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- **Russian Website:** <http://www.boruh.info/> This website is in Russian, many articles and the parasha are posted on it every week.



A weekly Journal of information and training published by the
World Jewish Adventist Friendship Center
Under the umbrella of the
General Conference —Office of Adventist Mission

Journal of Information and Training — Issue 705 — 12 November 2016 / 11 Cheshvan 5777



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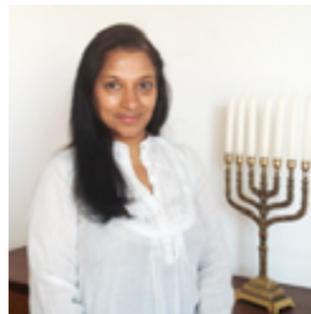
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Sabine Baris



Weekly
Jewish-Adventist
Journal
of Information

We pray every week for a topic related to the Jewish people. Because of Sukkoth, I suggest our partners to pray from November 13 to 19 for Eduardo Kahl and Cynthia Wainz, Leaders of the Jewish Adventist ministry In Buenos Aires, Argentina. Let's pray for these two leaders who are in charge of this ministry in the Capital of Argentina.



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NEWS

Jewish Ministry in Georgia and Tennessee (USA)

Richard Elofer received an invitation to give a training in Hamilton faith Community in Chattanooga (TN) and to present his ministry to two classes of World Religion Department at the Southern Adventist University (SAU). This training and teaching occurred from November 3 to 6. It was the first time that he could give a teaching at SAU, the two classes included all together 82 students. It was also a good opportunity to speak with the professors of these classes and with the dean of the school of religion.

The closest Jewish Adventist Congregation is located in Cleveland (GA), the leader of this congregation, Tina Munson came for the whole time to attend the training and to have some consultations with Richard Elofer, about Jewish ministry within the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

The leadership of the Conference is very supportive, Richard Elofer had some consultations with the leaders of the Conference about one year ago when he visited the Cleveland congregation,

and right now the leaders of the Conference encourage Tina Manson to extend her ministry to the whole territory of the Conference.

Friday evening was an interesting communion service, celebrated in the same way Yeshua celebrated his last supper of Passover, around a meal. While the members were eating, Richard Elofer stood up and shared with them the meaning of this communion service in the light of the last Passover Yeshua celebrated with his disciples.

On Shabbat morning, the Hamilton Community Faith church celebrated two worships, the first one at 10:00 and the second one at 11:30. This church is a contemporary church with modern music band and a very postmodern style of worship.

A sermon was presented by Richard Elofer at these two services where the work of the office of Adventist Mission was clearly introduced, showing that Jews need today to hear the message of Yeshua in order to be ready for his second coming.

On Shabbat afternoon a meeting was held in order to go further in this training, how to present the gospel to the Jewish people. A call has been made, asking people who would like to be engaged in Jewish ministry to stand up, and after a prayer for the success of this ministry, they were invited to speak with Tina Munson, and Lisa Reynolds, a Jewish member of this congregation, in order to exchange their names and emails for a successful collaboration for this ministry.



Parasha Overview LECH-LECHA

Ten generations have passed since Noah. Man has descended spiritually.

In the year 1948 from Creation (according to the Jewish tradition), Avram is born. By observing the world, Avram comes to recognize G-d's existence, and thus merits that G-d appear to him. At the beginning of this week's Torah portion G-d tells Avram to leave his land, his relatives and his father's house and travel to an unknown land where G-d will make him into a great nation.

Avram leaves, taking with him his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, their servants, and those whom they converted to faith in G-d. When they reach the land of Canaan, G-d appears to Avram and tells him that this is the land that He will give to his descendants. A famine ensues and Avram is forced to relocate to Egypt to find food. Realizing that his wife's beauty would cause his death at the hand of the Egyptians, Avram asks her to say that she is his sister. Sarai is taken to Pharaoh, but G-d afflicts Pharaoh and his court with severe plagues and she is released unmolested. Avram returns to Eretz Yisrael (Canaan) with much wealth given to him by the Egyptians. During a quarrel over graz-



PARASHA FOR THIS WEEK Lech-Lecha לך-לך Genesis 12:1-17:27

ABRAM'S FAMILY

The last verses of Parashat Noach are about Abram's family from Shem to Terach and the latter's family "Terach took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran, they settled there. The days of Terach were 205 years, and Terach died in Haran." (Genesis 11:31-32). According to Ramban (Nachmanides in 13th century), Terach's native place was Aram. Later he lived with his family in Ur Kasdim (Chaldea) where Haran and his son Lot as well as Sarai were born. From there he emigrated with the intention to move to Canaan. But he remains in Haran and dies there. Abram was in Haran when he received G-d's call.

