

# HASHGACHAH PRATIS

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



Parshas Lech Lecha - Vayeira, 5786 ■ Issue 174

## HEART TO HEART

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

### Bitachon Wins Over Power

Rabbenu Bachyai often brings *pesukim* that express the greatness of Dovid Hamelech's *bitachon*. Let us look at the battle between Dovid and Goliath, which teaches us several chapters in *emunah*.

In what did Goliath trust? In his mighty power – in his armored clothing, in his courage, and in his awe-inspiring appearance. His height was 30 meters and 60 centimeters! He was also trained in tactics of war – a man of war from his youth.

No one dared start up with him, and the haughty Goliath informed all that he was prepared to challenge anyone who would come his way.

The legions of Am Yisrael were stumped. Shaul Hamelech did not know how to confront this evil. The Pelishtim's maneuvers revealed their intention to bring a huge tragedy upon the dwellers of Eretz Yisrael. Their main commander – Goliath – did everything he could to depress the spirits of Am Yisrael, and in his great chutzpah and wickedness, he spoke out against the legions of the living G-d, over the course of forty days.

And then a young man came into the picture, a shepherd who left behind his father's sheep and came to the battlefield. David's heart was burning with zealotness for Hashem. He offered himself to battle Goliath, and in order to convince Shaul that he was capable of doing so, he mentioned some incidents that had happened: When I was watching the sheep, a lion arrived and grabbed one of the sheep. What did I do? I chased after the lion and pulled its beard, saved the sheep from its mouth, and killed the lion! And the same happened with a bear that came upon the herd, and I saved the sheep from it and killed it.

In recognition of this miracle, Dovid took the skin of the sheep that he had saved from the lion and sewed clothing from it, which he wore. He showed this *begged* to Shaul, a memento of this event. With these "credentials," Dovid got permission to go out to battle.

Everyone can learn from this: When something rare and special occurs, something extraordinary, this comes to hint to a person's task in life. When Dovid Hamelech – then a simple shepherd, abandoned and scorned by his family – saw that Hashem had given him special strengths and unnatural courage to be victorious over the lion and the bear, he understood that this strength was

not given to him only in order to save the sheep; and some time later, when Am Yisrael were endangered and there was no one who was able to stand up against the huge, cruel giant who was threatening them, he understood that he needed to use this strength.

Goliath's haughtiness was offended just by seeing the nice-looking young man with *peyos* and the shepherd's pack, sent to battle against him. "Am I a dog, that you are coming upon me with sticks?!" he raged. "In one second I will turn you into a pile of bones!" he warned the young man.

But Dovid did not fear. Goliath was coming with his limited strengths, and in contrast, Dovid was coming with Hashem Himself! With one hundred percent *bitachon* that Hashem would help him and he would win. If he'd had had only ninety-nine percent *bitachon*, it would have been forbidden for him to go out to war, to enter the lion's den. But, what *pesukim* of *bitachon* he spoke! "You are coming against me with the sword and the spear...and I am coming to you in the Name of Hashem! Today Hashem will place you in my hands...and all the congregation will know that it is not by the sword that Hashem will save...for war is Hashem's, and He will give you into our hands!"

Dovid had with him his shepherd's pack and five smooth stones, for this is the way of *tzaddikim*, to dress the miracle up with a natural act. Each rock had a special intention behind it: One was parallel to Hashem, the second to Aharon Hakohen, and the other three to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. The stones argued among themselves regarding which of them would merit to sanctify Hashem's Name, until they all became one stone, exactly as occurred to Yaakov Avinu. Dovid Hemelech aimed this stone at Goliath's forehead. Goliath shook and fell to the ground, and the ending is well-known. The young red-haired boy, a shepherd, defeated the bitter enemy, and Hashem's Name was sanctified.

*Emunah. Bitachon.* The clear knowledge and deep awareness that Hashem is with us. This is the key to *yeshuah*.

May Hashem enable us to merit seeing His *yeshuah*. May He raise our strength against our enemies, and may all know that You, Hashem, and Your Name, are One, King over the entire land; *amen*.

