

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT LECH LECHA

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

LIFE'S CHALLENGES

From the moment we are born, to the day that G-d calls us, we are tested. In essence, everything is a test, and once we absorb this, it will become easier to bear the many challenges and trials of life. These tests come in many shapes and forms -- the way we relate to G-d, to our parents, our teachers, our peers, our neighbours, our co-workers, our colleagues, even to a clerk in a store, the waiter in a restaurant, or a fellow driver on the road, are all tests. These tests reflect the genuineness of our commitment, the depth of our faith and the measure of our character, and at the end of the day, we are marked "pass" or "fail."

Avraham's father was a priest of idols, yet at the age of three Avraham recognised Hashem, and he spent the rest of his life in servitude of the One G-d. He was tested ten times, and we find one of those tests at the end of last week's Parsha. He was told by the king Nimrod to bow before the idols, yet Avraham refused, and belittled Nimrod, stating that Hashem created the world. Nimrod threw Avraham into the fire, yet Avraham was miraculously saved. This episode in Avraham's life is related to us via the Midrash. The Torah only hints to this event by calling the name Ur Kasdim -- the furnace of Kasdim.

Why is it that the Torah did not go into detail?

Furthermore, in this week's Parsha we are told that Avraham is tested by Hashem to leave his birth place. Here the Torah goes into detail as to the exact test. Surely the previous test, in which Avraham had to give up his life, was much more severe. If so,

why did the Torah chose to hint at that episode, but when it came to the test of leaving his homeland, the Torah chose to elaborate?

Finally, Rashi learns from the words "Lech Lecha" that Hashem promised Avraham that it would be for his benefit to go to the land that He would show him. As the Pasuk itself says "I will make you into a great nation." If Hashem had in fact promised that Avraham's trip would not entail any loss to him but would be to his benefit, what was the challenge of the test?

According to the Ramban the tests are for the benefit of the individual being tested. By passing these tests, one has translated his potential in action, and has elevated himself to a spiritual level.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein zts'l states that the big difference between these tests is that the first one, where he was tested for his life, was an intellectual test, while the second test of leaving his homeland, was emotional. It was easy for Avraham to defend Hashem and monotheism in Uhr Kasdim, because it made complete sense on an intellectual level. On the other hand at the beginning of our Parsha, Avraham is being asked to do something that intellectually and logically he cannot understand. He is being asked to leave his old father and his home. This is an emotional test, and clearly harder for Avraham than the previous ones. Similarly, we find that when Avraham was tested by Hashem clearly at the Akeida, it was again a test of emotion and not intellect. Avraham had been preaching against the killing of human sacrifices, and here he was, being commanded to sacrifice his own son. The dilemma, and cross of intellect would bother him, and the test was to see, whether he would be able to



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18:29pm



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By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil



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Parshat Lech Lecha
By Rabbi David Baadani



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Honouring One's Wife
By Rabbi Yehonatan Salem



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By Rabbi Eli Mansour



KIDS ZONE
Quiz & Story

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overcome all emotion and intellect in the service of Hashem.

Rabbi Pinchas Horowitz (Hafla) offers a further insight. Although Avraham was promised reward, nevertheless when he actually fulfilled HaShem's will, he did so solely for the purpose of serving Hashem, and not for the reward. When the Pasuk tells us of Avraham's fulfilment of HaShem's command it says "Vayelech Avram Kaasher Diber Eilav Hashem." Avraham's journey was not made for his own benefit but rather to fulfil HaShem's commandment. Avraham was tested at this time as to the way that he fulfilled the command of Hashem.

We recite daily in Kriat Shma "You shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your

heart, with all your soul ('Nafshecha')" (Devarim 6:5). Chazal tell us "with all your soul - even if He takes your soul" (Brachot 61b). This explanation is fitting for times when one is required to give up his life in an effort to sanctify HaShem's Name. What about when a person does not need to give his life but can live? How then does he love Hashem "with all his soul ('Nefesh')"? The Rishonim (Rashi, Ramban, Sforno) interpret the Pasuk "Im Yesh Et NAFSHECHEM Likbor Et Meiti Milefanai (Bereishit 23:8), to mean "if it is truly YOUR WILL to bury my dead before me". The "Nefesh" is a person's will and desire. Loving Hashem "Bechol Nafshecha" implies with your entire will.

Avraham was the Father of our nation.

Rav Desler ztsh explains that everything he went through, prepared the path for future generations. The fact that Avraham was able to give up his life for Hashem, prepared the way for all those Tsadikim in the future generations to die Bekidush Hashem.