ABRAM'S CALLING

God called Abram: "Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the

land that I will show you.'" (Genesis 12:1). Here G-d calls on Abram to give up his dearest ties, his homeland, his native place and his family. G-d's calling has a progressive intensification. He has to leave his nation and comfort, then the place where he was born, and even more. Even though the flood and the experience of the Babel Tower took place not so long ago, people became again idolaters and the country and people around Abram worshipped and served idols. The archeological excavations and discoveries made in Mesopotamia and the so called "Fertile Crescent" show us that the cities, and the civilization of Abram's time were very flourishing. However, all was done for the glory of their idols, and the aim of their lives was the greatness of human beings. There was no room for the G-d of creation, no room for the G-d of Noah who saved his family and the ancestors of everyone living on the earth. Abram was sad seeing that even in his family, who were the descendants of Shem, worshipping idols became the rule, even more, they produced idols and sold them in their ways from Ur Kasdim to Haran.

Abram understood his task, as to be a loud voice of opposition

again such a world, such a country, such a city, such a family. He became a minority, and what minority? The minority of one against everyone. To achieve his role he had to renounce to everything, he had to leave his comfort zone, the most fertile part of the known world, to be voluntary for a new adventure, to become a stranger, to walk alone to an unknown land make of rock..

He found a new meaning for his life: being devoted to G-d and through the fulfillment of His divine will in deep confidence in the divine leadership. (A changer) It is this courage and determination that have to motivate every true believer whenever it becomes necessary to walk "alone."

A BLESSING

The great task of G-d's people, created by G-d through Abram, is expressed in the words: "And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Genesis 12:2-3). While other nations live but for their own welfare



"Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:1-3)

and glory "let us make a name for ourselves," (Genesis 11:4), Abraham and his people shall know no greater task than to "become a blessing" to the world. Individuals and nations who bless Abraham, who recognize the inner greatness of his people and its G-d-willed aims in life and who are willing to learn from it, will receive continued blessings. Those who "curse" Abraham and his contribution to the world will learn by their own fate that they have forfeited their own future. "All families of the earth shall be blessed through you." G-d has created this nation, His people to lead mankind, by their example, on the road to ultimate blessing. For "the G-d of Abram" wants to help His mankind to regain Gan-Eden.

MOVING TOWARD CANAAN

Abram followed the divine command and moved away. Where to? G-d did not say to him where to go, in which direction to walk, this was left entirely to his own decision. It was clear that he had to leave his country, his native place, his place of residence, and his family. This means not to return to the West or to the

North, thus he took the direction of the South, the direction of Egypt and Canaan. G-d indicated to him later through a visible sign where he should settle down, "to the land that I shall show you" (Genesis 12:1). Abram remembered that Terach intended to emigrate to Canaan (Genesis 11:31), thus he chose the road to Canaan.

Why Canaan? The Torah states: "Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land." (Genesis 12:6). When Abram came to this land, he saw, the inhabitants, the Canaanites, and discovered that they were not better than the people of his own country, maybe worse, but beside the degenerated people of Canaan, he knew that there also lived, in the country, Melkitzedek, which is identified by the Jewish tradition as Shem himself. The meaning of this tradition is that the knowledge of G-d was somewhat preserved from the time of the flood and Noah who received a direct revelation from God to Abram's time.

According to this same tradition, the place where Noah, his sons, and Hebel offered their sacrifices to G-d was in

that very land, a place identified as the Moriah, where Abram will be asked to offer his son Isaac in Sacrifice (Genesis 22:1), and which will be called Bethel (house of G-d) by Jacob (Genesis 28:16-19), and where the Temple will be built, in the time of Abraham the land was called Salem, and will be named Jerusalem later in Jewish history. Thus this land, was closely tied to the memory of Abram's family (Abram was a descendant of Shem and Hebel), and to G-d's worship, for all these reasons Abram felt attracted to move there.

