

THE KTM DAF PARASHA

BRINGING A TASTE OF ISRAEL TO MONTREAL



FROM CANA'AN TO YISRAEL

BY RAV ARI FAUST (ROSH KOLLEL)

In a 1985 essay titled "The Geography of Hope", the American novelist Wallace Stegner wrote that "no place is a place until things that have happened in it are remembered." His point was that meaning is not built into the soil - it is created by the people who live, labor, and dream upon it. A place gains its significance and character through a combination of facts, legends, and collective memory, which gives it a sense of identity and continuity beyond a simple geographical point.

Avraham and Lot stand upon the mountainous plain and survey the land before them. Due to their abundant flocks and rivaling shepherds, Avraham suggests creating physical distance between the areas where they graze (Bereishit 13:9): "If you go left, I will go right, and if you go right, I will go left." Lot then makes a choice steeped in a profound bias (pasuk 10):

וַיֵּשָׂא לוֹט אֶת עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא אֶת כָּל כְּנֶרֶס הַיַּרְדֵּן כִּי כָּלָה מִשְׁקָהּ
... כְּגֹן ה' בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם...

And Lot raised his eyes, and he saw the entire plain of the Jordan, that it was entirely watered ...like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt...

Drawn to the shimmer of certainty, to the land that promised predictable comfort, Lot chooses what seems lush and complete. Avraham, by contrast, receives a land that is not complete - a land of promise, not of present ease.

In that contrast lies a profound message about the nature of Eretz Yisrael - and, by extension, about our purpose as Jews in the world.

Egypt, in Tanakhic symbolism, represents a world of stability and control. It is the land that "does not need rain" (Devarim 11:10) - a self-contained ecosystem dependent on the Nile, not on heaven. The Egyptian farmer can irrigate his field by human effort alone. It is a tempting image: a world that seems self-sufficient, closed, safe - a world where nothing is left unfinished. But it is also a world where human beings forget their dependence on the Divine. In Egypt, life flows like the Nile - constant, predictable, and ultimately godless.

When Lot sees a land "like Egypt," he sees comfort and completeness. He chooses a world that asks nothing of him but maintenance. And yet, that is precisely why it is a tragic choice. Because a life that asks nothing of you also gives you nothing lasting in return.

Contrast that with the description of the Promised Land given to Moshe generations later (Bamidbar 34:1-2):

זו אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם, כִּי אַתֶּם בָּאִים אֶל
הָאָרֶץ כְּנָעַן, זֹאת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תִּפְּל לָכֶם בְּנִחְלָה - אֶרֶץ
כְּנָעַן לְגִבְלֹתֶיהָ

Command the children of Israel and say to them, When you arrive in the land of Canaan, this is the land which shall fall to you as an inheritance...

The Torah's phrasing here is peculiar. Why say "הָאָרֶץ כְּנָעַן" - the land of Canaan - rather than simply "Eretz Canaan"? The defining letter "ה", is not only superfluous, but grammatically incorrect.

The Torah could be hinting to a duality in the land Bnei Yisrael is inheriting: Although at the time it was "Eretz Canaan", it had the potential to become "HA'aretz" - The Land. When Bnei Yisrael enter "HA'aretz Canaan," they are entering a work in progress. God does not gift them a perfect land; He entrusts them with a mandate to transform it - to take Eretz Canaan and turn it into Eretz Yisrael.

The name Canaan itself connotes lowliness and submission (from the root כנע - to be subdued). Yisrael, by contrast, means "one who wrestles with God and prevails." The very shift from Canaan to Yisrael embodies the transformation of a passive existence into an active, covenantal one.

Thus, when we speak of Eretz Yisrael, we are not merely describing a geographical territory but a spiritual project - a partnership between heaven and earth. The land responds to human action; its blessings are contingent upon our moral and spiritual behavior (Devarim 11:12-17).

Perhaps that is why the Torah insists on calling it "הָאָרֶץ כְּנָעַן" - the land as it is, is not yet as it should be. The defining "ה" hints to the land's future, potential perfection - just as each of us begins life with raw potential rather than polished perfection.

