

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshiyos Balak - Pinchas 5783 ■ Issue 117

HEART TO HEART

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

Three Mitzvos in One Breath

At the end of *Shaar Habitachon*, Rabbenu Bachyai enumerates ten levels of *bitachon*. Regarding most of these levels, he writes that the more a person matures, the more he sees how dependent he is on the Ribbono shel Olam, how much he is in need of Hashem's help, and how close he is to failure if not for His mercies and kindness. The more he learns about *bitachon*, the more he is *zocheh* to rise from one level to the next. The tenth level is a level that is unique to pious, righteous men and to *nevi'im*, who are entirely disconnected from matters of this world. We are not speaking about this level, but rather about people like us, who are capable of reaching the ninth level – even in the year 5783 – but only after much toil. We won't allow the *yetzer hara* to weaken us! He says: Why learn, why toil, if you won't be able to reach the highest level of all in any case? But no – we are human beings, aware of our deficiencies and imperfections. Better that we know that there are much higher levels. Better that we understand that one can always aspire to more, and that if we were *zocheh* to move forward, even a little, we should be very happy.

A Yid walks along the path of life. He has a family, and he needs to take care of their needs – the small ones and the big ones, and to deal with all sorts of matters, such as earning a living, health, *chinuch* and social needs. And the more he is *zocheh* to learn *emunah* and *bitachon*, the stronger his awareness grows. At the ninth level, Rabbenu Bachyai says, *his awareness of Hashem's compassion (chemlah) on His creations will be strengthened.*

Compassion (*chemlah*) is a greater *middah* than pity (*rachamim*). Anyone can feel pity. Most non-Jews also have pity on their family members, but only a Jew has *chemlah* – true compassion. He sees that his friend is lacking something, and even though he doesn't have anything to give him, he doesn't withdraw, but rather he tries to help and get hold of what is needed in another way. He exerts himself to collect *tzedakah* for the other, davens for him, and thinks of ideas for him, even if he himself is not able to help.

Now, when we speak about the *chemlah*, the compassion, of the Creator of the world, we cannot say about Hashem that He gives from what He doesn't have, when everything is His! Rather, Hashem has compassion on a person and gives him *that which he doesn't deserve*. This is true compassion, and this is the awareness that a person who trusts in Hashem attains. He understands and feels in his heart that he deserves nothing, that *everything is a free gift*, and so he is satisfied and happy with everything he has. He is filled with praise and

thanks for everything Hashem has blessed him with. While it is true that life is accompanied by *nisyonos*, and we deal with many difficulties, a person who trusts in Hashem is wise enough to think about the good, the *chessed* and the mercies that Hashem has bestowed on him. He focuses on this, and thus he gains the feeling that *everything is good.*

This awareness is expressed in all his ways – in his heart, on his tongue, when others see him and when no one sees. He thinks this way and also speaks this way. When asked how he's doing, his answer is, "*Baruch Hashem!*"; "*Hodu laHashem!*"; "*Chasdei Hashem!*" His face is glowing and his words are pleasant, and it's not a show; rather, he is carrying out the words of David Hamelech (*Tehillim* 89:2), "I will make Your *emunah* known through my mouth." His words enter his very essence, and *emunah* is rooted within him. This awareness of Hashem's compassion accompanies him both outwardly and inwardly, to the point that he is sure that everything is for the good, even if we don't see it right now.

There are eighteen characteristics in the person who has reached the ninth level. We looked for a *tzaddik* to use as a model of these characteristics, to enable us to learn them well and take them to heart. And, *b'chasdei Hashem*, we found in *Chazal* many sayings and facts connecting this ninth level to the holy *Tanna* Rabi Akiva ben Yosef, the *rebbe* of Rabi Shimon bar Yochai. How appropriate it is that Rabi Akiva teach us the processes and details of *bitachon* – he who was *zocheh* to publicize to the world the saying that *A person should forever be accustomed to saying, all that the Merciful One does, He does for the good (Brachos 60b).*

When a Yid says, "All that the Merciful One does, He does for the good," he catches three mitzvos in one shot: 1) He is repeating the words of the Gemara; 2) he is learning a halachah in *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim, 230:5)*; and 3) he is fulfilling the halachah inherent in these words, a halachah that has great strength in light of the words of the Gemara.

