

פרשת
לך לך
Parashat Lech Lecha

*Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-17:27, Isaiah 40:27-41:16
John 1:1-18*

Having Faith and being Faithful in Our Lives

לא וַיִּקַּח תֵּרַח, וַיֵּצֵאוּ אֶת-אַבְרָם בְּנוֹ וְאֶת-לוֹט בֶּן-הָרָן בְּן-בְּנוֹ וְאֵת שָׂרִי כַלְתּוֹ אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶבְרָם בְּנוֹ וַיֵּצֵאוּ אִתָּם מֵאוּר כַּשְׁדִּים לְלֶכֶת אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד-חָרָן וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם: לֵב *11:31 Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there. (NASB)* The interesting point here is this family, Terah and his son Abram, along with Lot the son of Haran, already had the initiative to move to Canaan prior to Parashat Lech Lecha. Did the Lord speak to Terah in a similar way He had spoken to Abram? *Radak on Bereshit / Genesis 11:31 Part 1* claims Abram was well respected and had told his father about the vision God had given him to move to the land of Canaan, and so they set out to do so. Rashi explains that the plural mode of the word וַיֵּצֵאוּ, refers to Terah and Abram, Lot and Sarai, Abram's wife, where Abram was secondary to the minor player, Terah. Nachmanides writes that Abram was a more distinguished person than his father and the other people journeying with them, and so the Torah employs the plural mode, *“they*

went with them,” seeing that, as the Torah writes, Terah had taken the initiative in emigrating. To the onlookers it appeared as if Abram had gone along with his father’s decision in the matter. The other members of the entourage continued to travel with Abram as their leader also after Abram had left his father behind in Haran. (*Bereshit / Genesis 12,4*) (*Tur HaAroch, Genesis 11:31 Part 1*) Did Terah come short of entering the land of Canaan because the Lord had not called him specifically? Based upon this text, Abram’s family had decided to leave Ur of the Caldeans and move to Canaan. What was the main reason? Did the region they lived become too pagan? Did those surrounding Terah and his family force them to move to another location due to their sin? We are not given these details, but we are told in Parashat Noach and then in Parashat Lech Lecha, the Lord had a plan for them to move to Canaan and called Abram to fulfill that journey. Abram had faith and he was faithful to do what the Lord commanded him to do.

It’s no secret the religious landscape in America “*has*” and “*is*” in the process of going through a major change due to the shift in the face of theologies being developed for the purpose of harmonizing biblical faith with modern culture. For example, fewer and fewer Americans are self-identifying as Christians, where more and more are identifying as the religiously unaffiliated or simply being “*spiritual.*” Many are walking away from the faith they grew up with, the faith of their parents, and are going through a major shift in their core beliefs in order to “*fit in.*” This I believe is the result of growing up with little to no teaching on how the scientific and sociological events of the world interact with the age-old Scriptures found in the Torah, the Prophets, the Writings (תנ"ך) and the Apostolic Writings. This has led to the feeling that the Scriptures are unconvincing uninspiring and irrelevant for today. This may be in part why certain theologies have been developed stating that the Tanach is not applicable today as opposed to the New Testament. Another example is found in the lack of the movement of the power of God in the life of a believer leading to the theology of dispensationalism. (The belief the gifts of the spirit have ceased.) Men tend to look more critically at the Scriptures developing theologies to harmonize God’s word with their beliefs, as opposed to being more critical about one’s own beliefs and relationship with God. The point is we should be actively examining our lives to bring their minds unto the

obedience of the faith (*Acts 6:7-7:1, Romans 15 and 16*). These modern times require us to dig deeper into the Scriptures, for the purpose of understanding what the Lord has for us. His Word is applicable for our lives even in these post modern times. Note in this weeks Torah portion, Parashat Lech Lecha, the significance of Abram being called out from his people and his family, to go to a new land, and to learn about the One True God, these things would have turned any man's theology upside down, especially that which Abram knew, polytheism in the land of Ur of the Caldeans. In Parashat Lech Lecha, (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-17:27*) the Lord God calls Abram to leave his land, to leave his father's house, and to leave his people (וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם) (לְךָ-לְךָ מֵאֲרָצְךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ) and go to a new land to become a nation of people, and to grow in their new found faith. These events are very significant and God's opening words to Abram provide for us a future expectation of His word being applicable (obligatory) for all peoples! God's Word being obligatory for all peoples is something not everyone is willing to accept because of the doctrines being taught in the church today. However, this is the future expectation that has been laid out for us in all of Scripture (i.e. *Isaiah 2*).

