

# HASHGACHAH PRATIS

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



Parshas Nitzavim - Vayeilech 5785 ■ Issue 172

## HEART TO HEART

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

### An Apple and Honey from the Rebbe

Allow me to introduce two neighbors. The first lives in a large five-room apartment, with beautiful, high-quality furniture. Once a month someone is called in to repair anything that is needed, and the family members live in their "palace" with ample space and in comfort.

Across the hall, a family lives in an apartment of one and half rooms, the faucet is dripping, the paint is peeling, and the only closet in the apartment is sagging under the weight of the clothing and possessions of five people; life there is not so easy.

Nonetheless, Rabbenu Bachyai teaches (*Shaar Avodas Elokim*, ch. 7) that the *aleph-beis* of a Yid is to thank Hashem for every gift He gives him, and that he should not consider it small or insignificant – neither lacking in quality nor small in quantity. He should give thanks from the depth of his heart for everything he receives as though it were very large.

The second neighbor, with his one-room apartment, should thank Hashem for his lot in the same way that his neighbor would say thank you for his spacious five-room apartment. Is this possible for people in our times?

To further concretize the question, we'll take an example of two poor people passing by, each of whom received *tzedakah* for *hachnasas kallah* from a different person. One of them got 18 shekels, and the other, 18,000 dollars. How is possible to say that the one who got 18 shekels should rejoice just like the one who got 18,000 dollars? How could there be no significance attached to the quantity and quality of the gift, so that the same depth of gratitude should be felt and acknowledged to the giver in each case?

But this is the principle stated by Rabbenu Bachyai: We should thank Hashem for all the good, and the good should not be insignificant in our eyes, either in quantity or in quality. In order to understand how we can be obliged to reach such a high level, we'll talk about the good *mazal* of Tuvia Simcha Gutman.

He was standing in a long line with eighty other people from Bnei Brak and beyond, from Eretz Yisrael and from abroad, near Lederman's shul, waiting to go into Maran Harav Chaim Kanievsky zt"l.

Finally, the door opened. One after another, the people passed through and got a one-word *brachah*: *Bu'ha* – *Brachah v'hatzlachah*, and everyone rejoiced in this tremendous *zechus*. But when Tuvia Simcha Gutman's turn came, things looked quite different. The Rav arose, put on his hat and

outer jacket, went into the kitchen and brought out a nice, big red apple and a large jar of honey. He handed it to Tuvia Simcha respectfully and simultaneously *bentched* him warmly with a sweet new year of children, life, sustenance, and *siyata d'Shmaya*. Everyone looked on admiringly, praising him for the fact that his presence had caused all of this. He had merited to receive an apple and honey from the *gadol hador!* Along with amazing *brachos!*

By the time he arrived home, the neighbors already knew that he was a lucky man, and they were sure that he was going to advance and prosper on every level. "You're going to be rich," one man told him, "so please remember us then as well."

Tuvia Simcha smiled and said good-heartedly, "If you want, I can give you a taste of the apple and honey."

As soon as the words left his mouth, the whole neighborhood was lined up to get a tiny sliver of the apple and a drop of the honey.

"I don't understand," someone foolish called out. "Why are you all pushing so much to get a drop of honey? I can get each of you a kilo honey in the grocery! And an abundance of apples of every shade and color!"

This man just doesn't get it. All the goodness in this world is not worth the drop of honey given with a *brachah* from the *rav* himself!

Certainly everyone understands that this story is just a *mashal* to show how even a seemingly small gift from Hashem *yisbarach* can be something very great.

When we want to give thanks, we don't look only at *what* He gives, we look *Who* is the Giver. Is it not proper to relate to the gifts of the King of all kings at least in the way we relate to a gift of a *gadol hador?* He is an exalted King, filled with mercy and compassion, Who personally bequeathed to us health, strength, and tools to manage in this world. What does the size of the gift matter when we know Who the Giver is?

This is the proper outlook on life. It is the outlook of a Jew who is constantly strengthening himself in *emunah* and *bitachon*, to value and recognize endlessly all the good and the gifts of any size or quality that come from the Creator *yisbarach!* The Good One Who does good, Who sustains and provides for all His creations with grace, mercy and compassion.