Even though we are surrounded by tests daily, we are taught to serve and love Hashem Bechol Nafshechem. Our service needs to lie within changing our will to coincide with His. Nullifying the will of the powerful Yetser Hara, which tries daily to bring us down.

Let us take heed from our Father Avraham, let us serve Hashem with reverence, and love, and may Hashem uphold the Blessing of Avraham – Veheyeh Beracha.

Shabbat Shalom



RABBI DAVID BAADANI
Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT LECH LECHA

אתו החוצה ויאמר הבט נא השמימה וספר הכוכבים... כה יהיה זרעך

G-d took him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars... "So shall your offspring be."

והאמין בה' ויחשבה לו צדקה

And he put his trust in ה', who reckoned it to his merit.

Our forefather Avraham stood up against the whole world and called out 'The L-rd is G-d'. He publicised Hashem's name amongst the people of his generation, and was thrown into the flaming furnace, he withstood all the trials experienced by G-d with complete faith and wholeheartedness.

And now, Avraham receives a promise from G-d Almighty, that he will be blessed with as many children as the stars in the sky and the sand of earth. At this stage Avraham is confident that the promise made to him by Hashem, will definitely be fulfilled. If so, we have to understand why did G-d consider Abraham's faith in the fulfilment of this promise to his merit?

Our Sages say that Avraham said to ה' הקב"ה: 'I looked at my astrological map, and according to the configuration of my constellations I am not fit to have a son'. Avraham, who was a great astrologer, saw that according to the configuration there was no way in the world that he would be fit to have a son. ויוצא אותו החוצה. G-d took him out of his tent and told him: לא מאיצטגנינות

שליך, step out, emerge from your astrology, let go and believe. Believe, not only in the natural world the way you see it, but also in what is beyond nature, the ability for everything to change, for the better.

There is an important message here for each and every one of the descendants of Avraham. Do not despair, do not accept the reality as it is, with the thought that there is no room for change. We need to Believe. Believe that we have the power to change through prayer, charity and good deeds. Believe that there is a possibility to go up above the stars and beyond nature. Believe. Your belief alone is considered by G-d as an act of charity and has an immense power to bring blessings and salvation.



RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

HONOURING ONE'S WIFE

When a famine broke out in the Land of Canaan and there was no food to eat, Avram Avinu took his household and

their belongings and went to stay in Egypt. After Pharaoh took Sarah Imenu for himself, thinking her to be Avram's sister, he returned her to Avram, her husband, showering them with many gifts. The verse (Lech Lecha 12:16) relates that a lot of livestock, cattle and

servants were given to Avram on account of Sarai – his wife. Our sages (Baba Metzia 59a) derive from this verse that all the wealth and bounty that a man receives is on account of the honour that he shows his wife. Avram, upon their arrival in

Egypt, honoured his wife greatly by treating her as the mainstay of their home, while belittling his own importance. As a result he was showered with riches. When a man honours his wife, acts respectfully towards her, and holds her in the highest esteem, this brings a blessing of parnassah in the home.

The Gemara (Yevamot 62b) states that a man should be more concerned for his wife's honour than for his own, since it is harder for a woman to suffer disgrace than for a man. This can be seen, for example, concerning the outlay that a man is required to make for his wife's clothing, which is more

than the outlay for his own. For a man to honour his wife's physical and emotional need is included in his duty to honour her, which in turn brings brachah to the home.

Besides a man's requirement to honour his wife's personal, emotional and financial needs, he must also respect the financial requirements to run the home smoothly. The Gemara writes that a person should be careful to provide sustenance in the home, as arguments evolve when there is a lack of means. A lack of "cash flow" may become a major cause of friction in the home, as this prevents the woman of the house from being able to run the

home smoothly. Since it is the man's role and responsibility to ensure the provision of sustenance in the home, if the financial situation is tight, he should make all the more effort to honour his wife and prevent her from feeling uncared for. He should swallow his pride, even at this time of potential conflict, and always make his wife feel good regarding her position in the home.

The more a person is committed to honouring his wife, in the full sense of the word, by providing all her needs, the more he will merit receiving parnassah.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

IS ONE REQUIRED TO MAKE A NEW BERACHA ON A MEZUZA THAT FELL OFF?

The question was recently asked regarding Hilchot Mezuza: If a person discovered that a Mezuza fell off his doorpost, must he recite a new Beracha when he reaffixes it? This would seemingly be analogous to the Halacha of a Tallit which inadvertently fell off a person's body. In such a case, the Shulhan Aruch (8:15) rules that he must make a new Beracha when he puts it back on, since the Misva has left him in the meantime. The Pitheh Teshuva (Yoreh Deah 289), as well as Rav Shlomo Kluger, the Aruch Hashulhan and Yismah Lev Yagen do, in fact, infer from this

Halacha that one would make a new Beracha on the Mezuza.