This week we are looking at the Scriptures from *Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-5*.

Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-5

12:1 Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 12:2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.' 12:4 So Abram went forth as the Lord had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 12:5 Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired

in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan. (NASB)

א וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמְלַךְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית
אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ: ב וְאָעֲשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְאַבְרָכָךָ
וְאֶגְדְּלָהּ שְׁמֶךָ וְהָיָה בְרָכָה: ג וְאַבְרָכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אֶאֱרָ
וְנִבְרָכוּ בְךָ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחֵת הָאֲדָמָה: ד וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר
אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיֵּלֶךְ אִתּוֹ לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן-חָמִשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים
שָׁנָה בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן: ה וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת-שָׂרִי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת-לוֹט
בֶּן-אָחִיו וְאֶת-כָּל-רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת-הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר-עָשׂוּ
בְּחָרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לְלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן:

The Lord has chosen a people unto Himself, a faithful people to lead the nations. This is the major premise that comes out of the text when the Lord promises to bless Abram to make him into a great and mighty nation (וְאָעֲשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל) stating that those who bless him the Lord will bless, and those who curse him the Lord will curse (וְאַבְרָכָה וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אֶאֱרָ). Note reading the Masoretic Text (MT), when the Lord called Abraham, He said in him all the families of the earth will be blessed (וְנִבְרָכוּ בְךָ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחֵת הָאֲדָמָה). It is interesting here in the Hebrew text, the word Ha'adamah (הָאֲדָמָה, *the ground*) is used to indicate that all of the families of the Earth will be blessed, and not just those who live in אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל (the land of Israel). The Scriptures say “*all of the families of the ground (הָאֲדָמָה)*” taking from the meaning that God created man from the dust of the earth (וַיֵּצֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-) (הָאָדָם עָפָר מִן-הָאֲדָמָה) in *Bereshit / Genesis 2:7*. The rabbis interpret this to say according to the Aramaic Targum (Onkelos), all the “*seed of the earth*” will be blessed (וַיִּתְּבַרְכוּ בְּדִילָךְ כָּל זֶרְעֵי אֶרֶץ). In the covenant that God is making with Abram, the Lord states a promise not only to Abram but also to his descendants (Israel), and to all the world (the non-Jewish peoples). The reason being, we were all created in the image of God! It is within these few verses of the Abrahamic Covenant (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-3*) that all other covenants find their basis. The Lord has chosen and is in the process of choosing a people

for Himself! What is the Significance of the Lord choosing a people unto Himself? According to the prophetic literature, the significance is for Israel to be a light unto all the nations (*Isaiah 2*).

Continuing to read the narrative in the Torah, the Mosaic covenant expands upon the Abrahamic covenant of the Promised Land (Israel) and establishes a dwelling place, the Tabernacle, where He (God) will make His name known. In the prophets, the Davidic covenant is related to the issue of prophet, priest, and king, and the New Covenant, in the Apostolic Writings, relates to the completion of the promise of God to bless all the families of the earth in His Messiah. Because of these things, there is a future expectation of the nations coming and worshiping before the Lord. If there is a future expectation of the nations coming and worshiping the Lord, the mechanism for such a thing happening is by entering into and becoming a part of God's Family. The Scriptures describe the Torah as being given to Israel and of Israel being a light unto the nations (gentiles). What does this look like with regard to those who were to have the Torah taken to them from a faithful people (Israel), a people who were called to lead the nations (*Isaiah 2*)?

In the prophetic literature, such as in the book of Isaiah, we read of the holy mountain of the Lord and of all the peoples going to Jerusalem to worship the Lord at Zion. The expectation is for all the people to give thanks and to praise the Lord God in heaven. In a similar way, the psalmist calls out for us to give thanks, by bringing to memory what the Lord has done. He states that the praise of the Lord and of His glory, are found in the memory of what He has done, זָכְרוּ נִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה מִפִּתּוֹ וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו-פִּי: ו זָרַע אַבְרָהָם עַבְדּוֹ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחִירָיו: ז הוּא *Remember His wonders which He has done, His marvels and the judgments uttered by His mouth, 105:6 O seed of Abraham, His servant, O sons of Jacob, His chosen ones! 105:7 He is the Lord our God; His judgments are in all the earth. (NASB)* Note again the psalmist's words stating that God's judgments are in "all" the earth suggesting all peoples are accountable before the Lord. According to Parashat Bereshit, this is because we were all created in God's image. The Torah continually speaks to us about the importance of remembering what the Lord has done for us.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:15

