

HASHGACHAH PRATIS

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



Parshas Tazria Metzora - Acharei Mot Kedoshim 5784 ■ Issue 162

HEART TO HEART

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

A Secure and Profitable Investment

The question regarding the obligation of *hishtadlus* is a serious matter. What does a Yid need to do in order to have *parnassah*? Rabbenu Bachyai determines in Chapter 4 that one must do *hishtadlus* in order to acquire what is necessary for the basic daily needs of his home. For example, what does one need on Tuesday, the eighth of Iyar? Summer clothing, no sweater or coat, simple weekday meals, water and electricity. Perhaps there is some minor event in your child's school, and he needs to bring a snack as well. How much does such a day cost? How much does a week in which all the days are similar to this Tuesday cost?

Tuesday is not like Thursday or Friday, when we prepare for Shabbos and for guests; and the second week of Iyar differs completely from the third week, which includes the day of Lag Ba'Omer. Even if we don't go so far as to imagine that all the days are like Tuesday, if we consider a month without major expenses, such as Iyar or Cheshvan, we'll come to the conclusion that, according to Rabbenu Bachyai, we have the obligation to do *hishtadlus* to cover our expenses for the month – a regular month without extra expenses – for the basic needs of the house.

One should do this *hishtadlus* with what Hashem has sent his way, using a skill that suits his temperament and abilities, that is in accordance with the halachos of the *Shulchan Aruch*, and that enables him to serve Hashem, to be occupied in His Torah and to do His mitzvos.

This is where the huge question arises, the question that occupies the minds of countless people and that moves all of humanity in the ceaseless pursuit of money. *What will be when I need more money? What about mein hazmanim, and all the things you need to provide for young ones today? What about the preschool season and buying school supplies? What about Yamim Tovim? And Pesach??*

And what happens if you're *zocheh* to welcome a new baby into the family, or to have a son who becomes a bar mitzvah and needs *mehudar* tefilin, a suit and jacket and hat and a *simchas bar mitzvah*? And if you're *zocheh* to that great gift of having a *chassan* in your home, or a *kallah*? Then you need thousands of *shekalim* to spend each day!

What will happen then? How will we manage? What will we do? What is our obligation in *hishtadlus* regarding this happy future, which we pray will be only happy?

Rabbenu Bachyai calls these needs "extras"; and regarding these extras he says one word: *tevo'eihu* – it will come to him! Thus he reveals to us the

secrets of *Shamayim* and explains that if Hashem decrees these "extras" for the person, then the money to cover it will come to him without any extra exertion.

The good Father, Who is wealthier than anyone in the entire world, will send the bonus without any exertion on our part! Yes, a person will see Hashem's blessings in his own home, and he will have everything he needs.

So how is it that there are so many people who feel pressured, who are not calm, and how is it that not everyone receives his "bonus" without any effort or exertion? It is because all this depends on one condition, as Rabbenu Bachyai writes: When he trusts in Hashem for it!

And *bitachon* is a *middah* that must be acquired. There are those who start thinking about how they're going to get hold of the exorbitant sums they're going to need in the future. To them Rabbenu Bachyai says: Do you want to invest? Excellent. All the investment you planned on putting into all sorts of *hishtadlus*, which may or may not bear fruit – invest instead in learning *Shaar Habitachon*! In strengthening your *emunah*! This investment will certainly pay off.

We do not need to search for proof. There are stories about Yidden from previous generations and from our generation as well, from *talmidei chachamim*, from great and renowned *tzaddikim*, and also from seemingly simple Jews, who trusted in Hashem and got everything they needed directly from *Shamayim*, through varied means that no one could ever have imagined. Why isn't everyone *zocheh* to this? Because the difference lies in the degree of investment in learning the *sugya* of *bitachon*.

The numerical value of the word *tevo'eihu* is 420. When Yankel is missing 420 shekels, no one makes a big deal. He looks here and there and gets the money. 4,200 sounds like a slightly more serious sum. If you add another zero, this already seems like a matter that requires a campaign. And what if he needs 420,000 shekels, or 420,000 dollars? This sounds like something impossible to get hold of, and the worry and pressure can be intolerable.

