

Do you know anyone like that? *Out of Babylon* [Thank the Holy One!] - but *stuck in Charan*, the place of pleasant distraction and comfortable compromise?

Alas there are many Charan's in this world. And there are many, many Terach's who stop for a night in such places as Charan – and then somehow never manage to leave.

Destination? Calling? Forgotten – or at least *anesthetized*.

Passion? *Redirected, tranquilized, dissipated*.

Destiny? Purpose? Those things will have to wait for *another generation*.

Another Generation Arises!

The story of Avram is the story of 'another generation'. The 'another generation' in question in Terach family's case turned out to be the very next one.

Terach sired 3 sons - our patriarch *Avram* and his two brothers *Nahor* and *Charan*. *Charan* died before Terach and his family even left Ur, leaving an orphan son [Lot] and two fatherless daughters, *Milchah* and *Iscah*. **Genesis 11:27-31**.

Avram's brother *Nahor* married his niece, *Charan's* daughter, *Milchah*. *Milchah* had a son named *Betuel*. *Betuel* had - or would someday soon have - a son named *Lavan* [Laban] and a daughter named *Rivkah* [Rebecca]. See **Genesis 24:15**.

Terach died before the events about which we read in today's aliyah. So, at the time we read about in Genesis 12, Avram's father's household – which from which he will in today's aliyah be told to ***go out*** – consisted at least of *Nachor* and *Milchah*, and perhaps *Betuel*, on the one side, and *Lot* and *Iscah* on the other hand. Interestingly it included the family that would in time produce his daughter-in-law *Rivkah*.

Avram's fatherless nephew *Lot* would of course wind up ***going out*** with Avram and *Sarai*. We are not told that Avram either *asked* or *encouraged* *Lot* to go. Neither are we told that Avram tried to *dissuade* him from going. All we know is that when *Lot* packed his things and joined Avram on the road headed southward from *Charan*, Avram did not *prevent* him. Hence though it appears from verse 4 that it was *Lot's* idea to go, in verse 5 we are told that Avram '*took*' him.

The Great Adventure Begins: Avram's First God Encounter

We discussed the concept and importance of ‘God encounters’ in connection with our study of Noach. In Monday’s aliyah of parsha *Noach* this author pointed out that:

*The Holy One is not aloof, and He does not [except when it serves some specific purpose] make a practice of **hiding** – or concealing Himself - from mankind. The Holy One **pursues** mankind with passion, and seeks to communicate and interact with mankind in wonderful ways. Much of Torah is, therefore, about ‘God-encounters’.*

Here is how the first ‘God encounter’ of Avram’s life is described in Torah:

Vayomer Adonai el-Avram

And the Holy One said to Avram

Lech lecha me'ar'tzecha

Go out/away from your land,

umimoladetecha umibeyt avicha

and from your birthplace, and from your father’s house

El ha-aretz asher ar'eka

To a land that I will show you.

Ve'escha l'goy-gadol

I will make you into a great nation.

v'avarechecha v'agadelah shemecha

I will bless you and make you great.

V'heyeh b'rachah

You shall become a blessing.

V'avarechah mevarachecha umekalelecha a'or

I will bless those who bless you, and he who curses you, I will curse.

v'nivrechu vecha kol mishpechot ha-adamah

All the families of the earth will be blessed through you.'

[Genesis 12:1-3]

In these 3 verses the Holy One makes 8 separate promises to Avram – all conditional upon Avram ‘going out’. Here are the 8 promises:

1. I will *show you* the land to which you go;
2. I will make you into a **goy g'dol** [uplifted people group];
3. I will *bless you*;
4. I will *make your name* [i.e. your character, your essence] *great/uplifted*;
5. You will *become a source of blessing*;
6. I will *bless those who bless you*;

7. I will *curse those who curse you*;
8. I will *engraft all nations/people groups of earth into you*.

In Hebrew the number 8 is the symbol of the Messiah. In the eight promises the Holy One made to Avram was encoded the promise of Messiah and of the Messianic Kingdom.

