



Aliyah

אני ♥ את
ישראל

Aims:

- To learn about the first mention of Aliyah in the Torah
- To learn about Avraham and his family's views on moving to Israel
- To think about why we would want to move to Israel

Shalom Roshim, Sganim V' Madrichim,

Shabbat Lech Lecha is traditionally one that Bnei Akiva makes the most of; we have the introduction of **Am Yisrael** as we learn about Avraham's actions and the introduction of **Eretz Yisrael** in the very first words of the Parasha, which we will focus on today. Now all we need is **Torat Yisrael**, but don't worry... that will have to wait a few parshiot...

From what I heard of the past week, Svivot were amazing. Parents have commented on the level of chuinuch that their children have been receiving which is AMAZING. Keep up the amazing work!

On Monday/ today some of the mazkirut have travelled up north to Birmingham to meet-up with the bogrim that are in uni there. This Shabbat coming is also traditionally Shabbat Hachshara, where those looking to do a year in Israel have the option to come on a shabbaton to learn more about their time in Israel with Bnei Akiva. We would like to thank Borehamwood shul for hosting us.

Reuben

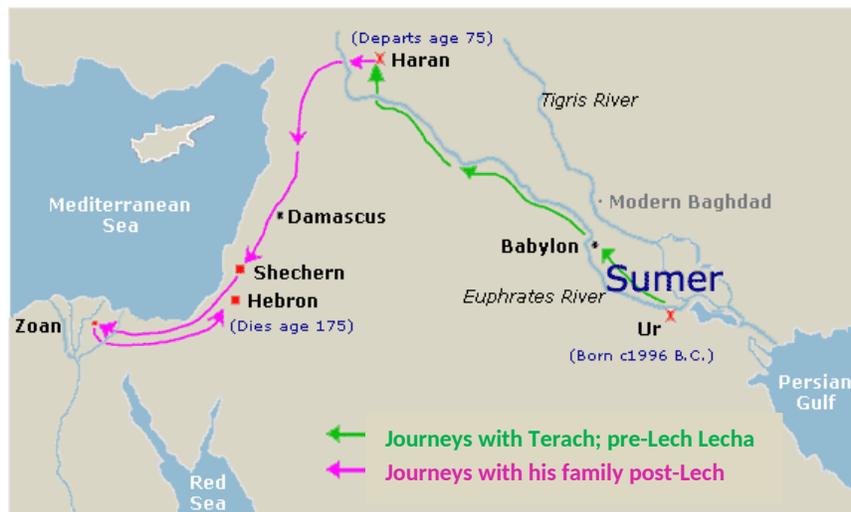
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: Who was the first person to make Aliyah?

And Terach took his son Avram, and Lot, the son of Haran, his grandson, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Avram; and they departed with them from Ur Kasdim to go towards the Land of Canaan, and they came to Charan and they settled there. And the days of Terach were 250 years and Terach died in Charan.

This quote is from Bereshit 11:31-2, the last two verses in Parashat Noach. We are accustomed to thinking that Avraham made Aliyah on his own, but actually the Torah teaches us that his whole family had already started making the journey across the desert. Just so you get an idea of the geography, take a look below:



Why on earth would Terach start to make Aliyah? What was there in Eretz Canaan? And why did he give up and just settle in Charan? Is it because he set up the Terach University...?



The first answer is that we don't know! The Torah decides not to tell us why he left his hometown and took his family with him.

However there are *midrashim* that talk of how his son, Avram, became a bit of a believer – going against the grain in the secular and even communist society of Bavel:

- Terach was an idol seller; Avram decided to destroy all the idols in the shop after realising they were all powerless.
- Avram started to believe in Hashem aged 48, the year of the building of the Tower of Bavel!
- Avram was put on trial by Nimrod, the King of Bavel, for his belief in Hashem. He was eventually made to walk through a burning furnace, but miraculously survived.



Was this Avraham's greatest idea?

It seems that Terach may have needed to leave his homeland due to persecution. His purpose was more to leave Bavel than arrive in Cana'an – hence why he gets sidetracked and settles in Charan.

