

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshiyos Mikeitz - Vayigash 5781 ■ Issue 55

HEART TO HEART

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

Why didn't I Get what I Asked For?

We know by now that everything is from *shamayim*. We have the proofs, the logical arguments. The next step is to understand that everything is for the good. This is a challenge. The yetzer harah claims that many times we don't get what we asked for, and we suffer all kinds of things- if so, how can it be that everything is good?

The Chovos Halevavos answers this question with the simple fact that Hashem created us! He knows exactly what's the best for us since He made us and knows what we need. Yes, everything He does is for our best. More than anyone else, He knows how our challenges and difficulties ultimately bring about our success.

Rabbenu Bechaya makes the following comparison: Imagine a man walking into a carpenter's workshop and taking in the scene. He sees the craftsman taking a beautiful piece of wood, putting it onto the table, and sawing it. He's horrified – "What are you doing with that piece of wood?! You're ruining it!" he says. Such sentiments are quite foolish. Obviously, a professional carpenter knows what he's doing. The quality of his work is obvious, so you can trust that even what seems destructive is just part of the process.

Similarly, a man who is suffering from terrible pain in his tooth goes to the dentist. The doctor lies him down and attacks his mouth with a drill, making the hole in his tooth even bigger! Nonetheless the patient is grateful for his service, and even pays him a lot of money for it. He trusts that the dentist has to widen the hole in order to be able to get at the root and clean it out.

If this is true of craftsmen who work with pre-existing materials, all the more is it true for Hashem, who created all

the raw materials in the whole universe from nothingness. Man was singled out in creation as the *yetzir kapov* – the only thing created by Hashem Himself. Therefore, we can be assured that He knows what He's doing with us, and has only our best interests in mind.

What should a Yid think when he davens and begs Hashem to give him what he thinks he needs desperately, and he doesn't get it?

He should think that he is like a baby who crawls along the floor and finds an interesting item – a screw. He's about to pop it into his mouth, when his father catches him just in time, and grabs it away. The child starts screaming... A person who walks in right then might say to the father, "Why not let him have it? Look how much he's crying!" If the person realized what the child had been holding, if the person had the whole picture, he would understand the father's refusal right away.

"Why can't you explain it to him?" a naïve but well-meaning neighbor might say, when you grab some loose, live wires from your toddler. "Tell him how electricity works, and why there's current running through there. Don't just grab it away!" This is not a good idea. By the time you get through to him, he will have been in great danger. So too, Hashem knows exactly how we were created and how every part of our body and soul functions. Only He knows what we need to fulfill our mission in the world, and only He knows what really is good for us. He can't explain everything to us at this stage. All we have to do is trust in Him and rely on His endless mercy and love, knowing that He is guiding us to the best possible place for us.

(From shiur 36)

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

FROM THE EDITOR

The Secret to Success

How would you define "intelligence"?

The outside world would define intelligence as a good business-head, ambition, or the ability to predict the rise or fall of the stock-markets.

The Gemara says something else:

"Rav Eliezer said: Any person who has *da'as* will ultimately become wealthy." (Sanhedrin 92a)

We would assume that the word *da'as*, as used in this Gemara, refers to business smarts. However, the passuk in Koheles (9:11) states, "Not to the wise is bread and not to the intelligent are riches." Isn't this a contradiction to the Gemara?

The Maharsha asks this question, and answers with a fundamental precept in hashkafah. This is such an essential thought, it should be placed on billboards!

In answer to this contradiction, the Maharsha quotes another gemara. The Gemara relates that someone asked Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chanina what a person should do in order to become wealthy. "Increase your business efforts and be honest in all your dealings," he responded. "Many people have done so, but it didn't work," the person replied, "If so," said Rabbi Yehoshua, "ask for mercy from the One who owns all the wealth!" (Niddah 70b)

The *da'as* that makes a person wealthy, explains the Maharsha, is knowing the true source of his wealth. A person with this sort of *da'as* will "ultimately" become wealthy. At first, he puts his trust in his own efforts. When this doesn't work out, he turns to Hashem. The experience of investment, research, and intense consultation ending in failure leads him to the conclusion that Hashem is the source of all wealth!

Of course, you can save yourself all the aggravation and turn to Hashem right away, and then you can get wealthy right away too!