How fortunate are we, that we are able to learn and to try to carry out what we have learned! How fortunate are we that we sometimes remember, even if at other times we forget. *Ashreinu* for every time we strengthen ourselves; *ashreinu* that we aspire to grow and to gain awareness. May our awareness of His Name *yisbarach* grow ever stronger, and may the *passuk*, "And he who trusts in Hashem is surrounded by *chessed*," come true for us; *amen.*

(Excerpt from shiur 307 in Shaar Habitachon. To listen to the shiur, press 4 after selecting a language, or dial directly 02-301-1904.)

FROM THE EDITOR

Living Miraculously

The neighborhood was in an uproar for days following Reb Yom Tov's *birkas hagomel*. He related how he had fallen into the sea. The water reached up to his nose, and then he hit a heavy rock that seemed to have been thrown out to him from the shore. The rock was obviously heavier than the water and would certainly sink momentarily, but at that moment his logical mind was suspended. Reb Yom Tov grabbed the rock and climbed onto it, and...wonder of wonders, the rock continued floating atop the waves! This was a miracle within a miracle. Not only was he saved from drowning, but he was saved by a rock that floated on the water!

The story made waves (excuse the pun). Hashem revealed Himself, making it clear that He wanted to save Reb Yom Tov's life. There was no other possible explanation, and several wise people began to grill Reb Yom Tov about his actions, seeking some explanation for how he had merited this tremendous miracle.

But we must realize that, while Reb Yom Tov is reviewing his deeds in search of some long-forgotten *zechus*, this miracle actually happens to me and you, and to the whole world.

Every morning we thank Hashem, with a special *brachah*, for "raising the land above the waters."

The element of stone is always at the bottom. If you put a stone into the sea, it will sink. Nonetheless, what happens to our world? The entire globe is based on water, yet the continents don't sink.

The Alshich Hakadosh comments on the *passuk (Tehillim 136)* "For raising the land above the waters, for His kindness is forever," that the positioning of the land above the water is a source of pain for the element of dust, for this is the opposite of its nature. The nature of dust is to sink down.

Why did Hashem create the world in this way? Couldn't He have created a world in which one side would be composed of water and the other side would be composed of land? Hashem *wanted* the world to exist in a way that contradicts the laws of nature, so that people can see the great *chessed* that the Creator does for them constantly. "For His kindness is forever."

In this way Hashem proves to us: *I am holding you up in an unnatural way.*

Chazal established that we give thanks every day with a special blessing for the fact that we get up in the morning and place our feet on the ground. This is a wondrous miracle, no different from the miracle that happened to Reb Yom Tov, who held onto a rock in the middle of the sea and it floated him to safety.

Good Shabbos, Pinchas Shefer

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

You can also join the many Jews who have changed their lives, by calling:

HASHGACHA PRATIS HOTLINE
Yiddish, Hebrew, English.

North America 151-86-130-140 • In England 0330-390-0489 • In Belgium 0-380-844-28 • In Israel 02-301-1300

In Australia 613-996-10005 • In South Africa 87-551-8521 • In Argentina 3988-4031 • In Ukraine 380-947-100-633

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

THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

Every Delay Is for the Good

On Friday I left my house at 9 a.m. and got into my car. My plan was to get to a *shiur* in Torah that was to start at 9:15, a logical plan that would leave me a minute or two before the *shiur* would actually begin.

I tried to start up the car, and then I discovered that a big truck was parked behind me and I could not move. I saw that the truck was carrying electronics, and the driver was nowhere to be found. *What was he thinking? How did he expect me to be able to drive out? How could he do this, on a Friday, blocking the street this way?!* All good questions about a truck parked in the wrong place.

I called the company (its contact information was painted on the truck) and they said they would try to locate the driver. In the meantime, the minutes ticked by. Ten minutes turned into twenty, and still I was stuck. I called again, and they told me that things were under control and asked that I avoid confrontation with the driver when he'd finally arrive.

That's actually an idea! I told myself. I would *not* argue with the driver. I drive a lot, and while driving I listen to the *Hashgachah Pratis* phone line and get much *chizuk* from all the stories. There is so much talk about how the people surrounding us are only messengers. It isn't really the anonymous driver who's holding me up; it's Hakadosh Baruch Hu Who determined that I would arrive late to the *shiur*.

