

# Bitachon in Business



A PRIORITY-1 PUBLICATION

Dear Friend,

Before I begin, I want to thank you for an uplifting and unique experience. I returned home energized and inspired, as I hope you did. My family is very grateful to you and for that matter, your family, for the wonderful experience.

The following is a review of some of the thoughts we discussed that are pertinent to the basics of our daily existence. I suggest we review them regularly and I hope we can eventually make them available to others.

The basis of our existence is the realization of the concept “Ein Od Milvado.” There is nothing besides Him – Hashem is the ultimate Controller, Conductor, Facilitator and, of course, Creator and Owner of everything and every occurrence in existence, past, present and future.

I just received an email, which conveys this idea. Allow me to share it with you.

To: You  
Date: Today  
From: G-d – the Boss!  
Subject: Yourself  
Reference: Life!

This is G-d. Today I will be handling ALL of your problems for you. I do not need your help. So, have a nice day. I love you.

G-d

To internalize this concept, however, and to make it a constant awareness of our conscious minds and a deep-rooted ever-present feeling in our hearts, requires much ongoing effort.

Truth be told, since everything is decided and decreed by Hashem on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, if we were to do absolutely nothing the entire year, this lesson of “there is nothing beside Him” might be very effectively learned. However, such behavior would be inappropriate on many different grounds.

First of all, man would not have all of the opportunities to do good and the tests of his will to stay away from evil, if he did not have to put in all sorts of efforts to achieve his portion.

Secondly, man would undoubtedly pursue many more inappropriate paths and desires if he were not busy just trying to achieve the basics in his life (Perek Gimmel – Chovos Halevavos, Shaar Habitachon).

Besides, Hashem wants us to live in the natural world and not rely on miracles. It could be that when everything comes through obvious miracles, eventually we begin to take things for granted and might even begin forgetting the Source, from where these miracles come. When, however, we have to put in all sorts of efforts and subsequently discover Hashem’s intervention, the ongoing suspense and struggle keep us more focused on Hashem as the ultimate source of all blessing.

It may be that a person can reach such heights of closeness and trust in Hashem, that he can stay safe from this danger just by maintaining the focus on his Bitachon. However, for most of us, we need the Hishtadlus to keep us focused on Him.

By the way, this need to stay focused on Him is one reason why often He takes a long time to answer our prayers, and thereby forces us to keep beseeching and begging Him over and over. The Medrash says that the reason the mothers of our people (Sarah, Rivka, Rochel, and even Leah) were childless for so long is that Hashem craves the prayers of the righteous. Obviously, He doesn't crave the prayers for His sake. He needs nothing. However, He craves their prayers for the uplifting quality and effect that it has on them.

If I were designing the world, I might have thought that instead of Sarah praying until she was 90 years old to have a child, I would grant her the child at, say, 60, and let her say Hallel and thank Hashem for the additional 30 years.

The problem is that our words are far more heartfelt when they are desperate requests rather than words of praise. We say the whole Hallel the first week, then half the next, and after a while we tend to take everything for granted. Not so when the need is still acute.

When He puts off answering our prayers, He forces us to keep sincerely focused on Him, and this brings us closer and closer to Him.

Hashem seems so committed to this concept of our living in the natural world rather than the miraculous, that it seems from Chazal that all that He grants us on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is only based on natural occurrences.

The Gemara in Shabbos 32a advises us not to rely on a miracle, because a miracle might not be forthcoming. Even though our lives and livelihood have been sealed on Yom Kippur, that decision is predicated on natural circumstances. However, Hashem never guaranteed the

decisions of Yom Kippur if they have to come about through miracles. Therefore, Chazal tell us not to count on miracles, even for results that were decreed on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

The danger of forgetting that Hashem is the source of all blessing is so great, that according to the Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzva 430, Bircas Hamazon), the reason that Modim was instituted at the end of Shmoneh Esrei was to address this issue. It seems from the Chinuch that when we recite the various Brachos of Shmoneh Esrei, we become inspired that Hashem is the source of all blessing and begin to be reliant on Him and His kindness and graciousness. We find ourselves in danger of taking Him for granted and even as we rely totally on Him to grant our prayers, we are in danger of forgetting Him as the ultimate source of all blessing. We therefore recite Modim to remind ourselves and refocus on the idea that He, in fact, is the only source of all blessing.

