

## OLAMI RESOURCES HIGH HOLIDAY DISCUSSION SESSION

### *Is Life Just a Roll of the Dice, A Play of the Cards?*

**BASED ON RABBI YAACOV HABER AND THE OU PARDES PROJECT CONCEPT  
& THE MORASHA SYLLABUS**

#### **Introduction to Rabbis/Teachers/Mentors**

The Teacher's Guide includes limited guidance an Overview, Background Cases, texts and translations and a brief summary of each source. The Student's Source Sheets contain the Overview, Background Cases, texts and translations. The goal of the session is to promote discussion to inspire interest for your newcomers and existing students to BE" return to learn more.

Please read the [\*Discussion Session Guidelines for the Moderator\*](#).

Please prepare stories to share that resonate with you about hashgacha pratis. Some participants will say or think, "Oh, that's just coincidence." The goal here is the stories should contribute to the students' appreciation of the possibility of a revolutionary, refreshing perspective on how to view life, and their very purpose and mission in this world.

The Discussion Guides are available in Word (and PDF) to enable you to modify according to your specifications.

#### **Overview**

COVID-19 has turned our world upside down. The transformation has been compared to throwbacks to the Great Depression and World War II. How do we view such cataclysmic events – does world history unfold randomly or is there a G-d with a plan supervising not only humanity at large, but even each individual? Is there a difference in times of relative calm and stability when life seems to run its own course?

The Jewish High Holidays – Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur – the Jewish New Year and Day of Atonement, are appropriate times to explore whether or not there is Divine involvement in our world.

#### **How Would You Respond?**

##### **Background Cases**

Case A

*Poker forces you to realize that, no matter your skill, luck is a powerful friend and foe, both at the table and away from it. Sure, we control our decisions, the things that make up the usness of life. But there's no skill in being dealt the winning hand, just as there is no skill in our birth — and that single fact is a governing factor in how our lives will play out...*

## Teachers Guide

*There's nothing quite like that game of cards to consolidate one central lesson: Chance is just chance. It is neither good nor bad. Without us to supply meaning, it's simple noise. The cards don't know or care who you are. They have no concept of fairness. They are just dealt — and we are left to deal with the fallout, to interpret the noise. And so, the most we can do is learn to set aside what we can do nothing about and, instead, focus on controlling what we can. (Maria Konnikova, *Poker Taught Me How to Deal With the Hand of Fate*, *New York Times*, June 19, 2020.)*

### Case B.

*Specific individual Divine providence is a system of Divine governance that reflects the very close relationship between G-d's providence and the creations of His world. When G-d governs with specific individual Divine providence, He is directly involved with the most minute details of an individual's life. In the system, G-d's hashgacha (supervision) is not limited to what impacts an individual physically, but extends to all events that occur in his presence. The fact that an individual observes specific events, or even happens to hear about them, has an intended purpose. This too was designed by G-d, for within this system there is no chance. (Rabbi Aryeh Leibowitz, *Hashgacha Pratis: An Exploration of Divine Providence and Free Will*, pp. 31-32, Targum Press, 2009.)*

### Questions and sources for discussion:

#### What are the implications of a random world?

*They sat together in the park  
As the evening sky grew dark  
She looked at him and he felt a spark tingle to his bones.  
'Twas then he felt alone and wished that he'd gone straight  
And watched out for a simple twist of fate.  
Bob Dylan – Simple Twist of Fate*

#### Is there an alternative to an unintentional world?

Judaism teaches that G-d created the world as a perfect place to fulfill His purpose, with all of nature under His command. As the omnipotent and omniscient ruler of the universe, He extends His providence to all existence, overseeing it and maintaining it in order to fulfill His ultimate purpose. Even when G-d does not miraculously intervene in worldly happenings, so they seem to be products of the laws of nature or accidents, or as a result of man's free will, all occurrences ultimately result from G-d's will.

#### 1. Tehillim (Psalms) 113:5-6 (Approx. 1000 BCE) – G-d sees all.

Who is like the L-rd, our G-d, Who dwells on high, Who lowers [His eyes] to look in the heavens and the earth?	מי כיקוק אלקינו המגביהי לשבת: המשפילי לראות בשמים ובארץ:
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Divine Providence is defined both as G-d's *awareness* of every detail of Creation – including each person's behavior and innermost thoughts and feelings – and His *personal involvement and relationship* with us, as based on who we are and what we're doing with our lives.

