

HASHGACHA PRATIS

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



Succos 5785 ■ Issue 149

HEART TO HEART

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

Hashem, Do What Is Good in Your Eyes

A Yid is walking in a dangerous place, where there are packs of dangerous animals and where a war is going on. His tension mounts; he cannot concentrate. The time comes to daven, but he isn't capable of davening properly. What is the halachah? What should he do?

Rambam teaches (*Hilchos Tefillah*, ch. 4) that he should say one *brachah*: "May it be your will, Hashem, to give each person his sustenance and to each man what he is lacking, and do that which is good in Your Eyes. Blessed are you Hashem...*shomeia tefillah*."

Kesef Mishneh cites the words of Rabbeinu Mano'ach and explains the words "do that which is good in Your Eyes." Essentially, what we are saying is: Don't do what is good in *my* eyes, since I do not know what is good. Rather, do what is good in Your Eyes, for You, Hashem, know everything, from the beginning until the end of time. You know each person to the innermost depths of his soul. You know the past, present and future. Therefore, whatever You, the Creator *yisbarach*, understand should be – that is the best thing to do.

The request that Hashem do what is

good in His Eyes is not an easy one to make. By nature, a small child who sees his father withholding a sweet snack from him will cry and scream and ask for more. While the father knows that this food could cause him a dangerous allergic reaction, the child does not understand this. However, when the child grows and becomes wiser and more understanding, he will ask on his own: "Abba, I'm asking you to safeguard me and not to give me this food. Please, give me only what is good for me."

This is a wise and mature outlook; it is the request of one who has total trust in his Father. This request is unique to the chosen nation, to Yidden alone. This distinction is found in Yitzchak Avinu, as well as in Shlomo Hamel-ech.

Yitzchak gave the *brachos* to Yaakov, the chosen Forefather – those same special *brachos* that Rivka, through her *ruach hakodesh*, knew were appropriate specifically for the son who would become the father of our nation. This is the *brachah* that Yitzchak gave: "And *Elokim* shall give you..." Considering that he was speaking about a *brachah*, why

FROM THE EDITOR

We Don't Take It for Granted

A person is walking in the desert and sees a poor child lying in the sand crying, abandoned by his parents. He immediately takes the child into his home and brings him up as one of his own children. He invests his heart, his soul and his money in the child. This merciful Yid then hears about an even sadder story. There is an innocent Jew who is sitting in jail due to false allegations leveled against him by his enemy.

Once again, this kind Yid rushes to the rescue. He speaks to the heart of the jailed man's enemy and succeeds in getting the Jew released. This good-hearted Yid then receives a huge gift along with a lengthy letter filled with expressions of gratitude, with signatures of the entire family and countless friends of the man he helped release from jail.

Suddenly, this good Yid has a question: If for a favor in which I invested maybe five hours I receive so much recognition and gratitude, where is the child who has long ago become a young man? In him I invested so much more! I gave him my time, my money, and my *kochos hanefesh*. Where is *his* gratitude?

This is a story that the *Chovos Halevavos* brings (in the beginning of *Shaar Habechinah*) to explain why we often fail to recognize the good that Hashem does for us and to thank Him for it.

When a person gets used to something, he comes to expect it, as if it's coming to him naturally. He takes it for granted and doesn't even think he's receiving something – it's already his.

We have gone through a year of tremendous miracles. Dozens of times throughout the past year, the enemies of Am Yisrael on all sides were sure that they'd succeed, *R"l*, in killing us and destroying our nation. Again and again, we see how Hakadosh Baruch Hu saves us from their hands. Let us thank Hakadosh Baruch Hu together! Here are the numbers:

Over 20,000 missiles were fired at us from Gaza.
Over 9,000 missiles were fired at us from Lebanon and Syria.

Almost 500 missiles were fired at us from Iran.
About 200 missiles were fired at us from Yemen.

And Hashem saves us from their hands again and again. We have become accustomed to the fact that missiles fly and there are no casualties. Bombs are detonated and no harm occurs.

What Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants from us is that we not become accustomed to this, but rather that we accustom ourselves to giving thanks and recognizing all the good that our merciful Father did and does for us all the time.

May we be zocheh to a gemar chasimah tovah and a good Yom Tov.

Pinchas Shefer

The shiur is aired on Mon. and Thurs. - menu 4 (Yiddish and Hebrew)

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Yiddish, Hebrew, English.