## FROM THE EDITOR

### How Is There Money in Meah Shearim?

A Yid from Boro Park relates:

For many years I did not understand how the Yidden in Yerushalayim's Me'ah Shearim neighborhood have *parnassah*. Every time I came to Yerushalayim and passed by Meah Shearim, I saw countless Judaica stores, and I simply could not understand how all of them could profit and succeed when the competition is so fierce. How do the storeowners make ends meet?

In my neighborhood in Boro Park there are several Judaica stores at least several minutes' walking-distance apart. But in Meah Shearim you encounter another Judaic store almost every time you take another step.

Until Hashem helped me and I understood the secret. The secret that I now want to share with Am Yisrael.

I traveled to my Rebbe for Rosh Hashanah, and since we wear a *kittel* only on Yom Kippur, I did not bring my *kittel* along with me. But after Rosh Hashanah my plans changed, and I decided to stay for Yom Kippur as well.

But I needed a *kittel*.

I told myself, *Meah Shearim is the place to go*.

I entered the first store I encountered and asked the seller for a white *kittel*. The friendly seller asked me, "What's your size?" I did not know what to answer him, so asked him to bring me a *kittel* to try on. He responded, "I don't have any open *kittels*, so you can't try one on here. Go to my neighbor to the right. He has open *kittels*, and you can try one on and buy one there."

I left the store amazed. To send off a potential customer to the neighboring store?!

But my amazement had only begun.

I entered the neighboring store and told the shopkeeper that the owner of the shop next door had sent me to buy the *kittel* in his store, where I would be able to try it on to see that it fit me correctly. The seller told me, "I don't understand why you have to buy it from me. Try it on here and buy it from him."

At that moment, I understood what I had not understood for many years. The Yidden in Meah Shearim live with *emunah*. They do *hishtadlus*, because this is what Hashem wants, and they know they can open dozens of stores, one next to another, and "Meah Shearim" – one hundred gates of *parnassah* will open for them, because *parnassah* comes only from Hashem.

When Yidden do their *hishtadlus* with simple *emunah*, Hashem sends them the *parnassah* in His own ways.

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# THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgachah pratis, as told on the hotline

## Everything Is for the Best

With much gratitude to Hashem, we purchased an apartment. A young couple with a large mortgage, and an apartment. In order to manage the payments, we decided to continue living in our rental unit and to rent out the apartment, which is, *baruch Hashem*, large and pleasant, and it could house a large family for a long time.

The apartment was rented out, and toward the end of the contract, we again advertised it for rent.

A potential tenant arrived. He asked a lot, checked and investigated, found out about the price, and claimed it was too high for him. He succeeded in getting us to lower the price a bit, and then a bit more. He also demanded a perfect apartment, fixed up, painted and refurbished, with door hinges that were attractive and silent, and no sign of cracks or peeling anywhere. I promised he would receive this as well. One does not need to be so suspicious. "You aren't my first tenant," I reminded him. "If the first tenant was satisfied, you will be satisfied as well, *be'ezras Hashem*." He was not completely calm, but he signed the contract and gave us the first check.

We started to work on refurbishing and fixing up the apartment. Several days later I got a call from him.

"I see at the end that it is not suitable for us," he said, "I want to cancel the rental contract and get my check back."

"What is that supposed to mean?!" I was shocked. "I knew I was going to rent it out to you, and I stopped advertising the apartment. This cancellation causes us a lot of damage!"

But the man said that talking about it would not help, because in any case he was not going to move in to our apartment, and the check we were holding simply had to be put back into the right hands.

I almost continued talking and telling him a few choice words that were on the tip of my tongue about what I thought about him, but with *rachamim* from Above I caught myself and said, "Okay. It's all for the best. *Kol tuv*," And I hung up the phone.

I worked on myself tremendously to think that everything is for the best, until I calmed down completely and we went back to advertising the apartment and waiting for the tenant who would finally show up.

For a month the apartment stood empty. It was a month during which we had to deal with paying both the mortgage and our rent without any rental money to fill in for the payments, and *baruch Hashem* for this.

Afterward, the current tenant showed up, and then we saw tangibly how everything is for the good. First of all, the talks between us were quick and smooth, pleasant and comfortable. He did not mention all sorts of small details or demand all sorts of things. He wanted to move in immediately and did not care that we did not even have the time to sweep the floor of the apartment.

