

Dvar Torah - Lech Lecha

Did you know that Sheva Brachot are in the Parasha of Lech Lecha?

Immediately after Hashem commands Avram and Sarai to uproot themselves from the land of Mesopotamia in order to make Aliyah 'el ha'aretz asher areka' – to the land which Hashem will show them. Hashem follows up by giving seven blessings to Avram; 'Ve'escha L'goi gadol' - and I will make you into a great nation, 'v'avarechecha' - and I will bless you, 'veagadla Shemecha' - and I will make your name great, 'v'heye bracha' - and you will be a blessing, 'v'avarcha mevarachecha' - I will bless those who bless you, 'umcallecha a'or' - and I will curse those who curse you. And the seventh blessing is 'v'nivrechu vecha kol mishpachot ha'adama' - and may every family on earth be blessed thanks to the impact you will have on them.

Such wonderful blessings! And actually these seven blessings match the sentiments that accompany our good wishes to every bride and groom for whom we recite 'sheva brachot' under the 'chupa' and during the first seven days of their marriage. We want them to be blessed by Hashem, we want them to have a positive impact on their surroundings. We want Hashem to be with them always and to prevent others from standing in the way of their success.

There is a further strong comparison. You see the term 'lech lecha' appears twice in the bible, once in our parsha of Lech Lecha and the second, fascinatingly, in a week's time, when we will read in Parashat Va'eira, 'v'lech lecha el eretz hamoria' - uproot yourself, make an Aliyah, to the land of Moriah and that's where the akeida (the binding of Isaac) took place.

What Hashem wanted to say to Avram was that it is not good enough just to make a physical Aliyah to the Holy Land. Within the Holy Land you need to make a subsequent spiritual Aliyah to Moriah - which according to our tradition stands for 'she'misham yozeit chora'ah l'yisrael' – 'from there instruction emerges for the people of Israel'. As it says in the verse 'ki metzion tezei torah' the torah comes forth from Zion' which is Moriah/Jerusalem.

Similarly we would like to inspire every bride and groom to embark on a double Lech Lecha. First of all may God bless them that they should reach the promised land of their dreams and that in their marriage they will not only bond together physically but to have a spiritual Aliyah, leading to a meaningful and fulfilled life of engagement with our torah and with our roots.

So what we find, quite unexpectedly, is that already in the Parasha of Lech Lecha, as soon as there was a couple on earth who recognised the truth of the one living God, not only did Hashem give them his blessing, he provided the key for them to be a blessing for everyone on earth.

Shabbat Shalom