Moving on to our Parasha, we see the famous opening line (and

And Hashem said to Avram 'go to yourself, from your land and from your birthplace and from your father's home to the land which I will show you'...And Avram went as Hashem had commanded him and Lot went with him; and Avram was 75 when he left Charan. And Avram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew and all the property which they had amassed and the soul they had made in Charan; and they went towards Eretz Cana'an and they came to Eretz Cana'an.
Bereshit 12:1, 4-5

What is different between the Torah's account of Terach's intended Aliyah and Avraham's actual Aliyah?

As you may have guessed, Avraham's relationship with the land of Israel was a **religious** one. Although there are many indications of this, notice the strange comment that they (presumably Avraham and Sarah) 'made a soul' in Charan.



Avram before his name change

Rashi understands this to mean that they taught people about the existence of one G-d and were successful educators – given that they also amassed wealth, why would they leave Charan? The Torah goes out of its way to tell us that despite having a religiously fulfilling life and enough money to live off, they still made Aliyah.



Now, let's return again to that same passage from Bereshit to look at a third character in depth...Lot. He is mentioned twice:

1

When the Torah says that Hashem commanded Avram to leave, Lot tags along.

2

When Avram actually leaves – the Torah mentions he takes Lot - again! But this time, Lot is more passive.

Isn't the Torah repeating itself? To investigate, let's skip a bit to when Lot and Avraham have the famous argument when they are settling down to live (Bereshit 13:7-11).

Avram: "Let there not be an argument between me and between you; and between my shepherds and between your shepherds, because we are brothers. Is not all the land before you? Separate now from before me – if the left, and I will go right or if the right, and I will go left."

*And Lot raised his eyes and he saw all of the plains of the Jordan **because it was all irrigated** – before Hashem destroyed Sodom and Amorah – like the garden of Hashem, like the land of Egypt, going towards Tzoar.*



Lot's reason for making Aliyah seems to be **agricultural**. He wants good pasture for his sheep and sees business opportunities in this fertile land. In other words, Lot was looking for personal financial gain.

Could this explain his double-mention in the passage detailing Avraham's Aliyah? Lot went along with the religious ideological reasons for moving to Israel to an extent, but when it came to the time to move, he may have thought twice. Therefore he needed to be 'taken with' like the others.¹



So far we have met three different members of the same family, who all had different reasons to move to Israel. But there is one person missing...

Terach had three sons – Avram, Nachor and Haran. Now, we've looked at Terach, Avram and Lot, who was Haran's son (Haran himself died when still in Ur Kasdim). But what about Nachor?

¹ We see this time and time again with Lot – he likes Avraham's way of life but doesn't quite emulate it – he satisfies himself with second best. For instance, like Avraham, he invites guests into his home in Sodom – yet when a rowdy mob comes to the door he is happy to give away his daughters "to do as you please" but as long as they left the guests alone!

Nachor's Diary

When the family made Aliyah, Nachor is noticeably absent. Nachor is seemingly the member of the family who did not want to make Aliyah, and was perfectly happy living in (what is now) Syria.



What happens to Nachor? Well, he disappears from the story but we do encounter his family when Avraham sends his servant to find a wife for Yitzchak from there in Parashat Chayei Sarah.

We have now seen the four major characters in Terach's family with four very different approaches to the Land of Israel. Terach sees a home from persecution, Avraham sees Aliyah as a religious commandment, Lot sees a business opportunity and Nachor doesn't see anything at all!

Points TO Ponder

- ✚ Which of these characters do you most identify with?
- ✚ What is your connection to the Land of Israel?
- ✚ Of the above characters, whose view does the Torah endorse?

I want to live in a country...