He took upon himself to fix up the apartment without any involvement on our part. He did not argue

## The First Hishtadlus

Someone in our family lost his cellphone.

We called it from the landline, and there was no response, because as it was lying somewhere its battery ran out, and so the phone was like a stone that could not be uncovered. On the first day we did not really feel the absence of the phone. We managed fine with the landline.

But on the second day we were not managing so well anymore. The children needed to leave the house and to take the cellphone with them, so they could be in touch with us, and the fact that we didn't have it was really annoying. We needed the cellphone.

Everyone started searching. Under the beds and on top of the fridge and on the shelves in the storage room and in the kitchen drawers. This was an opportunity for us to discover how large our home was, how many items it had inside it and how many closets it had, and floor tiles as well.

We were at a loss, because the house seemed unwilling to reveal where it was holding the all-important item, the cellphone.

Then I remembered the important *hishtadlus* I hadn't yet done. I hadn't davened.

I turned to Hashem in *tefillah* that we would find the cellphone, and then, within a minute, we heard a call of relief. The cellphone was found!

Where? On the same shelf where we'd searched several times.

Thank you Hashem!

## A Call That Was Answered

I have a cousin who is ill, *l'a*. He has been hospitalized for a long time, and someone needs to be near him 24 hours a day. There are not enough family members to take over for the parents, and it is hard to find volunteers to stay with the child.

One day the child's mother got a call from a friend she hadn't spoken with in many years. There is no special connection between them. They started speaking a bit, and after two minutes her friend apologized, explaining that she had called by mistake, and they ended the call.

This friend often volunteers to stay with ill patients. The child's mother now remembered this detail, and she recalled that in the past she had remembered her but had not had the time to look for the woman's number. Now she called her back and said, "You though you called by mistake? Really not! I am desperately looking for someone to volunteer to stay with my son in the hospital."

And indeed, this friend became a good messenger from Hashem, and on that very day she came and stayed with him for twelve hours!

## The Story of a Camera

A camera was never one of my aspirations. I did not suffer from not having one and did not seek out this item until members of my household requested one.

I understood the need and was persuaded that it was important, and the only thing left to do was to persuade my pocket. *When I have enough money to buy a camera*, I thought, *then I will buy one*.

I checked out prices and got a reasonable price proposal for a kosher camera; it is quite an expensive item.

I could have lifted my hands in defeat and said, "Too expensive." But I wanted to make my family happy, and I davened to Hashem to send me the camera without any additional exertion on my part.

And then, for a special occasion in my community shul, I was called upon, by virtue of my job, to organize the shul for the event.

The producer of the event asked me how much he would owe me for my work, and I told him the price of the camera.

The price was approved!

Only afterward did I recall that I had to take off *ma'aser* from the salary, so that I did not yet have the full sum for the camera, but I was sure Hashem would complete it for me.

Indeed, while working, I had to do several things that we hadn't agreed upon in advance, and so I received a bonus, and that is how I had in hand the entire amount I needed for a camera.

Hashem sends us everything, including this camera!

## Only Bitachon in Hashem

The beginning of this story you could certainly quote by heart: I traveled from Yerushalayim to Bnei Brak, and after I got off the bus I discovered I had forgotten my tefillin.

The continuation is to be expected as well: I called the bus company to ask whether they

## On the giving end

On Erev Rosh Hashanah I unintentionally caused damage to an expensive car. There were scratches on the shiny metal, and I worried about what would happen. Repairing the damage was liable to cost me thousands of shekels. As a *segulah* for a *yeshuah* I gave a sizable donation toward the dissemination of *emunah* and *bitachon*. I left a note with my phone number on the front of the car. Several hours later, the owner of the car called me and said: "It's all good, you have nothing to worry about; you don't need to pay me anything." At that moment I saw tangibly how in the *zechus* of the donation I was saved from monetary loss.