*Kesivah vachasimah tovah*, and best wishes for a good, sweet new year; *amen*.

## FROM THE EDITOR

### If Moshe Is Calm, Then I Am Calm Too

Moshe is a sweet boy with diabetes. His father told me: Taking care of Moshe's sugar levels gave me an idea of how my Father in Heaven takes care of me at every moment.

Nowadays, a child who has high blood sugar levels is treated with advanced medical technology.

He wears a small bracelet on his hand, a sensor. The sensor constantly monitors his blood sugar level, and when it drops, the sensor automatically calls the child's parents and informs them of the situation.

In addition, there is a small sticker attached to his skin with a portion of insulin which, if necessary, is injected into his body in order to bring down the sugar level.

I'll give you an example: I get a call and hear the automated voice say:

"Sugar level is currently 280. Do you authorize an injection of insulin for Moshe? To confirm, press 1."

I press 1, and at that moment a bit of insulin is injected from the sticker into Moshe's bloodstream without his even feeling anything.

Now, imagine how this looks on Moshe's end. When I got the phone call and I took care of him, Moshe was playing with his friends, or sitting and learning diligently.

If someone would ask Moshe, "What's going on with you? Is your sugar level okay now? Do you feel anything?" he would just laugh and say, "I don't know what you're talking about. Everything is totally fine. I don't understand anything about sugar levels. I have a father who deals with it – he understand everything; he knows everything."

And if someone would persist and ask, "But aren't you worried? What if your father forgot about you for a moment? What if he isn't available? What if he gets confused about how much insulin he's giving you?" Moshe would be disturbed by such questions and would not want to continue speaking to this annoying person. "My father doesn't forget about me for a second! He doesn't get confused. My father is always available to help me!" Moshe's father told me, "The more I contemplate Moshe's serenity, the calmer I become myself."

"Sometimes I go through a treatment...I need something that I don't have. Or I am dealing with a *nisayon* of anger. I've been waiting for a certain something for many years, and it isn't coming. And then I wonder: Did Abba forget about me? Did something here get confused?"

"Then I tell myself Moshe's words: 'My Father doesn't forget about me for a second! My Father doesn't get confused!'"

"I take Moshe's serenity and try to duplicate it for myself. 'Tatte is always available to help me. I only need to believe in this – and to rely on Him with all my heart.'"

Gut Shabbat  
Pinchas Shefer

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

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# THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgachah pratis, as told on the hotline

## Between Giving in and Air Conditioning

We went out for a *Shabbos hisachdus* for all the *bachurim* in *shiur gimmel* in one of the renowned yeshivos in Eretz Yisrael. We arrived at the campus, and each *bachur* put his things on the bed that would service him. That's how we discovered that there were not enough beds. The campus was excellent, the hospitality wonderful, the conditions perfect for a *Shabbos hisachdus*, but there weren't enough beds.

The person in charge hurried to speak with the people in charge, and after several brief, urgent conversations he came back with good news: There was a room about a seven-minute walk away where there were enough beds for anyone who did not have a bed.

Who was willing to go to this room?

No one. Why leave the whole *chevrah* and go to a room some distance away? True, it was not too far, and we would all meet at the *tefillos* and the *seudos* and the *kumzitz* and whatnot, but the whole idea of a *Shabbos hisachdus* is being together, and who knew what we would miss out on?

No one felt like giving in.

We stood there, several *bachurim*, looking at each other. I felt bad for the person in charge. I saw what an effort he was making for us. I thought about how much he'd worked so the *Shabbos* would be successful and everyone would enjoy themselves. So I could also exert myself a bit and give of myself. Nothing would happen if I gave in.

I said, "I agree to go. Anyone want to come with me?" Several other *bachurim* joined me, and we gave up being with everyone and instead took the room that was a short distance from the rest of the campus.

I felt good about this good deed, but ultimately, it turned out that we gained as well. It was a hot *Shabbos*, and at first the air conditioning worked at full blast. But on *Shabbos* night there was a blackout – no electricity in the bedrooms.

