

LECH LECHA { לֵךְ-לְךָ } (GO FORTH!)

A Messianic Jewish Commentary

By Hannah Neshet www.voiceforisrael.net

Genesis 12:1-17:27, Isaiah 40:27-41:16; Romans 4:1-25

“Adonai said to Abram, “Go forth (lech lecha) from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you...and I will bless you.” (Genesis 12:1-2)



Abram's Journey from Ur to Canaan, by Jozsef Molnar

Our last Torah study, Noach, concluded with a genealogy of Shem (Noah’s son) ending with Terah - father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. Terah took his son, Abram, and his daughter-in-law, Sarai, (Abram’s wife) as well as Lot, son of Haran who had died, and they all went out from Ur of the Chaldeans heading toward the Land of Canaan.

Instead of reaching their destination, however, they instead settled at a place called Haran where Terah lived out the rest of his days. At God’s command, however, Abram carried on his father’s unfinished mission – to reach the Land of Canaan – the name given to the Promised Land at this time. Abram and his wife, Sarai, became the first settlers of the ‘Holy Land’ by packing up their belongings and settling in Elon Moreh, near Shechem (modern day Nablus).

“Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land.” (Genesis 12:6)

THE JOURNEY HOME

This parashah is about journeys – specifically - journeys that take us home. The title, Lech Lecha, roughly translated as ‘Go ye...’, carries one of the most exciting messages in the Bible – the call to ‘aliyah’ – (from the root word, *la’alot - to go up or ascend*). God called Abram to leave country, kindred, and home in order to go forth into the Land of Promise.

The prophet Isaiah foretold a day in the End Times when many people from the nations would say, **"Come, *let us go up to the mountain of Adonai, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths. The Torah will go forth from Zion, the word of Adonai from Jerusalem.*"** (Isaiah 2:3)

Today, the term ‘to make aliyah’ means ‘to immigrate to the Land of Israel’. A person who ‘makes aliyah’ (immigrates to Israel) is called an ‘oleh’ (masculine) or ‘olah’ (feminine) – one who ‘goes up’. Abram and Sarai were the first ‘olim’ (plural) in Biblical history.

God called Abram to leave all that was familiar, secure, comfortable and perhaps even beloved, in order to go to an unknown land where he would dwell in a tent as a stranger. This parallels the call of God on many in our generation (including ourselves) to make aliyah - to ‘go up and to come home’ - to the Land of Israel.

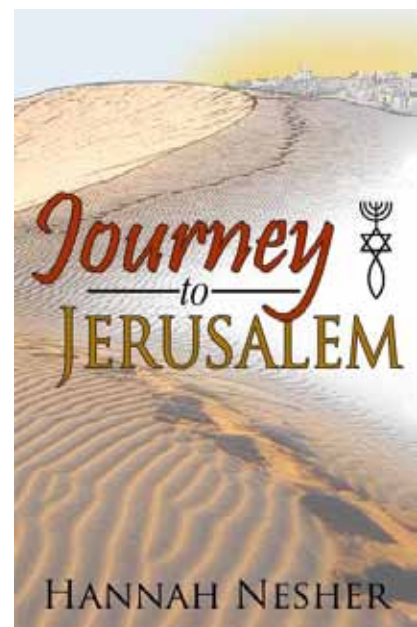
God promises in His Word to bring His people home from all four directions of the earth and He is fulfilling His Word in our very day – this is so exciting! God has miraculously brought us back to the Land, *never again to be uprooted from the land that He has given us!*

“I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them...I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them.” says the Lord your God.” (Amos 9:14-15)

Leaving behind everything that is familiar and heading straight into an unknown future certainly stretches our faith in the Almighty; but He is faithful, as written in my book, **Journey to Jerusalem**, the story of our family’s aliyah to Eretz Yisrael.

The call to Abraham is a call to each and every one of us in this hour: *“Lech L’cha! Go ye!”*

Yeshua’s last words to His disciples before His ascension were also Go!
“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...” (Matthew 28:19-20)



I don't believe that this means we must all become missionaries and traipse around the jungles of the Amazon (although some are surely called to do so). Obeying the call of '*Lech Lecha*' may or may not require a geographical change in location; but it seems to me that God is calling each of us to step out of our comfort zones and be willing to follow His Spirit on a journey '*to a place that He will show us*'.

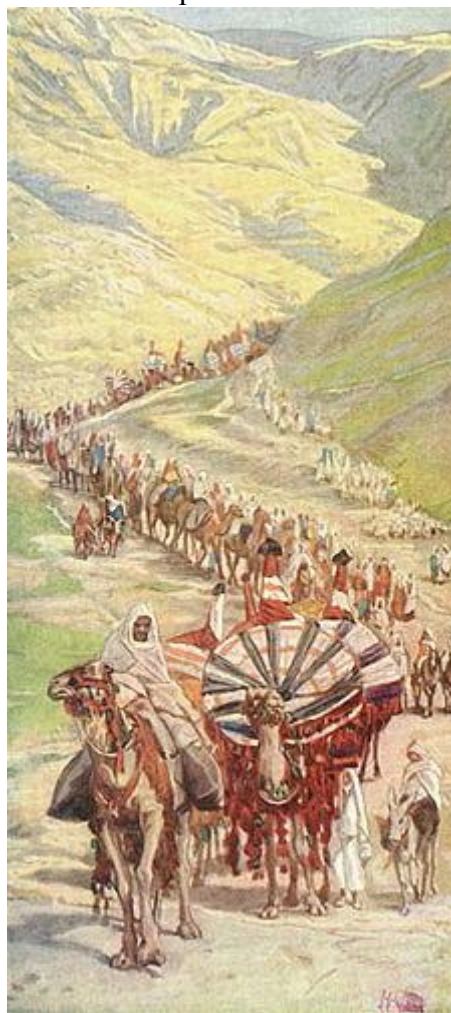
MOVING INTO THE PLACE OF BLESSING

“And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and you will be a blessing.” (Genesis 12:2)

Will we trust God enough to take this leap of faith as did Abram in order to receive the reward? God said to Abram – “*Go!...and I will bless you.*”

God wants to move us into a place of blessing – but it will require our obedience and faith to go when He says go! Not only does God want to bless us but He also wants to move us into position to where we may be a greater blessing to others as well.

In order for us to move into the place of blessing, we need to be willing to take that first step. Sometimes we fail to do so because we are afraid of making a mistake, so we stay stuck; but indecision can be even more dangerous than a wrong decision.



