

## The Binding of God In The Month Of The Oath

”בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי” (ויקרא כג: כג) : רַבִּי בְּרַכְיָה הָוָה קָרִי לִיָּה יְרַחֵם דְּשִׁבּוּעָתָא.  
חֹדֶשׁ שָׁבוּ נִשְׁבַּע הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְאַבְרָהָם שְׁאַנִּי גּוֹיָל אֶת בְּנִיךְ. הִדָּא  
הוּא דְכָתִיב : ”וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי נְאֻם-ה' ” (בראשית ככ: טז). מַה צּוּרְךָ הָיָה  
לְשִׁבּוּעָה זוֹ? רַבִּי בִּיבִי בַר אֲבָא בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן : אָמַר אֲבָרְהָם לְפָנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ  
בְּרוּךְ הוּא : רַבּוֹן כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים! גְּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לְפָנֵי כֶּסֶא כְבוֹדֶיךָ שְׁבַשְׁעָה שְׁאַמְרַתָּ  
לִי ”קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנֶיךָ אֶת-יְחִידֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר-אַהַבְתָּ אֶת-יִצְחָק” (בראשית ככ: ב),  
הָיָה לִי לְהַשְׁיבֶךָ וְלוֹמַר לָךְ, אֲתַמּוּל אֲמַרְתָּ לִּי : פִּי בִּיצְחָק יִקְרָא לָךְ זָרַע”  
(בראשית כא: יב). וְהַיּוֹם אֲתָה אוֹמֵר לִי : ”קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנֶיךָ אֶת-יְחִידֶיךָ”  
(בראשית ככ: ב). אֲלָא כְּשֵׁם שְׁהָיָה לִי לְהַשְׁיבֶךָ וְלֹא הִשְׁבַּתִּיךָ, כִּדְּבַשְׁעָה שְׁבַנְיָו  
שֶׁל יִצְחָק בְּאִין לִיָּדֵי עֲבִירוֹת וּמַעֲשִׂים רָעִים תִּזְכּוֹר לָהֶם עֲקִידָתוֹ שֶׁל יִצְחָק  
אַבְיָהֶם וְתִכְפֹּר לָהֶם.

*In the seventh month, on the first day of the month... you shall observe a sacred occasion, complete with loud blasts (Leviticus 23:23). Rabbi Berechiah understood the seventh [shevi'i] month as “the month of the oath [shevu'a].” For in that month God swore to our father, Abraham: By my own Self, I swear [nishba'ti]... (Genesis 22:16). What reason was there for an oath? Rabbi Bibi bar Abbah said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: Abraham, our father, said before the Holy One, Master of all worlds, you certainly know that when you said to me: Take your son, your only one... (Genesis 12:2) that I had in mind a response. I had in mind to say: Yesterday you said to me: It is through Isaac that offspring shall be continued for you (Genesis 21:12)! And now you say to me: Take your son... and offer him as a sacrifice?! As I had in my heart a response to you but suppressed my impulse and didn't argue, so when Isaac's children come to transgression and misdeeds you must remember the binding of their father and fill yourself with compassion for them!*

(Midrash Leviticus Rabbah 29:9)