

פרשת לך לך

Pearls from the Rov of Tehillos Yisroel, זצוק"ל

Translated from the גליון המקוצר of Tehillos Yisroel

“Go for yourself from your land, from your birth place, and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you” - "לך לך מארצך וממולדתך ומבית אביך" (י"ב:א')

It is well known that one of the ten נסיונות that אברהם אבינו had to go through was the נסיון of "לך לך וגו'", where ד' told אברהם to leave his land, his birth place, and his father’s house. In the following פסוקים ד' promises אברהם that He will make him into a great nation, He will make his name great, and that he will be blessed. Meaning, ד' promised אברהם אבינו that he will achieve all of the ברכות and everything good through this journey. The question that is asked is how is this a test if ד' promises him all of these blessings for leaving his country and his birth place, and going to ארץ הקודש?

It is possible to explain this נסיון as follows. רש"י says that it was necessary to give אברהם these three promises because naturally, when one is traveling, these three things are diminished; it is difficult to bear children, one’s טוב שם (good reputation) needs to be earned again, and all of one’s money is being spent on traveling. Therefore, ד' promised him all of this and more. We see from this that when אברהם אבינו began traveling with this promise, it was necessary for him to first take a step against the טבע, even though this would seemingly distance him from the above mentioned blessings.

This נסיון was given to אברהם because ד' wanted him to completely remove his thoughts and trust from הטבע דרך. He needed to bring himself to believe that he would receive everything directly from ד' (in a way that is completely outside of טבע). It was requested of him to remove himself from everything that most people trust in. Through this, he would manage to elevate himself ברוחניות.

In the following פסוקים we see אברהם אבינו’s נסיון actualized, as it says in י"ב:י"א, פרק י"ב:י"א, that when אברהם came to כנען, there was a famine in the land and there was no food for him to eat. הו"ל tell us that the people of the land of כנען blamed אברהם for the famine. They claimed that their gods were punishing them for allowing a stranger into the land that does not believe in them. From here we see the opposite of "ואגדלה שמך". We also see that when אברהם arrived in מצרים, his wife was taken from him by פרעה and therefore, he was unable to have children. Further, רש"י brings down (י"ג:ג') that אברהם was in debt when he went down to מצרים and he was not able to pay for his lodging. As soon as he withstood his נסיון without losing his אמונה or questioning ד', some of these things were returned to him- his wife was given back to him, he became very wealthy, and his name became known because of the miracles that happened

to him with שרה (פרעה was plagued for taking her). Even though אברהם did not have children until many years later, he did not let go of his אמונה and בטחון in ד'.

This is similar to someone who says to a person “If you get rid of everything that you own, trust me that I will replace all of it and buy you everything brand new”. It is not very likely that one would take his friend up on this offer, even if he is his closest friend. Naturally, he would want proof that he is really going to keep this promise, and then maybe he would consider it. Even if this friend is someone that he really does trust, he would naturally feel a strong resistance in doing such a thing and it is likely that he would say to his friend “First buy me everything new and then I will consider it”. To give away all of one’s belongings and rely on a promise that he will get everything new is very difficult. Even if a person would do such a thing, he would not be able to do it with שמחה. In this נסיון, אברהם אבינו was required to do it with the proper שמחה that is fitting for a מצוה. Had he not done it, it would be considered as if he did not withstand his נסיון, as רש"י says that the test was mainly not to doubt ד'. We see from here that he was being tested whether or not he would feel resentment or if he would fulfill this command with שמחה and without hesitation.

Even though with the level of אמונה that אברהם אבינו had, this נסיון was not very difficult and אברהם אבינו did not need to perfect himself anymore because he was at the peak of perfection, it was the ways of the אבות הקדושים to have in mind not only perfecting themselves, but also to pave the way for all future generations of כלל ישראל in order that they should be a whole nation of צדיקים. Everything they did came from their great love of ד' and they always had in mind that through their deeds, they would give merit to the following generations.

ד' gave אברהם אבינו this נסיון in order that he should have the opportunity to pave the way for us, that we should be able to overcome our נסיונות of בטחון. When the נסיון was placed before him, ד' removed all of the אמונה and בטחון that he previously had in order that it should truly be a נסיון and he would be required to overcome it and conquer the יצר הרע. This עבודה would be purely for his future generations, and this is where we draw our strength, since it is an inheritance from אברהם אבינו.



