

# PARASHAT LEKH L'RHA

(GET YOURSELF OUT)

GENESIS 12:1–17:27

## ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

**Y**eshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-Apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

### Haftorah Reading

Isaiah 40:27–41:16

### B'rit Chadashah

Stephen on Abraham: **Acts 7:1–8**

Paul on Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant: **Romans 4:1–25; Galatians 3:1–29**

On Melchizedek: **Hebrews 7:1–19**

On faithful Abraham: **Hebrews 11:8–12**

### Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion):

- 12:1 Elohim Calls Abraham to Leave Ur and Come to Canaan
- 12:10 Abraham and Sarah Seek Famine Relief in Egypt
- 13:1 The Return to Canaan and Abraham and Lot Part Company
- 13:14 YHVH Promises Abraham Land and Descendants
- 14:1 The War of the Eastern Kings
- 14:8 Sodom Is Defeated and Lot Is Taken Captive
- 14:13 Abraham Rescues Lot, Refuses Honors and Pays Homage to Melchizedek
- 15:1 Elohim Reassures Abraham and Promises Him a Son
- 15:9 The Abrahamic Covenant Is Cut
- 15:13 Prophecy of the Egyptian Exile and Redemption
- 15:17 Ratification of the Abrahamic Covenant
- 16:1 Hagar and Ishmael
- 17:1 YHVH Renews the Covenant With Abraham and Gives Abraham and Sarah New Names and a New Destiny
- 17:9 Circumcision: the Sign of the Covenant
- 17:15 YHVH Promises a Son to Sarah

**Study Questions For This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion):**

**1** **12:1**, *Get thee out of thy country*. Did Abram immediately leave his father's house and go directly to the country that YHVH would show him, or did he fulfill YHVH's will for his life in incremental steps? (Compare Gen 11:31 with 12:1.) Did Abram leave his father's house completely, or take part of his father's house with him including his father and nephew? Haran is located in northern Mesopotamia and is nowhere near Canaan. When Abram finally made his way to Canaan minus his father, did he still have part of his kindred with him, something YHVH instructed him to leave behind (Gen 12:1)? Did his nephew Lot prove to be a help or a hindrance to Abram in fulfilling YHVH's mission for his life in a new land?

What lessons can we learn from this account? First, YHVH is gracious to us even when we don't obey him completely and immediately. Scripture still refers to Abraham as the father of the faithful or faithfulness (Rom 4:12,16). Second, Abram was a man of prominence in Babylon (Chaldee), was recognized as a mighty prince (Gen 23:6), and was 75 years old when YHVH asked him to leave the comforts of life in Babylon to trek across the desert to the backwoods region of Canaan. No doubt, this was not an easy move for Abram for the reasons stated.

What did Yeshua tell his disciples about the sacrifices that would need to be made to be a follower of YHVH? (Matt 10:35–39). What did Yeshua say would be the eternal rewards of those, who like our father Abraham, set out in faith for a new spiritual destiny? (Matt 19:29) What physical obstacles stand in your way of fulfilling YHVH's spiritual calling, mission and destiny for your life?

**2** **11:31,12:1**, *Ur of the Chaldees ... land of Canaan*. YHVH commanded Abraham to leave Ur of the Chaldees, the ancient region of Babylon, which means "confusion" or "mixture" as in a little good and a little evil like the tree in Eden by the same name from which the serpent enticed Adam and Eve to eat. Has YHVH put out an end-time call to his set-apart people to leave an end-time religious system that is comprised of a little good and a little evil? (See Rev 18:4.) Is he calling a remnant to come out of religious confusion/Babylon back to Canaan, the Land of Israel, to reunite with the Hebraic/Abrahamic roots of their faith? Are you heeding that call? What are you doing about it?

**3** **12:2**, *I will bless you*. YHVH promised to bless Abraham by making him into a great nation and making his descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven (Gen 15:5). Presently there are only 12 to 15 million Jews alive today worldwide. There are currently over 100 times more Arabs alive than Jews. Many of them trace their lineage back to Abraham through Ishmael or Esau. Did YHVH fail to fulfill his promise to Abraham through Isaac and is his word not true? If his promise were true, then where are the numerous descendants YHVH promised to Abraham? See Romans 4:16; 9:8,11 and Galatians 3:7,9,14,28–29 for the rather surprising, yet revealing answer.

