

לך לך

**LECH LECHA**  
take yourself and go

*Take the Next Step*

The Jewish approach promotes living life as a journey, not a destination.

Take action and move forward— toward a place you don't yet know, but will discover.

**SENSIBILITY CARD**

# On One Foot: Lech Lecha

## IMPORTANT TEXTS

“And God said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your native land and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you.’” — *Breishit* 12:1-2

“Abram will be ‘shown’ to himself and will become visible to others.” — Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, *Meshech Chochmah* on *Breishit* Chapter 12

“During [these] seven days you should live in (*sukkot*). Everyone included in Israel should live in *sukkot*. This is so that future generations will know that I had the Israelites live in huts when I brought them out of Egypt.” — *VaYikra* 23:42-43

“The move into the *sukkah* is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom.” — Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays*, New York: Touchstone, 1988, p. 101



## The Implications

We will look at *Lech Lecha* in the context of:

- *Lech Lecha*: Dare Greatly **38**
- Welcome to College: Dive On In! **42**
- Graduation *Havdalah* **46**
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## Lech Lecha: Dare Greatly

This Activity is Great For



### Learning

- Rosh Chodesh
- Group Learning



### Coffee Dates



### Pastoral Counseling

- Self-Worth



### Identity & Relationships

- Group Dynamics
- Student Leaders

## Big Idea

When we go ahead and follow our dreams — even if we don't feel ready — we discover new things about ourselves that we never could have known before.

### I. Beginning the Conversation

#### Supplies:

Printouts of Amy Poehler and Brene Brown Zen Comics strips, large sheet of paper, tape, pens, comic template handout, and colored pencils.

Amy Poehler: <http://zenpencils.com/comic/157-amy-poehler-great-people-do-things-before-theyre-ready/>

Brene Brown: <http://zenpencils.com/comic/139-brene-brown-the-woman-in-the-arena/>

“Words by Amy Poehler/Brené Brown. Illustrated by Gavin Aung Than. [www.zenpencils.com](http://www.zenpencils.com)”

Print out and hang up the Amy Poehler and Brene Brown comic strips on the walls (you may wish to cut out each frame and tape to the wall so the students will have to walk all around the room), and have students walk around the room and read the comics. Following the last page of the comic, hang up a large sheet of paper with pens nearby, with the question: “When did you dare greatly?” Students should write their answers on the paper, and read others’ responses.



## II. A Deeper Dive

Read together **Breishit (Genesis) 12:1-5**, when God tells Abram (before he becomes Abraham) to leave everything he has ever known and go to a new land.

**א** וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם לֵךְ לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ  
וּמְמוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר  
אֶרְאֶה.

**ב** וְאֶעֱשֶׂה לְךָ גְדוֹל וְאַבְרָכָה וְאֶגְדְּלֶה שְׁמֶךָ  
וְהָיָה בְרָכָה.

**ג** וְאַבְרָכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶךָ אָרֹר וּנְבָרְכוּ בְךָ  
כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה.

**ד** וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵי ה' וַיֵּלֶךְ אִתּוֹ  
לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה  
בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן.

**ה** וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת לוֹט בֶּן  
אָחִיו וְאֶת כָּל רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת הַנֶּפֶשׁ  
אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן וַיָּצֵאוּ לְלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן  
וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן.

**1** And God said to Abram, “Go forth from your native land and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you.

**2** I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you; I will make your name great, And you shall be a blessing.

**3** I will bless those who bless you And curse him that curses you; And all the families of the earth Shall bless themselves by you.”

**4** Abram went forth as the Lord had commanded him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

**5** Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot, and all the wealth that they had amassed, and the persons that they had acquired in Haran; and they set out for the land of Canaan. And they arrived in the land of Canaan.

Translation adapted from <http://www.taggedtanakh.org/Chapter/Index/english-Gen-12>.

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## TALK IT OUT

Separate students into *chavruta* pairs to talk about the following questions:

- Imagine that you are Abram and/or Sarai. What are you thinking and feeling when you hear this command?
- Did you find it difficult to leave home when you started college?
- In what ways did leaving home give you opportunities to figure out who are?