But this is only from our perspective. For the Master of the world there is no difference; whether one needs an extra 420 or 420,000, it's all the same to Him. "I own the silver and I own the gold" (*Chagai* 2:8). Let us think deeply and recognize this consciously, and we'll be *zocheh* to much bounty, *brachah* and success, with all the bonuses, with much joy; *amen*.

FROM THE EDITOR

Five Thousand Shekels to Savings

I believe the following story is especially fitting as a way to give thanks to Hashem for seven years that we have been *zocheh* to bring the light of *emunah* to the world. A Yid from Kiryat Gat told me:

I gave a Yerushalmi Yid a ride in my car, and suddenly he asked me, "Do you listen to the *Hashgachah Pratis* phone line?"

I felt a bit uncomfortable about his asking me personal questions. My passenger sensed my discomfort, but he went on, "Forgive me for asking – but I simply cannot stop myself from persuading anyone I meet to listen to the phone line."

At that point I began to learn something of the life-story of my Yerushalmi passenger:

I grew up in the nightmare known as *debt*. My father was heavily in debt, and I suffered terribly from it. I decided that this would not happen to me.

I got married twenty years ago *bs"d*, and ever since then I have lived thrifly. I saved money in every possible way. For instance, on Shabbos I would give my children only a half portion of fish; and I had all sorts of other ways of cutting down on expenses.

We all suffered from my extreme stinginess, and the most amazing thing was that I did not achieve my goal. Despite my constant saving and cutting down on expenses, I was not able to put aside money to avoid future debt.

This was how we lived until four years ago, when I discovered the *Hashgachah Pratis* phone line.

I started listening, and slowly, gradually, simple *emunah* was instilled in me. When I say each day in *Birkas Hamazon* that Hashem is the One Who provides and sustains and does good to all, and prepares sustenance for all the creations that He created, that is the simple truth. Hashem gives *parnassah*. He decides how much I will have and how much I will be able to put aside.

Cutting down on expenses in an extreme way would not help me. It would bring nothing other than the feeling that I was choking.

I became a normal person, and I started to act like everyone else. Today I buy several types of fish in honor of Shabbos, as befits a *ben Melech*.

And the incredible thing – which, when you listen to the phone line you know is not so incredible – is that today I succeed in putting aside 5,000 shekels every month!

"Can you now understand why I'm so excited," the Yerushalmi Yid concludes, "and why I am convincing anyone I can to connect to this amazing phone line?" What's left for us is simply to thank Hakadosh Baruch Hu for seven amazing years, and to ask Him to enable us to continue spreading *emunah* throughout the entire world.

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• Kav Hashgacha Pratis for women
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THE HAND OF HASHEM

Amazing stories of hashgachah pratis, as told on the hotline

Door-to-Door Service

I got off the bus, and only after it had driven off into the distance did I notice that I had left my hat on the bus. It's not fun to lose a hat; it's an expensive item, and I could not go without it. I had to see what to do in order to get it back.

In the meantime I wore a different hat, and I called the lost and found center to try and locate the missing hat. "Your hat is in the Central Bus Station," the official answered me.

I did not want to go to the Central Bus Station, since it is a place filled with people, and there are major problems there with *shemiras einayim*. I know myself as someone who would have a really hard time managing in such a place without stumbling, so I refrained from going there.

I davened to Hashem to help me get my hat back without stumbling, and several days later the hat showed up at my house.

A Yid who had lost a suitcase had gone to the Central Bus Station to pick it up, and there he saw my hat and took it upon himself to return it to me. He saved my phone number, which was written on the hat, in his phone, and he tried to contact me no less than fifteen times. He did not receive a response, because each time, he had called during *sedarim* in *kollel*.

But he did not give up. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu wills it, even this does not stop a hat from arriving. This Yid knew my father, and he called him to ask him where I live, and he brought the hat all the way to my house!

Chessed That Rebounds

My neighbor is a wise person. In the area in which we live there is a great demand for apartments for Shabbos for all sorts of events. He was about to travel abroad, and he told me, "Look, I'm leaving my home for a long period of time, and it's a pity for my apartment to be empty when there are people looking to be hosted in the area. I'm asking you, if possible, to use the apartment whenever you need it, and also to give it to others to enjoy it until I return."

I was pleased with my neighbor's generosity. Thanks to him I was able to invite my married children for Shabbos, and to enable others to enjoy this favor as well. One day, the neighbor who lives under this neighbor's apartment realized that there was a leak coming from the apartment. "Can you check if everything there is okay?" he asked me.

