

HASHGACHA PRATIS

Incredible stories of Hashgacha Pratis in our times. Words of chizuk heard on the Hashgacha Pratis phone-line.

השגחה
פרטית

A World of Emunah
A Life of Bitachon

Parashas Acharei kedoshim 5786 × 187

Only with Hashem's Hashgacha

The True Solution

Sender, son of a multimillionaire, had lost his way home. He wandered the streets like a beggar, lacking even basic food and clothing. But his greatest trouble was that he'd forgotten where to find his father. If he only knew his father's whereabouts, he'd be lacking nothing.

A Yid came to Reb Baruch of Mezhibuzh and cried, "Rebbe, please daven for me! I have so many *tzaros!*"

"Why don't you daven for yourself?" asked the Rebbe.

"I can't," replied the despondent man.

"Well, then," said the Rebbe, "the fact that you cannot speak to Hashem is your true *tzarah*. Why did you come and tell me about your small problems when your true difficulty is much larger?"

Tzaddikim understood the true worth of a Yid. They knew the power of every Yid, in whatever state he might be, to effect changes for himself and for the world by communicating with Hashem.

Hashem listens to the *tefillos* of "every mouth." It doesn't matter who the person is or where he is holding in life. It makes no difference who his father or his grandfather was. "Every mouth!" Our job is simply to believe that this is the reality. When a person believes in his power to speak to the One on High and to be heard, then he can ask for anything he is lacking.

Good Shabbos, Pinchas Shafer

They Show us the Way

Stories of Tzaddikim who lived with emunah and bitachon

The Money Appeared Just in Time

The renowned tzaddik Reb Yeshayah of Kereshtir needed a large sum of money to pay his Jewish workers. Hashem sent him the money in the merit of his pure emunah and heartfelt prayer.

It was close to sunset, and the sky was painted a crimson red over the city of Kereshtir, home to the renowned and beloved Rebbe, fondly known as the tzaddik Reb Yeshayah of Kereshtir. The busy sounds of construction were heard from the tzaddik's holy abode, where Jewish workers were completing the monumental task of expanding and refurbishing the central room, where the Rebbe hosted his multitudes of guests. People came from near and far for his lavish meals, his warmth, and his words of Torah and encouragement. They came all week, at all hours of the day and night, and especially on Motzaei Shabbos, when the tzaddik held court until the wee hours of the morning over a lavishly prepared *melaveh malkah* meal.

Earlier that day, when the workers had converged and were about to begin working, the holy Rebbe entered the room and addressed them with his typical warmth and loving heart: "My dear friends, what a *zechus* we have to refurbish this house of Hashem! Know that I have already set aside your wages, and with Hashem's help, as soon as you complete your work I will pay you, as our Torah dictates." With these words, he returned to his room and his packed daily schedule of Torah, *avodah*, and *gemillus chassadim*.

Later that afternoon, an impoverished widow entered the tzaddik's room and cried bitterly about her plight. She was all alone, and she had nothing to feed her small children. The tzaddik listened with his heart, felt the pain of the brokenhearted widow, and then handed over the entire sum of money that he'd prepared to pay his workers. In his heart he believed with perfect faith that Hashem would provide him with the money to pay his workers in time.

The hour was late; it was



✕ The (Winning) Ticket ✕

They were a family of earnest *Bnei Torah* residing in Bnei Brak. Of all the men in the extended family, only Chaim owned a car.

“Chaim,” his esteemed father said to him one early afternoon, “I know that you’re the only one of our children who has a car, and that you often use it to give people rides and to do *chessed*. *Kol hakavod...*”

“Uh, yes,” Chaim responded, unsure where this introduction was leading. Sure enough, his father had more to say.

“I want to ask you for a big favor. Drive to your Aunt Bella, who lives alone in Akko. You know that she’s almost ninety years old. She never had children, and she’s always helped us in many ways. Pay her a visit. Represent the family. Only you have the means to do it easily.”

