

פרשת לך לך

This adaptation is dedicated for a
רפואה שלמה
for
העניא בת פריידל

"לך לך מארצך וממולדתך ומבית אביך אל הארץ
אשר אראך" (יב, א)

**"Go forth for yourself from your land and
from your birthplace and from your
father's house, to the land I will show you"**

R' Brachia explained: to what was Avraham comparable to? A flask of balsam oil that was closed and sealed with a fused lid and left in a corner, its scent contained. Once it is moved, its fragrances begin to waft about. So said Hashem to Avraham, move yourself from place to place, so that your renown increases by way of your mitzvos and good deeds, so that they emit a pleasant fragrance out into the world.¹

לך לך

Go forth for yourself

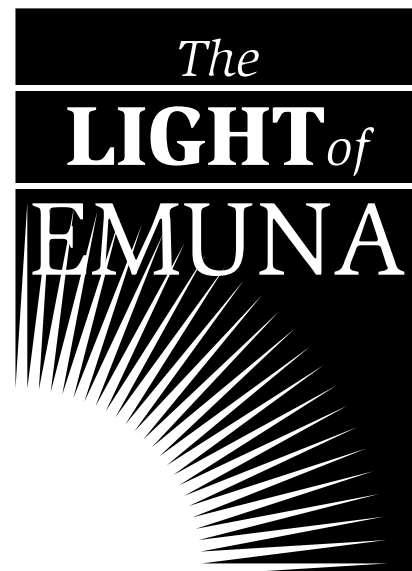
To where? To where should one go? - To yourself - to your innermost self - to the deepest part of things - to the soul inside of everything.

Why is it difficult for people to do *mitzvos*? It is difficult because they have been unable to reveal the inner portions of Torah, the delight of being connected to Hashem, the pleasure of knowing that Hashem loves them, that He understands their difficulties and waits for them to turn to Him. When everything is superficial, we don't have any strength. Then, we look for shortcuts, abridged versions - we have less vitality - we are separated more. When we are not connected to the internal elements of matters - everything is heavy, everything is difficult.

Attachment to Hashem is the gratification of

¹

בראשית רבה לט, ב



Based on Harav Menachem Azolai's "Ohr Ha'Emuna"

yiddishkeit - the personal, simple, healthy and natural bond. Hashem loves us. Hashem, we want You. Inside every Jew there exists this tremendous aspect, this G-dly point that is unlimited, that Hashem never gives up on. We must dig deeply until we connect to it. How do we connect, how do we find inner truth?

By doing everything for Hashem's glory:

Every action that we perform, every thought that passes through our minds, must be scrutinized. If it is at all extravagant, superficial - we must be shaken and horrified - Hashem, help us find genuineness, help us so that everything we do inclines towards Your honor, that every action stem from our love for You.

The holy Baal Shem Tov famously attempted to journey to Eretz Yisroel but was thwarted by terrible storms, causing him to scrap his plans and turn back. On his return, he stayed at the home of a wealthy Jew in Istanbul. His host had been unable to have children for many years and the Baal Shem Tov decreed that he be blessed with progeny. The man's wife was physically incapable of bearing children and so the Baal Shem Tov's pronouncement directly contradicted the laws of nature. Heaven revealed to the Baal Shem Tov that because of his actions in "forcing" Heaven's hand he had forfeited his share in the World to Come. At that moment, he experienced an ethereal sense of joy.

He excitedly told his daughter, "From this moment on, I can serve Hashem without any thought of reward – only for Hashem's sake" - at which point, a Heavenly voice rang out proclaiming that he re-earned his entire portion.

Avraham was told to leave his homeland. To where? To where was he headed?

At that juncture – we ask no questions. We leave everything, discard reason and go where Hashem sends us. The destination will be revealed eventually. In essence, there is no destination – the objective is to simply follow Hashem. Hashem instructs us to come along. "Watch Me and shadow Me." This requires determined nullification to Hashem's will. We want so many things, we need so many things – but what we truly need is the desire to do Hashem's will. Paradoxically, by quashing our own selfhood we reach our truest sense of self. לך לך – go forth **to yourself**. It is difficult to leave the place we grew up, where our families live, our friends and loved ones. Yet so many people have come close to the service of Hashem, abandoning their vocations - journeying into the unknown. To do so, we require much modesty and humility, much *emuna*. Avraham Avinu merited this and some remnant of his attribute is engraved in our souls, into the soul of every Jew.

