

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 Bamidbar 5786 × 190

Only with Hashem's Hashgacha

A Worldwide Initiative Began with Not a Single Sponsor.

Eighty-five years ago, setting up a "Hashgachah Pratis Kollel" sounded like an outlandish idea. Who'd ever heard of such a thing? In fact, the holy Reb Shlom'ke of Zhvil (whose *yahrtzeit* is this week) proposed the idea, but he could not find a single sponsor willing to support a *kollel* where people would tell stories of Hashem's *hashgachah*. He asked his devoted *gabbai*, Reb Elya Roth, to find a sponsor, asserting that if such a *kollel* existed in Yerushalayim, then "the whole world would look different."

Today, eighty-one years after he left this world, his vision has become a reality. There is such a "kollel" now, with thousands of participants from around the world who call in to listen to stories of *hashgachah* and strengthen their *emunah* in Hashem – the Hashgachah Pratis phone line! Reb Shlom'ke's words ring prophetic, as we are witness to a world that is indeed changed by the increased awareness of Hashem's Presence.

Reb Shlom'ke would always say: Someone who relates incidents of *hashgachah pratis* will see and experience *hashgachah pratis* all the time. We hear similar statements all the time – things like, "My whole life became more elevated"; "I feel calmer all the time"; and, "I see Hashem's *hashgachah* everywhere."

Baruch Hashem, this initiative has been around for eight years, and its very existence is miraculous. It is in the merit of you – our partners – that the phone line and newsletters exist. Our goal – "Project 1000" – is to distribute this newsletter from 1000 different centers of distribution. Now is the time to join and partner with us in spreading *emunah* throughout the world! May Hashem reward your efforts by enabling you to see His openly revealed *hashgachah* and love, and in the *zechus* of our *emunah*, may we see the complete *geulah* very soon

Good Shabbos, Pinchas Shafer

They Show us the Way

Stories of Tzaddikim who lived with *emunah* and *bitachon*

Thief Returns Stolen Money of His Own Volition

In the dead of night, he entered their hotel room and stole their fortune. Days later, he led them to the sack of money; the power of bitachon!

Pinchas and Shlomo were exhausted. Weeks of travel from city to village, expertly selling their wares, had paid off, as the heavy sealed sack in their suitcase testified.

The two brothers were business partners. They were traveling the roads, their wagon now empty of merchandise and their hearts light and happy. As the sun set and the skies darkened, they looked for an inn where they could spend the night, and they came upon a large, well-lit tavern on the way. They harnessed their horse and checked in for the night, stowed their possessions safely beneath their beds, and fell asleep instantly.

In the morning, Pinchas and Shlomo arose with the rising sun, dressed, and prepared to daven *Shacharis* before continuing on their way. But first, they checked under the bed to make sure that the precious sack with all their earnings was there. Their hands touched the only cold floor. Their hiding place was empty. The sack with the huge sum of money inside it had been stolen!

This couldn't be happening to them! Shocked, they immediately called for help. They approached the owner of the inn and demanded that he question all his workers. They themselves searched every corner of their room and the surrounding rooms and yard. The sack seemed to have disappeared without a trace, and no one they asked seemed to have a clue as to its whereabouts.

There were other Jews staying in the same inn, chasidim who were traveling to the tzaddik Reb Mordechai of Lechovich. They joined in the search for the missing sack but came up empty-handed.

"Come with us," they urged the two brothers. "The



This newsletter is just a small taste of thousands of stories and words of chizuk heard on the phone-line.

To fill your life with bitachon and serenity, call the phone-line now: 1-518-613-0140

✕ The Right Address ✕

The following story was related by the rosh yeshivah of Skver in Montreal, Hagaon Rav Sender Blau shlit"a. It was told on the Hashgachah Pratis phone line by his brother-in-law, Hagaon Rav Shlomo Zalman Friedman shlit"a.

I knew a Yid who is suffering tremendous yissurim, in more than one area of his life. From the minute I found out about it, I couldn't get it off my mind. I wanted so much to be of assistance, or to relieve at least some of his pain, but what could I possibly do for him – other than daven, of course?

Words of chizuk and emunah would certainly help him. I thought I would give him a call, but I immediately abandoned that idea. Very possibly, my good intentions would be seen as meddling. We did not share an especially close relationship, and my words of chizuk could easily be misinterpreted as mussar, or they might cause him to feel even more down and unfortunate.