An incident that took place over 25 years ago, also points out this concept. I once gave a Yeshiva bookkeeper a sign for her office, “Yeshuas Hashem K’heref Ayin.” The salvation from Hashem comes in a blink of an eye.

She once asked me, “Why is it that He only blinks at the very last minute?”

I answered that if He would blink a few days before the deadline or payroll, we might not realize that it is only from Him, and not because we are capable or competent. When, however, the salvation comes with a blink of the eye, at the last minute, we recognize clearly that it is only He that does it, and not ourselves or anything else.

Now that Hashem has designed the world to live with natural causes, not to rely on miracles, we must use

Hishtadlus, our efforts, to achieve our goal. This, however, creates another problem. How can we protect ourselves from losing focus on the fact that despite all of our many, strenuous, and diligent efforts, it is really only Hashem that accomplishes, and we really cannot achieve anything through our efforts? How do we accept the fulfillment of His will that He wants us to live according to the natural laws, and still keep focused on Him constantly?

It would seem that we need an ongoing approach and constant stimuli to refocus on that reality that only Hashem, and nothing and no one else, has any power over anything in our lives.

The following are some thoughts that can, when reviewed again and again and internalized in both our minds and our hearts, help achieve this desired effect.

We say in Hallel: “Please Hashem, save us; please Hashem, cause us to succeed.” The Seforno explains the phrase, “cause us to succeed,” as referring to being successful in doing the proper efforts. The question is, why doesn’t he rather interpret it to mean that our efforts should be crowned with success? The answer would seem to be that being crowned with success is included in the phrase “save us.” Efforts are not crowned with success, because they do nothing in the first place. Everything is completely and totally done by and from Hashem. We can only ask that we properly perform the Mitzva of Hishtadlus (effort), but we must know that effort has no connection with the result. It is just a Mitzva for us to perform, so as not rely on miracles.

It would be a good idea to recite this request at the end of Shmoneh Esrei daily (before stepping back) with this idea in mind.

The Ralbag says that Yaakov had to make every effort to get his son Yosef not to bury him in Egypt, even to the extent of making him swear to that effect. The reason he had to go so far, says the Ralbag, is so that his efforts should not be considered vain efforts (l'batalah). It seems that the results are not related to the efforts, as the Ralbag does not say that maybe the results won't happen, only that the efforts may be wasted.

Once again, we see that our efforts are necessary, but unrelated to the results. All results come directly from Hashem.

The Talumd (Niddah 70b) indicates that one who wishes for riches must engage in business as a condition of appropriate effort. However, the riches themselves are a gift from Hashem, not coming directly as a result of one's effort.

Another perspective of this concept can be seen in the Rambam at the beginning of the laws of Chanukah. The Rambam describes the pressure and pain suffered by the Jewish people "until the G-d of our fathers had mercy on them and saved them from the hands of their oppressors and delivered them." He then continues that the Hashmonaim killed the enemy and saved the Jews from its hand.

Who really did the saving, Hashem, or the Hashmonaim? The Rambam seems to contradict himself.

The obvious answer is that from the moment of Hashem's having mercy, they were really saved, the Hashmonaim just went through the motions and played out the script. However, for their efforts and dedication, they are also credited with the results, as if they actually were the ones who saved the Jews from their enemies.

The Mishna Berurah, at the beginning of Hilchos Megillah, brings a Rashi that explains why the Megillah is read at night and repeated by day. He says, “as a remembrance of the miracle, because they cried out in their days of trouble day and night.” It seems to indicate that remembering the miracle has to do with their crying out day and night.