Now read together the following text from Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk's (1843-1926) commentary on the Torah, *Meshech Chochmah*. <http://www.alexisrael.org/#!lech-lecha--abrahams-journey/cfyu>

**Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, *Meshech Chochmah* on *Breishit* 12:**

אל הארץ אשר אראך: יתכן לפרש כי צווה לילך לארץ מקום המיועד לעבודה . . . ושם יפרסם אלקות ויקדיש שמו . . . ויראה את הכחות הטמונים בסתר לבבו אשר מצא נאמן לפניו. וזה שאמר "אראך" פועל יוצא שיראה את הטמון בלב אברהם לאחרים . . . והנה לפי זה אברהם יתראה ויהיה הנראה לאחרים.

To the land which I will show you: We might suggest that Abram was commanded to go to the place earmarked for divine service... there he was to publicize the idea of God and sanctify His name... and demonstrate the potential which lay latent in his heart and his commitment to God. This is the meaning of the phrase "which I will show you". It means that God will exhibit publicly that which hitherto lay hidden in Abram's heart.... thus Abram will be 'shown' to himself and will become visible to others.

**Note to Facilitator:** In this text, the *Meshech Chochmah* understands the command for Abram to leave everything he has ever known, and go to a new place as an opportunity for Abram to discover for himself, and show to the world, what he is truly capable of doing. Abram will no longer just have the potential; now he will activate "that which hitherto lay hidden in [his] heart."

This is an important concept in Jewish thought: that we are given opportunities to actualize our potential and show to ourselves and others the incredible things of which we are capable. Otherwise, we might never know what we are capable of doing.

Discuss this text with students, asking them when they have confronted situations when they had to actualize who they truly are. Ask them to compare the *Meshech Chochmah* with the Amy Poehler and Brene Brown comics they read in the beginning of the session.

## OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

The following activity would be good for a *Rosh Chodesh* group, or a group of students who are artistic/creative. In the Amy Poehler and Brene Brown comics, the artist took the women's words and illustrated them with his own thoughts of how they play out in life. In this activity, challenge students to do the same with the words of the *Meshech Chochmah*. They should illustrate the words of the *Meshech Chochmah* using their own life — either something they have done before, or something they wish to do.

Give students colored pencils and the comic template below, and give them time to apply the words of the *Meshech Chochmah* by illustrating the comic. When done, ask students to hang up their work (if they are willing to share what they have created), and invite everyone to walk around and view the comics. Alternatively, ask for volunteers to share their comic and explain what they illustrated.

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Abram was to demonstrate the potential which lay latent in his heart...

This is the meaning of the phrase "which I will show you".



It means that God will exhibit publicly that which hitherto lay hidden in Abram's heart...

thus Abram will be 'shown' to himself

and will become visible to others.

Lech  
Lecha



# Welcome to College: Dive on In!

This Activity is Great For



**Learning**

- Group Learning



**Pastoral  
Counseling**



**Academic  
Calendar**

- Welcome Week



**Holidays**

- Sukkot



**Identity &  
Relationships**

- Student Leaders

*This is an especially good session for the beginning of the school year.*

## Big Ideas

- It is difficult, but worthwhile, to move out of your comfort zone to try new experiences.
- We can learn how to be vulnerable, and move beyond our usual sources of security, from the sukkah.

Suggested setting: In a *sukkah*, or as part of a *sukkah* building or decorating activity.

### I. Beginning the Conversation

#### Walking and Talking

- Ask students to find someone they don't know in the group, and take a three-minute stroll with them and try to find three things they have in common with that person.
- Call "switch" after 3 minutes, and tell students to find someone else they don't know well with whom to stroll and find three commonalities.

## TALK IT OUT

- Was it scary to find and talk with someone you didn't know before? Are you glad you did it?
- Now that we are at the beginning of the school year, what are some things that you might like to do this year — but that you are afraid/hesitant to do?



## II. A Deeper Dive

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Depending on your audience, either read this source together or summarize for students: According to the *Torah*, we are commanded to sit in the *sukkah* on the holiday of *Sukkot* because we lived in huts in the wilderness after God saved us from Egypt.

### **VaYikra (Leviticus) 23**

**לט** אַךְ בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאַסְפֹּכֶם אֶת תְּבוּאֵת הָאָרֶץ תַּחֲגֹּגוּ אֶת חַג הַיְּשׁוּבָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן שִׁבְתוֹן וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי שִׁבְתוֹן.