The Caravan of Abram (watercolor circa 1896–1902 by James Tissot)

A wrong decision, made with a right heart and with an attitude of faith can usually be corrected, but it is almost impossible to steer a parked car! Lack of forward movement brings incredible frustration and a vague sense of dissatisfaction. There is a torment in doing nothing, especially for children of God who are to be continually moving forward, advancing, and taking more and more ground for the Kingdom of Light.

Sometimes we are so afraid of making a wrong decision that we make no decision at all; or we go back and forth between our various options. As Elijah said to the people,

“How long will you waver between two opinions?” (1 Kings 18:21)

James tells us that a double minded man is unstable and cannot expect to receive anything from the Lord (James 1:8). There comes a time to just make up our mind and take the plunge into the deep waters - kadima! (onward).

Crossing the Jordan means taking the first step

Sometimes we feel stuck and unable to move because we want to have all the steps laid out clearly before we take the first one. So often, however, God doesn't give us the end from the beginning; He just says *go....to a place I will show you....*

When Joshua took the children of Israel into the Promised Land, they had to cross the Jordan River, but there seemed no way across the waters. Joshua instructed the Cohanim (priests) carrying the ark to step into the water; and as soon as they took that first step, the waters of the Jordan parted and the people were able to cross over into their destiny. Sometimes we have to be willing to take that first step, even into the deep waters, even where there seems to be no way across, and then we will see God do a miracle!

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you." (Isaiah 43:2)

It takes faith to step out, trusting that God will show up. I will never forget our first day in the Land of Israel, more than a decade ago now, but still fresh in my memory.

We had said our goodbyes to our home, family and friends and had come, like Abram, not really knowing where we were going. Even so, we felt certain that God had called us and would guide us to a place He would show us. When we actually arrived, however, and walked off that El Al aircraft with our two children and two suitcases each, it was quite a frightening experience. We didn't have a clue what to do or where to go next.



Not even knowing where to tell the taxi driver to take our weary bodies and heavy luggage from the airport, we accepted his suggestion to spend our first Shabbat in the Land near Jerusalem. We went to an Israeli pro-life (Be'ad chaim) conference at Yad Hashmona, a Messianic moshav (village) near Jerusalem – but there was *'no room at the inn'* to lay our weary bodies.

Burdened beyond words by the long travel and my own worries, I sat down on the pale golden Jerusalem stones and wept before the Lord, asking Him to show us where to go and what to do. That day, at the request of Ted Walker, I gave my testimony¹ before the gathering of Believers at this conference and our first miracle happened!

¹ Hannah's personal testimony is written in a book, Grafted in Again and recorded in DVD, Because He Lives

An American woman, Roni, offered to lend us her beautiful sea-side apartment in the coastal city of Netanya for an initial period of three months – absolutely free! Unheard of! God’s amazing grace! Thus began our journey....

God may not show us every step, but He is pleased with faith that will take the first one. His word is a lamp at our feet and a light to our path². Like a little flashlight we carry when camping to light the little dirt path leading (we hope) to the washroom at night, we can see just enough ahead of us to keep walking on the narrow pathway, trusting it will lead us to our destination. We can’t see the entire way to the end, but we keep following the Light we have been given.

Beware of Settling in Haran

God wants to take us all the way to our destination – to fulfill our destiny - but we have a tendency to get stuck somewhere along the way. God actually called Abram’s father, Terah, to the Land of Canaan, but rather than reaching his final destination, he settled with his family in a place called Haran.

Haran represents the trap of complacency – settling for ‘*good enough*’, which is often a far cry from God’s best for our lives. God says “**Woe to you who are complacent in Zion.**” (Amos 6:1) We may have come so far, overcome so many challenges and finally reached a place where we feel comfortable and secure. We want to camp here instead of pressing on for that prize at the end. We must be careful of our tendency to ‘settle’ for less than God’s best for our lives. Let us make a determined decision to go all the way with God to fulfill our destiny in its fullness.

Minor Adjustments

It doesn’t always take a huge, radical change to move into our place of blessing. My daughter, Courtney, taught this to me one day in her beautiful garden. She showed me several beautifully blooming plants and flowers which, not long ago, had been barren and lifeless. What was the change? Nothing drastic – she just moved them a few inches (centimetres for metric people) to a place where they would receive more sunshine.



Maybe all we need in order to blossom is to receive more ‘*son-shine*’. If some people in our lives seem to be ‘drooping’, we can help to bring some son-shine into their lives as well and we just might see them start to bloom again.

² Psalm 119:105

Sometimes we just need to make a minor adjustment in attitude to see a major improvement in our lives. Maybe it is a decision to treat the people in our lives with more kindness or patience. It could be a choice to wake up each day with a smile and say, *“This is the day the Lord has made; I WILL be glad and rejoice in it.”*; rather than walking around with a sour face and crabby attitude until our morning coffee has kicked in. ☺

Perhaps what is needed is simply a change of focus – from what is wrong with our life, ourselves and others, to what is right; from dwelling on faults and weaknesses to encouraging strengths; from seeing only what we don’t have and complaining about our perceived lack, to recognizing all the many blessings in our lives and being thankful for them.

Moving into our place of blessing is not only determined by following the leading of the Holy Spirit to the right geographical location, but also by remaining in unity and peace (shalom). It is upon the place of unity and peace that God commands His blessing:

“How good and pleasant it is **when brothers sit together in unity** (Hinei matov u’manayim shevet achim gam yachad); for **there Adonai bestows his blessing**, even life forevermore.” (Psalm 133:1,3b)

GOY GADOL

“And I will make of you a great nation...”

(Genesis 12:2) God promises Abram that he would become a great nation. In Hebrew, this is a ‘goy gadol’, גוי גדול, which could be translated as ‘a big Gentile’ ☺. In this context, however, the word ‘goy’ is used for nation and gadol can also mean either big or great.



God's Promises to Abram (watercolor circa 1896–1902 by James Tissot)

We can keep in mind, however, that at this point, Abram was not, in fact, a Jew. He was a man who had been living in Babylonia, who entered into covenant with His creator, as (I hope) we have all done at some point, whether Jew or ‘goy’ by birth. The important part of the equation is the covenant - not our lineage or blood line.

Abram, through this covenant with the Almighty God, was to be blessed and to be a blessing to all humanity. Interestingly, the Hebrew word for blessing, brachah, בְּרָכָה, comes from the roots word, ‘berech’ which means ‘knee’. It is only by submitting to God’s will and bowing our knee to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords that we may be blessed and a blessing to others.