It would seem that the miracle is considered happening at the moments of their heartfelt prayers being heard, and the events of Purim are considered the playing out of the Divine decision, rather than the essence of the miracle.

We also find in the Mishna Berurah (Laws of Taanis Esther), that Taanis Esther reminds us that when a Jew fasts and does Teshuva with all of his heart, Hashem sees and listens to him, in his time of need. We see that not only is everything up to Hashem and His mercy, but we all participate in the process by doing Teshuva. When we do so, then He is more ready to pay attention and have mercy on us. Even our Teshuva does not automatically remove an evil decree; we must then beseech Him for mercy as well.

Just a word about natural causes versus the miraculous: It seems from the Ralbag, when Yitzchak went to the Plishtim, he had to lie that Rivka was his sister, because he would have been relying on a miracle for them not to kill him and take her, had he said she was his wife. Yet it seems from this Ralbag that had Yitzchak not been afraid, he would not have had to lie. It seems that one’s level of fear or confidence literally changes what is considered natural and what is considered miraculous. Had he not feared, then the Plishtim taking his wife or killing him would not have been the natural, and not lying would not have been considered relying on miracles.

Since all results are directly from Hashem, and the depths of our awareness of this principle and trust in his kindness are the greatest Zechus to bring about positive results, it would seem worthwhile to find additional opportunities to strengthen these realizations, throughout our daily activities.

Two such opportunities can be found in Torah study and Tefillah. When we study Gemara, we are constantly searching for sources in the Written Torah for Halachos that were passed down from Sinai, through the Oral Tradition. Finding these Halachos, hinted at in the written word of Hashem, which was directly dictated to Moshe, connects us and our Halachic observance more directly and definitively to Hashem as the Source, thus strengthening our relationship with Him.

Our prayers are very powerful tools to strengthen our awareness of His total control, supervision, and direct involvement with every aspect of our existence. We constantly recite, “Baruch Atah Hashem.” When we say “Hashem”, we are calling Him by His first name, so to speak. We are referring to Him not in third person, but in second person familiarity. You are the Source of all blessing. His name defines His essence. Rashi (Parshas Va’arah, 6:3) tells us that in addition to Hashem referring to His status as Master of All and Master of Mercy, He is also referred to as the One who is trustworthy to deliver on His word. When we focus on Hashem as Master of All – merciful and trustworthy to deliver on His word- what more do we need to be inspired to put our trust and reliance in Him?

When we say that He is the one who “opens the eyes of the blind” or “dresses the naked” or “unleashes the bound,” we realize that even though we are not blind, naked, and bound etc., if not for His graciousness, we would, in fact, be so.

We say in Nishmas, “Ad Heinah Azarunu Rachamecha...” The Vilna Gaon explains that when we realize the infinite kindness and mercy of Hashem that He bestows on us undeservedly, we come to rely on Him totally. Because, he continues, if what He has done for us in the past was because we deserved it, then maybe now I no longer deserve it. If however, it was pure underserved kindness and mercy, then Hashem, who never changes His essence, will always continue His kindness and mercy.

In Shmoneh Esrei we invoke the infinite merit of our ancestors. We also invoke the fact that in the name of Hashem, Kel, it refers to His overpowering, so to speak, His anger at our misdeeds in order to have abundant mercy on us. We also say that He is a king who helps, saves, and protects all according to the intensity, confidence, and trust that we feel in Him. It makes no difference, says the Vilna Gaon, whether we put in effort (helper), do nothing (savior), or put ourselves in positive danger (protector). If we trust in Him, He will respond accordingly.

In Ya’aleh V’yavoh, we invoke our special relationship with Him, as expressed in the Atah Bechartanu, to ask Him to respond to our prayers (Avudraham). See an in-depth treatment of Shmoneh Esrei, as a source of Bitachon in “With All Your Heart – A Guide to More Heartfelt Prayer”, published by Proirity-1.

Following is a list of promises from Chazal to remind us that everything is up to Him, of which we can most certainly be assured:

1. They tell us to give Maaser in order to be rich.
2. The Vilna Gaon and others say that this refers to 20% of one’s profits, not just 10%.