**מ** וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן פְּרִי עֵץ הָדָר כַּפֹּת תְּמָרִים וְעֵנֶף עֵץ עָבֹת וְעַרְבֵי נַחַל וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים.

**מא** וַחֲגַגְתֶּם אֹתוֹ חַג לַה' שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה חֲקַת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי תַּחֲגֹּגוּ אֹתוֹ.

**מב** בַּסֹּכֶת תֵּשְׁבוּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים כָּל הָאֲזָרָח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשְׁבוּ בַסֹּכֶת.

**מג** לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דֹרֹתֵיכֶם כִּי בַסֹּכֹת הוֹשַׁבְתִּי אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהוֹצִיאִי אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.

**39** On the 15th of the seventh month, when you harvest the land's grain, you shall celebrate a festival to God for seven days. The first day shall be a day of rest, and the eighth day shall be a day of rest.

**40** On the first day, you must take for yourself a fruit of the citron tree, an unopened palm frond, myrtle branches, and willows [that grow near] the brook. You shall rejoice before God for seven days.

**41** During these seven days each year, you shall celebrate to God. It is an eternal law for all generations that you celebrate [this festival] in the seventh month.

**42** During [these] seven days you should live in thatched huts (*sukkot*). Everyone included in Israel should live in such thatched huts (*sukkot*).

**43** This is so that future generations will know that I had the Israelites live in huts when I brought them out of Egypt. I am God your Lord.

Translation adapted from Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *A Living Torah*, <http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=3&CHAPTER=23>

**Ask students:** In the *Torah*, God does so many miracles for us. Why have a whole holiday to commemorate sitting in huts? What was so special about living in huts for 40 years?

**Note:** There are many possible answers to this question. In this session, we will look at Rabbi Yitz Greenberg's answer as a way to help students think security and insecurity, in their college years.

Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, in his book *The Jewish Way*, explains the significance of the commandment to dwell in the *sukkah*. As you read this text with students, focus on Rabbi Greenberg's idea of *sukkah* as a way of helping us get in touch with, and deal with our own vulnerability.





**Rabbi Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays*, New York: Touchstone, 1988, pp. 99-101:**

The *sukkah*, the booth, is the central symbol of the ancient Israelites' trust and hope for forty years in the desert. The Hebrews left the protection of man-made thick walls to place themselves under the protection of God. Exposed to dangerous natural conditions and hostile roving bands, they placed their confidence in the divine concern, which is the only true source of security. Their act of faith remains a source of merit for the people of Israel and a continuing support for the covenantal commitment. By eating, learning, and sleeping in the booth so that the *sukkah* becomes one's home for a week, we re-enact their original act of faith.

...

The most important part of the *sukkah*, halachically, is the *s'chach*, materials of vegetable origin such as evergreen branches or marsh rushes that form the roof.

...

The *s'chach* is meant to teach something about the true nature of protection. Human beings instinctively strive to build solid walls of security. People shut out life; they heap up treasures and power and status symbols in the hope of excluding death and disaster and even the unexpected. The search for "solid" security all too often leads to idolatry, to the worship of things that give security. People end up sacrificing values and even loved ones to obtain the tangible sources of security. The *sukkah* urges people to give up this pseudo-safety.

...

The move into the *sukkah* is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom. Participants open up to the world, to the unexpected winds, to the surprise setback as well as the planned gain. The joy of *Sukkot* is a celebration of the privilege of starting on the road to freedom, knowing that to finish the task is not decisive, but failure to start is.

Divide students into *chavrutah* pairs to discuss the following questions:

- What do you think Rabbi Greenberg means when he says, "The move into the *sukkah* is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom."?
- As you begin the school year, what are the "solid walls of security" that you have built for yourself?
- How would you like to move beyond your comfort zone this school year? What would your life look like if you did?
- What is holding you back?



## OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

### Step In/Step Out Activity

Adapted from <https://www.trainingforchange.org/tools/step-step-out-using-comfort-zones>

In this activity, students will begin to think concretely about new experiences that they can have in the upcoming school year.

Use rope — or if possible, some extra *s'chach* — and make three concentric circles/square with enough room for the all the participants to comfortably stand in any of the circles.

