

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Parshs Ki Tavo 5783 ■ Issue 121

HEART TO HEART

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

Don't Eat Your Heart Out

How pleasant it is to trust in the Creator of the world. Everything is in His blessed Hands. He made everything. He inflicts injury and He bandages; He crushes, and His Hands loosen (*Iyov* 5:18); He makes people poor and He makes people rich; he lowers people and raises them up (*Shmuel* 12:7). He sends His messengers and arranges our entire lives for us, from the huge, monumental matters to the smallest details; and so, we need not do anything.

It is not difficult at all to remain calm, as King Chizkiyahu said, "I will sleep in my bed and You will act" (*Eichah Rabbah* 4:15).

Indeed, King Chizkiyahu said this at a time when *Am Yisrael* was facing a great threat. Sancheiriv and his huge army were making their way to Yerushalayim in order to capture it, and King Chizkiyahu trusted in Hashem so completely that he chose to do nothing at all.

On a practical level, however, we should follow the path of Dovid Hamelech, for while he said, "Hashem is my rock and my fortress...I will place my trust in Him (*Tehillim* 18:3), he also said, "I will pursue my enemies and I will overtake them" (*ibid.*, v. 38). Dovid Hamelech went out to war, but at the same time he always bore in mind that "He is the One Who gives you the power to succeed." (*Devarim* 8:18) and that he would succeed only if that was Hashem's decree. This attitude requires much wisdom, as Rabbenu Bachyai instructs us in the beginning of chapter 4: "Despite the fact that a person may solidify his faith to know that he is totally dependent on Hashem's decrees, and that whatever Hashem chooses for him is the best, he is still obligated to do *hishtadlus*."

We cannot ignore the obligation to do *hishtadlus*. Rabbenu Bachyai uses the term "obligated" – not only is it proper and correct to do *hishtadlus*, but we are obligated to do so, and we cannot disregard the decree that one must act in order to see results. There are varying degrees of how much *hishtadlus* one has to do – for some people a small amount of *hishtadlus* is enough, while others need to work more.

When Rebbetzin Sonnenfeld begged Hashem tearfully to send them *parmassah*, as they were penniless, her husband, the *rav* of Yerushalayim, the *gaon* Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld *zt"l*, went out to do *hishtadlus*: He walked some distance through the alleyways of the Old City of Yerushalayim and found two gold coins on the ground. The halachah states that a person is allowed to keep for himself an item that was obviously lost by a Gentile.

For a great tzaddik like him, this *hishtadlus* was enough. Each person, according to his level and his task and mission in this world, has to engage in the actions that will bring about the results he hopes to see.

We need to use the intelligence and the wisdom

that Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave us, and to choose the proper way to act in every matter; to do things that are logical, to seek advice, to find out what needs to be done, to consult an expert – to get up and do. *Bitachon* does not mean laziness or disinterest. We need to do what is expected of us in the world. At the same time, however, we need to remember at every point, from beginning to end, that Hashem will do what *He* has decreed. We should pay attention to the fact that Rabbenu says, "He is obligated *lehigalgel*" – to take the steps necessary for *hishtadlus*, but he did not say "*legalgel*" – to do *hishtadlus*, because all the steps a person needs to take in order to reach his goal will also depend on the Creator of the world, the One Who brings about all circumstances and all forms of *hishtadlus* that one will take. Rather than leading the way, we are being led at all times. And yet, we are obligated to make choices and to do what we have to do; we must not shirk this obligation.

This understanding brings a great deal of serenity to the soul. For example, Naftali thought that certain actions would bring him success. He worked and toiled but in the end he failed. Reuven takes a taxi for what should be a ten-minute ride. The taxi gets stuck in traffic, and the meter does its job for over half an hour. Shimon bought a new suit, and afterward he discovered it didn't fit him well. He could have been angry at himself, at the tailor, or at the advertisements, but when a person believes that Hashem will do that which He has decreed, he is calm. Yaakov prepares a cup of coffee for himself – or, even more disconcerting, for his friend – and puts in salt instead of sugar. He did all the *hishtadlus* to prepare something sweet, but instead he served his friend bitterness. How much pain and *ogmas nefesh* do we spare ourselves when we know that it is Hashem's decree. If you ate something that wasn't fresh or that didn't taste right, don't eat yourself as well! If you broke something, don't break your heart as well! It happened according to Hashem's decree, and it was for our good. If my Creator is satisfied with me, then certainly I can be satisfied as well.