Brachah may also be changed to ‘spring of water’, ‘brecha’, with just one minor vowel change. Yeshua is the fountain of springs of living water; and water represents the Spirit

of God. Blessings may come to us through our work, or through our relationships with other people, but it is the Spirit of God which is the true source of all blessing.

BLESSING AND CURSING

“And I will bless them that bless you, and him that curses you will I curse; and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Genesis 12:3)

God then made a profound promise to Abram that whoever blesses him will be blessed and whoever curses him will be cursed.³ This promise, which was extended to Isaac and then Jacob (Israel) and his descendants, still holds true today.

*“The story of European history during the past centuries teaches one uniform lesson. That the nations which have received and in any way dealt fairly and mercifully with the Jew have prospered – and that the nations that have tortured and oppressed him have written out their own curse.”*⁴

Is anyone seeking God’s blessing? A sure way to receive it, according to the Word of God, is by blessing Israel and the descendants of Jacob (Israel) – the Jewish people.

How would all the families of the earth be blessed through Abram? Through Abram came the Messiah, from the tribe of Yehudah (Judah). He came as a light in the darkness.

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light...For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given....” (Isaiah 9:6)

The Messiah was not sent only to save Israel, but all of mankind: **“It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved one of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, (goyim) that you should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.”** (Isaiah 49:6)

THE BLESSING OF ABRAHAM

There is another aspect of the blessing of Abraham that as followers of Yeshua, we need to comprehend – and that is that anyone who is in the Messiah is considered the ‘seed of Abraham’ and an equal heir to the blessings of Abraham as well.

That means that one does not need to be the physical seed of Abraham to receive the blessings! The book of Galatians declares that because of what Yeshua did, the blessing of Abraham can be ours, whether Jew or Gentile, male or female, bond or free, through our faith in Yeshua Hamashiach (the Messiah). **“And if you are the Messiah’s then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”** (Galatians 3:29)

³ For a full study of the dangers of anti-Semitism, see book by the author, A Messianic Jewish View of Purim (Feast of Lots) or watch the DVD, “Where is your Brother Jacob?” available by post or through the website: www.voiceforisrael.net

⁴ Olive Schreiner, Pentateuch & Haftorahs, The Soncino Press, Hertz, Dr. J. H., Ed. P.45

God actually swore by His own self, for there was none greater, promising to bless and multiply Abraham. Through faith and patience, Abraham did eventually receive the promises God made to him. **“And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promises.”** (Hebrews 6:13-15).

Likewise, if we will also patiently endure and stay in faith, God will bring to pass His promises of blessing, increase and multiplication, just as He did for Abraham.: **‘For God is not a man that He should lie.’** (Numbers 23:19, Hebrews 6:18)

This gives us great hope – which is the anchor for our soul.⁵ God wants to bless us so that out of our overflow, we can be a tremendous blessing to others. To those who have proven themselves faithful in the little, He knows He can trust with much.

I encourage you to receive the promise of the blessing of Abraham and say, *“I am blessed and I am a blessing. God blesses those who bless me and curses those who curse me. I am blessed with the blessing of Abraham. I am blessed and cannot be cursed.”*

All that God asks of us is that with gratitude, we remember Him as our source of every blessing, honour Him with our wealth by giving the firstfruits back to Him, and give Him all the glory and credit.⁶

“....and Lot went with him.” (Genesis 12:4)

We may note that Lot prospered simply because he went with Abraham. Who do we ‘go with’? The Word of God warns us to be careful about choosing our companions. Do we follow those who are walking with God, or those who are what may be called ‘walking curses’? As someone once said, *“If we want to fly like an eagle, we had better stop hanging around with turkeys!”*

“Abraham passed through the land unto a place called “Shechem” ... and the Canaanite was then in the land.” (Genesis 12:6)

This land was inhabited when God promised it to Abram; it was *not* an uninhabited land. The fact that some Arabs and nomads have been living here in the Land before Israel officially became a state again in 1948 does not invalidate God’s ancient promise of the land to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel).

Abram and Lot Depart Out of Haran (illustration from the 1728 *Figures de la Bible*)



⁵ Hebrews 6:19

⁶ Deut. 8:11-18

The Promise of the Land

Why does the Bible start with the account of creation? It is to establish God as the creator of the heavens and the earth. The whole earth belongs to the Lord. God, the Creator of every inch of land on this earth, has every right to give a portion of His land to whoever He pleases, no matter who happens to be living in the land at the time.

Shechem is now in what I would call '*Arab occupied territory*' but this land still belongs, by Divine right, to the people of Israel. God, as the original Zionist, made an eternal promise to give the land to Abram and his offspring:

"To your offspring will I give this land." (Genesis 12:7)

Why did God make this promise to Abram and his descendants? It was the Canaanites who at that time had taken control of the Land of Canaan, therefore God wanted to reassure Abram that despite the fact that others currently inhabited the Land, it would one day belong to Abram's offspring – the Jewish people.

We may see a very clear correlation to the political situation in the Middle East today. Palestinian terrorists have taken control of large tracts of land within Israel, while the Israeli government seems reluctant to drive them out. What about God's promise of this land to the Jewish people? Is it still valid today?

Some may even wonder if the Jewish people have returned to the Land in vain. What about all those who risked and some who even sacrificed their lives to drain malaria infested swamps, to re-build the cities and to defend this nation against the hordes of enemies? Rivers of tears and pools of blood have been shed in order to re-claim our God-given land.

Have we, the Jewish people, survived the threat of extermination throughout two thousand years of persecution in the lands of our exile – pogroms and inquisitions and even the Holocaust – finally to return to our land - only to be driven out by hate-crazed, religious fanatics?



[Ramadan Abdullah Mohammad Shallah](#) is wanted by the FBI for conspiracy to conduct the affairs of the designated international terrorist organization known as the "Palestinian Islamic Jihad".

Just as God encouraged Abram at Elon Moreh, so does God still speak to us, Abraham's offspring, through His eternal word, that our claim to this land is not political but by Divine right. The Islamic militants may gain some diplomatic points through waging a crafty propaganda war; they may gain some temporary victories; but ultimately, God's promise will stand.

Seek First the Kingdom of God

“Abraham was very rich...” (Genesis 13:2)

God blessed Abram to the point that he became very wealthy. Some people do not believe it is possible to be both rich and spiritual but Abraham shows us that God is not against us prospering materially. He promised not only that Abraham would be a blessing, but also that he would be blessed. If material prosperity is part of God’s blessing, then what is the problem?