5:15 *'You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day. (NASB, וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וַיֹּצִיאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְזֵרַע נְטוּיָה עַל-כֵּן צִוָּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת:*

Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:2

8:2 *'You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. (NASB, ב וְזָכַרְתָּ אֶת-כָּל-הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הוֹלִיכָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ זֶה אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּמִדְבָּר לְמַעַן עֲנֹתָךְ לְנִסְתָּךְ לְדַעַת אֶת-אֲשֶׁר בְּלִבְךָ הִתְשַׁמֵּר מִצְוֹתוֹ [מִצְוֹתָיו] אִם-לֹא:*

Devarim / Deuteronomy 9:7

9:7 *'Remember, do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God to wrath in the wilderness; from the day that you left the land of Egypt until you arrived at this place, you have been rebellious against the Lord. (NASB, ז זְכֹר אֶל-תְּשֻׁכַּח אֶת אֲשֶׁר-הִקְצַפְתָּ אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּמִדְבָּר לְמִן-הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יָצֵאתָ | מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַד-בְּאֶפְסֹס עַד-הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה מִמְּרִים הָיִיתֶם עִם-יְהוָה:*

Note how remembering is connected to obedience to the command. If we forget the commands then our lives will not be pleasing to the Lord. The giving of the Holy Spirit of God was meant for the remembering, and empowering to overcome sin, just as Yeshua said, *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” (John 14:26) “And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy*

Spirit.” (*Mark 13:11*) Remembering all the Lord God of Israel has done for us is foundational for living our lives according to the Scriptures. For instance, we would have no power to forgive if we forgot what the Lord God has done for us. Remembering what the Lord has done in the past is vital for living by faith in the future. The Scriptures are filled with stories of God’s powerful activity in the past to spur us on to faith with a hopeful expectation of the Lord working in our lives in the future. It is for this reason we are told, from generation to generation, we are instructed to remember what the Lord has done. This is so from one generation to the next, we do not forget the love of our God! The Scriptures state the Lord does not forget saying, ח זָכַר לְעוֹלָם לָם בְּרִיתוֹ דְּבַר צְוָה לְאַלְפֵי דוֹר: ט אֲנִי שָׂרָה בְּרִית אֶת-אַבְרָהָם וְשָׁבוּעָתוֹ לְיִשְׁחָק: י וַיַּעֲמִידָהּ לְיַעֲקֹב לְחֵק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם: יא לֵאמֹר לְךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת-אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן לְעוֹלָם: *105:8 He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations, 105:9 The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac. 105:10 Then He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel as an everlasting covenant, 105:11 Saying, ‘To you I will give the land of Canaan As the portion of your inheritance,’ (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, ח דְּכִיר לְעֵלָם קִיּוּמִיָּה פִּתְגָם פְּקִיד לְאַלְפֵי דְרִין: ט דִּי גַזַּר עִם אַבְרָהָם וְקִיּוּמִיָּה לְיִשְׁחָק: י וְקִיּוּמִיָּה לְיַעֲקֹב לְגִזְרָא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל קִיּוּמִיָּה עִלָּם: יא לְמִימַר לְךָ אֶתֵּן לְךָ אֶתֵּן כְּנָעַן לְעוֹלָם: *105:8 He remembered his covenant forever; he commanded a word for a thousand generations. 105:9 That which he made with Abraham, and his covenant with Isaac. 105:10 And he established it for Jacob as a decree, for Israel as a perpetual covenant. 105:11 Saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan as the lot of your inheritance.” (EMC)* What this teaches us is that the Lord keeps His everlasting covenant and He remembers what He had done in the past, which effects the future. Note the Torah teaches us having direct contact with God does not necessarily have a lasting impact on people. For example, consider how the people run out, shortly after Sinai, to worship the Golden Calf. Their commitment to the Lord and to His word was more of a fleeting momentary thing, in the emotion of the moment they accepted God’s Mitzvot, but through the course of a few short days, a month, or more, they turned to do as they wanted and created and served a false god. Why do you think the people did

this, especially after having seen the great signs and wonders of God to deliver them from Egypt?

