



59 Broad Street · Freehold, New Jersey 07728
office@freeholdjc.org · (732) 462-0254 · www.freeholdjc.org

Parashah Lech Lecha 11 Marcheshvan 5783 – November 5, 2022

Avram is told (by G-d) to leave Charan and travel some 400 miles to Cana'an (modern-day Israel). After Avram and his entourage arrive in Cana'an they are forced to leave, due to a local famine. They then must travel to Egypt in search of food. As they travel to Egypt Avram makes plans to deal with the immoral society of Egypt. He must ask his wife, Sarai, to say she is his sister rather than his wife because he fears for his life. The Egyptians would kill him and take her. Avram and Sarai return to Cana'an.

This brief part of the Avram and Sarai story teaches us something about general society. People do not generally choose where they grow up. They live where their parents live, and grow up in the society of their environs. The majority of the time society influences a person's behavior. Avram and Sarai grew up in a place of idolatry (Ur Casdim). They left for Cana'an (another immoral place) because there was a famine. They left Cana'an to go to Egypt (another immoral place) for food. On their way to Egypt, they made a survival plan.

Amidst all this debauchery Avram and Sarai, not only survived but brought with them a moral agenda. What is the Torah teaching here? Although a righteous couple, like Avram and Sarai, would not be dragged down by the immorality of the society in which they lived, the influence of that society does have a subtle effect on them.

Pirkei Avot teaches us, "to distance ourselves from a bad neighbor and do not associate with an evil person". Simply put, make good decisions based upon the morality of the Torah and not on what general society is telling you.

We are always traveling, moving, and sojourning and we are influenced both positively and negatively. Travel like Avram and Sarai did and moral decisions will be easier to make.

Good Shabbos!

Rabbi Nathan W. Langer