A problem arises only when we fail to keep God in the first place and center of our lives. We cannot serve God and Mammon.⁷ We are not to run after ‘things’ as do the heathens (pagans); but rather to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and then all these things we desire will be added unto us.⁸

God loves to bless His people when we acknowledge Him as our source. God wants us to have abundance so that we can use what He has given us to bless the world around us.

SHALOM (PEACE)! (Blessed are the Peacemakers)

“There was strife between the herdsmen of Lot and the herdsmen of Abraham.”
(Genesis 13:7)

Abraham knew that strife would destroy the blessings of God on his life, therefore, as a lover of peace, he sought for a solution. He decided that he and Lot must separate. I believe that one of the reasons why God chose Abraham to be the Father of our faith is because he was such a radical peacemaker!



Depiction of the separation of Abraham and Lot by [Wenceslaus Hollar](#).

Abraham was willing to give up anything Lot asked for, just to have peace (shalom) restored in his life. I see this beautiful spiritual quality of peace-loving being passed on to his son, Isaac, as well. When the Philistines unjustly challenged him over his father’s wells, Isaac chose just to walk away for the sake of peace.

I don’t believe this was weakness on either Abraham’s or Isaac’s part – it was humility and the wisdom to know that we must absolutely have peace in order to walk in the blessing and anointing of God!

⁷ Matthew 6:24

⁸ Matthew 6:32,33

We must treat strife as we would the plague. Arguing, bickering and contention bring in confusion and every evil thing! (James 3:16). Strife can actually destroy the blessing and anointing upon our life. People, and especially children, can actually become physically ill by living in an atmosphere of strife.

“Better a dry morsel with quietness than a house full of feasting with strife.”
(Proverbs 17:1)

It is interesting to me to note that Abraham did not call for a meeting between his herdsmen and those of Lot. They didn't carry on endless discussions about the issues and listen to everyone's side of the story. There are times when this is completely appropriate and productive; but we must have the wisdom to know when to do so would be pointless.

“Don't speak in the ears of a fool, for he will only despise the common sense in your words.” (Proverbs 23:9)

The Word of God warns us against trying to reason with fools. Not only will they not listen; they will even hate us for trying to speak into their lives. **“So don't bother correcting mockers; they will only hate you. But correct the wise and they will love you.”** (Proverbs 9:8)

With some people, negotiation is not an option; in the end, we will be the ones hurt in the process. Sometimes separation is the only answer as it was for Abraham and Lot. And for those in covenant relationships, such as marriage, a solution must be desperately sought after through prayer and fasting and wise counsel to end the strife and restore the blessing.

Abraham passed on a peacemaking heritage to his son; but will we leave a legacy of strife or shalom to the next generation? The evil spirit of Strife may seek to have dominion over our homes and families. But I am encouraged today with the word that we can speak to our mountain in the mighty name of Yeshua Hamashiach and if we will believe and not doubt it has to move! (Mark 11:22-24)

Our problems are called mountains because they seem to be big, permanent, immovable forces, but God's word is greater! Notice it does not say to speak about the mountain or even pray about the mountain (although that is good to a point). But there comes a time when we need to open our own mouth and speak with our own voice to say,

“Strife, I command you to move out of my life and be gone now!! In Yeshua's name”
Even if we don't see immediate results, we need to stay in faith and keep speaking to the mountain and shout Grace! Grace! to the mountain and it will be removed.

We can declare peace and shalom be in our dwelling places – our homes and families. Just as God spoke the light into existence, *“Let there be light!”*, we can speak, *“Let there be shalom in my home! Let there be healing in my body.”*

God's light will banish the darkness and His Spirit will give us wisdom in how to deal with the situations, but first we need to do our part and in the authority that God has promised us to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, **SPEAK TO THE MOUNTAIN OF STRIFE TO BE REMOVED!**

Yeshua said if we can believe, then all things are possible and that it shall be done to us according to our faith.⁹ We can cry out, '*Lord I believe, help my unbelief!*' And God will grant us a measure of faith, even as a mustard seed, to believe.

In order to restore peace, however, we may need to be willing to sacrifice something important to us and even be willing to accept an unjust situation, trusting God to make it up to us in His way and time.

Abraham gave Lot first pick of the land and accepted whatever was left over. Lot chose according to his natural sight. The land he chose looked lush and green and fertile; he gave Abraham the leftover brown, barren, dry land. But Abraham walked by faith and not by sight.¹⁰

“And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.”
(Genesis 13:10-11)

The land where Lot chose ended up completely destroyed due to its depravity (Sodom), but Abraham prospered in the Land because he believed in God's promises.

So, too, do many Jewish people choose to remain in the lands of their exile because it seems prosperous and secure, while Israel seems a tough and dangerous place. But we must also not be taken in by the 'lusts of our eyes' and instead believe in the promises of God for Israel in the Land.



Abraham and Lot Divided the Land (illustration from the 1897 *Bible Pictures and What They Teach Us* by Charles Foster)

“Lift up your eyes...I give you this land FOREVER...” (Genesis 13:14)

⁹ Mark 9:23, Matthew 9:29

¹⁰ 2 Corinthians 5:7

A 'Set Time' for Favor

God's promise to Abram is clearly an everlasting covenant, still in effect today. God's promise to Abraham for the land is forever and God is faithful to His covenant. If God can so easily break covenant with Abraham due to the sins of Israel, what assurance do we have, as New Covenant Believers, that He would not also break covenant with us? God is a covenant keeper!

God did not break His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel). He punished Israel for her sins, but once the time of the punishment was over, He kept His promise to restore the Land and bring His people home as described in the 36th chapter of the book of Ezekiel. This is happening in our very generation. The land is now blossoming and its cities inhabited. The set time to favour Zion has come.¹¹

God also has a 'set time' to bring things to pass in our own lives and we need to wait patiently for God to fulfill His promises in our lives - for He makes all things beautiful in its own time.¹² He has a 'set time' for favour for our lives as well, because we are in covenant with the Almighty God.

