkus and hashgacha pratis. During those two months that his

hand was healing, he didn't work, so he spent all day thinking over and over again the yesodos of emunah. Everything Hashem does is for our good, Hashem loves and cares about us more than anyone else, yissurim are a gift. He kept thanking Hashem and repeating these hashkofos, as they penetrated deeper and deeper into his heart and he lived with them, truly. The words of Mizmor L'sodah rolled off his tongue as he felt each one more and more. "Everything Hashem does is for the good" (Shulchan Aruch Siman 230) became engrained in his very being. He was suffused with song and praise to Hashem, as the possuk says 'אודך ה' כי אגפת בי, ישוב אפך ותנחמני'.

He also asked Hashem to give him strength to hold up with emunah, he asked for new fingers to be given to him; he didn't stop communicating with Hashem.

Reb Dovid was astounded that this young person sitting next to him could be capable of such lofty madreigos!

And what happened, in the end?

After two months, he was invited to come for a checkup in the hospital. As the other doctors looked on, his bandages were removed, layers of medicinal cream and other mucus were removed, until his fingers were revealed. Two whole, healthy fingers!! The middle bone had healed to completion, and a beautiful finger had emerged from it, including nails! Yaakov, smiled, flexed his new fingers, and thanked Hashem. The assembled professionals were shocked – a true miracle! Yaakov just felt closer to Hashem than ever, as He had answered his tefillos in the best possible way.

Ever since then, Yaakov finds new meaning in his tefillos. ... על נפלאותיך ועל טובותיך. ... מודים אנחנו לך על חיינו המסורים בידך Hashem for our wonderful, perfect limbs! When he says Nishmas and gets to the words 'כל עצמותי' 'תאמרנה ה' מי כמוך' he's overcome with emotion, gazes at his fingers and marvels at the incredible power of the Creator of the world, the loving Father in Heaven. He was injured during the week of Shabbos Shira, when Klal Yisroel said "זה קלי ואנווהו" – Yaakov never doubted for a moment that he would have a yeshuah and would praise Hashem for it!

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How did Yaakov find the inner strength to withstand such a nisayon? How could he react immediately with nothing but thanks to Hashem, and then have see a yeshuah in such a miraculous way?

It all started over six years ago. Shortly after his marriage, Yaakov woke up one day with back pain. It got worse and worse, until he was walking around all bent over! He went to be checked and they told him he had a slipped disc. Surgery was recommended, but Yaakov quickly discovered that it's no simple matter to recover from such an operation. Most of all, for the rest of his life he wouldn't be able to pick up heavy things.

He didn't know what to do.

Then he met a friend who told him a life-changing story. He had heard the story from his father in America, who has a chavrusa who is an eye doctor.

One day a Yid from Eretz Yisroel came in to be checked; he was losing vision in his left eye. The doctor examined him and discovered that the left eye was already done for; the right eye was in danger and needed surgery immediately! He told the prognosis to the Yerushalmi Yid, who responded by saying that he would like to go out for a few hours and then come back.

Where did he go? He found an empty shul, stood opposite the Aron Kodesh, and began speaking to Hashem.

First he thanked Him for all the parts of his body which functioned so well. Then he thanked Hashem for his eyes that used to work. After a very long thank you, he asked Hashem to restore his vision, and took it upon himself to work on shemiras einayim. Then he returned to the doctor.

He asked the doctor to check him again – and a slight improvement was apparent! The doctor said to wait and monitor the situation, and as the days progressed, the man continued thanking Hashem all the time, and his eyes got better and better. He was sent home with no treatment at all!

This is the story Yaakov heard, and he decided to do it himself. He began thanking Hashem for every detail of his life, for the past and the future. He thanked Hashem for the healthy back he had until now, and for the healthy back he hoped to soon have. This was a major change of focus and attitude, but he worked at it until he was actually meaning what he was saying. He also started learning the sefarim on bitachon mentioned above.