Likewise, explains the Maharsha, another Gemara states that "whoever doesn't have *da'as*, will ultimately be exiled." Why would a person who is lacking *da'as* deserve to be exiled? This *da'as* refers, once again, to the knowledge that Hashem is running the show. If a person doesn't have this *da'as*, he doesn't know that the main secret to financial success is to ask Hashem for help. He will exert himself through all sorts of effort and deals. Even if his efforts fail, he'll chalk it up to some reason or another – but not to the fact that he neglected to approach the Source of all money. In the end he'll run out of money and lose even his home.

This applies just as much to spiritual endeavors. The Gemara in Niddah says the same thing about Torah wisdom. Our Father in Heaven is ready and willing to give us *shefa* in every area – we just have to ask Him!

Good Shabbos, Pinchas Shefer

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

THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

Hashem Arranged the Meeting

I heard about a man who fell into debt of hundreds of thousands of shekels. He was in a very bad situation, and I got involved to try to help him out. One *askan* suggested that I ask a relative of mine for a donation. This relative was a wealthy man, but I wasn't close to him at all. I felt uncomfortable about approaching him. Plus, the *askan* told me to ask him for a specific amount of money – 30,000 shekels. Uncomfortable with the idea, I pushed it off.

A few days later, the *askan* met me and asked if I had spoken to my relative yet. I was embarrassed to respond negatively, and decided on the spot to call him that day.

I took the leap and called. The man greeted me warmly, asked how I'm doing, how my family is doing... and I started getting cold feet again. Here he was being so nice to me, and all I really wanted was his money... I didn't feel capable of making the request over the phone. I asked when I could meet with him. He asked me what it was about, but I didn't want to say. He said to call back in the afternoon and he would see when he has time.

I left the house to kollel, feeling apprehensive, embarrassed and kicking myself all at once. Maybe I should have just asked him then and there for the money? Maybe later, he won't have time, or he'll be busy, or in a bad mood...

Lost in my thoughts, I came to the bus stop, and two buses pulled up. Still distracted, I got on the bus – but then I realized it was the wrong one! I got off at the next stop, and then stood there, trying to figure out where to go from there. Just then, I heard a car honk. I turned around – and saw that my relative in the car! He was motioning for me to come in.

I saw Hashem had arranged for our meeting, so I told him about the person we were trying to help. Baruch Hashem, he was willing to help, and gave the entire amount. And then he drove me to kollel.

I was so happy to see clearly how following my small hishtadlus, Hashem arranged for everything else.

The Bag

One Thursday morning I was running late. As I rushed out of the mikvah to catch the bus, I left a bag of new clothes on a hook outside. The next day, I remembered that the hooks are cleared off every Thursday night. I assumed my bag was already gone, and I davened to Hashem to get it back.

When I went to the mikvah before Shabbos, I couldn't believe my eyes. There was my bag! How could it be? It was the only thing hanging there.

As I got closer I saw a note attached to it: "I took your bag by accident. Sorry."

I thanked Hashem for answering my tefillah!

All for the Best

Rav Aharon Shefer *shlit"á* from Yerushalayim relates:

Thirty years ago, I suffered from a stomach condition, and traveled to

On All the Miracles and Wonders

Reb Yosef Kletzkin of Beit Shemesh got his neighbor R' Yitzchak to tell his amazing story to Reb Dovid, who told it over on the line:

Reb Yitzchak is a good Jew who has gone through his share of difficulty. He wasn't complaining, but he was asking Hashem every day from the bottom of his heart to be able to remarry. Raising his two sons alone was overwhelming.

After *six years* of waiting, in Kislev 5779, he approached a shadchan who dealt with second marriages. He thought the man would give him some suggestions of shidduchim, but instead the first thing he said was, "Did you get a bracha from Rav Chaim Kanievsky?"

That threw him off. A bracha from Rav Chaim? "I wish! It's impossible to get into him, and the wait can take hours. How can I leave my children for so long?"

The shadchan smiled. "Ah, that's no problem – he has a fax line! My father was sick a few years ago, and we sent a fax, and Rav Chaim answered with exact instructions to us. Baruch Hashem, my father is all better now!"