But God told Abram to lift up his eyes to look at the stars. When we become 'downcast', our whole countenance falls; our shoulders droop and our gaze falls downward. But praise God, He is our glory and the LIFTER OF OUR HEADS.¹³

In order to 'see' the promises of God for our lives, we must be willing to LIFT UP OUR EYES to the mountains from where our help comes from. "Our help comes from יהוה (Adonai) maker of heaven and earth." (Psalms 121:2)

Let us lift up our eyes from looking downward at our problems and fix our gaze on Yeshua, the author and finisher of our faith.¹⁴



The Vision of the Lord Directing Abram to Count the Stars (woodcut by [Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld](#) from the 1860 *Bible in Pictures*)

¹¹ Psalm 102:13

¹² Eccl. 3:11

¹³ Psalm 3:3

¹⁴ Hebrews 12:2

Crossing Over

God said to Abram: **“Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.”**

(Genesis 13:17)

When God commanded Abram to walk the length and breadth of the land, it was not just for a little sightseeing stroll; it was a legal custom of the day in ancient times that ownership of the property was claimed by the person walking through it.



Abram Journeying into the Land of Canaan (engraving by [Gustave Doré](#) from the 1865 *La Sainte Bible*)

Egyptian and Hittite kings would regularly leave their grand palaces in order to take a ceremonial walk through their countryside in order to confirm their ownership of the land. In Mesopotamia, according to ancient records, the seller of a property would lift his foot off the land and purposefully set the buyers foot upon it. This may further explain the cultural context of the scripture wherein God promises Joshua ‘every place the sole of his foot treads upon’. **“I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.”** (Joshua 1:3)

Therefore the Talmudic rabbis compared Abram’s walk through the land to a vial of perfume which only gives scent when moved. Symbolically, when Abram walked the length and breadth of the land, he took possession of the land for himself and his descendants as an eternal possession.

Whereas Noah walked ‘with’ God; Abraham walked ‘before’ God, paving the way for the world to come to a knowledge of monotheism - faith in the one true God. This is why Avram was the first person to be called an **‘ivri’ עברי** (Genesis 14:13). This means a ‘Hebrew’ and it comes from the Hebrew verb, *‘la’avor* (to cross over), since he was a man with an ability to ‘cross borders’. He crossed over from a land of idol worship, to a place where YHVH **יהוה** would be worshipped in spirit and truth.

Lech Lecha is one of the most exciting chapters in the Torah, since it is when the adventures of the Jewish people began with God. We, too, may come to this life-altering place where we ‘cross over’ to enter into a new, exciting adventure in our life with God. An ancient book of Jewish mysticism interprets the opening words of this parashah, Lech Lecha, as ‘Go to yourself’. Lech mean ‘go’, and lecha is ‘to you’. Therefore, according to mystical Jewish thought, the first crucial step in life is to go within to our own inner self, to discover our highest mission, calling and purpose in life.

Once we come to a realization of our true destiny, and when we hear that Divine call, “lech lecha” (go forth), then our outward journey may begin with purpose and courage.

War of the Kings

Lot needed Abram's aid when four powerful kings captured all of Sodom, including Lot, and took the spoils of war. Abram rounded up a small army of 318 men and freed the captives:

"And he [Abram] and his servants deployed against them at night and struck them; he pursued them as far as Hobah, which is to the north of Damascus. And he brought back all the possessions; he also brought back his kinsman, Lot, with his possessions, as well as the women and the people." (Genesis 14: 15-16).

By this we can see that not only did Abram possess military might and valor, but also great kindness. With only a very small army, vastly outnumbered by the four kings and their armies, Abram risked his own life to save his nephew's. Abram demonstrated courage and heroism in the War of the Kings.

When our Israeli Defensive Forces soldiers entered the dangerous terrorist stronghold of Gaza¹⁵, they also showed extreme courage and heroism like our forefather Abraham. In Israel, we are all 'mishpachah' (family). Therefore, just as with Abram and Lot, our brave IDF soldiers did not allow themselves to fear the possible consequences of entering into the battle, but did whatever was necessary to protect the collective family.



IDF soldiers entering Gaza to seek out and destroy terror tunnels

Let us pray that the leaders of Israel will be strong and of good courage, making wise decisions that will bring an end to the threat of terrorism against the men, women and children of the nation of Israel as well as all other nations. Israel is fighting a war against terror, not just for ourselves, but for the entire free world.

¹⁵ July 2014

KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The king (Melech in Hebrew) of Shalem, Malchi-Tzedek (translated as ‘my king (is) righteousness’), brought forth bread and wine. He was a priest (cohen) to God most High (El Elyon), of an eternal priesthood.

This is an interesting passage which reveals Yeshua who is also priest (Cohen) – King (Melech) of righteousness (Tzedek). Malchi-Tzedek is also mentioned in Psalm 110 where David writes, “YHWH said to Adoni (my Lord), **“Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”** (Psalm 110:1)

Who is David’s Lord (Adon) who sits at Yehovah’s right hand? It is Yeshua whom God raised from the dead and seated at His right hand in heavenly places (Ephesians 1:20).



Meeting of Abram and Melchizedek (painting circa 1464–1467 by [Dieric Bouts the Elder](#))

God promises that the KING Messiah will defeat all the enemies of God. **“Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion...You are My Son, ...Ask of me and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance...You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel...Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way...Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.”** (Psalm 2:6-12)

Of this Lord of David’s, Psalm 110 goes on to say, **“You are a priest (cohen) forever according to the order of Malchi-Tzedek.”** (Psalm 110:4)

Yeshua was not of the tribe of Aaron, brother of Moses, but of another priesthood. He was a cohen (priest) after Malchi-Tzedek, who brought us eternal life through his blood.

“And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Malchi-Tzedek, there arises another cohen, who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. (Hebrews 7:14-16).

Malchi-Tzedek was King of Shalem. In the English, it is usually written as Salem, but what is Salem?? Only through the Hebrew do we discover the linguistic richness of the scripture.

‘Shalem’ שלם means ‘whole, complete, or perfect’. L’shalem also means ‘to pay’.

Shalom (peace) is also derived from the same root Hebrew word as shalem. Yeshua paid (shilem) the price so that we could have peace (shalom) with God. He will be king (melech) over Jerusalem (Yirushalayim) forever and ever.

The Hebrew name for Jerusalem actually contains a prophetic message. Yerushalayim means, ‘Yeru - they will see – shalem (wholeness, completeness, perfection). The ‘im’ ending indicates a plurality. When Yeshua returns *for the second time*, to preside over the nations of the world from the center of the universe, Jerusalem, we will finally see the peace, the wholeness, the completeness and the perfection that we so desperately desire.

TITHING TO THE COHEN

Abraham gives Melchi-Tzedek a tenth (10%) of the spoil as a thanksgiving offering. This is the first time that the Biblical principal of tithing is mentioned. Some people seem confused about the issue of the tithe (or do we just want to ‘play dumb’?)