3. They tell us that we may even test Hashem on this, because it is an absolute promise of performance.
4. It also seems from Chazal that even though this process may not be immediate, there is an immediate promise that if one gives Maaser, he will not be lacking at all.
5. They also tell us that the appropriate format of giving Maaser is directed to those who study and teach Torah.
6. Chazal also assure us that Hashem grants special protection and assistance, kindness and mercy to those who put their absolute trust in Him.
7. That goes to the extent of granting the desire of the person who is fully trusting that Hashem will not disappoint him in the fulfillment of his desire.
8. Reb Yisroel Salanter taught us that the absolute assurance of success in a given endeavor is only guaranteed to those whose Bitachon is 100% and unswerving.
9. Yet it seems clear that to the degree that one places trust in Hashem, it is to that degree that he increases his assurance of success in that particular endeavor.
10. We are also taught that one who gives Tzedaka on condition of results is considered a Tzaddik Gamur (complete) because his intention is to give Tzedaka under all circumstances, and the condition is just something he would like in return.
11. We are also assured that Tefillah always accomplishes and is never turned away completely. Tefillah, however, must emanate sincerely from the heart, not just the lips.
12. We are also taught the dangers of relying on humans as opposed to Hashem. The consequence being that Hashem turns us over into the hands of the one that we rely on. This is a matter of degrees. To the degree that we rely on someone else, He

removes His personal Hashgacha from us and allows us to be taken care of by that person.

13. We are also taught the danger of relying on our own Tefillos, or even those of another adult, because this can lead to the Satan raising the following issue in accusation: “This person is confident in his Tefillah, let us review his actions and see if he is truly deserving or not (most of us could do without such additional scrutiny).”
14. We are also taught the dangers of relying even on Bitachon. There is a fine line between relying on my own Bitachon, (confident state) and relying on Hashem’s kindness and mercy, which is what Bitachon is really all about.
15. However, we are assured that when one has Bitachon, he is guaranteed results, despite his personal standing as a righteous or even a wicked person.
16. Chazal tell us that wealth truly depends on Divine mercy and as such, prayer and our efforts are only conditions that we must fulfill in order to receive the Divine blessing.

The above points are based on Chazal, and are therefore absolutely reliable.

I realize that this letter is tedious, but if we have gotten to this point in it, I suggest that we reread it again and again regularly to derive the Chizuk of “Ein Od Milvado” and Bitachon in Hashem.

With best wishes for continued success, and sincere appreciation.



# Coping with Stress in Business

Dear friend,

It is only a few short hours after our conversation and frankly I am greatly pained by the grave implications of today's meeting. Even if I can assure you, beyond doubt, that this is but another step in the upward growth and expanded success of your business, I must still feel the pain hurting you now. We find by Avraham Avinu, that after his Bris, when Hashem had made it so hot that no one would come by to disturb his rest, Avraham was greatly pained by not having the opportunity to bestow kindness on someone. Hashem then sent the angels, one of whom was coming to tell him of the child he and Sarah would finally have after so many years, dressed as men, so Avraham would be able to bestow kindness upon them. Even though he was going to be told of the fulfillment of his life's desire, Hashem still considered the importance of removing the pain of not being able to bestow kindness.

The fact that I offer you positive and strong words of encouragement should not be interpreted as a lack of empathy, rather as a product of a deep conviction of the truth and efficacy of these thoughts.

The Talmud tells us that even though one who wishes to acquire wealth must do business, it really depends on Divine mercy; doing business is only a condition to be fulfilled. Understanding this idea alone is a major step in the right

direction. We know Hashem is merciful and we know how to approach Him to request His mercy. This does not mean that He will always fulfill our request. Sometimes our desires are not in line with what His infinite wisdom sees as good for us. However, we know the address to turn to for help. The power of Tefillah is enhanced by the sense that we are totally helpless without Him, and have nowhere else to turn – not even to our business acumen, connections, or the good graces of others.