- where the seventh day of the week is *Shabbat*, and not Saturday;
- where your elected officials live on your block and pray in your synagogue;
- where Torah is taken so seriously;
- where a person's home is not a measure of his success;
- where my forefathers walked;
- where the street names are from the Bible or names of Torah sages;
- where the guy delivering water can tell me where the closest minyan may be found;
- where the land itself has *kedushah*;
- where the land itself is a gift from *HaShem*;
- where the spoken language is the language G-d used to create the world;
- where you don't have to explain to your employer why you need to leave early on Friday;
- where you can eat *chametz* on the "eighth day" of Passover;
- where the majority of events in Bible took place;
- where many of its soldiers pray;
- where people are passionate about politics;
- where you can feel *Shabbat* is coming;
- where Jews have died protecting the land;
- where one can be proud to be a Jew.

By Rabbi Zev Shandalov

Can you add your own lines?

Think about the different reasons why people make Aliyah today.

Returning back to the story, what does the Torah make of all this? Does it say whose approach was right?

The answer is yes and no! It doesn't explicitly say since Sefer Bereshit is a narrative and not a set of 'do's and don'ts'. But the Torah is hinting something absolutely massive by what it chooses to include.

Avraham becomes the founder of a great nation, which has survived for thousands of years. He had a super relationship with Hashem, wealth, descendants and one of the biggest ever legacies in world history. In short, he did OK for himself!

Contrast this to the other three. We hear nothing about Terach's life after deciding not to settle in Israel whilst Lot and Nachor are reduced to having secondary roles in the great Jewish story.²

The Torah is subtly asking us a big question: Do we want to be part of Jewish history? Or are we happy with being mere footnotes. It's not that Israel isn't a place to avoid persecution – we have seen in the last century that it is. It's not that Israel isn't a good place to develop agriculture and business – look at Israel's growing economy. These are certainly advantages to our holy land – but the main reason why we, as the Jewish people, have such a connection to the land is that Hashem wants us to be a great nation there. And that is something that, like Avraham, we as Bnei Akiva believe should be done, not just talked about.

² Examples of this include Lot's descendant Rut marrying Boaz, leading to King David and the eventual Mashiach with Nachor's family continuing to provide spouses for the Avot.



- Word Association: Say the word Aliyah and go round in the circle with everyone saying the first word that springs to mind.
- Simulate Terach's family in action by giving chanichim the four main characters and their views, and act out how the discussions would have gone, for example over a family meal.
- Make a TV documentary looking at why people make Aliyah, including funny reasons.
- Good old Family Fortunes. Links in to the idea of Terach's family and you can say 'we asked 100 Olim/BA-niks...' etc.
- Speak to people in Israel who have made Aliyah and get quotes from them on why they did it; put these around the room.
- Play Ali'wah'a slight twist on the traditional game of WAH!
-

And finally...

Over 60% of those who make Aliyah identify with Bnei Akiva and its ideals.

Bnei Akiva 5774: Dates for your Diary

Limmud: Come and learn in Chavrutot and hear some fantastic speakers:

Every Monday evening in the London Bayit- 7:30

Every Monday in the Manchester Bayit starting on the 7th October-
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Birmingham is starting up in “Standard Location” on Monday 7th-
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Extra stuff if you want:

65 Things I love about Israel (and I thought it'd be nice to share-Keren Hajioff- Bogeret of BAUK who went into Tzahal):

1. I love that there are Israeli flags absolutely everywhere. Just because we can.
2. I love that time I was in a youth club in Tel-Aviv during chanuka and they stopped the crazy partying in order to light the chanuka candles.
3. I love that it is considered impolite to NOT tell someone who you voted for.
4. I love that Dudi is a common name here.
5. I love that when I was crying once on the bus, the girl next to me put her arm around me.
6. I love that feeling when the siren goes off and everything stops. And you know that everyone is feeling the same thing.
7. I love that under a week of knowing someone, he invited me to his wedding.
8. I love that the taxi driver carried on telling me his story from the Yom Kippur war, we had already arrived at my destination.
9. I love that time I was on a packed bus with 10 passengers standing. When a seated passenger got off the bus, all the standing passengers were arguing who should sit down. Arguing that the other should sit. After nobody budged, the seat remained empty for the rest of the hour long journey.
10. I love that the above has happened to be more than once.
11. I love that woman from Beer Sheva, who stood in the streets giving out tea and biscuits during the operation pillar of defence.
12. I love being told "Chag Sameach" by the electronic sign on the front of the bus. 70 years ago, nobody would have been able to believe that we would have the technology or a homeland, in order to do so.
13. I love how people are dressed up every day for a week in order to celebrate the one day of purim.
14. I love watching the video of Sam Sank's parents surprising him at his beret ceremony (search "sam sank surprise" on youtube and you will understand).
15. I love that at the end of my ride in the taxi, the driver gave me a bracha to get married.
16. I love that I occasionally get phone calls in the army from my friends' parents, just to "see how things are going"
17. I love that last year during the Memorial ceremony for the fallen soldiers of Israel, I met a Holocaust survivor who spent the evening telling me his story and held my hand during the Hatikva.
18. I love that when a glass breaks in a restaurant, everyone, without fail, screams "mazel tov" and starts cheering.
19. I love that walking through the streets of Israel and reading the street names, is more of a history lesson than most history lessons I have had.
20. I love Mivtza Yonatan (The operation in Entebbe) ITS JUST THE MOST INCREDIBLE STORY EVER.
21. I love that while in a clothes shop with my friend, a fellow customer handed us her baby (which was 2 months old) while she tried on clothes.
22. I love getting the seat on the bus next to the middle door. Because as opposed to other seats on the bus, it has its own shade for the window and there isn't a chance for another passenger to pull the shade down and stop me from looking out of the window at our beautiful country.
23. I love my adopted family. I got an adopted family when I moved to Israel and they have just accepted me like a real daughter. It's amazing! When I lost my credit card, my adopted mum gave offered me hers, when I was crying during the hard times, my adopted dad knew exactly how to calm me down (he would sing me songs!). All because a family took me in out of the goodness of their hearts. Unbelievable.
24. I strangely love that people here complain so much about Israel. For people to complain so much about this country,

means that they have forgotten about how great of a miracle it is that we have it. Why do I love the fact that people have forgotten how great it is that Israel is ours? Because it means we are used to it. Why are people used to it? Because it has been ours for 65 years. That, is something that I am very happy about. So, the more people complain, the more I am reminded that Israel is ours.

25. I love that the most common form of graffiti in Israel is "Am Yisrael Chai"
26. I love that I know an Israeli family that went to a very fancy wedding that I too attended, and after an hour of being at the wedding, I saw them leaving. When asking them why they were leaving so early, they responded "there are no salatim, no humous, no tehina, we are hungry". I laughed, but they were being genuinely serious, they left before the main course!
27. I love that I got over fifteen (yes fifteen!) invitations from people for seder. Including; 2 taxi drivers, a stranger I met in a train station, old friends from the army I hadn't seen in years etc.
28. I love watching the chabad guys chasing men to put on teffilin. Succeeding. And then hugging them. The hugging them bit, is the bit that I love.
29. I love IDF soldiers. (there was no way that this wasn't going to one of my 65)
30. I love that Nimrod is a common name here.
31. I love that the guy in the shwarma shop saw me bopping my head to the music, came out from behind the counter, and started doing a yeminite dance. And then gave me a free bag of chips.
32. I love that when you land in Israel everyone on the plane cheers. And they really mean it.
33. I love that feeling when you get off the plane and you see everything is written in Hebrew, and you are reminded of the fact that we have a Jewish state.
34. I love that on Friday evenings, no matter where you are in Israel- in the field, in a secular community, anywhere at all.. you FEEL that it's Shabbat.
35. I love that on Friday afternoons you can already smell that it's Shabbat.
36. I love the girls that give out Shabbat candles on the streets, it's so nice of them!
37. I love that the other day, my bus driver pulled over in the middle of the journey and bought himself pretzels.
38. I love that a few days earlier, another bus driver announced at the beginning of his journey, that he didn't actually know where he was going and he would appreciate it if someone would come and sit next to him and direct him.
39. I love that the security guard in Azrielli mall, after looking at my picture on my army ID, felt comfortable enough to tell me that I used to be fat.
40. I love ELAL. During pillar of defense they allowed people to cancel their flights for free in order to stay and help the situation in Israel, which lost them millions of dollars. HOW NICE IS THAT.
41. I love while eating dinner in a restaurant with a friend, the table next to us brought us a slice of birthday cake.
42. I love that the guy from my phone company, after flirting with me over the phone, added me on facebook after we finished talking!!
43. I love that when flying back from New York to Israel, after introducing myself to the man sitting next to me and telling him I was a lone soldier- he instantly invited me for Shabbat. The plane hadn't even taken off!
44. I love that Israeli's say the word "achi" (brother) after approximately every 7 words in a sentence. Even if they are screaming at each other.
45. I love the taxi driver that felt comfortable enough to have an argument with his wife on loudspeaker.
46. I love that Israeli's call Daddy Long Legs - "Helicopters" (in a strong Israeli accent)
47. I love people in Israel regard their ages in halves up until their mid twenties. "Im 22 and a half", "I'm 24 and three eighths" (the example was made up)
48. I love how Israeli's refer to arabs as our "bnei dodim" (our cousins).
49. I love that when trying on a dress in a shop, one of the workers told me not to get it because it didn't look good.
50. I love those occasions where I am sitting on a bus or a train and someone is walking around giving out wafers or biscuits. It's a regular occurrence here.



