



Dvar Torah for Parshat Lekh Lekha

Based on Chayei Moharan/Tzaddik #26 (129) and 53 (156)*

God said to Avraham Avinu (our patriarch), "Go for yourself to the land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). Why didn't God immediately tell him which land? In order to increase his love for it and to reward him for each step (Bereishis Rabbah 39:9).

Before his trip to Eretz Yisrael, Rebbe Nachman said, "There is a journey before, but I know not where." His disciple Reb Shimon laughed, "How can a person set out on a journey without knowing where he's going?" "Really," replied Rebbe Nachman, "I don't know [where]."
(Tzaddik #26 [129])

The Rebbe said, "My place is Eretz Yisrael. Whenever I travel, I'm traveling only to Eretz Yisrael. Temporarily I'm in Breslov." (Tzaddik #53 [156])

If you are a child of Avraham Avinu and a devotee of Rebbe Nachman (or at least a fan) you certainly want to be in Eretz Yisrael. You may not hear the call to go as clearly as Avraham Avinu did, but in some way, you every so often get a little nudge from God. He's telling you to go further, that you *can* go further, to your next station in Jewishness. That station is a holy land compared to where you are. It's hard to leave "your land, birthplace and father's home" (Genesis 12:1) that you're accustomed to and comfortable with. In order to take the necessary steps you have to view your current location like Rebbe Nachman viewed Breslov: I'm here temporarily.

Reb Shimon's question echoes that of the Midrash (Tanchuma, Lekh Lekha 3) which tells us that the test is doubly hard: The destination is unknown; how does one know which way to begin? Nonetheless, with the strength that Avraham Avinu planted in every Jew with his steps, Rebbe Nachman set out. Your journey may be perilous—life is a very, very narrow bridge—but staying fearless and determined, you'll arrive in the Holy Land.

agutn Shabbos!
Shabbat Shalom!

* The paragraph number within (the parentheses) is for "Chayei Moharan" (Hebrew); the other number is for "Tzaddik" (English and Spanish editions).

Rendered from Reb Noson's Likutey Tefilot (I, #47):

May I soon be worthy of traveling to Eretz Yisrael, land of life and holiness. May I feel its dirt beneath my feet, inhale its air, enjoy its shade. Grant me the privilege of soon arriving safely and soundly in the land You chose. Amen.