

And Hashem said to Avram, "Go for yourself." (12:1)

The words "*Lech Lecha*," "Go for yourself" have a profound meaning according to the *Sifrei Kaballah*. Hashem instructed Avraham to go to the source of his *neshamah*, soul, to introspect, to look deeper into himself. *Horav Shlomo Yosef Zevin, zl*, explains that man is not expected to achieve a level higher than his potential. He is expected to maximize his competencies to attain a level of success and accomplishment commensurate with his G-d-given faculties. He cites the *tzaddik*, *Rav Zushia of Annipole*, who said, "When I arrive at the *Olam Ha'Emes*, the World of Truth, if they ask me, 'Zushia, why did you not attain the spiritual level of the *Baal Shem Tov*,' I will not be frightened, for I am not in the same "league" as the *Baal Shem*. And if they say to me, 'Zushia, why were you not like the *Mezritcher Maggid*?' I will also not be concerned. For, how could anyone expect someone like me to become as great as the *Mezritcher*? What frightens me is when they will ask me, 'Zushia, why weren't you Zushia?' Why did you not become what you could have been? Why did you not maximize your potential and become the *gadol* that you were destined to be? "

This story should carry a deep meaning for all of us. Regrettably, many of us live two lives: ours and someone else's. We push ourselves to be someone we are not, all the while neglecting to strive to be who we are destined to be. Unfortunately, parents sometimes turn their children into neurotics in an attempt to transform them into someone other than themselves. If they would only focus upon their child's actual potential, instead of always looking "next door," they and their children would be much happier people. As the *Rebbe Reb Zushia* said, "We will be called to task for not maximizing our talents, not those of someone else." Unfortunately, those for whom this message is meant are too concerned with being someone else, with the superficial image which they cast.