



Lech Lecha / לך לך

Cake Paradise

Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

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"Hi Avrohom Yitzchok," said Shimmy, looking at the silver pieces of paper his friend was holding in the cheider courtyard. "Is that what I think it is?" he asked.

"Wow, are those tickets to the new Stern's Bakery Tasting Room???" asked Ari Holtzbacher in wonder.

"The Tasting Room???" gasped Shimmy. "I heard they have hundreds of different types of pastries there that you can taste."

"Hundreds?" laughed Avrohom Yitzchok. "There's thousands! Every single Stern's product is there, including many which have not yet been released for sale!"



"I begged my father to get us tickets," Ari said. "But they said that this week the Tasting Room is only open for family and close friends of the bakery staff. Even our famous Holtzbacher name couldn't get us tickets."

"Well, it's a good thing I'm family and you're my close friends," grinned Avrohom Yitzchok. "You're coming with me tonight!" - "As long as your parents let," he added.

As the bell rang, the boys all hurried into their classroom, excited for the most scrumptious evening of their lives. They had to work hard to keep their minds focused on their Gemara and ignore the thoughts of chocolate, caramel, and fudge that kept making their stomachs rumble in anticipation.

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That evening, Shimmy and Ari arrived in the lobby of the massive Stern's Bakery manufacturing plant. There waiting for them was Avrohom Yitzchok, along with their friends Chezky and Pinny, whom Avrohom Yitzchok had also invited.

"Ready?" asked Avrohom Yitzchok. "Let's go!" and he pushed open the door to the massive Tasting Room.

The boys' jaws dropped in shock at the size of the place. As far as the eye could see there were cakes, donuts, danishes, rugelach of all sizes and more. Chocolate and caramel flowed in rivers and one could simply dip a cup inside and take a drink of the delicious hot flowing liquid. It even looked like the chairs were made out of cake!

"This must be what Gan Eden looks like," Shimmy said in a slow whisper. "I want to live here forever!"

The boys quickly stacked as many treats as they could fit onto trays and found a place to sit and eat.

"It tastes Heavenly too!" said Chezky rubbing his stomach in enjoyment as he ate a giant custard-filled, chocolate-covered, caramel-crusted cupcake. "I don't ever want to leave!"

For the next 45 minutes, the boys tasted and ate their way through as many pastries as they could manage. But soon all of the sugar started to make them feel hot and uncomfortable.

"My stomach hurts," said Chezky, still rubbing his stomach, but now because of the pain. "I think I ate too much."

"Me too," said Ari.

"This doesn't feel like Olam Haba anymore," Shimmy said with a moan, looking at his tray of cakes like he never wanted to see it again.

"Is there a problem boys?" came a voice from behind them.

The boys looked up to see Avrohom Yitzchok's father Mr. Stern looking at them with a sad smile. "It looks like you boys might have literally bit off a little more than you could chew," he said wryly.

"Totty," Avrohom Yitzchok said. "I don't understand. Everything looked so good when we first arrived - why do we all now feel like we never want to come here again?"

"Avrohom Yitzchok," Mr. Stern replied. "Do you know how in this week's Parsha, Lot decided to go live in Sedom? He thought Sedom was so wonderful, so beautiful, that he could enjoy the pleasures of Gan Eden right here in this world."

"Yeah, but that didn't work out too well for him, did it?" Avrohom Yitzchok replied.

"No, it did not. And do you know why? Because the true pleasures of Gan Eden cannot be enjoyed in this world. Sometimes we think 'ah, this is Heaven!', only to be harshly reminded that Gan Eden is for the Next World only.

"While Hashem definitely wants us to enjoy what we do use in this world, the pleasures that we should be chasing are only those which we will receive in Olam Haba after 120 years. Any attempt to try to live a life of physical pleasure will only result in disappointment, as it did for Lot in Sedom, and as it looks like it did for you boys today."

Pinny looked at the half-eaten pastry still in his hand. "Mr. Stern, will there be sugar-studded strawberry-cream-filled danishes in Gan Eden? Because I don't think I ever want to eat one again."

"No, Pinny," Mr. Stern smiled. "In Gan Eden the pleasures are much greater than any of my baked creations which fill this room. And I can promise you that they last forever and you will **NEVER** be sick of them!"

Takeaway:

True pleasure can only be reached in Olam Haba. We shouldn't waste time in This World chasing after pleasure which doesn't bring us closer to Hashem.



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