



Lech Lecha

Beresheet (Genesis) 12:1 – 17:27

As *Parshat Lech Lecha* begins, G-d tells Abram to leave his native land and go to a land which G-d will show him. Imagine the unbelievable act of faith that asks of him! G-d promises Abram that a special land will be set aside for him and his descendants, and that he would be the father of a great nation. Abram and his family, which includes his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot, travel from Haran to Canaan.

Soon after arriving in Canaan, a famine forces Abram to seek food in Egypt. Upon entering Egypt, Abram declares that Sarai is his sister, not his wife; she is then taken into Pharaoh's palace. Abram realizes good fortune from this deception, but G-d afflicts Pharaoh with plagues. Pharaoh sends Abram, his wife, and their possessions out of Egypt.

Abram and his nephew Lot graze their flocks together, but the land does not support them both. Lot chooses to live on the Plain of Jordan, while Abram remains in Canaan. Later, in a war that erupts in the area, Lot is carried away as a hostage. Abram and his men pursue the captors and free Lot, his possessions, and the rest of the prisoners. That Abram is able to so quickly gather a fighting force of 318 men demonstrates that he has indeed been blessed, as G-d had promised him

Sarai, who has not been able to bear children, gives her handmaid Hagar to Abram as a concubine. Hagar bears Ishmael. G-d repeats his covenant to Abram, but now requires Abram and all the males of his household to be circumcised as a sign of the covenant. To mark the many changes in their emerging relationship, G-d changes Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah.



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