And his back started getting better! He thanked and he praised, and he straightened out more with each passing day. When he made a kabala to be more careful not to talk while wearing tefillin, the pain went away completely! Baruch Hahem, instead of the doctor's prognosis that he wouldn't be able to carry heavy packages, he now has a job carrying heavy boxes all the time!

Some people have a hard time believing this story, so we put a special interview on the Kav with Yaakov himself. There is a mark on his fingers where they were severed, and Yaakov uses them as a powerful example of Hashem's Divine Providence.

And the message from the story: Keep thanking Hashem!

(From shiurim 208-209 in Shaar Habitachon)

# Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

We know that nothing bad comes from Hashem, yet we see things that seem to be totally bad, like someone's children going off the derech. How could this be good?

Q #21

A. G., Haifa

## The Secrets of Hashem

Many readers mentioned the story of Chizkiyahu Hamelech who didn't want to get married because he saw that his son would be a rasha. The Navi rebuked him, "What do you have to do with Hashem's secrets? You have to do your mitzvah, and leave it up to Him!" In the end, his son, Menashe, ultimately did teshuvah, "opening up the door for baalei teshuvah," say Chazal.

## The Hidden Good

We can't always see the good in every situation. as **Reb Yisroel Barshalom (Beitar)** brings from Shevet Mussar (Ch. 6:5): Sometimes people have negative things happen to them, like children who do not act properly. This may happen to the child to increase his sechar when he grapples with the challenge, and for the father it erases his sins. **Reb Aharon Weiss (Bnei Brak)** refers us to Tzidkas Hatzaddik (68) who elaborates on various examples of good things which may come about through it.

Also, the son has a chance to increase kavod Shomayim in a way nobody else can; as sefarim tell us, they can free the holy sparks trapped in the impure kelipos. (**Reb Shlomo Zalman Baum, Beitar**)

This can be an opportunity for the father to be meilitz yosher for Klal Yisroel. As **Reb Moshe Goldman (Beitar)** tells of the Be'er Mayim Chayim who had a son who went off the derech for a time. He once was tending to his son, who was drunk and filthy, and offered a prayer to Hashem. "Ribono Shel Olam, see how my son strayed from the path and I am embarrassed by him, and yet I don't forsake him but care for him like any other child. So too, show Your mercy upon Your children even though they sin against You..." **Reb Moshe Dlazniak (Yerushalayim)** points out that the tefillos of fathers for their sons to be infused with a spirit of purity are very powerful, and Hashem may cause good families to suffer this nisayon so they will daven for their child and all the other Yidden in similar situations.

## We don't See the Whole Picture

**Reb Chaim Stern (Bnei Brak)** compares this to sharp spices on a tasty dish. If we were to eat the spices by themselves, they would be

very unpleasant. But altogether, it comes out delicious. So too, amidst Hashem's direction of the world, some things may seem very bitter but really combine with everything else to achieve the right blend.

**Reb Yehoshua Cohen (Yerushalayim):** We are in this world for a very limited time, and we can't understand why everything happens as it does. Maybe it's a tikkun for an earlier gilgul, and is actually very good.

**Reb Nosson Boruch Kramer (Modiin Illit):** Everyone has his tafkid in the world. Some have many challenges. That's their mission in the world, and Hashem knows why it's the right thing for them. L'fum tzaara agra.

**Reb Chaim Katz (Yerushalayim):** Our puny minds can't understand why things happen. It's like a man who needs an operation and a fool thinks the surgeon is a criminal, attacking him with a knife. It's obviously for the best.

**Reb Dov Kaufman (Modiin Illit):** Dovid Hamelech taught us by his example – he opens a perek of Tehillim with "מזמור לדוד בברחו מפני אבשלום בנו" – even when he was fleeing from his own son, he composed a Mizmor. The Gemara points out that he did not write a lamentation, but rather praised Hashem. (Berachos 7b)

**Reb Shlomo Boruch Shimon (Har Yona), Reb Mani Darchi (Ramat Gan)** explained that tzaar – pain – is not synonymous with ra – bad. Some things are painful but not bad. Anyway, Hashem does everything and does only good, so any tzaar we have to undergo must be good. (**Reb Yosef Cohen, Bnei Brak**).