What did that mean? It meant that Messiah would be of Avram's lineage, of course - but it also meant much more. In essence, it meant *Messiah would be in the midst of everything Avram would ever do*. As Y'shua would later declare:

*Your father Avraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing My day,
And he saw it, and was glad."*

[John 8:56]

The Substance of the Lech Lecha Calling

Note that there were actually three separate social, psychological and spiritual 'spheres of influence' – three components of his 'framework of givens'- from which Avram was called upon to 'go out'. **First of all**, Avram was called upon to ***go out from his land/country*** – i.e. *the physical location where he lived*. The call came at a time when Avram was living in Charan. Avram was called to 'go out' from the physical place he lived. This meant more than just that he was physically to move. It also meant that he was also being called upon to 'go out' from the underlying approach to and assumptions about life – the philosophies, the value systems, the social structures - and all tenets and doctrines of the religion that held sway amongst the residents of that place. He was called to go back to '*square one*' in regard to understanding Who God is, what relationship with Him is supposed to be like, and how life on earth should be lived by a human being.

Secondly, Avram was to '***go out*** ***from his birthplace***. Avram's birthplace had been Ur of the Chaldees – the seat of Sumerian civilization. Ur would have been the most logical destination for Avram. He had grown up there. He was familiar with – and to some degree had his worldview shaped by – both its *geography* and its *philosophies*. So the Holy One made it very clear right up front that Avram was not to go back to Ur, nor was he to go back to the ways of life or approaches to God which he had learned while he lived there.

Finally, Avram was to '***go out*** ***from his father's*** [Terach's] ***house***[hold]. Why? Because Terach's ways were not the Holy One's ways. Because the ways of Nachor, Avram's eldest brother, were not the Holy One's ways. Because the ways of Charan, Avram's younger brother, had not been the Holy One's ways. Joshua 24:2 tells us the stunning news that each of these men, though descended from Shem, 'served other gods',

Avram was therefore called upon not only to physically leave the spheres of influence of all in his father's house[hold], but was also called to 'go out' from each of these men's ways of thinking and interacting with God, with people, and with Creation.

Please note that the calling of Avram – the father of our faith - was not a call to 'join' anything. His was a call to do the exact opposite - to **DISENTANGLE** from all associations that colored his way of thinking, to **UNLEARN** everything he had ever been taught about God or for that matter about life on planet earth, and to completely 'start over' in life with only his relationship with the Creator of the Universe to guide him.

Only by disentangling, unlearning, and starting over from scratch could Avram come to know – much less live by - the truth.

Alas, perhaps there is a lesson to be learned in this for all who would be Avram's children.

Avram's Season of Passionate Pursuit Begins

We read in the 11th chapter of Hebrews the following words:

"By faith Avraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, sh'ma-ed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

[Hebrews 11:8]

At age 75 Avram basically *started life all over*. He packed up Sarai, at least one of his servants, and for some reason, his nephew Lot, and he left his family home in Charan. In so doing, he forsook his natural inheritance as a son of Terach [i.e. his 'birthright'] and embraced his spiritual inheritance [i.e. his 'blessing']. He headed south, apparently not having so much as a clue where he was going.

Where he was going was not really the issue. The issue was *Who He was going to be with*.

Please understand Dear Reader - what Avram was doing was not leaving Charan in search of *a better place to live* or to engage in business or to start the family he had always longed for. What He was doing was *embarking on a passionate pursuit of the One True God*.

Avraham was no 'soldier of fortune'. He did not leave Charan in search of *wealth*.

He was not after *possessions*. He was not even after *land*. He was likewise not after *fame*, or *fortune*, or *glory*, *self-actualization* or even *self-discovery*. He was not even after the long-desired heir that Sarai had proven incapable of giving him.

He did not go out in search of material blessings of any kind.

What he was after – *all* he was after - was *the One Whose Voice had spoken to him and awakened his sense of destiny*.

Avram had, quite unexpectedly, at age 75, been *romanced by the Creator of the Universe*. And he had been *completely swept off of his feet*.

He had heard the most beautiful Voice Creation has ever known speaking to him and him alone in such a way that his heart burned inside him and his spirit came wonderfully alive.

Has something like that happened to you, Dear Reader?

If not, may it happen this week.

And if perchance something like unto what Avram experienced in his 75th year of life has happened to you in some distant season of your life, may this week be a week when you experience another such encounter – only deeper and broader than the first. For He has begun a good work in you will be faithful to complete it³.

Looking For A City

The writer of Hebrews tells us that the greatest passion of Avraham's heart was the quest to find *a city*.