Tell students that you will call out different activities. If they are not interested at all in participating in the activity, they should stand in the outermost circle. If they are absolutely interested and plan to do the activity without hesitation, they should stand in the innermost circle. If they are interested but hesitant about doing the activity, they should stand in the middle circle.

Some sample activities you might call out, include: take a course that you hear is great but really difficult, try a new sport, go to a college activity by yourself, take a class that you know nothing about, sit down at a table in the cafeteria by yourself, join a group of people sitting in the cafeteria who you don't know very well, go on an alternative break trip, stop a friend from gossiping, tell people you are Jewish, tell people you support the State of Israel, go on a Birthright trip, write a letter to the school newspaper, ask an acquaintance to go out for coffee, etc.

Tell students to find one of the people they walked around with at the beginning of the session (groups of 3 are fine too). Choose one activity that you would like to do this school year, and brainstorm with the other students in your group how you can encourage yourself to do those things, even if they might feel initially uncomfortable.

End by going around the room and asking students:

- What is one thing that you commit to yourself to doing this semester even though it is outside your comfort zone?



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# Graduation Havdalah

This Activity is Great For



## Academic Calendar

- End of the Year Celebration
- Graduation

## Big Ideas

- Judaism helps us mark transitions through ritual.
- Transitions can bring with them fear and anxiety, but also opportunities for thanksgiving, growth and clarified purpose.

### ***A havdalah service that celebrates the graduates and marks graduation in a Jewish way.***

This ceremony is adapted from the Chai Ceremony created by Rabbi Julie Danan — <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/chai-ceremony/4/#>.

## I. Beginning the Conversation

**Supplies:** *Havdalah* supplies

- multi-wicked candle (or two candles held with flames together)
- cup of grape juice or wine
- spices
- printouts of the *havdalah* service

**Preparation:**

The week before the *havdalah* service, send an email to your soon-to-be graduates letting them know that there will be a special *Havdalah* ceremony honoring their graduation, and asking them to come prepared to answer the following questions in 1-2 sentences:

- How have you grown in your time here? Who or what are you thankful for?
- How do you want to be a light to your friends/family/community/the world, as you move on beyond college?

**At the *havdalah* service:**

Bring the soon-to-be graduates to the center of the circle, and give them the *havdalah* candle(s) to hold. The other students should form concentric circles around them.



### Introduce the *havdalah* service:

- Explain that Judaism has rituals that mark the transition from one time to another. *Havdalah* marks the transition from the peace of *Shabbat* to the rest of the week. Tonight, we will also mark another transition with our *havdalah*: the graduation of our friends from this university as they go forward on new paths. Transitions can be difficult because there is so much that is unknown, but it is also an opportunity to reflect on who we are and how we've grown, to give thanks to the people who have helped us on the way until now, and to clarify to ourselves what kind of person we would like to be, and the impact we want to have, as we embark on new opportunities.
- Ask the graduating students in the middle of the circle to say one or two sentences about how they have grown in their college years, or to offer *hakarat hatov* — gratitude, to those who have helped them in their college experience.
- Introduce the opening paragraph of the *havdalah*, if it is your custom to recite/sing it. Explain that this first paragraph is about the fear that comes with transition, and that it expresses faith that God is with us so we should not fear.
  - Sing together the opening paragraph.
- Introduce the next three blessings: on the wine/grape juice, the *besamim* (spices), and the fire. Explain that we smell the spices on Saturday night as the *Shabbat* is leaving, to console us that the *Shabbat* has left us. Similarly, we are sad to see the graduates go. The light/fire represents creativity, and all the ways that human beings can impact the world.
- Ask graduates to explain in one sentence how they hope to be a light to others as they move forward past college.
  - Sing together the rest of the *havdalah* service.
- Ask students to observe a moment of silence to think of the graduates and wish them health and happiness in all that comes next for them. End with songs and snacks. You may also wish to give graduates a gift of Jewish ritual objects (*kiddush* cup, candle sticks, *havdalah* candle, *besamim* (spices), *menorah*, etc.) for them to take with them to use in their new homes and circumstances.





