

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 Devarim, 5768 × 199

Only with Hashem's Hashgacha

Traveling Abroad? Not for the Reason You Think.

"I needed to travel abroad urgently "a *talmid chacham* from Yerushalayim recently told me, "and I took it really hard."

"Why?" I asked.

"I learn *b'chavrusa* with my father every day, and I couldn't imagine leaving him for several weeks. In fact, my father was so disturbed by the idea of my going to *chutz la'Aretz* that he asked a certain tzaddik to give him a *brachah* that my affairs would settle themselves here in Eretz Yisrael and that I wouldn't have to travel."

"And what did the tzaddik say?" I asked curiously.

"He said, 'Absolutely not. I cannot give you such a *brachah*!' And he explained: 'People think that a certain need is propelling them to travel across the world, but in reality it is exactly the opposite: The person needs to travel to a distant country, so Hashem creates the urgent need that forces him to do so!'"

"The tzaddik told my father that Hashem obviously wanted me to be in the United States, so He brought about circumstances to compel me to travel, even at the cost of missing out on our learning together."

This *talmid chacham* was expressing something fundamental, which is brought in the name of the Baal Shem Tov in *sefer Ohr Ha'meir*. It says there that people who travel abroad for business or other reasons imagine that they are traveling in order to, for example, make money, but in fact, if Hashem wanted He could send them *parnassah* at their doorstep. The real reason they are traveling is that Hashem wants them to be in that particular place in the world, for reasons often known only to Him.

Good Shabbos, Pinchas Shafer

They Show Us the Way

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

The Band of Thieves Escaped

A band of murderous thieves infiltrated the village, the lust for blood and money visible in their eyes. Then they turned on their heels and fled.

For over a thousand years, Sud, the small village in north-western Yemen, was home to the illustrious Gavra family, a revered dynasty of Rabbanim, *mekubalim*, tzaddikim, and wonder-workers. The most precious Gavra family keepsake was an ancient scroll documenting the family's lineage all the way back to Peretz *ben* Yehuda.

Yitzchak Gavra was a young boy when he lost his father, Rabi Yitzchak. (The Yemenite custom was to name a child for his father during his lifetime.) As soon as he was old enough, he and his brother Rabi Avraham, referred to as "the holy brothers," became the undisputed leaders of the Jewish community of Sud.

Rabi Yitzchak served as a *shochet*, a *bodek*, and a *posek*, and he also taught *shechitah* to others. The locals would say that meat *shechted* by the tzaddik Rabi Yitzchak had an especially heavenly taste. He also served as a *mohel* and circumcised hundreds of babies. He was well-known for his medical knowledge and expertise. He had experience with all sorts of alternative remedies and *segulos*. People with various ailments would come to him, and before they'd even open their mouths, Rabi Yitzchak already knew what they suffered from and the solution to their problem. His greatness in Torah and *yiras Shamayim* were matched by his countless acts of *chessed*. He was indeed a loyal shepherd to his flock.

Rabi Yitzchak was also a pillar of *emunah*, his staunch *bitachon* in the Creator unshakeable throughout his lifetime. When he davened, he raised his voice in prayer and supplication, and he shed rivers of tears. Rabi Yitzchak completed *sefer Tehillim* at least three times each day, with a goal of reciting 26 *sefarim* a week. Those who were privileged to be in his orbit testified that his *bakashos* were often answered immediately from on High. In times of drought, he would go out to caves and burial places of tzaddikim to daven with his disciples, and on the way back, their clothes would be soaked by sudden downpours.

It was a quiet, peaceful night in the village of Sud. The

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✕ My Miracle Home ✕

Avraham from Yerushalayim relates how he managed, in an openly miraculous way, to purchase a spacious home in the center of the city:

We were literally a hairsbreadth away from signing on an apartment in an outlying city when suddenly we received an offer to buy an apartment in Yerushalayim for a reasonable price. It was an offer we couldn't refuse, and we didn't. We bought the apartment and settled in *Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh*, adjusting to schools, work, and *kollel* in the city.

