

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshiyos Kedoshim - Emor 5782 ■ Issue 88

HEART TO HEART

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

The Destined is Truth, Toil is False

There's a fundamental difference between how we do mitzvos and how we do mundane things. When we do something for a mitzvah – bake matzos, for example -- we know we're doing something good because that's what Hashem wrote in the Torah. When we choose to do a mitzvah, we are rewarded for our choice, as well as for the actual act of doing the mitzvah. So you go to bake matzos, work hard and sweat, and then, if you merit to do so – you eat the matzos at the Seder. Three times a reward. One for the choice, another for the work, and a third – for the mitzvah. The first two are dependent on us -- our will and free choice, but the third, is not in our hands. Whether the matzah comes out kosher enough, or breaks into matzah meal as soon as it comes out of the oven, is not up to us. We can only choose and work towards it, but the results are not up to us.

Along with choosing to do good, we have to daven to Hashem to lead us in the right direction and give us the energy and the necessary tools to bring the mitzvah to culmination.

On the other hand, davening for mundane things, for our parnassah or for our health, begins right from the start, even before exercising free will and choosing what to do. Rabbenu Bachaye directs us at the beginning of the fourth chapter, part four: **"In mundane matters, sometimes a good means becomes a bad means and vice versa."** A person investigates where to invest, analyzes the market and chooses the investment that promises the highest returns. But success remains far away. Sometimes failure is immediate and sometimes a few months or years away. Generations of investments can yield millionaires and subsequently go down the drain. You never know. **"For in mundane matters, it was not revealed to us which one of all the means is best and most**

beneficial for us, nor the ways in which some course is more harmful and worse than other courses."

A bad choice can turn out to be the best one there is. What seemed like a terrible choice turned out to be the best choice. During WWII, how many Polish refugees thought they were foolish for turning down Russian citizenship and being deported to Siberia, but then the Germans came and killed any Jew that remained in Russian-occupied Poland. Many times, the best laid plans got messed up and Jews found themselves stuck somewhere they didn't want to be, only to discover later that had they followed their own plans, they would have been killed, and only the change of plans saved them.

This is what Rabbenu Bachaye is telling us. In mundane things we don't know what will be more successful unless a prophet comes and tells us what to do. Because **"the destined is truth, and toil is falsehood, and only Hashem's plans will take place."** (Bereshis 37:15, Ramban) Therefore, we are obligated to make our plans with all due diligence, and remember and believe, that Hashem Himself is the only one Who does and will do anything in the world, and pray that He bestow blessing upon our actions.

However, when we do a mitzvah, we are certain the choice, preparation and action are all good because they are for a mitzvah. **"For service of Hashem and transgression, it is not so. Matters of good and evil do not switch positions and never change."** A sin will always be wrong and a mitzvah will always be good. Every mitzvah we merit doing is certainly the best thing we could do both in this World and the Next, and we believe that Hashem repays those who do good.

May we merit to do mitzvos and good deeds, with joy.

FROM THE EDITOR

The Crane Uplifted Me

I must share Rav Yitzchok's story with you. It was so special that it tears to my eyes:

"Shortly before Pesach we moved into a new apartment in Bnei Brak. We were excited and happy with it, until we realized the kitchen was so new it didn't have counters. My neighbor also didn't have countertops, and we decided to try and find a supplier who'd be willing to supply us both with counters before Pesach. We found a factory that was willing to do it for us for an additional 350 NIS. Obviously, it was a small price to pay for a kitchen for Pesach, and I agreed. But when the supplier realized what floor I lived on, he told me he would need a crane to deliver the marble counters, and I'd have to add another 150 NIS. He mentioned that all these added costs were Yom Tov fees because we wanted the counters before Pesach.

The big day came. The marble slabs were ready and a large crane was parked near our building. The best parking spot was taken, so the crane tried to use another spot, but they couldn't get the marble into the apartment. They tried and tried, marble suspended in midair, but were unsuccessful. Sadly, the slabs were returned to the factory. The factory owner claimed it was not his fault and demanded 500 NIS to cover the delivery. That was how I lost 500 NIS and still didn't have a counter for Pesach."