I was still inclined to be *mechaneich* him a bit, to tell him, "What? Aren't you ashamed? What is this – are you king of the road?" And so on. He'd held me up for twenty minutes! But I decided to keep my mouth shut. Moreover, I decided that the driver would not even know that I had been held up because of him, because truthfully, it *wasn't* because of him, but rather the *Borei Olam* had planned that my morning would start off late, and that being the case, everything was okay.

After I made my decision, the driver showed up. He went on his way without even realizing what he'd been spared. Then I too drove off, and when I arrived, I discovered that the *shiur* had started late and I hadn't missed too much.

Perhaps you're wondering about the conclusion of this story. What did I gain from all this? Truthfully, I believe I gained a lot, because one only gains from *emunah*. But what I saw with my own eyes was that I gained inner peace and serenity and a good, refreshing morning. I don't want to think about all the negative baggage I would have loaded onto myself by exchanging blame and claims and faults with the driver of the truck. Thank You, Hashem, for the peace and calm, for the delay, and for the two lessons I learned today: a *shiur* in Torah, and a living lesson in *emunah*.

Hear Our Pleas Today!

My name is Yosef from Ashdod. I work as a *sofer STaM*, writing *mezuzos*. This is generally a good source of *parmassah*; when you sell the *mezuzos* you make a nice profit, which enables you, with

A Personal Call

My name is Moshe, and I live in Yerushalayim. My story happened on 22 Tammuz 5782, the *yahrtzeit* of the holy Reb Shlomo Karliner *zy"á*, who is buried in Ludmir. My connection to the *tzaddik* from Ludmir began with my connection to my *rebbe*, Harav Hagaon Rav Meir Sirota *shlit"á*. I have merited to draw living water from his pure wellsprings for many years, to acquire Torah with clarity from him and to hear *piskei halachah* from him.

Reb Meir *shlit"á*'s position requires that he travel to faraway villages in Ukraine and Poland in order to do things such as giving *hashgachah* on food, repairing *mikva'os* and *eiruvim*, and more, all for the benefit *Am Yisrael* in the Diaspora.

In the framework of his travels, Reb Meir was *zocheh* to go to many *kivrei tzaddikim*, among them the *tziyun* of the holy Reb Shlomo Karliner *zy"á* in Ludmir. When he came there, his heart sensed the holiness of the place and how the spirit of the Rebbe *zy"á* rests upon it as when he was alive; and ever since then, he has gone regularly to the holy *tziyun* in Ludmir, emphasizing continually how it is possible to bring about great *yeshuos* there.

Last Tammuz, as 22 Tammuz was drawing near, the desire to send a *kvittel* to the *tziyun* of the *tzaddik* grew stronger and stronger in my heart. I knew that my teacher and *rebbe* was going to fly to Ludmir, and I planned to deliver the *kvittel* to him, so that he could take it along with him.

However, plans were one thing and reality was another. Reb Meir left for Ludmir while I remained here, not even having gotten around to writing the letter. Only as 22 Tammuz, the day of the *yahrtzeit*, drew closer did I remember about the *kvittel*. I realized that Reb Meir must have already been at the *tziyun*, and since I didn't know of anyone else I could send the *kvittel* with, it seemed I had missed out on an opportunity. I was very disappointed, but I strengthened myself with the thought that everything is for the good.

On the night of the *yahrtzeit*, the cell phone in my pocket rang, and a number I didn't recognize showed up on the screen. After several rings it stopped. I decided to call back, and then I realized it was a prerecorded mass call. I listened to the recording: "You have reached the phone line of 'Torah for the *tzaddik* Reb Shlomo Karliner.' In honor of the *yahrtzeit*, you can send a *kvittel* to the holy *tziyun* through the system, automatically and for free. Press 2 now...."

I was amazed. A *kvittel* to Reb Shlomo Karliner! It wasn't so surprising! If there is an organization that takes care of hosting, newsletters, and everything connected to the *tziyun* in Ludmir, it is logical that they would also provide the public with the opportunity to send a *kvittel*. Still, notwithstanding all my admiration for their work, the call at this time was not so incredibly moving for me. Just as I had received the call, thousands across the world must have received it as well.

