



אור בישראל

A LIGHT FROM WITHIN ISRAEL

פרשת לך לך

ח' חשון תשפ"ה 9.11.24

עם סיוון רהם-נאיר

1 This week's parsha is Lech Lecha, and it is the third parsha in the Torah, after Bereshit and Noah.

In Parshat Lech Lecha, Avraham our patriarch and Sarah our matriarch appear on the stage of history, and they haven't left it to this day... The father and mother of our nation, the most influential people in history, begin their journey which is also our journey.



3 Many events occur in this parsha: Avraham and Sarah make aliyah (immigrate) to the Land of Israel, go through many challenges and struggles, receive a divine promise to live in the land, and there is also one commandment in this parsha: brit milah (circumcision).

Avraham and Sarah come from a background of idol worship, but manage to go against the flow and start a new path. Avraham, as our sages tell us, began asking questions at the age of three: Who created the world? Why is everyone around me immersed in idol worship and statues? Why worship the sun and moon, and not the One who created them? And thus, question after question, Avraham reached the truth and became the first believer.

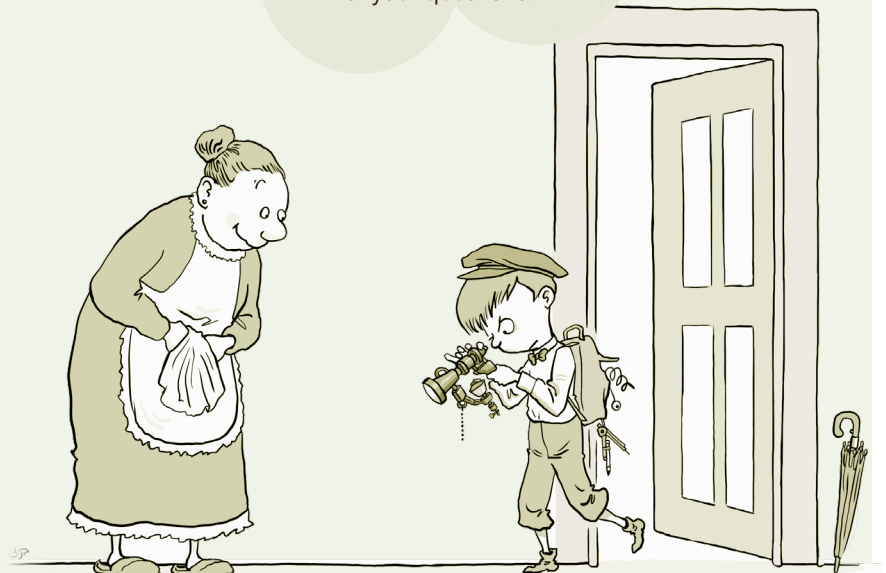


A STORY FOR SHABBAT

Isidore Rabi was an American Jewish scientist who was the recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physics. This is a prestigious prize awarded each year for outstanding research that helps humanity. Isidore was awarded this prize for his discoveries that contributed to the world of medicine. "It's all thanks to my mother," he told his students after receiving the Nobel Prize. "My parents were simple people who had immigrated from Europe and ran a small grocery store. Every day when my friends and I came home from school all the other mothers would ask their children the same question: "Nu, what did you learn at school today?" as if they had all been handed the same script. None of the children were eager to answer this question. But my mother would ask me an entirely different question, which encouraged me to think for myself and to be curious about the world around me. Every day, when I came home from school, my mother would ask: "Izzy, did you ask a good question today?"

Food for Thought

It was not only Avraham Avinu who asked questions and contemplated the world around him. After the Jews were freed from Egyptian slavery, the Torah tells us the important question that would be asked by future generations: "And when your children ask you, 'What is the meaning of this service to you?'" Or, "When in the time to come, a child of yours asks you, saying, what does this mean?" A question is not a problem. On the contrary, by asking a question, you are showing that you are interested, that something matters to you, that you want to learn. Seder night, the educational night of the year, opens with the famous "Ma Nishtana" ("How is this night different from all other nights?"), a series of questions that are asked by children. Never underestimate the importance of your questions.





FROM THE DIARY OF A CHEMED STUDENT

Hello! My name is Eitan Berger, and I am a 12th grader at Yeshivat Amit Amichai in Rehovot.

After serving as Chairman of the Student Council in 10th grade, my Rosh Yeshiva offered me a unique opportunity: to be the Vice-Rosh Yeshiva, joining the high school administration. This role allows me to head student leadership and involvement within the school.

During the war, I have been volunteering alongside other students in assisting the families of the reservists from our Yeshiva, by building their Sukkot, babysitting, and organizing meals for them. Last year, I helped the school transition from studying virtually to going back to classroom study. Thanks to this, our yeshiva maintained its high academic standards and achieved top results on the Bagrut exams. We even earned a national education award!

In my leadership roles, I focus on promoting a sense of belonging through leadership. As my Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Shimon Shushan says, "When students feel they can lead, they feel part of something greater."

I believe that if more students felt this way, - that they were "part of something greater" - and by focusing on excellence and partnership, the education system would improve. It would also better prepare students for life beyond high school.

At the start of this 5785-school year, I encourage school principals and educators to consider implementing a teacher-student joint administration system. Student councils and student leaders are eager to take responsibility, and together they can strengthen Israel's educational system.

SMALL MOMENTS OF A GREAT LEADER

The 3rd of Cheshvan, marks the 11th yearzeit of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef—a man of towering influence and deep humility. I had the privilege of covering Rav Ovadia for years as a news anchor, witnessing firsthand the personal moments behind his public persona. Amid the cheers of vast crowds, as he ascended the stage, few knew of the words he would whisper quietly to himself: "Ovadia, dust and ashes. Ovadia, dust and ashes." It was a grounding reminder to remain humble despite the fervent adulation around him.

With my own eyes, I saw him cry. "Millions of Jewish children in Israel and around the world don't know how to say Shema Yisrael," he would exclaim tearfully at those massive gatherings. It pained him deeply. He could never accept that so many felt distant from their heritage.

I've already forgotten the turbulent political headlines from those years. But what I'll never forget are those whispers and those tears.

In his memory.



Around the Shabbat Table

- Avraham went through a process of clarification and searching, leaving [his home] by God's command to the land of Israel where he built his home. Every Jewish person has a point of connection to the land of Israel. What do you think is special about Israel and what connects so many people to this land?
- Rabbi Ovadia Yosef was the Chief Rabbi of Israel, a very respected and important person. Despite the great honor bestowed upon him - he conducted himself with modesty throughout his life. What can we learn from this about dealing with honor and success?



דף הפרשה מוקדש לעילוי
נשמת החיילים הקדושים
מיכאל בן חמו ואייל טויטו הי"ד



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