

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

Parshas Naso (In Israel: Behaaloscha) 5786 ✕ 192

Only with Hashem's Hashgacha

Emunah Keeps Him Going

I know someone who's been through so much in life. He told me that what keeps him going is blind faith in Hashem. He explained himself in the following way:

Imagine that Yankel wants to check the water temperature, and he buys a thermometer that can measure only up to 40 degrees Celsius. He puts the thermometer in the water, and the marker jumps all the way up to the *Max* line at 40 degrees.

If Yankel then told us that the temperature of the water was 40 degrees Celsius, we would say that's ridiculous. How can you measure the heat of water that could possibly be 50 or 60 degrees or more with a thermometer that only goes up to 40?

"Likewise," this Yid told me, "I was taught that *emunah* begins only in the place where one's intellect ends. Just as measuring the true temperature of the water is beyond the capabilities of this thermometer, so too, I know there is no chance in the world that I will ever understand what is happening to me and why. I will never comprehend the workings of Hashem. So in every situation, I immediately let go of intellectual understanding and take up *emunah*."

"Rather than constantly relearning this, it is important to let go of the need for intellectual understanding *to begin with*, and to live in a consistent state of *emunah* in Hashem."

"I understand nothing, and I don't have a need to understand, either. I continuously believe that Hashem does and will do everything, and that whatever He does is for my good."

"This is what keeps me strong through the ups and downs of life."

Good Shabbos, Pinchas Shafer

They Show us the Way

Stories of Tzaddikim who lived with emunah and bitachon

Modeh Ani

What does one thank Hashem for upon awakening to another day of harsh labor in Siberia?

Rav Yechezkel (Chatzkel) Abramsky *zt"l* was a young man when he became the *rav* of the city of Slutsk in Lithuania. At that time the Soviet Union ruled the country, and so the position of *rav* required total devotion and great personal sacrifice. The Communist ideology banned any level of religion, especially *Yiddishkeit*, as the Russians were sworn anti-Semites.

Becoming the *rav* of Slutsk meant placing himself in great danger and posed a real risk of exile to Siberia. But Reb Chatzkel, who lived and breathed *emunah* and *bitachon*, didn't hesitate to accept the burden of *rabbanus*, and he spent his days teaching and disseminating Torah.

His myriad activities did not remain hidden from the eyes of the communists, whose spies were everywhere. They kept tabs on him and discovered he had given a *shiur*, helped circumcise a child, officiated at a kosher *chuppah* for a young couple, and more.

When the "incriminating evidence" against him had piled up, Reb Chatzkel was arrested. In a short faux-trial he was unceremoniously sentenced to five years of forced labor in Siberia. Placed in a freezing-cold compartment of a train, he spent five days en route to Siberia, repeatedly telling himself that he was in the Hands of Hashem, Who watches over every individual at every moment of his life.

In Siberia, the *rav*, who was totally unaccustomed to any form of physical labor, was forced to chop wood in the freezing cold. Nevertheless, with the passage of years, Reb Chatzkel's devotion to Hashem and His Torah was unwavering. He kept every mitzvah he possibly could, and he learned while he labored, even



✕ **Divinely Orchestrated Detour** ✕

Ukraine *Kivrei tzaddikim*. The disciples of the holy Baal Shem Tov. Anyone who's been there knows how special it is to go. I was all set for the trip of a lifetime. I had hired a driver in advance, a local who knew the roads well. We were traveling from Kortiz to Mezhibuzh when I decided to make a quick call to Rav Yisrael Meir Gabbai in Eretz Yisrael. He is the go-to address for anything related to *kevarim* in Ukraine and Eastern Europe, a person who dedicates time, money, and effort to ensure that Yidden can travel to these *kevarim*.

I told him where I was, and he immediately exclaimed, "You should make a stop in Anipoli. It's very close by. Tell the driver to make a stop there, and you'll be able to daven by the Maggid of Mezritch and the Rebbe Reb Zushe."

"You're right," I said hesitantly, "but I'm afraid to ask the driver to change the route we discussed in advance."

"Just speak to him now," he responded.

I hesitated some more. I am an extremely nonconfrontational person, and the last thing I wanted was to get into an argument with the driver on the dark, quiet roads we were traveling in this foreign country. I also wondered how much money he would demand for this unexpected detour.

But Reb Yisrael Meir is not one to give up easily. "Why

are you making a big deal of it?" he asked. "Anipoli is literally on your way. How could you miss such an opportunity? When will you ever be in Ukraine again? Don't be silly!"

"You're really right..." I said, my voice trailing off.