I pressed 2, and the recording continued: "Please state your name and your mother's name, and afterward press #.

"Pay attention," the recording continued. "In order for the system to register your words properly, please state your name as in standard spoken modern Hebrew. For example, for Moshe ben Rivka, say *Moshe ben Rivkah*"

There was a beep, indicating that I was to say my name, but I was suddenly incapable of saying anything. I was totally stunned, because, yes, my name and my mother's name is nothing less than Moshe ben Rivka!

This was a personal message to me from heaven, a personal message from the *Borei Olam*. Of all the possible combinations of names, specifically my name was chosen to demonstrate how a person should pronounce his name. I see this as a sign that ultimately, my yearning and desire for my name to be mentioned did what they had to in the Upper Realms, because the innermost spiritual yearnings of a Jew do not remain unfulfilled from Above.



May the merit of Reb Shlomo ben Yuta protect us and all of *Am Yisrael*; *amen*.

The Mission

For five months my daughter has been in hospital. Aside from worrying about her and davening for her recovery, I also have to deal with complicated travel arrangements and difficulties at home and in the hospital – a decidedly unpleasant place to be. What hurts me a lot is, first of all, the *bittul Torah*. How I miss my seat in *kollel*! *Ach!* What pleasure it is to sit with a *chavrusa* in the *beis medrash*! The air conditioning runs and the head dives into the *sugya*. If you are an *avreich* in *kollel*, you should appreciate the Gan Eden you have.

The second difficulty is being in a place that demands a lot of patience and overcoming inner battles, guarding your eyes and working on your *middos*. Each time anew, I gird myself with patience and produce another smile, in order to give my child the strength to battle for her life.

In truth, we are strengthening ourselves together. I tell her what every Jew says, promise her that Hakadosh Baruch Hu loves her with an endless love, strengthen her and myself with the understanding that everything is for the good, that Hashem is omnipotent and will certainly heal her and that she will yet frolic and play like all her friends, grow, blossom, and build a *bayis ne'eman*, and tell her children stories of *emunah* and *bitachon*.

For myself, I try to answer the question that is at the forefront of my mind all the time: Why have I been sent here? The purpose of every form of *galus* is for us to raise up the *nitzotzos* – the divine sparks that scattered to those places where we find ourselves, and surely I am doing so. However, I would like to identify the specific mission for which I was sent here.

Near my daughter's bed, on the other side of the curtain, lies another girl who is dealing with a difficult illness. She comes from a kibbutz somewhere in Eretz Yisrael, and like her parents, she barely knows anything about *Yiddishkeit*. I could hear the way they tried to calm her down on the other side of the curtain: "It'll be okay, you'll get through it," and other, similar phrases expressing hope, phrases that lack any basis or foundation, for they are hollow, empty of the *ikar* – Hakadosh Baruch Hu is the One Who will send your healing! At times I had the urge to just burst out and fill in the missing words. It's so painful to hear how a Jew, a person from the holy roots of Am Yisrael, can speak in a manner completely devoid of the Name of Heaven.

However, I didn't dare. I wanted to talk to them, but how can one give *mussar* to people who are in pain, whose lives have been overturned? I kept quiet and waited for the right time.

On Erev Shavuos, while people at home were preparing for Yom Tov with cheesecakes and the fragrant aroma of cooking foods, I was in the hospital near my daughter, and I felt the opportunity had come. I turned to the pained parents of the child lying near mine and told them, with all the warmth of my heart, "This evening will be Shavuos, the day we received the Torah and when all the sick people were healed. The blind began to see, the deaf to hear, and every blemish and pain was nullified as if it had never been. This power of healing returns each year on this holy Yom Tov! The *yahrtzeit* of Dovid Hamelech, who composed *Sefer Tehillim*, is also on this day, and it is a wonderful *segulah* to daven and make requests and say chapters of *Tehillim* for a recovery and a *yeshuah*."

I continued talking along these lines, trying to convey the feelings in my heart. I so badly wanted to do something good for them, to enlighten them with the truth – that there is hope, that there is Someone to trust and to lean on, that we have a great Father in Heaven Who sees everything and Who is all-powerful.