FROM SHEM TO ABRAM

The Jewish tradition has identified Melkitzedek with Shem, and in fact in the Bible we don't know anything about Melkitzedek, we don't know who are his parents, we don't know when he was born and when he died. As the book of Hebrews says it: "He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life," (Hebrews 7:3). This is believable, because if we look at the genealogy from Shem to Jacob, given by the book of Genesis we discover that Shem was 100 years old when he fathered Arpachshad (Genesis 11:10).

ing rights between their shepherds, Avram decides to part ways with his nephew Lot. Lot chooses to live in the rich but corrupt city of Sodom in the fertile plain of the Jordan. A war breaks out between the kings of the region and Sodom is defeated. Lot is taken captive.

Together with a handful of his converts, Avram rescues Lot, miraculously overpowering vastly superior forces, but Avram demurs from accepting any of the spoils of the battle. In a prophetic covenant, G-d reveals to Avram that his offspring will be exiled to a strange land where they will be oppressed for 400 years, after which they will emerge with great wealth and return to Eretz Yisrael, their irrevocable inheritance.

Sarai is barren and gives Hagar, her Egyptian handmaiden, to Avram in the hope that she will provide them with a child.

Hagar becomes arrogant when she discovers that she is pregnant. Sarai deals harshly with her, and Hagar flees.

On the instruction of an angel Hagar returns to Avram, and gives birth to Yishmael. The weekly portion concludes with G-d commanding Avram to circumcise himself and his offspring throughout the generations as a Divine covenant. G-d changes Avram's name to Avraham, and Sarai's name to Sarah. Hashem promises Avraham a son, despite Avraham being ninety-nine years old and Sarah ninety.

On that day, Avraham circumcises himself, Yishmael and all his household.

Haftarah Overview ISAIAH 40:27-41:16

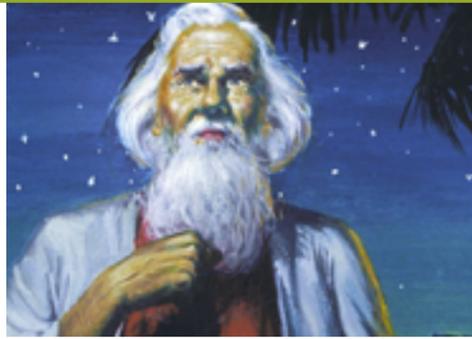
The book of Isaiah is a very beautiful text. This prophet was a real poet and our text of this week is a wonderful poem.

“Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.” (Isaiah 40:28).

The God of Israel is an everlasting God with an everlasting love for his children. He call Israel his servant, the chosen, and He called Abraham his friend.

Here we have the link between the Parasha and this Haftarah, both of them are about Abraham who left his home to respond to the calling of God.

“But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend; you whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, “You are my servant,



“And he brought him outside and said, ‘Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be’.” (Genesis 15:5)

It is said that Shem lived 500 years after he fathered Arpachshad, that means he died when he was 600 years old. Then Arpachshad was 35 when he fathered Shelah, Shem was 135 (Genesis 11:12). Shelah was 30 when he fathered Eber, Shem was 165 (Genesis 11:14). Eber was 34 when he fathered Peleg, Shem was 199 (Genesis 11:16). Peleg was 30 when he fathered Reu, Shem was 229 (Genesis 11:18). Reu was 32 when he fathered Serug, Shem was 261 (Genesis 11:20). Serug was 30 when he fathered Nahor, Shem was 291 (Genesis 11:22). Nahor was 29 when he fathered Terach, Shem was 320 (Genesis 11:24). Terach was 70 when he fathered Abram, Shem was 390 (Genesis 11:26). Abram was 100 when he fathered Isaac, Shem was 490 (Genesis 21:5). Isaac was 41 when he fathered Esau and Jacob, Shem was 531 (Genesis 25:20-21). Abraham was 175 when he died, that means Shem was 565 when Abraham died (Genesis 25:7). Shem died when Jacob was 69.