But how could I do nothing when I was aware of so much pain? I decided that while a phone call was not such a great idea, a letter might be an excellent idea. I know firsthand that when life challenges us, the only

true answer is to repeat and learn again and again the fundamentals of emunah in Hashem. I sat down and began to write, words from the heart, from one Yid to another. I wrote about how no human mind can ever grasp the way Hashem measures people's deeds and what they deserve, about how He loves and cares for each of us more than we can ever know, and how no matter how things look, He always does what is best for us. I wrote and wrote, putting my heart and soul into words that I hoped would bring chizuk to this Yid.

When the letter was complete, I sent it to a printer and asked them to have it typed and printed. But then when I received it in print, I reread it, imagining the recipient doing the same, and I felt nothing. I had the best of intentions, but really, what connection did the two of us share? What would he think? There was too great a chance that he would be turned off or even hurt by the letter.

I thought it over, and I decided to do nothing. I put the letter away and didn't send it.

Several months passed. One night I was at a wedding, and right near the band, a man stopped me, his face beaming. "Isn't your name Blau?" he asked. "Yes," I replied.

>>> continued from page 1

tzaddik will be able to help you in ways that no one around here can."

The chassidim arrived in Lechovich, accompanied by Pinchas and Shlomo, who soon found themselves standing before the Rebbe and telling him their tale of woe. The Rebbe listened attentively, empathizing with their deep pain over their loss. Then he suggested that they donate 18 rubles to the poor *Yidden* in Eretz Yisrael, whom he constantly helped.

Despite their now impoverished state, the two immediately sought out loans from the chassidim in the area, who were happy to help them. They returned to the tzaddik with the sum in hand, and then the holy Reb Mordechai of Lechovich, who lived and breathed *emunah* and *bitachon*, began to speak.

"My dear friends," he told them, "you know that everything that happens in this world occurs only by the will of Hashem and by His decree. Everything comes from Him, and there is no one but Him. And everything the Creator does with us is for our good. We need to trust and believe in our Father in *Shamayim!*"

When the Rebbe spoke these words of faith, it seemed there was a fire burning in the room, which warmed everyone who was present. No one could remain untouched

upon hearing these simple words, spoken from a place of such purity. The brothers too were visibly moved by the Rebbe's words.

"Now go back to the inn," the Rebbe concluded. "Go back to the inn where your money was stolen, and you'll see *yeshuas Hashem!*"

Pinchas and Shlomo returned to the inn. They entered the lobby, and a young non-Jewish worker approached them purposefully, bowing theatrically before them, "Welcome back, my lords," he said.

Then, unbelievably, he continued, "Would you like me to show you where your missing sack of money is hidden? Get me a strong cup of whiskey, and I'll give you the sack."

Quickly, the two got him a cup of whiskey, and the thief led the brothers through a maze of inner rooms in the inn until, in a dark corner in an abandoned back room, he pointed to the familiar-looking bulging sack.

Without a word, Pinchas and Shlomo took the sack and fled from the inn, overjoyed and filled with gratitude to the Master of the world for His constant and loving personal *hashgachah*.

"I envy your Gan Eden," he told me. "Your reward will be tremendous. You saved my life, and I have no idea how I'll ever be able to repay you."

I was sure the man was mistaking me for someone else. "I have no idea who you are or what you're referring to. Perhaps you mean another Blau?" I asked him.

But the man insisted that he owed me a debt of gratitude. "I will tell the honored Rav exactly what I'm talking about," he explained. "I've been going through a really rough patch recently. I felt that I couldn't take it anymore. Then one day, the printer I work for asked me to type a letter for a customer. As I typed, I felt the words had been Heaven-sent directly to me. The sincere, warm words of chizuk entered my heart. I cried as I worked, feeling the light of emunah, hope, and chizuk that emanated from the letter. After I completed the job, I kept a copy for myself. I took the letter home, and I read it every day!"

The letter that I wrote from a place of deep caring and love for another Jew was not lost. Hashem knew exactly where it had to go!

A Lifesaving Measure

Rabbi Yosef Chaim Dayan told this heartwarming story: I joined a few friends for a seudas Rosh Chodesh, complete with zemiros and divrei Torah. The highlight of the meal was when we resolved together to commit to a kaballah. We were a group of kollel yungeleit, and we determined that this month we would learn without interruption for at least the first hour of seder.

