

## **PARASHAT LECH LECHA** REACHING OUT TO OTHERS

The Torah goes straight from Noach to Avraham. We see the differences between Avraham and Noach. Noach is described as a “tzaddik tamim”, but not Avraham. At the end of Bereishit, it says that Noach’s father had high hopes for him. Lech Lecha tells you Avraham was the son of Terach, his brothers got married, had no kids. But it doesn’t tell you about Avraham, it just says what he did. There are no introductions. Noach didn’t help the world around him which is unlike Avraham. What’s the difference between Avraham and all the righteous people before him; Chanoch, Metushelach? They were all tzaddikim in fur while Avraham reached out to the whole world, he set the fire. It’s not just enough to be righteous yourself, you have to reach out to other people around you. People are needed to be like Avraham, there are plenty of Noachs around (kollel world/ charedim). No matter what you do for a living you have to reach out in some way. Protect the truth at the very least. What’s the difference between Avraham and Shem/Ever? When people were worshipping idols, Shem and Ever were afraid and only protested on the run. Why is Avraham the founder of the Jewish people and not Shem/Ever? Because he had Mesirat Nefesh, he totally didn’t care about his own skin. He was going to send out his message under any circumstances. There are many people, when it comes to their own skin and livelihood vs. G-d’s torah, they go for their own skin. They compromise because they care about their own skin more than G-d’s Torah. A shepard works for the owner, not for his flock.

The Torah doesn’t tell us history, it just tells us whats important for us. The Rambam says you know why it tells us these details? Because whatever happened to Avraham Avinu is going to happen to us. Whatever the Avot did, that gives us the strength to do it. If Avraham could bring people to Judaism, we have the strength to do it also. Lech Lecha/Vayera teaches us that life is difficult, especially for a torah-observant Jew. G-d tells Avraham to leave his house, go to Israel. But there is no food! So he goes to Egypt. He constantly has troubles. At the beginning of Parashat Vayera, the Jewish people come to Moshe and complain about Pharaoh so Moshe complains to Hashem. But Avraham doesn’t complain. Basically Bereishit is a book of suffering, this is what the Jewish Nation is all about. If you think you wont suffer in life, you’ll suffer even more. You have to acknowledge that it’s part of the plan. You have to act for Klal Yisrael. Spread the message. If you marry this girl, would it be good for Klal Yisrael or bad for Klal Yisrael? When the forefathers were “Oved Hashem”, they planted roots; they were living for their descendants. We do not live the same way. We question G-d all the time. We

live for ourselves and not our descendants. We have to be willing to be “Moser Nefesh” for G-d and other people.

The first thing G-d tells Abraham “get out of your land, the place you were born, your fathers house.” Why doesn’t the Torah tell the story of Avraham and the furnace? Because it is not something we can learn from, we can’t do the same thing. “**Me-artzecha**”-from you friends, leave them. **Everybody** worshipped idols, Avraham got up and spoke out and they thought he was nuts. We have to script our own lives, we can’t let others scrip them for us. “**Mi-moladtecha**”-the way you were born. Don’t let you biochemical part control you, don’t let your instincts control you., you can control it. “**Mi-beit Avicha**”-the place you were raised. Don’t believe everything you were taught. Script your own life, you can take control. Find yourself by leaving your friends, the way you were born and your educators to the land that I will show you. G-d doesn’t say which land. People don’t know where life will take them. They just follow G-d. Hashem tells Avraham it will all be good only in the future. Avraham follows G-d to an unknown land and doesn’t even complain about it.

The Chofetz Chaim says on the 10 tests. That by Avraham following G-d blindly, it put the power for all Jews to come to Israel. Because the reality is that there is no place better than Israel for a Jew to spiritually grow. That doesn’t mean that its all going to be great though. First thing that happened was that there was a famine. There is no hashgacha for a Jew like there is in Israel. G-d is always watching Eretz Yisrael. The root of everyone’s neshama is here. Even apikorsim nowadays will protect you. It doesn’t talk about Avraham because if you want to be someone who is part of the chain, you don’t try to make a name for yourself. Most people are in it for themselves. (1) Get down to work. (2) Avraham and Eretz Yisrael both cannot be captured by words; they defy discription, they are just too great. Lot had Mesirat Nefesh for guests just from being around Avraham.

Don’t sell yourself short. You can live a more meaningful life. This is the year to think, while you still have the example of Avraham in front of you. There is no time to think in YU. Make you decisions now. Open up a chumash and siddur. Apply