## הבדלה Havdalah

Recited at the departure of *Shabbat*, *Havdalah* is traditionally said over a cup of wine. The concept of *havdalah*, literally “separation,” is learned from the commandment to “remember the *Sabbath*,” in this case referring to the ritual differentiation of *Shabbat* from the other days of the week. A multi-wicked candle and aromatic spices are used in addition to the cup of wine. As the *Sabbath* day ends, the additional soul that was placed on every Jew during the *Sabbath* departs. Smelling the pleasant odor of teh spices was established to diminish the sorrow felt after the soul departs. The blessing on the candle was established to commemorate the creation of fire in the Garden of Eden at the end of Adam’s first *Sabbath* on earth. At the departure of a weekday holiday, the first paragraph and the blessing over the candle and spices are omitted. From *The Penn Shiron*, Hillel at the University of Pennsylvania, 2000. Edited by Uriel Cohen, Ethan Isenberg and Lytal Kaurman. Much of the translation has been adapted, with permission, from the Judaica Press *Tanach* and the *Shabbat and Festival Shiron*, edited by Robert Ives. Many of the explanations and source notes have been adapted from Ives, as well as from *The Z’mirot Anthology*, edited by Neil Levin and *Zemirot I’Shabbat HaMevuarot*, by S. Vaknin.

הִנֵּה אֵל יְשׁוּעָתִי אֲבֹטֵחַ וְלֹא אֶפְחָד,	Hineih Eil yeshu’ati evtach velo efchad,
כִּי עֲזִי וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה,	Ki ozi vezimrah Yah Adonai,
וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה.	Vayhi li lishu’ah.
וּשְׂאֲבֵתֶם מַיִם בְּשִׁשׁוֹן,	Ush’avetem mayim besason,
מִמַּעַיְנֵי הַיְשׁוּעָה.	Mima’ayenei hayshu’ah.
לַה’ הַיְשׁוּעָה,	Ladonai hayshu’ah,
עַל עַמְּךָ בְּרִכְתֶּךָ סֵלָה.	Al amekha virkhatekha selah.
ה’ צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ,	Adonai tzeva’ot imanu,
מִשְׁגֵּב לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה.	Misgav lanu Elohei Ya’akov selah.
ה’ צְבָאוֹת,	Adonai tzeva’ot,
אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם בֹּטֵחַ בָּךְ.	Ashrai adam botei’ach bakh.
ה’ הוֹשִׁיעָה,	Adonai hoshi’ah,
הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בַיּוֹם קְרָאנוּ.	Hamelekh ya’aneinu veyom kor’einu.
לַיהוּדִים הַיְתָה אוֹרָה וְשִׂמְחָה,	Layehudim haytah orah vesimchah,
וְשִׁשׁוֹן וְיִקָּר, כֵּן תִּהְיֶה לָנוּ.	Vesason vikar, kein tiyeh lanu.
כּוֹס יְשׁוּעוֹת אֲשָׂא, וּבְשֵׁם ה’ אֶקְרָא.	Kos yeshu’ot esa, uvsheim Adonai ekra.

Behold! God is my salvation, I shall trust and not fear. For God is my might and my praise, and He was a salvation for me. You can draw water with joy, from the springs of salvation. Salvation is God's, upon Your people is Your blessing, selah. God, Master of legions, praised is the man who trusts in You. God save! May the King answer us on the day we call. For the Jews there was light, gladness, joy, and honor; so may it be for us. I will raise a cup of salvations, and I shall invoke the Name of God.



## Havdalah הבדלה (continued)

At the end of a holiday begin here (omitting the blessings of the candle and the spices):

סִבְרֵי מָרָנָן וְרִבְוֹתַי:	Savri maranan verabanan verabotai:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'	Barukh atah Adonai
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,	Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
בוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.	Borei peri hagafen.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of the fruit of the vine.

After the following blessing smell the spices:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'	Barukh atah Adonai
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,	Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
בוֹרֵא מִיְנֵי בְשָׂמִים.	Borei minei vesamim.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of species of fragrance.

After the following blessing hold your fingers up to the flame to see the reflected light:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'	Barukh atah Adonai
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,	Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
בוֹרֵא מְאוֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ.	Borei me'orei ha'eish.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of the illuminations of fire.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'	Barukh atah Adonai
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,	Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל,	Hamavdil bein kodesh lechol,
בֵּין אוֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ, בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים,	Bein or lechoshekh, bein Yisra'eil la'amim,
בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי	Bein yom hashevi'i
לְשִׁשֶׁת יְמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה.	Lesheishet yemei hama'aseh.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',	Barukh atah Adonai,
הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל.	Hamavdil bein kodesh lechol.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the universe, Who separates between holy and secular, between light and darkness, between Israel and the other nations, between the seventh day and the six days of labor. Blessed are You, God, Who separates between holy and secular.