Baruch Hashem, although I live in Yerushalayim and learn in Beit Shemesh, I manage fine without a cell phone. I hear all about the day's occurrences at the dinner table, and I never miss out. As a group, though, we decided that we would not have even a short conversation during that first hour of learning. Nothing would stop our learning. The joint effort would give all of us strength.

That day, Hashem tested me. While I was learning, someone asked me a question about a topic that interests me, and I almost slipped and got into a conversation with him. But then I remembered our group decision. I would not stop learning to speak about anything else! I motioned to the clock, which read 4:20, and to my Gemara. The person understood my hint and left me alone. I thanked Hashem for giving me the fortitude to hold strong.

At dinnertime, my wife related that she'd had a challenging day. In the afternoon, she put our seven-month old baby down on the floor, and several minutes later



I Trust in You

Words of Chizuk shared on the Hashgacha-Pratis phone line

Shiur by Rav Yehuda Mandel *shlit"a*

My Time Is Not My Own

My uncle had thousands of talmidim, all of whom felt deeply connected to him. I once asked my father what was so special about my uncle in his youth. How did he become a beloved rebbi to thousands?

Abba zt"l had a very simple explanation: "Your uncle's uniqueness was that he gave of his time to others."

In Parshas Vayikra (21:3) we learn that a kohen was allowed to become impure in order to care for his deceased sister, and under certain circumstances he was even compelled to do so. We learn from here that a person can be preoccupied with his own spiritual growth and consequently reluctant to give of his time to others, yet there are times when da'as Torah dictates that he should do so!

Several years ago, I was visiting a talmid chacham in Yerushalayim, and I noticed that he was always patient with others and always seemed to have time. I asked him about this, and he told me that when someone seeks him out, he sees this as Hashem's way of telling him that he should give of his time for this person. "My time is not my own," he said simply, "and I somehow never lose out on my learning time when I do this."

If a person is acting l'Shem Shamayim and not out of laziness, then Hashem enables him to do chessed, learn, and daven without the time used for one of these things infringing on another.

This person also told me that every Thursday night, his rebbi, the gaon Rav Meir Chodosh zt"l, would listen to a simple man's ideas on the parshah for two hours! When Reb Meir's son once tried hinting to the man that it would be more considerate for him to keep it short, the man was flabbergasted. "Why, my words give your father such pleasure. How can I take away from that pleasure?!"

We often see that one who dedicates his life to others and doesn't think about himself becomes involved in zikui harabbim on a large scale, and this is because the rabbim exists in a place where personal ego was set aside.



she suddenly heard him coughing.

Running into the room, she could tell by the sounds he was making that he'd swallowed something from the floor. Her heart beat faster in fear. She took the baby and ran to find our neighbor, who knows first aid. Holding the baby, whose face was turning colors, she knocked vigorously on the neighbor's door. Precious moments passed. The baby was making strange choking sounds, and my wife feared the worst. Then, suddenly, the door burst open, and the neighbor, taking immediate stock of the situation, took the baby and did the Heimlich maneuver for infants on him. A pistachio shell flew out of his mouth.

The baby was still pale and weak, but he resumed breathing. His life was saved.

I heard the story in a daze, imagining my wife all alone during those difficult moments. I am certain that her eternal reward for allowing her husband to learn undisturbed is tremendous.

Suddenly, a light went off in my mind. "When did this all happen?" I asked her. "What time was it when the neighbor opened the door?"

During those terrifying moments, she'd kept looking from the clock to the baby, and so she was able to reply with total confidence: "It happened at 4:20 in the afternoon."

4:20 – the exact moment when Hashem tested my resolve to learn His Torah without any distraction whatsoever; the exact moment when, with great *siyata diShmaya*, I overcame the test and continued learning. I have no doubt that the *zechus* of this uninterrupted *limud haTorah* saved my baby's life.

The True Healer Stepped In

I was suffering from a certain pain and was diagnosed with an illness; not a life-threatening illness, but one that involved chronic *yissurim* and difficulty with daily functioning.

"The expert on this is a doctor in Yerushalayim," my family doctor told me. "If there is anyone who can help relieve your symptoms and enable you to function well with this diagnosis, it's him."

