

Notes: October 20, 2018

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tov
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: When God Speaks, Do You Listen?

Back in the 1970's and 1980's there was an advertising campaign. Some of you will likely remember it...

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_ygqPepLjM

EF Hutton is an American stock brokerage firm founded in 1904 by Edward Francis Hutton and his brother, Franklyn Laws Hutton. Later, it was led by well known Wall Street trader Gerald M. Loeb. Under their leadership, EF Hutton became one of the most respected financial firms in the United States and for several decades was the second largest brokerage firm in the country. The firm was best known for its colorful TV commercials in the 1970s and 1980s based on the phrase, "When E. F. Hutton talks, people listen," which usually involved a young professional remarking at a dinner party that his broker was EF Hutton, which caused the moderately loud party to stop all conversation to listen to him.

This campaign spoke to the respectability, authority and credibility of EF Hutton. "When they spoke, people listened" So, let me ask you...

Is there someone in your life whom you respect so much that when they talk, you listen?

For Avram...that was Adonai.

In this week's Parsha, Lech Lecha, on three specific occasions, Adonai spoke with Avram, three very specific and important moments that would forever change Avram's life.

We first meet up with Avram at the end of Genesis 11...

Gen 11:27 Here is the genealogy of Terach. Terach fathered Avram, Nachor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot.

Gen 11:28 Haran died before his father Terach in the land where he was born, in Ur of the Kasdim.

Gen 11:29 Then Avram and Nachor took wives for themselves. The name of Avram's wife was Sarai, and the name of

Nachor's wife was Milkah the daughter of Haran. He was the father of Milkah and of Yiskah.

Gen 11:30 Sarai was barren — she had no child.

Gen 11:31 Terach took his son Avram, his son Haran's son Lot, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Avram's wife; and they left Ur of the Kasdim to go to the land of Kena`an. But when they came to Haran, they stayed there.

Why is this important?

If you go back a few verses in Genesis 11 you will see that these verses are part of a lineage. That lineage is of Shem...

Gen 11:10 Here is the genealogy of Shem. Shem was 100 years old when he fathered Arpakhshad two years after the flood.

Lineage provides us with the beginning of the story. It provides us with a starting point. When Adonai provides a lineage, it is important.

This past week, we recently saw of a heritage for a person not being validated. Yet through Adonai's word the lineage He presents validates one's origin.

When Adonai speaks, people listen.

People is plural, yet unfortunately, this doesn't mean everyone.

Those who would follow along the line of Shem, would be known as Shemites

Avram, was a Shemite.

Today, a Shemite is exclusively attached to the Jewish people, even though Shemite languages are spoken by other people.

In 1879 the German journalist Wilhelm Marr began the politicisation of the term by speaking of a struggle between Jews and Germans in a pamphlet called *Der Weg zum Siege des Germanenthums über das Judenthum* ("The Way to Victory of Germanicism over Judaism"). He accused the Jews of being liberals, a people without roots who had Judaized Germans beyond salvation. In 1879 Marr's adherents founded the "League for Anti-Semitism", [19] which concerned itself entirely with anti-Jewish political action.

The first time Adonai spoke with Avram was in Genesis 12:1...

Gen 12:1 Now Adonai said to Avram, "Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you.

Adonai told Avram to leave everything and everyone one he knew, with the exception of his wife and nephew and go to a place where he knew no one.

We did it nearly nine years ago.

It is most certainly a step of faith, when you leave everything you know for the prospects of what is unknown to you.

The writer of Hebrews conveys the following regarding Avram decision to follow Adonai...

Heb 11:8 By trusting, Avraham obeyed, after being called to go out to a place which God would give him as a possession; indeed, he went out without knowing where he was going.

His decision was based on trust. Avram trusted Adonai.

How much faith do you have in Adonai when He speaks to you?

Yet, verse 1 was only the beginning of Adonai's words to Avram. He continued,

Gen 12:2 I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing.

Gen 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse anyone who curses you; and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Gen 12:4 So Avram went, as Adonai had said to him, and Lot went with him. Avram was 75 years old when he left Haran.

Adonai spoke, He got up and went.

Yet, when He spoke to Avram, He did not provide him with a timeline nor deadline as to when all these things would occur.

So, we can look back and know that this was the first time Adonai would speak with Avram, but it would not be the last time.

The next significant time recorded in Scripture is Genesis 15.

After the war of the Kings, Adonai appears to Avram...

Gen 15:1 Some time later the word of Adonai came to Avram in a vision: "Don't be afraid, Avram. I am your protector; your reward will be very great."

This was just after Avram's encounter with Malki-Tzedek, King of Salem and the King of S'odm, where Avram said...

Gen 14:22 But Avram answered the king of S'dom, "I have raised my hand in an oath to Adonai, El `Elyon, maker of heaven and earth,

Gen 14:23 that I will not take so much as a thread or a sandal thong of anything that is yours; so that you won't be able to say, 'I made Avram rich.'

Adonai, first gets Avram's attention through a vision regarding the promises He made back in Genesis 12, but now, years later, Avram responds to the vision in this manner...

Gen 15:2 Avram replied, "Adonai, God, what good will your gifts be to me if I continue childless; and Eli `ezer from Dammesek inherits my possessions?

Gen 15:3 You haven't given me a child," Avram continued, "so someone born in my house will be my heir."

Gen 15:4 But the word of Adonai came to him: "This man will not be your heir. No, your heir will be a child from your own body."

Gen 15:5 Then he brought him outside and said, "Look up at the sky, and count the stars — if you can count them! Your descendants will be that many!"