But the promise embedded within the verse - "זֹאת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תִּפְּל לָכֶם בְּנִחְלָה" - is that it will become your inheritance. You will make it yours by shaping it, refining it, elevating it.

In that sense, Ha'aretz Canaan is less a destination than a process - an invitation to co-create with God.



TORAH תורה
מִצִּיּוֹן MITZION

KTM MONTREAL

**LECH-LECHA
CHESHVAN 10 5786
NOVEMBER 1, 2025
CANDLE LIGHTING: 5:24 P.M.
HAVDALAH: 6:27 P.M.**

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**KTM CELEBRATES THE RETURN OF
THE HOSTAGES! WE CONTINUE
TO LEARN AND PRAY FOR THE
RETURN OF THE REMAINS OF THE
DECEASED, AND FOR A LASTING,
ETERNAL PEACE.**

The tension between Eretz Canaan and Eretz Yisrael mirrors the tension in every human life.

We, too, are born into a world of unfinished potential - a mixture of chaos and order, light and shadow. Like Avraham, we are called to hear "Lech Lecha" - to leave the comfort of Egypt-like certainty and to step into a landscape of becoming. Life is not meant to be ideal; it is meant to be redeemed. Our task is not to inhabit perfection but to build toward it - to take what is "Canaan" in our lives and transform it into "Yisrael."

Lot chose the world that looked complete, and he lost it all. Avraham chose the world of promise - and in so doing, became the father of a people who would forever live between what is and what ought to be.

We, too, must choose which land we inhabit - not just geographically, but spiritually. Do we seek Lot's Egypt of comfort, or the Canaan of challenge and creation? To live as Avraham's heirs is to embrace incompleteness - to know that holiness lies not in what is already perfect, but in what we are willing to perfect.



אין כמו שנה בארץ

BY NOA BENDAYAN, MIDRESHET ESHEL

Spending my year at Midreshet Eshel, a seminary located in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City, has already been such an incredible and meaningful experience. I feel like I have learned and grown so much in such a short amount of time.

From the moment I arrived, the school was so welcoming and made sure we all felt at home. Even though we were in a totally new place, everyone was so warm and friendly that it didn't take long before it started to feel like family. One of the very first things we did was go on a tour of the Old City and visit the Kotel. Standing there, realizing that this would be my home for the year was such a powerful and emotional moment.

The teachers at Eshel are amazing - every single one is so inspiring in their own way. They make every class fun and meaningful, and you can tell how much they care about us, not only as students but as people. Their passion and warmth really make you want

to grow in your learning, in your connection to Hashem, and in yourself as a person. It actually reminds me a lot of Hebrew Academy, since it is a small sem, where everyone knows each other; and it truly feels like one big family.

Living in the Old City is also such a privilege and adds so much to the experience. Living only steps away from the holiest place for the Jewish people is such a blessing. You can literally feel the holiness and spirituality in the air. It's incredible to be walking on the same streets that are filled with so much Jewish history. And nothing compares to prayers at the Kotel. Being surrounded by the intense tefillot of others really impacts the essence of your own tefillah. You feel a deeper connection, so much gratitude, and truly value where you are.

Selichot at the Kotel was something I'll never forget. The energy was indescribable. More and more people poured through the Jewish Quarter every night to pray at the Kotel, hoping to get as close as they could, or even

to just catch a glimpse of it, and this truly helped me understand what a zechut (merit) living so close has been. Standing with so many people, all united in tefillah, was incredibly powerful. I truly felt the strength and unity of Am Yisrael.

During the chagim there was a special energy here. The whole country felt alive and excited. What struck me most was that the entire country was in the same mindset; everywhere you went, you could feel the spirit of the chagim. It really makes you feel like you're exactly where you're meant to be.

I feel so lucky and thankful to be here, Baruch Hashem! - learning, growing, and experiencing this incredible year in Yerushalayim. Even the small everyday experiences remind me how blessed I am to call this place home.

Noa Bendayan is an alumnus of Hebrew Academy



ENCOUNTERING THE GIANTS: RAMBAN

BY CHAGAI SHREM

Rambam – Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (1138–1204) – was born in Córdoba, Spain, and lived during the Middle

Ages. He was one of the greatest halachic authorities and Jewish philosophers in history; he was a physician, a spiritual leader, and the author of central works in Torah, philosophy, and Jewish law.