As it says, "No bad comes down from Above," even though we don't see it. We have to believe that it's true. Look in Tanya, paragraph beginning "להשכילך בינה" (**Reb Shmuel Friedman, Reb Yehuda Gewirtzman, Reb Dovid Yisrael – Beit Shemesh**)

We thank all the many people who responded and apologize that there is not enough room to print all their wonderful comments!

## Question for issue 70

We know that our parnassah is decided on Rosh Hashanah. Is it possible to improve it with the midah of bitachon, or is it set in stone?

D.C., Yerushalayim

To send in questions or answers: Leave a message on the Hotline at 02-301-1300 menu 3 ext. 5 (Yiddish or Hebrew) |

Email: s023011300@gmail.com | Fax: 02-659-9189 - Until Sunday Parashat Mattot Masei

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

We say in Hallel, "ישראל בטח בהשם" – only Klal Yisroel has the incredible gift of being able to trust in Hashem. A gentile doesn't have the option of stopping to worry and trusting in Hashem!

The feeling of real bitachon is such a powerful, pleasurable experience, it can't be described in words. The feeling of having a relationship with Hashem, of being connected to Him, and turning to Him - a loving Father- whenever I am in need, is indescribable.

**The Beis Halevi writes, "With the midah of bitachon, a person can achieve anything! This is as it says, "והתענג על ה' ויתן לך משאלות לבך" - meaning, if your bitachon in Hashem is so strong that you feel pleasure with it, then He will grant you all the desires of your heart. Depending on the level of your bitachon – Hashem will give you accordingly." (p. 53)**

Some people say, "I have the midah of bitachon, and yet I don't see all my desires fulfilled!" The answer lies in the words of the Beis Halevi: Do you feel pleasure in your bitachon? Or is it just a

Excerpts from the popular shiur by Harav Hatzaddik R' Beirish Shneebalg shlit"a

## Do You Want True Pleasure?

means to get what you want in life?

If bitachon is a goal unto itself, then you can take pleasure in it, and you may see yeshuas Hashem. But if yo isur bitachon just a business proposition – I'll do it in order to get what I want – it does not have this potency.

Now, it's not easy to develop bitachon. There are many challenges along the way. Keep at it, and b'ezras Hashem you can achieve the level where you trust in Hashem without the slightest doubt.

My grandfather, the Rav of Bnei Re'em, Rav Yeshaya Shneebalg zt"l, explained the idea of tashlich we do on Rosh Hashanah. It's to "throw" all our affairs onto Hashem, so that He will take care of them!

We should do tashlich every day, in this way! Not just on Rosh Hashanah.

As we say in Shemoneh Esrei, יגון ממנו יגון "והסר ממנו יגון" - if we remove worries from our hearts, then we'll merit "ומלוך עלינו אתה ה' לבדך", - Hashem will be the only ruling power over us and He will help us with everything we need.

The shiurim of Harav Shneebalg are delivered weekly in Yiddish and Hebrew alternatively. Dial 2 then 3 (after language preference)

## Effects on Two Ends

On the receiving end

I would never believe that this could happen – at my age, to change my whole outlook on the world; my life is so much more calm and happy. I thank Hashem for bringing Kav Hashgacha Pratis to the world!

Y.R., Bnei Brak

Message left on the Kav, Thursday, 7 Tamuz, 9:57 AM:

I am donating to the Kav and if I have a yeshuah I will give more be"H.

Thursday, 7 Tamuz, 12:14 PM:

Baruch Hashem I'm already leaving court – I merited an unnatural yeshuah! Here's my donation.

On the giving end

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