I saw how these words were literally like water to tired, worn-out souls. They drank up every word. It moved me tremendously when the girl's mother said, "It was worth going through this difficult time in order to hear words like these." She added that they are descendants of Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev zy"l, the Kedushas Levi, the defender of Am Yisrael.

I thanked the Creator of all the worlds for the incredible revelation that indeed there is a goal and a purpose to my being in hospital. If precious *Yidden*, descendants of the holy tzaddik, were aroused in my merit, then it was all worthwhile. Hashem sent me in order to provide for them.

Hashem's help, to provide for your family. Ever since I started out, everything had been going well – until recently, when everything started unraveling. I wrote and wrote, amassing a considerable pile of *mehudar mezuzos*, and there was no demand. I called one dealer, and he said he didn't need any *mezuzos* at the time. Another one responded similarly, and the third explained that the market had shifted. There was an influx of tefillin and *mezuzos*. Supply is greater than demand, and therefore I must lower the price. "Right now," he said, "even at the lower price, you probably won't be able to sell. Not now." He comforted me that this was a passing problem; better days would certainly come. "People will buy apartments and will need *mezuzos*, and you'll have bountiful *parnassah*, and everything will be okay." He was certainly nice, even though he didn't buy anything, but words of comfort would not enable me to get what I needed from the grocery store, and I had reached the point where I had no idea how I would buy my basic Shabbos needs.

I tried a few other dealers, all of whom answered evasively. The financial situation took a toll on me. I lost my ability to focus, lost my joy in life. I didn't know how to deal with it, and it disturbed me no end that I would have to use checks or credit cards, something I generally avoided. I buy only with cash, and *baruch Hashem*, I've always managed this way. Now I started thinking about having to take loans, and it upset me terribly. I was broken and depressed.

I told my wife about the situation, and she encouraged me, saying that everything would be good. In the meantime, a few days went by, soon it would be the fifteenth of the month, then the twentieth. Large sums of money would be going out of my bank account on those dates. What would I do?

I was just thinking about these depressing thoughts when my wife turned to me with a smile on her tear-streaked face and told me, "I just davened Minchah and asked Hashem to have you sell all your *mezuzos* today."

She was so encouraging and full of hope, but even her words of *emunah* could not shake me out of my depression. All the *mezuzos* would sell today?! Really?! The idea sounded so far-fetched, like someone coming and telling me that I would win a million dollars in the lottery today.

She asked that, as *hishtadlus*, I call a dealer with whom I don't usually do business; but I didn't agree. I felt incapable of hearing again, "No, I can't. Try again another time." I didn't have the emotional strength to deal with another refusal, and so even though she persisted, I refused.

I left the house, and just then a dealer I had spoken to a week earlier called me. At the time I had told him I had quite a few *mezuzos* available, but he had said that he needed a *kesav beis Yosef mezuzah*, while I write in *kesav Ari*. Now he was calling again and asked, "You told me you had a lot of *mezuzos*. Do you still have them?"

"Yes," I answered, still not believing he would buy them. Lo and behold, as it turned out, someone had ordered a large amount of *kesav Ari mezuzos* from him, and of all the *sotrei StaM* he knew, he remembered me. The *mezuzos* were all sold on that very day! Exactly what my wife had davened for!

This is the power of a pure *tefillah* coming from the wholehearted *emunah* of a *bas Yisrael!*

להכניס
אמונה
הביתה
מאמר לאמא
שרוצה יותר

צחוק
בצד

לראות
אמונה
בעיניים
ראיון
שנתן כח

בחזית
האמונה
סיפור אישי

להתעמק
מאמר עומק

שטח
פרטי
סיפורים אישיים על
השגחה פרטית

ניתן להצטרף גם
בעמדת נדרים פלוס
תחת השם:
"מגזין השגחה פרטית"

אלפי יהודים כבר יושבים
ומתענגים על המגזין החדש
ההמושקע

השגחה פרטית לכל המשפחה
הצטרפו גם אתם התקשרו עוד היום ל-

02-6246845

Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

From time to time I call the automated response service at my bank to get an update about what's going on in my account. Sometimes it's important to track the monies that I'm waiting to receive, or I may want to make a purchase and need to know if I have the money for it or not. Most of the time, however, I call because I simply like to hear about all the activities in the account - monies that went out, and mainly, monies that came in. I live fully the words of Chazal, "He checks his purse often." Lately I've begun to think that perhaps this behavior shows a lack in middas habitachon. I would be happy to hear readers' opinions about this.