My doctor's secretary gave me a phone number where I could reach the specialist, then said, "He answers calls only for half an hour every day, from 10 to 10:30 a.m., so call at that time."

The next morning, when the clock showed 10 a.m., I put everything on hold and called the number. I got a busy signal. I tried again, and again, and again. The

phone was busy for half an hour straight. After 10:30 the doctor's phone went straight to voicemail, where an automated message informed me that there was no way to leave messages at this number.

Not one to give up quickly, and feeling this was my one chance at finding relief for my constant pain, I went through the routine again the next day, and the next, and the day after that, too. In fact, I kept trying for weeks but never got through. It was frustrating and demoralizing.

I tried getting in touch with the specialist in other ways: through *askanim*; in another clinic where he worked; in the university hospital where I heard he gave classes every Tuesday. I turned the world over, but nothing was working.

This went on for three months of suffering. My wife and I kept trying unsuccessfully, until one morning, I simply gave up. "That's it," I told my wife. "We've done more than our *hishtadlus*. Hashem is the true Healer, no one else. If Hashem wants us to reach this specialist, we will, and if not, then my *refuah* will come in another way."

I went into my room, locked the door, and davened to Hashem from the bottom of my heart. I cried out to him, because I couldn't bear the pain anymore and I had no strength to keep chasing after this elusive professor. "Please, Hashem, You are the true Healer! Please send me a *refuah*!"

I said a few *perakim* of *Tehillim*, then went over to the phone and dialed. I was accustomed to getting a busy signal, and the truth is that I had dialed automatically, out of habit, not thinking for a moment that this time would be different; but it was.

The specialist answered my call immediately, heard me out, and then made me an appointment at his clinic for three days later. That's how, with one heartfelt *tefillah*, a three-month wait came to an end.

Beyond All Hopes

I live in Beit Shemesh, and when I went out to daven that morning, I did not imagine for a moment that something good was going to happen to me that day. The truth is that I'd been waiting for a long time for something good to happen. How long? Well, I'll just say it as it was. I had a 28-year-old single daughter at home.

Chaya was a wonderful girl, with all the qualities that would make for an excellent wife and *eishes chayil*, but she seemed to have missed the train in life. *Shid-*

duch proposals came and went, and Chaya remained in our home, working, doing, coming, going...but also waiting; waiting and waiting for her long-awaited match to make his appearance.

The truth is that a months-long dry spell with no suggestions or calls had put a real damper on all our spirits, and I was truly in a rut, seeing no light at the end of this dark tunnel.

So I was quite listless as I made my way to shul that morning and davened Shacharis. As I was quietly wrapping up my tallis and tefillin after davening, one of the regulars in shul came over and inquired about a certain community chessed in which I was deeply involved. Without any warning, the inquiry turned into a loud attack. He made no effort to lower his tone as he cursed and maligned my efforts, calling me names that cause me to turn colors even as I recall it now, long afterward. Dozens of daveners heard his words.

I escaped the shul without a sound, feeling beaten to the core, wrung out like a dishrag in public. For the first time, I truly understood why Chazal say that shaming someone publicly is comparable to murder. I felt that my blood had been spilled, and I truly sensed that death would have been preferable to what happened to me. I walked away from the shul, my head bent low; and then I started to think.

I knew this was an opportunity for me, a chance to perhaps bring about the long-awaited yeshua for Chaya

and for our whole family. I took a deep breath. Then I said aloud, "Hashem, You know and You heard all that just occurred, and You are listening to me now, as I stand before You, beaten and hurt beyond words. You hear me now, and so I want to tell You, my Tatte in Himmel, that I wholly and completely forgive the man who hurt me. I hold no grudge against him and wish him only well. And I accept that this public shaming is from You."

I repeated the man's full name, feeling, as I said the words aloud, that I truly did forgive him. I was in a place beyond nature, a place much higher than the deep hurt and the people who heard and what they thought of me.

"Hashem," I continued, "just as I am going beyond my nature, please send us a yeshuah beyond our wildest dreams. Please."

I am telling you this story now, several months later, and when I relive those days, I feel that something truly beyond nature, something openly miraculous happened to us. A shadchan called the next morning with an excellent proposal. The shidduch took off with lightning speed.