Writing a fax sounded doable. Yitzchok sat down and wrote out his tale of woe, asking for a bracha for a wife. They sent off the fax, and Yitzchak waited with anticipation for his yeshuah.

A week later, he received a call from Rav Chaim's house. "The Rav said you should learn Meseches Kiddushin with a chavrusa. Everything will be fine. Bracha v'hatzlacha."

Well, here were clear instructions, directly from the gadol hador! Yitzchak finally saw a light at the end of the tunnel.

He went to the kollel down the street from his home, and asked the first avreich he saw if he could learn Kiddushin with him. The man looked at him strangely. "How am I supposed to do that, if I learn in kollel? There is a program here; I don't have time to learn a whole other Mesechta!"

He approached other people, who all said basically the same thing. Now Yitzchak felt his world fall in again. He was so close to a yeshuah, but without a chavrusa, there was no chance! In his desperation, he sat down in the Beis Midrash and davened to Hashem. As he

spoke to Hashem in his own words, an avreich nearby overheard him and felt sorry for him. He approached him and offered to learn with him. The avreich, Reb Yisroel Chaim, had just learned the Gemara in Shabbos (133) that a person should follow in Hashem's ways. "Just like He is merciful, so too you should be." He saw this as a Heaven-sent opportunity to fulfill the words of the Gemara.

Reb Yisroel Chaim offered to learn with Yitzchak in between studying for dayanus tests in Choshen Mishpat. And so they began. Whenever Yitzchak found time, he would head to the kollel, and they would learn together. The first time they learned was on the 26th of Kislev. They continued learning, day after day, and when they got to the fortieth daf, the yeshuah came! Yitzchak got engaged! Baruch Hashem, in Adar 5779 Yitzchok got married.

Before the chuppah, Yitzchok, overflowing with gratitude, blessed his chavrusa from the depths of his heart that Hashem should repay his kindness to him, and he should be blessed with more children. This Reb Yisroel Chaim had one child, a ten-year-old son, and doctors had told declared that he would never have more... They two chavrusos continued learning, moving towards the end of the eighty two **dapim** of Kiddushin, when Chanuka 5780 came along. It was the 26th of Kislev, exactly one year to the day from when they had started learning. R' Yisroel, surprisingly, hadn't shown up. Where could he be? He never missed kollel.

And then Yitzchok's phone rang. It was Yisroel. "I wanted you to be the first to know, because it was a result of your bracha – we just had a baby boy!" Eleven years after the doctors had declared that it was impossible, in the zechus of his chessed to another Jew and the power of a heart-felt bracha, R' Yisrael merited a Chanuka miracle!

Yitzchok hung up, crying from joy, and banged on the bimah, right then and there. When he had gotten everyone's attention, he announced, "Rabbosai, I want you all to know what just happened here, this past year. I came in here, looking for someone to learn with me, and nobody agreed. I know, it's very hard with your kollel learning and all. Only one person said yes – Reb Yisroel Chaim, and in the zechus of our learning I got married, and now he had a baby, after eleven years! Today, last year, was the day we started learning! Do you think he lost anything by giving of his time for another Yid?" One can only imagine the simcha in the kollel the next day, when R' Yisroel came back and made a Kiddush for everyone!

(From shiur 178 in Shaar Habitachon)

America for surgery. I didn't know a word of English, and my wife couldn't even come along with me, since we had just had a baby. My father came instead (but he didn't know English either).

We stayed by my brother, Reb Tzvi, who helped us in every way. He and his family took us to the doctors, translated everything they said, and made us feel very comfortable. Baruch Hashem, the surgery was successful, and we stayed there a little longer in order for me to recuperate.

Chanukah came, and Shabbos night, I really wanted to go to shul. I got dressed and slowly made my way down the steps – but discovered that it was too much for me. I felt far too weak to continue. I said "gam zu l'tovah" and went home.

A few minutes later I heard a sputtering sound from the next room. I got up to check – and was horrified to see one of the menorahs on fire! It was made of wood. I started screaming "FIRE!" and the rest of the family, who were in other parts of the house, came running in and put out the fire. The whole house was made of wood, so the fire could have destroyed everything, chas ve'shalom!