According to the above, that אברהם אבינו’s נסיון was to give up his belongings with שמחה, we can learn a very important lesson that applies to everyone. A person may believe that ד' is the One who gives him his פרנסה however, when he has an opportunity to make a big business deal that may not be completely מותר, he desperately tries to find a היתר to allow him to make this business deal. If he cannot find a היתר and is forced to let the deal go, would he be able to do this with שמחה? A person who has real אמונה and בטחון in ד' will believe that everything he earns is directly from ד' and is not dependent on how much effort he puts into it. Everything that was decreed for him to earn will certainly come to him and what was not decreed, will certainly not come to him. The only purpose of our efforts is because we were commanded by ד' to make an effort. Therefore, if we make too much of an effort when we should be letting something go, it is a פגם in our אמונה because it is a חיוב to believe that ד' gives us everything and it is not dependent on the amount of effort we put in.

A person who has strong אמונה will not be afraid of giving up a business deal if there is a small ספק that there is an איסור involved. He will not go looking for היתרים because he believes that what ד' wants to give him will come to him anyway. When ד' sees that this person is letting it go because of the איסור that is involved, he will find חן and love in the eyes of ד'. This was always the דרך of the צדיקים, as ר' יונה says that צדיקים distance themselves from 99 gates of היתר in order not to enter one gate of איסור.

We must pay attention to this specifically in our times, when פרנסה is very difficult and this is one of the most difficult נסיונות. We see people lose their ישוב הדעת and sometimes even lose their Yiddishkeit, ח"ו, as it says in חז"ל - "Poverty causes one to lose his דעת and דעת of his Creator". חז"ל also say - "A person is in turmoil because of his money". Therefore, specifically today, we must continuously repeat to ourselves the foundations of אמונה and בטחון and always place in our hearts the נסיונות of the אבות הקדושים and the great reward they received for overcoming them. They were זוכה to be loved by ד'. We must know that when the words of ד' and יראת ד' are precious to a person, he will not attempt to grab something that could possibly bring him to an עבירה. He will not get excited when the offer is placed before him because he trusts that his wealth is dependent on ד' and not on any person or on any business deal. Therefore, he will leave the deal with שמחה and rejoice over the fact that he is fulfilling ד' רצון. This alone will be more precious to him than the whole business deal. With this, his מעשים will be similar to those of the אבות הקדושים, as mentioned above.

“From your land, from your birthplace, and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you”

This פסוק can be explained בדרך רמז מוסר, which teaches us a strategy to save ourselves from the net of the יצר הרע. We must first know that not only the מצוות were given to us in order to bring us closer to ד', rather, everything that ד' gives us in this world (even the necessities) was given to us only in order to teach us ways of serving ד', and it is all a משל from which we must learn עבודת ד'. We must use all גשמיות as a means to bring us closer to ד' because this is our purpose in this world (as explained in פרק א' מסילת ישרים).

It says in ספרי מוסר that the יצר הרע captures a person the most when he is involved with גשמיות, even though dealing with גשמיות is unavoidable. A person who wants to truly come to close to ד' and be protected from the net of the יצר הרע must approach everything he does in גשמיות as a משל and a means to come closer to ד'. Through this, he will be protected from falling into the net of the יצר הרע and the יצר הרע will not have control over him. It is necessary to accustom ourselves to always live with this השקפה and to view this world as though it is no more than a משל, which teaches us ways to serve ד', as it says in משלי ט"ז ד' - "כל פעל ד' למענהו" - "made everything for his sake (i.e., as a means to come closer to him)". It also says in משלי מ"ג - "כל מה שברא הקב"ה בעולמו לא - מסכת אבות" - "All that ד' created in His

world, He created solely for His glory, as it says ‘All that is called by My Name, indeed, it is for my glory that I have created it, formed it, and made it’.

The first פסוק in this week's פרשה is giving every person advice on how to handle matters of this world. The תורה says to all of בני"י (it is speaking to our גשמה, which is called אברהם, as it says in the זוהר הקדוש "לך לך מארצך" (זוהר הקדוש) (גשמיות) "ארצך"). Even though we are forced to deal with these things, we must remember and know that whenever we are dealing with גשמיות, we should have the כוונה that through the גשמיות we should get closer to ד'. When the פסוק says "מארצך", it means that we should search for ד' in all of our dealings in this world. We should use "וממולדתך מביית אביך" to reach אל הארץ "אשר אראך". We should walk in this world and use everything as a means to come closer to ד'.

