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### Avraham's Purim Seudah

The first Purim Seudah is commonly thought to have taken place in Shushan together with Mordechai and Esther after we were saved from Haman's genocidal plan. I would like to suggest that the first Purim Seudah actually took place in this week's parsha.

"וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד וַיִּגְמַל וַיַּעַשׂ אֲבָרָהֶם מִשְׁתֵּה גָדוֹל בְּיוֹם הַגָּמֶל  
אֶת יִצְחָק"

Avraham threw a huge party on the day Yitzchak was weaned. Rashi tells us he was weaned twenty four months after the Pesach on which he was born. If we do the calculations and take leap years into account, this Mishteh took place on the very same date as Purim! I don't think this is a coincidence, and with a deeper look we will find that these two parties are celebrating the same thing.

Why does the Torah tell us about this party? It doesn't mention parties Avraham threw for his other children, their weddings or any other life milestone? This party was actually counterintuitive. Avraham's life mission was introducing God to the world. How amazing must it have been to have a living miracle in his house! A ninety

year old woman gave birth! As long as Sarah was nursing they had living proof of God to introduce to any guest. The day Yitzchack stopped nursing was the day this miracle ended. Avraham would have to revert back to showing Hashem's hand behind the scenes, in the everyday natural miracles we experience when we eat and breathe. Avraham threw a party to show that this is actually a higher level than needing open miracles to see Hashem's Hashgacha! On Purim we were weaned from needing open miracles! There were no plagues, split seas, or clouds of glory, yet we still recognized that Hashem was behind our victory.

How important is this message in these times, to recognize the natural miracles that Hashem bestows upon us every day, and to know that whatever we are going through is part of a bigger plan.



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### God or Guests?

You have a really important meeting with the president. He is coming to your house to visit you. As soon as he arrives you notice some people walking by your

**רפואה שלמה**  
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house. You're not sure if they need a place to stay. Would anyone in their right mind tell the president to wait a moment and see if these people needed a place to rest?

Hashem visits Avraham Avinu at the beginning of this week's parsha. As he arrives Avraham says

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶ-דְּנִי אִם נָא מְצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֵל נָא תַעֲבֹר מֵעַל עַבְדְּךָ.

Rashi explains that he is talking to Hashem telling him to wait while he invites the malachim into his house! What Chutzpah? Couldn't it wait?

The Gemara learns from here that Hachnasat Orchim is even greater than Kabbalat Pnei Hashchinah, than greeting God Himself.

Is welcoming guests really greater than connecting to Hashem? Perhaps the answer is obvious once we realize that doing chessed, is in fact the best way to connect to Hashem.

There are two ways to grow closer to someone. One is by learning about them and spending time with them, but the other is by emulating them. By putting yourself into their shoes and acting like

them, one can understand and connect on a really deep level. Avraham saw Hashem come and do chessed by visiting him as he was sick, and realized that more than he can connect to Hashem through spending time with him, he can connect by acting like Hashem and spreading that chessed onward. ■

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