Everyone there on the campus had to deal with the heat, while we enjoyed ourselves in a pleasant room with air conditioning that worked properly throughout the night.

One doesn't lose out from giving in. Didn't someone already say that?

## An Unlikely Guest

I am a *kollel yungerman* from Lakewood, and like so many others, I am accustomed to going up to the mountains with my family in the summer. We stay there for two months, which means we have to take almost everything with us, other than *Pesach* dishes, the *sukkah* decorations, and a few other small things that await our return.

We have to organize both *Shabbos* and everyday clothing for everyone, dishes, blankets and linens, personal and family items. A regular car is not enough to take

## No Need to Apologize

My friends and I had an amazing camp up North, organized by the yeshivah. It was simply an incredible experience. In the morning we davened *vasikin* with the rising of the sun by one of the *kivrei tzaddikim* in the North; the sounds of Torah echoed through the campus where we were staying; and in between it all we vacationed and got to know each other and the staff from a different perspective.

On Wednesday, 26 Av, during the last week of *bein hazmanim*, the camp came to an end, and we all boarded the busses to Bnei Brak and to Yerushalayim, happy to be going home. "Dear *bachurim*," the head counselor announced, "the busses will bring you to the city, and from the bus stop you'll have to get home on your own. The bus will not be making stops in the city!"

We're big boys. We can certainly manage. We could call our father to take us by car, if possible. We could walk, or we could take another bus in the city. The possibilities were many, and this was not meant to pose a problem.

I live in Telz Stone, and all I need is a 182 bus line to take me from the Central Bus Station in Yerushalayim to my home. So simple.

But it's a long ride from the Galil area in the North, and by the time we reached the bus stop in Yerushalayim we discovered that there were no longer any public busses running, and while we were sitting at the bus stop and yawning, the bus drivers were asleep for the night. What should we do?

There were several of us from Kiryat Ye'arim, and each of us brought up a different idea for how to get home. I said that perhaps there was a chance that at the final stop leaving the city we would still make the last bus. And if not, then Hashem could definitely send a car our way that was headed for Kiryat Ye'arim. My friends were not convinced, so I walked alone in the direction of the exit from Yerushalayim. I davened to Hashem to help me, knowing that He is the King of the world, and He rules over the highways and over the transportation. I asked Him to help me succeed in coming home with my large suitcase. I kept speaking in *tefillah* to our Father in *Shamayim* the whole time.

I reached the last bus stop very late, and right there, at 2 a.m., an hour after public bus transportation had stopped, a 182 bus was approaching the stop.

I signaled to the driver, and he stopped, all apologetic. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry," he said. "I should have been here an hour ago, and now it's almost 2 a.m. I'm sorry for the delay." He apologized again and again, but I knew why he had come late. He had to take me, and I had arrived at the station only now! The bus had ample room, both for me and for my large suitcase.

The ride was quiet and quick, all the way to my home.

Thank You, Hashem!

## Exactly the Same Week

I didn't come to my daughter's wedding like a wealthy man; I came like a *mechutan* whose father is a wealthy man. Each time I had to take care of something, I told myself, "Abba will take care of it" – Abba being none other than my Father in Heaven, Who owns all the gold and silver in the world, and Who passes it from one person to another at will.

I'll admit that I took loans – I managed, but the heart knows its own difficulties; loans need to be repaid.

With all this, I could not forgo the great *zechus* of having yeshivah *bachurim* learn Torah on the day of the wedding as a *zechus* for the young couple. The wedding was in the month of Av. I went over to the *rav*, who was also in charge of the *Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim*, and I asked him how much it would cost to sponsor a day of learning in the yeshivah. He told me that it would cost 380 shekels.

"What day is the wedding?" the *rav* asked me.

"Thursday of this week."

"This week!" the *rav* said enthusiastically. "I'm giving over your bank information right away."