A week and a half after the incident in shul, we drank l'chaim. Chaya was a kallah! Mazal tov, dear friends, mazal tov!

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

Dear Editors,

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to you for the amazing newsletter, which is a constant source of inspiration and chizuk. As a mashpiah in a yeshivah for older boys, I often find myself quoting stories and ideas I saw in the newsletter. I can also tell you that reading the newsletter every week just opens your eyes to see the sparks of light even in dark situations, and this is something we speak about in yeshivah often.

When I heard about the newly expanded newsletters, I felt obligated to express my thanks to you for the inspiration you've given me and my talmidim over the years, and to wish you continued hatzlachah.

May you be zocheh to continue spreading the light of hashgachah and emunah in the world.

All the best,

Eliezer Kahana, Yerushalayim

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



The Bag Was Easily Returned

Hello, my friends! My name is Naftali Stern, and I live in Yerushalayim. I want to tell you how we saw that when a Yid truly wants



to do a mitzvah, Hashem enables him to do so. Last week, my mother decided her day off was the perfect time to travel up to Meron, to the kever of Rabi Shimon bar Yochai, in order to daven. She didn't deliberate much but simply got on the bus at 9 a.m., prepared for the almost-three-hour journey.

Since the ride from Yerushalayim to Meron is not a short one, the bus always makes a stop at a gas station on the way. People can get off and stretch for a few moments and then get back on the bus to continue to Meron. After the stop, my mother noticed that the girl who was sitting near her hadn't gotten back on the bus, but that she'd left her bag behind on the bus. Assuming she had found an alternate way to continue to Meron, my mother wanted to do hashavas aveidah, to return her bag to her, but how would she find her? She had no idea who the girl was. My mother noticed that the bag had the girl's full name on it, and that her last name, which was not a very typical name, was the same name as a girl in my sister's class.

Without thinking twice, my mother called my sister, who confirmed according to the name on the bag that the girl who sat near my mother was indeed her friend's older sister. She called her friend, who then called her older sister to let her know that the bag was safe and sound. That's how Hashem enabled my mother to do a mitzvah, and spared the girl the prolonged agmas nefesh of making dozens of calls and searching for her bag that had all her important things inside.

Rebbi to the Rescue

My name is Refael Krausz. I live in Bnei Brak, and yesterday all the boys in my class were able to see Hashem's obvious hashgachah and how He takes care of each of us like His own precious only son.

It was recess, and we were running around in the yard playing all the regular games we play every day. My friend Chaim was part of a big group of boys playing tag, and as he was running across the yard he tripped on a twig and somehow got a deep cut in his hand, between his thumb and forefinger. He sat on the ground looking pale and dizzy, and it looked like there was blood everywhere. Of course we went running to tell the rebbi, who had recess duty that day.

In my cheder there is one rebbi who knows first aid and volunteers for Hatzalah, so of course a boy went running off to the rebbeim's room to call him. This rebbi arrived with his first-aid kit in seconds and expertly stopped the bleeding and cared for the wound. Chaim went home to rest up, and baruch Hashem, because of the quick care he got, his wound healed properly.



This rebbi then came to our class and told us the following:

"Boys, I just want you to know that this morning I woke up with fever, and I thought I wouldn't come to cheder today. At the last moment, I decided to take Tylenol and come anyway. Now we can all see how my decision was made because of Hashem's hashgachah over everything that happens to every one of us. Chaim was meant to fall and get hurt, but Hakadosh Baruch Hu ensured that I would be here to give him immediate care!"

Dear kids!

