

ANOTHER VIEW OF
HASHGACHA PRATIS

TO THE EDITOR:

I am responding to Prof. Levine's letter in the *Parashas Chukas*/June 16 magazine. The writer states that he can't see the point in recounting extraordinary displays of *hashgachah* since everything that happens is from Hashem. According to this line of reasoning, one could ask why the Torah reminds us so often of *yetzias Mitzrayim* and other miracles.

The answer is, of course, the famous statement of the Ramban at the end of *Parashas Bo*: by contemplating "the great, famous miracles, a person comes to acknowledge the hidden miracle."

It may be "a failing in us," as the writer suggests, but it is a common failure that the Torah shows us how to rectify. Publicizing incidents that are clearly acts of *hashgachah* strengthen our *emunah* that Hashem runs the affairs of this world. Knowing that Hashem does everything and that nothing happens without Him is not sufficient; we must internalize this fact until it becomes second nature.

It takes a lifetime of contemplation of the words of the Ramban to achieve this. The countless incidents of clear *hashgachah* one encounters in his lifetime are what bring home to him vividly the fact that Hashem really does run all the affairs of the world.

Chazal recognized this need by instituting a special *brachah* that one makes when he passes a place where a "miracle" occurred. Yet one makes no *brachah* when he passes a maternity hospital, despite the daily miracles that occur there!

Regrading the statement attributed to Rabbi Avigdor Miller, *zt"l*, I find it very difficult to believe that he disagreed with this concept, which the Ramban calls "a great principle, the reason behind many *mitzvos*." Perhaps he was talking about stories of *mofsim* where people were instantly cured of a serious ailment and the likes. Some people receive great *chizuk* from such stories too, but for others of a more skeptical nature, Rabbi Miller may have felt it was an unnecessary burden on their credibility.

Stories of *hashgachah* don't create such a

burden because one can always attribute them to chance — *minhago shel olam*, Hashem's regular way of running the world, if one feels that Hashem wouldn't do something like that for a particular individual.

I hope this clarifies the issue somewhat.

A. C. CARMELL