**4** **12:6**, *Shechem*. Abraham entered Canaan (i.e., the Promised Land) by way of Shechem and it was here that YHVH first announced to Abraham that this was the land he was giving him along with other provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant. Later this city was recognized as the entry point for Israelites entering the Promised Land and it was there that Joshua buried the remains of Joseph (on the parcel Jacob had purchased and bequeathed to his son [Gen 33:19; Josh 24:32; John 4:5])—the tomb of which exists to this day (though it has been greatly damaged and much of it destroyed by Palestinian terrorists from 2000–2003). There also Joshua had the Israelites, upon entering the Promised Land, renew their covenants before YHVH pronouncing the curses and blessings on the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim (Deut 27:1–26; Josh 8:30–35; 24:23–25) the bases of which are approximately 1500 feet apart. Dinah, the daughter of Jacob was raped by the prince of the city of Shechem, and Levi and Simeon avenged her of the crime committed against her by having the Canaanite male inhabitants be circumcised after which they slaughtered them (Gen. 34). In their zeal to possess the land promised to their fathers and recognizing this city was key to entering the Promised Land, it seems that Simeon and Levi took matters into their own hands in attempts to possess the land ahead of YHVH's timing. Shechem later was allotted to the tribe of Ephraim, the birthright son of Joseph and leader of the Northern Kingdom of the House of Israel (Josh 20:7), but was eventually assigned to the Levites as a city of refuge (Josh 21:20–21). At Shechem, Rehoboam was crowned king over Israel (1 Kgs 12), and later at the same place the ten northern tribes renounced their

allegiance to Rehoboam and established their own nation. It was at Shechem (also called Sychar) that Yeshua talked to the Samaritan woman at the well of Joseph (which was about one-and-one-half miles from Joseph's tomb) (John 4). The Samaritans were a mixed race people comprising of those from the House of Israel (Northern Kingdom) and various other non-Israelite racial stock. Will Shechem play a key role in the House of Israel returning to the land of promise during the last days in what in rabbinic teaching is called the Final Redemption when the return or regathering of the exiles (lost ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel) will occur at the coming of the Messiah?

**5** **13:1,3**, *And Abram went up out of Egypt ... even to Bethel.* The rabbis note the significance of this passage in that one always speaks of “going up” or “making *aliyah*” (i.e., ascending) to the land of Israel and Jerusalem. Going up *from* what *to* what spiritually speaking? Here the country Abram is leaving represents what spiritually? Where does he end up? What does the name *Beth-el* mean? Doesn't this speak of the spiritual journey each of us is on as we leave the spiritual servitude, bondage and slavery of the world, flesh and the devil seeking to “dwell in the house of YHVH forever” as David states in Psalm 23:6?

**6** **13:5–13**, The account of Abraham and Lot is very revealing concerning each individual's character. One was greedy and selfish; the other was a peacemaker even to his own detriment esteeming others better than himself (or “in honor preferring one another,” Rom 12:10). Abraham lived by the kingdom principles of give and it shall be given to you; whoever is greatest let him be the servant; and die to self in order to live. What were the end results of this approach in Abraham's life? Where did Lot's orientation eventually get him? Loss or gain? Discuss and reflect on the motives and actions of your own life in this regard.

**7** **14:20**, Discuss the ramifications of Abraham's tithing to Melchizedek. Is tithing a spiritual principle that predates the Levitical and temple systems? (Read Prov 3:9.)

**8** **15:6**, *He believed ... counted it to him for righteousness.* Was Abraham saved (or accounted righteous) by the grace of YHVH through faith in YHVH, or did his good deeds or works save him? (Compare the following passages: Gen 12:1–4; 15:1–6,18; 17:1–13 with Rom 4:1–12.) Is the idea of salvation by grace through faith therefore only a “New Testament” concept, as many teach, or is it rooted in the Torah? Some believe that Abraham (and ancient Israel) was saved by keeping the Torah-law. Is this true in light of the Scriptures we have read above? How was he saved? What were the fruits in his life that proved that he was saved and had a righteous walk before YHVH? (Gen 26:5).