It was not a city like Babel. It was not a city like Ur.

It was not a city like Charan. It was not even a city in Kena'an like Shechem or Hebron or Be'er-sheva or the Jebusite stronghold of Salem [later renamed Jerusalem and called the 'City of the Great King'].

The city that captured Avram's passion and which was a city not built by human hands. The city for which Avram's heart longed with an unquenchable longing was **a city which has foundations, a city whose builder and maker is G-d, a city prepared by the Holy One for those of whom it is said 'He is not ashamed to be called their G-d'**". Hebrews 11:8-17.

³ Philippians 1:6.

It is a *real city*. It has real walls, and real streets, and real houses.

After all these years, like my father Avraham, my heart still longs for that self-same city. How about you, Dear Reader? Aren't you looking for the city of the Great King, too? And will you ever really be satisfied with anything else?

Avram's Second God Encounter

We are not told by Torah how long it took Avram to travel from Charan southward to *Eretz Yisrael*. We are however told that shortly after arriving in *Eretz Yisrael* Avram had his second 'God encounter'. This one was even deeper, involved more of Avram's senses, and was more meaningful than the first.

Remember, the first God-encounter of Avram's life was *auditory only*. He saw nothing – he merely heard and found himself mesmerized by the Divine Voice. This time the Holy One He changes things up on Avram. This time, the Holy One gets corporeal. He presents Himself to - and overpowers - Avram's *visual senses* as well as his sense of hearing.

Vayera Adonai el-Avram vayomer

And the Holy One appeared to Abram and He said,

L'zar'acha eten et ha-aretz hazot

'I will give this land to your offspring.'

[Genesis 12:7(a)]

If this text is literally interpreted it appears that this time in addition to *speaking to* Avram the Holy One actually pulled back the curtain of Heaven just a 'smidgeon', and visibly *showed to Avram a little bit of His glory*.

The Holy One had done something similar for *Noach* [Genesis 8:20-22]. And before Torah is concluded we will find that He is going to do something analogous for Moshe as well [Exodus 34:5-7].

Avram's First Altar-Building Project

What aspect(s) of the Holy One do you think He allowed Avram to see at the time of this second God-encounter? It cannot be stated for sure, as Torah does not specifically tell us.

But let us look at what happened immediately after Avram received the startling revelation:

vayiven sham mizbe'ach l'Adonai ha-nir'eh elav

[Abram] built an altar there to the Holy One who had appeared to him
[Genesis 12:7(b)]

Torah tells us that immediately after this vision, in the immediate aftermath of the Holy One's initiation of this God encounter, Avram built a *mizbe'ach* [altar].

He stopped what he was doing and . . . *built an ALTAR?* Why? What was **THAT** all about?

Where did he even get the idea? Was that a *sh'ma* response to something the Holy One said - or was it just *Avram being Avram*? Was it the manifestation of some kind of 'religious spirit' that had attached itself to Avram in Ur or Charan - or was it a Divinely inspired act of prophetic intercession?

Avram is not, of course, the first person to build an altar in the immediate aftermath of a God-encounter. His ancestor Noach did the same thing immediately after his third God-encounter, which occurred right after the Holy One brought him and his family safely through the Flood.

Please note that the Holy One did not specifically instruct Avram to do build an altar – any more than the Holy One had instructed Noach to do so. Avram's building of an altar appears to be a pure *heart-response* - a man desiring, in the only way he knows, to acknowledge the Holy One as God, and respond with praise to what he has been privileged to see and know of Him.

Note also however that the altar Avram built was not by any means an altar upon which attempts were or would be made to *curry favor* with the Holy One. The altar Avram built was an altar built in appreciation of the fact that *Avram already had the Holy One's favor*.

Neither was Avram's altar one built in order to pour out the blood of bulls and goats in a quest for atonement for sin. It was instead an altar which fully recognized that *the Holy One's amazing grace had already provided all Avram needed by way of sin-cleansing*.

So if the altar Avram built was not designed to curry God's favor or somehow provide atonement for Avram or anyone else's sins, well . . . why did Avram build it? What was he thinking?

The Sages Weigh In

We cannot know for sure what moved Avram to build the altar. There is a fascinating disagreement among the sages on the issue. Both *Rashi* and *Ohr HaChaim* speculate that Avram built the altar as *an act of gratitude*. But gratitude for what?