Abraham and Melchizedek (1493 woodcut from the [Nuremberg Chronicle](#))

Some Christian preachers with an otherwise negative attitude towards ‘that Old Testament law’, who teach that we are ‘free from the law’, turn around and spend a significant amount of time pounding home the necessity of keeping the commandment to tithe!:)

Perhaps this overemphasis on the tithe as a kind of ‘spiritual abuse’ has caused some to reject tithing when it still remains valid as a Biblical principle. If at all possible we should belong to a local congregation; but even if we are not affiliated, we are still required to give our tithes and offerings to God’s work. If we do not, then we are thieves and robbers and cannot expect God’s blessing on our lives.

“You have gone away from my ordinances and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you.” (Malachi 3:7)

The Hebrew word used for return is ‘shuvu’, derived from the same root as repentance – ‘tshuva’. But how can we return to the Lord in repentance? The people asked, **“In what way shall we return (repent)?”**

And God answered clearly, **“In tithes and offerings, You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me,...bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this...If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes...” (Malachi 3:8-11)**

Do we really realize what this Word reveals? Those who do not tithe are thieves; but worse than common thieves who steal from man - they steal from God – therefore they are cursed. Yes, Yeshua became a curse for us, but not so that we can wilfully continue in sin and still expect the blessing of God on our lives!

God says we can even test Him on this point. It is the only place in the Bible where God actually encourages us to put Him to the test on this point. If we trust Him with our money, He will pour out a great blessing upon our lives.

When we are faithful to give our tithes and offerings, God blesses us. But the reverse is also true – if we are negligent or late with bringing the firstfruits of the increase, then the devourer begins to eat away at our supply.

Some people live in poverty and ‘wish’ God would bless them, but they don’t tithe. This indicates a lack of trust in God as our provider. God also commands us to give to the poor and needy, to orphans and widows, to be open handed towards the poor in the Land and God will bless us and cause us to prosper in everything we put our hand to.

When we give to the poor, it is as if lending to the Lord, and He will repay what we have given.¹⁶ We don’t need to be afraid of lack when we give: **“Those who give to the poor will lack nothing, but those who close their eyes to them receive many curses.”** (Proverbs 28:27)

It is God’s plan for blessing His people, but we have to learn to be generous. As we give, so shall we receive. I believe this is yet another reason that God chose to bless Abraham – because he was a generous giver. **“A generous soul will be made rich.”** (Proverbs 11:25)

“Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, thy reward shall be exceedingly great.” (Genesis 15:1) The Hebrew word for **reward** is the same root as used for **salary**. When we serve the Lord faithfully, He pays us a generous salary. This is our ‘exceeding great’ reward.

What was Abram’s response to God’s promise of such a great reward?

“What can you give me seeing that I go childless?” (Genesis 15:2)

LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME

In other words, Abram was expressing his disappointment that God had not given him an heir. “Of what value are material possessions or any worldly reward if denied a child?” Abram asked.

This attitude of Abraham, father of the nation of Israel reflects the Israelite/Jewish attitude towards its children. They are considered the highest of human treasures.

¹⁶ Proverbs 19:17

Although worldly attitudes and practices have also crept into Jewish families, the traditional Jewish home is one in which the mother is revered as the one who stays home to raise their children, to guard their treasure.

Sadly, many families today do not treat their children as such. We must be very careful to give our children the messages that they are important to us; that we treasure them – not that they are inconveniences or problems that we would rather be without so that we could get on to *‘bigger and more important work’*.

Sometimes we fail in this; it is not always easy to maintain a balance. Once, after expressing frustration that I am just not able to get *‘anything done’* because the littlest one seemed to be requiring a constant vigil the entire day long, my older son asked, *“Mommy, am I a problem to you, too?”*

This broke my heart and taught me a powerful lesson. Caring for children can be a demanding job, requiring patience, wisdom, creativity, eight arms, sixteen eyes, and more energy than they! But God has given us a great responsibility to train up our children in the way they should go¹⁷ and to teach them the Torah. His grace will be sufficient for us in every situation, moment by moment.

Yeshua’s disciples also thought their master too busy and important to be *‘bothered’* by all these children, with their messy hands and runny noses. But Yeshua said, **“Let the little children come unto Me and do not forbid them, for such is the Kingdom of Heaven.”** (Matthew 19:14)

Yeshua’s attitude towards children was remarkable, considering that even in the most enlightened nations of Biblical times, children had minimal human rights. In Greece, weak children were generally exposed on a lonely mountain to perish. Some pagan religions sacrificed children in a fire to their God. In parts of the world today, female infanticide may still be practiced today due to their culture’s preference for male children and their strict ‘population control’ policy. In other countries, children may be purposefully maimed or disabled in order to fulfil their role as the ‘family beggar’.

In Israel, however, childlessness was considered a tragedy (consider the story of Hannah, Peninah, and Elkanah).¹⁸ The people of Israel believed God’s Word that children are a blessing and a great reward (our salary). Let us model the Father of Israel’s attitude towards children as well as our Savior’s, and welcome children to come unto us.



¹⁷ Prov. 22:6

¹⁸ See 1 Samuel 1:1,2

I believe that another reason why God chose Abraham to be the father of our faith, besides his obedience and love of peace, was that he was a good father!

God knew that Abraham would command his children and household after him to keep the ways of the Lord. God needed a father for his new nation and God needs fathers today who will be faithful to teach God's ways and commandments to their children, rather than leaving all spiritual training to their wives.

This gives children the idea that anything to do with religion or spirituality is a distinctly feminine domain, which is a fallacy. God wants fathers like Abraham to teach their children what it means to love and obey God and keep His commandments - a noble calling indeed.

“And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness.”
(Genesis 15:6)

Here is another reason that God chose Abraham – he believed. He had this radical faith that just said, *“OK God, if you said it then I’m going to believe it.”* This was Abraham's righteousness, and it is what pleases God in us – believing in His Word!

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him...” (Hebrews 11:6) May we also walk in this kind of radical faith that Abraham demonstrated.

Cutting Covenant

“In that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “Unto thy seed have I given this land...” (Genesis 15:18)

The ancient method of establishing a covenant was to cut an animal in half and have the parties pass through the portions, united in the bond of the common blood. Here, God was seen as a flaming torch passing through the pieces of the slain animal while Abram remained in a deep sleep. Why did God put Abram to sleep?