## On the receiving end

I am at the end of a difficult period of suffering, long months of dealing with an illness too difficult to bear. Repeated surgeries, exhausting treatments, radiation, pain and suffering that give no rest. I was on an endless march through this darkness, and suddenly a ray of light came in through this phone line: in the dark tunnel with no end in sight, *Hashgachah Pratis* and the newsletters filled with words of *emunah* and *bitachon*. They pierced my heart, lit up the way for me, and showed me a new perspective. Everything that Hashem does is good, even if we don't understand how, and even if it seems to us to be harsh. I learned to give thanks for everything, even for what seems like *yissurim*. The friends who came to visit me thought they would find me broken and depressed, but they were amazed to discover a happy and serene person who was strengthening them from his own sickbed. I also managed to uplift the spirits of my family and to shower them with *emunah* and *bitachon*. Hashem's kindness is endless. "I cried out to You and You healed me" (*Tehillim* 30:3). Now that I have had my *yeshuah*, I am filled with thanks for all the revealed good, and thank you from the depths of my heart for accompanying me through my most difficult hours.

had found my tefillin. Of course they hadn't, and I borrowed tefillin from someone who had an extra pair at home, for an unlimited amount of time. *Baruch Hashem* for this as well. In the meantime, I continued doing *hishtadlus* and davening to find my tefillin. I asked and investigated and called again and again.

Anyone who knew me knew I was looking for my tefillin. A month after this loss, a friend told me he had seen an ad written by someone who had found tefillin, and he gave me the phone number.

I called the number my friend had given me, and it turned out to be a wrong number. I felt I had exhausted all possibilities. I had done everything I could. Simply everything. Physical *hishtadlus* and spiritual as well, logical and less logical, verbally and in writing, at home and in Yeshivah, in the city and while traveling.

I decided that from that point on I would do nothing about the matter. Nothing. But I did not despair, *challah*; rather, I placed my trust in Hashem, Who would send me the tefillin! I decided that surely He would send it to me! Only Him. There is no one and nothing other than Him.

Thus I thought, and I strengthened myself in *bitachon* in the Creator of all worlds, Who sanctified us with His mitzvos and commanded us to don tefillin.

Several more weeks passed, during which I donned my borrowed tefillin each day, and once again I tried calling the bus company and to ask the lost and found department whether they had found tefillin with my name on it.

The answer was *Yes! Found!* The Arab driver brought them in to the company's office, in their original case, and they were fully intact and undamaged.

A moment before ending the call I asked them to check when the tefillin had arrived in their office. They checked and told me the secular date.

I checked on the Jewish calendar, and the sweet and touching result was: The day the Arab driver returned the tefillin was the exact day on which I had abandoned all *hishtadlus* and placed my trust in Hashem alone.

## At the Exact Moment

All of us — all the *avreichim* and yeshiva *bachurim* in the family — divided among ourselves *Maseches Kiddushin* so that we could complete it together during *bein hazmanim*, a *segulah* for our sister to find her *zivug* very soon.

On Shabbos following the end of *Bein Hazmanim*, all of us, except for one *bachur*, who had already started yeshivah, gathered together for the *seudah* of the day.

I assumed that the brother who was already in yeshivah had learned his part as well, and I said, "Let's make the *siyum maseches!*"

At that moment I checked the time, and I saw it was 12:28. I noted the time for myself, because I wanted to check with my brother in yeshivah to make sure that indeed he had already completed the *masechta* by that time.

The *siyum* took place with much joy and excitement, and with great hopes for a major *yeshuah*.

On Motzaei Shabbos I phoned my brother and told him that we had already made the *siyum*. "I hope there was no problem with the fact that I was a bit late in completing my part," he said. "I finished learning the *daf* only at 12:27..."

This was a "sweet candy" of *hashgachah pratit*, which preceded the *yeshuah*. Immediately afterward, that Sunday, the *shidduch* proposal came up, and my sister subsequently got engaged. *Mazal tov!*

## Until the Tenant Comes

We have a rental unit that is always rented out. For twelve years it yielded us a nice monthly sum from the rental money, and we thought this apartment in this location with this demand would certainly always be rented out.

But Hakadosh Baruch Hu wanted us to practice *bitachon*. The last tenant left, and no new tenant arrived in his place.

People came and saw the apartment, and they left just as they'd come. None of them signed a contract.

In the beginning we thought that perhaps we had to switch the doors for newer, nicer ones, and to fix up the look of the apartment a bit. We did not think it wasn't nice enough as it was, but we thought that the people who came to see it might have thought so.