Inwardly, Chaim sighed. *Easily?! The drive up to the port city of Akko would be at least two hours each way! Why couldn’t someone else do it?!* But Chaim was a person who was constantly honing his *middos tovos*, a man who had trained himself to grab with both hands opportunities for mitzvot. His good will easily overcame his initial reaction, and he said, “Sure, Abba. I’ll be on my way right after Minchah.” He quickly informed his wife that he’d be preoccupied for the rest of that afternoon and evening, caught an early minyan for Minchah at Itzkowitz’s, and set out on his way. Traffic crawled, and by the time he pulled up to Aunt Bella’s building it was early evening.

He parked his car, bounded up the short flight of stairs, and tapped lightly on the door. Aunt Bella, it seemed, had been eagerly awaiting his arrival since he’d called to let her know he was on his way. There was a spread of store-bought cookies on a plate in the center of the table, a pitcher of water, and plastic cups. For two hours she regaled him with stories of the family’s past, her childhood, and more. Chaim listened attentively and shared warm regards with her from the family back in Bnei Brak. He expressed his gratitude for all the help she’d always given him and his brothers and blessed her with long life and healthy days. Her face shone. It was a sterling mitzvah of *kibbud av* and *hakaras hatov*.

Chaim was exhilarated.

He was whistling to himself as he stepped out of Aunt Bella’s building, but as he approached his car, his heart dropped. He found a policeman standing near his car, in the midst of giving him a parking ticket. In a second, Chaim closed the gap between them and stood next to the officer. “Excuse me,” he said loudly. “I am parked legally. Why are you giving me a ticket?!”

The officer looked up for a brief moment before he quickly finished putting Chaim’s information into his tablet. Then he looked up again and answered coldly, “Well, *most* of your car is parked legally, but see here,” he said, pointing, “you are several centimeters into an illegal spot. You deserve a ticket.”

Chaim was fuming, and he made no effort to hide it. He argued with the officer about the unfairness of giving a ticket for such a negligible “offense.” He argued that the car was not blocking anything. He argued some more, but he might as well have been talking to a brick wall. Finally, he got into his car and took a few deep breaths. “Hashem,” he wondered, “why is this happening to me now, after I did such a special mitzvah that took so much effort? Why?”

Subdued, he drove home, and life went on. A few weeks later, Chaim received a menacing subpoena to appear in court. There was someone in Chaim’s life who had made it his mission to get Chaim behind bars as revenge for what he considered a severe slight to his honor on Chaim’s part. This man had schemed and plotted, creating a web of lies and false testimony in order to ensnare Chaim and have him put into jail. Chaim was at a loss. How would he prove his innocence? Suddenly, he recalled the parking ticket he’d received in Akko. It had been issued on the very day when, the man claimed, Chaim had been involved in illegal activity. If Chaim could use it to prove that he’d been in Akko at the time, it would disprove the man’s assertion that he’d been involved in illegal activity in Bnei Brak.

Initially, the judge was unimpressed. “It’s possible that your car was in Akko at the time,” he said, “but you have no proof that you were there as well.”

“Oh, but the police officer who issued the ticket can testify that I was there,” Chaim exclaimed. “I told him

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almost sunset, and the workers had just about finished their work for the day. Pacing back and forth in his shul, the Rebbe poured out his heart in a simple, earnest *tefillah* to Hashem:

“Please, Ribbono shel Olam, You know that I want to do Your mitzvah, to pay my workers in time, on the day that they finished their work. You also know that I have no money, because I handed everything over to the poor widow, in order to do Your mitzvah as well. Please, Hashem, help me; send me the money I need!”

Suddenly, a Yid entered the *beis midrash* and began a conversation with the Rebbe. They spoke briefly, and then the man handed over a sum of money to the Rebbe. It was the exact sum Reb Yeshayah needed to pay his workers.

(In honor of the *yahrtzeit* of the renowned tzaddik Reb Yeshayah ben Reb Moshe of Kereshtir zy”a, who passed away on 3 Iyar, 5685)

Rav Beirish Schneebalg shlit"a

Beyond Externals

It was a pitiful sight. There stood a man with leprosy spreading over his skin. "What a pity", some people thought. "We should call in some *chessed* volunteers to cheer him up. We should send him some food packages and have someone play the guitar for him." These people were misguided. Their plans were not in line with Torah, which dictates that the man with leprosy be sent into isolation outside the Jewish camp.

