

PARSHA SUMMARY FOR PARSHAS LECH LECHA

by Rabbi Aron Tendler

Note: The Shabbos Torah Reading is divided into 7 sections. Each section is called an Aliya [literally: Go up] since for each Aliya, one person "goes up" to make a bracha [blessing] on the Torah Reading.

1st Aliya: Avram is instructed to leave Charan and travel 400 miles to the Land of Canaan. (Charan was 600 miles from Ur Casdim) Upon arriving, they are forced to leave Canaan, due to a local famine, and travel to Mitzrayim in search of food.

2nd Aliya: Avram plans for his encounter with the amorality of Egypt. His and Sarah's confrontation with Pharaoh is detailed. Avram and Sarah return home.

3rd Aliya: Avram separates from his nephew / brother-in-law Lot, due to Lot's defection from the teachings of Avram. Hashem reassures Avram that he will have children, "like the dust of the earth", who will inherit the Land and carry on his work.

4th Aliya: Avram is forced to rescue Lot from captivity. In so doing, he adjusts the balance of power in Canaan and is recognized by the other political leaders for his military and moral strength. His encounter with Malki Tzedek (Shem) is in stark contrast to his confrontation with the King of Sodom.

5th Aliya: Hashem again reassures Avram that he will have genetic children (not just students) who would be as numerous as the stars in the sky.

6th Aliya: The monumental "Covenant Between the Halves" takes place during which the next 430 years of Jewish history is revealed. Avram is 70 years old. Sarai instructs Avram to marry Hagar. The story of her conflict with Sarai, her encounter with an angel, and the birth of Yishmael in 2034 is told. Following the birth of Yishmael Avram's name is changed to Avraham.

7th Aliya: Avraham is presented with the Mitzvah of Circumcision. Sarai's name is changed to Sarah, and Hashem assures Avraham he and Sarah will have a son called Yitzchak. It is the year 2047 and Avraham circumcises himself, Yishmael, and his entire household.