**2. Rabbi Chaim Friedlander, Emunah v'Hashgachah, p. 9 (1999) – There are two aspects to providence: awareness and response.**

<p>The word “supervision” includes two facets. The first is to observe the object of supervision in order to assess the matter and understand what is going on with it. The second aspect is a result of the first, namely to decide how to respond and what to do with the observations.</p> <p>G-d’s supervision is no different; it also has these two aspects. Firstly, G-d watches us, since He sees and knows all, as the verse says, “The L-rd looked from heaven; He saw all the people” (Tehillim 33:13). Secondly, based on G-d’s observations and knowledge, He acts toward us and for us.</p> <p>Thus, providence has two aspects: awareness and response.</p>	<p>"השגחה" כוללת בקרבה שני חלקים. החלק האחד הוא: להסתכל על הדבר המושגח כדי להתרשם ולהבין את המתרחש בו ואתו. והחלק השני הוא תוצאת החלק הראשון, דהיינו, איך מגיבים ומה פועלים לפי מה שרואים.</p> <p>גם בהשגחת הקב"ה יש שני חלקים. ראשית, הקב"ה מביט עלינו והוא רואה ויודע את הכל, ככתוב (תהילים לג, יג) "משמים הביט ה', ראה את כל בני האדם". ושנית, לפי מה שהקב"ה רואה ויודע הוא פועל בנו ובשבילנו.</p> <p>נמצינו למדים: "השגחה" היינו: א. ראית הדבר ב. והפעולה בו.</p>
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**3. Rambam, Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin 10:1 (Approx. 1180) – It is a fundamental of Jewish belief that G-d both knows what we do and responds to our actions.**

<p>The tenth principle is that G-d knows the actions of mankind and does not ignore them, unlike those who say that “G-d has abandoned the world.”</p>	<p>והיסוד העשירי שהוא יתעלה יודע מעשה בני אדם ולא הזניחם, ולא כדעת האומר עזב ה' את הארץ.</p>
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It is axiomatic to the Jewish faith that G-d is both omnipotent and omniscient – i.e., He both knows and controls everything that occurs in the world. There is nothing that takes place in the world that G-d does not will. G-d continually creates and sustains the world.

**4. Rambam, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah (The Laws of the Fundamentals of Torah) 2:9 (Approx. 1180) – Every entity in the natural world is sustained directly by G-d.**

<p>All of the entities of the world...from the primordial form to the smallest insect in the center of the earth – everything exists from the power of the reality of His absolute existence.</p>	<p>כל הנמצאים... מצורה הראשונה עד יתוש קטן שיהיה בטבור הארץ הכל מכח אמתתו נמצאו.</p>
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People like to ask, “Can G-d create a rock too heavy for Himself to lift?” as if the question somehow proves that G-d has limitations. Just the opposite! What it proves is that G-d’s only limitation is that He cannot be limited. Another such “limitation” that comes by virtue

of G-d's infinite power is that He cannot remove His awareness from His creation, for if He did it would cease to exist.

**5. Rabbi Chaim Volozhiner, Nefesh HaChaim, Shaar 1, Chapter 2 (1828) – The world only exists by virtue of G-d's continual will for it to do so.**