Lech  
Lecha



Lech  
Lecha



# Just for Hillel Professionals: Try Something New

This Activity is Great For



## Just for Hillel Professionals

### I. Beginning the Conversation

Use these questions to reflect on how you can incorporate some of the lessons of *Lech Lecha* into your personal and professional lives:

1. When have you tried something new in your personal life? What was the result?
2. When have you tried something new in your professional life? What was the result?
3. Are you naturally someone who charges forward with a new idea, or do you normally hold yourself back?
4. What is something that you would love to try if you knew that it would be successful?

#### Try It Out:

What are three things you commit to trying this week in your personal and professional lives?



# Textsheets for Students

Lech  
Lecha

On the next pages, you'll find just the texts mentioned in each of the sections of this curriculum, without the facilitator's guide. Use these sheets if you would like to make copies of the texts for students, while keeping the facilitator's notes just for you!



## Lech Lecha: Dare Greatly



### Breishit (Genesis) 12:1-5:

**א** וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם לֵךְ לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ  
וּמְמֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר  
אֶרְאֶךָ.

**ב** וְאֶעֱשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָדוֹל וְאֶבְרַכְךָ וְאֶגְדַּלְתִּיךָ  
וְהָיָה בְרַכְּךָ.

**ג** וְאֶבְרַכְתָּהּ מְבָרְכֶיהָ וּמְקַלְלָהּ אֶת אֵת  
כָּל מְשַׁפְּחֹת הָאָדָמָה.

**ד** וְיִלְךָ אַבְרָם כְּאִשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵי ה' וְיִלְךָ אִתּוֹ  
לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן חֲמִשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה  
בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן.

**ה** וַיֵּקַח אַבְרָם אֶת שָׂרֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת לוֹט בֶּן  
אָחִיו וְאֶת כָּל רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכָשׁוּ וְאֶת הַנְּפֹשׁ  
אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לְלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן  
וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן.

**1** And God said to Abram, "Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.

**2** I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you; I will make your name great, And you shall be a blessing.

**3** I will bless those who bless you And curse him that curses you; And all the families of the earth Shall bless themselves by you."

**4** Abram went forth as the Lord had commanded him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

**5** Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the wealth that they had amassed, and the persons that they had acquired in Haran; and they set out for the land of Canaan. And they arrived in the land of Canaan.

Translation adapted from  
<http://www.taggedtanakh.org/Chapter/Index/english-Gen-12>.

### Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, *Meshech Chochmah* on Breishit 12:

<http://www.alexisrael.org/#!lech-lecha---abrahams-journey/cfyu>

אל הארץ אשר אראך: יתכן לפרש כי צווהו לילך לארץ מקום המיועד לעבודה . . . ושם יפרסם אלקות ויקדיש שמו . . . ויראה את הכחות הטמונים בסתר לבבו אשר מצא נאמן לפניו. וזה שאמר "אראך" פועל יוצא שיראה את הטמון בלב אברהם לאחרים . . . והנה לפי זה אברהם יתראה ויהיה הנראה לאחרים.

To the land which I will show you: We might suggest that Abram was commanded to go to the place earmarked for divine service... there he was to publicize the idea of God and sanctify His name... and demonstrate the potential which lay latent in his heart and his commitment to God. This is the meaning of the phrase "which I will show you". It means that God will exhibit publicly that which hitherto lay hidden in Abram's heart.... thus Abram will be 'shown' to himself and will become visible to others.

Abram was to demonstrate the potential which lay latent in his heart...

This is the meaning of the phrase "which I will show you".

Lech  
Lecha



It means that God will exhibit publicly that which hitherto lay hidden in Abram's heart...

thus Abram will be 'shown' to himself

and will become visible to others.

## Welcome to College: Dive on In!



### VaYikra (Leviticus) 23

**לט** אַךְ בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאַסְפְּכֶם אֶת תְּבוּאֵת הָאָרֶץ תַּחֲגֹּגוּ אֶת חַג ה' שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בְּיוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן שִׁבְתוֹן וּבְיוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי שִׁבְתוֹן.