FAMINE IN CANAAN

Canaan is a very difficult country to cultivate and to draw from it food. One of the greatest challenge is rainfall, I lived in Israel for 15 years and I saw how the

rain is crucial for the welfare of Israel, there is no rain at all during all the Summer time (April to October), and if the rain is not coming from October to December, the situation of the country could become critical. Thus under some severe circumstances famine could happen, and in fact happened several times in the biblical time. As soon as Abram arrived in Canaan with his people, he encountered a famine: **“Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land.”** (Genesis 12:10). This land was presented by God as the Promised Land, later it will be presented to the people of Israel as **“a land flowing with milk and honey”** (Exodus 3:8). But now it is a test for Abram’s faith, a time of probation. Abram was sent by God to this country, he expected prosperity, and his first experience was famine and hunger. He just arrived in the Promised Land, that he had already to leave seeking a shelter, he found it in Mitzraim (Egypt).

A question is asked here, did he do the right thing, since he endangered Sarai’s safety? The Jewish tradition answers saying that Abram committed a “grave sin.” Let’s remember that the Bible is true about its heroes, it does not present them as infallible men or women, their mistakes, errors and weaknesses are clearly mentioned in order to help us not to follow their mistakes but only their good deeds and faith.

However, Abram is presented as a man of faith, but when this test arrived, he did not wait for a direct intervention from God, he acted right away in order to save his family and clan from death. He didn’t wait for G-d to feed him in some miraculous manner. From this manner of acting, the Jewish people have drawn a principle for their lives “don’t depend on miracles.” Of course, when miracle happens, as the Exodus and many others they are happy, and they comfort their faith, but they know that G-d can decide to be silent for a long time as it is demonstrated in the story of Job (Abram’s contemporary). Abraham knew the reputation of the Egyptian society, it was an immoral community, there beautiful women—and especially those who were married—were

always in danger of abduction and rape. That is why presenting Sarai as his sister one could hope to succeed by less drastic means. Thus his advice to his wife was: **“I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake.”** (Genesis 12:11-13). But before it was too late, G-d intervened. Abram left Egypt and established his clan in the place where G-d had appeared to him. There he lived for the great task of his life: To call upon men in the name of G-d (Genesis 13:4).

APOSTOLIC WRITINGS — HEBREWS 6:20-7:28

As it is said in the comment of the parasha, the Jewish people have identified Melkitzedek to Shem the son of Noah. At the first look at this tradition we could be surprised, but in fact the book of Genesis tells us that Shem lived 500 hundred years after the birth of his first son. Listing the descendants of Shem we discover that Shem died when Jacob was about 69 years old. Thus for the Jewish tradition Shem or Melkitzedek played an important role in the life of the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And this same tradition identified the place called Bethel with Salem, the city of Melkitzedek. Abraham met Melkitzedek and gave him the title of all his possessions (Genesis 14:20). Isaac went to his “theological school” or academy just after the Akedah on the Moriah, that is why after the traumatic experience of the Akedah, we read in the Bible that Isaac did not return with Abraham to Beer Sheva (Genesis 22:19), but stayed in Salem with Melkitzedek to study G-d’s revelation from this **“priest of God Most High.”** (Genesis 14:18). When Jacob, escaped from his brother Esav who wanted to kill him, he stopped in Bethel where he received G-d’s revelation of the ladder (Genesis 28:12-14), and stayed for a while in the academy of Melkitzedek receiving his teaching as Abraham and Isaac before him. If these traditions are correct, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were instructed about the creation, the story of Adam and Eve, the story of Noah and the flood directly by the son of Noah, Shem, thus the tradition of these stories were transmitted from generation to generation

in a very small number of generations. Thus if we accept and believe the chronology of the book of Genesis (and if I did not make any mistake in my reading of the chronology), Adam lived 930 years (Genesis 5:4), Lemech was 61 when Adam died, he was 182 when Noah was born, and Lemech died at the age of 777, that means 5 years before the flood, when Noah was 600 years old. Noah died when he was 950 years-old, 450 years after the birth of Shem, that means Noah died when Abraham was 60 years old (Genesis 5:6-23; 11:12-24), fifteen years before his calling by God (Genesis 12:4). All this means Adam could have met Lemech, Lemech could have met Noah and Noah could have met Abraham, and Shem, could met Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jacob was 15 when his grand-father Abraham died.

