

# לך-לך

## Lech Lecha

Genesis 12:1-17:27

*Haftarah: Isaiah 40:27-41:16*

Now Adonai said to *Avram*, “Get yourself out *lech lecha* לך-לך of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father’s house, and go to the land that I will show you. Genesis 12:1

Our *Parasha* starts with a commandment from G-d to *Avraham* to leave his birth country, his roots, in order to live a new life and proclaim monotheism on earth. *Lech Lecha* means literally “go for yourself”. It implies a personal quest, a constant search, and *Avraham Halvri*, the Hebrew, “the one who stands on the other side” will have to cross the river and to separate himself from the rest of the world. Only a part of his life is revealed here, but will be critical for the history of Mankind:

It is the beginning of Jewish history; the birth of the Jewish people begins!

An old man with no children is going to become the holder of the divine Covenant, the first living stone of the divine plan of redemption. The life of this man will forever mark the destiny and vocation of Israel in the coming centuries. *Avraham* will carry the promises made to the Jewish people and to the nations who will join Israel in the worshipping of the Unique G-d, Creator of the heavens and the earth.

*Avraham* will be confronted by many tests, thereby paving the way for both his natural descendants and spiritual descendants of the nations.

Upon returning to Canaan after a famine, *Avraham* ends up in the middle of a battle (that might have been the First World War) opposing four kings against five. He will be the great victor.

This battle, which should be of no interest to start with, is in fact very significant. It is an image of the spiritual fight that started following the coming and the calling of *Avraham*. It is not by chance that *Lot*, *Avraham*’s nephew was taken as a hostage. In fact, the ancient texts of the

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*Sefer Bereshit*

Jewish literature like the *Midrash*<sup>1</sup> and the *Talmud*<sup>2</sup>, teach us that the four kings against which *Avraham* will fight are an image of the four empires (two are easily recognizable by their names) who will try to annihilate Israel:

When Amrafel was king of Shin'ar, Aryokh king of Elasar, K'dorla'omer  
King of 'Elam and Tid'al king of Goyim... Genesis 14:1

- *Amraphel*, king of *Shinar* would be *Nimrod*, king of Babylonia, *Avraham's* old enemy who fought against him before leaving Mesopotamia. This *Nimrod* as we have seen it in our previous *Parasha* was a great witch.

- *Arioch*, king of *Ellasar* would represent the kingdom of Greece.

- *Chedor-Laomer*, king of *Elam*, this is the Medo Persian empire,  
(See Daniel 8:2)

- *Tidal*, king of the nations, literally the *Goyim*; this Roman Empire destroyed the second Temple and sent the Jewish people into exile from whence they would start their return back, since the creation of the modern state of Israel in 1948.

Another indication of this spiritual battle is the mention of *Amalek* who was not yet alive at this time:

Next they turned back, came to 'Ein-Mishpat (which is the same as Kadesh), and defeated all the country of the 'Amaleki, and also the Emori, who lived in Hatzatzon-Tamar. Genesis 14:7

It is only later that the L-rd will clearly command the destruction of *Amalek*:

Adonai said to *Moshe*, "Write this in a book to be remembered, and tell it to *Yehoshua*: I will completely blot out any memory of 'Amalek from under heaven. Exodus 17:14

*Amalek* is the symbol of the one who opposes G-d since the beginning, always ready to fight G-d's people, and G-d Himself. We know his end:

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<sup>1</sup> Rabbinic commentary of the Bible using parables or tales to explain some facts

<sup>2</sup> Midrash Rabah – Bereshit 42 :2)

Then the one who embodies separation from Torah will be revealed, the one whom the Lord Yeshua will slay with the breath of his mouth {#Isa 11:4 Job 4:9} and destroy by the glory of his coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:8

The capture of Lot was purposeful; those kings were after one thing: touching *Avraham* through his family would awaken his Jewish solidarity and identity. It was the final aim: to drive the father of the Jewish nation and the father of all future believers into a war where he would be killed, in order to cancel the awesome promises of G-d and prevent the divine plan from being fulfilled:

Now Adonai said to *Avram*, "Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse anyone who curses you; and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed." Genesis 12:1-3

Today, this same spirit is trying to destroy *Avraham* together with his physical and spiritual descendants; however, G-d who is faithful to His covenant, gives us the final picture with the mysterious apparition of *Malkitzedek*, מֶלֶךְ-צֶדֶק, literally King of Justice to whom *Avraham* tithes, thereby acknowledging immediately, the divine nature of this apparition and the One to whom the royal priesthood belongs even before the Levitical order, *Yeshua HaMashiach*, the *Cohen Gadol* in chief, the High Priest:

This Malki-Tzedek, מֶלֶךְ-צֶדֶק king of Shalem, a cohen of God Ha'elyon, met *Avraham* on his way back from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him; also *Avraham* gave him a tenth of everything. {#Ge 14:17-20} Now first of all, by translation of his name, he is "king of righteousness"; and then he is also king of Shalem, which means "king of peace." There is no record of his father, mother, ancestry, birth or death; rather, like the Son of God, he continues as a cohen for all time.

Hebrews 7:1-3

*Avraham* shows the way by giving the tithe to the high priest of Jerusalem (*Shalem* being the original name of Jerusalem). Later, offerings

to the Temple will be brought to the city of the Great King and later still, at the messianic times, nations will come and worship before the King of kings.

There are many similarities between the Patriarch's life and the historical evolution of the people of Israel, as well as its spiritual vocation:

- The starving at Canaan
- Going down to Egypt
- The conquest of Canaan
- The conflict with *Yishmael*, forefather of Islam
- The reconciliation between *Yishmael* and *Yitzchak* at the burying of their common father...

However, before achieving those blessed peaceful times on earth, *Avraham* must experience deep anguish with the Covenant that was contracted with the G-d of Israel. It will be an anguish of exile, the facing of those *birds of prey* that would try repeatedly to attack Israel, and the anguish of persecution.

A preparation must be done through suffering and sanctification and *Avraham* is called to sanctification through circumcision, a symbol of G-d's mark on our lives:

In fact, he received circumcision as a sign, as a seal of the righteousness he had been credited with on the ground of the trust he had while he was still uncircumcised. This happened so that he could be the father of every uncircumcised person who trusts and thus has righteousness credited to him, and at the same time be the father of every circumcised person who not only has had a *brit milah*, but also follows in the footsteps of the trust which *Avraham avinu* had when he was still uncircumcised.

Romans 4:11-12

This *Parasha* ends with the story of *Yishmael*, the hard learning of faith in G-d. Today, Israel is still paying the price of this lack of faith. However, G-d in His faithfulness once again provides for the solution and sends the child of the promise, the spiritual heir and the guardian of the divine revelation, *Yitzchak*, who will tell us again of the *Mashiach*...

The *Haftarah* also tells us about this divine faithfulness in the tests and dangers, and of the irrevocable calling of *Avraham* and Israel.

But you, Israel, my servant; *Yaakov*, whom I have chosen, descendants of *Avraham* my friend, I have taken you from the ends of the earth, summoned you from its most distant parts and said to you, 'You are my servant' -- I have chosen you, not rejected you.

Don't be afraid, for I am with you; don't be distressed, for I am your God. I give you strength, I give you help, I support you with my victorious right hand. All those who were angry with you will be disgraced, put to shame; those who fought against you will be destroyed, brought to nothing. Isaiah 41:8-11



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