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• Kav Hashgacha Pratis for women
(Yiddish and Hebrew) - Menu 4

THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgacha pratis, as told on the hotline

Are You Sure It's the Same Tooth?

Quite some time ago I had a root canal treatment. On Friday it started hurting me a lot, and the crown was loose. I tried calling the dentist, but they weren't available to help me. In pain, I turned to the Healer of all flesh and davened that Shabbos would pass without any problems.

Baruch Hashem, the pain ceased in honor of the holy Shabbos, and on Sunday I went to the dental clinic. They took an X-ray, and the doctor told me with a serious look on his face, "You have a severe infection in your tooth. It doesn't look like we'll be able to save it. We'll extract the tooth and put an implant in its place."

In answer to my question of how much that pleasure would cost me, the doctor responded, "Four thousand five hundred shekels."

I was shocked. I am an *avreich* who hardly makes it to the end of the month. From where would I have such a sum? I don't take loans, and *baruch Hashem*, we manage from day to day. But how was I to get hold of such a huge sum? I decided to do some *hishtadlus*. I started listening to the Hashgachah Pratis phone line with greater frequency in order to get *chizuk*. I also did a *cheshbon hanefesh*. I very quickly came up with the point that I needed to fix – it's connected to taking breaks in the middle of learning. The *yetzer hara* always lures me to speak about seemingly urgent matters, and, unfortunately, I do speak some *devarim beteilim*.

I decided to strengthen myself in this matter and to stop taking these breaks in the middle of learning. I would learn without interrupting and tell the *yetzer hara* that we would speak later... This was very difficult for me, but anyone who has gotten a taste of learning nonstop already understands that the investment pays off.

Along with this *chizuk*, I also davened to Hashem to save my tooth.

A few days later, I went to a bigger expert and waited with a trembling heart to hear his diagnosis. I davened to Hashem the whole time, and then the big moment came – the doctor took an X-ray.

He looked at the X-ray intently and then said, "Nice, nice... your teeth are fine."

"So I don't need an implant?" I asked suspiciously.

"Implant? Why an implant? You have excellent

One Air Conditioner for Another

I am Yisrael Elyashiv from Ofakim. It is Elul, and we all want to accrue merits. We know that all things, whether major or minor, are going to be determined on Rosh Hashanah.

In our *beis midrash* they're collecting money for air conditioners. An air conditioner in the *beis midrash* is a lot more than just an air conditioner. Quality air conditioning means quality learning, the ability to concentrate while davening, without deterrents such as heat and sweat. Air conditioning in a *beis midrash* is a means of preparation for all the spiritual bounty that abounds there. I wanted to take part in this. How much? I didn't know yet. It was certainly on my mind, and I was trying to decide how much to donate.

Just two months ago we learned in *Daf Yomi* about Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai, who advised his relatives to give large sums to *tzedakah*, and at the year's end they were saved from the huge fine levied by the king; they paid only six *dinarim*. Then Rabban Yochanan told them that on the night of Rosh Hashanah he had dreamed that it was decreed upon them to lose the amount of money the king demanded of them, and therefore he asked them to give this amount to *tzedakah*.

I thought to myself, *We're so close to Rosh Hashanah. It would be worthwhile to give a nice amount now for the air conditioning, on the account of the expenses that were decreed that I have this year.*

I hadn't spoken about this at home yet, hadn't donated yet, and hadn't yet reached a decision, but Hashem in His mercy arranged an amazing process for me. On Shabbos night, the air conditioner in my house turned off at the time that was set on the Shabbos clock, but in the morning it didn't go back on.

I thought it was a one-time thing, maybe connected to a problem with the Shabbos clock. I didn't think the air conditioner itself had failed, but on Motzaei Shabbos, when I disconnected the Shabbos clock and tried to turn on the air conditioner, it didn't react. I called some people in the know, and they all said it sounded like something in the air conditioner was irreparably broken. I called a few repairmen, and they all gave the same "*psak*": You need to switch the circuit board inside the air conditioner, at a cost of about 800 shekels.

I realized this did not by happen by chance. There was a Heaven-sent message here. Since in shul they were campaigning for air conditioners, and in my heart I wanted to contribute, but I hadn't decided how much, I was being rushed from on High to contribute my part. I immediately called the *gabbai* and told him, "I'm donating an air conditioner! Not part of one, but a whole one."