After this clarification about the chronology of the patriarchal time we discover that Melkitzedek is not introduced to us in the same way of other characters of Genesis are. The book of Genesis is a book of genealogy, each one has a genealogy, we know who is his father, how many years he lived and when he died, But Melkitzedek has no genealogy, we don’t know who is his father, his mother, if he is descendent of Cain or Seth... Why this particularity? The letter to the Hebrews gives us the answer. The author, supposedly Shaul was a believer in Yeshua, and even though Melkitzedek was a historical man, who really lived on the earth, was symbolically a metaphor of Yeshua the Mashiach, that is why it is said **“He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of**

days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.” (Hebrews 7:3). That means Melkitzedek, was made like the Mashiach.

Mashiach was in heaven, he came from heaven through a great miracle, the incarnation, and he is presented in the prophecy in this way **“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days (Mimei ‘Olam).”** (Micah 5:2). in Hebrew: *Mimei ‘Olam* (from everlasting days, or days of eternity). Mashiach is presented as eternal, like Melkitzedek in the letter to Hebrews **“without beginning of days or end of life.”** The birth and the death of Melkitzedek were not recorded in the book of Genesis, as if he never was born or never died. Then if the Mashiach was never born and will never die, he is also co-eternal with G-d. That is why when the angel gave the name of the Mashiach in the book of Isaiah he called him *Immanuel* which means **“G-d [is] with us”**. This similitude between them is also in the name “Melkitzedek” which means “king of Justice” and in his title; king of Salem, or king of Peace. Only G-d is the “King of Justice” and the “King of Peace” (*Melech-Hashalom*). The child who will be born as the Mashiach is called in Isaiah **“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Sar-Shalom)”** (Isaiah 9:6).

I have chosen you and not cast you off”; do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God;

I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand. (Isaiah 41:8-9)

God is our protection, there is nothing to fear when we are with the Almighty. Abraham left his home, and was protected during all his life even if he was travelling to an unknown country.

Fear not, for I am with you, Be not frightened, for I am your God; I strengthen you and I help you, I uphold you with My victorious right hand (Isaiah 41:10)

STORIES AND TRADITIONS

Inspirational Corner

❖ Through the Jewish nation it was God's purpose to impart rich blessings to all peoples. Through Israel the way was to be prepared for the diffusion of His light to the whole world. The nations of the world, through following corrupt practices, had lost the knowledge of God. Yet in His mercy God did not blot them out of existence. He purposed to give them opportunity for becoming acquainted with Him through His church. He designed that the principles revealed through His people should be the means of restoring the moral image of God in man. (COL 286)

PUT YOUR LIFE IN PERSPECTIVE

A drunk was sitting at the curbside, taking huge gulps from a bottle of wine. His clothes were filthy and disheveled, and chunks of grime lodged in his hair. "I don't understand you," a disgusted passerby berated the drunk. "You want to drown your life in a bottle? Fine. But why do you have to be such a slob? Why can't you at least shake the grime out of your hair?"

"If I had the sense to shake the grime from my hair," said the drunk with a twinkle in his eye, "I'd have the sense to go home and have a normal life."

In our own lives, we often get caught up in the mad rush of daily life. The only way to have a good life is to put our life in perspective. What is essential in your life. And every once in a while, we should take the time to step back and examine our lives with as much honesty as we can muster. At the very least, it will engender in us the habit of seeking the truth, a habit that can only bring us benefit and fulfillment.

A FINE FELLOW

Two friends were sitting together at the funeral of a promi-

nent community member. A long procession of distinguished personages and family members delivered warm eulogies, bringing tears to many eyes. After the funeral, the two friends walked home in a contemplative mood. "You know something," one of them commented. "He was a very fine fellow. I'm going to miss him."

"I know" said his friend "you're not supposed to speak ill of the dead, but you couldn't stand the guy. You always had something nasty to say about him."

"Yeah. But let's be honest. Whenever he was honored, I always wished I was receiving those honors. But now that he's passed on, I can think about him more objectively. And you know what? He really was a fine fellow!"

THIS IS FOR THE GOOD

A king in Africa was out hunting. His companion and gun bearer was a person whose attitude towards life is "It couldn't be better. This is for the good." The gun bearer erred in loading the king's rifle causing a misfire which blew off the king's thumb. When the gun bearer exclaimed, "This is for the good," the king replied, "No, it's not!" and had the gun bearer put in jail.

Close to a year later the king was once again hunting; this time he was captured by cannibals. They were ready to prepare the king for dinner when they noticed the missing thumb; being superstitious, the cannibals would not eat someone who was less than whole, so they let the king go!

