Torah Portion T3-Go Forth/Lekh Lecha

INTRO – This portion is like a mini-movie with different sets "on location." It starts in Haran, goes to the land of Israel (Canaan) and then into Egypt and back to Israel. There is a lot happening. Let's dive in!

Gen 12:1-9 - The Call of Abram

It would have been more complete if the portion had begun back in chapter 11. What is not obvious is that Abram was BORN in Ur of the Chaldees. Haran is a different place! The story is not in chronological order. At some point Abram's father Terah must have taken his family from the Chaldees to Haran, but it is not told why. Also, Abram had a brother named Haran, so that is another source of confusion. Haran was the father of Lot, and died before his father Terah. (see Gen 11) None of this is a big deal, but it is evident that there are details of the story not given. It appears that Gen 12:1-3 is retrospective, taking place before the previous verses, Genesis 11:31-32. The implication is that TERAH responded to the call with Abram!!

YeHoVAH calls Abram to Lekh-Lecha – to go forth.

The threefold separation God instructs provides us a picture of how we must come out and be separate – indeed, detached from outside influences – country, relatives, father's house

V2 – the threefold promise that we see still being fulfilled today
1. I shall make you a great nation, and
2. bless you and make your name great, and
3. you shall be a blessing! (Ultimately fulfilled in Yeshua – even today as people come to covenant with YeHoVAH, it is a fulfillment of this 3rd promise),

Last week, we saw how Nimrod and the people of Babel wanted to make a name Hebrew SHEM) for themselves. NOW we see a contrast in the person of Abram. GOD will make his name great.

Also, last week, we saw how one bad choice by Ham resulted in his son Canaan being cursed by Noah, and this week we will soon see how Ham's choice reverberates through generations. We will also see how one choice by Lot has serious ramifications.

V4 - Abraham believed God, and OBEYED the command to "Go Forth." At age 75!

V8 – calling on the name of YHVH is taken as a public declaration of faith.

Today, we do this when we are baptized!
Ananias gave these instructions to Saul regarding baptism:
Acts 22:16 TS2009 And now, why do you delay? Rise up, be immersed, and wash away your sins, calling on the Name of YeHoVAH.'

So WHEN we are baptized, among other things, we:
1. Call on the NAME of YHVH– make a public declaration of faith
2. have our sins washed away.

Heb 11:8-10 FAITH = BELIEF + OBEDIENCE (understanding is not required before action!)

Hebrews 11:8-10 NAS95 <u>By faith</u> Abraham, when he was called, <u>obeyed</u> by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and <u>he went out, not knowing where he was going</u>. *(Obedience =Trust.)* **9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.**

We saw last week how Nimrod and Babel looked to build their own city on their own foundations. Abram went looking for the City of God built on His foundation

Gen 12:10-20 - Abram and Sarai in Egypt
Now that we have built up Abram as some kind of hero, the Bible gives an honest report of his faultiness:

The incident in VV10-12 shows what the best of men are when they are left to their own devices. As the minister of God, Abram is great and noble; as the architect of his own fortune, he is cowardly, selfish, and false. Pharoah turns out to be more noble than Abram!!
V13 – Did Abram forget that God was with him?!

V20 – Pharoah sent Abram and Sarai (and entourage) away. Hebrew word is SHALAKH. (H7971).
It means "to send away" but sometimes it is interpreted as "divorce." Very strange, since a divorce was not complete until a written certificate (Hebrew- sefer kr'tut; Greek apostascion) was given.
Clearly, Pharoah did NOT divorce Sarai since she was Abram's wife.

Gen 13:1-18 - Abram and Lot Separate
The separation id due to too many people and livestock crammed into one "encampment."
Abram gives Lot first choice on land.
V11 – Lot chooses the plains east of the Jordan river. Abram is left the Promised Land!

Lot ends up near Sodom – bad choice!!
FAITH includes trusting in the promises of YeHoVAH – even when it SEEMS like there are better choices!!

VV14-18 – God reiterates His promise to Abram of land and many descendants.

Gen 14:1-16 -Abram Rescues Lot

V10 – we see a war of 5 kings versus 4. The kings of Sodom and Gomorrah are defeated in/among the tar pits of Siddim. The 5 are now down to 3, and eventually lose.

From Preacher's Homiletical Commentary:
". . . the vanquished do not always benefit by the discipline of adversity. The men of Sodom and Gomorrah did not learn wisdom by this calamity, but continued in their wickedness until by a severer judgment they were doomed to destruction. Many nations have failed to learn the lessons of God's judgments in the scourge of war."

The victorious 4 kings take Lot captive, and also take loot from Sodom and Gomorrah.
Do you suppose Lot is regretting his choice to live near Sodom? The worst is yet to come!!

Abram learns of Lot's capture, and commissions 318 trained men to rescue him. ***Abram's faith is demonstrated by his quick and decisive obedience.***

V16 - Abram's men succeed, and recover Lot, his family, and possessions, AS WELL AS the loot from Sodom and Gomorrah. ***VICTORY is a combination of God's blessing and Abram's faithful action.***

Gen 14:17-24 - Abram Blessed by Melchizedek

DISCUSSION: In Genesis 14:17, how did the king of Sodom come out to greet Abram if he was killed in the tar pits in Genesis 14:10 (It says he "fell into" the pits)? Some say this king Bera survived the battle in the pits; others suggest it was his successor which met Abram.