The one snag in this perfect picture was that the apartment was old and the walls were filled with mold. It took some time before we connected the colds, eczema, and shortness of breath that members of the family experienced on a constantly rotating basis to the poisonous fumes that the walls were emitting. Moreover, as the years passed and our family grew, the walls began closing in on us. We were bringing up a family of eight children in these less-than-desirable quarters. As the family grew, the apartment seemed smaller and smaller.

The crowded conditions became intolerable, and like Yonah choking in the fish's intestines, we cried out to Hashem. We also did *hishtadlus*, looking into various apartments for sale in the area, but the prices were at least five times more than the value of our home. What could we do?

We decided to purchase a small apartment as

an investment, in the hope of later selling it at a profit. We rented out the apartment, the rent money going directly into the bank to pay the mortgage we had taken in order to buy it.

And we davened. How we davened! As a full-time *avreich*, this was a tremendous *nisayon* for me. Inner voices nudged at me: How could you remain in learning when your family is living under such conditions? How could you? I tried to stay strong, knowing that this was a test from Hashem, Who would surely provide for me. I staunchly resolved to keep to my daily *sedarim*.

One day, an agent called out of the blue to tell me he had a buyer for the apartment we'd bought as an investment. It was a wealthy man who needed an apartment in the exact location and the exact size of the small apartment we'd purchased, and he was willing to pay well. How well? Three times the amount for which we'd purchased the apartment!

Things began rolling. With the profit we made on this small apartment and the money from the sale of our own home, we bought a pleasant, spacious apartment that was appropriate for a family of our size.

I constantly thank Hashem for the miraculous way He provided for us. Whenever I need something, I just look around at the pleasant home where I live, and I think to myself: He Who provided me with this home can certainly give me what I need now, too!

>>> continued from page 1

young children were asleep, and the adults were eating their light dinners after a day of hard labor.

No one realized that danger was lurking.

The sudden sounds of blood-curdling shouts shattered the stillness of night. A band of murderous thieves had infiltrated the village and were running through its streets, swords drawn in their hands and lust for blood in their evil eyes.

They began banging on doors.

"Open up and give us all your money!" they shouted, "or we will murder you all in cold blood. Give us your money and valuables – now!"

The residents of the village bolted their doors, trembling in

fear of what was coming.

The sounds of the thieves and the cries of fear of the Jewish settlers of the village reached the tzaddik Rabi Yitzchak.

He immediately rose to his full height. "I trust in Hashem, and I am not afraid of them," he declared. "I will go out to them. I trust in Hashem, and I am not afraid of them!" he repeated.

The holy Rabi Yitzchak left his home and, protected only by his *bitachon* and pure faith, he approached the mob of thieves. And then...upon seeing his face, his regal bearing and his shining countenance, *the entire mob, as one, turned on their heels and fled from the village!*

✕ Easy Come ✕

Dovid B. from Bnei Brak related how Hashem sent him a bonus income without any special effort on his part:

I don't have it easily financially, to say the least. Normally, I work really hard in order to make a small profit – perhaps fifty shekels. These are my circumstances, and I'm not complaining, just giving you a picture of what my daily grind looks like. I always reiterate to myself that I am just doing *hishtadlus*, and the results are not in my hands; the results come from Hashem. Then one day, Hashem showed me very clearly how true this is:

I have a friend who was feeling very down. His daughter had been in shidduchim for several years, and there was nothing on the horizon. He hadn't gotten a call from a shadchan in months. He felt completely burnt out.

It was hard for me to see him in such a state of despair. What could I possibly do to help him? I simply wanted to bring a smile to his face. "I had an idea for your daughter," I told him without investing any thought in what I was saying. "What about so-and-so?"

To my surprise, my friend got back to me the following day. "That name you mentioned," he said without preamble, "sounds like an excellent idea. I looked into it, and we're interested."

I had no choice other than to call the boy's father and suggest it to him, too. Unwittingly, I had become a shadchan. The boy's side also looked into it and got back to me quickly with a positive response. One stage followed the next, and the shidduch proceeded quickly, without a hitch. At the end of that week, I had a fat envelope in hand with over 10,000 shekels inside – *shadchanus* gelt.

