

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshiyos Devarim 5781 ■ Issue 69

HEART TO HEART

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

Job Satisfaction

Some people just aren't satisfied with their employment. They're constantly looking at the wanted ads, always on the search for something different, supposedly better, even though they have a good enough job! Their brother seems to have a more enviable position, their neighbors seem to have an easier time making a living, the other guy has a nicer boss...

There are people who switch jobs every month, never content with their situation.

What does Rabbenu Bechaye say about this?

"If his livelihood comes in a way not appealing to him, or in a place not according to his desires, or through a man he doesn't want, he should think to himself: Hashem created me with this form, these characteristics, this size, and no other one. Likewise, Hashem arranged for me to make my living in exactly this way." (Shaar Habitachon ch. 4, sec. 2, based on Lev Tov).

Rabbenu Bechaye is speaking to people who have a hard time dealing with their working conditions. It's a long commute, the boss is tough and insolent, the atmosphere is annoying. He enjoins them to accept their lot. Just as Hashem created each person with this color skin and eyes, this height, and this nature, all of which are irrevocable, so too Hashem decrees how our parnassah will be sent to us.

A person should reiterate to himself, "Just as He brought me into the world into this certain place, through two parents selected by Him, to the exclusion of all others – so too, He selected my parnassah to come in a specific way, for my good. The family I was born into, my community and my customs were all arranged specifically for me by Hashem. Even if I don't like my family, I can't change who they are. My job, too, is determined by Hashem for my best."

Not everything can be changed so

easily. Imagine a guy who can't decide what levush to wear. On Sunday he goes Chassidish with an up-hat and *chalat*. On Monday it's a short jacket and brim-down. Tuesday, we see him with a three-quarter jacket, Wednesday he's got on a *frock*, Thursday he's wearing 18 pairs of tzitzis and crocks. On Shabbos he switches between three kinds of shtreimels and *spodeks*; by Shalosh Seudos he's casual, jeans and a tee-shirt. There's nothing wrong with this, technically, but it's not normal, and not at all recommended if you have children in shidduchim!

The same is true for everything in our lives. Even if our job isn't so appealing or comfortable, we have to first realize that Hashem put us into this situation, exactly like He chose our parents for us.

The Chovos Halevavos continues, "צדיק" "ה' בגל דרכיו". This passuk comes right after the one about parnassah, 'יפתח את ידיו'. Why doesn't the Chovos Halevavos quote the passuk about parnassah?

The Ibn Ezra explains that "If someone would complain why one person gets to eat wheat and the other, only barley, the answer is that Hashem is righteous in all His ways. He knows what is good for them since He created them and knows their natures. He is like a doctor who prescribes for each person what is necessary for him."

Imagine a guy complaining that the doctor proscribed a whole lot more pills for the man before him, and really colorful ones, too. He, on the other hand, got only two measly medications. How unfair! This is the parable for a person's physical lot. If one person has a harder time making a living, he must know that this is currently the correct prescription for him.

The Gemara explains ואתה נותן להם את אכלם בעתו. Each person gets his food at the time specifically ordained for him. (Kesubos 67b)

(From shiur 121 in Shaar Habitachon)

FROM THE EDITOR

Sorry, I'm in a Meeting

Reb Yudel from Beitar shared a special experience.

"When I was struggling with debt, my Rav advised me to travel to London and seek assistance from the Yidden there."

Rav Yudel's mindset was that he was giving the people the opportunity to take part in the mitzvah of tzedakah. After all, why else does Hashem give money to wealthy people, if not in order to do mitzvot? The fact that he was chosen as the facilitator didn't seem to bother him in the least.

"I was in London for a few weeks. There was one gvir I was trying to get in touch with, but it was very hard to catch him. I called a Rav in Eretz Yisroel who I knew had connections with him, and he assured me that the gvir would contact me.

"It was right before Mincha one day when my phone rang. First, I felt a surge of relief and excitement when I realized it was that gvir. Then I started thinking that it's not really appropriate to start schmoozing with people while on the verge of davening.

"I thanked him for calling, and excused myself, explaining that I was about to start Mincha and couldn't speak now.

"After hanging up, an amazing feeling filled me, one I had never felt before. I had been chasing this man for a while, and had pushed it off because I was about to speak to the One who has all the money in the world. And you know what? It's not hard to get in touch with Him, either! He's ready all the time to listen to us! Why don't I daven with the same feeling I have when I speak to a big gvir?"