## On the giving end

When the pain in my legs started, I didn't pay much attention to it. I was sure it was something small that would pass in a day or two. But that did not happen. The pain only got worse, and it turned out that this was a severe infection. I visited doctors and took medications, but nothing helped. More than two months passed, and then I decided to take a different step, to donate toward the dissemination of *emunah* in an entire town. I had been walking around like this, suffering without seeing any end on the horizon...and the amazing thing? Several hours after making the donation, I "happened" to meet a friend who told me about a doctor who specializes in things like this. I made an appointment, he gave me proper treatment, and within a few days the pains subsided.

## On the receiving end

One day I saw your newsletter in shul. Until that moment I had never seen it, and I thought to myself, *Here's another pamphlet, just like the rest.* I did not imagine what power lies in it. From that moment on, my life changed from one extreme to the other. The essays and stories in the newsletter strengthened my *emunah*, reestablished my *bitachon*, and lit up my life anew. From then on my life became filled with light, joy, and significance. I thank you from the depths of my heart for the great light that you've brought into my life.

"To whom?"

"To the sponsor who called just before you called. He told me he was making a wedding this week, and in addition to his donation to the *Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim*, he wants to donate 10,000 shekels to another person who is marrying off a child this week."

The *rav* gave over my account information, and the significant sum, which was a tremendous help, appeared in my account.

I saw tangibly how the donation to the yeshiva brought a *yeshuah* in its wake.

## Blessing Brings Blessing

In my wallet I have a hard copy of the words of *Asher yatzar*. I've heard much about the great advantage of reciting *birkas Asher yatzar* with *kavanah*. This is a *brachah* that is all thanksgiving to Hashem for our health, and it is also a *segulah* for continued health until 120. Recently, I strengthened myself greatly in saying *Asher yatzar* from a printed copy of the words, and I tried very hard not to miss out on doing this.

In many places you can come across the *nusach* of the *brachah* attached to the wall, but there are places where the *brachah* is not posted on some wall near the restroom, and that is why it is so good that the *brachah* comes along with me, clearly written, inside my wallet. I left Eretz Yisrael with this wallet, headed for London. At the airport, I stood in line waiting for a security check. When my turn came, I was told to empty my pockets. The wallet and its contents went through the X-ray machine along with the rest of my personal possessions. After the examination, I gathered my things and continued walking in the direction of the plane.

While on the way, I wanted to recite *Asher yatzar* from the card, so I put my hand into my pocket to take out the wallet, but I came up with nothing. Nothing but a tissue.

Where was the wallet? If not in my right pocket, perhaps in my left, and if not in my pants, perhaps in my shirt pocket, or in my suit. But I came up with nothing; it was nowhere to be found, not in any pocket. A short reconstruction of events in my head brought me to the realization that I had left my wallet near the security checkpoint.

Besides the *Asher yatzar* card, the wallet also held my identity card and a credit card. Losing my wallet would mean a lot of anguish.

I hurried back to the checkpoint, and there it was. My wallet was lying on the floor next to the security checkpoint, and no one had noticed it. I retrieved the wallet with all its valuable contents.

It is easy to imagine what would have happened had I discovered that my wallet was missing only once I was on the plane. Hakadosh Baruch Hu prevented me from this loss in the *zechus* of my *hakpadah* to recite *Asher yatzar* using a printed text.

## Free Taxi

I am from Netanya. I went in to shul to daven *Minchah*, planning to continue afterward to the large supermarket "*Osher Ad*," and I had prepared accordingly. Besides the money I needed for the shopping trip, I had also brought with me enough money to pay for a taxi home.

In shul, there was a Yid asking for *tzedakah*. His story touched my heart, and I very much wanted to help him. I gave him the money I had set aside for the taxi ride back home.

And so, I returned home after davening, took more money for a taxi, and left for the store, going there by foot, to return by taxi, *b'ezras Hashem*.

While I was shopping, my phone rang, registering a well-known, beloved number. It was my father.

"Abba," I said. "What's new?"

"We're on our way to visit you," my father said enthusiastically. "We left Haifa, and we're nearing Netanya. Where are you?"

"I'm in *Osher Ad*."