However, Hacham Ovadia argues that the case of Mezuza is not analogous to the case of the Tallit. In the case of the Tallit, once the Tallit has fallen off, there is no obligation to put it back on. The original Misva has been interrupted with a Heseh Ha'Daat. If one chooses to continue wearing it, it is a new Misva and therefore requires a new Beracha. On the other hand, the Mezuza is a constant obligation on the house, and reaffixing it is a continuation of the original Misva that does not require a new Beracha. Moreover, Hacham Ovadia cites Rabbenu Yonah who holds that even in the case of a Tallit that fell off a new Beracha is not required. Based on these two factors, he applies the principle of "Safek Berachot L'Hakel" to be lenient and not recite a

Beracha in a case of uncertainty. He originally presented this discussion in Yabia Omer YD 3:17, and then forty years later in Halichot Olam (Vol. 8 in the footnotes of p. 268).

Hacham Ovadia also discusses in which a person intentionally removed the Mezuza in order to replace its case. In such a case, no new Beracha is required, unless he kept the Mezuza off for a few hours, until he took his mind off of it, constituting a Heseh Ha'Daat.

Summary:

If a Mezuza fell off the door post, a new Beracha is not recited when reaffixing it. Similarly, if a person took off a Mezuza, in order to change its case, no Beracha is required when reaffixing it, unless he delayed reaffixing it for several hours and took his mind off of it.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Lech Lecha

Ten generations have passed since Noach. Man has descended spiritually. In the year 1948 from Creation, Avram is born. By observing the world, Avram comes to recognize G-D's existence, and thus merits G-D appearing to him. At the beginning of

this week's Torah portion, G-D tells Avram to leave his land, his relatives and his father's house and travel to an unknown land where G-D will make him into a great nation. Avram leaves, taking with him his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, their servants, and those whom they converted to faith in G-D. When

they reach the land of Canaan G-D appears to Avram and tells him that this is the land that He will give to his descendants.

A famine ensues and Avram is forced to relocate to Egypt to find food. Realizing that his wife's beauty could cause his death at the hand of the Egyptians, Avram asks her

to say that she is his sister. Sarai is taken to Pharaoh, but G-D afflicts Pharaoh and his court with severe plagues, and she is released unmolested. Avram returns to Eretz Yisrael (Canaan) with much wealth given to him by the Egyptians. During a quarrel over grazing rights between their shepherds, Avram decides to part ways with his nephew Lot. Lot chooses to live in the rich but corrupt city of Sodom in the fertile plain of the Jordan. A war breaks out between the kings of the region and Sodom is defeated. Lot is taken captive. Together with a handful of his converts, Avram

rescues Lot, miraculously overpowering vastly superior forces, but Avram demurs at accepting any of the spoils of the battle. In a prophetic covenant, G-D reveals to Avram that his offspring will be exiled to a strange land where they will be oppressed for 400 years, after which they will emerge with great wealth and return to Eretz Yisrael, their irrevocable inheritance. Sarai is barren and gives Hagar, her Egyptian handmaiden, to Avram in the hope that she will provide them with a child. Hagar becomes arrogant when she discovers that she is pregnant. Sarai deals harshly with her, and Hagar

flees. On the instruction of an angel, Hagar returns to Avram and gives birth to Yishmael. The weekly portion concludes with G-D commanding Avram to circumcise himself and his offspring throughout the generations as a Divine covenant. G-D changes Avram's name to Abraham, and Sarai's name to Sarah. Hashem promises Abraham a son, Yitzchak, despite Abraham being ninety-nine years old and Sarah ninety. On that day, Abraham circumcises himself, Yishmael and his entire household.

Rabbi Sinclair, Seasonsofthemoon.com

KIDS zone? QUIZ TIME!

1 What benefits did Hashem promise Abraham if he would leave his home?

12:1 - He would become a great nation, his excellence would be known to the world, and he would be blessed with wealth.

2 What were the Canaanites doing in the Land of Canaan when Abraham arrived?

12:6 - They were in the process of conquering the land from the descendants of Shem.

3 What two results did Abraham hope to achieve by saying that Sarah was his sister?

12:13 - That the Egyptians would not kill him, and would give him presents.

4 Who was Amrafel and why was he called that?

14:1 - Amrafel was Nimrod. He said (amar) to Abraham to fall (fel) into the fiery furnace.

5 How did Hashem fulfill His promise that Abraham would be buried in "a good old age?"

15:15 - Abraham lived to see his son Yishmael repent and become righteous, and died before his grandson Esau became wicked.



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