I checked. Everything seemed fine, without a hint of a problem, but the next Shabbos someone stayed there, and he noticed something strange. He discovered a lot of water in the linen closet, and all the linens were wet.

I called my neighbor who was abroad and told him about the problem I'd discovered. With his permission, I took all the linens out to be washed and aired out, and thus they were saved from irreparable mildew.

This neighbor wanted to do *chedsed* for others, and at the end of the day, through this *chedsed*, he was *zocheh* to have *chedsed* done for him.

A Contract Canceled, A Contract Signed

My name is Avraham, and I live in the center of Eretz Yisrael. I bought an apartment up North at a special reduced price for first-time homeowners, and since it did not make sense for me to move there, I decided to rent it out and to use the rental money to pay the mortgage. I advertised, contacted realtors who knew the area, and waited for a call that would close a deal. I waited for a long time. I received a lot of calls, but none brought a serious tenant. The area was new and was flooded with apartments that were up for rent, and the potential tenants were hastily grabbed up by apartments no worthier than mine.

I davened to Hashem to help me, and finally, a realtor informed me that he had found a serious tenant. She had already seen the apartment and liked it. I was invited to close the deal with her!

I was very happy about the *yeshuah*, and I traveled up North to close the deal. The future tenant was a single woman who was making aliyah from the Soviet Union. She was excited about the apartment, and she signed a contract and gave twelve post-dated checks.

I concluded the deal with a good feeling, but two days later I received a strange call. On the line was the woman who had signed the contract. She had a hard time speaking Hebrew, so she asked me to speak to the person who was with her.

He took the phone and introduced himself.

"I am the woman's lawyer. She said she was going to move in to your apartment, but then she realized that the contract she has for her current apartment is still valid, and she cannot cancel it."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that she needs to continue paying rent in the place where she's living now. She signed a contract there for a year, and she cannot cancel it."

"But she signed a contract with me as well."

"Right, but she can't cancel the previous one. You have to understand. She doesn't speak Hebrew, did not exactly understand the contents of the contract, and when her current landlord heard that she wanted to move, he explained that it was really not possible, and her contract obligated her for another few months."

I understood. This woman could not really rent my apartment, even though she had signed a contract and I had been completely honest. "You can sue her," the lawyer reminded me, "and demand the annulment fee."

Yes, I could demand reparations, and it would be completely justified, but how could I do this to a lonely woman, who probably did not have much money either?

I told him, "Fine, I understand that the contract is canceled, and regarding reparations – I'll think about it." But at that moment I already knew that I would not think any more about it.

I would forgo it completely and hope that Hashem would help me. He has done so much good to me. Not everyone gets an apartment at a reduced price. How much I had to thank Hashem for this!

I strengthened myself in *bitachon* and hurried to post new ads about the apartment for rent. On that same day I got a call. "Tell me," the man asked eagerly, "is it possible that the apartment for rent is in the middle building?"

"Yes," I answered.

"And it is available for rent?"

"It is."

"What *hashgachah pratis*! We want to rent it!"

And then my new tenant revealed that he had been living in a rented apartment in that same building. He liked the area and wanted to continue living there. When the time came to renew his contract, the landlord told him that he was planning to sell the apartment.

"I didn't know what to make of this news," the tenant told me. "We'd already invested in the apartment – we bought furniture to suit the layout of the apartment. We thought we would stay there for many years. And now, suddenly, we had to move. Your apartment is simply a miracle for us. It is the exact size of the apartment we live in now. The furniture fits, and everything works out perfectly!"

He was happy about his *hashgachah pratis*, and I was happy about my *hashgachah pratis*.

On the giving end

I own an apartment that I rent out, and lately it has been empty; there have been no tenants. As anyone in the know will tell you, this is not merely a lack of income; it is a tremendous loss. The bank payments don't wait for you to find a tenant; they are deducted from your account every month. In light of this situation, I decided to strengthen myself in *emunah* and *bitachon* in Hashem, and also to encourage others to do so. Therefore, I donated money toward the dissemination of *emunah* and *bitachon* in an entire city, in order to merit a *yeshuah*. Then the unbelievable occurred – we found a tenant who signed a long-term rental contract on the apartment.

