

Torah: B'reshet (Genesis) 12:1-17:27 Haftarah: Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) 40:27-41:16 B'rit Hadashah: Acts 7:1-8, Romans 4:1-25		<i>year 1</i> 12:1-13:18	<i>year 2</i> 14:1-15:21	<i>year 3</i> 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 HaShem said to Avram, walk to yourself / from your land and from your family and from the house of your father / to the land that I will show you	<i>va'yómer YHVH el Av'ram lekh lekhá me'ar'tzekha u'mimoladetkha u'mibeyt avíkha el-ha'áretz asher ar'ekha</i>	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם לֵךְ־לְךָ מֵאֶרְצְךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל־הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאֶה׃
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In this portion, HaShem speaks again to man for the first time since he spoke hope to Noakh. It tells the story of Avraham's call to leave his father's house through the birth of his first son, Yish'mael.

The haftarah reassures the people of Israel in exile that the call given in this Torah portion still applies.

Aliyah Summaries:

- Gen. 12:1-3** Avram is the tenth generation from Noakh, just as Noakh was the tenth from Adam. The phrase *walk to/for yourself* can be understood as a command to Avram to “find yourself.” The triad of land, kinsmen and “house of your father” show the depth of both separation and retention involved in what now becomes a divine trek for Avram. God's heart for blessing (vs. retribution) through Avram and his descendants is promised (Is. 51:2).
- Gen. 12:4-9** Avram is 75. We know nothing of those years. He takes all that he has become and leaves for Kena'an. God “appears” to Avram for the first time in Sh'khem / Oaks of *Moreh* (מֹרֶה - teaching; same root word for *Torah*). (Abram 3 times – Ge. 17:1, 18:1, Isaac twice – Ge. 26:2, 24, Jacob once – Ge. 35:9). He builds altars there and then in Beit-El.
- Gen. 12:10-13** Famine drives Avram from The Land to the first mention of Egypt, as will happen to all the patriarchs (Ge. 26:1, 42:1, 43:1), causing a strong sense of dependence upon HaShem.
- Gen. 12:14-20** Abduction of Sarai (and Ge. 20:1-18, 13; Isaac/Rebekah 26:1, 6-11); parallels in ancient Canaanite and Greek epic traditions (e.g. Helen of Troy); emphasizes influence in and respect from kingly courts, pride in matriarchal beauty and God's intervention/protection,
- Gen. 13:1-4** Avram's wealth grows under God's blessing. He returns to the altars previously built (12:8) and renews his connection to the land and to HaShem.
- Gen. 13:5-11** Affluence is not without its complications. Avram acts to nip discord in the bud and preserve relationships. The word “quarreling” (*merivah* – מְרִיבָה) (v.8) is only used in Torah to express ingratitude toward leaders and God over water (Ex. 17:7, Nu. 20:13, 24, 27:14, De. 32:51, 33:8). The Kena'ani (walled cities?) and the P'rizi (open country?) factor into the conflict.
- Gen. 13:12-18** Avram acts with generous character, not insisting on his rightful seniority. Lot chooses based on the glitter of prosperity, overlooking the underlying evil and sin. Lot's departure severs the last link between Avram and his father's house. Just as Lot “raised his eyes” and chose (v.10) Avram raises his eyes as God reaffirms the promise of nation and land. (Heb. 12:1-3)

Theme: Legacy – The Tower of Babel story sets the biblical theme of *Legacy* (Ge. 11:4), upon which the story of Avram/Avraham begins with Avram's father, Terakh (11:27), who was originally bound for what would become the land of promise (11:31). Avram's brother, Haran dies young, so his brother Nakhor marries Haran's daughter Milkah. We learn later that Sarai is Avram's half-sister. This shadow of Leverite marriage is all about perpetuating

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legacy. This is why Avram takes Lot (Haran's son) under his wing. Avram is all about making great the names of others. The storyline now focuses on this one man through whom all of mankind can choose to partake of God's blessing (Ge. 13:16).

Thought Focus

Walking the Walk – Avram's call to *Lekh-Lekha* - is more than just taking a walk... It is literally walking on a path to *find himself*. The story of Abraham is like each of our stories; it is about *halakhah* - walking in The Way - as Paul says, "in accord with the Torah and everything written in the Prophets" (Acts 24:14-16) - walking with God, going where he leads us so that we can find ourselves - not what others want for us, or what others want us to be (Noakh's Ark "walked" on the water – Ge. 7:18). It is about the significance of every decision we make, every step we take in obedience. This is what it means to be a follower of Yeshua.

Particularity – That one nation would be the vehicle through which ALL nations would be blessed is an incredible Torah principle that is without parallel. This concept of "particularity" is juxtaposed with the Tower of Babel - a unified uniformity where every "brick" was the same. Now, through the diversity of nations, one particular nation would be the key to blessing for all nations. Note that the universal goal must always be kept in sight along with the particular - the "universal blessing" does not come without the "particular." Could this be a key to the Messianic vision of a one-world government (theocracy) vs. a non-Messianic one-world government?

Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

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?