I don't want you to think that *shadchanim* don't deserve the money they get. I know many *shadchanim* who invest hours of conversation, blood, sweat, and tears until they see a shidduch reach its happy conclusion. But I am not a shadchan! When Hashem wanted to give me a lot of money in one shot, He did it in a way that did not require any extraneous efforts on my part.

Shiur by Harav Berl Shneibalg Shlita shlit"a

Hashem Provides!

If we only look around with our eyes open, there is so much *shefa* to be found! Hashem wants to give us everything. He doesn't want to give us another loan, or the ability to repay another debt and just continue the cycle of debt. He wants to give us all our needs expansively, with a wide-open Hand.

Someone told me that, having heard in our *shiurim* about people who married off their children without getting into debt, he resolved, when his son got engaged, that he would do the same.

On the day of the engagement, he started saying the fourth *sefer* in Tehillim every single day, in utmost seriousness. He never missed a day.

Nine months later, he called me up. "This Shabbos is the *aufruf*," he said. "The wedding will be next week, with Hashem's help. All the expenses have been fully paid, without my taking even a single loan!!"

"I want to tell this over publicly," he continued, "so that everyone can know about it, and so that people can internalize that through *tefillah* and *bitachon* in the *Kol Yachol*, things can work out without a person's falling into debt."

The conclusion he drew was not news to me. *B'chassdei Hashem*, I also recently married off one of my children, and Hashem sent me everything we needed. Things can work out this way only when a couple is working in sync and with a shared goal, and there is constant talk and strengthening of *emunah* and *bitachon* in the home.

May Hashem help us all to avoid the need for *tzedakah* or loans from others. May everyone have *shefa* directly from the King of all kings; *amen*.

✕ It Saved My Son's Life ✕

I consider it a privilege to support Torah, and I do so on an annual basis, every Elul. Reb Yosef is a rosh kollel for serious yungeleit, and I am happy to give him a generous donation every year to support his kollel.

Uncharacteristically, Reb Yosef called me in the beginning of Tammuz. I wondered what he wanted, and it didn't take long to find out.

"We are in difficult straits," he told me, "and I thought of you, knowing that you always support Torah generously."

"Sure," I responded slowly, my mind churning, "I hope to match what I've done in the past this year too, for Elul."

"Well, you see," he said, hemming and hawing uncomfortably, "it would be very helpful to us if you would give your donation as soon as possible."

Though I tried to cover it up, inwardly I was feeling annoyed. Didn't he understand that this was the way I operated, taking care of my yearly donations in Elul? Why was he nudging me already now? I muttered something noncommittal like "We'll see," or "Maybe I'll be in touch." In short, I put him off.

I hung up the phone with a sour taste in my mouth. I mulled over the conversation. Why had it disturbed me so much? The fact is that this sincere rosh kollel faced pressure at the end of every month to pay his yungeleit the stipends on which their families depended, in addition to other general expenses he had for the kollel. For some reason, among all his sponsors, he thought it wise to call me. Why had I put him off?

My inner conflict between my ga'avah ("Don't tell me how and when to make my donations. Just say thank you when I make them my way") and the truth (It really is a zechus for me to be able to support Torah. I should thank him) did not last too long. Thankfully, the truth won out, and I resolved to make the donation as soon as I could.

It took me some time to get the kollel's account number. That Friday at 10 a.m., I made my donation of 1,800 shekels directly

into the kollel's account. Though I usually refrain from doing anything money-related on Fridays, this was different. It was tzedakah – a zechus, and I did it gladly.

Shabbos passed, and on Motzaei Shabbos I got a call from my son. He told me a hair-raising story. Early Friday morning, he'd decided on the spur of the moment to go on a hike with a friend. They were both responsible, taking along water and supplies, and the route was one they knew well. They followed the signs as they climbed, but somehow, at some point, they veered off the path without even noticing, until suddenly they reached a dangerous area. The path was extremely rocky and narrow, and there was a cliff on both sides. The danger of falling into the abyss below was very real. They had no way of turning back or calling for help. Only Hashem could help them. They inched forward, crawling in terrified silence until they passed the dangerous area. Baruch Hashem, their lives were spared.