From what has been said, we see that every person, according to his level, has to use the גשמיות that is placed in front of him as a משל through which he can reach the main purpose of the world, which is to become an עבד ד' (and not a slave to פרעה and his armies, which is everything that has to do with matters of this world). We must always be growing towards this purpose.

Therefore, when a person is engaging in גשמיות, he must first think that everything he is about to do is only a means to reach the main purpose (which is also the purpose of all of the מצוות)-to come closer to ד'. When a person has this כוונה before approaching anything in גשמיות, it will create a protection for him against the יצר הרע, as it says in the גמרא that מזיקים are not allowed to enter and harm anything which is sealed closed, and the biggest מזיק of all is the יצר הרע. When a person has the כוונה that everything he is doing is for the sake of serving ד', it gives him a seal in רוחניות that protects him from anything else entering his heart and he does not indulge in the גשמיות that he is dealing with.



We can add another explanation for this פסוק, בדרך רמז מוסר, that teaches us an important way of how to view things in this world. We can also give an example from the physical world of how ד' deals with us, and through this we can learn something about עבודת ד' and how to take the שפע גשמיות that a person receives and use it as a means to come closer to ד'. The first thing that a person receives when he comes down to this world is a father and mother who give him love and attention, carry him on their shoulders, and worry for everything that he needs in this world. When a person grows up, his dependency on his parents slowly decreases and he is left to look out for himself. He must stand on his own two feet and worry about his own needs.

We must look into why ד' made it this way. Why is it that in the beginning we receive everything and then it is taken away? ד' could have made it that a person will be able to take care of himself right away, from the day that he is born, like the animals in this world. Therefore, we must understand the depth of this and what it is coming to teach us and how it can bring us closer to serving ד'.

We can say (besides the reasons which are very deep and are known only to 'ד) that the reason 'ד made it this way is because when we look into it, we understand that 'ד is the one who gave his parents such a heart and filled it with endless love and מסירות נפש for their children. 'ד is the One who eventually takes away the parents need to support the child when he grows up. The reason is because 'ד is the One who placed these feelings in them to begin with, as if they had no choice in the matter. They had no control or ability to remove these feelings from their heart. As the child grows older, the parents' feeling of need to support him leave them and this itself is evidence that it was really only from 'ד. 'ד placed these feelings there and he removed them. Therefore, the source for this love was not their own, it was 'ד who was bringing the שפע through them. They were only the צנור (channel) to deliver 'ד's love to the child. Therefore, in truth, all the love and devotion that the child feels is none other than 'ד's love and devotion.

When a person comes to the realization that 'ד is his true father and mother, and his physical parents are only a means of bringing 'ד's שפע to him, it will cause him to acknowledge and give thanks to 'ד for the love that he feels towards his father and mother. The natural love that he feels towards his father and mother should really be directed to the Source, which is 'ד. Once he has come to this realization, he automatically comes very close to 'ד and feels a strong connection to 'ד and love in his heart.

Through this משל, a person can easily achieve a connection to 'ד because he can learn how to transfer his feelings to the Source of where the שפע is coming from. By doing so, 'ד will continue giving him the שפע that he received until now and instead of receiving it through the channel of "parents", he can receive it directly from 'ד. This is what "לך לך וגו'" means- Turn away from the place that you were born, from the house of your father, i.e. through understanding that it was only a channel which was delivering 'ד's love to you, you can understand that we must come close to 'ד, who is the Source. When we do so, 'ד says "I will show you that I am the One who is giving to you and who loves you, and everything comes from Me." This is the meaning of the words "אל הארץ אשר אראך"- You will come to the land that I will show you.

"כאן אי אתה לבנים" - "Here you will not merit having children"

"ושם אעתך לגוי גדול וכאן אי אתה זוכה לבנים" - פרשה of this פסוק says regarding רש"י, "There I will make you into a great nation. Here you will not merit having children". It is necessary understand why רש"י says "Here you will not merit having children". Would it not have been enough to say "Go there and I will make you into a great nation"?