Q #68

—Y.L. from Modi'in Illit

Disclaimer: All opinions mentioned here are presented for discussion only. For practical ruling, please consult with your Rav.

A Mitzvah, a Permissible Act, and a Forbidden Act

Rav Chaim Meir Daskal from Elad: The questioner mentions the Gemara's words, "He checks his purse often," which are brought in the *sugya* of *yi'ush shelo mida'as*. This habit is not mentioned as a positive attribute, and it's possible that it reveals a certain lack of *bitachon*. One can find many positive reasons for constantly checking one's account, but under difficult circumstances, there should be not a hint of worry or pressure involved, as these feelings do not go together with *middas habitachon*.

Rav Refael Speigelman from Yerushalayim: "A person should forever be an *adam*." The term *adam*, meaning *mensch*, implies someone who does not worry needlessly about things that don't really matter. A person who engages in such worries not only lacks *bitachon*, he is not living up to the title of *adam*. A person needs to work on himself to act with maturity.

Rav Shlomo Shimon Rotman from Beit Shemesh: If the goal is to track your account and to keep your income and expenses organized, then it is not a problem, but if there is no purpose to it, then it is a waste of time, and it testifies to a lack in *emunah*.

Rav Yitzchak Ezra Cohen from Beitar Illit: There is an advantage to tracking activities in one's bank account, as is brought in the Gemara (*Chullin* 105a): "Shmuel says: He who checks his possessions each day will find a *sela* (valuable coin)." However, this needs to be done wisely, so that it is purposeful.

Rav Refael Tura from Bnei Brak: A *baal bitachon* needs to be even-keeled, whether he has money or not. Excitement about money and being unnecessarily occupied with money testify to a blemish in one's *bitachon*.

Rav Shmuel Meir Weiss from Ashdod: Curiosity is a negative trait. So long as its purpose is not for *avodas Hashem*, there is a disadvantage to it.

Rav Yosef Cohen from Bnei Brak encapsulated it well: When the goal is to track one's income and expenses, then it is a *mitzvah*; when it stems from curiosity, it is a permissible act; when one is often calling the bank out of worry, then it is *forbidden*.

Rav Noach Gad Weintraub from Kiryat Gat: If we are talking about an addiction, it can ruin everything, and it is proper to strategize how to wean oneself off of it.

Rav Moshe Menachem Levin from Modi'in Illit: If he likes to deal with money, then it would be proper for him to do something good with this inclination, such as opening a *gemach* for monetary loans.

In All Your Ways, Know Him

Rav Aharon Beifus from Rechasim: If he is already in the habit of doing this, then he should channel it for good things, and through this habit he should come to thanking Hashem for all the good that He has done for him - that *baruch Hashem* he has *parnassah* and there is money coming into the account. This way he will be able to give thanks for every single detail, for every sum of money that comes in. **Rav Tzvi Tomer from Yerushalayim** brings the words of the Chafetz Chaim in his *sefer Shem Olam* (end of 83): "And I heard in the name of one *gaon* that a person needs to look at his business matters and see the *hashgachah* of Hashem *yisbarach* upon him, and through this his *middas habitachon* will be strengthened...meaning to say that he should look well...and even if the *hashgachah* was not so recognizable at the end of the business deal, such as that he brought produce to the market to sell and the going rate was [to his disadvantage] at the time, and yet he made some profit, then he should examine how this deal came to his hands - in what way did the produce or the money for it come to him, and similarly regarding every business deal, and in this he will see obvious *hashgachah*."

Rav Shimon Chaviv from Kiryat Malachi: When he does something with the goal of expanding his *da'as* and raising his spirit, then there is no blemish in it; indeed, it is the opposite - we find that one of the *Rishonim* who was rich would play with his money as he learned. **Rav Avigdor Rosenthal from Bnei Brak** adds that even if there is no drawback in doing this, one can instead strengthen himself and expand his *da'as* by listening to *shiurim* and words of *chizuk*, such as by listening to the *Hashgachah Pratis* phone line.