On second thought, we said, "We need to strengthen our *bitachon*." We started to learn the daily learning program of *Shaar Habitachon* each day, and thus the awareness that Hashem knows what is best for us was sharpened in our minds. We were asking for *parmassah*, and who said it would come specifically through rent money? Maybe Hashem's desire was that the apartment be empty now, and the money would come from another source?

We continued learning and strengthening ourselves as a result of the empty apartment, and after several days a relative called, and without any introduction he asked how we were doing and how was the rental of the apartment coming along?

I told him, "It's not going right now. The apartment is empty."

"And how are you doing?"

"We're davening," I answered honestly

He asked how much money we had been asking for the rent, and a short time later he called and told me he had transferred into our account the sum of the rent for a month.

The money arrived although the apartment was empty. *Hayipalei MeHashem davar?*

about the price of the rent at all, so he paid more than the al-most-tenant who had preceded him. Afterward, when we raised the price, he understood the situation and did not try to argue, so the additional rent immediately showed up in our account.

He works in a hardware store, and he is professional at upkeep of a home. Anything that has to be fixed, he fixes on his own without asking for our help.

I thought to myself, *What would have happened if the al-most-tenant would have settled in my apartment? He would have called me for every little thing that wasn't working properly!*

While it was very difficult for us to have the apartment empty for a month, this was actually where we saw that everything is for the best.

## A Respectable Portion

Someone once told me that every person goes through journeys in life in order to rectify certain faults connected to his *ne-shamah*. "You think that you're collecting *tzedakah*," this wise Yid told me, "but in essence you are gathering the sparks that only you can rectify. This is a personal mission that Hashem gave you."

He told me something else important: "Therefore, pay attention to any mitzvah you could do anywhere you go. You never know whether this is the specific mitzvah for which you came to this city or to this shul."

I understood. You surely realize that to end up in a situation in which you need to collect *tzedakah* abroad, and the actual journey itself, are not the greatest pleasures at all. The idea my friend told me turned this journey into something uplifting. I hoped that indeed I would be *zocheh* to crown Hakadosh Baruch Hu in the world in every place I'd go.

Armed with this thought, I davened *Ma'ariv* in a shul located in a large Jewish city abroad.

After davening, I noticed a folded-up paper lying on the floor. A small, dirty paper that looked like it might have been some grocery list someone had made.

At first I thought I would proceed to the exit. I am not the *gabbai* of the shul and I am not responsible for its cleanliness. Let the person whose job this is come and put the note where it belongs.

A few seconds later I changed my mind and thought, *What does it matter whose job it is to pick up the dirt?! Is this a simchah hall we're talking about? This is Hashem's House! A Mikdash me'at! And if I would do something extra for the sake of my own honor, then because of the kavod of Shamayim it would certainly be fitting that I honor Hakadosh Baruch Hu's House by picking up the paper and putting it in the garbage.*

I picked up the paper, and I happened glance at it. Here the surprise greeted me: This paper was nothing other than a voucher — a type of check written out for the sum of 75 lirot! This is a nice sum of about 330 shekels.

I looked in all directions. There was no identifying sign indicating whose it was.

I was *zocheh* to take it. A completely kosher find.

I had wanted to honor Hashem's House, and Hashem immediately honored me with a nice gift.

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# Hashgachah Pratis in Sifrei Kodesh

## Hashgachah Pratis in the Sefarim Hakedoshim

### A Foundation in *Emunah*

A fundamental principle of our *emunah* is that Hashem does nothing without purpose. Even though we cannot fathom the reasons for many things that exist, the truth is that they have a purpose.

(Based on *Beis Habechirah LaMeiri, Shabbos 77a*)

### No Extraneous Person in the World

This principle applies to every person and object in the world. That is why it says (*Pirkei Avos* 4:3), "Do not despise any person." Do not think that any person is worthless or is not needed. Likewise (*ibid.*), "Do not disregard any object," – referring to every other thing existing in the world, which a person might disregard, deciding that there is no need for it to exist. This must not be done,

for "there is no person who does not have his time." This means that every person has his own unique *mazal*, his own place.

Every person has his own spiritual protection, and therefore the world needs his existence. The world would be lacking without him. This can be compared to the Torah's mitzvos – all of them are components of the perfectly complete Torah, and the Torah is all-inclusive; no word or letter is unnecessary.