On the receiving end

In contrast to many people, who view the days before Pesach as a time of joy and renewal, for me these days are seared into my memory as days of difficulty and tension. The pressure involved in cleaning the house thoroughly, the exhausting run between stores for food and clothing, and mostly, the ceaseless worry about organizing the finances – all turned the days of Erev Yom Tov into an annual nightmare. Last year, however, I discovered your phone line. The *shiurim* and stories I heard on the line gave me a feeling of security and serenity I had never known before. From a financial aspect as well, I was able to cover all the expenses in a very surprising way. I have no words to express my thanks.

Who Makes the Appointments?

At 9:05 a.m. my mother-in-law called me. "Do me a favor and go over to the *shver*. Tell him he has an appointment at the Interior Ministry at 9:20. He should take a taxi right away to the office in Har Chomah."

My father-in-law was near a shul at the time, in a place where there is no phone service, which is why my mother-in-law was trying to reach him through me. I understood the urgency of the matter. My father-in-law travels every year before Purim to the United States, where he is *mezakeh* the *rabbim* in the mitzvah of *tzedakah*. This year he had to renew his passport, and due to all sorts of hurdles, the matter had been delayed until now. The appointment at *Misrad Hapnim* was truly urgent, and I was sure my father-in-law would hurry to do as his wife had suggested.

However, the moment I told him about it, he said, "What? An appointment at 9:20? But I haven't davened yet. First I'll daven, and afterwards we'll see what to do. Please tell Ima that I cannot go to Har Chomah right now."

I felt a bit strange about my job of passing the messages between them, but Hakadosh Baruch Hu helped, and the minute I left the building I got an incoming call from my mother-in-law. "Tell the *shver* that they rescheduled the appointment for 10:30."

As we say, one doesn't lose out from being *makpid* on davening.

The Crying Stopped

We sent my daughter Saraleh, a sweet, charming girl, to a wonderful *gan*. Everything was totally fine until the day she started crying that she didn't want to go to *gan*. We thought this was a passing phenomenon. We persuaded her to go by giving her a small treat, and she somehow got to *gan*.

When my wife came to take Saraleh home, the *morah* told her that Saraleh had cried the whole time. It seemed strange, but we thought it was a one-time thing; it happens.

The next day, Saraleh made problems again, and the day afterward as well. She sat and cried, or yelled angrily, or simply stared into space without doing anything at all. Saraleh turned into a bitter, angry child who hated *gan* and fought us each morning anew.

After Purim the *morah* informed us she was not willing to continue this way. "After Pesach Saraleh cannot continue here." This was a very painful verdict, both for the *morah* and for us, but we understood the *morah*, who was suffering terribly from Saraleh's behavior.

I told my wife, "We need to strengthen our *emunah*." We sat down to learn the *sefer Shaar Habitachon*, and twenty minutes later, my wife recalled an old story.

Two years ago, she had a *gan* of her own, and for personal reasons she closed down the *gan* and gave it over to her cousin, who lived in our area. Some of the parents continued sending their children to the *gan* that had been transferred to her cousin, and some sent to other *ganim*. Among the children in that *gan*, there was one child who cried a lot. My wife told her cousin about this and said, "It's not so simple to manage with this child."

This cousin absorbed the words of *lashon hara*, and when the parents wanted to register their child in the new *gan*, she refused to accept the child. She claimed that in any case she had to get all the children reoriented and get them to relearn the system in *gan*. She could not take upon herself a project of this sort – a girl who cried excessively.

The child was not accepted in *gan*, and my wife had no idea what happened afterward. Did things work out for her in another *gan*? Perhaps not? She needed to ask for forgiveness from the parents of that child.

We got hold of the family's phone number, and my wife called them. She tried to reach them several times, and only after repeated attempts did the mother of the child finally answer the phone.

The mother immediately understood the purpose of the call, and she said, "Forgive? Why should I forgive? I absolutely do not forgive! You have no idea how difficult things were for us then."

And my wife said, "Actually, I do have an idea." She told her about our challenge with Saraleh's behavior. She apologized again and again from the depths of her heart and begged the mother of the child to forgive her. After twenty minutes of this difficult conversation, one that was filled with hurt feelings, the mother agreed to forgive her, and they wished each other *nachas* from their children.

