

Vayera

“And Abraham returned to his lads and they arose and went together to Beer Sheva and Abraham was in Beer Sheva.”

(*Bereishis* 22:19)

The verse only mentions the lads, that is Yishmoel and Eliezer, upon which the *Midrash* comments that Yitzchok had left to learn Torah in the Yeshiva of Shem the son of Noach. The question arises as to why he had to leave altogether, when he could have studied at home, under his great father Abraham? However, one has more success in learning when in a group situation, for through interaction and discussion, the subject matter becomes more clarified. Even if one is a scholar in his own right, nevertheless, through public discussion, he will gain much.

Yitzchok was sent away to learn only after the dramatic incident of the *Akedah*. Why not before? The *Ksav Sofer* explains that many parents are reluctant to send their children away, either because the latter are delicate and would be homesick or they are afraid that they will come in contact with a bad environment. Therefore, even though Abraham knew Isaac was righteous, one must never even trust himself. But after this great event, where Yitzchok was willing to offer himself up as a sacrifice in order to do the wishes of G-d, Abraham then felt certain that for the sake of G-d he would surely not be homesick nor would he befriend any bad people.

We should endeavor to give our children the best possible Torah education. In order to motivate them, we ourselves must serve as role models. Speeches will not help as much as our own actions. The Parsha tells us earlier that because Abraham used a messenger to fetch the water for his guests and did not do it himself, G-d later repaid his children by not directly giving them water in the desert, but rather through Moshe hitting the rock. This occurred even though Abraham had good reason for his actions. He was old and sick and could not do everything himself. Also, he wanted to train others in the performance of mitzvohs. However, the best way to

train others is to set an example. We ourselves must engage in Torah learning if we want our children to emulate us. We must show them how important this is. By attending public lectures, we can set such an example for others.

Two of Abraham's tests began with the words "go to you." These included leaving his family, as well as offering up his son. The *Midrash* tells us that the second one was more loved by G-d. One cannot be content with leading a righteous life himself but must also inspire his children to do likewise. In this free country of ours, everyone is allowed to do his own thing. We must see to it that the next generation continues in our way. The study of Torah gives them a common language and purpose. Try it today.