Gen 15:6 He believed in Adonai, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

Further clarification of the initial promise of being a great nation. That the initialization of this nation would come through Avram's seed, comprising his descendants.

To where Adonai speaks and Avram listens...

Gen 15:7 Then he said to him, "I am Adonai, who brought you out from Ur-Kasdim to give you this land as your possession."

Have you ever been in a position where you believe you have heard from Adonai, yet you don't believe you have all the pieces?

Part of listening is interaction with the purpose of seeking clarity.

Not only does this provide clarity, but also proves you have been listening.

Avram thought there was more to be known, so he questioned

Gen 15:8 He replied, "Adonai, God, how am I to know that I will possess it?"

...and Adonai responded, first by instructing Avram to bring animals for offerings and then by informing him what would occur, not immediately, but what is to happen generations from now...

Gen 15:13 Adonai said to Avram, "Know this for certain: your descendants will be foreigners in a land that is not theirs. They will be slaves and held in oppression there four hundred years.

Gen 15:14 But I will also judge that nation, the one that makes them slaves. Afterwards, they will leave with many possessions.

Gen 15:15 As for you, you will join your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age.

Gen 15:16 Only in the fourth generation will your descendants come back here, because only then will the Emori be ripe for punishment."

Gen 15:17 After the sun had set and there was thick darkness, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch appeared, which passed between these animal parts.

Gen 15:18 That day Adonai made a covenant with Avram: "I have given this land to your descendants — from the Vadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates River —

Gen 15:19 the territory of the Keni, the K'nizi, the Kadmoni,

Gen 15:20 the Hitti, the P'rizi, the Refa'im,

Gen 15:21 the Emori, the Kena`ani, the Girgashi and the Y'vusi."

So, after this encounter where Adonai spoke, Avram was left with...

- A prophetic outline regarding the land promised
- A covenant specifically associated to the land
- Borders to the promised land.

It would be these things that Adonai spoke to Avram, that would be conveyed to future generations, even up to this point where we are still able to glean wisdom to this day, where the writer of Hebrews conveys the following...

Heb 11:10 For he was looking forward to the city with permanent foundations, of which the architect and builder is God.

We don't always receive the fullness of what we are to be doing, but ultimately receive "step by step" instructions.

We did not know how this congregation would start.

We initially thought it would be on Passover, yet it was three months prior to that we had our first meeting in our living room, on our couch. Including Jeri, it was a grand total of four people.

Our Passover seder in our home that first year comprised 12 people.

We had left everything we knew, for a strange land we did not know, and Adonai opened the doors to what He would do through us.

We can still learn a great deal from what Adonai said to Avram.

The third significant time Adonai spoke to Avram in this parshah was Genesis 17

Gen 17:1 When Avram was 99 years old Adonai appeared to Avram and said to him, "I am El Shaddai [*God Almighty*]. Walk in my presence and be pure-hearted.

Gen 17:2 I will make my covenant between me and you, and I will increase your numbers greatly."

Gen 17:3 Avram fell on his face, and God continued speaking with him:

Gen 17:4 "As for me, this is my covenant with you: you will be the father of many nations.

Gen 17:5 Your name will no longer be Avram [*exalted father*], but your name will be Avraham [*father of many*], because I have made you the father of many nations.

What's in a name. We have been sharing with you the many names associated with Adonai. They so reveal more about who Adonai is...likewise, this change in name further reveals the promise Adonai made with him prior.

Gen 17:6 I will cause you to be very fruitful. I will make nations of you, kings will descend from you.

Gen 17:7 "I am establishing my covenant between me and you, along with your descendants after you, generation after generation, as an everlasting covenant, to be God for you and for your descendants after you.

A promise initially given to Avram, now Avraham, a covenantal promise that would continue past Avraham, generation to generation...an everlasting covenant.

Gen 17:8 I will give you and your descendants after you the land in which you are now foreigners, all the land of Kena`an, as a permanent possession; and I will be their God."

Gen 17:9 God said to Avraham, "As for you, you are to keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you, generation after generation.

Gen 17:10 Here is my covenant, which you are to keep, between me and you, along with your descendants after you: every male among you is to be circumcised.

Gen 17:15 God said to Avraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are not to call her Sarai [*mockery*]; her name is to be Sarah [*princess*].

Gen 17:16 I will bless her; moreover, I will give you a son by her. Truly I will bless her: she will be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

Gen 17:17 At this Avraham fell on his face and laughed — he thought to himself, "Will a child be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah give birth at ninety?"

Gen 17:18 Avraham said to God, "If only Yishma`el could live in your presence!"

Gen 17:19 God answered, "No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you are to call him Yitz'chak [*laughter*]. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

Gen 17:20 But as for Yishma`el, I have heard you. I have blessed him. I will make him fruitful and give him many descendants. He will father twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

Gen 17:21 But I will establish my covenant with Yitz'chak, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year."

Gen 17:22 With that, God finished speaking with Avraham and went up from him.

Heb 11:11 By trusting, he received potency to father a child, even when he was past the age for it, as was Sarah herself; because he regarded the One who had made the promise as trustworthy.

Heb 11:12 Therefore this one man, who was virtually dead, fathered descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky, and as countless as the grains of the sand on the seashore.

Heb 11:13 All these people kept on trusting until they died, without receiving what had been promised. They had only seen it and welcomed it from a distance, while acknowledging that they were aliens and temporary residents on the earth.

There may be times when we doubt, but the proof is in the Words of Adonai. The examples He has provided, validate his faithfulness to those whom He speaks to.