



Bereshit Idea Guide, K-3rd grade

Parashat Lech-Lecha

Stories in the <i>Parasha</i>	Jewish Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abram, Sarai and Lot leave their home to go to the land of Canaan• The Blessings• Abraham and Sarah meet God• God changes Abram's name to Abraham, and Sarai's name to Sarah• Covenant of Circumcision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Emunah</i> Faith and trust in God• <i>Brit</i> God's promises to Abraham

Ideas to Spark Learning

Idea #1: What's in a name?

Names are powerful. Sometimes just hearing a person's name can evoke different emotions. Try the following exercise with your students: Write a famous person's name on a card and hold it up for the class to read. Ask students to call out the first adjective, related to that person, which comes to mind. For example, Judah the Maccabee – “strong,” Moses – “Leader,” Abraham Lincoln – “honest,” Queen Esther – “brave.” Ask your students what message they would like to people to think of when their name is spoken. At this time in their life, what does their name stand for? What actions could they begin to do to strengthen the “positive” about their name?

Idea #2: Keter Shem Tov; The Crown of a Good Name

Make the interactive poster, “The Crown of a Good Name” (available at the MJLC). Children love having their picture up in the classroom and it will give the teacher many opportunities to use their students' Hebrew names. This poster can stay up in your room all year long and can be used to take attendance.



Idea # 3: Pretzel names

Make pretzel dough names. Write out each student's Hebrew name and give a portion of pre-made dough to each student to form his or her name. The dough name can be baked and or made more permanent with paint or shellac. (Adapted from **Teaching Jewish Life Cycles**, Berhman House.) Don't want to work with food products? As an alternative, spray shaving cream on the desks and have the students write their name out in foam.

Idea #4: Thought Questions

- *And you shall be a blessing.* What is a blessing? How might YOU be a blessing?
- Promises – What are they? What kinds of promises do we make to God?
- What does God promise us?
- In this *parasha* (Gen 12:1) we read The Call of Abram: “*The Eternal One said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your land, your birthplace, your father’s house, to the land that I will show you.’*” There is a traditional Jewish idea that there are no extra words in the Torah; every word is written for a reason. If there are no extra words in the Torah, why did God say from your

A Selection of Books for *Parashat Lech-Lecha*

Greengard, Alison. ***Lech Lecha: The Journey of Abraham and Sarah***. Albany, CA: EKS, 2004.

Introduces the story of Abraham and Sarah through Hebrew text and simple English translation opposite beautiful illustrations. A literal English translation and glossary are included. Other titles in this excellent series include ***In the Beginning: Bereshit, Noah's Ark, The Tower of Babel: Migdal Bavel, Rebecca, Jacob's Travels***, and ***Joseph the Dreamer***. (K-3)

Lamstein, Sarah Marwil. ***Letter on the Wind: A Chanukah Tale***. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, 2007.

Although set in the context of Chanukah, this is a lovely story about one man's trust in God. Like Abraham, Hayim – the poorest man in the village – firmly believes in the Almighty. When a drought threatens the community's ability to celebrate the holiday, Hayim solicits God's aid by writing a letter and sending it on the wind. His fellow villagers ridicule him for his foolishness, but Hayim's faith in God is rewarded in the end. Neil Waldman's lyrical ink and watercolor illustrations complement the text. (K-3)

Jules, Jacqueline. ***Abraham's Search for God***. Minneapolis, MN: Kar-Ben, 2007.

Tells how Abraham was dissatisfied with the religious practice of praying to idols and came to believe in God. (Grades 1-2)

Rosenfeld, Dina. ***A Little Boy Named Avram***. Brooklyn, NY: Hachai, 1989.

The famous tale from the Midrash of how our Abraham, at the early age of three, discovered the existence of the one, true God. (K-3)

Singer, Isaac Bashevis. ***The Wicked City***. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1972.

Retells the tale of the destruction of Sodom. (Grade 3)