# Reflections of Redemption

Essays on the Weekly Torah Reading and Moshiach,
Based on the talks of the
Lubavitcher Rebbe,
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

Reprinted for Parshat Lech Lecha, 5787

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**In loving memory of**
Horav **Schneur Zalman Halevi** ע״ה
ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** הי״ד
**Shagalov**
Passed away on 21 Tamuz, 5766

Reb **Dovid Asniel** ben Reb **Eliyahu** ע״ה
**Ekman**
Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765

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Passed away on the second day
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ben Reb **Dovid Asniel** ע״ה
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Passed away on the 24th day of Shevat, 5769
**ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.**

**And in honor of**
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by
Rabbi Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann, Ph.D

# Lech Lecha

## A Journey Back and Forth

*In Lech Lecha, Abraham was told to leave his land and journey to Israel. This portion is always read in conjunction with the seventh of MarCheshvan, fifteen days after Sukkos, when the last Jew arrived at the Euphrates River, ready to leave Israel. This going forth and coming back, leaving and entering the material world, is not a contradiction. Both are part of transforming the world into a dwelling place for G-dliness.*

This week's Torah reading, *Lech Lecha*, begins with G-d's command to Abraham to leave his home and his father's house and go to the land that G-d will show him. Our Sages tell us that the narratives about the patriarchs and matriarchs indicate the path their descendants – the Jewish people – should follow. Their actions paved the spiritual pathway for us, revealing the how and why of our Divine Service.

The Torah reading starts with the words, "Go out from your land, your birthplace and the house of your father and go to the land that I will show you." Abraham is commanded to ascend to the land of Israel, to leave all else behind and go on a journey of self-elevation.

To truly understand the meaning of this concept – and its importance for us – we must first take note of a significant fact about the calendar: the seventh day of the month of MarCheshvan always occurs during the week of *Lech Lecha*.

On the seventh of MarCheshvan, the Jewish people started praying for rain for the land of Israel. The prayer for rain began fifteen days after Sukkos, so that the last traveler from Jerusalem

would reach the Euphrates river. Sukkos, of course, was one of the three pilgrimage festivals in which Jews were required to bring an offering to Jerusalem from wherever they lived. It was a two-week journey – fourteen days – from Jerusalem to the Euphrates River, the Biblically ordained eastern border of the land of Israel. Thus, by the seventh of MarCheshvan, everyone who had gone to Jerusalem for the festival of Sukkos and was now returning home had reached the border of Israel. The rain in Israel would not trouble their journey home.

However, the significance of the seventh of MarCheshvan is not simply negative, the day until which the rains of Israel are delayed. Rather, that very negative – the delay of the rains until the travelers reach the border – indicates that the seventh of MarCheshvan has a deeper connection with the holiday itself. After all, it's a two-way journey to Jerusalem. Celebrating the holiday of Sukkos included both going to and coming from Jerusalem. In other words, as long as the Jewish people had not reached the border, the river Euphrates, it seemed to them as if they were still rejoicing in and observing the holiday.

Thus, the fourteen days after Sukkos were seen as an extension of the festival. The seventh of MarCheshvan, then, marked the final completion of every activity associated with the holiday. It was a day of descent from the heights of holiness the people experienced in the Temple in Jerusalem.

That being the case, there seems to be a contradiction between the lesson of the seventh of MarCheshvan and the lesson of the Torah reading. The words *Lech Lecha* mean "go out." That is the theme of the Torah reading. It teaches us to follow in Abraham's footsteps, to leave home – to leave our material concerns and comforts – and ascend to the land of Israel – to elevate ourselves spiritually. The seventh of MarCheshvan teaches us to follow in

the footsteps of those who observed Sukkos in Jerusalem, to return home – to go back to our involvement in the physical world – and descend from the land of Israel – to descend from the heights of spirituality.

Granted that there's a point to both concepts – elevating one's self spiritually and involving one's self in worldly concerns – still they seem to be diametrically opposed. Why is it that every single year they occur together? Since nothing happens by coincidence, but all is a result of Divine Providence, that the seventh of MarCheshvan always falls during the week of *Lech Lecha* emphasizes the connection and interrelationship between the two ideas. But, how does this relate to us now, specifically as we find ourselves in the days of Moshiach?

Actually, elevating one's self spiritually and involving one's self in worldly concerns are inter-related. The purpose of *Lech Lecha* – of going forth – is to create a dwelling place for G-dliness. This dwelling place can only be created through transforming material objects and mundane concerns into vehicles for holiness. And this transformation can occur only through the Torah and mitzvos of a Jew. So, when all of a Jew's activities are "for the sake of heaven" the common and everyday are filled with the spiritual. G-d's presence dwells and is revealed within the physical world.

The spiritual elevation – the ascent to the land of Israel – indicated by the journey of Abraham is not an end in and of itself. Rather, it provides the inspiration and direction, giving a Jew the ability to "go forth" into the world and transform it into a dwelling place for G-dliness. This return home, this descent to the material world outside the land of Israel, which completes and fulfills the purpose of the ascent, occurs on the seventh of MarCheshvan.

Still, we must look a little deeper into the question, since the journeys of Abraham in the Torah reading of *Lech Lecha* are from

outside Israel into the land of Israel, while the journey of the seventh of MarCheshvan is from inside Israel – from Jerusalem – outward to the lands outside of Israel. Since the journeys are superficially in the opposite direction, there must be something about the journeys themselves that connect the Torah reading of *Lech Lecha* and the seventh of MarCheshvan.

