

Parashat Lekh Lekha / פרשת לך לך

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What are you waiting for?

This Weeks Reading List:

Torah: Genesis 12:1-17:27

Haftarah: Isaiah 40:27-41:16

B'rit HaChadashah: Romans 4:1-25

Have you had a calling on your heart by God but are waiting on something, some kind of confirmation of what you should do? Have you prayed to the Lord asking and waiting on Him for a job, good grades, or something else and nothing is happening? Have you considered the reason nothing is happening is because you are “waiting?” In this week’s Parsha, Parashat Lekh Lekha, we find that God is looking for men and women of action. In the process of our allowing God to work in our lives, to guide and direct our paths (*Proverbs 3:6*) there is a certain initiative we have to take on our part to facilitate the process. Essentially, we need to put God in the driver’s seat of our life, but we also have to continue living, we can’t sit around and do nothing and expect a miracle.

God cannot drive a parked car.

In Parashat Lekh Lekha God calls Avraham Avinu to take drastic action. To get up, leave his home and the land that he had known all his life, and to move to an unknown land, amongst an unknown people to become a great nation through whom the entire world would be blessed.

Genesis 12:1-8

12:1 Now Hashem had said unto Avram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from the bais avicha, unto ha'aretz that I will show thee; 12:2 And I will make of thee a goy gadol (great nation), and I will bless thee, and make thy shem great; and thou shalt be a berakhah (blessing); 12:3 And I will bless the one blessing you, and curse him that curses you; and kol mishpochot haadamah shall be blessed through you. 12:4 So Avram departed as Hashem had told him; and Lot went with him; and Avram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Charan. 12:5 And Avram took Sarai his isha, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had amassed, and the nefesh that they had gotten in Charan; and they went forth to go into the land of Kena'an; and they arrived in the land! of Kena'an. 12:6 And Avram passed through the land unto the makom Shechem, unto Elon Moreh. And the Kena'ani was then in ha'aretz. 12:7 And Hashem appeared unto Avram, and said, Unto thy zera will I give ha'aretz

hazot: and there built he a Mizbe'ach unto Hashem, Who appeared unto him. 12:8 And he removed from there unto the harah mikedem Beit-El, and pitched his tent, having Beit-El on the west, and Ai on the east; and there he built a Mizbe'ach unto Hashem, and called upon the Shem of Hashem. (OJB)

Avraham is commanded to leave his homeland in Mesopotamia and travel to Eretz Canaan (*Genesis 12:1*). Avraham is performing “aliyah” (immigration to the land of Israel) and at the peak of his aliyah Avraham builds a mizbe’ach (altar) at Bet-El and calls upon the Name of God. (*Genesis 12:7-8*) After calling upon the name of God Avraham travels to Egypt (Mitzrayim) because of a famine (*Genesis 12:12:10-20*) where he encounters the Egyptian people, corruption and God cursed pharaoh for taking Avraham’s wife. Avraham subsequently returns back to Eretz Canaan. Upon returning to the land Avraham goes back to Bet-El and builds a mizbe’ach and calls upon the Name of God again. (*Genesis 13:1-4*) What is interesting to note in the days of God’s calling Avraham out from his people there were two major civilizations that were in existence (i) Egypt and (ii) Mesopotamia. The Land which God brought Avraham to is situated right in the center between these two major civilizations. The reason is God will make Avraham a great nation, and the children of Israel will bring God’s Name to mankind.

Then, after four hundred years of bondage in Mitzrayim (Egypt) God called his people, back to the land of Israel to make a place for Him, for the purpose of making His Name known among the nations. This concept is detailed in 2 Samuel chapter 7.

2Samuel 7:22-27

7:22 Wherefore Thou art great, Adonoi Hashem; for there is none like Thee, neither is there any Elohim but Thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 7:23 And what Goy echad in ha'aretz is like Thy people, even like Yisroel, whom Elohim went to redeem for an Am for Himself, and to make Him a Shem, and to do for Thee hagedullah (the great thing) and nora'ot, for Thy land, before Thy people, which Thou redeemedst to Thee from Mitzrayim, from the Goyim and their g-ds? 7:24 For Thou hast confirmed to Thyself Thy people Yisroel to be an Am unto Thee ad olam; and Thou, Hashem, art become their Elohim. 7:25 And now, Hashem Elohim, the davar (word, promise) that Thou hast spoken concerning Avdecha, and concerning his Bais, establish it ad olam, and do just as Thou hast said. 7:26 And let Thy Shem be magnified ad olam, saying, Hashem Tzivos is Elohim over Yisroel; and let the Bais of Avdecha Dovid be established before Thee. (OJB)

In order to make a place to proclaim God’s Name to the nations Israel needed establish a national religious center that was like no other on earth. God commanded Israel to do just that “ba’makom asher yivchar Hashem l’shakeyn Shmo sham” in sefer Devarim (book of Deuteronomy).

דברים 12:5

כִּי אִם־אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִכָּל־שְׂכֵמֵיכֶם
לְשׁוֹם אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שָׁם לְשִׁכְנוֹ תִדְרְשׁוּ וּבָאתָ שָׁמָּה: וְהִבַּאתֶם

דברים 12:11

והָיָה לָכֶם מִכָּל-אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מִסִּבִּיב וַיִּשְׁבְּתֶם-בְּטַח: וְהָיָה
הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בּוֹ לְשִׁבְן שְׁמוֹ שֵׁם שְׁמָה
תָּבִיאוּ אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מֵצוּה אֶתְכֶם עוֹלְתֵיכֶם וְזִבְחֵיכֶם
מֵעֲשֵׂרְתֵיכֶם וּתְרַמַּת יָדְכֶם וְכֹל מִבְּחַר נְדָרֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְרוּ
לַיהוָה: וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אַתֶּם וּבְנֵיכֶם וּבְנֹתֵיכֶם

The phrase “in the place God chooses for His Name to dwell,” is repeated many times and I believe this is a remez (רמז) pointing to God’s ultimate goal of (i) making His Name known to the world, and (ii) revealing His love and great salvation found in His Messiah Yeshua.. One famous messianic prophecy gives us some insight how God will draw all peoples to Himself found in Yeshayahu (Isaiah) chapter 2.