The above examples represent just a tiny portion of all of our actions. Most of the actions we take – almost 100 percent of them – achieve the desired results. There is hot and cold water; when we cook the food and spice it the way we choose, it tastes good; when we travel, once we arrive, we sleep, and we wake up refreshed. Most of our actions bring about the desired results, *b'chasdei Shamayim*, and these – just like the actions that did not succeed – are all in accordance with the decree of the Creator *yisbarach*. *Hodu lo, barchu Shemo, ki tov Hashem l'olam chasdo!*

from *shiur* 86 in *Shaar Habitachon*. To hear the *shiur*, (–) press 4 after choosing a language; or dial directly: (02-301-1904)

FROM THE EDITOR

Spiritual Insurance: There Is Such a Thing

What can we do? This is the question asked by fathers and mothers who care passionately about their children's *chinuch*. They lose sleep worrying about their children. They are pained at the sight of *bachurim* and young girls who have fallen into spiritual captivity and have left the true path. Who can express the depth of the anguish of devoted parents who raised their beloved children with sweat and tears, only to watch as their souls wallow helplessly in the mud?

Do you think that children going off the *derech* is a new phenomenon? Seventy years ago, the situation was not much better. Those were difficult, bitter days after the destruction of European Jewry. The survivors gathered the shards of their lives, buried their horrendous memories deeply, and established a new generation. Perhaps they hoped that peaceful days had come, but then they faced a terrible new *tzarah*. The winds of Zionism struck a fatal blow to the youth. So many young girls and boys left the *derech* that people of the past generation testify that of entire classes of Talmudei Torah and girls' schools, only two or three students remained *frum*.

The parents stood by helplessly. How do you prevent this kind of *tzarah*? How can you immunize children so that they will not be lured away?

Rav Dovid Kletzkina *shlit"l* (*shiur* 226) relates that at that time the *gaon* Rav Moshe Yehoshua Landau *zt"l*, who was among those who were closest to the Chazon Ish, lived in Yerushalayim. He would travel to Bnei Brak once every two weeks and present to the Chazon Ish all the questions that had accumulated over time.

As Rav Kletzkina heard from the *gaon* Rav Meir Greineman *shlit"l*: "I was in the room of the *gadol hador*, the Chazon Ish, when Reb Moshe Yehoshua *zt"l* brought with him the tears of the people of Yerushalayim, who were pleading for an answer regarding how to safeguard the souls of their children. How could they ensure that they would follow the proper path? What did they need to strengthen? The Chazon Ish was silent for some time."

Reb Dovid adds: We would think the Chazon Ish would respond that they should learn more *sifrei mussar*, be more careful with halachos, spend more time learning Torah, and so on, but this was not his approach.

"Finally," Reb Meir *shlit"l* continued, "the Chazon Ish answered: Reflect on and strengthen *emunah* in *hashgachah pratis*. This will hold up the generation; this will hold on to the children."

Every parent wants this insurance.

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THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

Two Shekels and Ten Agurot

I'm rather embarrassed to tell my story. Usually, the *bachurim* who speak here are *tzaddikim*; they speak about acts of *hisgabrus* or about their scrupulousness in keeping halachah. Most likely they are not really excited to talk about themselves, but the knowledge that there is *zikui harabbim* in doing so gives them the courage to contribute their story and thus to bring another *Yid* closer to Hashem.

But what I want to tell you about is not necessarily pleasant, because I'm not going to tell you about a good deed, but the opposite. Specifically now, during days of *teshuvah*, when Jews everywhere are examining their deeds, one can take *chizuk* from it and know that Hakadosh Baruch Hu always helps us do good, if we only will it.

In Adar, close to Purim, I went out with friends to collect money for the *Tomchei Torah* fund in my yeshivah. At the end of our rounds, we had collected 102 shekels and 10 agurot. It was decided that I would be the one to give the money over to the *Tomchei Torah* fund, and I took the money.

In my yeshivah we don't take percentages on the *tzedakah* we collect. All the money is given directly to the *Tomchei Torah* fund. In order to encourage the *bachurim*, they give some sort of gift, but not money. I decided on my own, however, that nothing would happen if I'd give the yeshivah 100 shekels and take the 2 shekels and 10 agurot for myself to buy a cup of coffee at the yeshivah's coffee corner. That's what I thought, and that's what I did, and I went to sleep that night without any pangs of conscience.