Rashi suggests that what Avram was grateful for – to the extent he felt the urge to build an altar and initiate a joyful approach to the Holy One - was the Holy One’s promise of both children and land.

Ohr HaChaim⁴ on the other hand suggests that what motivated Avram to build the altar was pure joy over the privilege of being counted worthy of the Presence of the Blessed One.

In other words, in Ohr HaChaim’s view Avram was overjoyed at the joy of spending time with the Holy One, while Rashi saw Avram as overwhelmed by the greatness of the promises the Holy One had made to him.

Ohr HaChaim saw Avram as loving the Holy One for the Holy One’s own sake, rather than loving Him because he was going to benefit from the relationship.

This disagreement presents to us an interesting dilemma: why do WE love the Holy One? Is it because of His Great and Precious Promises and Gifts? Or do we love Him because HE ALONE is viewed by us as our Exceeding Great Reward?

Yet Another Interesting Possibility

Or is it possible that the reason Avram was moved to respond to this Divine Encounter by building an altar was because what the Holy One showed Avram when He ‘appeared’ to him was nothing less than the image of a lamb [Messiah] slain before the foundation of the world?

Later in life – on Mount Moriyah – Avraham would declare: “*on the mountain of the Holy One, He will be seen*”. **Genesis 22:14.**

At the time of this early God-encounter, however, is it possible Avram wanted to memorialize the image the Holy One had shown him of a slain lamb on a heavenly altar the only way he knew how – in physical form – and that Avram’s ‘altar’ was simply the best Avram could do on short notice, with human hands and physical tools, to reproduce on earth in tangible form the image of what he had seen?

In connection with this God encounter the Holy One told Avram [forgive the

⁴ Rabbi Chaim ben Mosheh ben Atar (1696-1743), originally of Morocco.

paraphrase]: “*This is the land I told you about*”. This was significant. It was a fulfillment of promise #1 – the promise to *show Avram the land*.

And it was a down payment – an earnest – regarding the other 7 promises. If the Holy One fulfilled the *first promise*, He would, Avram knew, *fulfill all the others*.

The All-Important Promises of Seed and Inheritance

And the Holy One added one more promise to the eight He had made before — He promised to *give the land He showed to Avram to Avram’s zera* [seed/offspring].

Please take note that this ‘promise’ actually consisted of **two mutually dependent promises** – first that Avram, who was then childless, would have a ‘seed’; and second, that the ‘seed’ of Avram would inherit the land the Holy One had shown Avram.

Seeing the Beautiful Land

And so it is that in the course of the opening aliyah of the Avraham chronicles both we the reader and the man to whom we are introduced as Avram get a first glimpse of the “stage” on which the Holy One decreed that the most significant occurrences in Scripture would be played out.

It is in this aliyah of Torah, you see, that we the reader get introduced, along with Avram, to that very special parcel of real estate which later generations came to know as ***Israel!***

By the Holy One’s design, this seemingly insignificant parcel of land not much bigger than the American state of Vermont was destined to become, and forever remain, the focal point of all human history.

It was then. It still is today.

Why *this* parcel of real estate, instead of some other? For one reason, the land we know as Israel was at the center of civilization, on the crossroads of all world commerce. The two primary ancient roads from Mesopotamia [home of the Eastern empires of Sumeria, Assyria, and Babylon, to name a few] to North Africa [home of the Western empire of Egypt, which somehow managed to transcend all the Eastern empires] passed through this land. Anyone who traveled between these competing empires - or traveled from Africa to Asia or Europe - had to pass through this tiny country. It was “center stage” for all the interactions - as well as the decisive battles - of the world empires.

Even more important than the strategic value of this location however there is something irresistible - almost enchanting - about *the land itself*. The Holy One - Who designed it, sculpted it, and cares for it as His “garden enclosed” for His Beloved - has described it as “*a land flowing with milk and honey*”. In the center of this land He has “*placed His Name*”.

For this reason, as wonderful as the rest of Creation is, as beautiful as other mountains or as fertile as other valleys may be - Israel is always to be cherished and loved by those who love the Creator.

The Famine in the Land

Some may question the Holy One’s timing in bringing Avram to, and showing him, the land of Kena’an at a time of *famine*. If Avram is expected to ‘take to’ this land, wouldn’t it have been better for the Holy One to bring him to, and show him, the land at a time of plenty, with lush fields, and running streams?

