



PARASHAT
LEKH L'KHA
לך-לך

Genesis 12:1-17:27

Note to the adult teacher: It will be necessary for you to give the scriptural context and background for each of the points listed below.

Great Discoveries In This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

- 12:1 Elohim Calls Abraham to Leave Ur and Come to Canaan
- 12:10 Abraham and Sarah Seek Famine Relief in Egypt
- 13:1 The Return to Canaan and Abraham and Lot Part Company
- 13:14 YHVH Promises Abraham Land and Descendants
- 14:1 The War of the Eastern Kings
- 14:8 Sodom Is Defeated and Lot Is Taken Captive
- 14:13 Abraham Rescues Lot, Refuses Honors and Pays Homage to Melchizedek
- 15:1 Elohim Reassures Abraham and Promises Him a Son
- 15:9 The Abrahamic Covenant Is Made
- 15:13 Prophecy of the Egyptian Exile and Redemption
- 15:17 Ratification of the Abrahamic Covenant
- 16:1 Hagar and Ishmael
- 17:1 YHVH Renews the Covenant With Abraham and Gives Abraham and Sarah New Names
- 17:9 Circumcision: the Sign of the Covenant
- 17:15 YHVH Promises a Son to Sarah

Exploring This Week's Parashah:

1 YHVH Seeks a Man Who Will Walk With Him

Adam and Eve walked with YHVH as friends until they sinned. Their sin cut them off from YHVH. What a sad situation that was!

Abel, Adam and Eve's son, tried to follow YHVH. This made YHVH happy. But Cain, Abel's wicked brother, killed him. YHVH had to find someone else who would walk with and love him.

Enoch was the next man that was righteous, and then after that it was Noah. The whole rest of the world was evil, sinful and hated YHVH except for Noah and his family.

YHVH wants the whole world to love him and to be his spiritual children, but this is not possible if the world hates YHVH and continues to walk in sin and rebellion against him.

YHVH needed more than a man here and a man there who would love and serve him. He needed a whole nation of people who would love him. Maybe if there were enough people who wanted to walk with him and be like him there might be hope for the world. Maybe those people would tell others about YHVH and they would then tell others and so on until YHVH had a whole bunch of people who would become his children and friends.

You see, the Bible teaches us that YHVH Elohim is love. Everything he does is loving. He has to have someone to love. You and I can be that someone. But we have to choose to follow YHVH and to be like him. It is because of his love that he began looking for a man that would love him and trust him. This man would then teach his children to do the same thing, and those children would have children, and eventually that family would continue to grow into a nation of children who would love YHVH and walk with him spiritually. The man that YHVH chose to start this process was Abraham and the nation became known as the Children of Israel.

Let's now explore a little bit about the special relationship YHVH had with this wonderful man who is known as the father of the faithful.



2 YHVH and the Origin of Covenants

YHVH keeps his word; he cannot and will not lie. When he makes promises, he keeps them. He wants you and me to be like him. After all, he created you and me in his own likeness. Monkeys, dogs, whales and snails are not like YHVH. Only man is. YHVH has made many promises to men, and he is a keeper of the promises he makes.

Much of what man does is based on men making promises to each other and then keeping them. What would the world be like if men did not keep their promises? Some promises are spoken agreements that men make with each other. Other promises are put into writing. These are called by such names as agreements, contracts, covenants or treaties. For example, each president of the United States promises to follow the U.S. Constitution. If you testify in a court of law, you must promise to tell the truth. When people get married they make promises to each other. If you get a loan to buy a car or house or use a credit card, you promise to make payments to the bank each month. When you write a check, it is a promise that your bank will pay another person's bank the sum of money on the check. When you get a driver's license, you promise to follow the rules of the road. As a citizen of a country, it is expected that you will follow the laws of that country. These are just a few examples of promises that many of us make and have to keep every day.

The Bible records that YHVH was the first one to make agreements or covenants with men.



Men probably got the idea of making covenants from YHVH, and it was such a good idea that men have been doing it ever since.

Why are covenants or agreements so important? Promises and agreements help to keep law and order in society. What would the world be like without law and order? Laws and promises help to keep men from hurting, killing and stealing from each other. Agreements are based on the good word and honor of men. If men break their agreements and fail to keep their word, then they will get a bad reputation for being a liar, a cheat, dishonest and untrustworthy. They may even have to pay a fine or go to prison. It is a serious thing to make and then to keep promises and agreements!

Let's explore some of the covenants and promises YHVH made to men.

3 The Edenic and Adamic Covenants

YHVH made the first agreement with Adam. It had two parts. The first part we might call the Covenant of the Garden of Eden or Edenic Covenant. In it YHVH gives man instructions on what to do and what not to do, and makes certain promises to men. These are called the terms and conditions of a covenant.



- (a) Read Genesis 1:26-30 and 2:16-17. Make a list the terms and conditions of the Edenic Covenant.