I was Rav Yitzchok to relate how he had overcome his disappointment, or perhaps how some miracle had occurred. Otherwise, it would be something about how he had made Pesach without a counter and how uncomfortable it was. But his next words surprised me:

"During Chol Hamoed I thought to myself – obviously it was not the crane that created the problem – Hashem did it to me. And He loves me so much! He did everything just for my benefit! I thought it must be because of something important I am very careful with – Baruch Hashem, for many years I make sure not to be involved with anything before learning the first seder in kollel. The countertops, though, since I needed them urgently, had me on the phone before seder. Although it was bein hazamanim when there is no regular seder, since I am usually careful not to do anything before learning for a few hours each morning, and I had neglected this hakpadah, this was the result. Hashem had shown me, 'Dear son, I am waiting for your Torah.' The thought gave me such joy! All Pesach I walked around feeling like a million dollars. Hashem cares about me so much and my learning is so important to Him. My efforts are important to Hashem! I am so lucky!"

I was tremendously inspired to hear this Yid thanking Hashem for the discomfort of having to spend the Yom Tov without counters, just to see how beloved and important he is to Hashem. And I wanted to share this inspiration with you. Have a healthy, wonderful summer!

Good Shabbos Pinchas Shafer

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

The Right Story

My story took place right after Pesach of 5780, when the world was all shut down due to the Coronavirus. In our city, and well as all over the world, parents found themselves serving as teachers. I gathered my children, davened with them, taught them Chumash and Navi, and then told them a story of emunah in Hashem.

On the eve of the 27 of Nissan, I was preparing a story for the following day. Looking around the house for resources, I found a booklet with photocopies of all kinds of newsletters. There, I found the first story that appeared in the Hashgacha Pratis newsletter about Mrs. Etka Toibe Shachor *a"h* (for those who are unfamiliar with it, I'll summarize it in short: R' Dovid Kletzkin saw an ad for a tombstone cutter with the picture of her headstone on exactly the day of her *yahrzeit*, which was the 27th of Nissan. He learned and davened for her *neshama's zechus* and told others about it, mentioning it also on a family chat. People continued publicizing it further and further, until the news reached a *Yid* by the name of R' Aharon who had been searching for this woman for years to ask her for forgiveness. He gathered a *minyan* and went up to her gravesite to ask for her forgiveness. This was how he was saved from various *tzaros* that had been plaguing him for years.) Since the story "happened" to appear on that very same day, I saw it as a sign from Hashem, and decided to tell this story to my children.

The following day, I told the story with all the bells and whistles. The children realized it was exactly her *yahrzeit* and were excited. "Look how important it is to ask another *Yid* for forgiveness, and to make sure no other *Yid* has any grievances against us. Let's start asking each other for forgiveness right now. Why should we wait for times of difficulty to ask for forgiveness? Let's ask each other for forgiveness right now, and give Hashem joy." In order to make it a real lesson, which as you know, requires us to set an example, I announced, "I am planning on doing it right now. If there is anyone who thinks I need to ask for forgiveness from anyone, please remind me."

The children remembered all kinds of incidents, but Baruch Hashem these were all people with whom I had already reconciled. My wife, who had been listening to the story said, "I know who you have to ask for forgiveness. Remember Shimon?"

Eleven years ago, we left Eretz Yisroel due to a desperate financial situation. We had been living in Yerushalayim, and for two years I had worked

One Step Saves a Thousand

I live in Haifa. For Shvi'i Shel Pesach I traveled with my family to Bnei Brak to spend the holiday along with the other *chassidim* at my Rebbe. On the way, one of my friends called to tell me he wasn't going to be there – he had been hospitalized with a complicated strep infection. Since he needed intravenous antibiotics, he would have to spend Yom Tov in the hospital. How could I enjoy myself at the Rebbe while my friend was in the hospital, alone? I decided to go and visit him before the *tisch*. When I got to Bnei Brak, my plan got even more elaborate – I asked a few friends to come along, and together we would go over to the hospital and bring *simchas Yom Tov* to our ill friend. We made up to go as soon as the meal was over, and then walk back to the *tisch*.

That night, when we got to the gate, the security guard wouldn't let us in. "Only one of you can go in." But how could we leave our friend alone on such an auspicious night? My friends started thinking of all kinds of *segulos*. I offered to go in and call our friend down, and the security guard agreed. Meanwhile, the guard got called away, and my two other friends snuck in behind me.

We met in the hospital *Beis Medrash* and started singing. We sang *Shiras Hayam*, songs of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* and thanksgiving to Hashem. Other patients joined us, giving thanks to Hashem and enjoying the Yom Tov.

An hour later, on the way back to the *tisch*, one of my friends told me, "One step for your friend saves thousands of steps for yourself." I wondered what he meant.