When we follow this path, we reveal a lot of joy in our service of Hashem – a lot of satisfaction. "This I do for Hashem's honor, because I love You so – I have no strength, no zest and no time ... but, as soon as I realize that this is what you want from me at this moment – I overcome all."

The love of Hashem burns in the heart of every Jew. We need only remove the veil (לוט). Lot is a covering – instead of feeling Hashem we feel our own passions. We think of ourselves and forget Hashem. We must eliminate this covering. This is exactly what Avraham did when he told Lot, "Please part from me; if you go right, I will go left."² The *yetzer hora* lurks in every corner. He is the ultimate *Breslover Chasid*. He fully lives

by Rebbe Nachman's prime counsel of never despairing.³ He never gives up. We must battle him. We must convert the torch of lusts that burns within us into a torch of holiness, of love of Hashem. We must transform the imaginary materialistic paradise of physical pleasures into a true *gan eden* of clinging to Hashem. A Jew who merits tasting the sweet flavor of holiness understands that everything else is animalistic, brutish and tasteless. Can this really be what my soul wants? The soul yearns for Hashem – it takes comfort in Hashem – what gladdens us and gives us solace is that Hashem exists in the world. Nothing else – not food, drink, honor, success, urges.

To feel Hashem, to reach our innermost selves – we must proceed with a melody:

A melody can inspire the heart – it gladdens us and stirs us. We progress with one tune until it has served its purpose - then we exchange it for another.

Harav Eliezer Berland *Shlita*: Melodies are above all else. That is amazing – there are no letters, no words – yet they are so lofty. When I *daven*, learn or do *mitzvos*, I am accomplishing – but a tune? Yet, when a person hums or sings – he merits all seventy facets of Torah. The more a person sings, the more secrets of Torah are revealed to him. Our souls pine for the melodies that help them ascend to higher worlds.

Had Adam Harishon sung – he would not have sinned with the Tree of Knowledge. Therefore he composed his confession in a psalm, "A song with musical accompaniment for Shabbos day. It is good to give thanks to Hashem and to sing to Your high name."⁴

Hashem requests of us, "Show Me your appearance, let Me hear your voice."⁵ "I want to hear your melodies, sing before Me because your

³ אין שום יאוש העולם כלל

⁴ מזמור שיר ליום השבת טוב להודות לד' ולזמר לשמך עליון (תהילים צב, א-ב)

⁵ הראיני את מראיך, השמיעיני את קולך (שיר השירים ב, יד)

² היפרד נא מעלי אם השמאל ואימינה (בראשית יג, ט)

voice is pleasant – you have such a pleasant voice, I long to hear it – the voice of each and every Jew. How you sing your *davening*.” A person is created to sing and praise. Aside from *Shemona Esrei*, that is said quietly, it is a *mitzvah* to raise our voices, to chant, to be enthusiastic. Some complain that the davening of others disturbs them. What is it hindering? Their sleep? Their dreaming? The Sefer Chasidim says that when a person has the urge to raise his voice, it is a sign that his *tefillos* are being accepted. When we raise our voices, it is a sign that Hashem wants to fulfill our requests, provide us with our hearts’ desires. We must always *daven* with joy, with fervor.

In the heart of every Jew, in the depths of every soul, there is song - a melody of *emuna* - a ballad of yearning and longing for Hashem. “As the dear longs for brooks of water, so does my soul long for You, Hashem.”⁶ Singing connects a person to his Creator.

The Innermost Self is Desire:

The driving force in life, the very answer, depends on one’s desire. Abandoning ones negative desires and clinging to the positive ones. A person’s life appears as he aspires. Chazal tell us that on the path that a person craves, he is led. All of one’s free will is in his aspirations. Rebbe Nachman explained that one’s free will is very simple – if he wants to, he does and if he does not want to, he does not. Avraham Avinu withstood all of his challenges because his hopes burned in his heart. The most difficult thing for the soul is an absence of objectives. In the deepest sections of the heart, every Jew has a point of will and longing for Hashem. We merely need to reach it. Not to give up, not to say that we don’t have yearnings, this is how we are. Rebbe Nosson once heatedly described the flame in Avraham Avinu’s heart. One of the listeners sighed and wondered aloud where one procures such a heart. Rebbe Nosson retorted, “You already have such a heart, you

merely need to ignite it.” Even in the most impenetrable Jewish heart there burns a Jewish heart – we must simply remove the לוט – the veil.

