

*This week's speaker after davening in the Youth Minyan will be Eliezer Leibowitz.

* This week the **shiur** on Gemorah Brachos at **Mark Franck's** house will commence @ **6:30pm** Shabbos afternoon

Katanga

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Caulfield
Beth Hamedrash Weekly Newsletter

D'var Torah

BE A GIVER

by Rabbi Shraga Simmons



Abraham is on a mission to teach the world about God. But God is an infinite force who encompasses everything and lacks nothing! He doesn't get tired, thirsty, restless or cold. So how can He possibly be described?

The answer is found in what motivated God to create the world in the first place He wasn't lonely. He wasn't bored. And it wasn't a science experiment. But God did lack one thing, so to speak. He lacked someone outside of Himself to nurture and bestow kindness upon. Thus the attribute of "giving" is the most essential thing we can say about God!

Abraham emulated God by performing endless acts of kindness. His tent, pitched in the middle of an intercity highway, was open on all four sides so that any traveler was welcome to a royal feast.

As the story goes, Hashem was talking to Abraham as he was recuperating from his recent circumcision (aged 99), but upon seeing some strangers walking by he interrupts the conversation to welcome and tend to them. Imagine you're in the middle of speaking to the President of the United States. Would you ever say, "Hold on a second, Bill, there's some strangers walking by. I'll get back to you later!" So what made Abraham think leaving God was the right thing to do?

The answer is that there is an experience even greater than talking to God.

And that is to be like God. Human beings are created in the image of God. God is a giver. Thus, giving is basic to human nature. It is our greatest form of spiritual expression.

Of course, the reason to treat others kindly is because we care about them. But just as crucial is what it does for me. The act of "giving" makes me more sensitive, caring and compassionate. More God-like.

Not coincidentally, the city of Sodom, which was destroyed because of its lack of generosity and hospitality is geographically located next to the Dead Sea. In Israel, there are two seas connected by the Jordan River: The Sea of Galilee in the north, and the Dead Sea in the south. Since the Dead Sea is the lowest point on planet Earth (396 meters below sea level), water flows in, but no water ever flows out. This inability to "give" is why it's called the Dead Sea.

Practically speaking, how do I become a "giver?" The answer is simple: Start giving. Some people say, "I can only give to someone I love." This is incorrect. The Hebrew word for "give" - hav, is the same root as ahava, which means "love." Giving is what leads to love. When I give, I invest a part of myself, making you more precious to me. This is why parents love their children most of all; it is their greatest investment.

MAZAL TOV

- ✧ A very hearty Mazal Tov to **Doron and Aviva Paluch** on the occasion of the birth of a **son** this week.
- ✧ Katanga would like to wish the parents **Doron and Aviva**, grandparents **Avi and Kathy Paluch** and **Michael and Florette Matzner**, uncles, aunties, cousins and extended families much naches and simchas in the future.
- ✧ A **Sholem Zochur** to celebrate the birth of the newborn boy will be held this Friday night at the home of the grandparents **Avi and Kathy Paluch** at 1 Oulton Ave, Caulfield. All are invited to attend. The **Bris** will take place in **Katanga** this Sunday morning.

Thoughts for the week:
 Age is a high price to pay for maturity.
 It is easier to get forgiveness than permission.
 If you can talk, you can sing.
 If you can walk, you can dance.

Other Developments

* Last Shabbos the Shule was treated to a **Kiddish** by our Choson Bereshis **Mr and Mrs Grynberg**. Mr Grynberg, Rabbi Makover of the Alexander Yeshivah and Rabbi Gordon all spoke. Yasher Koach.
 * At a special **Shalosh Seudas** last Shabbos, sponsored by **Yankel Szwiecz** in honour of the occassion of his father's Yorzeit, **Sheva Brochos** was held and recited for **Allon and Danielle Ledder**. Rabbi Makover of the Alexander Yeshivah delivered the Dvar Torah. Mazal Tov and Yasher Koach.
 * This week we farewell **Rafi Goodman** who is leaving us to further his studies and gain his **Smicha** (Rabbinic ordination) overseas. We wish him a **Tzeischem Le'Sholem** and look forward to his return as Rabbi Goodman.

Parsha Overview - Vayera

Avraham, on the third day after his brit mila, sits outside his tent looking for guests. While talking with the Almighty, he sees three visitors (actually angels) approaching and Avraham interrupts his conversation to invite them to a meal. One angel informs him that in a year's time, Sarah, his wife, will give birth to a son, Yitzhak (Isaac).
 God tells Avraham that He is going to destroy Sodom because of its absolute evil. Avraham argues with G-d to spare Sodom if in the city there can be found ten righteous people. Avraham loses for the lack of a quorum. Lot (Avraham's nephew) escapes the destruction with his two daughters.
 Other incidents: Avimelech, King of the Philistines, wants to marry Sarah (Avraham's wife), the birth of Yitzhak, the eviction of Hagar (Avraham's concubine) and Ishmael. Avimelech and Avraham make a treaty at Beersheva.
 Avraham is commanded to take up his son, Isaac, to sacrifice him (Akeidat Yitzhak). Lastly, the announcement of the birth of Rivka (Rebecca), the future wife of Yitzhak.

Chesed and Hachnosas Orchim

The one virtue which permeated Avrohom's character and was actually part and parcel of his very makeup was Chesed, kindness and generosity to others. Chesed is one of the three pillars upon which the world was founded by Hashem, for without it, men could not live together in a workable society. With it, one can do wonders.
 A Story is told of how the pious Rav Yeshaya practised Hachnosas Orchim. Once a man and his wife were travelling through a village on Erev Shabbos when they happened to notice a small house. Because they were very tired from their journey, they wanted to ask the owner for lodgings. However, they were afraid that the owner would ask too high a price for accommodating them. They were about to move on when the wheel on their carriage broke, and they had no choice but to ask the owner for a place to stay for Shabbos. When they knocked on the door, Rav Yeshaya answered and as soon as he heard of their plight, he asked them inside. The man nervously asked Rav Yeshaya how much their accommodations would cost. Rav Yeshaya replied that it would cost five rubles, but that for this price they could eat as much food as they wanted. The husband and wife decided that, despite the fact that this was a high price, they had to accept it for lack of any alternatives. At least they could eat as heartily as they desired. As a result, they enjoyed the Shabbos meals very much, and they slept most peacefully. When Shabbos was over, they felt that they had received more than their money's worth, and were most willing to pay the five rubles. However, Rav Yeshaya refused their money, I never intended taking any money, as Hachnosas Orchim is one I gladly perform for free. However, if I told you that I wouldn't accept money, you would have felt uncomfortable and not accept out hospitality. I wanted you to enjoy Shabbos, and you did. That is payment enough.

Announcements

- Katanga's Artscroll Gemorah Brochos has gone missing from the Shule. Would any person who knows its whereabouts please return it as soon as possible.
- Please join us for our **Katanga weekly Squash game** on Sundays @ 6pm at Gardenvale Squash Centre. If you are interested in attending, please let Mendi Slodowitz know.

- Minyanim times** for this coming week are: Mornings: first minyan @ 6:15am, second minyan @ 7:00am. Mincha at 7:55pm followed by shiurim. Ma'ariv at 8:35pm.
- Anyone interested in joining the roster for **presenting shiurim** in the Youth Minyan should speak to Ezra May, or email us here.

Suggestions or comments regarding our website or newsletter? Email us – we would love to hear from you.



Wishing everyone a Shabbat Shalom & Gut Shabbos!
“The Editors”