In the morning, after davening Shacharis, I went back to my dorm room to check my amplifier system. With Purim on the way, the amplifier was an extremely important piece of equipment. I plugged it in, pressed the buttons, tried speaking on it, and discovered that it was completely useless. The microphone was broken, and there was nothing to do but get rid of it, the sooner the better.

What do you think would be the quickest way to get rid of a broken electronic device? If you thought of taking the amplifier to the closest garbage can, you're mistaken. There is a quicker way, and that is to throw it out the window. That's right – there I was, on the fourth floor of the yeshivah dorm. I lifted the amplifier with all my strength, and within a few seconds it had landed on the sidewalk below, completely shattered.

The problem was that it was not only the amplifier that broke apart. It smashed right onto the roof of a car.

What stupidity! The quick way I had chosen was in fact the much slower, more painful way. I went downstairs to check the condition of the car and discovered that I had caused a lot of damage. I was very upset. I had absolutely not meant to do this to anyone.

Miracles in Beit Shemesh

Rav Neta Slonim *shlit"a* told an amazing story that took place in Beit Shemesh: Behind Ben Ish Chai street, the municipality paved a pathway. Originally, it was intended to allow emergency vehicles access to the backs of the buildings on that street, as the buildings are built on a mountain, and there are five stories between the front and back entrances. From the ground floor of one of the buildings, a woman and her children emerged to breathe some fresh air on that lovely pathway, where one could view a forest full of trees, alongside fields. The children and their mother looked forward to a pleasant experience outdoors. They took a few steps, and suddenly, *help!* Heavy wooden boards were falling onto the sidewalk, one after another. The neighbor directly above the path had tied his sukkah boards to his porch using plastic zip ties. The sun scorched them, and they became gradually weaker until, precisely at that moment, they tore completely and the boards fell onto the sidewalk with a mighty thud.

Terrified, the mother closed her eyes. Moments later, when she opened them, she saw that her dear children were all safe and sound. The boards had landed in between them, as if they were puzzle pieces moving into place, and the children stood among the boards unscathed! Frightened and shocked, they thanked Hakadosh Baruch Hu from the depths of their hearts for their miraculous salvation. They returned home to recover from the near-tragedy, and they didn't leave their home until the next morning.

This was not the end of the story. The next morning, the father of this family went outside and saw that one of the boards had fallen into his yard. When he picked up the board in order to put it outside, he discovered a large poisonous snake. The snake had been smashed under the board and killed on the spot.

The snake died from the force of the board that fell from six stories up. This occurred at 1 p.m., when the snake was moving in the yard. If the board hadn't fallen at that moment, who knows what would have happened? The snake could easily have entered the house and endangered the entire family. A great tragedy was averted. One miracle led to another, and we can never thank Hashem enough for the miracles and the wonders of the Creator of all worlds.

Seventeen Voice Messages

I have a machine for selling drinks, cans, and small bottles. The machine is centrally located, and *baruch Hashem*, it is available to passersby so they can quench their thirst while filling my pockets; it is a kosher *parnassah* for me.

I have a *kvius*: Every day there are three hours of *limud haTorah*, during which I only, *only* sit and learn. My cell phone is turned off and I cannot be reached. During this time I forget about the whole world and am *zocheh* to learn without any disturbance.

One day after I completed my learning, I turned on my cell phone and discovered 17 voice messages. Starting with the first message, I heard the voice of my friend, who sounded very tense: "Listen, your soda machine was tampered with, all the cans were taken, and the money was taken too. Come quickly."

The following message: "The police are there. Come quickly."

Next message: "Nu, what's with you?"

Later: "You're not answering and you're not coming, so I'm going instead of you."

This dear good-hearted friend and *baal chessed* tried to reach me 17 times, and each time he reported on developments. In the end the thief was caught, along with the cans and the money, and everything was returned to its place. The final message was: "Everything is okay. You can relax." When I came to the location where the soda machine was, everything was already completely organized, with not a trace of all the chaos that had hit this place just a short time earlier.

I saw tangibly how "He who accepts upon himself the yoke of Torah is freed from the yokes of *malchus* and *derech erez*." I also avoided the experience of fear and *ogmas nefesh* and the whole storm of emotions that such an incident could cause, not to mention dealing with the police and everything related to it. Everything that was stolen was returned to me, and those priceless hours of *limud haTorah* are preserved forever.