To the degree that we muster the feelings of helplessness and dependence on Him, we increase the likelihood of receiving and witnessing His mercy and kindness. Tefillah, however, with all of its power and benefits, has its limitations. It is sometimes limited by the worthiness of the one who prays. He may not be worthy of the amount of mercy needed to help him. It is also often limited by the ultimate knowledge of the Creator as to what is really good for man. Therefore sometimes His mercy calls for the opposite of fulfilling man's request. In fact, we ask that He should "fulfill the wishes of our heart, for the good" rather than unconditionally.

This is the realization that man should have and this should be the basis of his Tefillah and his approach in facing the difficulties of life. "Everything that Hashem does is for the good," and "everything is in the hands of Heaven, except for man's fear of Heaven."

These concepts should serve to encourage our Tefillah and enhance our ability to cope with the difficulties of life. We can, to a great extent, influence the course of our business affairs, and we must take advantage of these opportunities.

There is, however, another concept that seems to go even beyond the power of our Tefillah. That is Bitachon – trust in Hashem. The Sefer Hachinuch indicates that there are two aspects to the mitzvah of Tefillah: one, to help man to achieve the desires of his heart, and secondly, to inspire in him a deepened Bitachon in his Creator. When man stands helplessly before his Creator in prayer and recognizes his own inability and Hashem's all-powerful control and he praises, beseeches and thanks Hashem all in one Tefillah experience, he finds himself moving upward from a state of need and hope, to one of anticipation, reliance and eventually absolute trust that Hashem will not let him down.

The question can be asked: How can we have absolute trust that Hashem will not disappoint us in light of the above concept that Tefillah is affected by what is good for us and what we deserves. The answer, seems to be, that Bitachon is not completely logical; sometimes man just has a feeling that Hashem will not let him down due to His knowing how much a given result means to the individual. This feeling can result from deep involvement in Tefillah, but it can then take man beyond the power of Tefillah alone.

We have a tradition passed down from generation to generation from the Gaon of Vilna and even going back further to Sinai, that to the same degree that one puts his trust in Hashem, his reliance will not be disappointed. This concept can be best understood and qualified by two stories from Rabbi Yisroel Salanter, whose Rebbe's Rebbe's Rebbe was the Gaon of Vilna.

One time, the Rashash, a great scholar of the 1800s

questioned the statement of Rabbi Yisroel Salanter, the 19th century master of ethics, that even luxuries are granted through Bitachon. Rabbi Salanter said that he would prove it – from that moment he had Bitachon that he would receive a gold watch.

At that time, a ship was caught in a violent storm. The frightened captain vowed that should he survive and dock safely, he would give his gold watch to a rabbi in that port. A few days later, when the captain presented the watch to the shocked Rashash he exclaimed, “This does not belong to me. Give it to Reb Yisroel Salanter. It is his.”

On another occasion, a man in desperate need of 10,000 rubles came to Rabbi Salanter. He told the man he need only buy a lottery ticket and have complete Bitachon that he would win the 10,000 rubles. The man bought the ticket . . . and did not win.

When he complained to Reb Yisroel, he asked the man if he had complete Bitachon that he was going to win. The man said he did. Reb Yisroel then asked the man to sell him this ticket for 5,000 rubles. When he said yes, Reb Yisroel told him that he obviously didn’t have 100 % Bitachon, because if he did, he never would have sold it for half.

On the one hand, with absolute Bitachon in the kindness and mercy of Hashem and his loving concern not to disappoint one who places complete trust in Him and awaits confidently His response, one can achieve the desires of his heart, even for luxuries. On the other hand, however, this trust must be absolute and complete in order to merit the desired results. Any willingness to settle for less indicates some lack in the

completeness of this Bitachon.

A question could be asked. Even assuming that Bitachon is an emotional state based on the feeling that Hashem in His great power and infinite kindness won't let me down, how does it fit with the possibility that achieving my desired results may be more than I deserve or worse yet, may not be for my good?