Question for newsletter 119

I feel that I am in a situation of *hester Panim*. I have a lot of *yissurim* and pain, and I daven and have not seem a *yeshuah* (although I believe and trust that it is all for my good). My question is: How does one deal with this feeling of *hester Panim*? —Y. M. from 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 Balak

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

When a person feels unwell, *chas v'shalom*, and there is even the slightest chance that he has some sort of illness, he undergoes all sorts of examinations to check whether he is ill. And if, *challah*, it turns out that he is ill, he does everything possible in order to get better.

And I wonder...

We came to this world in order to fix our negative character traits, to transform them into good *middos*. Every person knows that he is lacking in *middos*, and not just slightly so.

If so, why don't people stop and do some examinations, and see which disease of the *nefesh* they have, and in what area they require healing?!

The truth is that it is not easy to check this.

Someone once came to one of the *gedolei hador* to inquire about a *bachur* for the purpose of a *shidduch*. The *gadol* said, "I don't know him."

"But the *bachur* is always in your area," they responded. "How is it that you don't know him?!"

The *gadol* answered, "Chazal say, 'A person can be known through his cup, his pocket, and his anger' [meaning that a person's true nature emerges when he is drunk, when he is asked to contribute 'from his pocket,' and when he is in a situation that is liable to anger him]. This *bachur* always comes to me with a happy face, and I've never had the opportunity to get to know him in a real way."

Thus, during regular times we don't feel our lack in *middos*. When everything is going well, everything is okay, there is no anger, no revenge, no negative feelings. The test is only during a *nisayon*. When the *nisayon* comes, that is the time to make an "examination." If we see that anger is controlling us, that is a sign that we require healing, and we must work on this *middah*.

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

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

Know Your Spiritual State

A *chashuveh Yid* told me that he tries to work on his *middas hachessed*.

I wondered: "You are known to all as a good-hearted man of *chesed*, and whenever anyone who turns to you, you help him immediately!"

"Indeed," the *Yid* told me, "I put aside two hours of my time each day in order to help people, but if someone asks for help during other hours, it bothers me a lot."

This is an example of a person who examines himself, his true spiritual state, and tries to improve.

An *avreich* came to me with a *hashgachah pratis* story:

In my *kollel* we were discussing and decided that we need to invest in the *middah* of *chesed*. I took upon myself that if I see a child who needs help crossing the street or needs to make a phone call, I will help him.

That same day, on my way home, I stopped at a store and bought a few things. As I was leaving, I heard a child shouting to me; but as I was used to doing, I paid no attention. I continued on, and another child tried to get my attention, and this time I remembered what we had spoken about in *kollel* and decided to try to help him. I asked him, "What do you want?"

He pointed to my bag and said, "Look, you have a hole in your bag, and a wine bottle is about to fall right through it."

"Look what *hashgachah!*" the *avreich* concluded. "In the *zechus* of the *kabbalah*, I was spared the loss of a bottle of wine."

I told this *avreich*, "If you would have continued on, and the expensive wine had slipped out of the bag and broken, the loss of the bottle would have been negligible compared to the loss incurred when a person neglects working on his *middos*."

May Hashem help us be *zocheh* to withstand our *nisyanos* and correct our *middos* and repair our souls; *amen*.

Effects on Two Ends

On the receiving end

From the depth of my heart I wanted to thank you for the sweeter-than-honey "sichas chaverim" on the phone line. Yasher koach. It is wonderful, amazing, enlightening, and fascinating to hear the conversations of *talmidei chachamim*, whose words bring *emunah* and *bitachon* to all of Am Yisrael. It gives me *chizuk* for the entire week. Thank you very much!

In the beginning of the winter I committed to sponsoring the dissemination of these newsletters for a full year. I did this as a *zechus* for my daughter to get engaged soon. Less than two weeks later my daughter was engaged. In another two weeks we will celebrate her wedding, *iy"H*, and I want to switch the name to daven for, and ask that you daven for me to have great *shefa* for all the many expenses that accompany the wedding.

—Y.M., vBeit Shemesh

On the giving end

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