

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshiyos Nitzavim 5781 ■ Issue 70

HEART TO HEART

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

Lower the Stress

“Another benefit -- minimal aggravation in one's business dealings. If one's merchandise does not sell, or if he is unable to collect his debts, or if he is struck by illness, because he knows that the Creator is in charge of his life and knows best what is good for him, as is written ‘Only to G-d should you hope, my soul, for my hope is from Him’ (Tehilim 62:6).”

[Duties of the Heart, Gate of Trust, fourth Gate, Introduction]

Rabbenu Bachaye does not promise that people with bitachon will have no problems. He does, however, promise that they will have less stress in business. When mistakes, misunderstandings, unforeseen circumstances, or Covid come up, a person's bitachon is put to the test. One who is still lacking bitachon will lose his cool, get upset, his blood pressure will shoot up, his self-esteem will pummel, and he will become depressed... because he has no tools with which to meet the challenge. On the other hand, one who learns to trust Hashem will be strengthened by his challenges.

Rabbenu Bachaye doesn't tell us to what extent the pressure lets up. There is no exact measurement, because it depends upon every person's particular level. The greater a person's level of bitachon, the less stress he will have.

Let's imagine a matzah distributor, who makes up his matzah shipment before Tu B'Shvat. Every pound of matza is loaded with sweat, work, worry, *hiddurim* – these are kosher l'Pesach *shmurah* matzah, destined for distribution across the United States. Thousands of pounds of matzah. But the shipment keeps getting delayed until it finally makes it to the port on the day after Pesach. Go sell *shmurah* matzah for Pesach Sheini...

True, bitachon didn't save him from loss, but if he learned about bitachon, his headache would be less. While the money and effort are lost, how much headache, blood pressure and anger he'll experience is up to him, and his level of bitachon.

The same is true when a businessman is a victim of theft. He will suffer less aggravation if his bitachon is in place. Likewise, if a person becomes sick, with bitachon he knows he is in the hands of the Greatest Doctor of all, and the emotional pain, worry and bewilderment subsides. Then his emotional state directly affects his body's immune system and ability to heal itself. When one reminds himself of Hashem's presence and ability to heal every person in every state, his body receives the power to heal. As Shlomo Hamelech says, “A man's spirit will sustain his illness.” (Mishlei 18:14)

When Rabbenu Bachaye lists the benefits of having bitachon he writes: “... **Because he knows that the Creator is in charge of his life and knows best what is good for him.**” Everyone wants a nice house, a nice car, and a good seat in shul where the temperature is optimal. Why? Because every person looks out for himself. A man knows what he needs, wants and dreams of, but Chovos Halevavos teaches us that our Father in Heaven knows better what is truly good, comfortable, and healthy for us. One who has faith in Hashem is calm when things don't work out the way he envisioned because “Hashem knows best!”

This is the life! Calm, relaxed, stress-free. Not becoming fazed by mishaps, mistakes, and last-minute changes. More bitachon, less stress.

(Quoted from lesson #22)

FROM THE EDITOR

Not Going to Sue

My friend told me his daughter was critically ill. She had gotten to the hospital in time, but the doctors had disagreed on some obscure point and then argued back and forth. Someone was offended and waited for an apology... they acted with total negligence, and instead of saving her life, they were busy with their pride. In the interim, the girl's situation deteriorated to the point that her life was in danger.

This man has no blame in his heart. He doesn't feel guilty – ‘why didn't I yell at them, why didn't I hurry them up? Why did they wait around, why didn't they check this or that?’ Nothing. He's not even threatening sue them for malpractice.

“How come you're not running to sue those doctors? Others in your situation would be tearing the hospital to pieces! Drowning in revenge, guilt, or anger! What's wrong with you?” they want to know.

But he tells them, “I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is the Creator and Guide of all the created beings, and that He alone has made, does make, and will make all things.”

Hashem runs the world; He alone does and can do everything. Man can do nothing without being directed to do so from Hashem, so whom to I have to sue?

A life of emunah is a calm, happy life. A life of faith and trust.

Good Shabbos
Pinchas Shefer

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

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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

Speak to the Boss

The first time I traveled to fundraise for my yeshiva was 35 years ago. As I was boarding the plane, I noticed that the great mashgiach, Reb Don Segal *shlita*, was boarding along with me. I decided that if I had the zechus to be traveling with such a great tzaddik I just had to get a bracha from him.