This reveals the nature of the covenant as both initiated and ratified by God Himself, just as with the New Covenant. The terms of the covenant depend upon God's faithfulness, not on Israel's subsequent behaviour. God's promises to Israel are still good. In the Hebrew, the verb used is in the past, **‘Natati’** (I have given), not in the future, ‘I will give’. The transfer of the land into Israel's hands is already a ‘done deal’.



A Deep Sleep Fell Upon Abram and a Horror Seized Him
(illustration from the 1728 *Figures de la Bible*)

God had promised Abraham many descendants, but Sarah remained barren, therefore she decided to ‘help God out’ by offering her servant, Hagar, to Abraham in order to bear him a child. How often do we grow impatient with waiting for God to fulfil His word to us, and move in the flesh like this to ‘make it happen?’ May we learn to trust God for the fulfilment of His promises in HIS timing, remembering that “**He has made all things beautiful in its time.**” (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

After Hagar conceived, she behaved disrespectfully toward Sarah, her mistress, and therefore Sarah dealt harshly with her and Hagar fled. One rabbi commented that because Sarah sinned in her ill treatment of her slave, God gave Hagar a son who would be the ancestor of a race destined to deal harshly with the descendants of Abram and Sarah. But Hagar also sinned in not respecting Sarah’s authority over her.

And angel of the Lord found Hagar by a fountain of water. This is the first time that an angel (malach) is mentioned in the Bible. It means a ‘*messenger*’. The angel told Hagar she would have a son and call him Ishmael.

In the Hebrew, ‘Shma’ means ‘hear’ and El means God (as in Elohim). And so Hagar would call her son Ishma-El because God heard her affliction. Even so, the angel instructed Hagar to return and submit to her mistress. There are times when the authorities over our lives may treat us harshly or unfairly, but the correct response may still be submission.



Hagar and the Angel in the Wilderness, by [Francesco Cozza](#)

The angel also told Hagar that her son, Ishmael would be a ‘**wild donkey of a man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man’s hand against him...**’ (Genesis 16:12)

Notice that the prophetic Word of God tells us that the descendants of Ishmael will be full of strife and contention. Ishmael’s descendants form part of the Arabic people today, which may help explain the tendency towards violence in their culture.

Ishmael represents the child of flesh, while Isaac represents the child of promise. Works of the flesh always produce strife and frustration; while Isaac’s name, Yitzchak, **יצחק** means laughter from the root word l’tzchok (to laugh). What originates from the Spirit brings laughter, life and joy!

A MULTITUDE OF NATIONS

'As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.' (Genesis 17:4)

God promises that Abram will be the father of a 'multitude of nations'. In the Hebrew, it is written **אֲבִי הָמוֹן גּוֹיִם** {Av (father) hamon (multitude) goyim (nations or gentiles)}.

Abraham was not only to bring a small select group of people into covenant with his God, but multitudes – more than the stars in the sky or the sand on the seashore. God's intention is that all peoples – every race, tongue and tribe would become members of His family. How did he accomplish this? Through the blood of Yeshua Hamashiach (the Messiah).

"Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles (goyim) in the flesh...that at that time you were without the Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Messiah Yeshua you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Messiah...For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." (Ephesians 2:11-18)

Through the Messiah, we may all find equality before God and all may consider ourselves Abraham's seed that belong to the Messiah. We are equal heirs, Jew and Gentile, according to God's promise, not blood lines.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yeshua. And if you are Messiah's then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:27-29)

I WILL CHANGE YOUR NAME

In the 17th chapter of Genesis, we read that God changes his name from Av-ram **אַבְרָם** to Av-raham **אַבְרָהָם**. His wife's name was also changed from Sarai **סָרַי** to Sarah **סָרָה**. In the English this has little, if any, meaning. But in the Hebrew, we can see that the only change to both their names was the addition of the Hebrew letter hey { ה }. This letter is often used as an abbreviation for the name of God. Therefore, by adding this letter to each of their names, it added 'God' to their nature. Wow!

When I think about this, it amazes me. By themselves, they were able to do nothing.¹⁹ They were already well advanced in years and still had no son. They had not yet seen the

¹⁹ John 15:5

fulfillment of God's promise to them; but with the addition of one little letter – that represents God – it changed their entire destiny.

Even Yeshua said that by ourselves we can do nothing. But with God all things are possible.²⁰ Even if we are getting up there in years, it is not too late! When God adds Himself to our name, nothing can stop us from fulfilling our destiny. Halleluyah!

This letter hey, also changes a word in Hebrew from masculine to feminine gender. I notice that Sarai was unable to conceive, but when God added his feminine, mothering nature to hers, she became Sarah, and conceived a child. Her natural fertility was restored and her barrenness healed when God's nature transformed her. Our barrenness may also be healed and our natural fertility restored through our union with God as El Shaddai – nurturing mother.²¹

CIRCUMCISION – SIGN OF THE COVENANT

God re-affirms His eternal covenant with Abraham and again promises the Land to his descendants.²² He repeats this promise so many times in these chapters that it is difficult to understand how so many people miss it or misunderstand the covenant. The land of Israel is an everlasting possession of the people of Israel.

“My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.” (Genesis 17:13)

The sign of the Abrahamic Covenant (Ot Habrit) is the circumcision of the foreskin of every male child on the eighth day of its life. This is a permanent sign (ot אֶזְרָת) of God's promise to Abraham, just as the rainbow remains as a sign (ot אֶזְרָת) of God's covenant with mankind which he made to Noah.



Abraham Took Ishmael with All the Males Born in His House and Circumcised Them (illustration from the 1728 *Figures de la Bible*)

I recently heard someone joke, “I always wondered about Abraham, when God told him what the sign of the covenant would be.... did he think, “...but Noah got a rainbow!”? ☺

The Hebrew word for covenant is ‘Brit’ בְּרִית and the term used for the circumcision is a ‘brit millah’ (millah means word). The brit millah (or ‘bris’) has been so important to the Jewish people over the centuries that many were willing to die or risk their son's death

²⁰ Matthew 19:26

²¹ See article [I will Change Your Name](http://www.voiceforisrael.net), on website: www.voiceforisrael.net

²² Genesis 17:7,8

rather than forsake this fulfilment of the covenant. The Maccabean martyrs died for it. The officers of King Antiochus put to death the mothers who initiated their children into the Covenant or they killed the child and hung it around the mother's neck as a warning to others (I Maccabees 1:61).²³

God considers anyone who does not perform the circumcision on their son as having broken covenant with Him and He would cut off this soul from his people. When Moses set off for Egypt to deliver the Israelites from slavery, God sought him along the way to kill him! ²⁴Why? Because he had neglected to circumcise his son, Gershom. Moses failed to fulfill this sign of the covenant and God would rather kill him than allow him to go to His people in direct violation of the covenant.