"Okay," my father said. "The store is really on our way, and you'll certainly need a car to get everything home. So when you're done shopping, wait there, and you'll join us for the ride to your house."

I finished my shopping, and soon after I had packed up my purchases, my parents came with their car, offering all the comfort and pampering that only beloved parents can give, and they brought me and all my things home.

It took me a good few minutes to make the connection: I had donated the money for my return taxi to *tzedakah*, and Hashem sent me a free ride. I hadn't lost out on anything.

all of this; you need a truck, and so the process is as follows:

You rent a truck and drive it up to camp. You unload all the cartons and suitcases, and afterward you return the truck to a certain drop-off point, and from there your return by cab or with someone who is coming from the same place.

That is what I did. Our truck arrived at camp, and after we unloaded the suitcases, I went to return it to a certain point on the map — a place devoid of any *Yidden*. I arranged with a friend, who also had to return his truck, that his taxi would pick me up there, and we would return to camp together.

The first stage was successfully completed: The empty truck arrived at its destination, and now I wanted to return to camp. I called my friend and told him I was waiting for him. "There's a delay here," he told me. "It will take another few minutes." I waited.

While I was waiting, a private car stopped right near me, and from the window, a man wearing a tiny yarmulke looked at me. "Do you know where there's a shul here?" he asked.

"There is no shul here," I told him. "There are no Jews here. How did you get here?"

"Truthfully, I was never here before," the Yid answered me. He gave me the impression that he was someone who was recently introduced to Torah and mitzvos. "I simply came here from Baltimore for the first time in my life in order to see the house where my grandmother lived 85 years ago, and now I desperately need a shul, because I did not don tefillin today."

"It's a miracle that you met me," I told him. "I should have already been on my way, but because of an unexpected delay I'm still waiting here. You'll get hold of tefillin easily if you continue this way." I showed him how to drive in the direction of the camp, where he would find a shul. There, Jewish life was thriving in full glory, with yeshivos and families of precious *kollel yungeleit* who had come to spend the boiling-hot summer months in the country, far from the *pritzus* that exists on the city streets.

He thanked me and left.

A minute later my friend showed up in the taxi. "What *hashgachah pratis!*" I told him. "Because of your delay, I was delayed as well and I was able to help a Yid who needed tefillin." My friend was amazed. "What *hashgachah!* It was an annoying delay, and now I understand why it had to happen. I returned the truck that I took, and for some reason the clerk there wanted to charge me a much larger sum. He claimed that I was supposed to pay more, and I claimed that the additional money he was talking about had not been included in the original agreement. So the minutes passed until it all worked out, and all this — so that this Yid should meet you."

The sun was heading westward. The road was painted with gorgeous colors of sunset as we made our way to camp. There we met our guest, the *baal teshuvah* from Baltimore.

I felt that he was a good *neshamah*, a Yid who had traveled a long route toward recognizing Hakadosh Baruch Hu and Torah and *Yiddishekit*. I wanted things to be good for him, and I asked if he was married. I set up a meeting for him with our *rav*, who is involved with *shidduchim*.

This *baal teshuvah* is no longer anonymous. His meeting with the *kollel yungeleit* and the yeshiva, with the *tefillah* and the learning and the community life, did something to him. He became fully observant and has continued to stay in touch with us.

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# Hashgachah Pratis in Sifrei Kodesh

## Hashgachah Pratis in the Sefarim Hakedoshim



# Listen in to the line And you'll get it

### This Alludes to Hashgachah Pratis

*Kivnei Maron* means one by one, just as the sheep pass under the staff one by one to be counted for *ma'asros*. This alludes to the concept of *hashgachah pratis*.

(Based on *Beis Habechirah LaMe'ir*)

### Hashgachah over Every Detail

On these holy days, Hashem sits on His Throne of judgment, and He judges all the worlds, and He pays attention to each and every person individually. In ancient times, people thought that Hashem does not care what happens to each individual. There were two schools of thought regarding this: Some thought that it was beneath Hashem's dignity to care for every individual, and others felt that it would have been too much of a bother for Him. The *navi* contradicts these ideas, proving it from the fact that Hashem brings every star into existence and turns on its light by number every single night, although there are countless stars. Hashem takes them every night by number and sets each one in its place. This disproves the reasoning of both schools of thought, because each individual star is like each individual person. Hashem calls each star by name;

He does not consider it to be belittling, nor is it too much of a bother for Him. This proves to us that He oversees each individual person as well, and He does not consider it to be belittling, nor is it too much of a bother for Him.