Yasher koach to my dear friend, the good messenger who was sent to me by Hashem *yis-barach*.

Exactly on Time

I was in Beit Shemesh on Shabbos *Parshas Eikev*. When the time came for *krias haTorah*, great excitement swept through the crowd: They were going to read from a brand-new *sefer Torah*! In its honor they had made a *hachnasas sefer Torah* that very week. When they bought the *sefer* to the *bimah*, the *mispallelim* danced around it. Everyone sang and waited in anticipation for the great moment when the one who received the *aliyah* would say the *brachah* of "*asher bachar banu mikol ha'amim*...."

The *baal korei* rolled open the *sefer*, but he could not find the first words of the *parshah*, "*V'hayah eikev*." He was searching and looking, and several *mispallelim* got up to help him, but they could not solve the problem. Where had the *pesukim* in the beginning of that *parshah*

disappeared to?!

Every *sefer Torah* is made of *yerios* that are sewn together, and it now appeared that a mistake had been made in the sewing of the *yerios*. The parchment containing the beginning of *Parshas Eikev* was mistakenly placed after *Parshas Shoftim*, so the *parshiyos Eikev, Re'eh and Shoftim* were out of order. From *Ki Seitzei* onward, the order was correct until the end. The beginning of the *sefer* was *mehudar* as well and was perfectly fine all the way up to *Parshas Re'eh*.

Such a *sefer Torah* is not fit for use! Only once they would fix the mistake and rearrange the *yerios* could they read from it. And if they had read from it, the person who was called up to the Torah would have made a *brachah l'vatalah*.

We stood there, all the regular *mispallelim* and the guests who happened to be there, amazed at the incredible *hashgachah pratis*. What would have happened if the *hachnasas sefer Torah* had taken place a few weeks later? What would have happened if they hadn't taken out the *sefer Torah* on this Shabbos and discovered the error? They might have read from the Torah each week for a full year in a *sefer Torah* that was *pasul*, from the Shabbos of *Parshas Ki Seitzei* until the Shabbos of *Va'eschanan* of the following year! Hashem saved an entire *kehillah* from many *brachos l'vatalah* and from failing to fulfill the mitzvah of reading from the Torah.

Everything took place with great *rachamim*. The *sofer Stam* and the donors did not have any more *ogmas nefesh* than the fact that on the first Shabbos after it was donated to the shul, they were not able to read from it. This is exactly as is written in the *parshah* itself: "Hashem decided not to destroy you." How great is Hashem!

Against All Odds

My name is Avraham, and I live in one of the Southern settlements. My son was traveling with a friend, and on the way back he discovered that his suitcase was not on the bus. Apparently, it had been stolen. The suitcase contained very expensive and very important items, such as a cell-phone, an I.D. card, and a wallet containing a sum of money. My son came home upset, thinking the situation was hopeless. He started talking about getting a new I.D. card and about the loss of the money as though it was a done deal, but I did not agree to join his sour mood. "Why think the bag is lost forever?" I asked him. "Believe that Hakadosh Baruch Hu can return it to you!"

Then Shabbos came, and throughout the day we spoke words of emunah. Again and again I spoke to my son about how the Creator of the world is omnipotent. He returns lost objects to their owners, and he is the Master of all deeds. "Think positive," I asked of him, although logically speaking, the chances that the items would be returned to him were slim; the way the bags had disappeared seemed to indicate that someone had stolen them, and if the thief wanted valuable items, why would he regret stealing them and decide to return them? The reason is that no one can help or harm anyone else if it is not the will of the Creator. Everything is in His Hands, and with emunah and tefillah we can influence the outcome.

"You know, even a simple thought can have an influence," I told my son. "Thoughts come from a high place. Let us hold on to the thought of emunah and not despair."

On Motzaei Shabbos after Maariv my daughter came running over to me and said, "They called to say they found the bag! They discovered it at the junction near Be'er Sheva, with everything inside it. Someone must have pulled it out of the luggage compartment and left it there. You have to go to the police station to take it."

Finding the suitcase was just a small part of this whole episode. I feel fortunate that we found the good thought and the emunah. How fortunate are we that we belong to a nation geared to think positively! "And he believed in Hashem – and Hashem considered him righteous."

An Incredible Statistic

In the yeshiva ketanah where I am a rebbi, we launched an innovative new program this past year. During third seder, bachurim of all ages and levels learned a seemingly easy maseches independently b'chavrusa. Every young bachur is paired with an older one as a chavrusa, and we've seen, baruch Hashem, that this works out beautifully for both the younger bachurim and the older ones.

