חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

BRESLOV · ON GENESIS 12:4

What does it really mean to 'go for yourself'

Likutei Halakhot, Orach Chaim, Laws of the Sabbath 7:75

"Lech lecha" (Go for yourself) is read as Hashem yitbarach's (may He be blessed) directive to every person: to go toward one's own essence, the neshamah (soul), traveling past the obstacles of one's physicality, birth-circumstances, and family/social environment—"me'artzecha," "umimoladetcha," and "beit avicha"—toward "the land that I will show you," the source of all souls bound up with Eretz Yisrael (the Land of Israel) and the Beit HaMikdash (Holy Temple). One must trust that Hashem never burdens a person with hindrances he cannot overcome, and so is always capable of pressing forward toward his neshamah's source. AI SUMMARY

This is what Hashem yitbarach (may He be blessed) said to Avraham, which alludes in this to every person in the world — "Lech lecha" (Go to/for yourself) — for it admonishes the person that he should go to himself. For the essence of the person, that which is called "I," is only the neshamah (soul), as is written in the Torah "Chotam Betoch Chotam" (A Seal Within a Seal), siman (section) 22, Likutei, chelek (part) alef. Likewise, when one speaks to a person directly and says to him "you" or "go," the essential intent is toward the neshamah, which is the essence of the person, as is known. And this is what the Torah admonishes the person.

"Lech lecha" (Go for yourself) — that you should go for yourself, to yourself, meaning to the source of your neshamah (soul), so that all your walking and journeying and all your ways in this world, in all of them you should intend to go for yourself, to yourself, meaning to the source of your neshamah. For this is the essential core of the person, that which is spoken to, as mentioned above. And this is "me'artzecha" (from your land) — "me'artzecha" precisely. Meaning, from within your own earthliness and physicality, to whatever earthliness and physicality you have descended into, where it seems to you that it is difficult to leave from there — nevertheless you must exert yourself to go specifically from within your own land, to go for yourself, to your neshamah, etc., as mentioned above. And this is [the meaning of]:

And "from your birthplace" (umimoladetcha) — meaning, from whatever physical state you were born into, even though this too is a great hindrance, as David said (Tehillim 51), "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity," etc. — nevertheless you are compelled to go specifically "from your birthplace," to go for yourself (lecha lecha), specifically, as above.

And "from your father's house" refers to the family, neighbors, relatives, and acquaintances among whom one is raised, for from them too there are many, many hindrances to the service of Hashem (God), may He be blessed, which they obstruct in various ways — sometimes through physical means, and sometimes through their opinions and reasonings which are the opposite of truth. From all of these you must go out and go for yourself, for your soul, as above.

For you must believe that certainly the Holy One, blessed be He, does not act tyrannically (b'tronya) with His creatures, and certainly you have the strength to withstand all of this — as Admor (our teacher), may his memory be a blessing, wrote in

siman 46 of Likutei Tinyana, that the Holy One, blessed be He, does not send a person hindrances that he cannot withstand, etc.

And this is "to the land that I will show you" — which is Eretz Yisrael (the Land of Israel), which is the generality of holiness, where the Beit HaMikdash (Holy Temple) is, where the source of all souls is. Regarding this He warns him, "lecha lecha" — "go for yourself," for your soul, as above.

And this is what Rashi explained.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)