

PARSHAT VAYERA  
GENESIS 18:1-22:24  
16 CHESHVAN 5783/10 NOVEMBER 2022



*Rumi/Shams*  
Painting by Yari Ostovany

### THE THIRD SCRIPT

1. The writing comes in three scripts. One that he alone can read. One that he and others can read. And one that neither he nor anyone else can read. I am that third script. (Shams-e Tabrizi)
2. God appeared to Abraham by the terebinths of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, three *anashim*/men were standing near him. He saw them and he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them and bowed down. He said, *Adonai*, if I have found favor in your eyes, please do not pass on from your servant. Let me send for some water so that you may bathe your feet and rest under the tree...God said, The outrage of Sodom and Gomorrah is so great... (Genesis 18:1-20)

3. Mishnah: One is allowed to remove four or five bundles of straw to make room for guests on Shabbat and to prevent people from leaving because of overcrowding.

Gemara: Rabbi Yehuda said in the name of Rav, “Welcoming guests (אורחין) is greater than receiving the face of the Shechina as it is written. “My lords, if it please you please do not go past your servant...” Rabbi Elazar said, “See how the ways of the Holy One are not like the ways of flesh and blood. Our custom would never allow a child to tell his elder, “Wait until I return to you,” while we see that the Holy One did wait until Abraham went to serve food to the guests, as it is written, “My lords, if it please you do not go past your servant...” (Shabbat 127a)

4. אֱלוֹהִים דְּבָרִים שְׂאִין לָהֶם שְׁעוֹר... הַכְּנֻסֹת אוֹרְחִים

אָרַח - to wander, journey

אֶרֶח - path

אֶרְחָה – caravan

5. v. 1 – God appears to Abraham  
v. 2 – Abraham meets three guests  
vv. 17-33 – dialogue between God and Abraham about Sodom

6. This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning a new arrival

A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
some momentary awareness comes  
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!  
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house  
empty of its furniture,  
still, treat each guest honorably.  
He may be clearing you out  
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,  
meet them at the door laughing,  
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,  
because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.

(Rumi, “The Guest House”)