We must say that Hashem will even reward one with more than he deserves and make it even work for his good, rather than disappoint the man who places his total trust and reliance on Him. Achieving this state is no simple accomplishment and it is very tempting to fool oneself into believing that he has this 100% Bitachon. We should, however, strive to achieve this state in order to merit our desires and to realize that to the degree that we have real Bitachon, He will respond to us with the fulfillment of the yearnings of our hearts. We can influence the outcome to the degree of our Bitachon.

The Vilna Gaon, offers us a piece of advice on how to achieve this state of mind and heart. When we focus on the kindness and mercy that Hashem has bestowed upon us in the past and recognize that we were not truly deserving of His gifts, rather we received them only due to His kindness and mercy, then we can begin to rely on His kindness once again. If Hashem had only helped us in the past when we deserved it, then who knows if we still deserve it today? However, when we realize that all of His gifts of the past were pure kindness and mercy – and we know that His kindness is endless – we can be confident that He will help us again now.

We all know of the great miracles that Hashem has

performed and continues to perform for those who put their complete trust in Him. Let's focus on them again and again and work on our hearts to feel more and more of His kindness. When we concentrate on this and our Tefillah, we can develop a total reliance on Him, with that ultimate feeling that He will never disappoint those who turn their desperate eyes in complete trust toward Him.

Please read and reread this letter and may we be privileged to see the fulfillment of our Tefillos and of that level of trust that we put in Hashem.

Sincerely,

Your Friend

P.S. I neglected to mention that reaching the above-mentioned level of Bitachon is obviously not an obligation for every Jew, but it is a level which can work wonders if one reaches it. However, there is an obligation, in difficult situations that seem very dangerous or serious, for one to be sure that for Hashem it is equally possible and easy for Him to solve the problem for the good, as it is not to work it out for the good. This realization is obligatory and helps to soothe our fears. As impossible as it seems to us, to Him it's simple.

## Part II

Dear Friend,

As I begin my flight home, my mind wanders back a few years to another flight home, when I wrote to you as well.

Then everything looked so dismal, problems seemed almost insurmountable. I tried to strengthen your Bitachon and focus your optimism. I don't even remember the details, but your business has made amazing progress since then. Now here we are again, problem after problem compounded by more serious problems, wondering how many more problems and crises can be handled?

Well, I don't really know the answer, but I can't help but remember that so many times before we pondered the same question and made it through it all.

The Vilna Gaon writes that when a person is faced with a crisis he should review the past and realize that everything that Hashem has done for him in the past was only due to His kindness and mercy and therefore He will certainly continue to act the same way with him now. If what He did for him in the past was because he deserved such treatment, then maybe now he doesn't deserve to be helped. If however, it was not due to his deserving, rather due to Hashem's kindness and mercy, then he can rely on that again, because Hashem's kindness and mercy are constant and remain forever. We recognize that we are not truly worthy of Hashem's kindness, otherwise we wouldn't worry about anything.

This, the Gaon says, is the means to inspire Bitachon - confidence in Hashem's kindness that everything will work out fine.

This fits well with the Gaon's concept of Bitachon: that if one has complete trust that Hashem will help him, then it will surely happen. Realizing all of His previous kindness and mercy helps us to feel confident again and thereby influence the resolution of our crisis based on the merit of our Bitachon in Him.

This formula for Bitachon would do well under normal conditions or circumstances similar to the previous crises. However, when the problems, trouble and crises get so out of proportion by comparison, it becomes more difficult to find that sense of confidence in their future resolution.

To help foster great Bitachon in Hashem's kindness and mercy in these extreme situations, it would help to consider the following: First of all, for Him small problems and seemingly insurmountable ones are all the same. Secondly, His kindness and mercy and His intimate involvement in every aspect of our lives are always active. The only problem is that we worry about being undeserving. Allow me to address this issue.