Only if the Holy One was trying to appeal to Avram’s flesh.

Or if what Avram was after was real estate or material blessing.

And that is not what is happening. The Holy One is not *a real estate agent trying to close a sale* any more than Avram is a buyer hungry to be talked into the tract of his dreams.

The Holy One is a landlord already at work evicting the previous, holdover tenants [the Kena’ani]. The Holy One therefore does not bring Avram to the land when the Kena’ani were prospering. He brought Avram to the land when He was in the process of making the nest the descendants of Kena’an have made for themselves *as uncomfortable as possible*.

The Holy One wants Avram to see the land at its *worst*, not at its best. And He intends to stir in Avram’s heart a love for that land not based upon outward beauty or productivity – but *based upon the connection between the land and the Holy One*.

He wants Avram to love the land not because it is beautiful or fruitful [although it is definitely both] – but because the Holy One is present in a unique way there, and has prepared it to be His special place of meeting with all those whom He has made covenant.

So Avram builds a couple of altars on which to worship the Holy One Who called

him out of the land of the Chaldeans - and then keeps on moving southward, all the way to Egypt. As Torah tells us:

*Avram went down to Egypt to dwell there,
for the famine was severe in the land.*

[Genesis 12:9-10]

Avram and Sarai Sojourn in Egypt

The last part of today's aliyah describes a 'life experience' the Holy One allows Avram to experience – one which will be repeated in subsequent generations. The life experience is Egypt – the household of Pharaoh⁵.

Avram knows – by reputation at least – when he decides to leave Kena'an and head Southward, that while Egypt is a place where one can find food in famine, it is not exactly a pristine vacation destination. What it is, Beloved, is a pit of snakes.

And, without discussing it with the Holy One [hey, he's *just learning* – like all of us, right?], Avram makes a plan on how to deal with the snake pit. He decides to use his beautiful wife Sarai as a 'snake charmer'. He will use Sarai's sensuousness to appeal to Pharaoh's exotic tastes. Avram therefore says to Sarai:

hineh-na yadati ki ishah yefat-mar'eh at

Behold, you are a beautiful woman.

Vehayah ki-yir'u otach ha-Mitzrim

When the Egyptians see you,

v'amru ishto zot v'hargu oti v'otach yechayu

they will assume that you are my wife and kill me, allowing you to live.

Imri-na achoti at l'ma'an yitav-li

Say that you are my sister. They will then be good to me for your sake,

v'avurech v'chaytah nafshi big'lalech

and through your efforts, my life will be spared.'

[Genesis 12:11(b)-13]

I didn't write that dialogue, Dear Reader; I am just reporting it.

I'll confess, I do not particularly *like it*. To me, you see, it seems like a *sell-out of Sarai's virtue*. But then again I wasn't there, and I haven't walked in Avram's

⁵ **Par'oh** [Pharaoh] is a generic name for Egyptian kings (**Josephus, Antiquities 8:6:2**), coming from the Egyptian *par ao*, the 'Great House.' It is believed that Avram and Sarai's sojourn in Egypt occurred circa 1900 - 1730 b.c.e. Some believe the Par'oh spoken of in this passage was Amenemhet II of the 12th Dynasty, who assumed the title and began to reign in 1900 b.c.e. It is impossible, based upon the information available to date, to say for certain.

sandals.

What Avram did was to have Sarai tell a half-truth, and tell everyone she was his sister. In this way, Avram was able to ‘sell’ her into Pharaoh’s harem, and get enough food for he, Lot, and the rest of his entourage to survive the famine.

Beauty has always meant a lot in snake pits like Egypt. The sales price – was then, and is now - *riches beyond measure*.

Whether you or I approve of what Avram and Sarai did is not really the issue. The Holy One proved Himself faithful to Avram even in the snake pit of Egypt, and even in the midst of their slime. The Holy One *protected Sarai’s virtue* when Avram did not [and quite probably could not have, and knew it]. And the Holy One even turned personal disaster into triumph, making Avram [and Lot] wonderfully rich in the process.

Discipline would come later, at a later stage of Avram’s relationship with the Holy One. Right now, it seems, Avram is in the ‘blessing’ stage.