In ט"ו:ה, it says that 'ד took אברם outside and said to him to step outside of his מזל, where he saw that he was not destined to have children. He was told that אברם would not bear children, but אברהם would. The מפרשים explain that 'ד was showing אברהם that the birth of ישראל has to be specifically in a way which is above the טבע of this world. 'ד informed אברהם אבינו that the building of ישראל כלל must be on a foundation of הטבע and they must understand that טבע does not apply to them. With this, we can understand the words "וכאן אי" "וכאן אי" to mean that the promise of אברהם אבינו being the father of ישראל כלל is only on

condition that אברהם אבינו would distance himself from the materialism of his homeland. This is because כלל ישראל exist in this world for one purpose, to be close to ד' and to receive everything directly from ד'. They are required not to have any connection to טבע at all, as the רמב"ן says at the end of (י"ג:ט"ז) -פרשת בא "One who does not believe that every deed and occurrence in his life is a complete miracle and there is no טבע, and everything is a direct decree from above, does not have a share in the תורה of רבינו משה רבינו" (see רמב"ן inside). From this, we must understand that when a Yid falls to a level of being ruled by טבע, it is harming his entire Yiddishkeit and his direct connection to אברהם אבינו.¹

ד' and ד' "And he trusted in ד' and ד' counted it for him as righteousness" **"והאמין בד' ויחשבה לו צדקה" (ט"ו:ו')**

רש"י says that אברהם אבינו received זכות and צדקה from ד' for believing Him when He told him that he would have children. The רמב"ן asks- Since אברהם אבינו was one of the biggest מאמינים, as we see when he overcame the נסיון of sacrificing his son, as well as all of the other נסיונות that he overcame, why would this be considered a זכות? Even more so, he himself was the נביא who received the נבואה that he was going to have children.

It is possible to answer this as follows. In the previous פסוק, רש"י explains that אברהם אבינו saw in his מזל that he was unable to have children. ד' told him to change his name from "אברם" to "אברהם", He lifted him outside of all of the מזלות, and showed him how after he changed his name, he would be able to have children².

We see from this that ד' allowed אברהם אבינו to understand with his own שכל how his מזל would change. Therefore, אברהם אבינו had a choice to have אמונה because of what ד' had showed him or to remove that information from his mind and have אמונה that he would have children without understanding how it would take place. He chose to remove this information from his mind and to remain with the same level of understanding as before ד' showed him this, which was that according to טבע and his מזל he was unable to have children. With this, he caused great רוח ד'. This is why it says that ד' counted this for him as צדקה, because he was not commanded to do this and it would have been enough to believe in ד' through the נבואה that was given to him, since he was given the ability to understand this in his mind.

¹ See עזרא on his commentary of the עשרת הדברות, where he says that when a person believes in the strength of טבע, he lowers himself to being controlled by טבע and he becomes enslaved to his מזל. It is then impossible for him to receive anything that is above טבע. This is not the case of one who does not believe in the strength of טבע. Rather, he believes only in the strength of ד' and he does not pay attention to טבע at all. Only he is one who is not enslaved to the טבע or to what his מזל has destined for him. This is the meaning of what חז"ל say- "אין מזל לישראל"

² It is possible to say that even though אברהם אבינו had a promise from ד' that he would have children, since his מזל was showing him that this was impossible, אברהם אבינו thought that ד' fulfilled this promise through his servant, אליעזר, as is known that a תלמיד is considered like a son. However, אברהם אבינו wanted his own child and therefore said to ד'- "ואנכי הולך עירי" -ד' responded by promising אברהם אבינו that he would have a son.

We learn from this that *אמונה* according to the *תורה* is only when a person believes without understanding. Therefore, it is requested of every person to continuously be growing in their *אמונה* by believing in things that are above our intellectual understanding. Without this, a person is not fulfilling the *מצוה* of *אמונה*. However, if a *גוי* grasps *אמונה* intellectually, that is all that is required of him.

The *מצוה* of *אמונה* can be explained that we are required to believe in *ד'* without any logic. When a person understands intellectually, he is lacking *שלמות* in fulfilling the *מצוה* of *אמונה*, which is given to us in the first of the *הברות* "עשרת הדברות", *"אנכי ד' אלוקיך"*. We are commanded to try to grasp *אלוקות* (G-dliness), as it says *"דע את אלוקי אביך וגו'"*. However, after one does come to some understanding, he is required to add *אמונה* above what he understands. By doing so, he is fulfilling the *מצוה* of *אמונה*³. Further, there is an obligation to fulfill the *מצוה* of *אמונה* even in matters which contradict a person's logic, as was the case here with *אברהם אבינו*⁴.



Believing in logic and *טבע* is one of the biggest *נסינות* of today. Our entire *תיקון*, as well as the *שלמה* depends on it and it is what is holding back the *שלמה*. *הרה"ק מרוזין* says regarding what is written in the *גמרא* - *"גמרא - בא חבוקוק והעמידן על אחת"* - that when *חבוקוק* says that the entire stands on *אמונה*, as it says *"צדיק באמונתו יחיה"*, it was referring to our generation, the one before the *שלמה*. The foundation of everything is to strengthen ourselves with *אמונה*. He said that there is going to be difficult *נסינות* of *אמונה*, that will be difficult even for the *צדיקים* to withstand. The meaning of *"וצדיק באמונתו יחיה"* is that even the *צדיק* will only survive through the *זכות* of *אמונה*.

