

Shabbat Lech Lecha...Genesis 12:1-4

And you shall be a blessing!

א וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ אֱלֹהֵי-מִצְרַיִם וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ. ב וְאֶעֱשֶׂה לְךָ גְדוֹל וְאַבְרָכָה וְאֶגְדְּלָהּ שְׁמֶךָ וְהָיָה בְרָכָה. ג וְאַבְרָכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אֶאָר וְנִבְרָכוּ בְּךָ כָּל מִשְׁפָּחֹת הָאָדָמָה. ד וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיֵּלֶךְ אִתּוֹ לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן-חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן.

¹ The Lord said to Abram, Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you shall be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you and curse him that curses you; and all the families of the earth Shall bless themselves by you." ⁴ Abram went forth as the Lord had commanded him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

DA'AT Z'KENIM...Read not "And you shall be a blessing" rather, "Be a blessing!" This is the command form. Thus, as part of Avram's covenantal promise he was commanded, 'wherever you go, inspire others to bless...then shall you be a blessing.'

RASHI.... "And you shall be a blessing..." The meaning is this: before your journey the power to bless was in My hands alone, but *now* the power of blessing will also be yours.

RABBI ELLIOT DORF...The root BaRuCH compels us to acknowledge God, asking us to transcend our self-centered view of the world and our self-congratulatory stance within it...

RABBI SAMSON RAPHAEL HIRSCH....Our prescribed blessings do not enunciate facts, truths, which it is assumed we are already fully conscious of, or wish are yet fully realized, but such that they wish to awaken, reanimate, and keep ever fresh in us.

PROFESSOR PETER PITZELE...Abram's call- both the one he hears and the one he leaves to us-contains a promise. It is God's promise to fill and empower us with energy and vision; but more, it is also...our promise to one another, that our journeys will be connected to the well-being of the entire earth...Hearing the call we trace our roots back to Abram, a glimpse of Eden restored...a new world in which the human community is viewed as a great kinship...awaiting our response.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם

BARUCH ATAH ADONAI, ELOHEYNU MELECH HA-OLAM

PRAISED ARE YOU, ADONAI OUR GOD, SOVEREIGN OF THE UNIVERSE.

Mishkan HaNefesh, CCAR

BLESSED ARE YOU, SOURCE OF LIGHT, SOVEREIGN OF ALL WORLDS

Koh HaNeshama, Reconstructionist Press

BLESSED ART THOU, LORD OUR GOD, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

The Siddur, Rabbinical Council of America

WE PRAISE YOU, O LORD OUR GOD, SOVEREIGN OF THE WORLD

Service of the Union of Liberal Synagogues, London

O HOLY ONE OF BLESSING, YOUR PRESENCE FILLS CREATION

Sudbury Siddur, Temple Beth-El, Sudbury, Mass

YOU ARE PRAISED, ADONAI OUR GOD, MAJESTY OF THE UNIVERSE

On Wings of Awe, B'nai Brith Hillel, Rabbi Richard Levy