I reached the *tisch* hall and met one of my nephews at the entrance. He was visibly upset, explaining that my son had fallen and needed stitches. Where was he now, I wanted to know. Where? Well, you guessed it. In the hospital, of course.

I turned around and walked right back, wondering what was going on here. I had just come back from the hospital, and someone had even reminded me I was saving a thousand steps for myself. What had I saved here? *Chas v'shalom*, I wasn't angry at Hashem or anything, I was just wondering. A quick thought that flitted through my mind while trying to think about Hashem's kindness and how everything is for the best.

I got to the hospital and met my wife. She told me that when our son fell and she saw the bleeding, she ran to the doctor. He sent her on to the ER in the Bnei Brak hospital, but when she got here, they told her that the cut needed a plastic surgeon, and they only had a regular surgeon on duty. She'd have to go on to a larger hospital further away where they had a plastic surgeon. Just as she was about to leave, the doctor ran after her, calling her back. "Lady, lady, there's no need to go, a plastic surgeon just came in. He can take care of your son!"

Baruch Hashem my son was stitched up properly.

I didn't get much sleep that night, but the sea split for me in a very special way. In the morning during davening I

realized the chessed we had experienced. While I certainly had walked many steps, I could clearly see how Hashem had rachmanus on me, and my steps for my friend saved me many steps to a further hospital.

How Did you Know My Name?

When the Hashgacha Pratis hotline was just starting out, one of the first stories that appeared was about Rav Gavriel Gavra from Bayit Vagan in Yerushalayim. We will reprint the story in honor of his upcoming shloshim, and it should be an *iluy neshama* for him.

Rav Gavriel served as a rabbi in Argentina, and later, in Eretz Yisroel and leader of a Kehilla from Latin America in Yerushalayim. He was a mohel who gave many babies their bris mila. One day, he received a phone call from Spain. "Rabbi, my wife gave birth to a baby boy. Please come and give him his bris." Rav Gavriel tried to explain that travel was not so simple, and there were other competent mohalim in the region, but the man was adamant, "If you don't come, the baby will not have a bris." Rav Gavriel decided to make the trip. Meanwhile, he received another invitation to perform a bris in the area, and he planned to travel from one bris to the next. At the first bris, he happened to meet a surgeon who was impressed by the rabbi and gave him his business card. When the first bris ended, Rav Gavriel took a cab to his next bris. The cabby drove and drove until they both realized he was lost. Rav Gavriel got out of the cab and stood on the sidewalk, wondering how to proceed, when he heard his name being called, "Gavriel, Gavriel!" he lifted his head and saw a 17-year-old boy on a porch in the building behind him.

"I'm stuck out here," called the boy, "Can you go into the house and open the porch door?"

The rabbi went up into the house and walked through the living room. He spotted, to his horror, a menorah prominently displayed alongside symbols of avodah zara. He opened the porch door and after he calmed down, he asked the boy, "How did you know my name?"

"I had no idea your name was Gavriel," said the boy. "There's a neighbor in this building by the name of Gavriel who lives below and I was calling him."

Rav Gavriel realized something was going on. The night before, in his dream, his mother had called him, "Gavriel, Gavriel" and here he was being called again by this strange boy. He asked about the boy's family and realized his mother was Jewish, but his father was a gentile. The boy knew he was a Jew and wanted to have a bris, but was afraid of his father. Now, his parents were on vacation and he could have his bris.

"Would you like me to give you a bris?" asked Rav Gavriel. "Yes," said the boy.

The rabbi took out the business card he had been give just a short time earlier and called the surgeon to come and help him set up a makeshift operating room. The doctor came and they merited to give the boy a bris.

Rav Gavriel Gavra *zt"l* brought many Yidden back to their Father in Heaven. He was a posek in the Bayit Vegan neighborhood in Yerushalayim and taught Torah in Yeshivas Kol Yaakov. May he be a *meilitz yosher* for all of Am Yisrael.

on creating a store in a very specific area of expertise, which I knew nothing about. I had hired two Yidden to oversee the project and I paid them for their work, including all their expenses.

The two hired a worker called Shimon who did some work in the store. When he was finished, Shimon came to me and asked for payment. "I don't have to pay you, I didn't hire you," I told him and sent him to the two hired workers. But he insisted, "I worked for you! Please pay me."

"Go to those who hired you and ask them to pay you. I paid them for their work including their expenses. There's no reason I should pay again."

