



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and collections of  
maamarim

given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

### ***Melave Malka Parshas Vayeira 5769***

– וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד וַיִּגְמַל וַיַּעַשׂ אַבְרָהָם מִשְׁתֵּה גָדוֹל בְּיוֹם הַגְּמִל אֶת יִצְחָק (בראשית כ"א:ח)  
And the boy grew and was weaned, and Avraham made a great feast on  
the day that Yitzchak was weaned.

Rashi explains that this event took place twenty-four months after  
Yitzchak was born. He also explains that the feast was called a *משתה גדול*,  
because “*Gedolei Hador* were there, Shem, Ever, and Avimelech.”

Many commentators (Radak, Abarbanel and others) wondered why  
Avraham Avinu chose to make the feast when Yitzchak was weaned. Why  
don't we find descriptions in the Torah of Avraham making a *משתה* on the  
day of Yitzchak Avinu's *bris* or *bar-mitzva*? The Torah only tells us of the  
feast made, ביום הגמל את יצחק.

Rabeinu Bechaye explains,

“The general custom is for a person to make a *seuda* on the day that his  
son is born, or on the day of the *mila* in honor of the mitzva. It is possible  
to explain that Avraham Avinu waited to make the feast on the day that  
Yitzchak was weaned, because on that day, he led him to Talmud Torah.  
We shouldn't be surprised by this, for Avraham Avinu recognized his  
Creator when he was three years old.

This is why he didn't want to make the *seuda* on the day of his birth or  
on the day of his *bris*. He waited until the day that Yitzchak was weaned



[1]

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so that he could rejoice with his son in the *simcha* of Torah. In Tehillim the Torah is described as יִשְׁרִים מִשְׁפָּחִי לֵב – The laws of Hashem are just and cause the heart to rejoice. Also, it is written (ישעיה כ"ח:ט) אֶת מִי יוֹרָה יְדַע וְאֶת מִי יִבֵּין שְׁמוּעָה גְּמוּלִי מִחֶלֶב - To whom shall he teach knowledge, and to whom will he explain the lesson, to those weaned from milk.

For as soon as he was weaned, he was sanctified, separated, and dedicated to the service of Hashem, prepared to be an *olah temimah* (an unblemished *olah* sacrifice). And it is also known that the love of a father for his son on the day he is born, or on the day of his *bris mila*, is not as great as his love on the day that his son is weaned, for on that day, his love grows stronger and stronger.”

Based on Rabeinu Bechaye’s commentary, we can add the following explanation. Until the day he was weaned, Yitzchak was entirely connected to his holy parents, Avraham Avinu and Sara Imeinu. Therefore, the very food that he ate, and any of his needs were entirely *l’shem shamayim* - for the sake of Heaven, on levels that are beyond our comprehension.

However, once he was weaned and no longer dependent on his mother, the *kedusha* of his eating, and every action fueled by his eating, would depend on him. This is why Avraham Avinu invited *Gedolei Hador* to come and bless Yitzchak on the day he was weaned. He wanted them to give him the *bracha* that he should continue to walk in the path of the righteous, and always eat with sanctity and purity. This in turn, would help ensure that all his actions would be performed לשם שמים.

Similarly, the *Sfas Emes* (מגילה י"ד.) explains the Gemara’s statement: R. Yitzchak said ‘Yiska is Sara. And why is she called Yiska? Because she saw (סכתה) with *ruach ha’kodesh*. As it says (בראשית כ"א:י"ב) כָּל אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלַיִךְ שָׂרָה שָׁמַע בְּקוֹלָהּ (בראשית כ"א:י"ב) – Everything Sara tells you, you should listen to her voice.



[2]

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The *Sfas Emes* asks:

“Why did the Gemara bring two *pesukim* that teach us about Sara Imeinu’s *ruach hakodesh*? (The first which tells us that she was called Yiska, and the second where Hashem tells Avraham to listen to everything Sara tells him.)

He answers:

“It is possible that two *pesukim* are brought to demonstrate that she was a prophetess even before she married Avraham Avinu, for her father gave her that name because of her *nevuah*. For if she only merited the power of *nevuah* because of Avraham, she wouldn’t have been counted as a *neviah* in her own right.

This explains why Chazal, (when listing the prophetesses), didn’t list all of the *imahos*, even though Rashi (ויצא כ”ט:ל”א) wrote that all of the *imahos* were *nevios*. For the other *imahos* experienced *nevuah* through the power of their marriage to the *avos*. Therefore, only Sara Imeinu, who was a *neviah* even before her marriage to Avraham Avinu, is listed as a *neviah*.”

From the *Sfas Emes* we learn that those who were truly connected to the *Avos* experienced *ruach hakodesh* and prophecy, because they placed themselves under the protection of the *Avos*. Therefore, prior to his *bris milah*, Yitzchak Avinu must have existed in a state of elevated *kedusha* because of the *kedusha* of his parents. Only when he was weaned, did he start to attain those levels on his own, and develop his own identity. That is why Avraham Avinu wanted *Gedolei Hador* to bless him on that day.

I often mention the *peirush* of the *Ksav Sofer* on the *pasuk* לְכוּ בְּנִים שְׁמָעוּ (תהילים ל”ד:י”ב). Go my children, listen to me and I will teach you *yiras Hashem*.

“The *pasuk* should have said בּוֹאוּ בְּנִים - come my children. Why does it say לְכוּ - go? It seems to me that his intention was to explain that he wouldn’t be at peace if they follow his words while they are with him. He wanted



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to know that they would continue to follow his words even long after they have moved away from him. Only then would he feel that he has truly taught his children *yiras Hashem*.”

Rav Meir Shapira zt”l also understood the *pasuk* this way, and that is why he chose to inscribe that *pasuk* above the entrance to his great yeshiva, *Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin*.

The true test of our education comes when we leave the yeshiva or kollel and head out to the streets of the city. That is when we truly need to implement שמעו לי by hearing the voice of those who taught us to maintain the *kedusha* of our eyes and our thoughts.

We are now thirty days after *Hoshana Rabba*, a day which illustrates this lesson. As long as the *arava* is united with the other *minim* and is included in the *bracha*, all is fine. However, on *Hoshana Rabba*, we take the *arava* on its own and even strike it on the ground, to demonstrate that even when it is no longer bound to the other *minim* in the *mitzva*, it can withstand even being struck by physical or spiritual hardship.

Similarly, when a young man leaves the protective environment of the yeshiva or kollel, he must be able to retain his identity and even in the face of adversity, continue to serve Hashem בשמחה ובטוב לבב אכי”ר



[4]

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