

NOVEMBER 6, 2019

Parashat Noah

Genesis 12:1-17:27

Taught By:

Hallel & Josh



SUMMARY

G!d tells *Avram* and *Sarai* (who will later be renamed *Avraham* and *Sarah* to reflect their new connections with G!d), to leave their home and to travel to a new land. G!d promises that in this new land *Avram* will become a big nation. *Avram*'s family will be blessed and they will be a blessing to others. *Avram* travels with *Sarai* and his nephew *Lot* from *Haran* to *K'naan*. There is not enough food in *K'naan*, which leads *Avram*, *Sarai*, and their household to move to Egypt. They eventually return to *K'naan*, much wealthier than when they left. *Lot* settles in *S'dom*.



Lech Lecha by Darius Gilmont

G!d later appears **again** to *Avram* and promises *Avram* that he will have many children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. G!d then instructs *Avram* in what he needs to do to confirm his own commitment--or covenant--to stay connected with G!d. *Sarai* tells *Avram* that he and the servant *Hagar* should have a child together since she and *Avram* have not been able to. *Hagar* becomes mother of *Avram*'s son, *Yishmael*.

After this G!d gives *Avram* and *Sarai* the names Avraham and Sarah--reflecting the new promise--or covenant--that *Avraham* and *Sarah* make to stay connected with G!d.

1) Just 2 verses before this week's *parasha* starts we read that *Avram's* father, *Terach* takes *Avram*, *Sarai*, *Lot*, and the family and leaves from *Ur*--the place where *Avram* was born--to settle in *Haran*. In the first verse we read that G'd told *Avram*:

לְךָ-לֶךְ מֵאֶרֶץךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ:

Go, yourself, from your land, and from your birthplace, and from your father's house to the land I will show you.

Isn't this a little repetitive? Couldn't G'd have just told *Avram* to leave? Why tell him to leave his land, his birthplace, AND his father's house?

JOSH: Maybe G'd is telling him to go out from his land--*Haran*, the place he lives now. G'd tells him to leave to leave his birthplace so that--when he leaves *Haran*--he doesn't go back to the place he was born and just left. And maybe G'd tells him to leave his father's house to emphasize that he is leaving his father to start something new.

HALLEL: Maybe G'd is telling him it is ok to leave and to stop thinking and worrying so much about his father. Even though he is already married, maybe this is a little like G'd sending him to college so he can start doing things for himself and thinking for himself. I think this might be G'd's way of telling him that he shouldn't rely on his parents anymore. He's going to be ok.

2) In the second verse we read that G'd tells *Avram*:

וְאָעֲשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָדוֹל וְאֲבָרְכְךָ וְאֶגְדַּלְהָ שְׁמִי וְהָיָה בְרָכָה

I will make you a large nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name large, and BE A BLESSING. What could it mean to be a blessing?

JOSH: I like Rashi's explanation that G'd is giving *Avram* the power to bless people—a power that only G'd had up to this point. I think that this might mean that G'd is giving *Avram* power to bless people the way that G'd blesses people--to be with people and pay attention to them and share something important about himself with people.

HALLEL: I also like Rashi's explanation. I imagine that G'd wanted to increase blessing in the world and saw in *Avram* an ability to see the good in others and to praise them for it. G'd saw that *Avram* could do good things with this ability and use it to increase blessing in the world.