

**Torah:** B' resheet (Genesis) 12:1-17:27  
**Haftarah:** Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) 40:27-41:16  
**B'rit Hadashah:** Acts 7:1-8

	year 1 12:1-13:18	year 2 14:1-15:21	year 3 16:1-17:27
1	12:1 - 3	14:1 - 9	16:1 - 6
2	12:4 - 9	14:10 - 16	16:7 - 9
3	12:10 - 13	14:17 - 20	16:10 - 16
4	12:14 - 20	14:21 - 24	17:1 - 6
5	13:1 - 4	15:1 - 6	17:7 - 17
6	13:5 - 11	15:7 - 16	17:18 - 23
7	13:12 - 18	15:17 - 21	17:24 - 27

and it was in the days of Am'rafel king of Shinar / Ar'yokh king of Elasar, K'dorlaómer king of Eylam / and Tidal king of nations...	<i>va'yehiy biymey Am'rafel mélekh Shin'ar / Ar'yokh mélekh Elasar, K'dor'la'ómer mélekh Eylam / ve'Tid'al mélekh goyim</i>	וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם אֲמֶרְפֶּל מֶלֶךְ-שִׁנְעָר אֲרִיּוֹךְ מֶלֶךְ אֶלְסָר כְּדוֹרְלָאֲמֶר וַיִּתְּדָל מֶלֶךְ גּוֹיִם:
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*Lekh L'kha* tells the story of Avraham from his call to leave his father's house to the birth of his first son, Ishmael. This year we focus on Avram's rescue of his nephew, Lot, who was taken captive. This first biblical narrative of warfare seems to come from outside independent sources. It portrays Avram as decisive, self-sacrificing, loyal, courageous toward Lot, and as a military leader and hero. There is little detail about the war itself, emphasizing the virtues of loyalty, saving captives, disdain for material reward, and trust in HaShem to empower the few against the many.

The *haftarah* reassures the people of Israel in exile, that the call and the promise to Abraham made to him in this Torah portion are still valid.

Aliyah Summaries:

- 1. Gen. 14:1-9** The introductory words and the subsequent names and places depict an Akkadian (c. 2334-2154 BC) chronicle. Invasion routes in v. 5-7 describe “the kings highway” (Nu. 21:22) bearing resemblance to Mesopotamian itineraries from ancient Babylonian times (c. 1830 BC)
- 2. Gen. 14:10-16** Avram the Hebrew (*avram ha ivri* - אַבְרָם הָעִבְרִי) is drawn into war along with his allies, to redeem those taken captive, even though Lot separated from him. The number of his army, 318 (the sum of the 12 prime numbers from 7 to 47) is not literal, but symbolic of a large group. It is the number of the name *Eli'ezer* (אֱלִיעֶזֶר - 1, 30, 10, 70, 7, 200 - my God is helpmeet) With great strategy, success is achieved: Lot, his possessions, women and others are recovered.
- 3. Gen. 14:17-20** The intentions of the king of S'dom are intentionally ambiguous. To “meet” most often means to “confront” (see Ge. 13:13). He brings no gift, offers no blessing to Avram, “Shaveh Valley” could be understood as the royal sports arena. In contrast, Malki-Tzedeq (מַלְכֵי צְדָקָה - righteous/rightful king - an appellative - See Jos. 10:1) brings symbols of life and joy and offers a blessing.
- 4. Gen. 14:21-24** The king of S'dom's first word is “give-me,” in contrast to Malki-Tzedeq. Avram's response is total loyalty to One - El Elyon. His actions are not mercenary, nor his motivation spoils. What came from S'dom (v. 11) is returned after his warriors are cared for.
- 5. Gen. 15:1-6** “Fear not” (*el-tiyra* - אַל-תִּירָא) is an oracle of assurance. “I am your shield” (*anokiy magen lakh* - אֲנֹכִי מִגֵּן לְךָ) is a simile of divine protection (Ps. 3:4, 18:3, 31, 36 etc.). “Your reward” (*se'kar'kha* - שְׂכָרְךָ) is HaShem's assurance of a recompense that vastly exceeds the

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spoils of war that Avram had spurned. Avram's speaks his first recorded words with HaShem, words of frustration, disappointment, bitterness and despair. The name, Eli'ezer, only appears here (Ge. 24:2ff). HaShem reassures him with the stars. Nehemiah (Neh. 9:7) makes it clear that v. 6 is the hinge – Avram's act of faith makes him worthy of HaShem's reward secured through a covenant (Neh. 9:7-8, Ps. 106:30ff re: Nu. 25:6-13)

- 6. Gen. 15:7-16** First use of "I [am] HaShem" (ani ADONAI – אֲנִי יְהוָה) connecting Avram's individual context to a national one (Ex. 20:2). Offspring will manifest during his lifetime, but possession of the land will not (Ge. 13:15, 17, 15:15). "How shall I know... [v.8] know this for certain [v. 13]" forms Avram's second dialogue with HaShem. The unexplained "covenant between the parts" projects the fate of the violator with that of the animals. The future is described in three stages of suffering: alienation, enslavement and oppression, followed by three stages of redemption: judgement on the oppressor, Exodus, settling the Promised Land, all over a long period of time. The fate of all people is in HaShem's hands (v. 16, De. 9:4-6, Le. 18:24, 20:23)
- 7. Gen. 15:17-21** HaShem is the principle party, his represented by smoke and fire (Ex. 19:18, 20:15(18), Is. 4:5, 31:9, Acts 2:3-4). The grant of land is delineated in geographic and ethnic terms. This is the most comprehensive of 17 such lists in Tanakh.

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### Thought For Today

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1. *Pidyon sh'vuyim* (פְּדִיּוֹן שְׂבוּיִים – Redemption of Captives) is a religious duty in Judaism to bring about the release of a fellow Jew captured by an enemy or imprisoned unjustly. According to Maimonides, "there is no commandment as great as that of redeeming captives, for they are among the hungry, the thirsty and the naked, and are in mortal danger...".

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### Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

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1. (12:1) Sometimes we have to leave something (or someone) behind in order to move on. Is God speaking to you about this? If so, what are you waiting for?
2. (12:14) Sarai was a treasure to Avram, yet he hid their relationship from Pharaoh. What do you treasure? Do you "hide" it? How do others view what you treasure?
3. (13:5) We become like those with whom we associate. Who do you want to be like? Do you spend enough time with Yeshua for it to show?
4. (14:13) The word "hebrew" means "to cross over." Have you "crossed over" from death to life? (John 5:24, Gal 3:7)
5. (14:21) Have you ever been tempted to use tainted or forbidden means to justify what seems like positive results? What are you doing to prevent this?
6. (15:8) Do you ever ask God, "how will I know?" Has he answered with a promise? Are you participating with Him, or just waiting? (Eph 2:8-10)
7. (17:7) It is God who establishes His covenant. Do you trust Him to uphold His covenant? Are you sure?