I told him it was my first time traveling for my yeshiva and I wanted a bracha for success. He told me the following:

“When Ester Hamalka approached Achashverosh, she placed herself in great danger. He could have killed her on the spot!

Then, when they sat together at the feast – she, Achashverosh and Haman, and Achashverosh asked, “Who is this and where is he, who dared to do this?” Esther answered: “An adversary and an enemy, this evil Haman!”

Rabi Elazar says (Megillah 16a) that Esther actually pointed at Achashverosh, but an angel pushed her hand to point at Haman.

How did Esther think of doing such a dangerous thing? With one misguided finger she was endangering herself and the entire Jewish nation!

The Gra explains that when tzaddikim spoke before a king, in their hearts and minds they were speaking to Hashem. Esther Hamalka, was physically speaking to Achashverosh, but in her spirit she was sitting and talking to Hashem. Achashverosh signed the decree, and when she heard the question, she pointed at the correct address. Hashem had to send an angel to save her and the Jewish people.

“So,” Reb Don Segal said, “should you. When you go in to speak to a Yid about your yeshiva, direct your words to Hashem. Tell Hashem how the yeshiva needs money so there should be Torah in the world. Don’t even think about the person sitting in front of you. Talk to Hashem, the donor is only listening in.”

Reb Don’s instructions followed me wherever I went. Every house I visited I knew I was going in to speak with Hashem, and the person there was just listening to my conversation.

It was my first fundraising trip, and I had no idea how to measure its success, but after telling the yeshiva how much I’d gotten, they were amazed and told me the trip was an astounding success. There were donors who gave four-figure sums. Nobody gave less than a hundred dollars.

At the end of the trip, I learned the lesson of a lifetime. A relative told me about a wealthy man he knew who used to stay with my grandfather in Hungary. He used to sleep at my grandfather’s house every night and even learned together with my uncle for a while. The man

often asked my brother about us and our family, and my brother suggested I go and try to get a donation from him. “He donates to many Jewish causes,” said my brother. “It’s worth the try.”

We drove together to the man’s estate, somewhere far out in the country.

Small Prayer results in Grand Salvation

When R’ Tzvi comes to visit Eretz Yisroel he rents himself a car and drives around the country. Mid-afternoon, Rosh Chodesh Tamuz 5781, he was driving towards Yerushalayim when he spotted a yeshiva boy standing at the bus stop waiting for the bus. R’ Tzvi pulled up.

“Where are you headed?”

“Yerushalayim.”

“Step right in.” R’ Tzvi pushed a few things to the back seat to make room for the boy.

The boy who got in seemed quite excited.

“Why are you going to Yerushalayim?”

“I’m on my way to the dentist.”

They continued talking, and R’ Tzvi learned that the boy’s wallet was empty. He had nothing with which to cover the travel expenses and was every excited to have been sent this ride. He still didn’t know how he would pay for the dentist because his parents were making a wedding next week and he didn’t have the heart to pile another expense on them. His father, a great talmid chacham who had just completed a work on emunah and bitachon, was a sickly man who couldn’t handle any stress, so all the family’s finances were taken care of by his mother and his brother-in-law.

His sister, the bride, was the 11th child in his family, and he, a twenty-year-old yeshiva bachur was the 12th out of 13 children. Before setting out for the dentist, he had prayed Minchah with a lot of kavanah, and when saying “Av Harachaman” he thought how Hashem is his father, and although he cannot ask his flesh-and-blood father for anything, he can ask his Father in Heaven for whatever he needs. After Minchah, he stayed in the Beis Medrash and said Tehilim with a lot of kavanah. Then he turned to Hashem and said: “Hashem, You know I am a strong twenty-year-old. I can work a little and earn the money I need for the dentist, and even buy myself some clothing. But I am a yeshiva bachur learning Your holy Torah, and I want to continue doing just that, nothing else. So, I ask of You, help me get to Yerushalayim, pay for the dentist, and buy something new for the wedding. I have nobody else to ask from, so I ask of You. Please, dear Father, help me.”

After fifteen minutes of Tehilim, the boy had gone to the bus stop, where R’ Tzvi had come along, and taken him to Yerushalayim in a comfortable, air-conditioned car. How thankful he was to Hashem!

The boy was in a talkative mood and told R’ Tzvi about his family. He told him how his older brother is involved in a halacha learning program that gave monthly tests, and how he teaches them all and they all know more halacha in his merit, what a great talmid chacham his brother was becoming and what a zechus it was to be his brother!