A true journey brings one to a completely new level. One reaches a stage unconnected with and incomparable to the place one stood before the journey. Thus, the journey of Abraham into Israel and the journey of the Jews away from Israel after Sukkos must bring each to the same new level. That is, the spiritual pathway paved by Abraham must be the same one traveled by the Jews and completed on the seventh of MarCheshvan. In this way the correspondence of the Torah reading of *Lech Lecha* and the seventh of MarCheshvan can be explained.

The words "*Lech Lecha*" – "go forth" – are a command from G-d. Prior to this command, Abraham acted based on his own understanding. As he came to recognize the existence of G-d, he taught others about the Creator. But his answers and understanding came from his reasoning and comprehension. As a result, the transformation he could achieve, the degree to which Abraham could teach others to recognize the G-dliness within the world, was limited to an intellectual level. However, after G-d commanded Abraham *Lech Lecha* – go forth – Abraham acted as G-d's emissary. His actions were based not on his own understanding; rather, he acted simply to carry out the command and directive of the One who sent him. In this way Abraham could connect and unite creation with its Creator. The connection with, relationship to and perception of G-dliness was not limited by one's intellect or logic. It penetrated the entire being.

And this is also the lesson of the seventh of MarCheshvan: one

must take the inspiration and the vision of G-dliness received at the Temple in Jerusalem during the festival and go forth with it as G-d's emissary, bringing a recognition of G-dliness – through Torah and mitzvos – to the whole world. In this way there will be a revelation of G-dliness and an actual seeing of the spiritual.

The task and yearly journey of *Lech Lecha*, as we experience it on the seventh of MarCheshvan, reaches its culmination and completion precisely now, in the days when the coming of Moshiach is imminent and we will complete the journey Abraham began, transforming the world into a dwelling place for G-dliness.

*(Based on Likkutei Sichos 20, pp. 54-60)*

# BESURAS HAGEULO
# The Announcement Of The Redemption

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It should be noted once again (as I have said many times) **that the Rabbis** must publicize the legal decree that "**all the appointed times have passed**."[1] In regard to *teshuva*,[2] *teshuvah* has already been done and all aspects of Divine service have already been completed. All that remains now is **the true and complete Redemption in actual reality**.

There is nothing more to wait for, since all aspects of Divine service have already been concluded and *teshuvah* has already been done, **and it depends only on the coming of Moshiach himself**. The statement of the Gemara that "It depends only on **teshuvah**" was [required] earlier, but now that teshuvah has already been done it depends only **on the coming of Moshiach himself**. All that is necessary is for Moshiach to come in actual reality and [for us to] "point with his finger and say this is the one,"[3] this is our righteous Moshiach.

One should immediately "point with his finger and say this is the one." I have repeated and emphasized many times that not only will the Redemption eventually come, but **the Redemption already stands on the threshold**. It waits for every man and woman of Israel to open the door and pull the Redemption into the room!!

*(At the visit of the Rav and Gaon, Mordechai Eliyahu,*
*6 Cheshvan 5752)*

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1. *Sanhedrin* 97b.

2. As the Gemora continues: "it [the coming of Moshiach] depends only on teshuva."

3. See *Ta'anis* at the end. *Shmos Rabba*, end of chapter 23. Rashi's explanation of *Beshalach* 15:2.

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As mentioned several times, "all the appointed times"[1] have already concluded, and my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, has announced that *teshuvah* has already been done and we have also "polished the buttons." Therefore according to all the signs, our generation is the last generation of exile and automatically the first generation of Redemption. What this time requires is that one should prepare **in reality** to "Get you out of your land... to the land I will show you," imminently and immediately.

…Particularly in our generation, the last generation of exile and the first generation of Redemption, there should be a special emphasis on the Divine service of "Get you out of your land... to the land I will show you," and the acquisition of all ten lands.[2] This must be reflected primarily in an increase in Torah study, which foreshadows this service. This needs to be not only with his three intellectual faculties as they are connected to his emotional character traits, but also in the essence of the three intellectual faculties. What this means specifically is an increase in the study of the inner teachings of the Torah (with intellectual explanations[3]), including the subject of Redemption and our righteous Moshiach.

*(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha,*
*11 MarCheshvan 5752)*

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1. *Sanhedrin* 97b.

2. [The land of Israel originally comprised the land of the seven nations; these correspond to the seven emotional attributes. In the Age of Redemption, the Torah promised us that we will acquire an additional three lands; these correspond to the three intellectual faculties. Translator's note.]

3. See also the talk of 8 Cheshvan of this year.

**In loving memory of a dear freind**
Reb **Yosef Yisroel** ben Reb **Sholom** ע״ה **Rosner**
Passed away on 7 Menachem-Av, 5777
**ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.**

*

**Dedicated by his friends**
Mr. & Mrs. **Gershon** and **Leah** שיחיו **Wolf**
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחיו **Shagalov**

* * *

**In loving memory of a dear freind**
Reb **Pesach Betzalel** ben Reb **Leib** ע״ה **Fleischman**
Passed away on 3 Elul, 5784
**ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.**

*

**Dedicated by his friend**
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחיו **Shagalov**

**In loving memory of**
Mrs. **Rochel** bas Reb **Aharon HaKohen** ע"ה **Ghods**
Passed away on 14 Cheshvan, 5758
**ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.**
*
**Dedicated by her family** שיחיו
* * *
**In loving memory of our dear mother in law & mother**
Mrs. **Rivkah (Rozanne)** bas Reb **Chaim** ע"ה **Stekler**
Passed away on 13 Kislev, 5786
**ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.**
*
**Dedicated by her son-in-law and daughter**
Mr. & Mrs. **Yehuda (Jerry)** and **Avigail (Allison)** שיחיו **Elfassy**


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