



TORAH 4 TEENS

BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



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“Closed Homes but Open Hearts” – Hachnasat Orchim During Corona

One of the unfortunate side-effects of this Corona epidemic is the social distancing. We humans are social creatures and the lack of human interaction can really bring us down. It is one thing to want to hang out with your friends and be part of a cool and vibrant social scene, but it is not as easy to reach out to those friends to whom we are not as close, and frankly we might not even particularly like.

Hachnasat Orchim is among the most ancient of Jewish values. We look to Avraham Avinu and our forefathers who opened their homes and their hearts to everyone, strangers and friends alike. When choosing a wife for Yitzchak, the heir to this heritage of hospitality, the most important criteria was her kindness to strangers and her willingness to put others and their needs above her own.

Today we may not be able to welcome even our closest friends into our homes, not to mention strangers; and yet, the mitzvah of Hachnasat Orchim is not completely lost. We may have closed

homes but we can still open our hearts.

A nice little ‘Hi’ from you, might totally make their day

In a world of WhatsApp and Instagram, Facebook and Telegram, we find ourselves interacting with other people all day long. Some might be our best friends and yet others might be just acquaintances or those on the sidelines and peripheries of our social circles. It is these people, with whom we might feel less connected or close to, that the mitzvah of Hachnasat Orchim still applies.

Sometimes these people might actually be in need of our friendship; feeling lonely and distanced from the center of attention, or being a bit socially awkward or shy. And sometimes they are absolutely fine, and yet, receiving a nice little ‘Hi’ with a cute emoji - from you, might totally make their day and give them that warm feeling of knowing that they are noticed and thought of.

Today in a world of social distancing we have been given the gift of social media. Let’s use that gift to reach out to those who would appreciate it most and thus continue our beloved legacy of Hachnasat Orchim. ■



Moshe Domnitch 11th Grade, Efrat

Living With Emunah

When Avraham had to bury Sarah, he was forced to purchase a plot of land that was already rightfully his. In addition, he had already been promised all of Eretz Yisrael for him and his descendants, so why did he have to pay for land that was rightfully his? A common answer is to prove that it's ours, but I would like to go in another direction. The fact he had to do this was a test of Emunah. The Magen Avot as well as Sefer HaYovel considers his purchase of Maarat Hamachpela as one of his ten tests. The Gemarah (Sanhedrin 111A) also cites the fact that Avraham did not complain about this. In fact, Avraham never complained about any of the tests Hashem gave him.

The fact that Avraham didn't complain shows the depth of his emuna. To complain is to find fault with the events that are transpiring. All that transpires is from Hashem and all that is from Hashem is good, even if it doesn't seem that way to us sometimes. Therefore, complaining is finding fault with the way Hashem runs the world. It takes a very deep level of emuna to comprehend that everything Hashem does is for best.

Sometimes a person goes through a tough period of time. Sometimes the entire Jewish people go through a tough period. Sometimes even the whole world goes through a tough period of time, like we all are now with Corona. With Corona

and with other tough times, we don't know why it's happening, and we may never know why it's happening. Even so, we recognize that all things are from Hashem. May we emulate our forefather and retain our emuna even in the toughest of times. ■

NCSY Israel is the premier organization in Israel, dedicated to connect, inspire, empower, and help teen olim with "Klita" to the Land of Israel by encouraging passionate Judaism through Torah and Tradition. Find out more at israel.ncsy.org





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