Half an hour after that conversation, my wife decided to call Saraleh's *gan*. "How is Sarala?" she asked the *morah*.

And the *morah* answered as expected: "I'll tell you the truth, I don't know what happened to Saraleh, but I must tell you that I do not remember her acting this way for a long time. Half an hour ago she started smiling, playing and participating, exactly as she always had in the beginning of the year. If she continues this way, she can certainly continue in our *gan* after Pesach."

The *morah* did not know about the phone conversation that changed the world.

Without Tefillah There Is No "Flour"

Today I woke up late – just when I had so much more work to do than on any other day. I work as a *mashgiach* in a bakery. Normally, my work begins along with that of the other workers. They do their work, and I supervise and ensure that it is done properly, with kosher ingredients from which challah was taken, as well as *terumos* and *ma'asros* and many other important nuances and *hakpados*, in order to give buyers the highest standards in kashrus.

Today my work was supposed to begin earlier, because today there was a new supply of flour coming in, and I'm the one who needs to check it and see that it is clean of any infestation. Already a few days ago they informed me that on this day I would need to be at the bakery before all the other workers.

And specifically today I was running late, and I still hadn't davened. At first I thought I would daven in the *shteiblach*, say the words quickly and gather the requisite *kaddeishim* from various minyanim. *Barchu* from here, *kaddish* from there, *kedushah* from another minyan, and so on until I would have fulfilled my daily quota. Thus it would turn out that I had davened quickly and responded to all the *kaddeishim*, and also I came on time...

But I instinctively felt this was wrong. What sort of davening was this? I put aside all my *cheshbonos* and went to daven calmly, from beginning to end, in one minyan.

Immediately after davening I arrived at the factory, where they informed me apologetically that they had made a mistake. They thought they had used up the flour they had, but in truth there was still enough flour, and I could take care of the new flour on a different day.

It was truly exciting to see how Hakadosh Baruch Hu arranged everything so that I would be able to daven properly.

We Daven for Everything

I was *zocheh* to have such a pleasant guest! My nephew showed up unexpectedly for Shabbos, and I was truly happy he came. "How good that you came!" I told him. "We have food aplenty and also a room for you to sleep. The only thing I'm missing is a bed, but I'll get one for you right away." I called my brother-in-law, who lives nearby, and asked him if he could lend me a folding bed.

He answered that I could, but when I went over to pick up the bed I noticed that it was crooked and the mattress was very thin. Perhaps you could call the thing a bed, but sleeping on it was not really possible.

I went home and told my nephew that I was a bit frustrated; I still did not have a bed for him. "By us, we daven for everything," my nephew told me simply. "Daven to Hashem that you should have a bed."

I adopted his simple idea. How hadn't I thought of it myself? I davened to Hashem to get me a bed quickly. Afterward, I left the house to run several errands, and on the way back, at the entrance to my building I met a neighbor and asked him, "Do you perhaps have a folding bed for my guest?"

"Yes!" was the neighbor's response.

A simple and necessary answer, the fruit of the simple idea of my young, beloved nephew. *Baruch Hashem*, we had a bed for our guest as well as a nice story about the power of *tefillah* to tell the children at the Shabbos table.

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Hashgochah Pratis in Sifrei Kodesh

Hashgachahh Pratis in the Sefarim Hakedoshim

He Receives Wisdom in Order to Have Parnassah

Even if someone is wise, he should not think that he has gained his wealth through his wisdom, or that through his wisdom he will manage even in a year of drought, and even if he sins. Things do not work that way. Rather, as long as Hashem decreed that he would gain his *parnassah* through his wisdom, he was granted the wisdom through which he earned his *parnassah*. Despite a person's intelligence, he would not have been able to acquire any wealth if the Creator had decreed poverty upon him.

A person might have to perform many good deeds before Hashem decrees that he can gain wealth through his wisdom; and He decrees exactly how much wealth he will earn and how long he will have it, based on his deeds.

(Based on Ha'emunah V'habitachon L'Ramban, ch. 22)

It Was Decreed That He Have Parnassah According to His Wisdom

There are three types of decrees: Sometimes it is specifically decreed for a person that he will be wealthy, and this happens regardless of his efforts. Likewise, if it is decreed for him that he will live and be healthy, then even if he goes through water or fire he will escape unharmed. And if it is decreed him that he be poor or die or suffer, then too, all his efforts to avoid this will be in vain, for he will not be able to nullify the Heavenly decree.... However, it is possible that it was decreed in *Shamayim* that his life and peace and wealth will be subject to the laws of nature, based on his acumen, *hishdallus*, and choices.... Therefore, a person should engage in work and use his intelligence to determine what course is best to bring home sustenance for his family and to safeguard his health, and then Hashem will give it to him.