When the time came to register for yeshiva gedolah, we saw something incredible: Every bachur who learned throughout the year with a younger bachur whose abilities were weaker than his – over 50 percent of all those who completed shiur gimmel – immediately received a positive response from whichever yeshiva gedolah he had applied to.

Generally, when the time comes to register in yeshiva gedolah, we are prepared to deal with disappointments. We know how often bachurim are not accepted to the yeshivos of their choice, and we have to help them find other suitable yeshivos. We know the process, which includes a lot of pain and ogmas nefesh. This was the first time that so many bachurim were accepted, smoothly and quickly, within a few hours after they had passed the entrance exams for yeshiva gedolah.

Each of these bachurim had taken upon himself to invest in a younger bachur and to dedicate time and koach to him. Often, it seemed that it was on the account of his own personal advancement, but l'maaseh, these older bachurim only gained. When I told the bachurim who are currently entering shiur gimmel about this discovery, they asked that they too be given the opportunity to give of their time and energies to younger bachurim. They understood that this is a type of segulah: If you learn with a weaker bachur, you will easily be accepted to yeshiva gedolah.

I felt that it was very important to publicize this story, so that bachurim will know that one only gains from giving. I don't think this is a matter of a segulah alone. The mitzvah of chessed opens many doors, and there are also great benefits to the older bachur who invests in the younger one. He builds his middos, practices the art of explaining and directing, and acquires wonderful abilities that will stand by him as he continues on his path, to rise onward and upward, with Hashem's help.

I have no interest in smashing cars. I am generally a very gentle *bachur*, never in my life have I done such a wild prank. Who knew how much damage I had actually caused! And obviously, I was obligated to pay; this could be considered criminal negligence.

I grabbed a pen and paper, wrote my name and a phone number where I could be reached, and wrote that I had damaged the car and would like to pay for the repair. I attached the note to the car, and with a heavy heart, I went up to learn in the yeshivah.

That afternoon, a tzaddik of a Yid called and told me, "I am the owner of the car you damaged. It's a new car that I bought only two months ago. Come with me to the appraiser, and let's hear the cost of the damage."

I went with him, and I heard firsthand that the repair was liable to cost between 20- and 30 thousand shekels.

I am a young *bachur*. Where in the world would I find such a sum?! I was embarrassed to call my parents and ask for their help. What could I do?!

What does a Yid do? He turns to Hakadosh Baruch Hu. I asked His forgiveness for my reckless act, and after Minchah I tried to think what it was that Hashem wanted from me. Then I recalled that on the previous day I had collected *tzedakah* money for the *Tomchei Torah* fund, and I had taken 2 shekels and 10 agurot for my own personal use. I considered the facts, and with much shame I confessed and said to myself: I stole *tzedakah* money! Hakadosh Baruch Hu in His great mercy aroused me to do *teshuvah*, and I would have to rectify my act.

I took a bit of money from the pocket money that I had, returned the stolen money, added a few shekels as a donation, and davened that Hashem would help me.

An hour and a half later, the owner of the car called and asked me to come with him to his office. When we got there he said, "Look, I thought about this story again. I see you are a good *bachur* who is learning well in an excellent yeshivah. If you had to collect money now – tens of thousands of shekels – you'd neglect your learning, and I don't want that to happen, *chalilah*. I decided to forgive the debt for the damage you caused – but that is on condition that you publicize what happened in your yeshivah, and hang a sign with a picture of the smashed car, so that everyone will see what happens when you throw a heavy object out the window. Your friends should learn that we don't throw things out the window, and in general, they should be careful not to get swept into acting irresponsibly."

I did not know how to thank him. For the sake of the Torah of a *bachur* whom he didn't even know, he had given up on tens of thousands of shekels! I have tremendous *hakaras hatov* to him, and I thank Hakadosh Baruch Hu, Who put in his heart the thought to forgive me. I saw that this *yeshuah* came only after I examined my actions and did *teshuvah*.

I learned the lesson well: not to touch money that is not mine! To be careful not to cause harm! *Din prutah K'din me'ah*, and ever since that day I have been very careful with my money, making sure not to take anything that doesn't belong to me.

See how Hakadosh Baruch Hu helps those who do *teshuvah*!