**9** **15:1–21**, In this chapter, YHVH establishes the Abrahamic Covenant with Abraham and his descendants forever. This covenant forms the basis for the Renewed Covenant prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31–33 and revealed in the Apostolic Scriptures that YHVH would make with the House of Israel and the House of Judah (Heb 8:6–13). We learn in Romans 4 that the Abrahamic Covenant undergirds the salvific aspects of the Renewed Covenant. Furthermore, in Genesis 15:17, we read that Abraham had a very strange vision. The prophetic implications of this vision are vast. To learn how this vision points to Yeshua, to his taking the penalty of Abraham's descendants violating YHVH's law, and to his death on the cross, and to learn the overall importance of the Abrahamic Covenant as it relates to the Renewed Covenant, read our teaching article on the Abrahamic Covenant (see web site link below).

**10** **16:1–16**, Though Scripture calls Abraham the father of the faithful, he fell to doubt and unbelief after waiting for years for a son. The result was his taking matters into his own hands and working out YHVH's plans and purposes in his life through fleshly means. The result was the birth of Ishmael, the father of many of the Arab people. Do you have trouble waiting on YHVH? Remember, his primary goal in your life is NOT to bring YOUR dreams to pass, but to form in you the person and character of Yeshua (Rom 8:28–29). This only comes through time, and the heat and pressure of spiritual refinement. That is the message of Genesis 15:12–14. The birds of the air (a spiritual picture of Satan and his demons) wanted to interrupt this process (verse 11). But will we rest (sleep, verse 12) in YHVH and allow him to work his purposes out in our lives so that we may become the refined vessel he wants us to be in Messiah Yeshua? (Read Ps 37, entire chapter, with special focus on verses 4–7, 23–24.) This is the process of sanctification and growing in spiritual maturity through which we must all go.

**11** **17:1**, *I am El Shaddai/the Almighty El*. YHVH reveals himself as *El Shaddai*, the All Sufficient or Powerful One and then between verses two and eight states the seven “I will” provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant. What is the purpose of this divine name in relationship to the covenant and to the number seven? Verse 19 speaks of an “everlasting covenant.” Could this be what Paul was referring to in Ephesians 2:12 when he stated that the believing people of the nations were now Israelite citizens through Yeshua and were no longer strangers or aliens to YHVH’s covenants (plural) of promise. To what covenants (plural) was he referring? Many take this to be the “New” Covenant. But that is singular, not plural. Could the other covenants to which Paul is referring be the Abrahamic and Mosaic (or Sinaitic) Covenants?

For further study, please see these articles available at <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/teaching.html>:

➤ [\*The Abrahamic Covenant: The Covenant of Salvation\*](#)

➤ [\*The Hebrew Scriptures & The Writings of the Jewish Rabbis Confirm The Deity and The Incarnation of Yeshua the Messiah\*](#)

## HAFTORAH LECH LECHA—ISAIAH 40:27–41:16

### When the Going Gets Tough ... Let Faith In YHVH Arise to Carry You Onward!

**1** *The Soncino Edition Pentateuch* introduces its commentary to this Haftorah portion as follows:  
The Sedrah [Parashah] opens with the call of Abraham and [YHVH] bidding, “Be thou a blessing” unto all the families of the earth. Such, likewise declares the great Prophet of Consolation, is the Divine charge to the Children of Abraham. Israel, suffering in Exile, might well despair of the fulfillment of the Divine promise, nay, even of God’s remembrance of that promise. The Prophet stills such questionings. In God, Israel has the source of inexhaustible strength. The everlasting God will not fail to carry through His great purposes for mankind through Israel His servant, the child of “Abraham, My friend.”