<p>The reason G-d is referred to as being “all-powerful” is that the ways of G-d are not like those of flesh and blood. For when a person builds a house out of wood, he does not create the wood of his own ability. He just buys the wood that has already been created and assembles it into a building. Once he has completed it according to plan, he leaves it as it is, and it continues to exist.</p> <p>Not so for G-d. In His infinite power, He created this world out of nothing. And ever since creation, the world only continues to exist every day and every single second by virtue of the Divine force and pristine radiance infused into it according to His will. Were G-d to remove the force of His influence for even a second, it would all cease to exist. This is in line with the morning Yotzer Ohr prayer established by the Men of the Great Assembly, “He continually renews His creation each day, constantly.” That is, literally “constantly,” every instant and every second...</p>	<p>וענין מה שהוא ית' נקרא "בעל הכחות", כי לא כמדת בשר ודם - מדת הקדוש ברוך הוא. כי האדם כשבונה בנין דרך משל מעץ, אין הבונה בורא וממציא אז מכחו העץ, רק שלוקח עצים שכבר נבראו ומסדרם בבנין, ואחר שכבר סדרם לפי רצונו, עם שכחו הוסר ונסתלק מהם, עם כל זה הבנין קיים.</p> <p>אבל הוא ית"ש, כמו בעת בריאת העולמות כולם בראם והמציאם הוא ית' יש מאין בכחו הבלתי תכליתי, כן מאז כל יום וכל רגע ממש, כל כח מציאותם וסדרם וקיומם תלוי רק במה שהוא ית"ש משפיע בהם ברצונו ית' כל רגע, כח ושפעת אור חדש, ואלו היה הוא ית' מסלק מהם כח השפעתו אף רגע אחת, כרגע היו כולם לאפס ותוהו. וכמו שישדו אנשי כנסת הגדולה בברכת יוצר אור "המחדש בטובו בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית", היינו תמיד ממש כל עת ורגע...</p>
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**6. Rabbi Chaim Freidlander, Sifte Chaim, Emunah V'Hashgacha, Volume 1, p. 15 (1999) – We must meditate on the fact that everything is an expression of G-d's will.**

<p>At each and every second, G-d, by virtue of His will, causes the entire creation to exist, from the smallest creature to the biggest. So when we see a little fly alive and fluttering around, we should meditate and think to ourselves that right now G-d is granting it life and the ability to move. Likewise, people live and function at each instant only because G-d makes it so at each moment.</p>	<p>הקב"ה ברצונו מהווה ומפעיל בכל רגע מחדש את כל סוגי הנבראים מהבריה הקטנה ביותר עד הנברא הגדול ביותר. וכאשר אנו רואים זבוב קטן חי ומתנועע, עלינו להתבונן ולשים אל לבנו שהקב"ה עכשיו נותן לו חיים ומנועע אותו. נמצא שהאדם קיים ופועל בכל רגע רק מכיון שהקב"ה מפעיל אותו בכל רגע.</p>
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**What are the implications of a Divinely guided world for each individual?**

**7. Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, Derech Hashem, Part II, Chapter 1:3 (1730's) – Divine Providence over human beings is unique in that it comes as a response to choices they make.**

<p>The human race, however, is different from all other species, since it was given free will and the ability to attain either perfection or deficiency. Man is therefore a proactive, moving influence, and not merely passive. The Providence dealing with man must therefore also be different from that concerning other species. In the case of man, [Providence] must oversee and scrutinize every detail of his activities, and produce consequences in response to his conduct and actions. All of a person's deeds, as well as the outcome of those deeds, are scrutinized, and Providence is then extended to him in the particular manner that suits the consequences, and [the individual is judged] measure for measure, as will be discussed in a later chapter.</p> <p>This is not true, however, of any species other than man. The members of other species are acted upon, but have no influence themselves. They merely exist to maintain the species as a whole, according to the nature of its spiritual Root. Providence is thus merely extended to maintain the Root and its branches, according to the inherent nature and function of that Root.</p> <p>Human beings, on the other hand, act and exert influence as individuals. They therefore require individual Providence, and everything must be the result of their deeds, no more and no less.</p>	<p>ואמנם בהיות שנשתנה המין האנושי מכל שאר המינים – שניתנה לו הבחירה והיכולת במה שהוא לו קנית שלימות או חסרון – ונמצא בבחינה זו פועל ומניע, ולא נפעל – גם ההשגחה עליו, מוכרח שתשתנה מההשגחה על שאר המינים, כי הנה יצטרך להשגיח ולהשקיף על פרטי מעשיו, להמציא לו כדרכיו וכפרי מעלליו, ונמצא שיושגחו מעשיו כולם ותולדותיהם, וישוב ויושגח עליו כפי הראוי לתולדות המעשים ההם, בפרט, ומדה כנגד מדה, וכמו שזכרנו בפנים.</p> <p>וזה ממה שאין שייך בשאר המינים שאישיהם נפעלים ולא פועלים, ואינם אלא כפי מה שראוי לתשלום המין ההוא, כפי מה שהושרש בשרשו, שהנה תהיה ההשגחה לקיים השורש ההוא וענפיו, כפי מה שטבע וחוק השורש נותן שיהיה. אבל המין האנושי, שאישיו פועלים ומניעים כמו שזכרנו, הנה צריך שיושגחו בפרט, כפי מה שיגרמו להם מעשיהם, לא פחות ולא יותר.</p>
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**8. Rabbi Chaim Friedlander, Siftei Chaim, Emunah Ve-Hashgachah, Volume 1, p. 25 (1999) – Individual providence applies to each person concerning each action.**