Immediately, the king went to the jail to free his gun bearer. "You were right," said the king, "this was for the good! I am so terribly sorry that I sent you to jail." "No," replied the gun bearer, "being in jail was for the good, too."

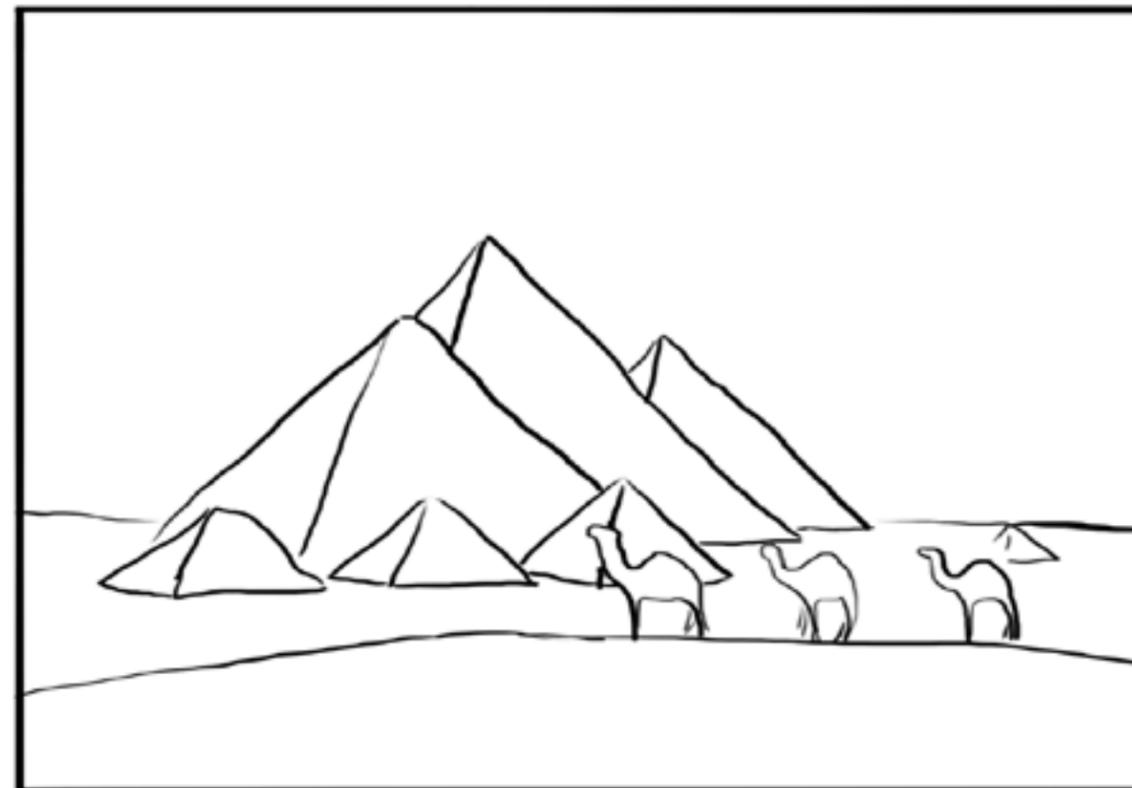
"What do you mean? Look how you have suffered," said the king. "Yes," responded the gun bearer, "but if I wasn't in jail ... I would have been with you!"

It is so very important to train oneself to look positively upon life's situations. From a Torah point of view, all that happens in life is ultimately for the good. The Almighty loves us and wants only the best for us. He gives us opportunities for spiritual and character growth every day.

So many times what appears as "bad" or "negative" ends up being a blessing. In the meanwhile, we have invested so much time and energy into worrying or regretting -- all for nothing and all to our detriment. It is wise to remember that worry is defined as interest paid in advance on a debt which often times never comes due.

KIDS PARASHA LECH-LECHA

לך-לך



Genesis 12:1- 17:27

"Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake." When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. And when the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels." (Genesis 12:10-16)

<http://www.bnai-tikkun.org.nz>

Inspirational Corner

❖ It was for the accomplishment of this purpose that God called Abraham out from his idolatrous kindred and bade him dwell in the land of Canaan. "I will make of thee a great nation," He said, "and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." (Genesis 12:2). (COL 286)