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Our Personal Lech Lecha

Nothing in life happens in a vacuum. The journeys we begin, the choices we make, and even the challenges we never imagined facing are often connected in ways we can only begin to understand much later.

When Avraham Avinu is commanded to offer his beloved son Yitzchak as a korban later in Parshat Vayera, the Torah introduces the command with two familiar words: לֶךְ לְךָ — “Lech Lecha” (Bereishit 22:2). These words take us back to the beginning of Avraham’s journey of discovery, when Hashem first commanded him in our Parsha: “Lech Lecha from your land, your birthplace, and your father’s house, to the land that I will show you” (Bereishit 12:1).

The journey that began with לֶךְ לְךָ אֶל הָאֶרֶץ — “Go to the land that I will show you” — continues with לֶךְ לְךָ אֶל אֶרֶץ הַמִּנְחָה, the journey to Har HaMoriah for the Akeidah.

These are not two unrelated journeys. The first takes Avraham toward the land in which he, his family, and his descendants will take root. The second tests the very foundation of that future through his willingness to surrender the son who embodies its promise. The Lech Lecha that brought Avraham to Eretz Yisrael was only the beginning of a journey whose depths he could not yet have imagined.

Avraham follows Hashem, trusting completely in Divine guidance. Where will I settle? How long will the journey take? What awaits me when I arrive? He asks not a single question. Not even “Why?” He moves forward with complete submission and unwavering faith.

Years later, he faces an unimaginable command: to offer Yitzchak as a korban. The angel ultimately stops him, and a ram is offered in his son’s place. Yet Avraham’s willingness to place everything in Hashem’s hands becomes an eternal part of our people’s spiritual inheritance.

Acts of faith, commitment, sacrifice, and belonging are not abstract ideas to be studied in the parsha and left on the page. They are as relevant today as they were then. The Torah is alive, and its lessons speak to us now.

After I addressed the southern community of Nir Am at a ceremony on October 7, one of the participants asked whether our family had ever considered moving back to America after Binyamin was killed.

My son Yehudah, who was sitting beside me during the talk, immediately interjected: “Absolutely not!”

His response needed no deliberation. I went on to explain that our family had always felt



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deeply connected to this land — to its extraordinary beauty, its history, its people, and its struggles. And since Binyamin was killed, that connection has become even deeper and more profound. We are now intertwined with the very fabric of this land in a way we could never have anticipated.

We came to Israel because we believed this was where our family belonged. We chose to build our lives here, raise our children here, and share in the joys and challenges of a nation returning to its homeland. We could not have known what that choice would eventually demand of us.

Our original Lech Lecha brought us here. But the journey did not end when we unpacked our suitcases, established our home, or built our lives in this land. In many ways, it was only the beginning. Now, twenty years later, we are still evolving: privately, personally and growing more connected with Israel's land and society- organically and intentionally.

There is a profound connection between Avraham's journey, which began with Lech Lecha, and the מ"ב מסעות — the 42 journeys of Bnei Yisrael from Egypt, through the wilderness, and finally to the plains of Moav, opposite Yericho. This connection is framed by the principle מעשה אבות סימן לבנים — “The deeds of the fathers are a sign for the children.”

Avraham's journey and Bnei Yisrael's 42 journeys, as Rabbi Jonathan Sacks teaches, remind us that faith is not a static state but a continual process of movement and growth. Even after arriving in Eretz Yisrael, Avraham continues to travel — to Shechem, Beit El, Chevron, and even Egypt. His life is not defined by settling permanently in one place, but by a spiritual journey that continues to unfold.

The Degel Machaneh Ephraim, quoting his

grandfather, the Baal Shem Tov, teaches that every person experiences 42 journeys from the day of birth until the day they leave this world.

Avraham's personal journey thus becomes a spiritual blueprint for the national journey his descendants would undertake centuries later — a journey that continues for our people to this very day.

Perhaps this is one of the deeper messages of the repeated לך לך in Avraham's life. A calling is not fulfilled through a single act of obedience, nor is our relationship with Hashem defined by one moment of faith. It is the journey itself that matters. We are “בדרך”. It is not simply about reaching the ultimate destination, but about who we become along the way.

The journey unfolds in stages, and each stage asks something different of us. Sometimes, only in retrospect, do we recognize how the steps we took years earlier prepared us for the place where we stand today.

Avraham was told to go to a land Hashem would show him. He could not see the full future that awaited him. Neither can we. We move forward with faith, carrying both what we have lost and what we have been entrusted to continue building.

Lech Lecha was never simply about reaching a destination. It was about becoming part of a covenant, a people, and a journey larger than oneself.

With all its blessings and beauties.

With all its uncertainties and unknowns.

With Trust and Faith.

And so, our journey continues. ■

The **Airleys** have built **Beit Binyamin**, a retreat center in Tzfat for those directly affected by the war. Soldiers, Zaka members, security forces, bereaved families and widows can come for respite, relaxation and rejuvenation. For more information and to donate, visit Beitbinyamin.org.