<p>The concept of specific individual Divine Providence incorporates a couple of concepts. Firstly, the judgment and supervision concern the individual person,</p>	<p>לפי האמור, המושג של "השגחה פרטית" כולל כמה מובנים. ראשית, שהדיון וההשגחה הם על האדם היחיד, כפרט שנידון ומונהג על פי המעשים שלו,</p>
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<p>who is judged and guided specifically according to his own actions, unlike the animals that are judged in general for the perpetuation of their species.</p> <p>It also means that G-d does not judge a person for his general actions but for each action that he makes. G-d guides a person on this basis in order to give him reward or punishment.</p>	<p>ולא נידון כחלק מהכלל לצורך קיום הכלל, כבהמה שהדיון עליה הוא במסגרת הכלל לקיום המין.</p> <p>ועוד שהקב"ה לא דן רק לפי מעשי האדם בכללותו, אלא הוא דן על כל פרט ופרט ממעשי האדם ומנהיג אותו לפי זה לתת לו שכר או עונש.</p>
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**9. Rabbi Chaim Friedlander, Siftei Chaim, Moadim, Vol. 2, p. 323 (1989) – When a person wants to see G-d’s hand in his life, it is revealed to him; otherwise, he simply sees the laws of nature.**

<p>When we are disconnected from G-d and are unaware of Him, then G-d does not show His providence. It appears as if the hand of nature rules over us.</p> <p>To the degree that we strengthen our belief in His providence, that is how much we will merit the manifestation of His special providence over us.</p>	<p>כאשר אנו במצב של אי דביקות וחוסר מודעות אין הקב"ה מראה השגחתו ח"ו, אזי נראה כאילו יד הטבע שולטת ח"ו.</p> <p>ככל שנתחזק יותר באמונת ההשגחה, באותה מידה נזכה והקב"ה יראה לנו את השגחתו המיוחדת.</p>
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**10. Talmud Bavli, Niddah 16b (Approx. 500 CE) – When a child is conceived, his hereditary traits, environment and parents are determined by Divine providence.**

<p>Rav Chanina bar Pappa taught: The angel appointed on pregnancy...takes the drop and brings it before G-d and says: “Master of the World, what will become of this drop? Will he be strong or weak, intelligent or dull, rich or poor?”</p> <p>But whether he will be righteous or evil is not discussed [and not determined], as Rabbi Chanina taught: “All is in the hands of Heaven except for the awe [awareness] of Heaven.”</p>	<p>דריש ר' חנינא בר פפא אותו מלאך הממונה על ההריון... ונוטל טפה ומעמידה לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא ואומר לפניו רבונו של עולם טפה זו מה תהא עליה גבור או חלש חכם או טיפש עשיר או עני.</p> <p>ואילו רשע או צדיק לא קאמר כדר' חנינא דא"ר חנינא הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים.</p>
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**11. Rashi, Berachot 33b (1040-1105) – G-d sets the stage for our lives but we have the choice as to how to act.**

<p>Everything that comes upon a person is in the hands of the Holy One, for example: if he will be tall or short, poor or wealthy, wise or foolish, white skinned or black, everything is in the hands of Heaven. But becoming a righteous person or becoming</p>	<p>כל הבא על האדם ביד הקדוש ברוך הוא הוא; כגון ארוך, קצר, עני, עשיר, חכם, שוטה, לבן, שחור, הכל בידי שמים הוא, אבל צדיק ורשע אינו בא על ידי שמים, את זו מסר בידו של אדם, ונתן לפניו שני דרכים, והוא יבחר לו יראת שמים.</p>
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<p>an evil person doesn't come from Heaven. This He gave into the hand of man. He placed in front of him two paths, and man should choose for himself the awe of G-d.</p>	
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On Yom Kippur we focus an entire day on the fact that G-d created each of us with a unique mission to fulfill and the resources with which to accomplish it.