I wasn't surprised by the end of the story. I called another technician, and he asked me, "Did you try turning on the air-conditioner?"

"Yes."

"Then you see there...," and he explained exactly where I was to place my finger. "Press that button for a long time."

I pressed the button, and the miracle happened before my eyes: The air conditioner went back on as though nothing was wrong. The following Shabbos we enjoyed a cool, air-conditioned room, knowing that we had merited to receive a personal message from Hashem: One air conditioner for another.

How Much Are the Beams Worth?

I have a fold-up sukkah. On the external wall of my home there is a folded iron structure that we open before Sukkos. We place wooden beams on top of the iron structure to serve as the floor of the sukkah.

I was looking for suitable wooden beams, and I saw an Arab contractor, who was expanding my neighbor's apartment, doing something with wooden beams. I thought, *Here are my beams.*

He certainly wouldn't need all of them for the expansion, and even if so, he could bring us new ones tomorrow. He had contact with suppliers that sell building materials, while I had no idea about anything. It would be much easier to buy from someone who brings it all close to home, even if I'd pay a bit more for it.

I approached the Arab contractor and asked him how much he wanted for the beams.

He answered, "Give me 400 shekels, and we have a deal."

He made a good impression, and I decided to buy them.

The next day the Arab contractor told me, "It's not worth it for me to sell them at that price. The cost is 500 shekels."

Five hundred? I would need to think about this again. What had the Arab told me the day before? "Four hundred shekels, and we have a deal." Not 400 – no deal.

That same day I met some people who told me those beams were probably not se-

On the giving end

There is a donor who calls from time to time in order to increase the amount of money he donates monthly toward the dissemination of emunah. He told us that he does this each time he needs a yeshuah, and he has been zocheh to see many yeshuos as a result. The last time he called, he had a problem with taxes involving a large sum of money, and he saw a yeshuah with that issue as well.

On the receiving end

I listen consistently to the stories people tell, and each story I hear gives me a lot of *chizuk*. I want to thank you for the changes you recently made regarding how the stories are presented. They are presented in a clear and pleasant way that helps one focus on them. Thank you, and thank you to the *mezakei harabbim* who tell their stories on the phone line.

Hashgachah Pratis in Sifrei Kodesh Hashgachah Pratis in the Sefarim Hakedoshim

The Mitzvah of Sukkah Comes to Arouse the Middah of Bitachon

The meaning of this is that the mitzvah of *sukkah* comes to teach us that a person should not place his trust in his home and its strength...even if his home is filled with everything good. He should not trust in the help of any person, even if the person is the ruler of the country; rather, he should place his trust in He Whose words created the world's reality – for only He has the ability, and when He promises something, He doesn't rescind His promise.... And we should seek protection from Him alone....

The mitzvah of *sukkah* comes after the ingathering of the silo and the vineyard in Eretz Yisrael, in order to arouse us to this truth. This time of year [has the potential to be] a time when people neglect *emunah*. All the storage houses are filled, and the person is in his own home and city, and he has repaired his roof and strengthened his home to protect himself from rain and wind and other possible harm. Therefore, the Torah commands him to leave his strong home and to sit in the sukkah, so that he will be aroused to place his trust in Hashem *yisbarach*, and he will pay attention to the fact that everything that came from the field – it all came with the will of Hashem.

This is hinted to by the fact that the sukkah is made from the remains of the silo and the winepress. This serves to remind him that he reaped fruit to eat, and the remains are also used [as *sechach*] for the sukkah, [as we have all this] only because Hashem made it rain; and then he'll remember that whatever protects him, and all his possessions, come only from Hashem *yisbarach* and not from his own actions....
(Menoras Hama'or, Ner 3, unit 4, section 6, ch. 1)

Sukkah Alludes to Emunah

"For all seven days, a person makes his sukkah primary and his home secondary" (*Sukkah* 28a).

"*Sukkah*" refers to *emunah*, and it is the canopy of *emunah*. So long as a person hasn't fully perfected the "seven middos," he must follow the path of *emunah peshutah*, and he cannot follow a path of *emunah* on the basis of his intellect. That's why the Mishnah says, "for all seven days," implying that so long as he is still in the process of perfecting the seven middos and hasn't yet perfected them all, "a person

makes his sukkah" – which is simple faith – primary. It should be a well-established feature of his life, "and his home" – meaning his intellect, as it says (*Mishlei* 24:3), "with wisdom a home is built" – secondary.

