



CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL OF THE PALISADES

קהילה קדושה בית ישראל של הפליס

*An egalitarian Conservative community
where 'welcome' is not just a word!*

PARSHAT LECH LECHA

OCTOBER 16, 2021 - CHESHVAN 10, 5782



PARSHAT LECH L'CHA

Genesis 12:1 – 17:27

Haftarah Isaiah 40:27 – 41:16

Meet the world's very first Jew! As our story begins, Avram is commanded by Hashem to leave his country, birthplace and his father's house and to go to the Land that Hashem will show him. Hashem promises to give Avram great blessings, and Avram leaves immediately (Bereshit 12:4).

In this weeks Parsha Lech Lecha, we are reintroduced to Avram whom we met briefly last week in Parshat Noach. We learned there that Avram's father was Terach, his brother was Haran, he married Sarai and they had no children. The family moved from UrKasdim to Canaan where Terach died. But what do we really know about Avram?

This great man the first Jew, must have had an illustrious life of many good deeds and accomplishments prior to this weeks Parsha but we are told nothing about it.

We all remember the legends about: his destroying the idols in his father's shop. How he discovered the one true G-d and how he was tested by Hashem many times. Avram was obviously so special that Hashem saw fit to communicate with him directly.

Why does the Torah record so little about Avram's life prior to "Lech Lecha"? Perhaps, this story illustrates the essence of true goodness. Of course, Avram was a great and righteous man throughout his life, but before Hashem spoke to him, he was just following his personal feelings. There are many good people who do just that.

They do good because it makes them feel good. The problem with following your feelings is that one day they may lead you in the right path but the next day...who knows?

Furthermore, your feelings may differ from mine and, ultimately right and wrong become blurred. Often, right and wrong are determined by the feelings of those who happen to be in power at the time.

"Vayomer Hashem El Avram Lech Lecha..." Hashem spoke to Avram and Avram complied, that is when his life really began. It was only then that Avram put aside his own feelings in favor of doing what's right in the eyes of the ultimate law giver, Hashem.

THOUGHT QUESTION OF THE WEEK

In verse 12:2 Hashem promises Avram children, wealth and fame in return for his faith and compliance. Was this really a difficult test for him? What are the 3 greatest blessings that YOU pray for?

LECH LECHA ALIYA SUMMARY

General Overview: Abram and Sarai travel to Canaan. Due to a famine in the land they temporarily relocate to Egypt, where Pharaoh unsuccessfully attempts to add Sarai to his harem. They return to Canaan with great wealth and Abram parts with his nephew Lot. Abram defeats the armies of the four kings who had taken his nephew Lot hostage. G-d seals a pact with Abram, bequeathing the lands of Canaan to his descendants. Childless Abram marries Hagar and she gives birth to Ishmael. G-d changes Abram's name to Abraham, and Sarai becomes Sarah. Abraham is circumcised at the age of 99.

First Aliyah: G-d commanded Abram to leave his father's house and homeland, and travel to the land that He will show him. As reward for doing so, G-d promised to make Abram the patriarch of a great nation. Abram obeyed, taking along his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot. Once Abram arrived in Canaan, G-d informed him that He will eventually give that land to his descendants. Abram traverses the length of the land until a famine forces him to travel to Egypt. Fearing that the Egyptians would kill him in order to take Sarai, Abram asked her to allege that he was her brother.

Second Aliyah: And indeed because of her beauty, Sarai was taken captive and brought to Pharaoh. G-d struck the members of Pharaoh's palace with a plague, causing Pharaoh to hastily release Sarai. Pharaoh loaded Abram and Sarai with gifts and riches and had them escorted out of his land. Abram returned triumphantly to Canaan.

Third Aliyah: Lot, who had accompanied Abram and Sarai, was independently wealthy. When Lot's shepherds quarreled with Abram's shepherds, the two parted ways, with Lot settling in the province of Sodom, which was renowned for its evil inhabitants. After Lot departed, G-d spoke to Abram again, reiterating His promise to bequeath the land to his descendants, and promising to make his descendants numerous as the soil of the earth.