**12. Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe, Alei Shur, Vol. I, p. 168 (1988) – The profound importance of each individual and his purpose in life.**

<p>Every person needs to know that he has importance. Not an imagined importance that he “considers himself as special”... rather a deeply profound importance that is even shocking.</p> <p>The Talmud states, “Each and every person must declare, ‘The world was created for me’ (Sanhedrin 37a). Rashi explains that this means I am considered as important as the entire world ...</p> <p>“Like the entire world” – This is the one-time life experience of a particular person – there was never a person like him and nor will there ever be a person like him throughout history. I, with my special character strengths, the child of my parents, born at a specific time period, and in a certain environment – certainly there is a unique challenge that is placed upon me. I have a special share in the Torah, and the entire world is waiting for me to actualize that which is incumbent upon me. For my role cannot be exchanged with anyone else in the world!</p>	<p>כל אדם חייב לדעת, שיש לו חשיבות. לא חשיבות מדומה שהוא "מחשיב עצמו בעצמו" ... אלא חשיבות בעלת משמעות עמוקה ואף מזעזעת.</p> <p>"כל אחד ואחד חייב לומר: בשבילי נברא העולם"- רש"י: "כלומר: חשוב אני כעולם מלא, לא אטרד את עצמי מן העולם בעבירה אחת". (סנהדרין לז, א)</p> <p>"כעולם מלא" – זוהי חוית חד-פעמיותו של האדם, שלא היה עוד כמותו ולא יהיה כמותו עד סוף כל הדורות. אני עם המיזוג המיוחד של כוחותי, בן לאותם אבות, נולד בתוך אותה תקופה ובאותה סביבה- בודאי עבודה מיוחדת מוטלת עלי, חלק מיוחד לי בתורה, וכל הבריאה מחכה לי שאתקן את המוטל עלי, כי את עבודתי לא אוכל להחליף עם שום אדם אחר בעולם!</p>
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**Where do we see the conflicting ideologies of *hashgacha pratis* and ‘chance’ illustrated in the Torah?**

Rabbi Yosef Salant in his sefer *Be'er Yosef*, explains the clashing perspectives on hashgachah pratis through the confrontation of the Sar Esav with Yaakov Avinu on his return to Eretz Yisroel from Charan. Yaakov crosses his family and possessions over the Yabok River. He

## Teachers Guide

goes back to the side of the river where he started from and is pounced upon by the angel of Esav when he is all alone.

(Rabbi Reuven Leuchter explains that all the details of the events relating to the *Avos*, our forefathers, are meaningful in terms of hashgachah pratit. However, this is only true for people as great as the *Avot*. But as far as the rest of us, we really can't expect to be able to interpret all the details of our life events. This will be only be possible in the עתיד לבא – the World to Come – when in retrospect we will begin to understand all the details of world events.)

### 13. Bereishis 32:25 – The Angel of Esav confronts Yaakov Avinu.

And Yaakov was left alone and a man wrestled with him until the break of Dawn.	ויותר יעקב לבדו ויאבק איש עמו עד עלות השחר.
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How was Yaakov left alone if he was traveling with his entire family?

### 14. Rashi, Bereishis 32:25 (1040-1105)

[Yaakov] forgot his small containers and returned for them [ to the other side of the river].	שכח פכים קטנים וחזר עליהם:
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Why would Yaakov return for seemingly insignificant small containers?

### 15. Talmud Bavli Chullin 91a (Approx. 500) – Yaakov doesn't steal from others and needs to preserve his possessions.

<b>And Yaakov remained alone.</b> Rebbe Elazar said that he returned on account of his small containers. From here we learn that the righteous love their possessions more than themselves (since it appears he endangered himself to return for the containers). Why do they love their property so much? Because the righteous do not involve themselves in theft.	<b>ויותר יעקב לבדו.</b> א"ר אלעזר שנשתייר על פכין קטנים מכאן לצדיקים שחביב עליהם ממונם יותר מגופם וכל כך למה לפי שאין פושטין ידיהן בגזל.
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No one risks their life for their assets, especially a righteous man like Yaakov.