"Then what's the question? Just tell the driver to stop. You'll see, it'll be no problem."

I finally acquiesced. I asked the driver if he could stop in Anipoli, and he really didn't seem to think it was a big deal. He made the stop, and I went into the *beis hachaim* to daven for myself and my family, for Klal Yisrael, and for the *geulah sheleimah*.

That was it, really no big deal. I got back into the car, and the driver gunned the engine. Then, without any prior warning, there were suddenly flashing yellow lights in his way – the Ukrainian police force. The driver started trembling. Russia and Ukraine are at war, and meeting up with the police is not something anyone wants at such a time. But the car coming toward us screeched to a stop. Two uniformed policemen jumped out, motioned for us to stop, and gruffly demanded the driver's ID.

The driver took out his ID card, and even though he seemingly had nothing to hide, he was terribly tense. One of the policemen looked at his papers and threw his bombshell: "You're supposed to be drafted!"

"Me?!" The driver was genuinely shocked.

"Yes, you! It's wartime now, and there's no getting away with this evasion. You need to come with us

>>> **continued from page 1**

coming up with *chiddushim*, which he wrote down in later years.

How did he survive this living Gehinnom?

Reb Chatzkel once explained to the Rebbe Rayatz of Lubavitch that one morning he awoke after another night of sleeping on his hard wooden board, the freezing cold penetrating his very bones.

"What does a Yid do when he wakes up in the morning?" Reb Chatzkel asked. "The first thing I did was to say '*Modeh ani*.' And I thought about those words in a new light. What was I thanking Hashem for? Was the fact that I'd awakened to another day of harsh labor under subhuman conditions reason to say thank you?!"

"But then I suddenly thought of the last three words – *b'chemlah rabbah*, with great mercies, *emunasecha*; and I thought to myself that *this* was a reason to thank Hashem – for the faith that He has given me – the faith in Him. I thought about how this freezing-cold morning in the depths of the Siberian *galus* was a chance for me to

acquire *emunah*, to reiterate to myself again and again that Hashem is running His world with mercy and love, and that every bit of suffering is for my good. I thought about how, indeed, I am overwhelmed with gratitude for every additional bit of *emunah* I can put into my personal arsenal, integrate into the very core of my being. *Ribbono shel Olam*, I thought, *Modeh ani! I thank You for giving me emunah!*

"This," concluded Reb Chatzkel, "is what enabled me to hold on in Siberia."

The Rebbi Rayatz was visibly moved.

"It was worth enduring all those difficult years of suffering in order to learn this awesome *vort*," he said.

now.”

“But I’m too old to be drafted,” he said, pointing to his date of birth.

The policeman ignored his argument. Looking into his tablet, he said, “It says here that you need to be drafted.”

It seemed the two had no problem leaving me alone on the dark roads and taking the driver with them, but he begged them to at least allow him to complete his job and promised to go to their office in the city as soon as he was done.

By the good graces of Hashem, the policeman agreed, and we drove on to Mezhibuzh. I am ashamed to tell you that the thought that passed through my mind as we were driving was that Rav Yisrael Meir had gotten me into this mess by insisting that we stop in Anipoli. At the time I did not understand that this encounter with the police was completely to my benefit.

I spent several days in Mezhibuzh, and in the meantime, the driver took care of his affairs, going from one office to another to arrange his paperwork so the mistaken draft notice would be cancelled. Then it was time for me to head back home. Because of the war in Ukraine, there are currently no direct flights from Ukraine to Israel. I had to cross the border into Moldova and take a flight from there.

At the border, they asked my driver for his papers again, and everything passed smoothly. *Baruch Hashem*, he’d taken care of the problem, and there was no longer a draft notice on his name.

As we drove into Moldova, it hit me: Hashem had performed a miracle for me!

If I hadn’t made the detour in Annipoli, we would not have met up with the Ukrainian police. The driver wouldn’t have had a clue about the draft notice, and we’d have come here to the border, three hours before my flight, and then all the problems would have begun! They certainly would not have allowed the driver through until he took care of the problem. I’d have had to search for another driver, and I surely would have missed my flight.

If I had missed my flight, who knows when the next flight would have been? And how would I have managed staying in this foreign country, possibly for several days?!

Hashem took care of me, the *zechus* of the *tzaddikim* stood by me, and everything worked out.

✕ A Fortuitous Error ✕

I am a full-time *avreich*, and I have the *zechus* to sit and



I Trust in You

Words of Chizuk shared on the Hashgacha-Pratis phone line

Shiur by Harav Yehuda Mandel *shlit”a*

The Power of a Heartfelt Brachah!