"I davened Mincha like never before. I felt so strongly that I was speaking to the biggest Gvir in the world, who also loves me and wants only the best for me. All He asks is that we trust in Him! When we talk to Him, we should at least give Him the same attention and interest as when we're speaking to a human gvir," Reb Yudel concluded.

I was so impressed with Reb Yudel's experience. Maybe he was zoche to this amazing feeling because he overcame the nisayon of speaking to the gvir right then, and rather held on to the emunah that only Hashem could help him. He drew closer to Hashem and Hashem rewarded him with the incredible feeling of reliance on He who cares most about us!

Good Shabbos

Pinchas Shefer

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

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• Kay Hashgacha Pratis for women (Yiddish and Hebrew) - Menu 4

THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

The Power of Mitzvos

My sister from Yerushalayim made a *chalah* in Tzfas and invited all the extended family for Shabbos.

On that very busy Friday, someone called my sister and asked if they could have her apartment for Shabbos. She felt very pressured, since she would have to clean and straighten up her whole house, but she agreed.

Then they all travelled to the home she had rented in Tzfas, and discovered there were many important things they had requested that were missing. It cost a pretty penny to fill in for the missing essential items, and it was a big disappointment. She was about to call the owner to complain, but decided it was too close to Shabbos to do anything about it anyway, so she held back.

As she was carrying home a big pot of kugel for the Kiddush the next day, a strange-looking man saw her and asked if there was kugel available. She said there was and continued on her way. Then she stopped and turned back to the fellow. She thought he might be hungry, so she asked him if he wanted some kugel. He replied enthusiastically that he did, and she gave him a nice portion. He ran off happily.

After a wonderful Shabbos, her family got into the van they had hired and settled down for the trip back home. They were all exhausted from the excitement over the weekend, and drifted off to sleep.

At one point, my sister woke up and was horrified to see their car veering from one side of the lane to the other! She looked at the driver and saw that he, too, was falling asleep! She screamed, he woke up, and regained control at the last second!

After they all calmed down, my sister was sure they were saved in the merit of the not-so-easy mitzvos she had done on Erev Shabbos.

(Thursday night, Parshas Korach, story 5, 20176)

Help with the FBI

I met Rav Michael Greenwald *shlit"á*, who shared this amazing story.

He was in America recently as part of his zikui harabim, and walked into a shul one day at 12:00 PM to learn in between appointments.

After a few minutes, a man walked in wearing tallis and tefillin. He recognized Rav Greenwald, and went over to him. "Oy, give me a bracha!" He started rattling off all his tzaros, how he doesn't have a job, suffers from all kinds of things, and to top it off – the FBI has started an investigation and pressed charges against him! He spoke to lawyers and they didn't give him much chance to avoid a prison term. The fellow started crying; how would his wife and children manage with a father in jail?!

Rav Greenwald listened sympathetically and then said, "I'm sorry, I can't help you."

"WHAT?? Don't you care about a fellow Jew in distress?" the man cried.

"Of course I care about you," Rav Greenwald continued. "But how do you expect Hashem to help you when you don't follow the halachos of zman tefillah? Listen, when you have to go to the bank, you make sure to get there before it

A Siddur from Heaven

Rav Shmuel Kenig from Yerushalayim:

My wife went to Tzfas with her students for Shabbos. On Friday night, they went to daven in a shul in the Old City. It was packed. They made their way up to the ezras nashim and my wife found a spot at the front, right by the railing overlooking the men. She had our one-year-old there with her, and balanced her siddur on the railing.

The toddler reached up to her, bumped her siddur, and it fell down onto the men!

It was both embarrassing and annoying, since now she didn't have a siddur. There was nothing she could do about it then, of course.

After davening, they went down and asked a passing man if he had seen a siddur falling down from the ladies' section. He smiled, told them to wait a minute, and went back inside.

He came out a minute later with another man who was brimming with joy. He was in the middle of the teshuvah process and had come to daven in shul, but couldn't find a siddur. There were just too many people and they were all taken. He looked up and spoke to Hashem, "Abba in Heaven! I don't know how to daven without a siddur. Please give me a siddur!"

Just then, the siddur fell down right in front of him!

(Bitachon Yomi, Sunday Parshas Chukas, 200)

Jam Instead of Milk

Reb Nosson Yoel Fish relates:

I live in Beit Shemesh. Today, it's a busy place, and stores are open until very late. But until a few years ago it wasn't like this, and by 8:00 the streets were quiet.

So it happened that I once went to Yerushalayim to a wedding, and my wife called me to ask that I buy a bag of milk. We had run out and there was nowhere to get one at this hour in Beit Shemesh.