The second part of the first covenant that YHVH made with Adam was called the Adamic Covenant.



- (b) Read Genesis 3:16-19. What are the terms and conditions of this covenant?

The Adamic Covenant is the one YHVH made AFTER man had sinned by eating from the Tree of Knowledge. In this covenant, YHVH tells man what will be the consequences or curses for his disobeying YHVH and eating from the forbidden tree. But in this covenant YHVH made a wonderful promise to man.



- (c) Read Genesis 3:15. Who is the Seed or offspring of the woman who would come and crush the head of the serpent (or Satan)? (Read I John 3:8; Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:1-3,10.)

4 The Noahic Covenant

Next, YHVH made an agreement with Noah called the Noahic Covenant. This was a covenant between Noah and all of his descendants including you and me.



- (d) Read Genesis 9:8-17. What are the terms and conditions of this covenant?

In the Noahic Covenant, man has reason to be assured of YHVH's love and grace in that he promises never to destroy the earth again by a flood. This covenant also gives men certain basic moral guidelines (laws determining the difference between right and wrong) that if followed will help insure that there will be peace on earth between men.

5 Abraham: A Special Man, A Special Covenant

Next, YHVH made an agreement or covenant with Abraham called the Abrahamic Covenant. In this covenant, YHVH promised Abraham the following things:

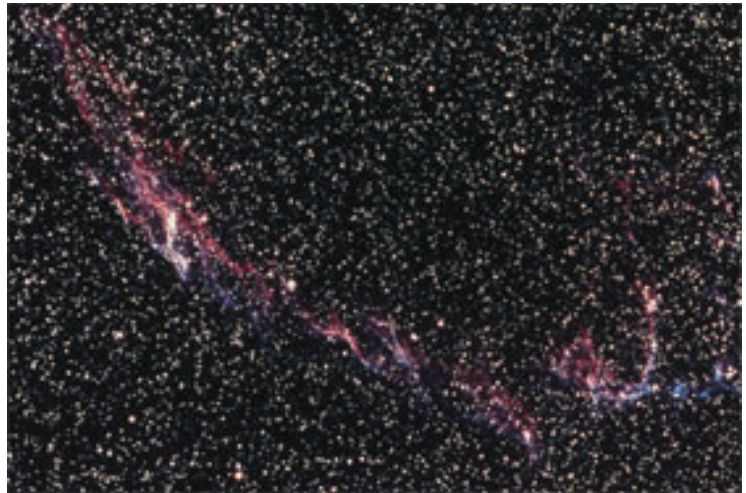
- YHVH will make of Abraham a great nation (Genesis 12:2).
- YHVH will bless Abraham (Genesis 12:2).
- YHVH will make Abraham's name great (Genesis 12:2).
- YHVH will make Abraham a blessing to others (Genesis 12:2; Galatians 3:14).
- YHVH will bless the ones who bless Abraham (Genesis 12:3).


- YHVH will curse those who curse Abraham (Genesis 12:3).
- YHVH will cause all families of the earth to be blessed through Abraham and his seed (the Messiah, Genesis 12:2; Galatians 3:16).
- Abraham and his descendants would receive a large piece of land in which to live (Genesis 12:7; 15:7,18; 17:8).
- Abraham's offspring would be multitudinous, as numerous as the stars (Genesis 15:5; 17:2,6).
- YHVH promises to be Abraham's shield and exceedingly great reward (Genesis 15:1).
- Nations will come from Abraham (Genesis 17:4,6).
- YHVH's covenant with Abraham will be an everlasting covenant (Genesis 17:7,8,19).
- YHVH promises to be their Elohim (Genesis 17:8).

In the Abrahamic Covenant, YHVH promised Abraham many things, but Abraham did not have to do anything to earn those blessings. All he had to do was to trust or have faith in YHVH. We see this in Genesis 15:2 where after YHVH made promises to Abraham the Bible records, "[Abraham] believed in YHVH and he [YHVH] counted it to him [Abraham] for righteousness sake." YHVH considered Abraham righteous simply because he had faith in YHVH. If one is righteous before YHVH, the Bible teaches that such person will have his name written in YHVH's Book of Life, meaning that YHVH will give him eternal life. Nowadays, we call that person "saved."

The covenant YHVH made with Abraham was a very important one. It showed us how to get on good terms with YHVH. It showed us how to be considered righteous before him. If one is righteous, then one is a friend of YHVH. If one is a friend of YHVH and walks faithfully with YHVH, then one will have a forever friendship with YHVH. This means that one will live forever.

The Apostle Paul speaks about the faith of Abraham in Romans chapter four. Here he shows us that the means by which YHVH offered salvation to Abraham was exactly how people afterwards would continue to be saved. This is why we refer to the Abrahamic Covenant as "the covenant of salvation" since it shows us how to be saved: by YHVH's grace, and through our faith in him.



 (e) Read Romans 4:1-25 and Ephesians 2:7-10.