R’ Tzvi was touched. He realized that the organization the brother took part in was the same organization to which he gave large donations. Now he knew his money was doing really great things and it excited him. As the boy was getting out of the car, R’ Tzvi pulled a wad of bills out of his pocket. “This is for you. And please, I have a son just your age. He’s in shidduchim, and I see you’re a serious boy. Can we make a deal – you pray for him, and I’ll pray for you? Let’s exchange phone numbers and update each other with the good news when it comes, *be’ezras Hashem*.”

The boy agreed, and they exchanged phone numbers. Before they parted, the boy looked at the wad of cash in his hands and realize it would be enough to cover both the dentist and a new suit. Hashem had sent him everything he’d asked for. “Thank you,” he said to R’ Tzvi, and the two parted ways.

R’ Tzvi, who enjoyed hearing about the young budding talmid chacham who was growing thanks to his donations, dialed Rabbi Hillel Rothman, the head of the organization. He told him about the interesting boy he’d just met and how he gave him everything he had prayed for. Reb Hillel saw the greater picture. “R’ Tzvi, it’s very nice that you gave him some cash, but your job isn’t over. You think you did a chessed with the boy, buy the real chessed was what he did for you – he chose to get into *your* car and give *you* the *zechus* of hachnassas kalla! That family really needs your help!”

R’ Tzvi agreed. “Find out the details and I’ll give them whatever they need,” he told R’ Hillel.

R’ Tzvi gave R’ Hillel the name of the yeshiva the young boy learned in, and it turned out that it was the very same yeshiva in which R’ Hillel himself had learned thirty years beforehand. Two hours and several phone calls later, R’ Hillel had the number of the brother-in-law who was in charge of the family’s

finances.

"Just last night I sat with my mother-in-law and calculated exactly how much they needed for the wedding. It came out to 25,000 shekels." He gave R' Hillel the number of his in-law's bank account.

R' Hillel dialed R' Tzvi. "They need 8K right now, but I think you should give 10. You know, the wedding is just the beginning. There's sheva brachos, and extras that people tend to forget." R' Tzvi heard 'eight' and donated just that. That evening, there were 25,600 NIS in the family's bank account.

In the next few days, R' Hillel spoke with another donor and described the hashgacha pratis the family had seen. "Such great mitzva!" The donor exclaimed, "I also want to be part of it." He decided to donate the last \$2000 for the wedding.

On Tuesday, the day after the wedding, R' Hillel called the brother-in-law. "Please come in when you have a chance, I have \$2000 here waiting for you." The young man couldn't contain his amazement. "This is unbelievable! Just a few minutes ago I was sitting with my mother-in-law going over the bills and we found 6500 NIS that hadn't been accounted for. My mother-in-law was calm about it. 'Hashem Who sent the money to cover the wedding will send us this too,' she said. And now you called. Amazing! \$2000 is exactly 6500 NIS!"

It all started with a young boy who withstood the temptation to leave yeshiva and make a few shekels. Instead of going to work in a store, he worked on the mitzva of bitachon and continued learning Torah. And what did he ask Hashem? Only for his immediate needs – the dentist; a ride; clothing. But in merit of his strength, his entire family merited a yeshua, and many people earned mitzvos on the way.

Within the Hour

A Yid from Teveria writes in:

In business, money is not the only form of payment – you sometimes make a deal where each partner does what he knows how to do, and together – both of you earn profit.

One day I made such a deal. I signed that I would do what I knew how to do best; he would do what was in his area of expertise and together, we would both profit. Or so I thought.

The first part of the deal was mine. I did everything I could. I gave many hours to the project, ran around and took care of everything. Now, it was his turn.

At this point things started schlepping. He did a lot less than what we agreed he would do, and I was at a loss. I called him once and twice, but he didn't answer my phone calls. They just went through to voicemail where I left one frantic message after another, but he never bothered calling me back. I was on the verge of collapse. This was getting to be too much for me.

Two weeks went by, with me calling him again and again. After two weeks of this, on Thursday afternoon, he finally answered. He claimed he had already done his part and didn't owe me anything. As to my feeling that he really hadn't done enough, well, that was my problem. With that, he hung up the phone.

I felt cheated. The deal was so clear, all the details had been spelled out. I had done everything, and he'd just started, leaving before anything started moving. I tried strengthening myself. Hashem is in charge; He is the address for my grievances; everything He does is for the best. I said *Mizmor Lesodah*.

On Monday morning, I told myself I would give it one last try. I picked up the phone and dialed, but the call went to voicemail. There was nothing else for me to do. All I had left now was to work on my bitachon. Again, I said *Mizmor Lesodah*.