Hashem planted a tremendous power in this world – the power of a *brachah*. (*Rashba* Responsa; 1:408) Everyone knows that the *brachah* of a *kohen* has great potency. It’s brought in the *Yerushalmi* at the end of *Sotah* (9:14) that the blessings of the *kohanim* protect us. But the truth is that every *brachah* has power. When a person says “You should be *gebentched*,” he may have no idea what a positive change his words could bring to his friend’s life.

I have personally seen many times how a *brachah* is fulfilled, and it’s moving each time anew. Here are several examples:

I have a friend who visits his elderly father regularly. Unfortunately, due to old age and poor health, the father doesn’t recognize his son. As anyone who’s been there can attest, this is a painful experience for my friend each time anew. Once, before leaving to visit his father, he asked an acquaintance to *bentch* him that his father should recognize him. Amazingly enough, his father mentioned his name four times during that visit.

Another time, someone who lives in Brooklyn told me he was in Lakewood very late at night, and after he davened *Maariv*, a *bachur* came in to the shul to collect *tzedakah*. He gave the *bachur* a dollar and then asked him for a *brachah* for a smooth ride back to Brooklyn. Of course, the *bachur* acquiesced and *bentched* him with a smile. “What can I tell you?” he said. “The ride was unusually quick, and I didn’t meet up with even one blinking red traffic light on the way!”

I was also once at a *seudah* for a *siyum* where the person making the *siyum* was, unfortunately, not well. On the following day he was supposed to undergo a complex treatment, which had minimal chances of success. At the *siyum*, everyone who spoke *bentched* him that the treatment should succeed. To the doctors’ surprise, this experimental treatment helped him tremendously!

These are examples of things that take place all the time.

All of us can utilize this power to do good to others! For instance, it’s common to meet people collecting money for a specific cause. Even if you’re unable to donate, it costs nothing to give the collector a heartfelt *brachah* for success. Not only are you encouraging his attempts to do a *mitzvah* that is often accompanied by moments of shame or despair; your words can actually be the power that will cause him to meet the person who *can* donate significantly to his cause!



learn in an excellent *kollel* alongside many esteemed *talmidei chachamim*. Everyone in the *kollel* has a family to support at home and needs the monthly stipend in order to cover the very basics, and the *rosh kollel* is prompt and gracious in giving out the stipend each month.

There are set guidelines by which an *avreich* in our *kollel* earns his stipend, and the *rosh kollel* abides by them strictly. There are tests that we need to take and set times we need to arrive. Anyone who keeps to these guidelines will get the respectable sum offered at the end of the month, but someone who misses days or comes late here and there can possibly end up with nothing at all.

Though I generally earn my keep easily, as I am very disciplined, this past month was different. Something came up at home, a serious situation that I had to deal with, and it took a lot of my time. My attendance slacked; I had to miss several days, and I came late repeatedly. It was something that required so much of my attention, and I knew that Hashem's will was for me to take care of it. Of course I learned as much as I could, but it was often not in *kollel* and not during the set hours. I also barely took any tests, and so it seemed that my fate was sealed – no pay this month. But I needed the stipend more than ever.

I approached the *rosh kollel* nervously and explained, filling him in on the private matter that had taken up so much of my time and attention. He listened attentively and seemed to understand, but said he would have to run it by the person who managed the funding. If he approved, I would get the stipend.

"I really understand you," he told me, "but it's also very important for the good of the *kollel* that we abide by the rules, no matter how good an excuse someone may have."

So the *rosh kollel* talked it over with the manager, and they were both inclined to pay me despite everything, but then they spoke some more and realized that doing so would very possibly result in a certain laxity in the *kollel*, which they could not responsibly allow. With a heavy heart, the *rosh kollel* informed me he would not be able to pay me this month.

What could I do? I davened to Hashem, Who certainly knew that I had done my very best under the circumstances, to help me cover the month's expenses.

The following day the stipends were given out, and lo and behold, I received a regular envelope like everyone else, as though all the back-and-forth of the past two days had never taken place at all. I thanked Hashem from the bottom of my heart, knowing now more than ever that the money came from Him alone.

Later, I found out how the obvious hand of *hash-gachah* had brought the envelope to me.

As I've mentioned, after serious deliberations on the matter, the *rosh kollel* and the manager had decided not to pay me. The following day, when the *rosh kollel* was giving out the money, he discovered my envelope, ready and waiting among all the others. He assumed the financial manager had reconsidered and decided to pay me, and he was happy to give me the envelope.