Later on we found out that I felt so weak because of a unit of blood I had mistakenly received. That "mistake" saved the whole family! Every year on this date my brother calls to thank me for saving them, and I thank him for helping me get better. We still argue about who did the bigger chessed!

What will Come, will Come

An avreich from Modiin Illit:

My great-grandfather started a yeshiva many years ago along with another man. As the years went by, the positions in the yeshiva were passed down to their sons and sons-in-law. When my grandfather passed away 26 years ago, we assumed the pattern would continue.

We were disappointed when it did not. No important positions were offered to my father and uncles. At most they became *meishivim*, but they got none of the main positions in the yeshiva. Friends urged us to do something about it. "It's coming to you! You should go to a din Torah and stand up for your rights," they said.

Noetheless, we ignored the advice of these well-meaning people and didn't say a word. It wasn't worth the problems, the politics and maybe the lashon horah and chillul Hashem it would cause. Who knew what an argument of this sort could do to the yeshiva? Yeshivas have closed as a result of *machlokes*!

This continued for many, many years.

Recently, for some reason, my relatives were suddenly appointed to major positions in the yeshiva. One became a Rosh Yeshiva, another started giving a shiur, and a third is now treasurer. They got what was coming to them, and without a fight!

So now we see what Hashem had in mind for them – they would have to wait more than twenty years to get their jobs. Imagine what would have happened if they had taken the advice of going to beis din! It would have been a messy affair, dragging on for twenty years, with who knows how much expense and damage to the yeshiva, their own reputation, the honor of Hashem and their families!

Picture a baal bitachon approaching them and telling them to just stop this unpleasant hishtadlus and leave it up to Hashem. Anyway, they will only get their positions if and when Hashem decides that they should! If they had already taken legal action, would they have listened to the voice of bitachon? Probably not. And of course, they would have only lost out.

They got exactly what they wanted, without fighting, complaining, bad feelings or ruined relationships. Just emunah!

(Thursday night, Parshas Vayishlach, 2)

Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

I had a good job for many years, and was able to set aside time to learn regularly. I lost the job, and my new job doesn't pay much, so I have many debts. Should I work more, although it would take away from my learning, or just trust in Hashem?

Q #11

A. N., Bnei Brak

What is Hashem's Will?

Reb Yosef Mimon from Tzfas: Bitachon in serving Hashem applies only when it's on "your time," not if it affects others. Imagine if people owed you money – how would you feel made no efforts to make the money? And, of course, set aside time for Torah also.

Reb Shmuel Ben-Tzion from Bnei Brak: It seems like Hashem's will in your situation is that you work on repaying your debts.

Reb Yosef Meir from Tifrach: If you look in Chovos Halevavos (Shaar Habitachon chapter 4) you'll see that as long as the hishtadlus isn't against halacha, you have to do it. If you follow his advice, I'm sure you'll have a lot of siyatta dishmaya and get out of this.

Reb Tzvi Arush from Yerushalayim: Even though it seems that you'll have to spend more time making money, you can get chizuk from the words of the Baal Ha'Tanya. Referring to Torah as the *meshal hakadmoni*, he explains that some people can reach levels of connection to Hashem in the short time they have available to them. It is possible that your situation places you in this category.

Reb Efraim Fishel Sofer from Yerushalayim: The answer depends on the person and the situation. You should ask the advice of someone who knows you and your spiritual level.

Reb Meir Yechiel Hamburger from Yerushalayim: A merchant once complained to Reb Nosson of Breslov that he doesn't have any time to learn Torah. Reb Nosson said to him that doing business with honesty is very lofty and can bring about tikkunim similar to those that came about from building the Mishkan! I think this relates to you too.

No One Loses Out from Listening to Hashem

Reb Shlomo Shimon Rotman from Beit Shemesh: It's clear that you will gain nothing from cutting out learning! The opposite – by making the effort to continue learning despite your challenges, you'll see yeshuos.

Yaakov Masban from Yerushalayim: You only gain from learning Torah. Many people do a lot of business and hardly cover their expenses, while avrechim live just fine on tiny stipends. If you learn, you will see blessing in your money.

Reb Yehoshua Haramati from Netanya: Rashi says at the end of Kiddushin that the reward for learning Torah is

given even when the person is old or sick and can't learn. So, strengthen your Torah-learning and ask Hashem for the money.