Ul’Avram heyti b’avurah

He treated Avram well because of her,

vayehi-lo tzon-uvakar

and [Avram] thus acquired sheep, cattle,

v’chamorim v’avadim ush’fachot v’atonot ugemalim

donkeys, male and female slaves, she-donkeys, and camels.

[Genesis 12:16]

And the Holy One, clearly presaging what would take place a little over 400 years later, struck Pharaoh and his palace with PLAGUES. And, as a consequence, this Pharaoh, as his descendant would do centuries later, ordered the Holy One’s people out of his kingdom under armed guard, in a fit of rage. Here is how Torah records it:

Vayetzav alav Par’oh anashim

Pharaoh put men in charge of [Abram],

V’yeshalechu oto v’et-ish’to v’et-kol-asher-lo

and they sent him on his way along with his wife and all that was his.

[Genesis 12:20]

Our aliyah began, as you will recall, with an instruction, from the Holy One, for Avram to ‘go out’. And it ends with a similar instruction, this time from a rather irate Pharaoh.

In both instances, it was clear that the time had come for Avram to take one last look around the place where he lived, then to pack up to move on. And, in both cases, the destination was to be Kena'an.

Much more on that tomorrow, Beloved.

Questions for Today's Study

1. Go back to Genesis 11.

- [A] From which of Noach's three sons was Avram descended?
- [B] What does the name Avram mean?
- [C] When chapter 12 begins, how old was Avram?

2. In his first recorded encounter with the Holy One [Genesis 12:1-3] Avram merely hears the Holy One speak, saying "***Lech Lecha***" [*go out for yourself . . .*]"

- [A] What three things was Avram to "go out" from?
- [B] Where was Avram to "go out" to?
- [C] List at least six things the Holy One said He was going to do.
- [D] Who went out with Avram?
- [E] What place in Israel did they go first?
- [F] How was Avram's encounter with the Holy One at this place (his second encounter) different from the encounter in Haran?
- [G] What did the Holy One promise Avram this time?

3. Where and how did Avram acquire wealth?

4. In today's haftarah reading, and particularly in Isaiah 40:27-31, the prophet of the Holy One is telling the descendants of Avram not to give up on their destiny and purpose just because things weren't going the way they thought they should. Here is the passage:

*Why say you, Ya `akov, and speak, Yisra'el, "My way is hid from the Holy One,
and the justice [due] to me is passed away from my God?"*

*Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The everlasting God, the Holy One,
the Creator of the ends of the erez, doesn't faint, neither is He weary;
there is no searching of his understanding.*

*He gives power to the faint;
and to him who has no might he increases strength.*

*Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:
but those who wait for the Holy One shall renew their strength;*

*they shall mount up with wings as eagles;
they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.*

- [A] What does the Holy One promise to give to the “faint?”
[B] What does the Holy One promise to give to those that have “no
might?”
[C] What four (4) things does Isaiah say will happen to those who “wait”
upon the Holy One?

5. Today’s reading from the Brit Chadasha is Romans 4:1-3, as follows:

*What then will we say that Avraham, our forefather, has found according to the flesh?
For if Avraham was justified by works,
he has something to boast about, but not toward God.*

*For what does the Scripture say? "Avraham believed the Holy One,
and it was accounted to him for righteousness."*

In connection with today’s Brit Chadasha reading look up in Strong’s the words translated “*believed*”, “*credited*” (KJV “counted”), and “*righteousness*”. Write the Greek words and their definitions. Then, using a Hebrew lexicon, try to determine what Hebrew words/concepts each of those Greek words relate to. Then, using the words/concepts you have discovered, try to rewrite Romans 4:1-3 Hebraically.

*May you come to know Avram as a father of your faith.
And may the Holy One show you His “garden enclosed” up close and personal.*

The Rabbi’s son

Meditation for Today’s Study

Psalm 107:1-7

*Give thanks to the Holy One, for He is good,
For his lovingkindness endures forever.
Let the redeemed by the Holy One say so,
Whom he has redeemed from the hand of the adversary,
And gathered out of the lands, from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.*

*They wandered in the wilderness in a desert way.
They found no city to live in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.
Then they cried to the Holy One in their trouble,
And he delivered them out of their distresses,*

*He led them also by a straight way,
that they might go to a city to live in.*