**מ** וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בְּיוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן פְּרִי עֵץ הַדָּר כַּפֹּת תְּמָרִים וְעֵנָף עֵץ עֵבֶת וְעַרְבֵי נָחַל וּשְׂמֵחַתֶּם לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים.

**מא** וְחַגְתֶּם אֹתוֹ חַג לַה' שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בַּשָּׂנָה חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי תַּחֲגֹּגוּ אֹתוֹ.

**מב** בַּסֹּפֶת תִּשְׁבּוּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים כָּל הָאֲזָרָח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁבּוּ בַסֹּפֶת.

**מג** לְמַעַן יִדְעוּ דֹרֹתֵיכֶם כִּי בַסֹּפֹת הוֹשַׁבְתִּי אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהוֹצִיאִי אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.

**39** On the 15th of the seventh month, when you harvest the land's grain, you shall celebrate a festival to God for seven days. The first day shall be a day of rest, and the eighth day shall be a day of rest.

**40** On the first day, you must take for yourself a fruit of the citron tree, an unopened palm frond, myrtle branches, and willows [that grow near] the brook. You shall rejoice before God for seven days.

**41** During these seven days each year, you shall celebrate to God. It is an eternal law for all generations that you celebrate [this festival] in the seventh month.

**42** During [these] seven days you should live in thatched huts (*sukkot*). Everyone included in Israel should live in such thatched huts (*sukkot*).

**43** This is so that future generations will know that I had the Israelites live in huts when I brought them out of Egypt. I am God your Lord.

Translation adapted from Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *A Living Torah*, <http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=3&CHAPTER=23>

## Welcome to College: Dive on In!

Lech  
Lecha

**Rabbi Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays*, New York: Touchstone, 1988, pp. 99-101:**

The *sukkah*, the booth, is the central symbol of the ancient Israelites' trust and hope for forty years in the desert. The Hebrews left the protection of man-made thick walls to place themselves under the protection of God. Exposed to dangerous natural conditions and hostile roving bands, they placed their confidence in the divine concern, which is the only true source of security. Their act of faith remains a source of merit for the people of Israel and a continuing support for the covenantal commitment. By eating, learning, and sleeping in the booth so that the *sukkah* becomes one's home for a week, we re-enact their original act of faith.

...

The most important part of the *sukkah*, halachically, is the *s'chach*, materials of vegetable origin such as evergreen branches or marsh rushes that form the roof.

...

The *s'chach* is meant to teach something about the true nature of protection. Human beings instinctively strive to build solid walls of security. People shut out life; they heap up treasures and power and status symbols in the hope of excluding death and disaster and even the unexpected. The search for "solid" security all too often leads to idolatry, to the worship of things that give security. People end up sacrificing values and even loved ones to obtain the tangible sources of security. The *sukkah* urges people to give up this pseudo-safety.

...

The move into the *sukkah* is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom. Participants open up to the world, to the unexpected winds, to the surprise setback as well as the planned gain. The joy of *Sukkot* is a celebration of the privilege of starting on the road to freedom, knowing that to finish the task is not decisive, but failure to start is.

- What do you think Rabbi Greenberg means when he says, "The move into the *sukkah* is a movement from the certainty of fixed position toward the liberating insecurity of freedom."?
- As you begin the school year, what are the "solid walls of security" that you have built for yourself?
- How would you like to move beyond your comfort zone this school year? What would your life look like if you did?
- What is holding you back?



## Havdalah הַבְּדֵלָה



Recited at the departure of Shabbat, Havdalah is traditionally said over a cup of wine. The concept of havdalah, literally “separation,” is learned from the commandment to “remember the Sabbath,” in this case referring to the ritual differentiation of Shabbat from the other days of the week. A multi-wicked candle and aromatic spices are used in addition to the cup of wine. As the Sabbath day ends, the additional soul that was placed on every Jew during the Sabbath departs. Smelling the pleasant odor of teh spices was established to diminish the sorrow felt after the soul departs. The blessing on the candle was established to commemorate the creation of fire in the Garden of Eden at the end of Adam’s first Sabbath on earth. At the departure of a weekday holiday, the first paragraph and the blessing over the candle and spices are omitted. From *The Penn Shiron*, Hillel at the University of Pennsylvania, 2000. Edited by Uriel Cohen, Ethan Isenberg and Lytal Kaurman. Much of the translation has been adapted, with permission, from the Judaica Press *Tanach* and the *Shabbat and Festival Shiron*, edited by Robert Ives. Many of the explanations and source notes have been adapted from Ives, as well as from *The Z’mirot Anthology*, edited by Neil Levin and *Zemirot I’Shabbat HaMevuarot*, by S. Vaknin.

