



RABBI SHALOM

ROSNER

RAV KEHILLA, NOFEI HASHEMESH
MAGGID SHIUR, DAF YOMI, OU.ORG
ROSH BAIS MEDRASH ENGLISH SPEAKING PROGRAM MACHON LEV

“Lech Lecha” – Becoming Your True Self

The parsha begins with Hashem commanding Avraham – *Lech Lecha* – to go. Some have interpreted the phrase to refer to the fact that the journey was for Avraham’s own good and benefit (*Rashi*). He was to go **for** himself.

Rav Shlomo Yosef Zevin (LaTorah V’La-Moadim) suggests that the imperative has a far deeper meaning. Hashem is commanding Avraham – *Lech Lecha* – go to the depths of your soul. That statement is not a command to go **for** yourself but rather a directive to go **to** yourself. Hashem’s call to Avraham was not simply geographical. It was existential: discover your own essence, your own *neshama*.

Hashem never demands of a person to achieve beyond his or her capacity:

“כָּל אֲשֶׁר תִּמְצָא יָדְךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּכַחַךְ עֲשֵׂה”

“Whatever your hand finds to do — do with all your might.” (Kohelet 9:10).

The *pasuk* does not mean that one should feel free to do as they please. That would invite a world of *hefkerut*. Rather the intention is that one should utilize the strengths and talents

with which one was gifted to maximize their potential.

This echoes the famous teaching of R’ Zusha of Anipoli. “In the next world, they will not ask me, ‘Why weren’t you like the Baal Shem Tov?’ or ‘Why weren’t you like the Maggid of Mezritch?’ But they will ask me: ‘Zusha, why were you not Zusha?’” Did you do everything possible to be the best person you could be based on the capabilities and limitations granted to you.

The message is clear: our task in life is not to imitate others, but to actualize our own deepest potential. As Hazal tell us: “*Maase Avot Siman L’banim*” – we are to emulate the characteristics exemplified by our Avot and their encounters are an example for future generations. That is the first command to the first Jew — *Lech Lecha*. May we be able to dig deep inside ourselves, recognize our talents and utilize them to maximize our potential in the manner in which we serve Hashem and the way in which we impact those around us. ■

Mazal Tov to
Shai & Leah Rubin and family
on the **Bat Mitzvah** of their
daughter **Noa Esther**

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