So why did Yaakov return for the containers? Only to emphasize that the righteous don't steal?

### 16. Rabbi Yosef Tzvi Salant, Be'er Yosef, Parshas Vayishlach (1972) – How can the righteous love their possessions more than their body?

It is very difficult to understand that loving one's possessions more than one's physical body should be an attribute of the	והנה קשה מאוד להבין שמדת הצדיקים יהיה שממונם חביב עליהם יותר מגופם, הלא עור בעד עור וכל אשר לאיש יתן בעד נפשו (איוב ב), וזוהי מדת כל
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<p>righteous, for isn't it written in the Book of Job (2:4), "Skin for the sake of skin! Whatever a person has, he would relinquish to spare his life." This is the nature of every person. This should doubly apply to the righteous for they surely would not risk themselves for something as inconsequential as small containers. These containers should not have been worth the time or the effort to go and return for them in the middle of the night.</p>	<p>אדם, ומכ"ש הצדיקים שלא יסתכנו בגופם בעד ממון פחות ערך כמו פכים קטנים שאינם שווים בנזק הזמן והטורח להשאיר לבדו, או לחזור עליהם (לפי מש"כ רש"י) בחשכת הלילה.</p>
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Why then, did Yaakov cross alone to retrieve the small containers? Yaakov returned for the containers since he recognized that all of one's possessions are given by G-d and have purpose.

**17. Be'er Yosef, Parshas Vayishlach (1972) – Yaakov recognized that all of one's possessions are given from G-d and have purpose.**

<p>The intent of the Talmud's statement, "Their possessions are more beloved than their bodies" is that they should physically exert themselves for their possessions. And this principle is addressed in the Talmud (Yoma 38b), "No one can touch an object that is meant for someone else, even the slightest bit." We derive from this that there is special providence over every owned object, even the most seemingly inconsequential object. For each object is directed specifically to its owner.</p> <p>This principle is also discussed in the Talmud (Sotah 2a): This home is destined for so and so, this field is destined for so and so" ...</p> <p>Since this item is directed to its owner by Heaven, the item is appropriate and carefully measured for the needs of its owner. Therefore, the righteous know how to value and appreciate everything that comes into their possession, whether expensive or of little value, because it is through Divine Providence that this item belongs to them. And certainly this object is necessary for them to help them actualize their potential. Therefore, the</p>	<p>הכוונה בכאן מה שאמרו שחביב עליהם ממונם יותר מגופם היינו מטורח גופם ועמלם, שכדאי להם כל יגיעה וטורח גופם עבור ממונם. והענין בזה הוא, דאמרו בגמרא (יומא ל"ח ב) אין אדם נוגע במה שמוכן לחברו אפילו כמלוא נימא, מבורר מזה שיש השגחה מיוחדת על כל דבר פרטי אפילו על החלק היותר קטן כמלוא נימא שזה המלוא נימא יגיע דוקא לאותו פלוני.</p> <p>וכמו שאמרו ג"כ בגמרא (סוטא ב) בית פלוני לפלוני שדה פלונית לפלוני...</p> <p>וכיון שמן השמים מושגח שאתו הדבר מתאים ומדוד במדה נכונה ומדוקדקת שיהיה שייך ויגיע לאותו איש, וא"כ הצדיקים יודעים להוקיר ולהחשיב כל דבר גדון או קטן שהגיע לידם מפני שהוא בהשגחה פרטית מן השמים שיהיה אותו הדבר שלהם, ובודאי שיש בו צורך לשלימותם ולכן אינם חסים על טרחם ועמלם ומתאמצים בכל היכולת שלא לאבד שום דבר השייך להם.</p>
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righteous do not spare any trouble or effort to prevent the loss of any of their possessions.	
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(See also the Arizal, Parshas Vayishlach, explaining Bereishis 32:25.)

Why did the Angel of Esav decide to attack Yaakov Avinu specifically at this time?