Either way, Abram refuses to keep any loot from the cities S&G. lot has already suffered from his proximity to the city of iniquity; Abram wisely does not want any connection whatsoever.

VV18-20 - We meet Melchizedek, King of Shalem (Peace)
Melchizedek literally means “king of righteousness”

See John 8:56-59 – Yeshua states “Abraham rejoiced to see my day.” Most take this to refer to the Melchizedek event with bread and wine.

Gen 15:1-21 - God's Covenant with Abram
God reiterates His promises to Abram

Genesis 15:5 TS2009 And He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward the heavens, and count the stars if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So are your seed.”

V5 – this verse along with verse 13 (“*your seed are to be sojourners in a land that is not theirs”*), are the inspiration of my all-time favorite lyric in Christian music in the song “Sometimes By Step” by the late great Rich Mullins.
The second verse opens thusly:

Sometimes I think of Abraham, how one star he saw had been lit for me.
He was a stranger in this land, and I am that no less than he.

***V*6 – faith= righteousness**
This verse is quoted by Paul in
Romans 4:3 NAS95 For what does the Scripture say? “ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

How do we know Abraham believed God? BY his obedience to God’s instructions.

VV9-21 – God cuts the covenant to endorse, or consummate it.

V18 – “made a covenant” – Hebrew is B’rit – the idea of cutting an agreement. God gives the land from the Nile to the Euphrates! That is WAAAAY bigger than the Israel of today!!

Gen 16:1-16 - Sarai and Hagar
V2 – Abram listened to Sarai – ANOTHER bad choice, with consequences for 4,000 years – so far!!

VV7-13 – YeHoVAH appears to Hagar apparently as a man , and advises her to return to Sarai.

For DISCUSSION:
V13 - WHY did Hagar refer to the “angel” or “man” as YeHoVAH? WHO was this man?

V16 - Ishmael is born (Abram is 86)

Gen 17:1-14 - Abraham and the Covenant of Circumcision
In this chapter, we see the names of Abram and Sarai changed to Abraham and Sarah – a new start, or fresh slate, as we say.

V1 – Abram is now 99 years old, that make Ishamel 13.

V2 -the verb employed here (na-THAN “nuh-TAWN”, H5414) means, I will grant, fix, perform, or establish My covenant— i.e. carry into effect provisions previously expressed. There was now to be a further development: the covenant was to be sealed.

VV4-5 – Abram's name is changed by God to Abraham ("father of many nations")

V9 – the verbiage "guard my covenant" or "guard my commandments" (H8104=shah-MAWR) is seen many times through the Scriptures. The idea is not only obedience, but preservation of God's Word through teaching to our children and upholding His Word publicly.

Gen 17:15-27 - Isaac's Birth Promised
V15- Sarai's name changed to Sarah

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V20 – Ishmael is also foretold by God to be the father of 12 tribes – fulfilled in Gen 25:12-16.

VV24-26 – Abraham and Ishmael circumcised on the same day – Abraham at 99 and Ishamel at 13.

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Prophet Portion
Isa.40:27-31 - The Greatness of God

This section contains my all time favorite Scripture verse:

Isaiah 40:31 TS2009 but those who wait on YeHoVAH renew their strength, they raise up the wing like eagles, they run and are not weary, they walk and do not faint.

Isa 41:1-16 - Fear Not, for I Am with You
3 times in verses 10-14 – God says, "Do Not Fear."
Written to give hope to Israel during the time of captivity, this passage is encouragement to believers today when we see evil winning all around us.

From Preacher's Homiletical Commentary:
"Great consolation is to be derived—1. From the near relation which God sustains to His people. "Thy Redeemer," &c. 2. From the perpetual presence of God with His Church. "I will hold thee," &c. 3. From the manner in which He adapts the instrumentality He employs to the end He proposes. "I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth." 4. From the way in which He identifies His glory with our success.
In order to enjoy the consolation of this promise—1. There must be in us a well-founded hope of acceptance and reconciliation with God. 2. We must seek to possess the character to which this and all such promises are made. 3. We must be much in the exercise of that faith which honours God in all His attributes. 4. We must cultivate the expectation of nothing less than final triumph for the cause of God, and for the individual believer, the recipient of His mercy. The history of the past proves that this expectation is reasonable. How often the worm has threshed the mountain! The captives were delivered from their captivity. The Apostles triumphed over the Roman empire. Luther and his associates did accomplish the Reformation. That which has been is that which shall be; in the future there will be still greater victories for the Church of God."—Samuel Thodey.

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Yeshua Portion
Week 37-Luke 10:1-16
Covered last week – see Notes for T2

For discussion:
Luke 10:1-16
Yeshua/Jesus sends out the 70 “missionaries.”

Luke 10:8-11 NAS95
8 "Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you; 9 and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

10 "But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 11 'Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.'

What is the meaning of the term “Gospel of the Kingdom”??
Does it include the story of Yeshua’s death, burial, and resurrection? Why or why not?
Why was the gospel of the kingdom so important to the hearers?

Mat_4:23 Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the **gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

Mat_9:35 Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the **gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Mat_11:5 the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE **THE GOSPEL** PREACHED TO THEM.

Mat_24:14 "This **gospel of the kingdom** shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Mat_26:13 "Truly I say to you, wherever **this gospel** is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

Mar_1:1 The beginning of the **gospel of Jesus Christ**, the Son of God.

Mar_1:14 Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the **gospel of God,**