On Shabbos morning they both bentched gomel in shul.

My son told me this story in detail, and I was completely shaken up.

"What time was it when all this happened?" I asked him.

"It was ten o'clock," he responded.

My mind flitted back to what I had been doing at that hour, and I could see myself, as if in slow motion, standing there in the middle of my dining room, totally unaware that my son's life was in peril, making a transfer of 1,800 shekels into the kollel's account – giving tzedakah, which saves lives. I realized that although the truth had won out, I still felt, as I was making the transfer, that I was doing the rosh kollel a favor. Little did I know that Hashem had sent the rosh kollel to call me in order to save my son's life.

✕ Sold to Someone Else ✕

Shmeul Steinharter from Manchester related:

Everyone knows how hard it is to get a good camera for a reasonable price these days. I had a camera that we were putting to good use, until one day on a family trip the camera got lost. We searched and searched, going

back to the park several times in the hope of finding it. Finally, we gave up. Now I was looking for a good secondhand camera at decent price – not an easy thing to find, as I said.

It was a cold, blustery morning when I entered the beis midrash for my regular 6 a.m. minyan for Shacharis. My eyes strayed to the wall filled with notices in the entryway to the beis midrash. The word “camera” stood out, and I immediately moved closer, to read the notice. On a small memo paper someone had written “Excellent secondhand camera for sale.” A phone number was listed below. I quickly pulled out a pen and a pad of paper and jotted down the number. Then I went inside to daven.

Immediately after Shacharis, as I was walking out of the beis midrash, before I even entered my car, I was dialing the number. It was a little before 8 a.m., but I figured it was worth a try, as I was rushing to get that camera before someone else grabbed it.

The man picked up after two rings, his voice wide awake and alert. When he heard it was about the camera, he perked up even more. I asked a number of technical questions about the model number and condition of the camera, and I received very satisfactory responses. I asked if I could come to see the camera, and he gave me his home address. We arranged that I’d come later that day, during my lunch break.

At exactly 1 p.m. my phone rang. It was the seller of the camera, telling me not to bother coming. A couple of hours earlier he’d sold the camera to another person who’d asked about it the previous evening. All our talk had been for naught. The camera was sold – sold to someone else.

What a pity; what a waste of time, I thought to myself at first. But the next minute, I caught myself. Thank you, Hashem, I thought. You’re teaching me a great lesson through this. I played back the events of the morning and saw myself, still bundled up from the cold, on my way in to daven Shacharis, stopping by the notice to read it and jotting down the number. I thought back to my Shacharis that morning, when, as I davened, I kept a note in the back of my mind to call the seller as soon as I could. Hashem was showing me that I made a mistake – a person should not take care of his personal business before davening.

This story caused me to think about my mistake and to learn a vital lesson, and to accept upon myself not to deal with any personal business before davening.

Several days later, Hashem arranged a camera for me – not for half the price of the original one, but actually, for free! But that is just an addendum to this story...

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

I want to share with you something that happened to me. I think there is no better forum to relate how Hashem’s hashgachah manifested itself in my life.

A few months ago, our granddaughter got married in Bnei Brak. We arrived in the city a bit early, and I decided to go into Lederman’s shul to learn until it was time for the chuppah.

Later, in the hall, I realized that my glasses were missing. I searched for them everywhere, and I even called the driver who had brought us to Bnei Brak, to inquire whether they were left in the car. Nothing.

Several months passed, and once again we had a wedding in Bnei Brak. On the morning of the wedding, it came to my attention that an acquaintance of ours was in difficult financial straits, and I gave him 200 dollars that I

had in cash at home.

Once again, we arrived in Bnei Brak a bit early, and I went to Lederman’s shul to sit and learn before the wedding. Incredibly enough, I noticed my glasses lying on a shelf in the shul, as though they were simply waiting all these months for me to come and take them!