Among his well-known works: Mishneh Torah – the first complete code of Jewish law; and Moreh Nevuchim – a profound philosophical book that discusses faith, humanity, and God. Rambam's influence is still felt today – both in the Jewish world and in wider Western culture.

Q: We don't have any background on Avraham before God approached him. Why did God choose Avraham Avinu to be the leader of our faith?

A: Avraham was not chosen by chance or because of his ancestry, but because of his wisdom and recognition of the truth. While all the people of his generation served idols, he began to observe the world and understand that there is one Creator and that one should not serve created beings but the One who created them (Hil. Avodah Zara 1:3):

”כיון שנגמל איתן זה (אברהם) התחיל לשוטט בדעתו... עד שהשיג דרך האמת והבין קו הצדק מתבוננו

הנכונה וידע שיש שם אלוה אחד והוא מנהיג הגלגל והוא ברא הכל ואין בכל הנמצא אלוה חוץ ממנו”

After this mighty man was weaned, he began to explore and think... Ultimately, he appreciated the way of truth and understood the path of righteousness through his accurate comprehension. He realized that there was one God who controlled the sphere, that He created everything, and that there is no other God among all the other entities.”

Therefore, God chose him because he was the first to rediscover pure faith and teach it to others.

Q: So the choice of Avraham came from his actions and faith. Can we say that the choice of the people of Israel also comes from the fact that they continued Abraham's spiritual path?

A: Indeed. In Parashat Vayeira it says (Bereishit 18:19): “I knew him so that he would command his offspring ... to keep the way of Hashem - to do righteousness and justice.” The choice of the people of Israel is a natural continuation of the choice of Avraham - a nation that carries his message, maintains his faith, and acts according to justice and truth. Israel was chosen to be the vessel for preserving divine knowledge in the world.

Q: Is this also the reason, according to you, that a non-Jew can undergo conversion and

join the people of Israel?

A: Certainly. The divine choice is not closed to anyone (Hil. Isurei Biah 13:4): “Similarly, for all future generations, when a non-Jew desires to enter into the covenant, and take shelter under the wings of the Divine presence, [he must] accept the yoke of the Torah.” The reason is that conversion is not a change of lineage but a choice to follow the path of truth. Anyone who believes in one God, accepts the yoke of Torah and mitzvot, and walks in Avraham's path of uprightness becomes part of the nation chosen for this purpose. Just as Avraham called upon God's name and brought many of his generation under the wings of the Divine Presence, so today anyone can enter that covenant.

Q: So if a Jew decides to abandon Avraham's path, does not keep Torah and faith - does he cease to be Jewish?

A: No. In terms of his identity, he remains part of the Jewish nation. But regarding his spiritual level, he separates from Avraham's path (Hil. Teshuva perek 3): “Someone who says the Torah is not of divine origin ... or someone who rejects the Oral Law ... they have no share in the world to come.” Yet he is still counted among Israel. He has lost his spiritual privilege, not his roots. And there is always a way back, for the way of Teshuva is always open to us.



HALACHIC Q&A

BY RABBI YOSEF ZVI RIMON - NASI, WORLD MIZRACHI

Question: If I wake up in the middle of the night and realize that I did not say Hamapil earlier, should I say it?

Answer: Shu"t B'tzel Chochma deals with this question, and he writes that you should make a bracha (and clean your hands before doing so). If one were to eat half of an apple and realize that he did not make a bracha, of course he would make a bracha at the latter point. The same logic applies here.

Question: If I go to sleep in the afternoon and will sleep through the night, should I say Hamapil before going to sleep?

Answer: The Biur Halacha writes about a case where one goes to bed just before alot hashachar (dawn) but will fall asleep right after. Does this person make a bracha of Hamapil? Is the bracha of Hamapil at night dependent on the time of saying the bracha or the time of actually sleeping? In practice, because we say safek brachot lehakel, the Biur Halacha writes not to make a bracha. Seemingly, we can apply the same logic in our case. The bracha would be during the day and the sleep would be during the night, so we will say safek brachot lehakel. Additionally, there is more of a reason not to make a bracha in this case. The bracha of Hamapil was instituted over sleep at night, and therefore, here there would be a hefsek between the bracha and the sleeping on which the bracha was instituted.