This 'sensitive issue' caused quarrels and division as more and more uncircumcised Gentiles came to faith in Yeshua. Finally, it was decided at the Jerusalem Council, that only the Mikvah (ritual water immersion) would be necessary for conversion to the Jewish Messiah and not physical circumcision.²⁵

Although some Gentiles may choose to be circumcised or circumcise their sons (as Paul circumcised Timothy), Paul clearly states:

“ If an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the Torah, then his uncircumcision will be counted as circumcision. And that he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not from men but from God.” (Romans 2:26-29)

HAFTORAH LECH LECHA: Hope & Strength for the Journey

The prophetic portion of Scripture for this week gives us hope that God is our faithful traveling companion on our journey through life.

Jacob complained that his way was hidden from God; it is the cry of invisibility.²⁶ Sometimes we may feel that we are doing so much, trying to be faithful, sacrificing and giving, and nobody even seems to care. No one notices let alone gives a word of thanks.

It is easy to think that even God doesn't see us. But this is simply not true. God sees everything we do and our reward is from Him. God is always with us; He has promised to never leave us or forsake us along the way. This is good news to every weary traveller who feels lost, alone, or abandoned - for we are never alone - even if it sometimes feels that way.

²⁴ Exodus 4:24-26

²⁵ Acts 15:7-11

²⁶ Isaiah 40:27-28

I like to think of it like my GPS in my car, which I purchased to help me find my way around the maze of the city of Jerusalem. Sometimes I go through these dark tunnels and I hear the GPS voice boom out, “GPS SIGNAL LOST!” But I don’t panic; I don’t despair. Why? Because I know that I’m coming out of this tunnel – it is only temporary. And as soon as I’m out, I’m going to see the light again and my GPS is going to function once more, giving me direction which way to go.

Sometimes we feel lost on our journey and cannot hear any direction or guidance from God. All seems dark and hopeless. But if we can remember that this is only temporary and say to ourselves, “*This too shall pass*”, we can press on to the end of the tunnel where the Light awaits us once again.

The Scriptures say that weeping endures for a night but joy comes in the morning.²⁷ Well, when does the morning start? At 12:00 A.M. - a very dark time; and yet we know with a certainty that the dawn is coming. So too, in the darkness, we can have hopeful assurance that the dawn is surely coming and we can keep walking one step at a time, with His Word as the lamp at our feet and the light to our path. (Psalms 119:105)

God promises that as we keep hoping in Him, He will give us strength for our journey: **“He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength.”** (Isaiah 40:29)

There are times when we feel so weak, so lacking in power and strength that we just can’t walk another step. But God has this amazing way of encouraging us so that we are refreshed with strength for the journey.

“But those who hope in the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles.²⁸ They shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31)

In some English translations it reads, “Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; but in Hebrew the word, **kaveh**, קוֹה is not ‘wait’ as much as it is HOPE.

Hope is so powerful to strengthen us and give us courage on the journey.



²⁷ Psalm 30:5

²⁸ The Hebrew word for eagle is ‘neshar’.

We simply cannot continue without hope. The Bible calls us to be *'Prisoners of Hope'*.
“Return to your fortress, you prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you.” (Zechariah 9:12)

I believe that God wants to renew hope in His people, to strengthen us for the journey with the knowledge that we are not alone; He is with us. And if God be for us, then who can be against us?²⁹

We shall mount up with wings like eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint. Notice we start out flying, then running and then walking. God will give us strength and power to soar like an eagle, but also to run the race, and then also just to walk out our day by day lives – strength and grace to do the simple, mundane things of life with peace and joy.

Over and over again, God assures us of His presence and that we need not fear the journey into the unknown - for He holds us by our hand and will never let us go.



“Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. Yes, I will help you I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)

²⁹ Romans 8:31

Lech Lecha Study Questions

1. Why do you think that Abram's father, Terah, settled in Haran rather than go all the way to Canaan? What does Haran represent to you? Have you ever wanted to settle there?
2. What is the meaning of 'aliyah'? What is the call of 'Lech Lecha' to each one of us?
3. Do you feel that you need to make a change or adjustment to move into the place of blessing? Share and discuss?
4. Have you ever been stuck in indecision? What is the problem with being double-minded? What helped you move forward decisively with faith and courage? Share and discuss.
5. How does the example of the Cohanim carrying the Ark of the Covenant into the Jordan River give us courage to take a step of faith even when we don't see the way through?
6. Share a personal testimony of a time when you stepped out in faith and God proved His faithfulness to guide and provide.
7. What one thing is absolutely necessary for us to receive God's blessing? What one thing will destroy that blessing or cause it to be withheld? What can we do about it?
8. How does blessing relate to 'knee' and 'pool of water'?
9. What promises did God make to Abram? How do Gentiles inherit these blessings?
10. Why is anti-Semitism anti-Biblical? How does God respond to those who curse Israel?
11. What are some Scriptures proving that God gave the land to Abraham (despite the fact that it was already inhabited)? Do you think that this promise is still relevant today?
12. Why did Abram agree to give Lot whatever section of the land he chose? How did Lot choose? What does this say to us about the choices we make?
13. Do you believe that God want us to live in poverty or that wealth and riches are evil? What one condition do we need to keep in order for material prosperity to be a blessing?
14. Do you tithe regularly? What promises does God make about giving the tithe to Him? What does God say will happen to those who do not give their tithe? Share and discuss.
15. What prophecy did God make about the descendants of Ishmael?
16. How did changing Abram and Sarai's names affect their destiny?
17. What is the significance of Brit Millah (circumcision)? Do you believe this command is relevant for non-Jewish followers of Yeshua today? Share and discuss.
18. How may we be assured that God is our ever present traveling companion along the journeys of life? Does this bring you comfort and confidence when setting out on a new or unfamiliar path? Discuss your current journey with the Lord. Is He calling you to 'go forth' in some way?

About the Author:

Hannah Nesher grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home and received her education in a religious Hebrew school in Canada. During a crisis pregnancy, she came to know Jesus (Yeshua) as her Messiah and Savior. She now lives in Israel with her children and grandchildren, teaching the Jewish roots of the Christian faith.

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