Similarly, Turnos Rufus once asked Rabi Akiva: *Why are your babies not born circumcised? If this is what Hashem wants, why does He not create them this way to begin with?*

His question stems, of course, from a superficial view of the world. In truth, Hashem wants father and child to undergo the process of circumcision and purification on their own. Making a *bris milah* is not just a technical act, but one that has deep personal and cosmic ramifications.

The person with leprosy, too, can find spiritual rectification only after remaining in isolation for some time. While he is among people, he can fool himself into a superficial view of his illness and its "natural" causes; in isolation, it's nearly impossible not to reflect on the deeper spiritual causes that made him ill. Nothing prepared you for the sudden insult that was thrown your way, searing a hole into your heart. You blushed crimson all the way to your ears. You could easily exonerate yourself, or better yet, retaliate in kind. But Hashem wants you to keep quiet. This stance, which stems from the belief that this insult was decreed upon you and that the person who insulted you is merely a messenger, is a *tikkun* for you. When we see beyond external circumstances to their spiritual roots, we live lives of consistent meaning and significance.

that I didn't feel I should have gotten a ticket, and we argued about it for quite a while."

The police officer, when called into court, was only too happy to identify the man who'd had the "chutzpah" to park, at least partially, in an illegal spot and then to try to argue his innocence. "That's him, without a doubt," he said imperiously. Chaim was cleared of all charges, and the case was dismissed. He was awed by this obvious demonstration of Hashem's loving *hashgachah*; he only regretted the fact that he had questioned Hashem's ways at the time. It had seemed unfair when he was inconvenienced immediately after having done a big mitzvah, but in truth, Hashem was bestowing His goodness upon him. *Elokim chashavah l'tovah!*

✕ Only with Hashem's Help ✕

One day, a bareheaded man who exuded a sense of wealth, success, and arrogance stepped into the bank in *Rishon LeZion* where I work. He walked over to me and abruptly requested that I withdraw a large sum of money from his account.

"Sure," I responded. "I'll withdraw the money, *b'ezras Hashem*." Somehow, my use of the term *b'ezras Hashem* was highly displeasing to him. "What are you blabbering about?!" he fumed. "Just withdraw the money."

I wanted to stick up for Hashem's honor, but I didn't know how to react. I just kept quiet and typed the information into the computer. Just as I was about to complete the withdrawal, the screen turned black. The computer shut down on its own.

"Nu!" the client said impatiently.

I turned the screen around and showed it to him. Then I suggested we go into the manager's office to make the withdrawal.

In the manager's office, the exact same scenario repeated itself. I typed all the information into the computer, and just as I was about to complete the transaction, the computer shut down.

The man was a bit deflated now, and I suggested we try in another inner office in the bank. We did the same thing, and for the *third* time, we got the same result.

There were many other clients and bank workers who witnessed this chain of events. We cannot do anything in this world without Hashem! This was a true *kiddush Hashem*.

✕ Diamonds from on High ✕

This story was related by Reb Yisrael Mintzberg shlit"a, son-in-law of the tzaddik Reb Yitzchak Dovid Gutfarb zt"l. It happened to one of his acquaintances.

Reb Asher and I were talking one day after shul about all sorts of things. Somehow we got involved in a discussion about the greatness of reciting *Tehillim*, and Rav Asher mentioned how certain *pesukim* become seared into a person's consciousness, with a personalized *peirush* just for him. "I'll tell you an explanation on the words *Even ma'asu habonim* (*Tehillim* 118:22) that I'll bet you've never heard before," he said in sudden recollection.