The glasses are worth 700 shekels, which was approximately the amount of tzedakah I had given earlier that day.

I feel no further comment is necessary.

Thank you for your newsletter, which gives me so much chizuk.

**Respectfully yours,
Yitzchak Weiss, Yerushalayim.**

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



Five Shekels in Change

My name is Avi, and I live in Beitar.

Today as I was walking to cheder I had this niggling feeling in my head that I was forgetting something important. I just knew something was off, but no matter how hard I tried, I could not remember what it was. That uncomfortable feeling accompanied me all the way to my classroom, and when I walked in, I smacked my forehead in consternation. Most of my friends were already in place, and many of them had brand-new notebooks opened on their desks, ready to take notes on the new Gemara we were starting to learn.

So that's what it was! Yesterday, Rabbi told us – no, he actually instructed us quite sternly – to make sure we had the new notebooks we would need for the Gemara we were starting today. I had planned on buying the notebook in the evening, but somehow, the whole thing simply slipped out of my mind.

What would I do? Well, at that point there really was nothing to be done other than to deal with the horrible feeling of missing out. I took notes on a sheet of paper someone was kind enough to lend me, and in answer to my Rabbi's questioning glance, I blushed red and said I would buy the notebook for the next day.

Many other things happened in the course of the day, as they always do. When the final bell rang at the end of the day, no one was happier than I was. For some reason, it hadn't been the best of days for me. I started walking home on my usual route, which takes me down a long street filled with all types of stores, and suddenly I stopped in front of a store of school supplies, the events of the morning coming back to me all at once. The notebook! I had to buy it. For tomorrow. Before I forgot and made a fool of myself again. I entered the store and found a notebook, which cost 5 shekels. I rummaged through my pockets, searching for some change, but I came up with only a few agurot. What now? Going home and then coming back would be a hassle. I just wanted to know that the notebook was in my schoolbag, ready and waiting for the next day.

Then a light bulb went off in my head. My afternoon



Rebbi had collected money that day – 15 shekels from each boy, for an upcoming trip. I had given him the 20 shekel bill that my mother gave me, and he'd given me back 5 shekels in change. I knew just where those 5 shekels were – safely in the inner pocket of my schoolbag.

As I opened the bag and took out the coin to pay for the notebook, I felt that Hashem was with me, guiding and watching me even on this not-so-great day, and always easing the way for me.

Wonder with a Ball

The latest hit for us kids in Beit Shemesh is the "wonder ball," a colorful rubber ball that bounces really high and is great for all sorts of games. My brother and I took to bouncing our ball around the house all afternoon, chasing each other in our attempts to catch the ball before the other caught it. We were having lots of fun.

Actually, for me it wasn't just fun; it was also a great distraction from my problem. My name is Yumi Rabinowitz, by the way, and it is my pleasure to tell you nifla'os Hashem: how my "wonder ball" did something really wonderful and solved my problem. My problem was: My rabbi had insisted that all our tests be signed by a parent and returned to him the following day. I came home with my test, my mother signed it, and an hour later, when I wanted to place it in my schoolbag,

it was nowhere to be found. N-o-w-h-e-r-e. My mother encouraged me to keep looking through the house. "The test doesn't have feet," she said. "And it certainly didn't walk off. Besides, it's very improbable that anyone in the house would have thrown it out. It must be somewhere around here." But the test was lost, and I was in no mood to keep looking. So, as I said, playing with the "wonder ball" was a great distraction from my problem. We bounced and ran breathlessly into each other and into all the far corners of the house, where the ball rolled and bounced and disappeared, only to reappear in one of our hands.

My brother threw the ball really high, and it began bouncing down the hallway, all the way into a far corner in the back of the girls' room. I took off in hot pursuit of the ball and pounced on it, picked it up from the floor, and right there, lying underneath it...I discovered my test!



Dear kids!