When he finished giving out the stipends, another *avreich* came over and asked for his money, and then he realized what had happened. Instead of erasing my name from the list, the manager had mistakenly erased the name of this other *avreich*, who had abided fully by all the *kollel's* guidelines for the past month.

The good-hearted *rosh kollel* could not bear to ask me to return the money that had been given me. He simply arranged the money for the other *avreich*, accepting that it was *min haShamayim* that I receive payment.

Yes, the manager made a mistake, but Hashem never makes mistakes!

✕ Amusing Bar Mitzvah Musings ✕

When Elul of this year came around, there was unique personal excitement in it for me. We were ushering in the year of 5786, exactly thirteen years after the birth of my beloved firstborn son. This year, with Hashem's help, we would be celebrating a big milestone: my son's bar mitzvah.

This would be the first bar mitzvah in our family, and of course we wanted to celebrate properly. I thought about the various halls in our neighborhood and decided that one of them best fit our needs. Without further ado, I called the owner of the hall in order to book the date we needed.

A young voice answered my call on the second ring. It was the owner's son.

"Can I please speak to your father?"

"He's not available now. Who's calling?"

"Well, I'm calling about an affair I want to make in the hall..." My voice trailed off.

"Sure," the voice responded. "What is the date you want to reserve?"

I told him the date.

"You don't need to call again," the son assured me.

“Consider it done.”

I did as he said, and I considered the matter taken care of. There were other things that required my attention now, like getting tefillin in time, a hat and suit for my son, a caterer, and more.

Time passed, and our excitement mounted as the date was approaching. We prepared a guest list, and suddenly we realized that we’d miscalculated the total number of people meant to come to the bar mitzvah. As I envisioned the real number of guests we could anticipate, I realized that the hall we’d booked was simply too small.

“We really need to take a different, larger hall,” my wife urged.

Nervously, I dialed the number of another, larger hall in the area and asked if they had our date available. To my relief, they did. Now it was time for the unpleasant task of canceling on the other hall we’d already booked.

“Cancellation?” said the owner when he heard the reason for my call. “That’s not so simple. What did you say your name was, and what date did you book for?”

I told him, a slight edge betraying my nervousness.

I could hear him flipping through his calendar, and remarkably, he said, “I have no reservation on your name. There is another event on the date you mentioned, booked for another family.”

It took me a minute to absorb what he’d said.

“What do you mean?” I stammered. “I spoke to your son.”

“There is nothing on your name here,” he repeated. “So you have nothing to cancel and no reason to pay me for anything. All the best,” he concluded, and I could hear the smile in his voice.

I ended the call thrilled that I owed him nothing and totally shaken by the thought of what could have been. Imagine if we hadn’t cancelled. On the day of the bar mitzvah, or very close to the date, we would have discovered that another *simchah* was taking place in “our” hall. What in the world would we have done then?!

Hashem took pity on us and prevented us from enduring this *agmas nefesh*.

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

Mazal tov on the newly expanded newsletter. I read edition 185 from cover to cover, and I really enjoyed it. I feel that there’s no better place to share how I was *zocheh* to see the hand of *hashgachah* with my own eyes:

Since I am close to Rav Moshe Tzadka *shlit”a*, the *rosh yeshivah* of Porat Yosef, I often learn in his *kollel* on Thursday nights and Friday mornings. After learning, many of us join the *rosh yeshivah* to daven at the Kosel.

The *mashgiach* of the *yeshivah ketanah* is the one who distributes the *kollel* stipend to all the members of this *kollel*, and he usually does so close to sunrise on Friday morning. One week, the *mashgiach* approached the *rosh yeshivah* and told him that the *kollel* was in dire need of funding.

Later, when we got to the Kosel, I suggested that we say a *perek* of *Tehillim* for the *kollel*. Then I suggested to someone davening there that he ask the *rosh yeshivah*, who had just completed a full night

of intense learning, for a *brachah*. I added that the *kollel* was in need of funding.

This Yid approached the *rosh yeshivah* immediately. He held out a bundle of dollars he had in his pocket. The *rosh yeshivah* didn’t want to take the money, but he motioned to the man to give it to me. When I later went to change the dollars into shekels, I mentioned to the money changer that the money was for a *kollel*, and he immediately responded by waiving his fee of 1.5 percent.

The following week, I gave the *mashgiach* the full sum – exactly 6,300 shekels, and I told him everything that had happened. The *mashgiach* was amazed, because this was the exact sum that he’d taken as a loan the previous week. We literally saw Hashem’s *hashgachah*!

Best wishes,

Chaim Shimon Ravia, Beitar Illit

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



Hashem Is Truly Everywhere.