"It all begins with a story." Fifteen years ago, I worked in the diamond district on 47th Street as a broker. I spent my days schmoozing with potential buyers and sellers of diamonds about their wants and needs, and then matching them up with each other. The work was rewarding, and it supported my family. I would get a small cut from every deal that was made via my "matchmaker" services. There was another advantage to my job, and that was that it basically suited my values as an *ehrlicher* Yid. Back then there was an unofficial dress code in the diamond exchange, and it meant that almost all the people I encountered were dressed respectably, as human beings should be dressed. What an advantage! And almost all the workers were men.

One day, a man came over to me with a surprising offer. He had eighty unpolished diamonds in hand, and he was prepared to sell them to me for \$120,000 – a laughable price for such merchandise. It was a strange offer, since I worked as a broker for polished diamonds and had never before purchased raw diamonds myself, but I took it in stride. After considering his offer, I was very excited, thinking it was an excellent opportunity for me. I had \$70,000 in savings, and I borrowed the rest of the money in order to purchase the diamonds. I began showing my purchase around to several dealers, but all of them directed me to the man who was the undisputed expert on the value of diamonds, whose office was on the second floor. With a raise of his brow or a flick of his wrist, he could establish the true value of my purchase.

I spread my wares out on his table and held my breath as he examined them under his magnifying glass. After several long moments he looked up, and to my chagrin, I saw pity in his eyes.

"They tricked you," he said shortly. He gave a short guffaw. "As a Jew, you might appreciate these stones," he continued. "They are simple stones from the city of Hebron."

I was in a state of shock. In moments I had gone from being self-supporting to being deeply in debt. This huge loss actually came on the heels of another unrelated financial loss I had suffered a month earlier. I was in a terrible state.

I traveled home in a daze, trying to make some sense of everything that had happened to me, and all I could hear were the expert's words, again and again, "As a Jew, you might appreciate these stones." I laughed to myself. Yes, as a believing Jew I would appreciate these stones, which had come my way through Hashem's will. Surely there was good in all this for me. Fueled and re-energized by *emunah*, I slept well that night and awoke refreshed, ready to face the world. After davening, I suddenly had a thought that perhaps that expert excelled in determining the value

of polished diamonds, not raw ones. I decided to take the diamonds to be polished. I would pay whatever was necessary to have them scrubbed, cleaned, and polished until they shone as bright as the president's cufflinks. And Hashem would help.

When I returned to the expert's office and he saw the now-polished diamonds, his eyes opened wide. "I don't believe it!" he cried. "Are these the same 'Hebron stones' you showed me last week? These diamonds are worth a fortune. Every stone, on average, is worth as much as you paid for the whole bundle, man." He whistled. "Your God is with you, man," he said.

That's how, in one shot, I made close to 10 million dollars.

"This," concluded Reb Asher, "is my personal explanation for the words of *Tehillim* – the stones that were initially disparaged and called 'Hebron' stones became the cornerstone of a huge fortune for me."

"Well," I countered, "I can also tell you an original commentary on Dovid Hamelech's words. Perhaps they refer to our generation, which was disparaged by some *Amora'im*, who said, "Let the Moshiach come, but we don't want to see [his coming]." Yet, look at our wonderful generation. There is so much *yiras Shamayim*, so much Torah, so many mitzvos. There's the *Hashgachah Pratis* phone line. How lucky we are to be a part of it all! In the past there were *Tanna'im*, *Amora'im*, giants of spirit; but today, who is going to battle for us? Hakadosh Baruch Hu Himself! This is the meaning of the words in *Tehillim*, "All this was from Hashem; it is wondrous in our eyes" (*Tehillim* 118:22). I could see that for some reason my words had a powerful effect on Reb Asher. His face turned red, and he began pacing back and forth, and I wondered, what exactly had I said that caused this reaction?