(Based on Pelle Yo'etz, entry Da'as)

Wisdom and Wealth

The holy Munkatcher Rebbe zy"ta (Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Munkatch) often remarked that most people believe that

a wealthy man is wise. We have observed people who were once simple and unlearned, but once they became wealthy they were suddenly endowed with wisdom. This is in accordance with the words of the *Zohar*, which says that wisdom lies where there is plenty. And therefore, once he is given his *parnassah* amply, he becomes wise in our eyes.

Someone asked me: If so, why does the *passuk* state, "Not to the wise will be bread"? And I answered him: This is referring to the flawed belief that "it is my wisdom and the talents of my hand that brought me this wealth." This is not so. But it is true that when Hashem decrees wealth upon a person, he is granted wisdom as well.

(Divrei Torah, fifth edition, p. 96)

Circumstances Are Dictated by Him

When we see someone succeeding in business, our first thoughts about it are that he is capable, that he understands his business well, that he has a great deal of energy, and so on. It is important for us to realize that we mask our lack of *emunah* by constantly using expressions like *baruch Hashem*, *b'eizras Hashem*, and *im yirtzeh Hashem*. The truth is that our thinking is based on nature alone, without taking Hashem's *hashgachah* into account. This is proof that our *emunah* is, unfortunately, lacking. As the *passuk* states (*Yeshayahu* 29:13) "With his mouth and with his lips he honored Me, but his heart is distant from Me."

We must work on strengthening *emunah* in our hearts, and on learning, first of all, that whatever happens and whatever talents a person possesses are from Hashem, and He is the One Who dictates what will happen. All natural explanations are actually Hashem's decrees being carried out, and if someone succeeds, it is not because he was wise, but only because Hashem wanted him to succeed and therefore granted him that wisdom.

(Based on Michtav Me'Eliyahu, Volume I, p. 182)



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A Thought on Bitachon

From the shiurim on Kav Hashgachah Pratis

Pesach was an exalted Yom Tov, filled with moments of spiritual elation, when we felt the closeness to Hashem. Now that it is over we feel a sense of loss, as though something very precious has come to its conclusion. But this is an illusion. The truth is that the Yom Tov is not over. It is still shining. Throughout the Yom Tov, tremendous *kochos* were implanted in each of our souls, Heavenly *kedushah* and lights that shine. Now the time has come to harvest their sweet fruits. In yeshivos and *kollelim*, the summer *zeman* begins on Rosh Chodesh Iyar. It is not coincidental that we return to learning right after Nissan. The timing is precise, set from on High. After holy *kochos* were implanted in us on the Yom Tov of Pesach, it is the best time to devote ourselves to Torah learning. Our minds are prepared to absorb the learning with new *da'as*, to acquire new understanding and to be *mechadesh chiddushim*.

This is brought in the *Sefer Ma'or Vashamesh (Parshas Shemini)*, which explains that people had the practice of learning halachah in extra depth on Rosh

Excerpts from the popular shiur by
Harav Hatzaddik R' Beirish Shneebalg shlita

Harvesting the Fruit

Chodesh Iyar and on Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan. This is because we were endowed with an extra measure of Heavenly holiness on Yom Tov, making these months more potent for the absorption of Torah. They used this as a test: If they found that they now understood what they learned on a deeper level, and they succeeded in discovering more *chiddushim* than they had during the rest of the year, this was a sign that they had absorbed the *kedushah* of the Yom Tov that passed.

Moreover, we are now in the midst of *sefiras ha'omer*, a time that completes the Yom Tov of Pesach. On the night of Yom Tov, we were *zocheh* to receive a gift of tremendous spiritual strengths, but these were taken from us just after we received them. Now, during the days of *sefirah*, we bring them back to us through our *avodah* of these days, and in this way we will be *zocheh* to come to the Yom Tov of Shavuot – to *Matan Torah* – holy and pure, and ready to receive the holy Torah.