Fourth Aliyah: The southern region of Canaan was embroiled in a major war involving many kings. When the dust settled, the victorious kings took captive all the inhabitants of the Sodom region — Lot included. When Abram was informed of Lot's plight, he

rushed to the rescue along with a handful of men, engaged the victorious kings in battle, soundly defeated them, released all the captives and returned all the spoils.

Fifth Aliyah: Abram rebuffed the king of Sodom's wish to award him with all the war's spoils. When G-d reassured Abram that he would be greatly rewarded for his righteousness, Abram broaches his childlessness. "What is the point of all the reward and wealth," Abram cried, "if I have no heir to inherit it?!" G-d assured Abram that he will indeed have a child and promised that Abram's descendants will be as numerous as the stars of the heaven.

Sixth Aliyah: Abram requested a sign from G-d that his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan. G-d responded in the famous "Covenant Between the Parts." Abram and the Divine Presence passed between an assortment of halved animals, and G-d told Abram that his descendants would be exiled and in bondage for four hundred years. At the conclusion of this period, Abram's descendants would leave with great wealth, G-d would punish the nations which enslaved them, and Abram's children would inherit the lands of Canaan. Following this pact, Sarai — seeing that she and Abram were still childless — suggested that Abram father a child with her Egyptian maid, Hagar. Hagar conceived and began to mistreat her mistress Sarai, who responded with a heavy hand, prompting Hagar to flee. Hagar encountered an angel who encouraged her to return to Sarai, promising her that the child she will bear will become a great nation. She obeyed and gave birth to Ishmael. At the very end of this section, G-d added the letter *hey* to Abram's name, making it "Abraham."

Seventh Aliyah: G-d sealed a covenant with Abraham and his descendants; the sign of the covenant is the circumcision of all males when they are eight days old. Sarai's name is changed to Sarah, and G-d promises a delighted Abraham that he will father another son, this time from Sarah. At the age of 99, Abraham circumcised himself, his son Ishmael, and all the members of his household.

Yahrzeits for: Friday 10/8/2021

Mr. David Lesser	Brother of	Mrs. Gloria Weisinger
* Mrs. Rose Feldman Puteska	No Observers	
Blanche Zucker	No Observers	

Yahrzeits for: Saturday 10/9/2021

Wilbur A. Kramer	No Observers	
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Yahrzeits for: Sunday 10/10/2021

Mr. Milton Cohen	Father of	Mrs. Helen Gronner
Dora Harrison	No Observers	

Yahrzeits for: Monday 10/11/2021

Mr. Irving Katz	Father of	Mrs. Maxine Ward
Betty Manne	No Observers	
Mr. Morris Newman	No Observers	
Mr. Jack Schader	Brother-in-Law of	Mr. Harvey Sohmer

Yahrzeits for: Tuesday 10/12/2021

Mrs. Tillie Alenikoff	No Observers	
Mr. Hyman Goldberg	Father of	Mrs. Florence Goldberg
Mr. Constantine Guinness	Father of	Ms. Roxanne Guinness
* Mrs. Lena Lewy		
* Mrs. Sofya Pozharskaya	No Observers	
* Mrs. Gussie Sabin	No Observers	
Mr. Julius Shandolow	Father of	Mrs. Annette Shandolow-Hassell

Yahrzeits for: Wednesday 10/13/2021

Mr. Louis Steinhouse	Father of	Mrs. Leslie J. Applebaum
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Yahrzeits for: Thursday 10/14/2021

Mr. Yousef Haim Abraham	No Observers	
Ms. Lois Isenberg		
Mr. Aryeh Rosenstock	Father of	Mrs. Prina Hertzberg
Mrs. Lillian Solkoff	Mother of	Mrs. Rona J. Spiegel
Barbara Zucker- Zarett	Friend of	Mr. Philip Kamil

Yahrzeits for: Friday 10/15/2021

Ms. Henriette Barsano	Kohen	
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