Since our purpose in this life is to rise to ever-greater levels of human perfection and closeness to Hashem, it follows that we must be exposed to serious tests. The tests are of two types: one which takes a person who may be less than fully deserving and through the test, uplifts him to a higher level to become deserving. The other, dealing with a person who is already very deserving, leading him to even higher levels.

When we see a situation that seems so unlikely to happen naturally, we can assume that it represents a serious test to bring us to higher levels and through the passing of this test to become truly deserving.

This being the case, the more unnatural the set of circumstances and crises, the more obvious it becomes that this is an opportunity to rise to new heights and to become deserving of success and blessing never previously achievable.

Even though there is a natural tendency to interpret the situation in the negative, the truth is that the result depends on one's score on the test. A positive outlook, with a strengthening of one's Bitachon, will bring him through the test and establish him on a level where he can really deserve the desired results.

I know it is easy to advise others, but I've been there once or twice.

Please recognize the message. It's so unreal, it can only be a special test, for special people, to uplift them higher and higher and make them even more deserving.

May you be privileged to soar higher and higher from these tests and feel that ultimate sense of true Bitachon in Hashem, and in the merit of the test results and the ensuing Bitachon, may you see the speedy resolution of all of your difficulties and be blessed with the Divine kindness and mercy that bring every measure of success in all of your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Your Friend

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## Special Edition – Bitachon

The only way to reach true happiness is by having bitachon, faith and trust, in Hashem. The *Chovos HaLevavos* explains the reason for this.

We may think that the happiest person in the world would be someone with a profession so lucrative, or a skill so in demand, that he can make as much money as he needs, whenever he desires. The *Chovos HaLevavos* (in his introduction to *Sha'ar HaBitachon*) shows us seven reasons why even this person would be lacking in security and happiness, and only one who trusts in Hashem can be truly content:

» One who trusts in Hashem knows that He provides for us anywhere and in any situation. (For example, even in the barren wilderness, Hashem had ravens bring food to *Eliyahu HaNavi* who was hiding from King Achav). On the other hand, one who relies on his own skills will be stymied when he lacks the proper equipment or supplies to ply his trade.

» If we feel that our professions bring us our sustenance, we may be forced to take jobs that are hazardous, or to work unduly long hours. One who has Bitachon knows that everything that happens to him is for the best, and that his livelihood will come easily and safely. King Dovid was stranded in the dry, desolate desert as he compared himself to a lamb whose faith in his shepherd is unshakable (*Tehilim* 23). Just as the lamb knows that the compassionate shepherd will lead him to a green pasture and a cool, quiet brook. Dovid knew that Hashem, in His mercy, would provide for him, even in a forbidding desert.

» Any professional is afraid of the competition. If his trade

secrets are revealed and his monopoly broken, he may not be able to make a living. One who trusts in Hashem does not fear anyone, as Dovid said, “I trust in Hashem, I will not fear - what can man do to me?” (*Tehilim 56:12*)

» Someone devoted to his business is constantly assailed with problems and decisions that keep him tossing and turning at night: “If I keep a bigger inventory it can be stolen, it may spoil or I might not be able to sell it. If I keep a smaller inventory we might not have enough stock on hand when demand for our products rise.” With Bitachon in Hashem, we know that Hashem will give us what we need, when we need it, wherever we may be.

» Even if a person is successful at amassing a vast amount of wealth, it cannot protect him from sicknesses and situations that deny him the chance to enjoy his prosperity. One with Bitachon is protected from any calamity; anything painful that happens to him is only an atonement for a sin, or to give him more reward in the world-to-come.

» Even a massive fortune may be worthless if food is not available (in times of famine or war, for example). If we trust in Hashem we will never lack anything, just as a fetus in the mother’s womb or a chick in its egg is constantly provided with all its needs.

» Someone who devotes his entire life to amassing a fortune will not reap dividends after his death, while someone who spends his days growing spiritually and striving for greater heights in Bitachon is guaranteed a high rate of return for his investment both in this world and in the world-to-come.

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PRIORITY TEACHING INSTITUTE - PRIORITY RESOURCE CENTER