My name is Shloimy, and I live in Williamsburg. One Thursday evening I had an amazing surprise waiting for me when I got home. My father was in the dining room, excitement written all over his face.



“Shloimy,” he said, “we’re off!”

“Off to where, Tatty?” I asked.

“You and I are flying to the Zidichover Rebbe’s son’s bar mitzvah in Chicago!”

After I finished jumping up and down in ecstasy, I realized we would be leaving to catch our flight early the next morning. How would I get my weekly *parshah* sheets that *rebbe* always gives out on Friday? I didn’t want to miss out.

In the meantime, my father went to *Maariv*, and *hashgachah* had it that he met my *rebbe* and told him about our plans and about how I really wanted to get my *parshah* sheets.

“Well,” my *rebbe* said, “right now the *cheder* is closed, but if you come very early in the morning the building will be open, and you can take your copy of the *parshah* sheets from the table in the *rebbe'im*’s room.

When my father came home, we decided that my older brother Yanky would go to an early minyan near my *cheder* and get the *parshah* sheets immediately afterward. Then our taxi would stop right near the *cheder* on its way to the airport, and Yanky would come out and give us the sheets. *Baruch Hashem*, just as we were passing by the *cheder*, the traffic light turned red, and my father was able to run out and get the sheets from my brother without even asking the driver to make a stop!

The whole trip was an amazing experience for me, and it was filled with more *hashgachah pratis* too. In the place where we were staying, our room was the only one where there was a *siddur* to use. On the way back, we originally got seats in row 16 of the airplane, but there was another Yid who

wanted to sit near us, so they put us all together in row 34, all the way in the back of the plane. Right before boarding, we decided to try our luck and ask for a seat closer up. It was *hashgachah pratis* that they gave us all seats together in row 12, even better than what we had originally! Also, I wanted to sit near the window, but then a man got on the plane and pointed out that the window seat belonged to him. Off course, I immediately moved over to the middle seat in the row, but then he looked at me again and said, “You know what? If you want the window seat, you can switch with me. You can have it!”

On the way home, I asked Hashem to make the flight go quickly, and it did. In the airport, we spoke to someone whose flight left Chicago an hour before our flight but landed in New York at the same time as us. Thank You, Hashem!

In the Nick of Time

My name is Shmuly Weinberg, and I live in Yerushalayim.

We had an exciting Chanukah party at my uncle’s house, filled with laughter, good food, and games. After the party we quickly got to work straightening up the room.

My sister cleared off the leftover food and dishes and brought them to the kitchen, and I expertly rolled up the very long and full plastic tablecloth with all the garbage and used paper goods inside it.



I went to get a garbage bag, which I placed at the side of the table in order to slide the tablecloth right inside, but as I was doing so...something slipped out of the plastic tablecloth. It was a small pad of papers that my father keeps in his pocket, where he writes very important numbers and things he needs to remember. If it hadn’t fallen out just at that moment, it would have gotten lost, along with all the vital information it contained.

Dear kids!

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Notices

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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 4

Last week:: At the airport in Rome, the security guard shows Rabbi Levy that the family's suitcases were left behind.



Are there perhaps three seats available on the flight that's about to leave for London?

Yes, there are!



Two hours later...

Thank you, Hashem...the flight went smoothly, and we should make it in time for the chuppah...



In the meantime...

But I had a brand new suit...

Really, thanks so much, it's just...uh...

It's really not my taste, but I guess there's no other choice...

Come see what Aunt Rachel got you. These are our grandchildren's nicest clothing!



I'm embarrassed to come to the wedding like this, without Tatty and without normal clothes...

Children, I know it isn't easy for you, but let's try to remember that everything is for the best!



Yes, Uncle Shaul's right. Every delay is for the best. Even the fact that Tatty was delayed must be for our good.

I don't get it. What could possibly be good about the fact that Tatty, Luzi, and Shimmy are all stuck in Rome now. What?!



Suddenly

Tatty!

How did you get here?!

And how did you know to look for our suitcases in Rome?!

You all have excellent questions, but we need to hurry now and get ready. The chuppah starts in half an hour!



After Rabbi Levy tells his children everything that happened:

Wow! Everything fit into place just like the pieces of a puzzle...

How bashert it was that Tatty and the younger children got delayed...

Had they allowed them all onto the first flight...

The suitcases would've remained behind in Rome, and we would have had no way of getting them here in time!



Exactly. And I have more good news. On our way here from the airport, a representative of the airline called and apologized for the rude way we were treated by their staff...the airline is going to reimburse us generously!

Thank you, Hashem, for showing us how this delay was made in Heaven!

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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