Shimon Bergman from Yerushalayim: The passuk says, "If not for My covenant of day and night, the laws of the heaven and earth I would not place." (Yirmiyah 33:25) Sefarim explain that learning Torah keeps the entire world going. I'm sure your learning will help you in your difficulty.

Reb Naftali Klein from Ofakim: You can't skip a mitzvah just because you have to make a living! This certainly applies to the mitzvah of learning Torah.

Trust in Hashem

Reb Dovid Leifer from Yerushalayim: Baruch Hashem, you are able to learn in addition to working. Remember that the hishtadlus for parnassah is not connected to the results. This is the time to strengthen your bitachon and continue all your learning sedarim. As the Chovos Halevavos writes: "Don't think that your parnassah is dependent on a particular means, and that if it would be withheld it wouldn't come in a different way!"

Yair Chaim Ribni from Beit Shemesh: Only you can answer this question. You have to know how strong your bitachon is. Do you sometimes worry about parnassah? This shows you're not on the level of bitachon to refrain from hishtadlus. If you don't have any worries, you could continue your learning schedule.

Reb Yechiel Dovidovitz from Beit Shemesh: I'll answer by paraphrasing the Beis Halevi in his *Kuntress Emunah U'Bitachon*: This is the way of the man who is straight – when he has some difficulty, or his sustenance is diminished, he doesn't increase his hishtadlus, but instead examines his deeds. If he finds something improper that could have caused it, he'll do teshuvah for it and daven to Hashem. He'll strengthen his heart and his bitachon, in the conviction that there is no one to turn to for help besides Hashem.

Question for next week

I listen to many shiurim on the line and got a lot of chizuk. Now I'm facing a challenge: Someone in my family is losing a lot of money through his job, yet continues at it. I depend on him for parnassah, and I'm very broken over it.

Ch. R., Yerushalayim

To send in questions or answers: Leave a message on the Hotline at 02-201-1300 menu 3 ext. 5 (Yiddish or Hebrew) | Email: s023011300@gmail.com | Fax: 02-659-9189 - Until Sunday Parashat Vayitza.

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

Many years ago I was a Rebbi in a cheder. It was my custom to write down my students' names and daven for the success of each one of them. At the end of one year, I was happy to see that all the boys had done well – except one. I couldn't understand why it had happened! Afterwards, I realized that this boy's mother had a very unusual name, and when I davened for him I didn't pronounce it correctly.

I heard from an *adam gadol* that to the degree that a person believes in the power of his tefillos, they will be accepted. If you believe that your tefillos for a person will work only if you pronounce the names correctly, they won't be accepted otherwise! If you think that the only way your tefillos will be heard is if you daven by the Kosel for forty straight days – then that's what you'll have to do!

These are deep secrets of Kabbalah... But Rav Yisroel Salanter used to say, every rule has an exception. This rule has an exception too!

The point is, your belief in the power of your tefillah gives it power. Yidden: believe in the power of your tefilla, daven to Hashem for

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

Believe in your prayer

everything! No tefilla goes to waste! You can talk in Yiddish, English, French – just believe in the power of your own words!

I know a lady who had three children who needed a shidduch. One was divorced, another was an older bochur with many challenges, and another son. It looked bleak.

But then, she simply davened for them! Within a few months, all three were married! She had such belief in her own tefilla that when someone invited her to go to Eretz Yisroel for a visit, she said she was busy marrying off her children – before it even happened!

A baal teshuvah once came crying to me that his son was in major legal trouble and going on trial. He was worried that his son would be sentenced to many years in jail, which would also cast shame on the family.

"Do you think the court will determine his fate?" I yelled at him. "Only Hashem does that! Daven to Hashem, and he'll be fine!"

You know what? He davened, and his son got off scot-free!

Effects on Two Ends

On the receiving end

I went through a very hard time, so I decided to take a vacation. Afterwards, I felt like I needed a vacation from the vacation! I realized that the best way to relax was to increase the amount of time I listen to Kav Hashgacha Pratis. It's the cheapest, best, most effective vacation!

G. A., Bnei Brak

Since I started distributing the pamphlet I saw yeshuos in many areas. An older bochur started helping me, and within two weeks he became a chosson!

T. M., Tzfas

On the giving end

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