

## **“Go for yourself from your land, the land of your birthplace, and from your father’s home, to the land that I will show you.” (12:1)**

The **Degel Machane Efraim** teaches that the Torah is eternal and not limited to one specific period in time. Every Jew can discover a response to life’s challenges in the Torah. Thus, the words, *Lech lecha me’artzecha u’mimoladetecha u’mibeis avicha*, applies to each one of us. The **Zohar Hakadosh** addresses this issue and explains that the words, *Lech lecha me’artzecha*, are stated by Hashem speaking to the *neshamah*, soul, which is viewed as being an *av*, father, to the *guf*, body, of a person. “*Avram*” would then represent the *av*, soul, which descends from *ram*, on high, Heaven above. Hashem instructs the *neshamah* to leave its “home” *b’ginzei meromim*, in the highest heavens, to descend to *ha’aretz asher areka*, to the *guf* (whichever) body, in which I will place you. *Avram*, the *neshamah*, listens, accepting any place or venue in which Hashem places it.

We now understand why Hashem did not inform Avraham of his destination. “To the land which I will show you,” explain the commentators (*Kedushas Levi*), is Hashem’s way of telling the *neshamah* that wherever you end up, I am with you (showing you) all the way. Hashem was giving Avraham the key to confronting the challenges of life: “You are not alone. I put you here, and I will be with you while you are here.”

Life is filled with mystery. The inexplicable often happens, stymying us and undermining our ability to think rationally. Why? Why is this happening to me? While the answer to that question is most often beyond our ability to grasp, one thing we know for sure: we are not in this alone. All of “this” is decreed from Hashem, and He will be with us as we journey through the ambiguities that plague us. It is always *asher areka* – “which I will show you.” We never know up front what our destination in this world will be. We are supposed to wander from place to place, with the realization that it is Hashem who is manipulating our life’s journey, and He is with us every step of the way until we return back “home.”

*Horav Pinchas Friedman, Shlita*, cites the well-known *Midrash*, “Then G-d opened her eyes, and she (Hagar) perceived a well of water” (*Bereishis* 21:19). Rabbi Binyamin says, “All are in a state of blindness until Hashem opens up their eyes.” A person travels down the road. It is hot, and his throat is parched. He really could use a cold drink right now. He must remember the famous words – *el ha’aretz asher areka*, and hope that Hashem will soon enlighten you (him) by illuminating the path of your (his) journey.

I conclude with the words of the **Shlah Hakadosh**, who writes (commentary to *Bamidbar* 9:18), “According to the word of Hashem, would *Bnei Yisrael* journey; and according to the word of Hashem, would they encamp.” The *Shlah* writes: “There is a *remez*, allusion, here to the notion that, for every movement that a Jew makes, he should say *Im yirtzeh Hashem*, or *B’ezeras Hashem*, ‘If it will be the will of Hashem (G-d willing)’ or, ‘with the assistance of Hashem...’

Hashem's Name should be fluent in his mouth."

This is how a Jew develops and maintains *deveikus b'Hashem*, clinging/closeness with the Almighty. The mere fact that we know that, without Hashem we cannot function, compels us to be constantly aware of His Presence in our lives. This is what *deveikus* is all about. When a Jew arises in the morning, his first thought should be to thank Hashem for granting him another day. Then, he should realize that whatever he will do that day, wherever his life's journey will take him, it will always be *el ha'aretz asher areka*, "To the land that I will show you" – to the place/endeavor/goal that Hashem will lead us to. Thus, our entire day will be very much like that of a child who walks holding his father's hand. Only – it will be Hashem's Hand which we will embrace.