Later, after I left the chasunah in a taxi to take me to the bus stop, I suddenly remembered that I had forgotten to buy the milk! At first I thought it wasn't worth the time and effort – and expense – to go back and get it, but then I decided that it was worth it in order to make my wife and kids happy. I told the taxi driver to turn around and take me back to Rechov Kanfei Nesharim, to the supermarket there.

I got out of the car and there was a strange sight. A man was holding on to a fence, his head bobbing back and forth. A concerned passerby asked me if I knew him. The fellow looked drunk, and we didn't know how he would make it home.

I noticed he was holding a cellphone, so I took it and looked through the names until I found "home." I called and spoke to his wife, saying he seemed drunk.

"He isn't drunk," she practically shouted. "He has diabetes. His sugar level must be very low. Quick – get him some jam or something sweet!"

I ran into the store and told the manager that someone's life was in danger. He gave me jam and a spoon, I ran out and fed the man spoonful after spoonful. Baruch Hashem, he stopped shaking, the color returned to his face and he stood on his own. He thanked me again and again, we called his wife, and she was emotional with gratitude to Hashem and to His messenger. Unfortunately, I forgot to buy the milk once again! But instead, I helped save someone's life. My wife understood.

(Bitachon Yomi, Tuesday Parshas Balak, 207)

"Borrow and I'll pay back"

I listen to Rav Shneebalg's shiurim all the time, and finally was able to make the commitment to stop the gemachim game. I resolved not to use my credit card, but, I didn't have money for Shabbos, either.

I met a friend and told him where I was holding. He mentioned the famous Gemara that Hashem promises, regarding anything we need for Shabbos, "Borrow, and I'll pay back."

I responded that in my estimation, this promise for Hashem works if you tell the lender that Hashem will pay back the money.

So my friend asked, "How much money do you need?"

I was taken aback – I hadn't meant for him to give me the money! He persisted, "Is 300 shekels enough?"

I nodded, and before I knew it, he thrust the money onto my hand.

"Don't worry, Hashem will pay me back," he said with a smile, and wished me a good Shabbos.

A few days later, he called me to tell me it was already paid back. What happened? Without any explanation, he found an envelope with 300 shekels in his mailbox!

(Friday Parshas Korach story 3, 20190)

Hashavas Aveidah

I was traveling to Bnei Brak to spend Shabbos by the Viznitzer Rebbe.

When I came out of the mikveh, a man came over to me with a bus card (rav-kav). He said a Viznitzer bachur sat next to him on the bus and forgot it there. There wasn't even a picture on it, just a common name like "Moshe Weiss." I really didn't want to take it, because there was almost no chance I could find the owner amongst the hundreds of people walking around Viznitz. But he pressed me to take it, so I asked Hashem to help me do the mitzvah of hashavas aveidah.

I wanted to call home to tell my parents I had arrived safely. I didn't have a cellphone, and I went over to where there were payphones. All of them were taken, so I had to wait.

As I waited in line, I heard a bachur talking on a phone, saying that he lost his rav-kav on the bus! I went over to him and asked him if his name is Moshe Weiss, and it was!

Baruch Hashem I was able to do the mitzvah, and the bochur could hardly believe the hashgacha pratis of it, finding someone I didn't even know in such a huge crowd.

(Stories of Reb Yosef Greenbaum z"l, mikedoshei Meron, Yiddish 0/15)

closes. So why do you think you can just daven Shacharis whenever you want?"

His words were spoken with sincerity and love, and the fellow took them to heart. He resolved then and there to make sure he davens every day before the zman.

Rav Greenwald gave him a hug and a bracha, and davened for him to have a yeshuah.

The next day, he called Rav Greenwald and spoke excitedly into the phone.

"You'll never believe it! Yesterday, my lawyer informed me that they found a discrepancy in my file, so they canceled it!!" This is the power of an honest kabbalah.

(Bitachon Yomi, Tuesday, Parshas Balak, 207)

He was Preparing...

I davened one day in Meah Shearim Shteiblach. When the gabbai, Reb Shmuel Kraus, saw me there, he came over to me.

His son Reb Dovid was one of the neshamos who went up to Shamayim this past Lag Ba'omer, and I had known him somewhat. This is the story he told me:

I was walking in the street recently and a distinguished-looking man was coming from the opposite direction. He had two men walking at his side and he looked like a Brisker. When he saw me he said *המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבני ציון וירושלים*.

I asked him who he is, but he didn't want to say. He explained how he got to know my son.