Finally, he spoke up. "Only now do I understand what happened here," he said, a look of wonder on his face. "As I told you," he said, "working in the diamond exchange was basically in line with my values and my desire to guard my eyes in purity. There was certainly the occasional *nisayon*, though. Several days before this story happened, I was sitting at a table with a *frum* dealer trying to convince him to purchase four stones, which were on the table in front of us. At one point, he started to walk away, and in the heat of the conversation I followed him, trying to convince him to buy them. Then I realized that I had left the stones on the table – four diamonds, worth \$60,000 in all! In the meantime, two women who were immodestly dressed sat down at the table we'd abandoned. "What to do?" I wasn't in a position to simply wave away \$60,000. This was a significant financial loss indeed. I decided to walk over to the table while facing the opposite wall and ask the women for the cloth bag I had left behind on the table. Instead of passing me the bag, however,

they started to shout and accuse me of stealing. I could have argued with them; I could have proven that the diamonds were mine. But I thought to myself that if I'd guarded my eyes until now, I would not involve myself further in a situation that would place me at risk of seeing forbidden sights. I let the whole matter go."

Reb Asher's eyes were suddenly moist as he turned to me and said, "As you spoke, I recalled this incident. I believe it happened no more than two days before I was offered the deal with those raw diamonds. It is exactly as you said – all this was from Hashem. It is a wonder that occurred because of our eyes – as a reward for the fact that I safeguarded my vision. Back then, I thought I'd *loft* money because of *shemiras einayim*, but in truth, I gained the deal of a lifetime!"

✕ Warmed by Hashem's Love ✕

We are taught that heat on Motzaei Shabbos is a source of healing. It is a good custom to drink warm drinks, eat warm foods, and shower with warm water on Motzaei Shabbos. This is something we always try to do, and this past Motzaei Shabbos was no exception. The trouble began when one of my children wanted to take a hot bath and discovered that the water coming out of the faucet was only lukewarm.

That Shabbos had been cloudy and chilly, and so the solar heaters hadn't heated up the water. In such situations we immediately turn on the electric boiler, which is connected to our water main, and we have boiling water in our taps within ten minutes. This time, however, it didn't work. As soon as we tried to turn on the boiler the circuit breaker jumped. Stumped, I called in a technician. While I was calling him, it did not occur to me at all that it would be appropriate to say *gam zu l'tovah*. But Hashem showed me, and He showed me very well, how this too was for the good. The technician checked our fuse box carefully, then turned to me, his face very serious.

"You've just experienced a miracle," he said. "You have a leak in your water main, and if you hadn't discovered it now, your whole heating system would have gone down the drain."

I don't know anything about Heavenly accountings, but I cannot help but connect this miracle with something that happened before Shabbos. On Friday morning I got a call from an organization that does vital *chessed* for a specific group of people in Am Yisrael. After a short conversation with their representative, I deliberated for a bit and then decided to give them a very large donation. I cannot help but think that as a result of this *chessed*, Hashem ensured that I would not lose thousands of dollars on intensive repairs of

Did you see Hashem's hashgacha clearly in your own life?
Let us know! Your story can spread emunah to thousands
Email your story to: hashgachaprutis@gmail.com



Your Say

Mailbox

When I received the newly expanded edition of this newsletter in Yiddish, I was so moved. It immediately brought to mind something that happened this past winter.

Rav Sheffer invited me to his son's *vacht nacht*, and when I arrived I met his uncle Reb Tzvi *shlit"z*. Since Reb Tzvi knows that I'm related to the Ruzhiner dynasty, he told over a "Rhuzhiner story" about the *Avir Yaakov* of Sadigura:

An impoverished *bachur* had gotten engaged, but he hadn't yet set a date for his wedding, since he did not have anywhere to live. When the *Avir Yaakov* heard this, he insisted that the *bachur* set a date immediately, and he helped him do so.

When the *chassan* left the Rebbe's home, he met a widow who was looking for a couple to live in her home and assist her with all her needs. The *chassan* agreed to the arrangement, and that's how he and his young wife had a place to live.

After the widow passed away, he became the owner of the house.

Upon hearing the story, Rav Sheffer came to his own conclusion: "A person always has to set a date for good things. I've been wanting to expand our newsletter for a long time, and I am hereby deciding that the first newly expanded edition will, *b'ezras Hashem*, come out for Pesach."

It was *min haShamayim* that this story was related in Rav Sheffer's presence, leading him to this declaration. And the results? You are holding them in your hand! May Hashem *bentch* Rav Sheffer and all the *Yidden* involved in this holy project, and may Am Yisrael see all *yeshuos*.

