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SICHA POEM

Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 25

Vayera, Sicha 1

— By Mrs. Chanie Gourarie, Chabad Toms River

When Avraham was 99 years old,
To have a Bris, by Hashem he was told.
On the third day after his Bris when the pain was hardest to bear,
To visit Avraham, Hashem did appear.

While he was talking to Hashem,
He suddenly saw three men.
To please wait for him, was Avraham's request,
While he ran to attend to the needs of each guest.

The Rambam says that hospitality to guests takes precedence,
Over receiving the Divine Presence.
As it says, “And he saw, and behold there were three men,”
Without even adding etc… which would hint to the verse's continuation.

How do these words specifically prove that Avraham did the right thing?
Why doesn't the Rambam use a much clearer proof that the Talmud does bring?
The Talmud's proof is: “And he said, My L-ord, if I have found favor in your eyes,
Please do not pass by your servant.” please wait so I can host these guys.

The Rambam feels that the very fact that Avtraham saw the three men,
In the middle of a Divine revelation,
When on Hashem he must have had focused attention,
Is the best proof that he was meant to interrupt the conversation.

For our original question we still seek an answer,
Why does the Rambam deviate from the Gemara's proof and bring another?
"And he saw and behold there were three men" is certainly not clearer,
Then the verse, "And he said, My L-rd, if I have found favor…"

We can understand this by looking at the words of the Halacha,
That the Rambam chooses to use when describing this Mitzvah.
The Rambam uses the words "escort guests" specifically,
Rather than the all encompassing phrase of "showing hospitality."

There are two elements to acts of kindness, Gemilas Chassadim,
The first is that the kindness fills a lack in another person.
The second highlights the doers action,
His attribute of kindness finds expression.

These two elements hospitality also does contain,
Firstly, from the food, drink and provisions the guest does gain.
Secondly, by the host kindness is expressed,
Attentiveness and consideration he shows toward the guest.

In matters of acts of kindness what usually matters is what we achieve,
The assistance that the person does receive,
How the giver feels about it is not part of the equation,
If he drops money and a poor person finds it, he fulfills his Tzedaka obligation.

The Mitzvah of Hachnosas Orchim is different from the rest,
The host's heartfelt love and care must be felt by the guest.
After the guest's needs were met and he is ready to go,
When the host escorts him, his sincere interest for his guest does show.

Avraham paved the way for you and me,
He taught us that from the second that the guest we see,
We must show genuine interest in them,
And therefore he noticed the three men even while talking to Hashem.

Although they were really angels and the food they didn't need,
His guests, Avraham ran to feed,
Because when it comes to the Mitzvah of hospitality,
The host's kindness is the key.

Since to Hashem Avraham was so dear,
And to a chariot he did compare.
He was higher than the angels spiritually and from him they had much to gain,
The essence of the Mitzvah was the same.

A Mitzvah done wholeheartedly is the best,
From the Mitzvah of Hachnosas Orchim we should learn for all the rest,
We should infuse kindness in every Mitzvah that we do,
And we should never lose sight of another Jew!

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