"I put out a sefer this year, and wrote in it that if someone does melacha within ten minutes of shkiyah on Erev Shabbos, he is mechalel Shabbos. Someone called me up and told me I'm wrong. I brought all my proofs, but he argued back with a lot more of his own. In the end, he convinced me and I said I'll change in it the next edition of the sefer. I asked him his name, and he said I don't need to quote him, but it was your son Reb Dovid."

Reb Shmuel was very moved by the story and came home and related it to his family. As they were marveling over the gadlus of their special Reb Dovid, one boy called out, "He was preparing for his own levaya! He was buried ten minutes to shkiya!"

Indeed, the father recalled, it took so long to arrange all the technical details that they were ready to bury him only right before Shabbos. He asked the Toldos Aharon Rebbe, who said to go ahead with it. The men who did it had to walk back to their homes since it was already Shabbos.

They were astounded that he had clarified the very halacha that was relevant to his own tragic levayah. May he be a meilitz yosher for all Klal Yisroel.

(Thursday, Parshas Korach, Yiddish story 2, 22033)

But how will it look?

Yehoshua from Yerushalyim:

This is that time of year when bachurim are trying to get accepted into yeshivos. I'll never forget my story of yeshivos and how I didn't lose out by being *mevater*.

I was already an older bachur learning in a well-known yeshiva when a new yeshiva was about to open and they asked me to join. It would help their prestige and raise the level of learning. I was hesitant – in shidduchim there is a lot of attention given to which yeshiva you learned. I was in a good yeshiva and that would look good, but if I switched to some no-name one, it would make things harder for me.

I decided to go, partly because I felt I had already gained as much as I could from the place where I was.

And what happened with my shidduch?

I married my night seder chavrusa's sister!

(Friday Parshas Chukas, story 1, 20358)

Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

With all the tzaros Klal Yisroel has suffered recently, I have a dilemma. I know I'm supposed to feel the pain of am Yisrael, but when I allow myself to feel, it makes me very sad. What is Hashem's will?

Q #22

Y.Y.S., Yerushalayim

How fortunate you are that you have such sensitive feelings! How fortunate that we are part of such a special nation and that we care so much about each other!

Areivus

Reb Menachem Baum from Bnei Brak brings many sources about the importance of feeling others' pain. See the second letter at the end of Noam Elimelech – a ben aliyah shouldn't stop thinking about someone else's pain for even a second. In Divrei Emes of the Chozeh MiLublin zy" a it says that when you feel someone else's pain, it reduces his suffering. (Miketz) In Tanya it says that feeling another's pain arouses Heavenly mercy for him. They say the Pnei Menachem heard that a certain talmid chacham was sick and he was so disturbed that he became sick himself. They asked him to cut back on his "nosei b'ol" since it wasn't safe for him, but he refused. "I'm happy to fulfill the Gemara in Berachos (12b) that one is supposed to get sick davening for a talmid chacham!"

Serve Hashem with joy

On the other hand, sharing people's pain has to be balanced with simcha. As the Shulchan Aruch says, "It is appropriate for all yirei shomayim to be distressed and worried over the churban Beis Hamikdash," but the Be'er Heitev adds, "but tefillah and Torah should be with joy." (O.C. 1:3) You have to make sure you're happy the rest of the day. The story is told of many Gedolei Yisroel who suffered a loss on Shabbos but restrained themselves until after Shabbos to express their mourning. (From R' Yehoshua Levi, Nachman Goldberg from Yerushalayim, and Nosson Halevi from Beitar) As R' Shmuel Dovidovitz from Beit Shemesh quotes from Koheles, "For everything there is a time, under the heaven... A time to cry and a time to laugh, a time to eulogize and a time to dance."

Sadness is very negative

The Sifrei Chassidus and mussar are full of the idea that sadness is very damaging. Rav Aharon Mi'Karlin zy" a said that sadness isn't necessarily an aveirah per se, but it leads to many grave aveiros. Also, it reflects a lack of emunah that everything that happens is from Hashem. R' Mani Darchi from Ramat Gan asserts that sadness comes from a feeling of challenging rather than accepting the situation. That is why great people are able to deeply feel the pain of others but do not become overly sad. They know that Hashem is the True Judge and does only good.

Reb Yehuda Gewirtzman from Beit Shemesh: Sadness comes from emotional involvement not controlled properly. Sometimes you have to remove yourself emotionally from a situation to effectively help others.

Reb Zalman Chadash from Elad: If it leads to sadness, it must be from the yetzer horah. Strengthen your emunah and bitachon and don't focus too much on Klal Yisroel's tzaros.