51. I love that one morning, at 5:30am, while walking to my base, a guy on a bike cycling past me screamed “don’t yawn with your mouth open”.
52. I love that time I was driving with a friend and all the cars in the lane going in the opposite direction were flashing their lights as they drove by. I asked why they were all flashing their lights and my friend said, “its because they saw police ahead and they are warning me” apparently this is a common code in Israel!
53. I love that on a plane from London to Israel, an Israeli sitting next to me was holding a baby. The baby was crying for the majority of the journey but then it became cute for a bit. During its couple of minutes of being cute, I said to the woman next to me “your baby is so cute” and she said, “well actually it’s not mine, I saw a woman I know who has twins and I thought I’d help her out by holding one of them for the plane journey”.
54. I love that there are so many people riding their bikes and singing out loud. They don’t even get any weird looks, it’s completely acceptable here.
55. I love that people start saying Shabbat Shalom as of Wednesday. I even once heard someone say Shabbat Shalom on a Sunday.
56. I love that before pesach, there are adverts on the television and radio, reminding people to make sure that everyone they know has somewhere to be for all their meals.
57. I love that on numerous occasions people have stopped me in the street and asked me to use my phone. And sometimes if I am about to meet someone yet am running out of battery, I make sure to write down their number because I myself, know I can find someone’s phone to use.
58. I love that as soon as a mother with a stroller is about to go up / down stairs, there is always more than one person who helps her. They don’t even ask, they just help.
59. I love that night that my friends and I walked into a random apartment in Tel-Aviv because it looked as if they were throwing a party, pretended we knew people there even though we didn’t and end up becoming friends with the majority of them.
60. I love that everyone can keep calm and keep going when missiles are being fired at Israel, but when there is snow- that is when panic begins.
61. I love seeing old Israeli men sitting at a table, laughing, playing shesh-besh, eating nuts and smoking- knowing that they have probably been friends for years and been through a lot together.
62. I love seeing a group of guys my age, that are so close and are like brothers.. knowing that in 40 years time they will be what I described above.
63. I love that you can go outside in your pyjamas and give reason to doing so, because “even if I’m not inside my apartment, I’m still walking around my home”.
64. (Only those who have experienced this feeling will be able to understand it) I love that feeling you get when you just realise. You just have a moment of realization of how lucky it is to be here. Be it on a memorial day, or at the top of a mountain during a hike with friends, or on a packed bus. There are those moments where you all of a sudden appreciate where you are. In the state of Israel. The Jewish homeland. Those moments, are truly great.
65. I love the fact that this list could carry on...

-KVUTSAH PLANNING SHEET-

