

LECH LECHA: UNCOVERING THE COVENANT

Teacher's Guide



POINTS TO PAUSE



DISCUSSION TOPICS

▪ 1:24



As Rabbi Fohrman suggests, utilizing the literary chiasm can be a way of packing a lot of meaning into a small amount of space.

Minimalism is the style best characterized as a style or technique (as in music, literature, or design) that is characterized by “less is more.” Interestingly, Biblical stories are often recorded using a very small number of verses. For example:

- Story of Adam and Eve: 23 verses
- Story of Cain and Abel: 16 verses
- Tower of Babel: 9 verses
- Binding of Isaac: 19 verses

Would you consider the Bible to be a minimalist document (not to be confused with Biblical minimalism)? Why or why not? If so, why do you think God chose such a “technique”? God could certainly have designed the Torah to span any length and space. Why would God choose the minimalist style?

▪ 4:43



Why would the same root verb “הפר” (h-p-r) have two opposite meanings? Why is the same word used for both ideas? Put differently, what might these two opposite translations actually have in common?

▪ 9:38



Why is God’s “side” of the covenant focused specifically on the two elements of land and children? What do they have in common? As the book of Genesis progresses, God’s promises to the forefathers will consistently include these two elements. Why do they always come together? And why is this the way in which God always reaffirms his commitment to the other party?



FROM PRINCIPLE TO PRACTICE

In this video, we discovered that the central idea around which the narrative revolves is that the fulfillment of God’s promise is entirely dependent on the people keeping their side of the covenant. The gifts are not free; the deal is mutual. **What does that mean *in practice*? What are the theological and practical implications of this idea? What can we do to ensure that our side of the covenant is kept?**

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Instructions: As you watch the video, fill in the chiasm outline with the various corresponding textual elements. To help you structure and organize the material, some elements have already been filled in.

