

## Avraham And Sarah

Read the following Torah texts on Avraham and Sarah and consider the following questions:

- Avraham and Sarah are often used as models of Chesed from the Torah. In what ways do Avraham and Sarah show Chesed in the passage below?
- How did their kindness impact others and the world in a positive way?
- Read the commentary below and think about what it adds to your understanding of these two leaders. How does the Talmud help you build a fuller picture of the couple's chesed? Why does this matter?

Breishit 18:1-10	בראשית יח:א-י
<p>The LORD appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre; he was sitting at the entrance of the tent as the day grew hot. Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them and, bowing to the ground, he said, “My lords, if it please you, do not go on past your servant. Let a little water be brought; bathe your feet and recline under the tree. And let me fetch a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves; then go on—seeing that you have come your servant’s way.” They replied, “Do as you have said.” Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Quick, three seahs of choice flour! Knead and make cakes!” Then Abraham ran to the herd, took a calf, tender and choice, and gave it to a servant-boy, who hastened to prepare it. He took curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared and set these before them; and he waited on them under the tree as they ate. They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he replied, “There, in the tent.” Then one said, “I will return to you next year, and your wife Sarah shall have a son!” Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind him.</p>	<p>וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בְּאֵלֵי מַמְרֵי וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל כְּחֹם הַיּוֹם: וַיֵּשֶׁא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים עָלָיו וַיֵּרָא וַיֵּרָץ לְקִרְאתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרְצָה: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי אִם־נָא מִצְאֹתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֲל־נָא תַעֲבֹר מֵעַל עַבְדְּךָ: יִקַּח־נָא מֵעֵט־מַיִם וּרְחֹצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁעֲנוּ תַחַת הָעֵץ: וְאִקְחָה פֶתֶלֶחַם וְסַעֲדוּ לְבַבְכֶם אַחֵר תַּעֲבֹרוּ כִי־עַל־כֵּן עֲבַרְתֶּם עַל־עַבְדְּכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ כֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ: וַיִּמְהַר אַבְרָהָם הָאֹהֶלָה אֶל־שָׂרָה וַיֵּי אָמַר מִהֲרִי שְׁלֹשׁ סֵאִים קֶמַח סֹלֶת לּוֹשִׁי וְעֵשִׂי עֵגוֹת: וְאֶל־הַבָּקָר רֹץ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח בֶּן־בָּקָר רֶךְ וטוֹב וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־הַנֶּעֱר וַיִּמְהַר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֹתוֹ: וַיִּקַּח חֲמָאָה וְחֶלֶב וּבֶן־הַבָּקָר אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּתֵּן לַפְּנִיָּהם וְהוּא־עֹמֵד עֲלֵיהֶם תַּחַת הָעֵץ וַיֵּאכְלוּ: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו אֵיךְ שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בְּאֹהֶל: וַיֵּי אָמַר שׁוּב אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעַתְּ חַיָּה וְהִנֵּה־בֶן לְשָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וְשָׂרָה שֹׁמְעַת פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וְהוּא אַחֲרָיו: וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה זָקְנִים בָּאִים בְּיָמֵים חַדְלָה לְהִיּוֹת לְשָׂרָה אַרְחֵ כְנֻשִׁים:</p>

**Rashi on Genesis 18:1 (Quoting Bava Metzia 86b)**

**וירא אליו AND THE LORD APPEARED UNTO HIM** to visit the sick man. R. Hama the son of Hanina said: it was the third day after his circumcision and the Holy One, blessed be He, came and enquired after the state of his health

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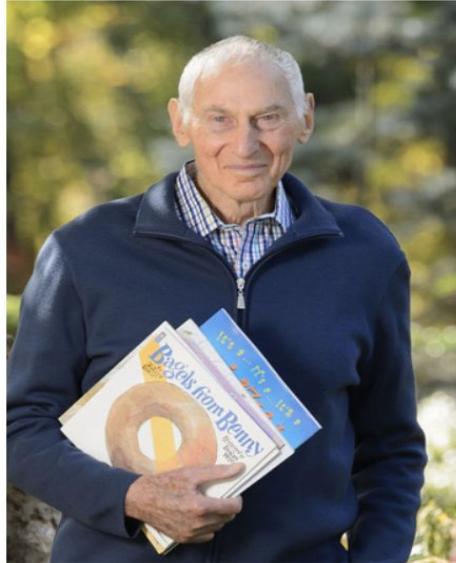
—**פתח האהל AT THE TENT-DOOR**

that he might see whether anyone passed by, and invite him into the house

# Harold Grinspoon

## Philanthropist

Founder of PJ Library



### Questions to Consider:

- In what ways does Harold Grinspoon show Chesed?
- How does his kindness impact others and the world in a positive way?
- How can you relate to Harold Grinspoon's story and what about his actions motivate you to be more kind?

Harold Grinspoon is the founder of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF).

Born in 1929 in Newton, Massachusetts, Harold was teased as a young boy for being one of the few Jewish children in his town. As a young boy, he was surrounded by antisemitism. Living through both World War II and the Holocaust shaped his worldview as both an entrepreneur and philanthropist.

In the early 1960s, Harold's life changed when he purchased a dilapidated two-family home with money borrowed from an in-law. He repaired the house, rented it out for a profit, and launched a successful career in real estate that has spanned six decades.