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הבית

מאמר לאמא
שרוצה יותר

הומור
בצד

לראות
אמונה
בעיניים

ראיון
שנות כח

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הצטרפו גם אתם התקשרו עוד היום ל-

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Q's & A's

Q's & A's about emunah and bitachon

The words of our Sages are well-known: "Who is rich? One who is happy with his lot." While it's true that everyone says "Be happy," my question is: How do you truly come to be happy with what you have? How can we succeed in being happy and satisfied even with our small, limited portion?

Q #71 —A.R. from Bnei Brak

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

With Joy, Emunah, and Bitachon

Rav Ze'ev Aryeh Shteiglitz from Bnei Brak, Rav Nosson Halevi from Beitar Illit: The questioner thinks he isn't happy because his portion is a small one, but that is not correct. He won't be happy even if he has more, because it is his nature to think sad thoughts. The solution is for him to recall all the good that Hashem has done for him, and to see what he has right now in contrast to what he was lacking in the past. This mode of thought will cause him to be happier, and it will also bring him *shefa* from Above.

Rav Moshe Henig from Beit Shemesh: You are allowed to anticipate and want more than what you have, and still be "happy with your lot." Anticipate more, but be happy. As Rav Yehuda Mandel has taught us, worrying and becoming upset are a total contradiction to *bitachon*. Be a *boteiach* – be calm (and daven to Hakadosh Baruch Hu that He help you to be calm), and turn your thoughts away from your worries over the tight financial situation you're in right now. Be happy with your current situation, and at the same time, hope and trust that more good and more *shefa* will come! And with Hashem's help you will see a *yeshuah!*

Rav Yehuda Gewirtzman from Beit Shemesh, Rav Avraham Wein from Ashdod, Rav Efraim Heksher from Modi'in Illit: The greatest difficulty in life is the feeling of lacking. We are always feeling that we aren't getting enough and that we are worthy of more. But when we start being grateful for what we have, and we see all the good there is in our lives, then we start to be happier. When we live with the *emunah* that the Creator owes us nothing, and that everything we have, even the smallest thing, is a free gift, we begin to see all the good in our lives and not all the bad, and we are happy and glad with what there is.

Rav Shlomo Shimon Rotman from Beit Shemesh and Rav Eliyahu Yosef Friedman from Yerushalayim: When we thank Hashem for each and every thing, even the small things, we develop happiness with our lot.

Rav Aharon Schick from Bnei Brak and Rav Naftali Kreiger from Beitar Illit: *Emunah* and *bitachon* bring one to *simchah*. When we believe that the Creator provides us with everything we need, and that everything we have came to us with an exact *cheshbon*, and not by chance but by Hashem's decree, and the fact that we have less than we might want is also the desire of the Creator – then we can achieve *simchah*. And in general, it is worthwhile to value whatever we have and to be happy with it, to enjoy every small thing we have just as we enjoy the major things.

Rav Chaim Ben-Senior from Bnei Brak: Sefer Chafetz Chaim al HaTorah (Parshas Va'eschanan) discusses this question, and the gist of the answer is that Hakadosh Baruch Hu knows what each and every person is meant to have. He knows that if one person were to be in another person's situation, he would suffer a lot more. The Chafetz Chaim brings a *masal* of a carpenter who has a large saw to cut down trees, and if we were to switch it for a grander and more expensive saw, it would cause a lot of damage, and he would not be able

to succeed in his work. Likewise, if a person finds himself in a situation that causes him great distress, he should not be discouraged, for it is only for his good.

Don't Envy

Rav Yehonasan Levi from Yerushalayim: Jealousy blocks out the opportunity to be happy with what one has. When a person focuses on what others have, feelings of jealousy develop, and he is not capable of seeing the good he has in his own life. The solution to this is very simple: to focus only on ourselves; to open our eyes and start to see what we have (health, Torah, abilities, family, friends, possessions, etc.); to start to say *thank you* for this, to work very hard to overcome the tendency to feel jealous, and not to compare ourselves to our neighbors.

Rav Yishai Aboud from Tel Zion, Rav Nir Yishai from Kiryat Malachi, Rav Dovid Leifer from Yerushalayim: As the well-known saying goes, *each person and his pekel*. This is usually said about difficulties in life, for everyone has difficulties. But it can also be said regarding good fortune. Each person has his own *pekel* of good and happy things that he has received. In order to be happy with his lot, a person should focus on this *pekel* and see all the good that lies within it.

