

Dvar Torah

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LECH L'CHA

The first pasuk of Parshat Lech L'cha is "Leave your country and your birthplace, and the house of your father, to the place that I will show you (B'reishit 12:1).

The test that Avraham received was to leave everything in Charan behind and start anew in the land of Israel. Severing his ties with the past was a formidable task and Avraham complied to it to its last detail, showing unmitigated dedication to G-d. One may argue that Lot showed even more righteousness than Avraham, since Avraham simply acquiesced to G-d's command, whereas Lot showed tremendous faith in Avraham, a mere mortal who claimed to hear from G-d.

If this is true, where did Lot go wrong? How did he choose specifically to live amongst the sinners of S'dom? He seemed to have the potential to be a true Tzadik, so what had such a bad influence on him?

To answer this question, we need to analyze deeper that first pasuk. Why did G-d need to give such verbose instructions? "G-d told Avraham to leave his Homeland, birthplace and the land of his forefather." He could have simply said "Leave this land and go to Israel."

The reason for G-d's verbosity is to stress to Avraham that the secret for him to become the forefather of the Jewish people, he had to completely sever all ties from his Homeland, birthplace and father's home.

In contrast, Lot simply went with Avraham, without severing any ties to his past. Although at first, Lot showed his righteousness by clinging to Avraham, by moving to S'dom, Lot showed that he never really left his past life or his past ideals. He could not maintain a spiritual high like Avraham, because he had not sincerely uprooted his base instincts from the onset.

With this idea in mind, we can understand why the Torah text omits Avraham's past. The only reference to his childhood and growing are found in Midrash or legends but not in the text. The answer is that Avraham's past was irrelevant. Avraham became a new man by leaving behind the influences of his father's home. The Torah seems to be concern only with the new Avraham, after leaving Charan, showing true submission to G-d.