



A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA

מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

פרשת לך לך

ויאמר ה' אל אברהם לך לך מארצך וכו'. ואעשך לגוי גדול. (בראשית יב, א-ב)

Hashem said to Avrom, "Go for yourself from your land... and I will make of you a great nation."

(Bereishis 12:1-2)

This week's *Sidrah* begins with the first of the ten trials that Hashem tested Avrohom Avinu. Avrohom was instructed to leave his birthplace, Charan, and his father's house to travel and settle in the land that Hashem would show him.

The *possuk* includes the seemingly unnecessary word לך, meaning "for yourself." The Meforshim offer various interpretations to explain its significance. Rashi explains that Hashem was telling Avrohom to go להנאתך ולטובתך, for his own pleasure and benefit. He was informed that while he wouldn't be able to have children in his current location, relocating would allow him to have offspring. Rashi further cites the Midrash, which notes that Hashem reassured Avrohom that even though travel often diminishes fertility, Avrohom would nonetheless merit children.

The *parshah* continues by recounting that when Avrohom reached Eretz Canaan, Hashem appeared to him. As the *possuk* (12:7) states, ויאמר לזרעך אתן את הארץ הזאת, *Hashem appeared to Avrom and said, "To your offspring I will give this land."* Following this, it says, ויבן שם מזבח לה' הנראה אליו, *So he built an altar there to Hashem Who appeared to him.* Rashi explains that Avrohom offered these *korbanos* in gratitude for the tidings of the offspring he would have and the land of Eretz Yisroel that would be given to them.

The Gur Aryeh raises a question about why Avrohom brought *korbanos* specifically now. He had already received the promise of children with the command of לך לך, *go for yourself*, which, as previously explained, assured him of offspring. So, what new revelation did Avrohom receive that prompted him to bring these *korbanos*?

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* addresses this question using an insight from Tosafos (*Bava Basra* 115a). Tosafos explains that the term זרע refers to kosher offspring, while בן can also denote unworthy descendants. Therefore, at the beginning of the *parshah*, Avrohom was simply promised בנים, as Rashi states. However, now in Eretz Yisroel, when Hashem appeared to him, he was assured of זרע - worthy descendants. In gratitude for this promise, he offered *korbanos*.

The Ibn Ezra (*Bereishis* 16:2) explains that the term בן is derived from the word בִּנְיָן, *building*, with the father serving as the child's foundation. Just as a building does not necessarily reflect its foundation, a בן is not always similar to his father. In contrast, the זרע, *seed*, of each plant produces a species that resembles it. Therefore, Hashem's promise to Avrohom of granted him זרע indicated the birth of a righteous child, true in its roots, which was a cause for celebration and gratitude.

In Shacharis after the *parshah* of Akeidah we say the following *tefillah*:

אֲבֵל אֲנַחְנוּ עַמְּךָ בְּנֵי בְרִיתְךָ, בְּנֵי אֲבִרָהֶם אֱהָבָה, שֶׁנִּשְׁבַּעְתָּ לּוֹ בְּהַר הַמֹּרִיָּה, זָרַע יִצְחָק יְחִידוֹ שֶׁנֶּעְקַד
עַל גְּבִי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, עֵדֶת יַעֲקֹב בֶּנֶךְ בְּכוֹרְךָ, שֶׁמֵּאַהֲבָתְךָ שָׂאֵהֶבֶת אוֹתוֹ, וּמִשְׁמַחְתְּךָ שֶׁשְׂמַחְתָּ בּוֹ, קָרָאתָ
אֶת שְׁמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׁרוּן ... אֲשֶׁרִינוּ, מֵה טוֹב חֻלְקֵנוּ, וּמֵה נְעִים גּוֹרְלֵנוּ, וּמֵה יָפָה יְרֻשָּׁתֵנוּ.

But we are your people, members of Your covenant, children of Avrohom, Your beloved, to whom You took an oath at Har Moriah; the offspring of Yitzchok, his only son, who was bound atop the altar; the community of Yakov, Your firstborn son, whom – because of the love with which You adored him and the joy with which You delighted in him – you named him Yisroel and Yeshurun ... We are fortunate – how good is our portion, how pleasant our lot, and how beautiful our heritage!

The Siach Yitzchok highlights the various terms used to describe Klal Yisroel as descendants of the Avos. Concerning Avrohom, we are referred to as בְּנֵי אֲבִרָהֶם; in relation to Yitzchok, we are called זָרַע יִצְחָק; and with respect to Yakov, we are known as עֵדֶת יַעֲקֹב. He explains that Klal Yisroel's special status can be attributed to three key aspects. Firstly, Hashem made a covenant and promise with Avrohom. Secondly, we inherit positive traits from our ancestors as part of our spiritual DNA. Lastly, we have received guidance from the Avos on how to conduct ourselves and follow their example.

These facets are expressed in this *tefillah*. Regarding the בְּרִית and שְׁבוּעָה promised to Avrohom, we are defined as בְּנֵי אֲבִרָהֶם, because the covenant with our Avos remains relevant to Klal Yisroel, and is linked to being בְּנִים (see *Tosafos Shabbos 55a and Kiddushin 36a*). The second quality of inheriting an elevated nature is illustrated by the term זָרַע יִצְחָק, specifically referencing יִצְחָק זָרַע. As previously explained, זָרַע indicates an offshoot that reflects the original, emphasising that we have inherited the spiritual strength of *mesirus nefesh* and the ability to conquer one's will, exemplified by the Akeidah. Lastly, since the time of Yakov Avinu, there has always been a *yeshivah* within Klal Yisroel, represented as עֵדֶת יַעֲקֹב - a community that continues to pass down the legacy from our ancestors. (See Siach Yitzchok further who explains the phrase אֲשֶׁרִינוּ מֵה טוֹב חֻלְקֵנוּ וכו' and the various terms according to the above.)

We learn the emphasis Avrohom placed on זָרַע כֶּשֶׁר from the fact that he only offered *korbanos* after Hashem's second assurance that he would merit offspring. Simply having descendants would not be sufficient for him; he celebrated with *korbanos* only when he was assured of descendants who would follow in his ways. We must appreciate the spiritual inheritance we have received from our Avos, which gives us the inspiration and strength to rise above challenges to our *ruchniyus* well-being and live at an elevated level.