How firmly do you believe this? When the daily rigors and routine of life take their toll on you, your faith wanes, your upward look dims, the joy of your salvation diminishes, your first love for Yeshua lessens, and your hope in YHVH’s promises for your life is tarnished, what do you do? What is your reaction and response? Do you call to remembrance the ongoing faithfulness of YHVH to his promises and to his Word as Isaiah here encourages us to do?

**2** **40:27**, *My way is hid from YHVH*. Is YHVH hiding from us, or have we walked away from him, and in reality he is there all along? Abraham might well have despaired when he left the cosmopolitan comforts of Ur and vacated to a sandbox piece of land on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. He might have despaired when the land YHVH promised him did not come immediately into his possession, when he even had to flee the land promised him because of famine, when he waited for about two decades to have a son through whom YHVH’s promises would be fulfilled, and upon the death of his wife he had to purchase, at a premium price, a burial plot in the very land that YHVH had promised to him decades before. Yet he overcame the despair to become the Father of the Faithful, and an example to us all. What can we learn from Abraham? (Read Heb 11:8–19.)

**3** **40:28**, *Have you not known?* Abraham was in exile in a foreign land, and so was Israel during its captivity. We are spiritual exiles in a foreign land called spiritual Babylon awaiting our spiritual inheritance. While enduring the rigors and ignominy of exiled status, the fear can arise that one has been forgotten by YHVH. When this situation arises, what does Isaiah counsel us to do? We are called to remember the very character of YHVH, the Set-Apart One of Israel. That simple act opens up a reservoir of divine enablement and upliftment that will begin pouring into our lives. (Read verses 29–31.)

**4** **41:2ff**, *Who raised up the righteous one from the east*. This is enigmatic and confusing language. Some commentators say this is referring to Abraham (e.g., *Artscroll Chumash*, Adam Clarke in his commentary),

some say it refers to Cyrus, the Persian king who liberated the Jews and allowed them to return to Israel (Ibn Ezra, *Soncino Pentateuch*), and some see it as a reference to both (Matthew Henry in his commentary). Regardless of whom Isaiah is referring to here, what is the bottom line message? (Read through verse 5 and then start again in verse 8 and continue to verse 16 for the answer.) What major attributes of YHVH are being emphasized here? Notice some of the key phrases in these verses that speak of YHVH's sovereignty:

Who accomplished it?  
 I am YHVH ... I will be the same.  
 The islands saw and feared.  
 Israel ... whom I have chosen.  
 I have summoned you.  
 You are my servant, I have chosen you.

Now look at some key phrases that speak of YHVH's tender mercy:

I have ... not despised you.  
 Fear not for I am with you.  
 I have strengthened you ... even helped you, even supported you with my righteous right hand.  
 I shall be your help ... your Redeemer.

Now look at what YHVH promises to do to the enemies of his people who would prevent them from receiving YHVH's promises:

All who are angry with you shall be shamed and humiliated, those who contend with you shall be like nothing and shall perish.  
 You shall seek them but not find them.  
 The men who struggle with you; they shall be like utter nothingness.  
 (Read Verses 15–16.)

This is what YHVH promises to those who walk with him and trust in him as Abraham did.

**5** To whom is YHVH making these promises? As we have studied in the previous two Haftorah portions, there is only one nation to whom YHVH primarily is directing all of Isaiah's prophecies. Who is that nation today? Who is the seed of Abraham today? (Read Gal 3:29 for starters! Then read Eph 2:11–19.) What call is YHVH sending forth to his people at this very moment? He is calling them to come out of exile to Babylon (Read Rev 18:4). Is your life presently being shaken and turned upside down? Is YHVH separating the wheat from the chaff in your spiritual life? Are you passing through the fires of refinement and being given a new direction and purpose in life, a fresh start and a new beginning? Are the old religious paradigms fading away and new ones arising where YHVH is demanding of you a higher, more righteous, more obedient, and a more intimate walk with him? Can you trust YHVH's leading? Is he strong enough to vanquish your enemies, meet your needs and bring you into your promised inheritance? For you, that is a yes or no question. If you answer yes, then trust and obey him as you go forward as Israelites—as the seed of Abraham.