In 1978, Harold met Diane Troderman, a former high school teacher, who would become his wife and partner in Jewish charitable giving. In the 1980's, Harold became sick. This had a dramatic impact on his desire to find meaning beyond making money. Harold chose to give back – investing his time, money, and energy into strengthening the Jewish community. He believed that his Jewish values were really important to his success as a businessman.

The Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF) was established in 1991 with the mission of enhancing Jewish life. To date, the Foundation has invested more than \$200 million dollars in Jewish causes,

developing successful partnerships with Jewish communal organizations and fellow philanthropists to create programs such as the Hillel's Grinspoon Israel Advocacy Internship Program, and the Farm Awards to support local farmers. In addition to his work with the Foundation, Harold has served as a founding partner and board member for numerous national and international organizations.

In May 2015, Harold joined Warren Buffett and Bill and Melinda Gates in signing The Giving Pledge, a commitment to dedicate the majority of his wealth to philanthropy. The pledge was created by Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett to persuade the world's wealthiest people to donate most of their fortunes to charity. Why did Grinspoon sign on? His answer is simple: He took the pledge, "to encourage other people to do it." If you're a person of great affluence (great wealth), "you have to ask yourself a question: what are you going to do with your wealth?" said Grinspoon. "I'd like to do something meaningful and creative with mine."

To date, he has put \$390 million into his charitable Harold Grinspoon Foundation, which so far has distributed \$170 million. He says that, upon his death, most of his remaining assets will go to philanthropy, too.

Grinspoon's giving is mainly focused on Jewish causes. His foundation runs programs such as PJ Library, which distributes free books and music with Jewish themes, and JCamp 180, which supports Jewish summer camps. PJ Library is modeled after Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program. "I'm in the car one day listening to public radio, "Grinspoon said, recalling a spark that ignited his mission, "and I hear that a gal by the name of Dolly Parton is giving away free books to disadvantaged families." Grinspoon, who is dyslexic, had not read to his own children when they were young, but he had just been on a flight where he was captivated by a father comforting a crying child with a book. He immediately called Parton's Imagination Library and arranged to sponsor her program in the Springfield area, where he lives. PJ Library sends out free Jewish children's books and music to families with "Judaism as part of their lives."

Harold's passions extend well beyond real estate and Jewish philanthropy. Known for his love of long walks and hiking, he also enjoys dancing, Pilates, and meditation. His passion for the arts finds expression in an extensive collection that includes his own work with a series of tree sculptures.

Harold and Diane travel extensively around the world. Between them they have several awards and honorary degrees, as well as six children and eleven grandchildren.

Sources:

[www.boston.com](http://www.boston.com)

Harold Grinspoon Foundation

## Barbra Streisand



### Questions to Consider:

- **In what ways does Barbra Streisand show Chesed?**
- **How does her kindness impact others and the world in a positive way?**
- **How can you relate to Streisand's story and what about her actions motivate you to be more kind?**

Barbra Streisand was born on April 24th, 1942. She is an American singer, actress, and filmmaker and has been awarded an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar and a Tony award. Streisand was raised “in a religious home.” She says, “The Sabbath was always honored, candles were lit. My grandfather went to synagogue every Saturday and he would take me with him when I was about five.” As a child, Streisand attended the Yeshiva of Brooklyn, where half the day was spent on English studies and the other half of Hebrew culture.

She first became known as a recording artist and then got into film. With the film *Yentl*, she broke many records, including being the first woman to write, produce, direct and star in a major film. This film was about a Jewish young woman in Poland who wanted to have access to the Jewish education that men had, and she dressed up as a man to pursue her dreams. She also won a Golden Globe for best director and was the first and only woman to win this award.

Through her philanthropic efforts, Streisand has helped individuals and communities around the world. For example, she has helped the Cambodian Children's Fund as they

work with some of the most impoverished communities in Cambodia. The children helped in Cambodia used to make their home on a former garbage dump at the Cambodian city of Steung Meanchey. Initially, the fund focused on 45 children who lived at the dump making sure they were receiving the education and medical attention that they desperately needed. Thanks to donations from organizations like the Barbra Streisand Foundation and the hard work of the Cambodian Children's Fund, currently, 2,000 students have emerged from the dump living area as individuals who are receiving an education and financial support as they build a better future for themselves.

Barbra Streisand has helped individuals gain greater access to equal rights through her efforts as a champion of social justice to the LGBTQ community. In 1992, Barbra was awarded the Commitment to Life Award from AIDS Project L.A., the ACLU Bill of Rights Award, and a Humanitarian Award from the Human Rights Campaign. In a love letter to the LGBTQ community, she wrote, "We're all unique and beautiful in our own way and entitled to love and be loved by whomever we choose."

In 2009, Streisand donated \$5 million to endow the Barbra Streisand Women's Cardiovascular Research and Education Program at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center's Women's Heart Center. In 2012 she raised \$22 million to support her women's cardiovascular center, bringing her own personal contribution to \$10 million. The program was officially named the Barbra Streisand Women's Heart Center.

Through movies and entertainment, Barbra Streisand's celebrity has brought joy to millions of viewers. By using her wealth and fame, she has been able to show Chesed by providing assistance to many people around the world.

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