בס״ד

DIVREI TORAH ON THE PARSHA · BY RABBI DOV KEILSON

זכרון אבינעם

ZICHRON AVINOAM

IN MEMORY OF AVINOAM GROSSMAN · לע״נ הבחור החשוב אבינעם ע״ה בן שמואל אהרן נ״י

986/זירא

ב׳ חשון תשפ״ו

To Invite Guests

Amazingly, the *parashiyos* of our holy Torah map out for us life instructions for each and every scenario, allowing us to see the way it should be. *Parashas Vayeira*, although overflowing with endless lessons of life, surely particularly highlights the very great mitzvah and *avodah* of *hachnosas orchim* — revealing to us just a small little glimpse of the overwhelming greatness of Avraham Avinu and Sara Imeinu.

My esteemed *chavrusa* Rav Yehuda Tzvi Kurzrock *shlita* shared an incredible story:

One Succos, on a very cold winter night, Rav Chaim Ozer had a guest staying with him. Rav Chaim Ozer was not feeling well, but nevertheless, he not only set up a meal for his guest, but he also joined him outside in the *succah*, warmly dressed in his winter gear. The guest said to his distinguished host, "Rebbi! It is so cold out here, and Rebbi is not feeling well, a '*mitztaer*,' one who is suffering discomfort, is completely exempt from the mitzvah of *succah*!"

Rav Chaim Ozer responded: "Yes, it is true that I am exempt from *succah*, but from the mitzvah of *hachnosas orchim* I am surely not exempt!"

From this incident, we see an illustration of one who learned from Avraham Avinu, and the way that he ran towards the guests who were coming his way, even though the Torah emphasizes that it was the third day after his *bris milah*, a time that he surely was exempt from doing so....

A Yid must strive to fulfill mitzvos Hashem under all circumstances....

In the incredible *sefer* of Rav Meir Soloveichik *zt"l*, he relates an incident that is also extremely enlightening, especially on this week of *hachnosas orchim*:

The Brisker Rav went on a trip and stopped off at a *frum* inn, in middle of the night. The innkeeper, not recognizing the greatness of the Brisker Rav, treated him with great disrespect, giving him a small, dingy room, with barely the minimum amenities.

A little while later, the Koidinover Rebbe came with his whole entourage. The innkeeper opened the doors for him and gave him and his chasidim royal treatment fit for a king.

When the Rebbe noticed that the Brisker Rav had been placed in a tiny room with barely a light, and said to the innkeeper, "Do you know who this is?!" The Rebbe revealed the Brisker Rav's identity, and the innkeeper was quite ashamed as he realized his terrible mistake. He begged *mechilah* from the Brisker Rav for treating him so shabbily.

The Brisker Rav commented that in our *parashah*, Avraham Avinu treated those apparently Arab guests like *Malachim*; thus, the innkeeper should treat every *Yid* with the respect due to him — not only if he knows exactly who the *Yid* might be.... The Brisker Rav then added that he would be mochel the innkeeper only if he would go to Brisk to learn how one really performs the mitzvah of *hachnosas orchim* properly!

The two stories above really give us a bit of light into the greatness of this holy mitzvah, and how much the one incident in our *parashah* is the eternal foundation of *hachnosas orchim*.

Most amazing, perhaps, are the implications the slightest nuances of Avraham Avinu's actions had on the generations to come:

He gave water through a messenger; Hashem gave water to Klal Yisrael through Moshe Rabbeinu. Avraham gave bread to the guests himself; Hashem gave bread to Klal Yisrael Himself. Avraham stood over the angels while they ate under the tree; Hashem protected Klal Yisrael beneath the Clouds of Glory....

No part of this one incident went unnoticed. Avraham Avinu's zeal and love to merit the mitzvah of having guests went into the DNA of each of his descendants, and having the *zechus* to host other *Yidden* in one's home is something integral to every Jew.

But from Whom did Avraham Avinu learn *hachnosas orchim*? Says Rav Avigdor Miller, he learned it from Hashem Himself. For after all, the world belongs only to Hashem Alone; and Hashem, in His everlasting kindness, invited us all to be guests in His beautiful world, to partake of all its delicacies, and to listen closely to the voice of our Host and all He wishes to impart to us during our stay...

B'Siyata DiShmaya.