In the same way, every person that Hakadosh Baruch Hu placed on earth is needed for the world's wholeness. Like-

wise, every object existing in the world has a purpose. The Mishnah specified people because every person has his personal protective angel, as the Gemara teaches in *Bava Kama*. All other things are managed according to Hashem's wisdom. The words "do not despise" are used regarding people, since every person deserves respect. Regarding other

objects, we are warned not to "disregard them."

(Based on *Derech Hachaim, Maharal*)

### Nothing Extraneous in the World

"ויתרון ארץ בכל היא" (*Koheles* 5:8). What is the meaning of this *passuk*? It means that even things that seem to be extraneous to us in the world, such as flies and mosquitoes, which do not seem to serve any purpose other than to cause pain to humanity, are beneficial to the world.

This is the meaning of our *passuk*, "And the extra [creations] of the land" – even those that appear to be extra and provide no benefit – "are included in 'bako'" – in all that Hashem created. When Hashem finished His Creation, the Torah states: "And Elokim saw all that He had done and beheld it was very good." Each and every part of creation that Hashem created is very good and beneficial; nothing is for naught.

(Based on *Shemos Rabbah* 10:1)

### Everything Is Prepared for a Time of Need

Everything that Hashem created has the exact size and amount necessary for itself and for the world, no more and no less. Even if something seems unnecessary, Shlomo Hamel-

ech has already asserted that everything in Creation has its purpose. This can be compared to a person embarking on a lengthy trip or cruise. He does not suffice with packing the things he needs at present. He will pack many things that he usually does not use at all at home. In much the same way, Hashem prepared for us everything that will become necessary at any time. He also created things that might become necessary in certain circumstances, such as medicines and other *segulos*.

(Based on *Ohel Yaakov, HaMaggid MiDubno*)

### A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on Kav Hashgachah

We are at the start of a new year. The uplifting *Yamim Tovim* are behind us, and now we come back to the starting point – *Bereishis*. A new start, an opportunity to forget the past and start everything anew, on the right foot.

Regarding the tremendous *simchah* of Simchas Torah, tzaddikim have said that beyond the *simchah* of completing the Torah, there is a joy we feel for the opportunity to start again from *Bereishis* – the opportunity to open a new page.

The thought then arises: This is not the first time. We've already been at this starting point, already promised ourselves that this time we would start anew, and then a year passed – and we did not advance to where we had hoped. If we remain wallowing in these thoughts, then indeed we will continue in the same situation. Only if we seek to move past the thoughts to the actions, and ask ourselves how indeed we can start anew – will we be able to move forward.

The month that passed by, bursting with *Yamim Tovim*, did not disappear. It is a stop meant to fill us up with spiritual strength for the entire year. If we know how to take the messages from it, then we will truly be able to open a new page.

On Sukkos we left our permanent home and went into a temporary one. The temporal quality was not only symbolic, it demonstrated as a fact that we sit in the shade of Hashem, and that our lives in this world are

temporary and fleeting. This is not where our home is; rather, our true home is in the Presence of Hashem, on Whom we are dependent for everything.

*Chazal* tell us, in *Maseches Avodah Zarah*, that in the future Hashem will test the nations of the world with an easy mitzvah – the mitzvah of *sukkah*. Hashem will take the sun out of its encasement, and it will be very hot, and they will kick the *sukkah* as they leave it. Why will they kick it? Because they will not have internalized the temporal quality of life – they will not understand that sitting in the *sukkah* is merely an external act, but one that has a great deal of inner significance, emphasizing that we live in the shade of Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

This is the message for life: We are only guests in this world. Everything is in the Hands of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and everything He does with us is for the good. There are people who set a goal for themselves – for example, wealth – and when they don't succeed in meeting their goal, they "kick." But this is not the correct approach. The more we internalize the idea that this world is temporary and that we don't control anything, the more we will increase our *bitachon* in Hashem, and the more we will daven and beseech Him, and we will live from a place of *emunah* and *bitachon*. For one who knows that he is sitting in the shade of Hakadosh Baruch Hu lives well, with joy, inner peace, and serenity.

Excerpts from the popular shiur by  
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