In the rabbinic literature, the rabbis compare Moshe and Ezra, saying Ezra was worthy of giving the Torah to Israel had Moses not preceded him (*Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 21b*). The comparison comes by reason of the people who returned from captivity in Babylon, and the parallel of the people coming from captivity in Egypt. Both sets of peoples did not have God's word, and so both presented themselves, one in Jerusalem under Ezra, and one before Sinai under Moshe. Both groups accepted the Torah as a way of life. The assembly of people in Jerusalem however seemed to make a whole-hearted commitment with God as compared to the people's acceptance of the Torah at Sinai. One major difference between the assembly in Jerusalem as compared to the one at Sinai is that, as Ezra read the Torah, there were men of learning, who knew Hebrew and Aramaic and who explained the Scriptures "*so that the people understand it*" (*Nehemiah 8:7-13*). An important thing to note is that having heard the word of God, the people rushed out afterwards to perform one of the commands they had just heard. The difference is that those who were in Jerusalem appear to be taking on the God's Word for themselves, making it their own, and integrating God's word into their lives. This was not what took place in the lives of the people at Sinai. Is this what is taking place in your life today? Remember, in the Torah there was the threat of death to those who would reject the Torah, and life to those who would accept it. Note that no covenant under Jewish law itself is valid if accepted under a threat. Therefore, it was by free-will the covenant was made with the people where in Ezra's case the people "*asked*" to have the law read to them, and the leaders helped the people to understand God's word, and went out to perform the command, meaning they sought to live God's word, to put it into practice (being faithful). Are we being taught this today? Is this (faithfulness) being emphasized in churches today?

The message of the Torah is for all mankind and the Lord desires that we seek Him in His words, to draw near, and to walk in His footsteps by living our lives for Him according to His word. The rabbis say that before the Lord gave the Torah to Israel, He had offered it to the other nations, but they refused it. In addition, there is a particular significance to the place the Torah was given to Israel, the Lord revealed it

in the “*extraterritorial desert*,” whereby contained in this act of giving Torah, He had simultaneously given His word in all the 70 languages, so that men of all nations would have a right to it. The rabbis teach a universalism of the Torah for all peoples, which is coupled to the teaching of the inseparability of Israel and the Torah. One rabbi held that the concept of Israel existed in God’s mind even before He created the Torah. Yet, were it not for her accepting the Torah, Israel would not be “*chosen*,” nor would she be different from all the idolatrous nations. Saadiah Gaon (a rationalist) expounded on these rabbinic teachings in a rationalist way stating that the ethical and religious-intellectual beliefs imparted by the Torah are all attainable by human reason. He held that the Torah is divisible into two parts, (i) commandments which, in addition to being revealed, are demanded by reason (*e.g., prohibitions of murder, fornication, theft, lying*), and (ii) commandments whose authority is revelation alone (*e.g., Sabbath and dietary laws*), but which generally are understandable in terms of some personal or social benefit attained by their performance. The rationalist opinion, which is also a modern approach in many ways to God’s word, is that the Shabbat and the Kashrut have no spiritual benefits to their performance. In the period between Saadiah Gaon and Maimonides, most Jewish writers who speculated on the nature of the Torah continued in this rationalist tradition. We can see today in the church, this rationalist approach is also employed on certain Scriptures, those that are believed to not apply as opposed to those that are believed to apply to life. I conclude this is the result of the church only teaching theology and doctrine, as opposed to actually living and teaching what is written in the Scriptures. Do you know the difference between teaching a theology or doctrine as opposed to teaching Scripture?

This is the manifestation of God’s power today, to work in our lives (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:7*) by the choosing of a people and the giving of God’s word leads to the repentant expectation for His people (Israel) and for the nations (goyim). The point of the Lord choosing a special people is what Abraham led by example, as described by Rashi on *Bereshit / genesis 12:5*. Rashi interprets Parashat Lech Lecha, to mean that Abraham ministered to men, and Sarah ministered to the women, regarding the Lord God Almighty. They made converts, speaking to men and women about the goodness of God and His ways, which

means they were convincing people to follow in God's foot steps. *Radak on Bereshit / Genesis 12:5 Part 3* also holds a similar interpretation. Radak states, the word עָשָׂו (Asav) from the root עָשָׂה (Asah) meaning he worked or labored, being successful in causing men to turn to monotheism from polytheism. Isn't it interesting how Radak states Abraham was an active evangelist? Abraham was actively seeking for men to join with him in worship, service, and obedience to God's way of life in righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth. This interpretation is also consistent with *Shney Luchot HaBrit, Vayikra Torah Ohr 20*:

Shney Luchot HaBrit, Vayikra, Torah Ohr 20

Our patriarch Abraham, inasmuch as he personified absolute faith in G'd, comprised within himself all the spiritual powers connected with the soul. The Torah testifies that while still in Charan he and Sarah "made" souls, created people who possessed spiritual values, i.e. a soul (Genesis 12:5).