Question: In the army, we often get up for guard duty shift in the middle of the night and then return to sleep. If my first sleep

will be shorter than the sleep I will have after my shift, when should I make the bracha of Hamapil? Should I wait to say it before going back to sleep?

Answer: The answer to the question is seemingly dependent on two different understandings of the nature of the bracha of Hamapil. If Hamapil is essentially thanking God for the minhag shel olam (common order/practice of the world) of sleeping at night, you seemingly would make the bracha before you go to sleep for the first time. If Hamapil is a birkat hanehenin (blessing over enjoyment) and you are making the bracha over your sleep, then there is more room to say that you would make the bracha before the longer sleep. In practice, the Shulchan Aruch rules that one makes the bracha on the first sleep. You may wonder: How can the bracha on the first sleep also work for the second sleep which may be hours later? Does this not constitute a hefsek (interruption)?

This is really not a difficulty, as it is similar to eating an apple. One must not interrupt between the bracha and the initial bite into the apple, but afterwards, you continue eating the apple without a bracha even if you spoke or did other things in between. So too, one must be careful not to interrupt between the Hamapil and initial sleep, but afterwards, a hefsek is not problematic.

However, there is in fact a difference between the cases. By birkot hanehenin, if you are mesiach da'at (have a period of unawareness) from the apple, you do in fact need to make a new bracha. In our case, even though the soldier goes to do a

guard shift, he does not make a new bracha. This is because the majority of people who wake up in the middle of the night are still thinking about going back to sleep and are not mesiach da'at from their sleep. This is certainly true with soldiers in the army who often count the hours of their shmira down until they can finally go back to sleep. Le'havdil, this is similar to what Tosfot says in Brachot 11b regarding Birkot Hatorah: A person makes one bracha in the morning and it serves him for the entire day, even when doing many other things. Tosfot explains that a person does not lose awareness of his responsibility to be learning Torah, and therefore, even when doing other things, a person always has the hope and direction to return to his learning. I shared this idea with Moreinu Harav Amital zt"l and he agreed.

Translated from Hebrew and abbreviated by Yaakov Panitch.

PARNASS HAYOM: CHESHVAN

- 7 Cheshvan | Barbara and Bruce Mazer, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her brother, Mark Samuel z'l
- 13 Cheshvan | Jeffrey Mandel, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his father, Aaron Mandel z'l
- 17 Cheshvan | The Drazin Family, in honour of the Yahrzeit of Avrum Drazin z'l
- 18 Cheshvan | Ephraim and Reesa Kandelshein, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her father, Hyman Busgang z'l
- 18 Cheshvan | Mireille Shostak, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her father, Edouard Khafif z'l
- 21 Cheshvan | The Sochaczewski Family, in honour of the Yahrzeit of their father, David Sochaczewski z'l
- 24 Cheshvan | Sue and Kamal Gabbay, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her mother, Simha Mashaal z'l





THE TRIBE SCRIBE

LECH LECHA: WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH!

Kevin the curious kitten was bounding across the farm when he fell into a canister of milk. The milk was tasty, but the problem was, he couldn't swim and he couldn't get out!



BOING!

Determined to escape, he kept on trying. He paddled and paddled....



SPLASH!

He paddled and paddled, trying to get out of the container, but nothing happened. He was stuck!



PADDE!

...and paddled and paddled but he couldn't reach the side.



STRETCH!

His legs flopped down, and he prepared for the worst. To his surprise his tired legs landed on something solid!?



Finally, in despair, he gave up. He was just too tired to go on.



He had paddled so hard, and for so long that he had turned the milk into butter! He was saved by his own hard work!



IN THIS WEEK'S **PARASHA AVRAHAM*** ENCOUNTERS MANY CHALLENGES BUT INSTEAD OF GIVING UP, HE JUST KEEPS GOING.



KEVIN THE KITTEN, LIKE AVRAHAM, SHOWS US THAT PERSEVERING THROUGH TRICKY TIMES CAN TAKE US TO A BETTER PLACE. KEEP ON GOING!

* Avram's name was changed to Avraham at the end of the Parasha.



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