Where to begin? Do a little - Hashem will do the majority. Hashem waits for us to turn to Him just a little bit. Then, he turns to us. He smiles at us. Hashem is like a mother who waits for her child to come seek forgiveness. We are in this world to reveal Hashem’s kingship. A person reveal Hashem’s kingship when he commences working on his innermost self - when he begins to disengage himself, in small ways, from his present state towards a slightly elevated state. Without inner service, a person remains with all of his silliness. He feels deprived, full of complaints, angry, sullen, anxious and blameworthy towards himself and others - he is boastful, jealous, he acts selfishly, for the admiration that he hopes to receive. We have to start contemplating where we stand in the world. Am I connected or detached? What am I connected to? When, Father, will I begin to think of You and not about myself or my honor?

The Innermost Self is Truth:

Truly honor others. Not just with occasional compliments – constantly. We must compliment our children, our spouses, our neighbors. Even for simple things. Every good word that we say to another, gives him honor, it revitalizes his spirit. We must incessantly think about honoring others. If we honor others, we will be honored.⁷ The regard that we earn by venerating others is Hashem’s honor. It is holy honor. Only via this can we accept humiliations in life and endure. We must exchange esteem from man for honor from Hashem – which we receive every time we learn Torah, do *chesed* or anything else that we do for Hashem’s glory. Especially when we act with strength – I can’t, it’s too difficult, I fall asleep on my *sefer*, I can’t do anything, I don’t feel anything – but I do it anyway. Honor is self-sacrifice to overcome challenges. Honor is being modest. Honor is increasing holiness in our lives. When a person

⁶ כאיל תערוג על אפיקי מים כן נפשי תערוג אליך אלוקים (תהלים מב, ב)

⁷ איזהו מוכבד, המכבד את הבריות (אבות ד, א)

foregoes reverence from people, when he doesn't care what others say about him – when he looks for G-d's veneration – he experiences great joy – indescribable delight. He has succeeded in substituting superficiality with inner substance. He has earned one-on-one time with Hashem.

When a person seeks neither honor, nor success, nor any sort of trivial achievements – when he pursues his own inner point of genuineness – he frees himself from anger, pedantry, dissatisfaction, a sense of deprivation – he connects to a very high element, an element of joy. He is bonded and happy in a way that is not

dependent on outside factors. He chooses Hashem out of love, from the innermost place, from his truest place.

Hisbodedus Corner

A person's correction depends on his relationship with Hashem. People ask *tzaddikim* to bless them, which is certainly positive and helpful – but it will not correct them. Many people are close to *tzaddikim* but it does not change them because of primary importance are one's own efforts in *tefilla* and *teshuva*. Without *tefilla* is without Hashem. *Tefilla* = Hashem.

תפילה

Master of the World! Help me be a true person. Not to do things because everyone else does them - because they will respect me more, because others expect me to act a certain way.

Help me be myself and not someone else.

Help me remember every day of my life that no one will ask me after 120 years why I was not Moshe Rabbeinu. They will ask me why I wasn't myself. Give me the strength to be true to my true self, even if it is considered less admirable amongst my peers.

Help me, Father, to learn from Avraham Avinu's example in acting as if he was alone in the world, not negatively influenced by anyone.

Give me the strength, Father in Heaven, to reach the truth within me, through internal reflection, through free will, no matter how long it takes.

Help me, Father, to respect everyone, to consider them, to seek their happiness, especially when it comes to my family and those close to me - but, not to give up on myself, on my true self - for how worthwhile are things that I do only to gain the approval of others?

When I do things because others expect it, pressure me, even if they do so without words - it never ends well.

Therefore, help me, Father, to respect another's situation, to understand him, to judge him favorably – all, while remaining true to myself. Help me never to get angry, never to erupt - because those are signs of weakness. One who is confident does not get angry at someone who disagrees with him.

Father in Heaven, may I merit being a true person because only through truth is it possible to truly draw close to You.

Have an awesome, uplifting and wonderful Shabbos,

Dov

Notice: The foregoing is based on my limited understanding of the Parsha Sheet, *Ohr Ha'Emuna*, disseminated by Harav Menachem Azolai *Shlita* and is not a complete or exact adaptation of *Ohr Ha'Emuna* and is not necessarily even a reliable interpretation of the ideas presented therein. *Ohr Ha'Emuna* is published in Hebrew; in translation, accuracy is always compromised. Rav Azolai has not reviewed this material - any inaccuracies, omissions or confusion should be attributed exclusively to me. I still hope you enjoy and it provides some *chizuk*.

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