הִנֵּה אֵל יִשׁוּעֵתִי אֶבְטַח וְלֹא אֶפְחָד,	Hineih Eil yeshu’ati evtach velo efchad,
כִּי עֲזִי וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה,	Ki ozi vezimrah Yah Adonai,
וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה.	Vayhi li lishu’ah.
וּשְׂאֵבֵתֶם מַיִם בְּשִׁשׁוֹן,	Ush’avetem mayim besason,
מִמַּעַיְנֵי הַיְשׁוּעָה.	Mima’ayenei hayshu’ah.
לֵה’ הַיְשׁוּעָה,	Ladonai hayshu’ah,
עַל עַמְךָ בְּרַכְתֶּךָ סֵלָה.	Al amekha virkhatekha selah.
ה’ צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ,	Adonai tzeva’ot imanu,
מִשְׁגֵּב לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה.	Misgav lanu Elohei Ya’akov selah.
ה’ צְבָאוֹת,	Adonai tzeva’ot,
אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם בֵּטַח בָּךְ.	Ashrai adam botei’ach bakh.
ה’ הוֹשִׁיעָה,	Adonai hoshi’ah,
הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בַיּוֹם קָרְאֵנוּ.	Hamelekh ya’aneinu veyom kor’einu.
לַיהוּדִים הַיְתָה אוֹרָה וְשִׂמְחָה,	Layehudim haytah orah vesimchah,
וְשִׁשׁוֹן וִיקָר, כֵּן תִּהְיֶה לָנוּ.	Vesason vikar, kein tihyeh lanu.
כּוֹס יִשׁוּעוֹת אֶשָּׂא, וּבְשֵׁם ה’ אֶקְרָא.	Kos yeshu’ot esa, uvsheim Adonai ekra.

Behold! God is my salvation, I shall trust and not fear. For God is my might and my praise, and He was a salvation for me. You can draw water with joy, from the springs of salvation. Salvation is God's, upon Your people is Your blessing, selah. God, Master of legions, praised is the man who trusts in You. God save! May the King answer us on the day we call. For the Jews there was light, gladness, joy, and honor; so may it be for us. I will raise a cup of salvations, and I shall invoke the Name of God.



## Havdalah הַבְּדֻלָּה (continued)

At the end of a holiday begin here (omitting the blessings of the candle and the spices):

סַכְרֵי מַרְנָן וְרַבָּנָן וְרַבּוֹתַי:	Savri maranan verabanan verabotai:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'	Barukh atah Adonai
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,	Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
בוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.	Borei peri hagafen.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of the fruit of the vine.

After the following blessing smell the spices:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'	Barukh atah Adonai
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,	Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
בוֹרֵא מִיְיָ בְשָׁמִים.	Borei minei vesamim.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of species of fragrance.

After the following blessing hold your fingers up to the flame to see the reflected light:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'	Barukh atah Adonai
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,	Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
בוֹרֵא מְאוֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ.	Borei me'orei ha'eish.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the world, creator of the illuminations of fire.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'	Barukh atah Adonai
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,	Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל,	Hamavdil bein kodesh lechol,
בֵּין אוֹר לְחֹשֶׁק, בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים,	Bein or lechoshekh, bein Yisra'eil la'amim,
בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי	Bein yom hashevi'i
לְשֵׁשֶׁת יְמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה.	Lesheishet yemei hama'aseh.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'	Barukh atah Adonai,
הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל.	Hamavdil bein kodesh lechol.

Blessed are You, God our Lord, King of the universe, Who separates between holy and secular, between light and darkness, between Israel and the other nations, between the seventh day and the six days of labor. Blessed are You, God, Who separates between holy and secular.

