



**SHOSHANA JUDELMAN**

TORAH TIDBITS CONTRIBUTOR

# Lech Lecha: Be Brave and Go Forth

For a while now, my heart has opened every time I read these words at the end of the Amidah:

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אֶמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיּוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ ה' צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי:

*May the words of my mouth and the wondering of my heart be according to Your Will and facing You, Hashem. You are my Strength and my Redeemer.*

It is a meditation, a tefillah, that helps me redirect my questioning heart and wandering mind. Like a “re-center” button on Waze. I say this passuk, and I feel myself realigning with the goal of striving for closeness to my Creator.

Avraham Avinu paved this path of *hish-tokekus*, of yearning for Hashem, for us. He lived his whole life with this intention. And through him we are enabled to live this way as well.

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The lives of the Avot and Imahot are doorways for us. Through learning about their journeys and challenges, we can tap into the koach they passed down to us and actualize our own personal growth.

The Chiddushei HaRim tells us that for a long time Hashem was actually saying “Lech Lecha” to everyone. But only Avraham Avinu, who worked on himself continuously, refining his life and opening his heart, was eventually able to receive the message, thereby stepping up to become the paradigm of what it means to live a meaningful life.

And Hashem gave Avraham a hefty challenge. But it’s what enabled his greatness to truly be realized.

לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלֶדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאֶרֶץ  
אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאֶה:

*Go forth from your land and from your birthplace and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you.*

Physically, Avraham had to leave the place where he grew up and the way he was used to doing things. But Chassidus teaches that “Lech lecha,” means go for yourself. To yourself. On a spiritual and psychological level this journey would be one of even deeper personal growth and refinement.

And it’s meant for all of us.

The Noam Elimelech tells us that lech lecha is a call to come out of our comfort zones. To continuously examine our habits and leave behind those that are unhealthy or no longer serving our mission. And to recognize that while it is in our nature to put up defense mechanisms that get in the way of relationship, we can also

find the koach to heal them.

Lech lecha means making a full mental shift. Living with our hearts facing Hashem and continuously redirecting as new challenges arise. And they do.

In the Avraham story, Hashem doesn't reveal the destination. Instead He puts Avraham Avinu in a situation that demands moving forward with constant faith and trust. And Avraham agrees. Through being in a continuous place of "not knowing," Avraham Avinu passed on to us the power to keep our own hearts open to possibility. We too can live in emunah.

In truth, that is our everyday reality anyway. None of us knows what tomorrow will bring. Thinking about that could frighten us. Except it is in our spiritual DNA, passed down from Avraham Avinu himself, to have the strength to keep moving forward in the "not knowing."

And it is the greatest journey in the world. The journey of our lives.

Hashem told Avraham. And He is telling each one of us:

אֵלֹהִים

I will show you.

I will be with you, and I will hold you on this journey each and every day. Just turn your heart to Me and keep going forth- to become yourself. ■

**Shoshana Judelman** is passionate about learning and growing through Chassidus. She gives shiurim to women in many communities around Israel, including Efrat, Elazar, Raanana and Jerusalem as well as at Midreshet Rachel V'Chaya. Shoshana also guides groups at Yad Vashem and leads journeys to Poland and other countries around Europe for JRoots.

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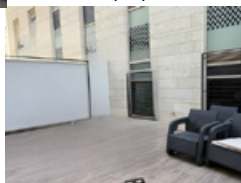
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