Respectfully yours,

Yaakov Freund from Williamsburg

We'd love to hear from you! Send us your comments on this letter by email.



Our Driver Was Heaven-Sent

My name is Naftali, and I live in Manchester. One afternoon before Pesach it was unusually warm, and we kids were itching to get out.



My mother decided to stop all her cleaning and preparations and take us to a large park filled with grass and trees. We packed a ball, some skates and scooters, and an early picnic supper of schnitzel sandwiches and a variety of sliced vegetables. It was a real treat. My brothers and I were having a blast, running around and letting off all our pent-up energy. When my mother called us to come back, at first we barely heard her. By the time we'd gathered everyone together again and were ready to go, it was quite late. It was getting dark, and on the spur of the moment my mother decided to order a taxi to take us all home. She called a company that we knew had only one Jewish driver. When the taxi arrived, my mother got in with the younger children, but the rest of us didn't fit in, so she ordered a second taxi for the older children. We were a bit anxious about going into a taxi on our own for the first time, but everything happened so quickly that there was no time to deliberate. But we needn't have worried, because Hashem was taking care of us. When the second taxi arrived, we were relieved to see that our driver was the one Jew who worked for that company!

Express Intervention from on High

Hi everyone! My name is Yitzchak, and I live in Beit Shemesh. If you've ever been here, you probably know that what started out as a tiny town is today the fastest-growing city in Eretz Yisrael, with new neighborhoods being built all the time. As it turns out, my family lives in one neighborhood, and our community's cheder is in another neighborhood on the other end of the city. So how do I get to cheder every day? I take a city bus. In Eretz Yisrael, children learn from a very young age how to navigate the bus system. We have special personalized, computerized bus passes called Rav Kavs. We wait at the bus stop, get on the bus, and ride to school all on our own. There are two different buses that I can take home from cheder. One of them has a much longer route, with many stops in various neighborhoods, and the other bypasses most of the city neighborhoods. It's basically an express line from my home to the neighborhood where my cheder is. I usually end up taking the bus with the much longer route, simply because it comes every few minutes, while the bus with the shorter route comes only every half hour. One day we ended class late, and I was really upset because specifically on that day my mother needed me to be home earlier. As I left cheder and went to the bus stop, I saw the bus with the shorter route coming toward my stop. I made it onto that bus and got home just in time!



Dear kids!

There are amazing stories just for you on our kids' phone-line.

