

Eilecha

weekly



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וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל-אַבְרָם לֵךְ-לָךְ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלֶדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאֶה:

MEKOR

BEREISHIS 12:1

Hashem said to Avram, "Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you."

MEANING

RASHI, SEFORNO, CHIZKUNI

Traveling to Eretz Yisrael would be for Avraham's benefit as his name would be magnified there. This travel was to be undertaken without knowledge of the destination, which would later be revealed to Avraham in a vision. Until this vision came, he was to continue traveling. Hashem wanted to prevent Avraham from going back to his birthplace to claim his inheritance, as he would be going to Eretz Yisrael which was his true and rightful inheritance as a descendant of Shem.

MESSAGE

ME'OR EINAYIM

Although it may seem as if the physical encasement of the body and its needs inhibit the loftiest spiritual heights, in truth, this experience of struggle, rising above, and utilizing physicality for holiness enables it to reach levels impossible to attain in the lofty spiritual realms.

Our verse may be seen as hinting to this deep truth: **לֵךְ-לָךְ**: It is possible for the **נשמה** to travel great distances in *avodas Hashem*, **מֵאֶרֶץ**: specifically by virtue of its experience of earthliness and physicality. This capacity to illuminate our physical experiences with the light of **אמונה** is precisely what makes us so much loftier than the most glorious angels.

THE TREASURE WITHIN

To be human is to be a seeker. Whether or not we are conscious of it, there is a general theme that underlies all of our actions: the pursuit of life's essence and the happiness we are certain it will grant us. "אנו רצים והם רצים – We are running, and they are running". Although the end result may look very different, with some people searching for meaning in the broken wells of physical satisfaction while others discover the flowing stream of a relationship with the Infinite One, it is ultimately the same "running", the same desperate search that powers them both.

In our generation, this "running" has grown extremely intense, particularly among our youth; "זה דור דורשני" – This is a generation that seeks Him". This has resulted both in more Jews getting in touch with the beauty of Torah and mitzvos than ever before, as well as, *rachmana litzlan*, more Jews being drawn to the transient illusions of pleasure and fulfillment presented by the Other Side. Oftentimes these two attractions merge within the very same Jew; the passion of the *Dor HaMidbar* ("חסד נעוריך") together with the passion of the *Dor HaMabul* ("רע מעוריו"). We feel as if "אנו רצים ואנו רצים – We are running and we are running."

The *Mei HaShiloach* teaches that when we contemplate the places we go in search for the essence of life, we soon come to the realization that they each represent the opportunity to fill a lack. More money satisfies the need to pay the rent, physical pleasure satisfies desire, a steak dinner satisfies hunger. All of these things, and others like them, merely bring one up to a status quo of contentment - a status quo which, sooner or later, is bound to be disrupted with the appearance of a new lack to fill. Could this be the

essence of life, the mere filling of lacks? Is there nothing that can lift us up, that can give us something *more*, that can enable us to truly gain something beyond the experience of contentment?

The tzaddik teaches that this very question was asked by Avraham to the Master of the world, and the first two words of our parsha are the answer: "לך לך – Go to yourself". With these two words, Hashem let Avraham in on the greatest secret of life: the treasure you seek in the world around you can only be found *in the world you hold within*.

Embedded in the very essence of the Jewish soul is the capacity for the greatest levels of connection to Hashem and the ability to get in touch with a world beyond. By "going to ourselves", we discover the ladder of our soul which, while "מוצב ארצה" – rooted in the physical body, is "מגיע השמימה" – touching the highest spiritual realms. Once we do, instead of searching for the essence of life in the transient world of lack, we can use the medium of *avodas Hashem* to climb the inner ladder of the soul and rise to intimacy with the Source of infinite light, life, and ultimate fulfillment.



"LECH LECHA – GO TO YOURSELF." THE TREASURE YOU SEEK IN THE WORLD THAT SURROUNDS CAN ONLY BE FOUND IN THE WORLD YOU HOLD WITHIN.

- The Meor Einayim zy"ta



The Obligation of Lifelong Faithfulness

Based on a teaching of Rav Moshe Weinberger shlit"a

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ונתתי לך ולזרעך אחריו את ארץ מגרף את כל ארץ כנען לאחזת עולם והייתי להם לאלקים:
ויאמר אלקים אל אברהם ואתה את בריתי תשמור אתה וזרעך אחריו לדורתם:

בראשית
יז:ח-ט

Bereishis Rabba 46:9 comments: ואם לאו אין נכנסים לארץ

There's a clear connection between ברית מילה and receiving Eretz Yisrael; **by performing מילה we merit** קנין הארץ...

ברית מילה has two basic elements:

1 מעשה המילה
Circumcision that (generally) occurs on the baby's 8th day

2 שמירת הברית / קיום הברית
Guarding and staying loyal to the covenant

This is reflected in the *berachos* said at a ברית מילה, as stated in the Gemara in Shabbos 137b:

המל אומר: "אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על המילה".

אבי הבן אומר: "אשר קדשנו... להכניסו בבריתו של אברהם אבינו".



A one-time action and "buy-in"

Lifetime commitment to Derech of Avraham



Similar to being 'branded', it's a mark, a **signature**...

...but a signature is accompanied by **real obligations**.

Every second of every day we are meant to uphold the covenant; we have a **נאמנות**/faithfulness regardless of our age.

The requirement of loyalty only begins on the 8th day...but it continues until our last breath.

Returning to the מילה/Eretz Yisrael connection, the privilege to live in the palace of the King in the most ideal way in Eretz Yisrael obligates us to be **faithful** to the ברית, which is not just the *mitzvah* of performing מילה; the **key** is **שמור את בריתי תשמור** ואתה את בריתי תשמור

We encounter a similar dual concept in when it comes to the **Beis HaMikdash**:

1 בנין בית המקדש
The obligation to **build** the Mikdash

2 שמירת בית מקדש
The obligation to **honor, guard and exalt** the Mikdash

As the Rambam writes in *Sefer HaMitzvos* (מצוות עשה כ"ב): "לשמור המקדש וללכת סביבו תמיד לכבדו ולרוממו ולגדלו".

The same holds true for our **Batei Midrash, yeshivos, and shuls**:

Building a structure is a wonderful first move, and anyone involved in its construction ought to be commended...

...but then the edifice needs to be **used, respected and maintained** as a **makom kadosh**.

אמר נא אחותי את... At the beginning of the parsha, when Avraham fears for Sarah's life in Mitzrayim, he says:

The Radziner Rebbe zy"a teaches that **אחותי** is and **acronym** for: **א-ל חי וקים תמיד ימלך**

No matter what happens in dark places - even if our relationship is tainted - 'Hashem is in that place with you and He is eternal'.

That part of body that gets circumcised, gives **life/חי**. Mitzrayim, by contrast, was the opposite of faithfulness: **פגם הברית**. **לאחות** - from the word אחותי - also means **to fasten/mend together**; Even in dark times, we have **א-ל חי**, and our *kesher* with Him is not severed. **Avraham sewed the world together** - קונה שמים וארץ. He connected body & soul; שמירת הברית + קדשת הברית. It is incumbent upon us to always remember **the inseparability of a Jew, Hashem and the Land**.