I called the Hashgacha Pratis hotline and listened to a story about someone whose partner tricked him. An *adam gadol* told him that the first thing he had to do was to give his emunah room to grow. "For two full weeks you need to be quiet about this and work on your emunah." And that was what the person did. He spent two full weeks saying he first Ani Ma'amin: "I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is the Creator and Guide of all the created beings, and that He alone has made, does make, and will make all things."

I took the message to heart and decided to do the same. "If Hashem gave me this nisayon, it means I can withstand it. Now I only have to work on my emunah."

A few hours later I get a phone call from my father. Just two weeks earlier, I had told him about the deal, and he wanted to know how it was going.

"Did you settle the issue with your partner?" he asked.

"Not yet."

"I am standing now on the street near his office. I'm going in to talk to him."

I have no idea what my father said to him, but within one hour everything was taken care of. He did not only what he'd promised to do, but much more than I could ever imagine. I earned much more than I dreamed I would earn from this deal.

I let go and allowed Hashem to run the show. And that's what He did, much better than anything I could have done.

He welcomed us happily and sat with us for two hours reminiscing about Hungary, how welcoming my grandfather was to him, and how he loved my grandmother's food. While sitting with him I completely forgot about Reb Don's instructions – I was sure that here I could get a donation of my own accord. I told him about the yeshiva I was fundraising for and what great work they were doing, feeling all the while that I was doing something great here. The man duly nodded at my words, pulled out his checkbook, and wrote out a check for... eighteen dollars.

I had thought I was talking to the man, and that was what I got. Thank You, Hashem for teaching me the most valuable lesson of my life.

The Discharge

My wife's grandmother had been in the hospital for a while. When it was finally time for her to go home and she was all packed up, the discharge papers seemed to be getting held up. She called the nurses, but they were busy. She asked for a doctor, but the interns told her the doctors were all tending emergency cases. And the time went by.

My wife's grandmother is an elderly woman, and as she sat there, the hours ticking by, she got more and more agitated. She felt displaced, unable to go, but with nowhere to stay. When my wife called her, she sounded like she was about to break down in tears.

My wife was distraught. Who could she speak to? She could try the doctors, the head of the department, the medical advocate... but why go to the middlemen when you can go to the top? She sat down on the couch and spoke to Hashem from the bottom of her heart asking Hashem to help her grandmother, so she'd be able to go home.

Not one hour passed and her grandmother was again on the line. This time, she sounded relieved. "I'm home already!" she exclaimed. The dilly-dallying had all ended in one minute. Suddenly all her papers were in order and she just walked out of the hospital.

Look What I Found!

My name is Tal and I live in Ramat Hasharon. I learn in Kollel a whole day and my wife stays at home to take care of our children. This summer, my eleven-year-old wanted to go on a trip but we didn't have the necessary funds for travel. I have a car, but I didn't have money for gas.

When my daughter saw the day was passing and we were going nowhere, she went into her room and prayed that we'd be able to go on a trip. As soon as she finished praying, she stepped out of the house and walked down to the mailbox. And there was an envelope with 800 shekels!

"Abba, look what I found!" she exclaimed, running in. I saw it was an envelope we occasionally receive with donations and thought it was an old envelope. The man usually calls whenever he puts money in our mailbox. Since he hadn't called, I assumed it was an old empty envelope.

I took the envelope from her and saw it was new, and there was money inside! I called the man up and he told me he had forgotten to call.

No prayer goes unanswered, and some – are answered on the spot.

Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

When shopping, I always ask vendors for a discount. Lately, I've been thinking that this might be a lack of bitachon, because everything I'm destined to receive will come to me in any case. On the other hand, many stores quote a high price, anticipating that they will give discounts to those who request them. How should I conduct myself? L.S., Q #24

Avoid asking for Discounts

Rabbi Aharon Beifus from Rechasim: Bitachon is a constantly growing process. Perhaps your recently raised awareness is a sign of your gradually advancing level of bitachon. While in the past, asking for a discount was appropriate for you, at your new level it may be unfitting. I'm glad to hear you've advanced this far!

Rabbi Nachman Goldberg and Rabbi Ben Tzion Rubin from Yerushalayim: if one has unwavering bitachon he won't ask for a discount. He who gave you ninety shekels can give you a hundred as well. Hashem feeds and sustains everyone; He doesn't need discounts, especially not at the storeowner's expense. Even where asking for a discount is expected, such as, for example, when the item is overpriced, one should ask for it pleasantly rather than demand it.

