

Life's Mission Statement

By: Rabbi Yosef Vogel

We are all used to reading or even writing mission statements for business ventures. They are vital as they serve to clarify the nature and purpose of the project at hand. We may ask ourselves, how many of us have a personal mission statement that would give us some guidance and clarity into the more important areas of our lives.

One of the great mission statements is recorded in the opening verse of this week's Torah reading. These are the first words spoken to the Jew, representing the beginning of Jewish history. It is with these words that G-d sets into motion the great journey on which man must embark.

Human nature like gravity is in a constant natural descent. We are primarily governed by our natural animal instincts whose mission statement is self preservation. Our G-dly soul on the other hand provides balance by enabling us to transcend self and identify and empathise with something or someone outside ourselves.

In two words – Lech Lecha – G-d sums up the nature and direction of life's journey. Go forth he says to Abraham, from the current state you are in, which is shaped and moulded by your environment and habit. Move constantly beyond your comfort zone, broaden your horizons and aim for that which although currently might seem elusive, can eventually be attained.

It is these words spoken to our ancestor thousands of years ago, that best describe the journey of the Jewish people both collectively and as individuals. Life is a dynamic where one is either moving forward or going backwards, between growth and contraction, between self preservation and a sense of community. It is the great Jewish imperative, that whatever destination we are at in our lives, we must constantly go forward, even one step at a time. Because it is this one step that will bring you closer to the Promised Land.

31 October | 7 Cheshvan

Lech Lecha

Shabbat Begins: 4:14 pm

Shabbat Ends: 5:16 pm