



### ***B'reishit* / Genesis 12:1 - 17:27**

*Lech Lecha!* Go Forth! לך - לך A wonderful aspect of Hebrew is how often the letters of the words can form 'word pictures' and the sound of the words is descriptive of the action being taken. Here we see two legs! And the sound: *lech-lecha, lech-lecha...* is a very rhythmic sound denoting movement.

### **Grammar - *Dikduk* - דיקדיק**

#### **La'med      ל**

*La'med* is the only Hebrew letter that reaches up, as if to the Heavens.

In order to walk, to 'go forth' in obedience to God's commands we must have our hand reaching up to His in prayer for direction and enabling. In the context of the *parasha*, Abram - *Avram* - is responding to the call of God. He heard God's instructions, as Noah did, and responded with *emunah* - אמונה - faithful obedient trust.

The first *la'med* is accompanied by the vowel sound *seggol* (three dots below) forming the syllable *Leh...*

Together with the *chet* - ח - the word *lech* is formed, an imperative form of 'go', or 'walk' - *holech*. It has the feminine infinitive: *la'lechet* and the root *halach*.

Past tense (m): *Hu halach* - הוא הלך - He walked.

Present tense: *Hu holech*. (m) *Hi (hee) holechet*. (f) - הוא הולך. היא הולכת -  
He walks. She walks.

The word for the Jewish Golden Rule about how best to live in obedience to the commands of God is *Halacha* - הלכה, which can loosely be translated as 'Way to Walk.'

In the portion name *Lech Lecha*, both words end with a *Chaf Sofit* - ך. The difference in sound is that the first is accompanied by a *sh'va* (stop sign!) so the word ends abruptly as *Lech!* The second is accompanied by the vowel sound 'ah' - *chamatz* - and forms the word *Lecha*.

A direct translation of *lecha* is "to you." God is saying to Avram, "Go forth - to yourself!" He is leading him to a place where he will truly find himself; to a land where he will be in harmony with God's purposes for himself and for all his descendants to come. In fact, ultimately, for all the earth as we see in Genesis 12:3.

However, God makes it clear that the Land itself was not *Lecha* - to Avram, but was *Li* - to Me; to God Himself. As we read in Leviticus 25:23, "And the land shall not be sold to perpetuity - that is, never - for the Land is Mine!" *Ki Li haAretz!* כי לי הארץ

Another form of the **possessive case** is the use of *shel* as in *sheli* - mine - שלי.

"*Zeh ha'bayit sheli*." "This is my house." *Sheli* is used for both masculine and feminine nouns.

Other forms:

Your - *shelcha* (m) שלך Your - *shelach* (f) שלך

His - *shelo* שלו Hers - *shelah* שלה

Our - *shelanu* (m) & (f) שלנו

Your - *shelachem* (m. pl) שלכם Your - *shelachen* (f. pl.) שלכן

Their - *shelahem* (m. pl.) שלהם Their - *shelachen* (f. pl.) שלהן

## Vocabulary - מילים Milim

Transliteration	Words	Hebrew
parasha	Torah portion	פרשה
emunah	faith, faithfulness	אמונה
holechet	walk (f.)	הולכת
Halacha	Laws of living	הלכה
aretz	land or country	ארץ
HaAretz	The Land (Israel)	הארץ