We argued and argued, back and forth. It was clear I wasn't obligated to pay, and I even asked a dayan who confirmed it. Finally, after a long time, Shimon gave up, and said, "That's not how Jews behave to Jews. You won't see blessing from this business."

Shimon's "blessing" was fulfilled. While I indeed wasn't obligated to pay him, two years later I was forced to close down and leave the country. Now, with the story about the late Mrs. Shachor in mind, on the 27th of Nissan, I knew I had to do something about Shimon.

The only thing I knew about him was that he lived in Bat Yam. I didn't even know his full name. I did know, though, that he had a son by the name of Noam Elimelech. Armed with this detail, I called around Bat Yam. Finally, my search narrowed down to two people – two renovators with the name Shimon who had sons by the name of Noam Elimelech. I searched for family members, unsuccessfully. Finally, I found his mother's number. She lived in Tel Aviv, and surprisingly, her home number was still connected. An elderly woman answered, "Yes, Shimon is my son, but he isn't working now because of Covid."

"I just want to speak to him," I said. She gave me his number.

When I called Shimon up, he recalled the story immediately. "They still haven't paid me," he said sadly. I told him how I had found him and the whole story about Mrs. Shachor *a"h*. He was visibly moved, and we talked about the amazing Hashgacha in it. We told each other how much nachas Hashem was having from our conversation, and just as we had reconciled, Hashem would reconcile with Am Yisrael.

Now I became restless. Who else's feelings had I hurt? Who else could I make up with? I made a list of all my teachers and friends from my early childhood, and called each and every one up. I asked for forgiveness for childhood mischief, and they were very excited to hear from their former student. And when I reached the end of the list, I felt exhilarated – there's nothing like knowing that there's nobody in the world who has anything against you.

This is the end of my story. No, I didn't see any amazing yeshuos, and I can't offer you a surprising twist for the grand finale. The greatest yeshua was the actual asking of forgiveness. The freedom of forgiveness.

Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

There are people who have permanent struggles in their lives, be it an ill child, chronic disease, difficult-tempered children, or difficulty in parnassah. Should one try to improve his life and change the situation through davening and physical effort, or should he make peace with it, assuming that this is what Hashem has decreed for him, and that's it?

Q #40

A. P. Modiin Ilt

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

Want What Hashem Wants

Rabbi Dovid Yisroel from Beit Shemesh; Rabbi Yosef Dushinsky from Haifa; Rabbi Chaim Meir Daskal from Elad; Rabbi Dovid Yishai Va'aknin from Yerushalayim: What you first have to do is define what "making peace with a situation" means: Is it depression and loss of hope? Because that is not the Torah way of life. Yidden accept what Hashem does with love and understand it is all from Him. And as we say on the Yamim Noraim "U'teshuva, u'tefila, u'tzedaka maavirin es roa hagezeira" – repentance, prayer and charity can change anything. And **Rabbi Yehuda Gewirtzman** adds: When we don't accept Hashem's will with love, the gates of prayer are sealed shut.

Rabbi Yehoshua Levi from Yerushalayim; Rabbi Baruch Cohen from Bnei Brak: The highest level of bitachon in Hashem is trusting Hashem that your current situation is the best one for you, as Rabbenu Bachaye writes (Parashas Mikeitz) quoting the Chovos Halevavos: "He should trust Hashem with all his heart... that he should want whatever is Hashem's will. i.e., whatever his situation is: ill or healthy, wealthy or poor, free or captive. If Hashem willed him to be in one of these circumstances and sufferings, and Hashem wishes to weaken him with it, he should will it as well... whoever is perfected in his faith in Hashem must trust in Hashem with all his heart that He, May His Name be exalted, will bring him the appropriate means as necessary." However, if you haven't reached this level yet, you are obligated to continue praying for salvation.

"Those Who Place their Hope in Hashem shall Renew their Vigor"

Your question hints of despair. That is not our way. Our job is to always strengthen ourselves, hope and wish for better and pray for it. Your salvation

can come at the blink of an eye! And we know that even if a sharp sword is placed on one's neck he mustn't despair of Hashem's mercy. Hope itself brings salvation. **Rabbi Chaim Moshe Klein from Haifa** quotes the Ramchal: "Hashem so-to-speak, goes down to hear the prayer of the hopeful, as the passuk reads: 'I have greatly hoped for Hashem, and He extended [His ear] to me and heard my cry.' (Tehilim 40:2) **Rabbi Yitzchok Azriel from Hadera** and **Rabbi Dovid Boker from Tzfas** quote from the Gemara in Shabbos(31a): "At the time one is brought in for judgment (after death) he is told, 'Did you hope for salvation?'"