Reb Yair Ribni from Beit Shemesh: There's a difference between pain and sadness. Feel their pain, but don't get swept away by sadness that destroys your functioning.

Reb Shlomo Shimon Rothman from Beit Shemesh), Chaim Meir Daskal from Elad: In every tragedy there are points of light. Focus on the chassadim that happen so you can realize that Hashem orchestrates everything with love and mercy.

Reb Dovid Leifer from Yerushalayim: These things happen so we'll examine our actions and do teshuvah. Take some time each day to think about this. As the Baal Shem Tov said, a little bit of light can dispel a lot of darkness, including sadness.

Reb Chaim Dovid Green from Yerushalayim: Focusing on the pain involved is not for you if you can't handle it. You can empathize with them in other ways, such as doing mitzvos l'ilui nishmasam.

Reb Shimon Eichenstein from Beit Shemesh: Holocaust survivors who were able to rebuild their lives afterward did it by focusing only on the future. They didn't stay in the past. So too, after feeling their pain you can look toward the future.

Reb Aharon Beifus from Rechasim: A man came to Rav Shteinman zt"l with his son who was deathly ill and asked if it was a punishment for him. Rav Shteinman said that we don't know Hashem's cheshbonos, and he should just accept it as a nisayon. In each challenge, we have to see what is the most productive way to deal with it. Hashem doesn't want us to be sad; the Shechina doesn't dwell amidst sadness. (Shabbos 30b)

Question for issue 71

I often ask for a discount when I buy things. I started to wonder if this is a lack of bitachon; Hashem can give me the item at any price. On the other hand, many stores post higher prices, assuming people will bargain them down. What's the correct outlook?

M. R., Yerushalayim

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

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A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on Kav Hashgacha Pratis

When sick people would go to speak to my Rebbi, Rav Gershon Libman zt"l, he would always ask them this question: Do you think you're sick? How do you see yourself? And if they would answer that they think they're healthy, he would say, "Yes! That's how you'll be."

The power of positive thinking is unbelievable! It can make sick people better and bring all kinds of yeshuos. Living with bitachon is the same way – you're always positive that Hashem will work everything out for you.

This is especially true for healing our neshama. We have to think about ourselves as tzaddikim! I'll prove this to you. The Shulchan Aruch says (Siman 93) that you get up to daven Shemoneh Esrei with simcha. How? By saying pesukim beforehand of "tanchumin shel Torah." So we say Ashrei which has the pesukim רצון יראוי יעשה, שומר ה' את כל אוהביו.

Now, let me ask you a question. This passuk also says ואת כל הרשעים ישמיד! So how does that make you happy, if you don't know if you're a tzaddik or a rasha? Maybe you'll get all down on yourself, saying that Hashem will destroy you?

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

Yes, I'm a Tzaddik!

It must be, that a person is supposed to consider himself a tzaddik, and a "yirei Hashem" – otherwise, how would saying these pesukim make him happy? The yetzer horah puts a lot of effort into this one – he wants everyone to feel like they're reshaim. It says in Pirkei Avos רשע בפני עצמו – you're not supposed to think of yourself as a rasha!

I know that in avodas Hashem there is a concept of seeing yourself as small, *shiflus*, but nowadays that's not the way to go. If you want to do *shiflus*, make sure you have a Rav to advise you just how to do it; it's too dangerous otherwise.

Our job today is to think of ourselves as tzaddikim, and then we can serve Hashem with simcha. Keep telling yourself, "I'm a tzaddik," and the yetzer horah is going to jump in, "What? A tzaddik? But you did this and that..." So you keep fighting back at him – "No! I'm a tzaddik!"

Every person should say "The world was created for me." (Sanhedrin 4:5) Keep on repeating this to yourself. And if you think you're not worthy of this, you can commit to improving yourself!

Rav Mandel's shiurim are broadcast on Kav Hashgacha Pratis weekly in all three languages - Hebrew, Yiddish and English

Effects on Two Ends

On the receiving end

My sister and I bought apartments together in a group purchase. Then one of us had to sell. Because I read the hashgacha pratis pamphlet, I was able to be mevater and sell. A few months later I bought a bigger apartment! Yasher koach!

L. S., Beit Shemesh

For issue 66 I sponsored 40 shuls as a zechus to be able to sell my apartment easily.

That Thursday, a buyer contacted me, and on Sunday the apartment was sold!

Thank You, Hashem!

Anonymous

On the giving end

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