Call 1-518-613-0140, ext. 0/2

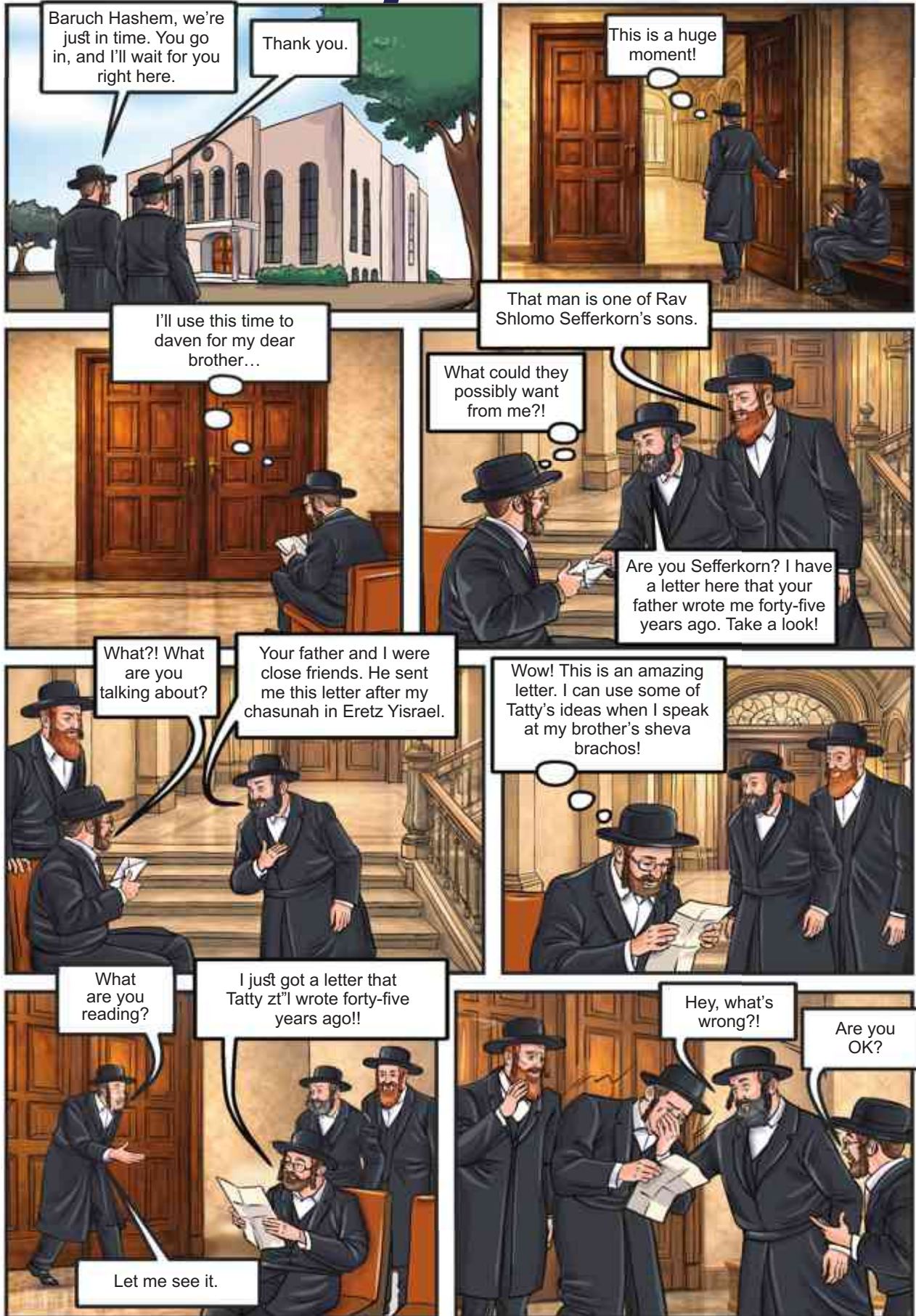
Notices

Did you see Hashem's hashgacha clearly in your own life?

Call the Hashgacha Pratis phone-line for kids and tell Am Yisrael your story! 1-518-613-0140, ext. 0/4

Regards from Tatty Chapter 3

Last week: The chassan and his brother set out to receive the Rebbe's brachah before the wedding. Reb Shlomo discovers the old letter in his suitcase and decides to try and give it to someone who'll enjoy it.



You have the power

to strengthen the
shemirah of all 613
mitzvos for Jews
throughout the world!

השגחה פרטית

A World of Emunah
A Life of Bitachon

How?

By doing what Hagaon Rav Vaakov Kamentzky zt"l and Hagaon Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l encouraged every Yid to do: Spreading the awareness of Hashem's hashgacha pratis, which is a foundation of emunah. As these gedolim wrote, when a Yid's emunah is stronger, his shemirah of all 613 mitzvos is strengthened.

כל לב מבין, יבין כמה גדולה הנחיצות להשריש בזמנינו אלה אמונת
ההשגחה הפרטית בלב כל אחד ואחד, ובפרט לבלבול צעירי הצאן, כי הוא
יתד שהכל תלוי בה, ועל ידי התחזקות המצוה זו - יתחזקו בס"ד כל תרי"ג
המצוות ויתקיים בנו 'וצדיק באמונתו יחיה' ודבר טוב לחזק האמונה הוא על
ידי שירשמו בפנקס מה שרואים ומרגישים השגחה פרטית בעינינו היום
ימיים. ונקל להבין שענין זה יעקור ויבטל את ההרגל שהכל במקרה
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