Isaiah 2:1-4

2:1 The Davar that Yeshayah ben Amotz saw concerning Yehudah and Yerushalayim. 2:2 And it shall come to pass in the acharit hayamim, that the Har Beis Hashem shall be established as the rosh of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all the Goyim shall flow unto it. 2:3 And amim rabbim (many peoples) shall come and say, Come ye, and let us go up to Har Hashem, to the Beis Elohei Ya'akov; and He will teach us of His Derakhim, and we will walk in His Orakhot; for out of Tziyon shall go forth the torah, and the Devar Hashem from Yerushalayim. 2:4 And He shall judge among the Goyim, and shall arbitrate for amim rabbim; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Goy shall not lift up cherev against Goy, neither shall they train for milchamah any more. (OJB)

Notice, this indicates that God’s Torah is for all peoples who would place their faith in the Living God! God has revealed to us that our purpose is one of submitting to His will and allowing him to guide and direct our lives. We see this in the messianic prophecy in Isaiah chapter 2, and also in Parashat Lekh Lekha. Avraham’s life was one which was directed by God, such as him getting up and moving his entire family to a new land amidst a people he did not know.

Avraham was a man of action!

This week’s passages present us with a picture of God’s desire for us to be obedient to his call. Ultimately, we see the culmination of this designed plan in the Messiah’s rescuing obedience and the weakness of humanity in the face of temptation for example. Yeshua demonstrated his full submission to the will of the Father as is shown in the garden of Gethsemane (*see Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; and Luke 22:39-46*). Yeshua said while praying “not my will but your will be done”: *"Avi, im yirtzeh Hashem, if you are willing, take this kos (cup) away from me. Nevertheless not the ratzon of me but r'tzonechah (thy will) be done."* in Luke 22:42. After the Garden prayer, Yeshua knew the soldiers had come to take him and when he was asked he freely identified himself.

Yeshua was more concerned for his disciples than for himself. When Peter tried to defend Yeshua he prohibited any kind of hostility or resistance and advocated full submission. While being questioned by Pontius Pilate he freely admitted to teaching in the temple, he did not reiterate his actions to avoid indictment. Yeshua was faced with the temptation of rejecting his saving purpose, which is to lay his life down upon the cross for our sins. Yeshua remained completely and absolutely obedient. On the other hand, Peter showed mixed loyalty. Peter at first took strong action and defense of Yeshua but later he denied him three times that he was a follower of Yeshua. Peter was faithful and loyal at one moment and then cowardly and a traitor the next. Faced with the temptation of denying Yeshua Peter was a complete failure.

In Parashat Lekh Lekha Avraham was faced with a decision, and he was a great success by taking his family and moving to Eretz Canaan according to God's command. However, when he moved to Egypt he was a failure, cowardly, and feared not relying upon God's provision to protect his own life, and the lives of those who are with him. Throughout the scriptures we find portraits of failure and success in the face of temptation. I honestly can identify with Peter because there are many times I myself have failed. Yet I praise God for the obedience Yeshua kept, to provide a rescue for me from my own failings. Yeshua is our high priest who symbolizes the high priest in the place God had made His Name known, in Israel. Yeshua as our high priest can sympathize with our weaknesses for he was also tempted like us.

In conclusion, there is a wonderful picture that is provided for us that contrasts our relationship with God and our obedience. Do we wait around for God to move or do we take action? I believe scripture is clear, we have to take action; we are men and women of faith by first stepping out in our faith and taking action. Start moving forward with what you know in your heart God is calling you to do and then allow God to take the driver's seat and take you where he wants you to be. So, what are you waiting for?

Well, are you waiting because you think you are worse than Peter? That your relationship with God has become so damaged that you couldn't possibly believe God would want to use you let alone guide and direct your path? No matter what you have done I believe God is seeking a renewed relationship with you today! I know everyone, and I mean everyone has had problems with relationships so it isn't something new when it comes to our having problems with our relationship with God. We have all said things, had hurt feelings, and encountered broken promises when it comes to relationships with friends and family. These relationships will never be the same and we cannot expect our relationship to return to what it was once previously. Not because we cannot forgive, but because we are growing. We finally come to realize the error of our ways, and try to make a change for better and to renew our relationship with those we love. In our relationship with God we are the ones breaking promises and hurting God's feelings. God however remains faithful to us and desires a renewed relationship with Him. The point is to recognize our failing, repenting, and asking God to forgive us, this is the way we take action. We step out in faith believing our sins are forgiven us because of the sacrifice made in God's Messiah Yeshua.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Please help me to be a man/woman of action like Avraham was a man of action. Please forgive me of the broken promises I have made through sin against you Lord. Please restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me to be a man/woman after your own heart. Help me to become everything you would have me to be for your glory. Help me to give you all the glory, the honor, and the praise in by honoring your Name in my life. I ask, and pray all these things in Yeshua's Name! Amen

Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah for ever and ever