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

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

Notices

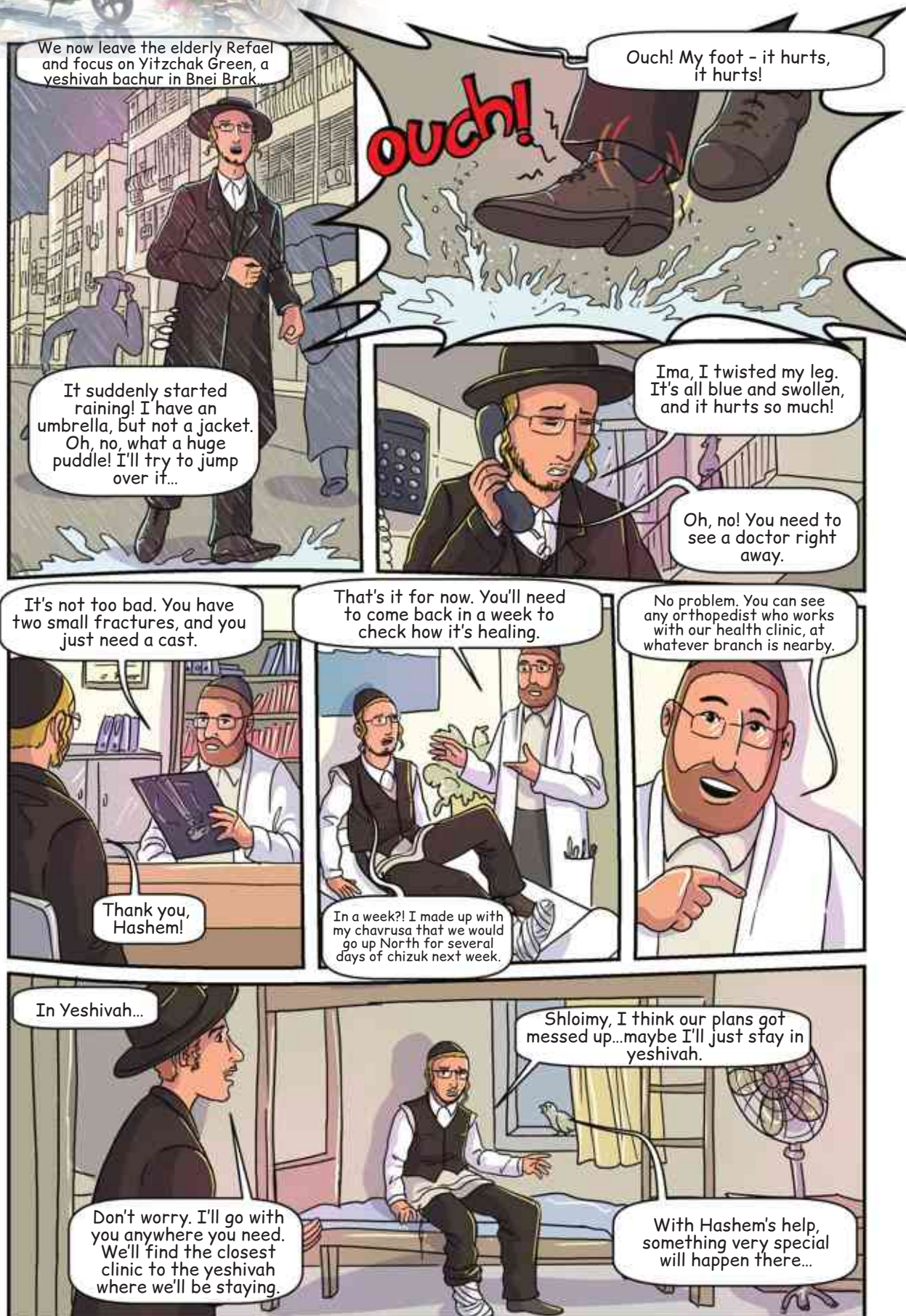
Did you see Hashem's *hashgacha* clearly in your own life?

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

It All Adds Up

Chapter 3

Last week: Our story began in the year 1941. In the past, Refael'ke was saved from the monastery, but he was brought up by Israeli secularists. Today he is an old man, and he suddenly yearns to connect to his departed parents.



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.**

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