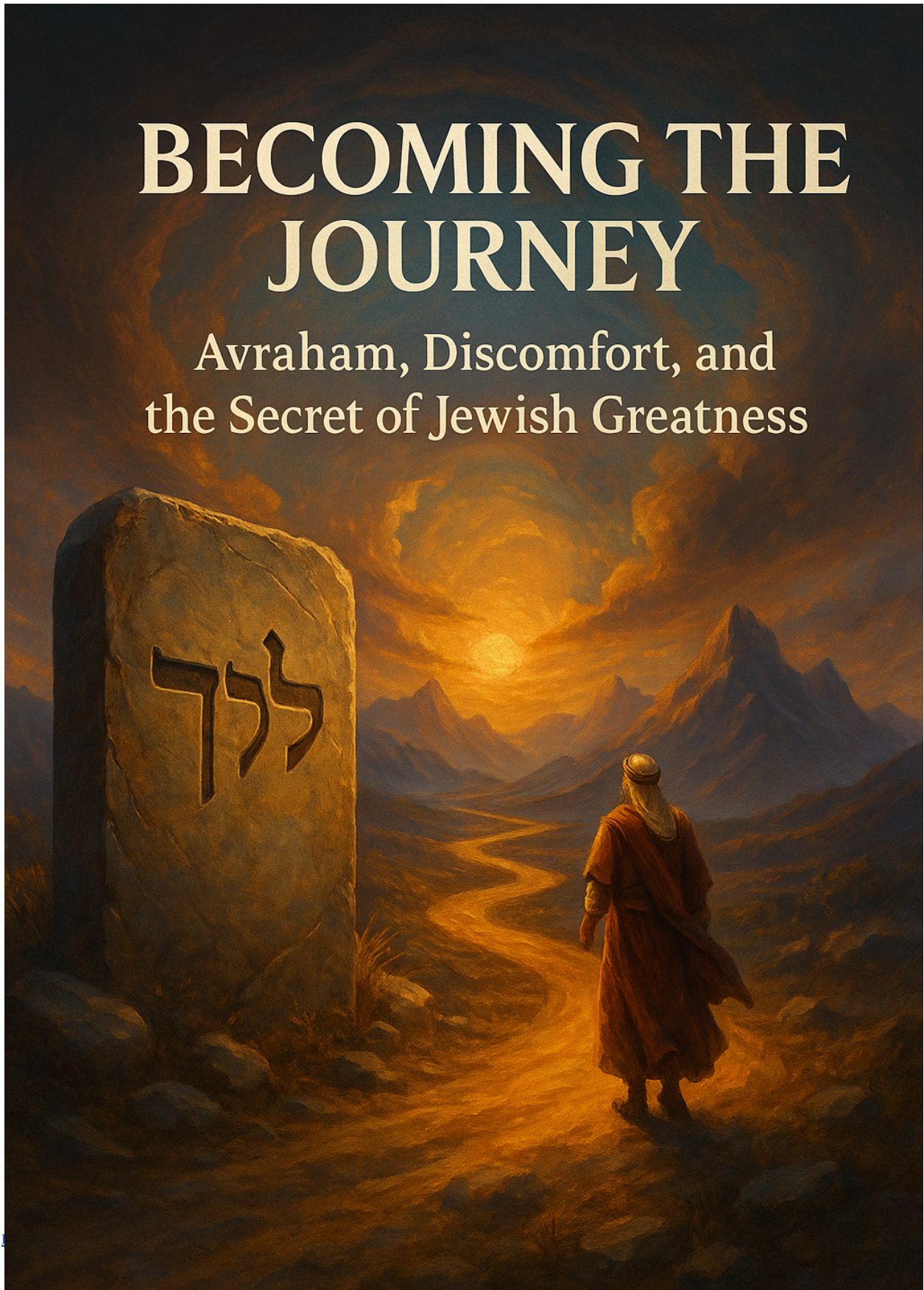


Rabbi Shlomo Farhi

BECOMING THE JOURNEY

Avraham, Discomfort, and
the Secret of Jewish Greatness



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Becoming the Journey: Avraham, Discomfort, and the Secret of Jewish Greatness

The Derasha

This morning's Torah begins with a simple but seismic command:

“Lech Lecha — Go for yourself.”

Hashem tells Avraham to leave everything familiar. But Rashi adds an intriguing twist:

“Lehana'atcha — It's for your benefit.”

God says:

“I'm going to make you into a great nation.”

Now here's where things get fascinating. Non-Jewish listeners of the class sometimes message me — we have Christians, Muslims, people of all backgrounds tuning in. One wrote, offended that Jews say “Goy.” I told him:

“You know who else God calls a Goy?”

“Avraham.”

“Goy gadol” means “a great nation,” not “Gentile.” It's Dr. Seuss logic — everything depends on where you're standing.

But something deeper is happening:

God isn't *incidentally* telling Avraham he'll become great. God is saying:

This journey — this discomfort — is what will MAKE you great.

And that becomes the DNA of our nation.

The Greatness Hidden in the Journey

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What makes Am Yisrael great? Torah? Chesed? Zionism? Creativity? Tenacity? Yes, all of it — but beneath every trait lies Avraham's journey.