**18. Be'er Yosef, Parshas Vayishlach (1972) – Sar Esav came to challenge Yaakov’s belief in Hashgachah.**

<p>We can explained the following Talmud passage (Chullin 91a) along the same lines: Rebbe Yehoshua ben Levi said, “We learn from here that the dust rose from their feet during their altercation up to the Throne of Glory in Heaven. [We derive this as follows:] It is written here (Bereishis 32:25) “He wrestled with him,” and it is written there (Nachum 1:3), “And clouds are the dust at His feet.”<sup>1</sup></p> <p>...and according to what we have explained we may suggest that this angel, who, as the Sages explain, was the minister of Esav, the Accuser, and the evil inclination, wanted to challenge and deter Yaakov from his pure and strong faith (in <i>hashgachah pratis</i>).</p> <p>This is what the Sages had in mind when they said: “<i>Their dust rose up to the Throne of Glory</i>,” that is, there was an ideological confrontation between Yaakov and Esav regarding whether even those things that are seemingly minute and insignificant like the dust that man tramples with his feet are also overseen directly from the lofty heights of the Throne of Glory.</p>	<p>ובענין זה יש לבאר במה שאמרו שם בגמ' א"ר יהושע בן לוי מלמד שהעלו אבק מרגלותם עד כסא הכבוד, כתיב הכא בהאבקו עמו, וכתיב התם (נחום א) וענן אבק רגליו,</p> <p>לפי מה שנתבאר אפשר בזה ג"כ שהמלאך הרי היה שרו של עשו כמבואר בחז"ל והוא השטן והיצר הרע, ורצה להסיתו ולהדיחו מהאמונה הטהורה והחזקה.</p> <p>וזהו בכוונתם במה שאמרו שהעלו אבק רגליהם עד כסא הכבוד, היינו שהאבקות וההתנצחות שביניהם הייתה בזה אם גם הדברים היותר דקים ושפלים כאבק שאדם דש ברגליו הוא ג"כ מושגח ממרומים עד כסא הכבוד.</p>
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**19. Be'er Yosef, Parshas Vayishlach (1972) – Even mundane occurrences and bodily functions are in G-d’s immediate awareness.**

This principal of hashgachah pratis is expressed in writing in the name of the Vilna Gaon (in the book <i>Imrei</i>	וכעין זה כתבו בשם הגר"א (בס' אמרי נעם) על מה שאומרים בברכת אשר יצר, גלוי וידוע לפני כסא כבודך וז"ל: מה שמזכירים כאן כסא הכבוד בברכת
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<sup>1</sup> The first verse quoted refers to the struggle between Yaakov and the angel of Esav. The word for “and he wrestled” is ויאבק. Its root is אבק, which we see from the second verse quoted means “dust.” This indicates that the wrestling between Yaakov and the angel involved dust.

<p><i>Noam</i>) regarding the part of the blessing of <i>Asher Yatzar</i>, "...<i>It is well known before Your Throne of Glory...</i>" Why should this phrase be mentioned in the blessing after using the restroom? The purpose is to counter those who contend that it is impossible that G-d is interested, supervises and directs such a lowly world. Therefore, we declare, "<i>Before Your Throne of Glory</i>"...to say that even from there G-d is supervising such mundane things.</p>	<p>עשיית צרכיו, הוא לאפוקי מדעת האומרים כי אי אפשר שהקב"ה ישגיח על עולם שפל כזה. לכך אנו אומרים שאפילו לפני כסא הכבוד... אפילו משם הוא משגיח על דברים שפלים כאלה.</p>
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**20. Complete ArtScroll Siddur, *Asher Yatzar* Blessing upon exiting the lavatory, p. 15 (Approx. 520 BCE/AS Translation 1984) – The intricate workings of the intestines, kidneys and other organs are supervised by G-d.**

<p>Blessed are You, G-d, our L-rd, King of the universe, Who formed man with wisdom, and created within him openings and cavities. It is obvious and known before Your Throne of Glory that if a single one of them were to be ruptured or blocked, it would be impossible to exist and to stand before You. Blessed are You, G-d, Who heals all flesh and acts wondrously.</p>	<p>ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר יצר את האדם בחכמה וברא בו נקבים נקבים חלולים חלולים גלוי וידוע לפני כסא כבודך שאם יפתח אחד מהם או יסתם אחד מהם אי אפשר להתקיים ולעמוד לפניך. ברוך אתה ה' רופא כל בשר ומפליא לעשות.</p>
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See further the Olami Morasha Shiurim, [Hashgachah Pratis I](#), [Hashgachah Pratis II](#).