It is necessary to understand that these words are not referring to general *אמונה* in *ד'*. Rather, we must say that the *נסינות* will be to stay loyal to *ד'* and His *תורה* even when there are great *נסינות* and all of the signs we are receiving seem to be contradicting the *תורה* and the *נביאים*. The *נסיין* will be whether or not we will misinterpret the *תורה* and veer from the tradition of the previous generations by interpreting the *תורה* through him and logic and *טבע*.

Unfortunately, we see today that there is a big temptation in this generation to follow human logic. So much so, that we are misinterpreting the *תורה* and molding it to fit our intellect. We even see this with the important people of our generation, that they are becoming accustomed

³ There is a *מחלוקת* between the *ראשונים* whether the *מצוה* of *אמונה* is one of the *מצוות* or not. There are those who say that it is impossible to count it as one of the *מצוות* because if *בנ"י* had not had *אמונה* before *מתן תורה*, it would not be possible to give them any *מצוות*. According to this opinion, *אמונה* is only an introduction to the *מצוות*. *תרי"ג מצוות*. *רמב"ם*, however, holds that *אמונה* is one of the *מצוות* and we follow his opinion.

It is still unclear to how resolve the difficulty of the other *ראשונים*. According to what has been said above, it is possible to say that the *מצוה* that we received at *מתן תורה* is to continuously add *אמונה* to what we logically understand. Through this, we fulfill the *מצוה* of *אמונה*. When *ד'* took us out of *מצרים*, we saw *שכינה* *גילוי* throughout the entire experience, as it says *"אתה הראית לדעת כי ד' הוא האלוקים אין עוד מלבדו"* (*דברים ד' ל"ה*). Therefore, we no longer had the choice to have *אמונה* in *ד'* or not. However, in order to fulfill the *מצוה* of *אמונה* we are being commanded to continuously add new levels, of things we do not understand. According to other opinions, this was the *מצוה* that was given in *"אנכי ד' אלוקיך"*.

⁴ *אנכי ד'* had reached this level on his own, even though he lived before *מתן תורה*, when the *מצוה* of *אנכי ד'* had not yet been given. This why *ד'* considered this as *זכות* and *צדקה*.

to believing in כחי ועוצם ידי and השתדלות בדרך הטע, as if our פרנסה is dependent on how clever we are or how hard we work. Additionally, many think that success in raising our children is dependent on knowledge of the professionals who studied by the גויים. Unfortunately, these opinions are spreading, corrupting the whole תורה, as well as אמונה פשוטה in 'ד, that He is the One who did, does, and will do everything. Even the meaning of אמונה itself is being misinterpreted.

However, from the fact that we see that this קליפה has become widespread, it is proving more what the רה"ק מרוז'ין said, that the whole תיקון of this generation and the גאולה שלמה are dependent on this. This is the meaning of "בא חבוקק והעמידן על אחת", that the entire תורה is resting on אמונה. Regarding the corruption of this generation, the פסוק says "יעזוב רשע דרכו ואיש עון מחשבותיו וישוב אל ד' וירחמהו" "A wicked person should leave his ways and a person should leave behind his corrupted thoughts and return to ד', and ד' will have mercy on him". Corrupted thoughts may mean that a person thinks he can understand the ways of ד'. We are required to leave that behind, as it says "כי לא מחשבותי מחשבותיכם ולא דרכיכם דרכי".

We are required to nullify our logic to the דעת of the תורה and not try to bend the תורה to fit common sense. We must return to אמונה פשוטה, which has been the inheritance of בני"י throughout the generations until today. We must receive the הנהגה of ד' with אמונה and אהבה, and believe that everything that seems to us to be backwards, it is because of our misunderstanding. One who trusts in ד' even in matters which are against his שכל, will merit to receive the גאולה שלמה. May it be ד' רצון that we should stand strong in the נסיון of this last generation and to be patient when we see things that seem to contradict אמת. By doing so, we will merit seeing the שקר fall and the clear אמת will be revealed and all of the idolaters will be embarrassed, and those who follow the אמת will be filled with שמחה with the coming of the coming of the גאולה שלמה בב"א.

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