**Vayeira 2015**

א)

hacnachas orchim

Beis Aharon 25:

Speaks out four main things about hacnachas orchim that we learn from Avraham Avinu:

1.**It’s not enough to just wait inside for the guests to come. Avraham would go and sit outside his tent to wait for people and invite them in. Not to be passive, but to be proactive about it.**

This shtims with what the Nachlas Tzvi regarding the pasuk that says “צדק צדק תרדוף” “Righteousness, righteousness you should chase after.” Many mephorshim explain that this is referring to tzedakah. Says the Nachlas Tzvi that the double lashon is telling us you should go out and find the poor person to give tzedakah to; not just sit in your house and if people come then you give. It’s the same pshat as above.

2. **You should do hacnachas orchim yourself, not through a shliach. Avraham had many other people that could have taken care of guests for him but he did it himself** nonetheless, even while recovering from the milah. He brings a story of a tzadik that had a poor person come to his city. The tzadik brought him into his house and made the poor man's bed himself. When the ani found out that this wasn't just some regular yid, but was in fact a tzadik, he asked for mechila. The tzadik told him that there is no reason to apologize, I wasn’t making your bed, I was making my bed in Olam Habah. Also brings a story about the Chafetz Chaim, who would partake in the preparations for guests as well. One time a guest asked the Chafetz Chaim if he could help him out and the Chafetz Chaim responded ‘Are you going to help me put on my tallis and tefillin also? This is my mitzvah; I have to do it myself’. So we see how big of an inyan it is to do things yourself, especially regarding this mitzvah.

3. **You don’t need to get a whole background check on an ani. There is no need to ask a whole laundry list of questions before and try to figure out if this guy really needs to stay by you, or maybe he can stay somewhere else, and all these types of matters. If someone asks to come over for a seudah you have them over, period.** These ‘people’ that Avraham took care of were melchaim, they didn’t actually need anything from him.

The Mishna at the end of the fifth perek in Avos says “לְפוּם צַעֲרָא אַגְרָא”, meaning the more pain that is involved with the performance of a mitzvah then the more reward there will be. What do you think Hashem cares more about? When you invite someone over that you're extremely close with a week before and have all week to prepare, or, if someone that you don’t really have much to do with calls you up on Wednesday or Thursday night saying he has nowhere to eat on Shabbos? Are you going to look for a million and a half excuses for why you can’t have this guy over; either because it’s too late, you have too many guys already, etc.? You figure it out and make it work somehow to fulfill this chasuv mitzvah. The main point, though, is that when someone asks for a place to stay or eat then you don’t ask questions, just have them over.

4. **The guests give more to the host than what the host gives to them.** How do we see this in Avraham's case? The angels healed Avraham and they gave them the news about Sara. This is with any inyan of tzedakah and chesed, and Chazal tell us this clearly.

The Baal Haturim writes that the word ״ונתנו״ is a palindrome, meaning it’s the same word when spelled backwards. This comes to teach us that when you give you also get.

ב)

Mila, leading by example

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| **א** וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה, בְּאֵלֹנֵי מַמְרֵא; וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח-הָאֹהֶל, כְּחֹם הַיּוֹם. | **1** And Hashem appeared to him in the fields of Mamre, as he sat at the door of the tent, in the heat of the day; |

Rashi, on that pasuk, tells us that it’s called ‘אֵלֹנֵי מַמְרֵא’ because Mamre was someone who gave advice to Avraham about the Milah

Beis Aharon 23-24:

Asks the famous question that is: What could Avraham possibly have been asking Mamre about? Was he asking whether or not to listen to Hashem’s command?

He asks another question on the lashon of Rashi. When explaining who Mamre was he writes ״הוא שנתן לו עצה על המילה״. Why does it say על המילה, on the milah, instead of just saying he gave him advice about the milah?

The Beis Aharon says that Avraham was at doubt about whether to circumcise himself first and then everybody else or to do everyone else before him. What's the depth of the doubt that Avraham had? Chazal tell us that a person can only give someone milah if they themselves have had a bris milah. So that is what the root of the question was. In accordance with hilchos milah, Avraham had to circumcise himself in order to then be allowed to circumcise others. However, Avraham wanted to do the milah on everybody ״בעצם היום הזה״ on that same day, but that would not be possible if he gave himself the milah first due to the pain he would have as a result. Mamre answered him that he had to circumcise himself before the others because **a foundation of chinuch is that you have to do something yourself first and then you can tell others to do that very thing. Avraham had to fix himself first and only then would be able to fix others. (See Baba Mesia 107:) Mamre told Avraham that if he wants to have a positive influence on the members of his house and educate them to follow in derech Hashem, to have mesiras nefesh in fulfilling the ratzon of Hashem, then he has to show them that he is willing to do it.** (See Mayin Beis Hashoava page 310 haftora parshas Naso. See Reflections of the Maggid pages 235-237. See also from Despair to Destiny pages 52-53 on mah nishtanah, the kids picking up on the ‘inconsistencies’ of the sader)

This also answers the second question about the lashon of Rashi. Mamre wasn’t really explaining how to do the actual milah itself but was more helping with the details of the mitzvah.

Rashi, in Berachos 14b, says that if someone doesn’t first learn then how are they going to be able to teach? You have to have actually done an action in order to give that over to others.

The Steipler in Birchas Peretz brings the following vort on the words אֵלֹנֵי מַמְרֵא. He points out that it is the same gematria as ’הוא יעץ על המילה’.

The Nachlas Tzvi, in his sefer Ateres Tzvi, towards the end of parsha Lech Lecha cites the Medrash that tells us Adam, Noach and many other greats were born circumcised. He asks why, then, wasn’t Avraham also born this way? In addition to that, we know from many places that Avraham kept the entire Torah (Yuma 28:); so why didn’t he give himself milah until he was 99 years old?

He quotes the Gemara in Kiddushin 31. that says ‘greater is someone that is commanded to do a mitzvah and does it than someone who wasn’t commanded to do it and still does it.’ By other mitzvahs, even if you do it without being commanded to, you can still perform it again later. That is not the case by milah, though. If Avraham would have performed the milah then he wouldn’t be able to do it again when Hashem would give him that command. So instead he waited until he was commanded to do this mitzvah and only then did he do it.

He brings another answer as well, that fits well with the pshat of what it was that Mamre told Avraham. **Once the members of Avraham's house saw him perform the milah on himself then they would be inspired to do it also. That wouldn’t have happened if Avraham was either born circumcised or he did the milah earlier in his life. If they didn’t see him actually do the milah then they might not have wanted to go through with it themselves.**

For Kiruv Section see Lech Lecha 2015:

Thank you Ari Zaslowsky for typing and editing this.