



TORAH 4 TEENS

BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



YAAKOV GREENBERG
GUSH ETZION CHAPTER
DIRECTOR

THE VAST LAND THAT CANNOT HOLD US BOTH

Just as quickly as Lot is introduced, Lot exits when Avraham asks him to leave after a strife between their herdsmen. Looking at the story, there seems to be a fixation on the land and its size. The story opens with “the land could not sustain them,” implying the land was small. This is further reinforced when the text points out that “the Canaanites and Perizzites were then dwelling in the land,” suggesting that the herdsmen’s strife was either connected to these nations or at least occurred in close enough proximity for them to hear about it. Again, the land is portrayed as small and heavily settled.

However, when Avraham tells Lot to leave, he says, “Is not the whole land before you?” — implying that the land was indeed large! The story concludes with Avraham dwelling in the land of Canaan while Lot settles in the “cities of the plain” near Sodom. Once again, the land appears vast, with enough space for two distinct regions.

The text uses the land to highlight a deeper issue in Avraham and Lot’s relationship. Lot begins as a dependent of Avraham — not just ideologically, but materially; Avraham provides him with a home and wealth. As Lot amasses his own wealth, he becomes independent of Avraham. It is this change in the relationship dynamic that causes the rift. It is irrelevant what

the herdsmen were actually arguing about; the main issue is that Lot now had his own herdsmen who no longer relied on Avraham.

The “land” at the beginning of the story is small and congested, symbolizing a relationship that has become stale and strained. Avraham is still the leader and provider, but Lot no longer sees himself as under his authority.

The failure to recognize the change in their dynamic made them both feel boxed into a land that “could not hold them both.” However, once Avraham realizes they need to relate differently, suddenly the land becomes vast and open. A new future opens before Avraham — one in which both can coexist, each in his own space.

Many times in life (and especially as teens), we see ourselves and our friends change we feel that relationships have become stale or toxic, but often it’s because we fail to acknowledge that we — or the other person — have changed. What we learn from Avraham and Lot is not to let ourselves be boxed in by “who we once were” or “who they used to be.” Instead, we should recognize that sometimes relationships need to evolve so both sides can grow — while still maintaining a connection with one another.



RIVKA TREISTER
EFRAI, 11TH GRADE

THE STRENGTH TO STEP FORWARD

In Parshat Lech Lecha, Hashem commands Avram to leave everything behind — his land, his birthplace, and his father’s house — and “go to the land that I will show you.” The pasuk says: לְךָ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלֶדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ

אל-הארץ אשר ארץך

At first glance, this seems like an act of blind trust. No path, no plan, no explanation — just “לך-לך”. But Rashi explains that this journey wasn’t only physical; it was for Avram’s benefit — for his personal growth. Sometimes the hardest steps in life are the ones that take us out of our comfort zones, but they’re usually the most important.

As teens, we face so many pivotal moments — social pressure, figuring out who we are, where we stand religiously, and what kind of people we want to be. The world today pushes us to fit in, but “לך-לך” reminds us that becoming who we truly are sometimes means walking a different path.

Avram becomes Avraham, the father of a nation, because he had the courage to go — even without knowing what lay ahead or where he was going. This teaches us that we don’t always need to have all the answers; if we’re moving toward growth and toward Hashem, that’s the direction that counts.

So the message of *Lech Lecha* for our generation is: Don’t be afraid to take that step. Your path might not look like everyone else’s — and that’s exactly the point. ■



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