Because the journey demanded:

- Adaptability
- Courage
- Resilience
- Unshakeable faith
- A willingness to step into the unknown

This becomes the Jewish template.

And then Hashem tests whether we “get it.” Because “Lech lecha” doesn't specify a destination.

Why?

Because God wasn't teaching Avraham to enjoy the journey.

He was teaching him:

Be the journey.

Become comfortable in the uncomfortable.

The Car Accident That Wasn't an Accident

Two days ago, Hashem gave me my own Avraham-style introduction.

We literally *bumped into* a Jew named **Frank Moore** — we hit his car. After the impact (thankfully minor), we got to talking. He came to my office; we schmoozed. A mensch with a heart of gold.

Later he sends me an article from the Wall Street Journal:

“Should America Open Its Doors to British Jews?”

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Given the violent antisemitic protests and even a cold-blooded murder in Manchester, the author suggests mass Jewish immigration to America.

Frank asks my thoughts. I said:

“I understand the fear — but what happens when Jews run every time they’re hunted?”

You teach the world:

Scare a Jew → He’ll flee.

Then Belgium empties. France empties. Sweden empties. Eventually... America empties.

Because enemies don’t stop. They scale.

Dearborn, Paterson, AOC, Mamdani — ideas spread. Demographics shift.

If British Jews flee to America, how long until America becomes the next place they flee *from*?

Avraham’s Lesson: Don’t Run. Stand. Fight. Build.

And that’s when it hit me:

Avraham wasn’t told:

“Run from danger.”

He was told:

“Walk into destiny.”

You can’t outsource Jewish strength.

If they wage a PR war, we fight back with PR.

If they weaponize media, we weaponize truth.

If they intimidate our institutions, we fortify them.

If necessary — we defend ourselves physically.

But we NEVER operate from fear.

This is the “Lech Lecha” legacy:

Strength in motion. Confidence in chaos.

Learning to Live Uncomfortable

Now, what does “journey” mean practically?

Think of traveling today. TSA liquid rules. Toothpaste sized for Smurfs. Deodorant that wouldn’t freshen an ant. We’ll pay \$5,000 extra for three inches of legroom.

The whole point is that travel is uncomfortable.

Hashem wanted Avraham — and us — to be:

Comfortable being uncomfortable.

Because comfort makes you passive.
Discomfort makes you alive.

Why We Stay in Bad Places Too Long

This explains something painful:

Why do parents keep kids in schools that are destroying them?

Why do couples wait too long to fix broken marriages?

Why do people keep “repairing” things they should have replaced years ago?

Because:

Comfort is the enemy of change.

We’d rather stay miserable than move.

Because moving feels like failure.

But Hashem didn’t tell Avraham:

“Stay until it breaks.”

He said:

“Go before it breaks.”

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Why Jews Struggle with Therapy & Help

Some people avoid therapy, avoid help, avoid change.

“People don’t change,” they say.

If that were true, Judaism collapses.

The entire Torah is an instruction manual for growth.

Every mitzvah says:

“I believe you can become something more than you are.”

The Uncomfortable Mitzvah

A student once told me:

“Rabbi, I keep everything — kosher, Shabbat, learning — but putting on a kippah in public terrifies me.”

He kept it all internally.

But the moment he physically “looked Jewish,” he felt exposed.

I told him:

“If you’re not proud enough to show the world your identity, don’t wear it.”

He walked away relieved.

Then he turned back and said:

**“But what am I embarrassed about?
Why am I hiding something I’m proud of?”**

That day he put on the kippah.

Today he teaches Torah to others.

Sometimes the mitzvah is whispering:

“Take on me...”

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Not the easy one.
The hard one.

Let Your Kids See You Struggle

Many parents hide their struggles.

But your kids need to see:

- You try hard things
- You take risks
- You fail sometimes
- You try again
- You push through discomfort
- You grow

Your kids don't become great by watching your **success**.

They become great by watching your **journey**.

So yes — fall asleep on your sefer.

Fail at something holy.

Let them see you being *unfinished*.

Because that is the Jewish way.

Your Avraham Moment

Ask yourself:

- What mitzvah is slightly out of reach?

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- What family relationship feels impossible?
- What business venture scares you?
- What dream are you postponing because of fear?

A man told me yesterday that he finally quit his job and went out on his own because of last week's Noach class on confidence.

Why?

Because he realized:

For most Jews, working for someone else means you can't afford a Jewish life.

Not vacations —

Tuition. Kosher food. Simchas. Community life.

So better to start early, when you have runway — like Avraham did — rather than at the breaking point.

The Takeaway

Greatness is not a destination.

Greatness is motion.

Greatness is discomfort.

Greatness is the willingness to begin — even without knowing where it leads.

Hashem didn't make Avraham great *because* he arrived.

He made him great **because he moved**.

We inherit that power.

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Shabbat Table Questions

1. What is one area of your Jewish life where you've become "too comfortable"?
2. Where is Hashem telling you "Lech Lecha" — move — but fear is holding you back?
3. What is one mitzvah you know is "dancing" in front of you asking to be taken on?
4. What struggle could you share with your children to model growth?

Source File: Based on the spoken transcript delivered at Altair Hotel, Miami Beach.