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

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

Notices

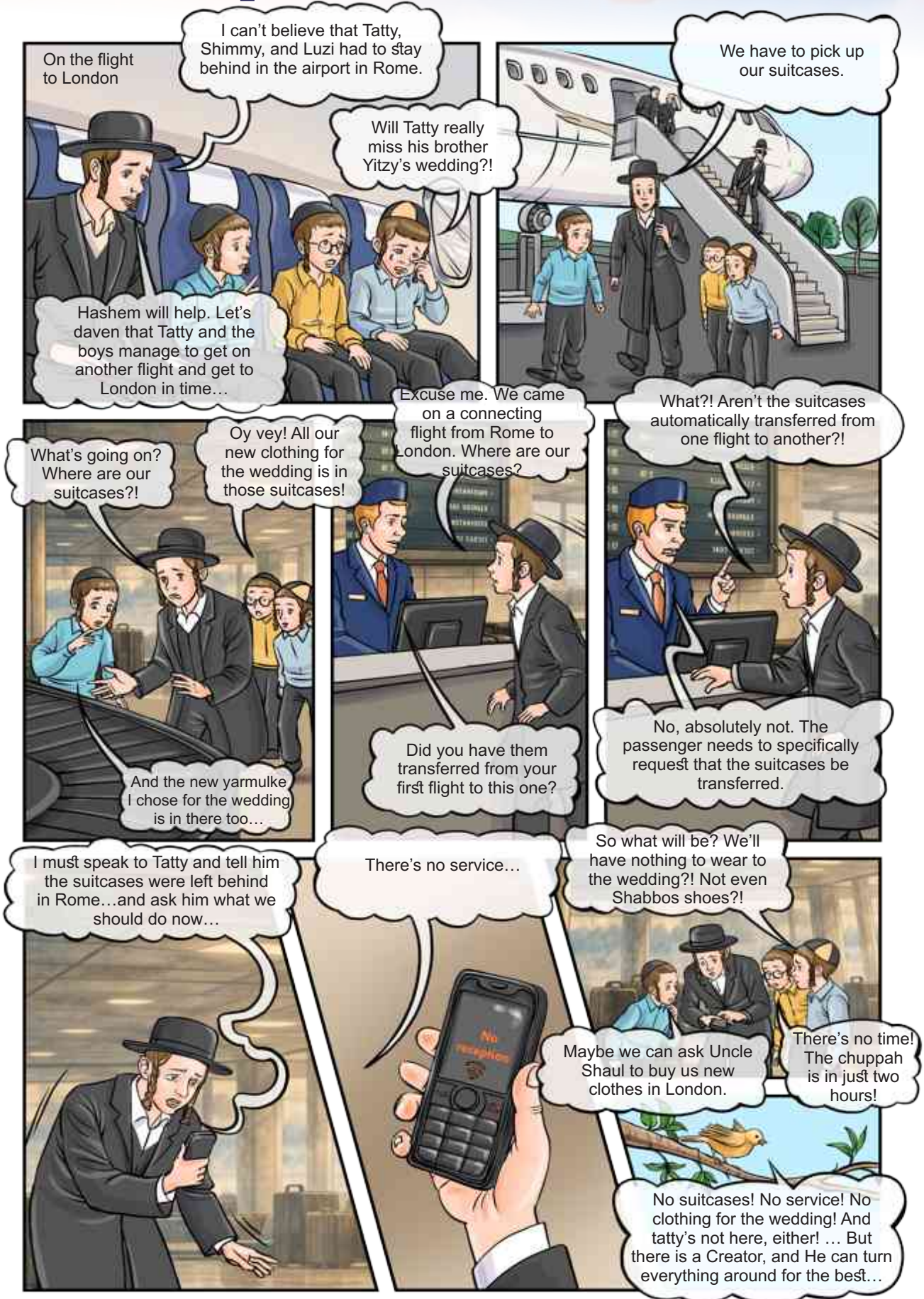
Did you see Hashem's hashgacha clearly in your own life?

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

Delayed, but Repaid

Chapter 2

Last week: At the airport in Rome, an airline manger doesn't allow Rabbi Levy and his two youngest children to board the flight to London.



Reb Shlom'ke of Zhville zy" a said it

80 years ago.

YOU are the one who can make it happen now!

The tzaddik Reb Shlom'ke asked his close disciple, Reb Eliyahu Roth zt"l: Find a sponsor to set up a "Hashgacha Pratis Kollel" for ten Yidden.

Reb Shlom'ke said:

A person who talks a lot about Hashem's hashgacha will constantly experience Hashem's hashgacha. Back then, it didn't happen ...

Reb Yaakov Meir Shechter shlit" a said:

I wondered how it was possible that the tzaddik's hopes didn't come to fruition. But when I heard about the Hashgacha Pratis Initiative, I saw that a tzaddik's word always comes to be.

It's in YOUR hands to continue making this great dream a reality.

You can be a Rosh Kollel for "Kollel Hashgacha Pratis", and strengthen tens of Yidden in emunah and bitachon.

השגחה פרטית

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