Rabbi Yitzchak Sirota from Beit Shemesh: At times, serious halachic issues of theft and *oshek* can arise from asking for a discount. The Chofetz Chaim writes in Kuntress Sefas Tamim (chapter 5): "Often, after a workman has done work the homeowner argues with him regarding payment... deducting even one small coin from his wages renders the employer a "gazlan and *oshek schar sacht*"... and one who wants to come clean of this matter must always pay his employee whatever he asks for, or decide on the wages in advance."

Rabbi Shimon Eichenstein from Beit Shemesh: When paying for something related to a mitzvah, one should be careful not to argue about the price. This is also relevant when buying items in honor of Shabbos. We are told that when the Arizal was shopping for something to be used for a mitzvah, he would place a pile of coins in front of the vendor and tell him to take whatever he wanted.

Rabbi Dov Klein from Beit Shemesh and Rabbi Yisroel Lev from Modiin Illit: Even if asking for a discount does not stem from a flaw in bitachon, it is improper, because whatever you gain would probably not be too large a sum.

Rabbi Ben Tzion Genzler from Ramat Vznitz, Haifa, and Rabbi Eliezer Lev from Modiin Illit: The gedolim view such behavior as a lack of bitachon. Yosef Hatzaddik was punished for reminding the

Sar Hamashkim twice to present his case before Pharaoh. Had he asked only once, he would not have been punished at all. One should find a better profession than bargain hunting...

Asking for a Discount is Permissible

Rabbi Yehuda Gvartzman from Beit Shemesh: I suggest that before you make a purchase you should shop around and compare prices, especially if you find yourself asking for discounts because you really cannot afford to pay full price. However, in general, I see it as a defect in bitachon.

Rabbi Chayim Hagar from Beit Shemesh: Before we ask people for something, we must first ask Hashem for it. In this case, we must know that we are dependent on Hashem; if He so wishes, we will receive a discount, and if not, then we will not receive it.

Rabbi Dovid Leifer from Yerushalayim, and Rabbi Azreil Green from Bnei Brak: Asking for a discount shows no defect in one's bitachon. It is just like going to work. However, the request should be made in a pleasant manner. At times, the owner is glad to give a discount, knowing that he is earning a happy customer, and then both sides come away happy.

Rabbi Yitzchok Shapira from Ashdod: When the seller overcharges, it is right and proper to argue about the price. There is a lot of halachic discussion on the matter of overcharging.

Proof

Rabbi Yehoshua Levi, Yerushalayim: The Rambam (Hichos De'aos 5:13): "A Torah Sage [should conduct] his business dealings with honesty and good faith...[he] yields to others when he buys from them, but is not demanding [about what they owe him]." Arguing about a price is really not proper conduct for talmidei chachamim. If others wish to argue about the price, they must do so in a pleasant manner.

Question for next week

What is the correct approach to the various health insurance plans? Should one purchase a better plan as hishtadlus, or should he refrain from the effort as an expression of his bitachon in Hashem?

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 Nitzavim

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

Anger is difficult to overcome. Many people go for lessons or therapy for anger management. But I have a great trick that involves taking on two kabbalos for thirty days. The first is to learn every day for a full half hour about the downsides of anger. And the second: not to say a word for the first sixty seconds after walking through the door. After one full minute, you can say anything you want. That minute carries a lot of power, and after thirty days of this, anyone prone to anger will notice an improvement.

Some people excuse themselves for their anger by claiming to have holy motives. "I only yell at them for positive reasons, to teach them how to behave." Yelling, however, is a sign of

Excerpts from the popular shiur by Harav Yehuda Mandel shlit"a from Lakewood
Sixty Seconds of Light

weakness, a loss of control. Young children who see this kind of behavior, besides for their trauma and emotional pain, learn that they, too, do not have to exercise self-control. Many Gedolei Yisroel had boiling tempers. Reb Gershon Liebman, Reb Nosson Wachfogel, and Reb Aharon Kotler all had very stormy temperaments. They reigned in their energies, however, until they ruled over their anger, rather than the opposite. They succeeded to the extent that Reb Aharon Kotler's wife would wonder why he doesn't answer people who put him down -- *she* couldn't tolerate it. Once, in the middle of a speech, someone got up and insulted him in front of the entire crowd, but he answered him calmly.

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

You, too, can be a partner in spreading emunah throughout the world, and merit the Zohar's promise of "children and grandchildren who are G-d-fearing and upright!"

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