

Tell a story
Parsha Lech-Lecha
by Julie Zhuk on 2024-11-09

In this week's Parsha G-d tells Abraham that He will make from him a covenant with the Jewish people. He will do this starting with Abraham. First G-d tells Abraham to leave everything he has ever known behind. G-d tells Abraham to go forth to the land that He will show him. G-d will direct him where to go and most importantly G-d doesn't want Abraham to be afraid. G-d will be with him every step of the way. Like Moses was going to be in the future, Abraham in this week's Parsha was also afraid. G-d told Abraham that he could do the impossible.

The words in Hebrew, "Lech, Lecha," mean Go for You, Go within yourself. By the end of the Parsha, G-d has changed the name from Abram to Abraham. It's also in this Parsha revealed that Abraham and Sara didn't have children. Sara told Abraham to go be with Hagar. G-d promised the following year that Sara would have a child with Abraham. Abraham did as Sara asked him and had a child with Hagar and named him Ishmael.

Before Abraham and Sara left their home and went forth to where G-d sent them, Abraham had one last thing left to do. He knew that his father was worshiping idols and he wanted to put a stop to it. The hardest thing for him to do was to separate himself from his father. He realized how different he was from his father being a Jew and not wanting to worship idols. These idols that his father was worshiping, he believed them to be gods.

For Abraham to want to get rid of them, it was hardly a kind or polite thing to do.

The Parsha brings up Moses in the future Parsha how he tried politely asking Pharaoh to let the Jewish people go when he had enslaved the Jews.

We know now that Pharaoh had declined to do this, and it was because of this act that G-d had set forth ten plagues on the Egyptians and Pharaoh himself. The Egyptians thought they had power the power of endurance, and the Jews were going to resist the tyranny somehow. Those ten plagues that G-d set forth were the original politics of disruption of humanity's boldest wake-up call. There was a question in mind for the Egyptians since they were torturing the Jews, "You beat the Jews, in return, we are going to your water. You overwork the Jewish people? We are going to make sure your crops die. You won't pay the Jewish people for the work they have done? We will block your roads. You won't free the Jewish people, We will turn off your lights!

Since Pharaoh had enslaved the Jewish Nation and discriminated against the Jewish people, he was denying them their innate dignity. This was a profound theological affront to G-d saying business as usual just is not possible. When smashing his father's idols, Abraham taught us that we can't be polite when we are confronting anyone that is who uses their political or social power to separate us. We have to fight for our humanity and we can't concede the raw power of our indignation.