(Ohr Yisrael by Harav Hakadosh Reb Yisrael of Sadigura, p. 248)

In Fulfilling the Mitzvah of Sukkah, One Shows that He Believes in Hashem

In *Yalkut Shimoni* on *Parshas Emor* it is written regarding the *passuk*, "And the sukkah shall be their shade during the day": If someone fulfills the mitzvah of *sukkah* in this world, Hakadosh Baruch Hu protects him from harm.... Why is this the reward specifically for the mitzvah of *sukkah*? Don't all mitzvos protect us, like a shield, from evil?

Perhaps this can be understood as follows: Dovid Hamelech said (*Tehillim*

32:10), "One who trusts in Hashem will be surrounded by chessed." On the other hand, one who does not truly believe in *hashgachah* is not protected. As the Torah warns (*Vayikra* 26:23-24), "...if you shall walk with Me 'keri,' I shall walk with you 'b'keri' as well...." Rambam explains that *keri* implies that a person says that things are happenstance, and if so, Hashem in turn will leave that person to happenstance. *Sefarim hakedoshim* teach that the mitzvah of sitting in the sukkah alludes to the fact that we are trusting in the shade of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and we believe that Hashem *yisbarach* is always watching us.

This, then, is the meaning of the *Yalkut*: "Anyone who does the mitzvah of *sukkah* in this world" – through which he shows that he believes that everything happens with Hashem *yisbarach's hashgachah* – Hashem protects him from harm, and no evil will befall him.

(Kesav Sofer on the Torah, Likutim for Sukkos)

In the Shade of Emunah

Anyone who is a member of the holy nation of Am Yisrael may sit in the sukkah, under the canopy of *emunah*. And anyone who is not a member of the holy nation must not sit in it and should be removed from under the canopy of *emunah*.

Anyone who sits under the canopy of *emunah* gains freedom for himself and for his descendants forever. And anyone who removes himself from under the canopy of *emunah* gains only exile for himself and for his descendants.

The mitzvah of sitting in the sukkah, as we have explained, is in order to show that Am Yisrael sit under the canopy of *emunah*, without any fear, for the prosecutors have been removed from them. And anyone [who understands] the secret of *emunah* sits in the sukkah, as we have explained – anyone [who understands] the secret of *emunah* and is a member of Am Yisrael shall sit in the sukkah.

(Zohar Hakadosh, Parshas Emor, 103)

A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on Kav Hashgacha Pratis

During Aseres Yemei Teshuvah, we "return with teshuvah." The term chozer bit'shuvah begs explanation. To where are we returning? If the answer is that we're returning to being good, were we all good before? There are people who are drowning in evil, deeply entrenched in sin, who have been consumed with jealousy, lust, and the desire for kavod since the day they were born. Could their process of repentance be called a "return"? It would be more accurate to call it a "remaking."

Hashem set Rosh Hashanah to be the day of the creation of Adam Harishon. Adam was created "b'tzelem Elokim." This means that he was created with extraordinary kochos; he was all good, with endless gadlus, in the most perfect way.

Remember, especially during these days, that you are a tzelem Elokim – a perfect creation in every way. All you need to do is to "return" to the Rock that forged you, to repair a few mistakes, and to come back to your root. I knew someone who couldn't communicate properly

with the people around him. When they spoke to him they felt he didn't care. He seemed to be a cold person. His close family members tried to give him mussar, to get him to express more warmth and caring to the people around him, but it seemed the more they spoke about it, the worse the situation became.

Who Are You Really?

And then, one day everything changed and his aloofness was transformed into warmth. He became a person who cared and exuded empathy and love to everyone around him. What happened?

Very simple – a smart man told him, "The real truth is that by nature you're warm and kind." He proved to him that in certain situations, when he's forced to reveal some warmth, he is able to do so. When the man heard this, he changed his outlook about himself and made a tremendous improvement.

The yetzer hara works hard to make us forget who we truly are; we need to overcome this, and to know our great strengths.

May we be zocheh to do complete teshuvah, to create ourselves anew and to serve Hashem with all our heart.



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