Rabbi Tzvi Cohen from Beit Shemesh; Rabbi Akiva Strauss from Bnei Brak; Rabbi Shimon Rotman from Beit Shemesh: Hashem can do anything! Hashem can change things, cure illnesses, save the seemingly unsalvageable - anything! As Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa said: "He Who told the oil to burn will tell the vinegar to burn." Recent years have seen cures discovered for diseases that were previously believed to be incurable. Your problem can also be solved!

Rabbi Gamliel Hakohen Rabinowitz from Bnei Brak: Sefer Tiv Hatefillah writes a lot about this. Every difficulty one suffers from, after doing teshuva, is in order to encourage him to daven more and strengthen his relationship with Hashem. That is the main reason. Therefore, continue praying! Don't make peace with your situation and don't stop davening. People see yeshuos beyond the natural order.

Question for Issue #90

The last few months have been very difficult. Wars, terror, the shock of losing our generation's tzaddik. What can inspire us?

P.A., Nof Hagall

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 Behar

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

During the weeks of Sefiras Ha'omer, we mourn for Rabi Akiva's twenty four thousand disciples, who passed away between Pesach and Shavous. The reason for the plague is explained in Maseches Yevamos (62b): "Rabbi Akiva had twelve thousand pairs of students in an area of land that stretched from Gevat to Antipatris in Judea, and they all died during one period of time, because they did not treat each other with respect."

In Novardok, the mussar topic of the month was respect. All mussar sessions were dedicated to an in depth study of how to honor one's fellow properly. Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, the Alter of Slabodka was a genius in bein adam la'chaveiro. There was none like him -- he loved other Yidden and did everything he could for them.

Once, one of his students left the yeshiva to attend a wedding of a friend. The Alter sat and waited for his return until very late just to give him the good feeling of someone waiting for him. The young Yaakov Ruderman, who went on to become the legendary Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Israel in Baltimore, once suffered from the stomach flu. The bathroom was an outhouse and he, a young boy, was afraid to go there. The Alter realized his predicament and every time he left the house, the Alter would stand at the window and call out, "Yaakov Yitzchak, don't be afraid! Yaakov Yitzchak, don't be afraid!" To the calming sound of his voice, Rav Ruderman was able to use the outhouse time and again. Such greatness, such kavod habriyos.

Once, the Alter went to the doctor. As he waited for

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

Who Is Honorable? One Who Honors His Fellow

his turn, he heard the patient in the doctor's office screaming in pain. He immediately began praying for the poor man without even knowing who it was. Such gadlus! May we have even a small portion of it. Rav Yitzchok Hutner zt"l described how the Alter of Slabodka once rebuked him. The rebuke was well deserved, but Rav Hutner decided to leave Slabodka because of it. As he was leaving the Yeshiva, he passed the Alter's house. When she saw him, the Rebbetzin called out to him, "Yitzchak'l, Yitzchak'l, do you know how many tears the Alter cries for your success? Every day he stands and prays that you grow in Torah." Rav Hutner realized that the rebuke stemmed from endless love, and he decided to remain in the Yeshiva.

When one of his students set out to establish another yeshiva with the Alter's blessings, he sent him off, saying, "I stood on my feet to pray for my students for so many hours that I no longer have energy to stand. This is why I cannot stand on my feet today. This is how a yeshiva needs to be run." He was known to say that ahavas Yisrael is achieved only through praying and beseeching Hashem for it, and that this kind of prayer is accepted immediately. The light of his great ahavas Yisrael continues to shine in the world through his great students who illuminate the Torah world. May these words serve as an elevation for the neshama of my dear father, Rav Nachman ben Harav Ze'ev Kahat z"l who was an amazing person, loved his fellow Yidden and brought them close to Torah.

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

I live in London. I have to tell you, I get incredible inspiration from the content on your telephone line, the stories and shiurim. You really do an amazing job! But only when there was a problem with the London extension did I realize how precious your line is...

On Friday, Erev Rosh Chodesh Nissan a young lady called to donate newsletters to be distributed in ten shuls. She told us that she had promised to donate them if she'd be engaged by Rosh Chodesh Nissan, and here she was, a kallah, fulfilling her promise.

On the giving end

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