And so, on the Holy Day everyone in the world passes by him like *bnei maron*, for "He created together their hearts, He understand all their deeds." Since Hashem created each person's heart, He is able to oversee everything that happens to every individual.

(Based on *Maggid Meisharim* by the *Beis Yosef*, expounding on *Yeshayah 40:26*)

### Who Understands All Their Deeds

On the day of *Rosh Hashanah*, all those who come to this world pass before Him like *bnei maron*. What does this mean? Some say that it means like sheep – when sheep are counted for *maaser*, they are allowed to leave their pen through a narrow opening, one by one.

Reish Lakish said: This is like the steep cliffs of *Beis Maron*, which has a very narrow path with a deep abyss on either side, so that people must walk along the path in single file.

Rav Yehuda said in the name of Shmuel: This refers to the armies of the Davidic dynasty – just as the soldiers are counted one by one before going to battle, everyone in the world is inspected by his Creator on *Rosh Hashanah*, one by one.

Rabba bar bar Chana said in the name of Rabi Yochanan: Even though they pass before Him like *bnei maron*, Hashem surveys all of them in a single glance.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: We can even learn this from the words of the Mishnah, since it says that everyone passes before Him like *bnei maron*, and it brings proof from the *passuk* in *Tehillim* (33:15): "Who creates together their hearts, Who understands all their deeds." What is the meaning of "together"? If you want to say that it means that He created everyone with identical feelings and thoughts, we see that this is not the case. So it must mean as follows: The Creator examines the hearts of everyone in the world at the same time, and He understands all their deeds.

(*Rosh Hashanah 18a*)

not abandon His pious ones nor take His Eyes off them; rather, He constantly cares for the *tzaddik*, and His protection will never leave him.

(Based on *Rabbenu Bachyai, Bereishis, 18:9*)

### A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on *Kav Hashgachah*

In *Parshas Ki Seitzei* we learn that it is forbidden for a Moavi or Amoni man to marry a regular Jewish woman. The Torah also gives a reason for this – the fact that they did not go out to greet Am Yisrael with bread and water.

We might ask: Why are they distanced forever for such a small error?

Rashi explains that it is not because of their lack of hospitality, but rather because of their conspiracy to cause Am Yisrael to sin. But if so, why is this not explicitly stated in the *passuk*?

The *Kli Yakar* answers: When a person is tired and hungry, he does not always check what is allowed and what is forbidden; he takes what is given to him. The reason they did not offer the Jews any bread or water was that they wanted Am Yisrael to become hungry and thirsty so when they'd be offered something they would eat it, and through this they would come to sin. Hakadosh Baruch Hu knew this was their intention. Therefore, the *passuk* states (Devarim 23:5), "For their words behind their refusal to greet you" – for the conversations that led to this lack of giving.

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

### One Small Moment – and Great Results

From here we learn an important principle: Every act has an effect. Sometimes what seems to us not to be so problematic could actually have severe consequences.

Based on this we can take a lesson for the days of *Chodesh Tishrei*: We are coming closer to the exalted days of *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*. Every small act we do during these days has huge consequences.

As we know, during the forty-eight hours of *Rosh Hashanah* the entire course of the year is determined. Anything we do for one moment on *Rosh Hashanah* has consequences.

The *yetzer hara* knows this too, and therefore it tries to cause us to stumble in very difficult *nisyonos* – in anger and in sadness. It is worth our while to be prepared, to think about where we have fallen in previous years, and to build a plan for how not to repeat it.

May Hashem help us to be *zocheh* to go through these holy days with serenity and calmness, and to be written and inscribed in the *sefer* of *tzaddikim*, for good life and peace; *amen*.

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