Rav Moshe Mor from Rechasim, Rav Mendel Stauss from Afulah: There is a comment attributed to *tzaddikim* on the *passuk*, "...in the heavens above and on the earth below": "In the heavens" – when it comes to spiritual, heavenly matters, "above" – one should always focus on those who are above him, on a higher *madreigah* than he is, and he should envy them with *kinas sofrim*. "And on the earth" – regarding worldly matters, "below" – one should always see those who have less than him, and thus he should be happy with his lot, since he sees people who are poorer and more destitute than him and who are suffering more than him. Similarly, **Rav Mordechai Galander from Beit Shemesh** quotes the *Kli Yakar (Parshas Terumah)*: "In matters of this world, meaning all physical successes, such as wealth and honor, one should look at those who are below him, and when he sees that he has so much more than many people, he will be happy with his lot."

Rav Yaakov Steinberg from Yerushalayim: We are taught that one should not desire anything that belongs to "your fellow." "Rei'acha" – your fellow – derives from both the root word meaning *friend* and the root word meaning *bad*. You should not covet what your friend has, because for you to have it would be bad. When we know that "what I have is good for me, and what I don't have is bad for me," we are able to be happy with our own portion.

Question for an Upcoming Newsletter

It is a well-known fact that during difficult times it is easier to strengthen ourselves with bitachon. How can we bring ourselves to live with emunah and bitachon during times when everything seems to be going well?

—A.A. from Beit Shemesh

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

Rav Tzadok Hakohen from Lublin zy"א would often describe an incident that he saw with his own eyes in his youth, and he said how he took mussar from this story and learned a great principle to apply for all the days of his life; and this was what enabled him to break down all the tremendous mechitzos the yetzer hara placed before him in all areas of his avodas Hashem, until he was zocheh to raise himself to great and lofty heights. Once when he was walking down the street he saw a father and son, paupers who were almost dying of starvation. Suddenly the father noticed a shiny coin lying on the ground, covered with mud. He told his son to pick it up, but the son was lazy. The father bent down, picked up the coin and cleaned it, and then used it to buy thirteen fruits. The father told his son to eat some of the fruits, but the boy refused, saying that since his father had picked up the coin and then exerted himself with his last bit of his strength to clean it and buy the fruit, according to the din, the fruits should be his. When the father saw that his son did not want to eat the fruit, he told the boy to follow him. Then, as they were walking, the father threw the fruits down to the ground, one fruit after another, until all the fruits were strewn about on the ground, covered with mud. The son found the fruits and started to eat them. He was very happy

Excerpts from the popular shiur by Harav Hatzaddik R' Beirish Shneebalg shlit"א

A Little Effort Avoids a Lot of Trouble

with his find, and it did not occur to him that these were his father's fruits. He worked hard to clean the mud off the fruit until they were fit to be eaten. After he had eaten several fruits, he felt revitalized.

Reb Tzadok concluded the story and said: There is a great lesson to be learned from this story. With one bit of exertion in the beginning, one can save much exertion later on. If this son had exerted himself a bit when they found the coin, he would have saved himself all the rest of the work, but because he was lazy in the beginning, he needed a great deal of effort to regain what he had lost due to his laziness.

The way to attain a life of emunah and bitachon with Hakadosh Baruch Hu is through a bit of exertion at the beginning of the way. Afterward, one leads a happy life, a life without any pressure or worry.

There are those who want to make things easier for themselves, to refrain from making that small bit of effort. They believe they are wise, and they think they have to go through life on their own, but when all is said and done, how many great efforts do they have to make before they finally understand that only with emunah and bitachon can we overcome all the tribulations of life with peace and serenity.

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

Effects on Two Ends

On the receiving end

I want to thank you with all my heart. You're simply mechazek me! Before your wonderful newsletters and phone line existed, any time someone bothered me or took something from me, I would be very annoyed. Once I was exposed to this valuable, praiseworthy content, my life changed. I am now a calm person, and even when someone annoys me, I know that everything is preordained, and whatever Hashem does is all for the good.

—Y.L. from Ashdod

I had to take care of something very important, but each time I tried, there were disruptions and unexpected problems; until I donated to the center for dissemination of these newsletters and davened to Hashem that in this zechus the matter should work out. The next day everything worked out in the best possible way! And now I am adding my additional donation to the first donation. May you be zocheh always to disseminate emunah.

—C.M. from Yerushalayim

On the giving end

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