Abraham was actively seeking to share his faith with others. Another commentary *Maaseh Nissim on Pesach Haggadah, Magid, The Four Sons 3:3*, also has a similar conclusion. The rabbis describe the function of faith in our lives. We are called to bring our faith to the nations, to share God's Word, His righteousness, His holiness, His justice, and His truth to all who will listen. The Lord has chosen a people unto Himself, a faithful people to lead the nations. This is the major premise that comes out of the text when the Lord promises to bless Abram and make him into a great and mighty nation (וְאָשְׂרָה לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל). If you are not sharing your faith with others, you are not functioning in the manner Abraham functioned in regard to his faith! This is a consistent theme throughout all of Scripture of love, repentance, obedience, and the proclamation of our faith.

The Jewish commentaries speaks of the Mitzvot and the word Asah (עָשָׂה) as being transformative, as it is related to Abraham and Sarah sharing their faith and bringing souls into the belief of the One True God. This is achieved by the telling and retelling of the stories from the Bible, of how the Lord loves us and sent His Messiah to save us from our sins. Is this not how the Torah directs us to the Messiah, through re-

pentance and turning from sin? In *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:1*, Moshe stated the following:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:1

4:1 “Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, so that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you.

(NASB, א וְעַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁמַע אֶל-הַחֻקִּים וְאֶל-הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים, אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְלַמֵּד אֶתְכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת לְמַעַן תַּחֲיוּ וּבִאתֶם וִירְשֶׁתֶם אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם נָתַן לָכֶם)

According to the words in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:1*, the people are to remember the extraordinary power of God to deliver them in both mercy and judgment towards the nation that come against the children of Abraham (*Note: those who bless him the Lord will bless, and those who curse him the Lord will curse, וַאֲבָרְכָה מְבָרְכֵיהַּ וּמְקַלְלֵיהַּ אָאָר*). Moshe calls upon the entire assembly to keep in memory what the Lord has done, and to take heed of the Mitzvot (commands) so that they may enter into the Promises and blessings of God. Notice how the people of God, their conduct is very important to receiving the promises of God. The Torah is designed such that by the mercy of God, we are given time to perform Teshuvah (repent) and to turn back to the way of the Lord, to be obedient to the laws of God, in the land they are promised and even in the land they are living in the diaspora, and only then will His people live peacefully, with joy and happiness. The divine statutes and judgments were created as a guide to live by, and our happiness is dependent upon these things.

The Torah is for all peoples, just as we find here in this week’s Torah portion in the Hebrew text on the word Ha’adamah (הָאָדָמָה, *the ground*) used to indicate that all of the families of the Earth or in the Aramaic (Targum Onkelos) which states all the “*seed of the earth*” will be blessed (וַיִּתְבָּרְכוּ כָּל בְּדֵי לָדָבָר כָּל זֶרְעֵי אַרְעָא). In the covenant that God is making with Abram, the Lord states a promise not only to Abram but also to his descendants (Israel), and to all the world (the non-Jewish peoples). In the Apostolic Writings, it is revealed in the Messiah Ye-

shua, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we are empowered in the happiness and peacefulness of God to overcome sin in our lives. The Torah is related to the worship and service of the Lord God of Israel, all of which are obligatory and the duty of all men to obey! Even the nations will receive recompense on both the individual and at the national level for the disobedience and their servitude to unrighteousness and injustice in this world. These concepts are consistent with those of the prophets, (*i.e., Hosea and Jeremiah*) that true faith rests upon the knowledge of God, where the people sinned because of their not understanding the heart of what the Lord God wants for their lives, and thus perishing for a lack of knowledge. (*Hosea 4:6*) Our existence depends upon whether we are striving for God's ways, as opposed to sinning and neglecting what the Lord wants for us. Are you living under the modern theology that says "*Ah Grace saves me, that is all I need!*"? The preservation of our lives and our identity as the people of God is dependent upon whether we place at the center of our lives the Lord God of Israel and His Messiah Yeshua and strive to live for the righteousness of God. (*Matthew 6:33*) Take note of what Yeshua said in *Matthew 6:33* '*But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (NASB)* What does it mean to seek first the Kingdom? The fact of the matter is Israel preserved her identity among the nations and survived the influences which overwhelmed the nations by her faith in the Lord and obedience to the Torah. The same may be said of us in this modern age and the peoples falling away from the truth of the Scriptures! The covenant that we have in Yeshua the Messiah establishes who we are in the Torah of God as the people and children of Faith! (*Romans 3:31*) Do you have faith? Do you live your faith by your faithfulness to the Lord God in heaven? These are very important questions that have a direct impact on your salvation!