

unconfronted by G-d, living in this world, down here on earth, void of the mystery of the spiritual world, the world of the Divine. Avraham's nation is to be guided by the Divine Hand, engaging with Him, achieving its greatness in the elevated world of mystery and spirit, the Divine world.

We will see this exact same parallel in the journey of Hagar and Yishmael and Avraham and Yitzchak at the Akeida. An earthly story paralleling an elevated story.



7TH ALIYA (17:7-27)

Avraham is told to circumcise his family as a sign of the covenant between him and G-d. He is startled at the promise that Sarah will have a child at age 90, he 99. He suggests that Yishmael could be the next generation of the Jewish people. No, while Yishmael will be great, Yitzchak will be the next generation.

Avraham is reluctant to give up on Yishmael as the heir to the Jewish people. Perhaps this is Avraham's persistent kindness – he sees good, even greatness in Yishmael.

But that type of greatness is not sufficient: greatness comes in different shapes and sizes. Yishmael is great in his way, the ways of this world. Yitzchak will be great in a different way, in the world of the spirit, of the Divine, of ethics. There is greatness amongst the nations of the world: but Jewish greatness is different. ■



STATS

3rd sedra of 54; 3rd of 12 in Bereshit.

Written on 208 lines, ranks 23.

7 Parshiyot; 3 open, 4 closed.

126 pesukim - ranks 13th.

1686 words - ranks 18th.

6336 letters - ranks 19th.



MITZVOT

1 positive mitzvah: Brit Milah. A total of 5 sedras have only one mitzvah (another 17 have none and six have 2 or 3 - that accounts for 28 sedras, over half of the Torah's 54).

A SHORT VORT

BY RABBI CHANOKH YERES
RAV, BEIT KNESSET BEIT YISRAEL, YEMIN MOSHE

שׂא נָא עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה...לְךָ אֶתִּנְנָה וּלְזַרְעֲךָ (יג'יד, טו)

"Lift up your eyes and look...to you will I give it and to all your descendants" (13:14-15)

What is the significance of G-d announcing here that He was transferring possession of the Land of Israel to Avram, when Avraham still had to purchase the Cave of Machpelah with his own money?

The Meshech Chochmah (Rabbi Meir Simcha from Dvinsk 1843-1926) answers that although the current evidence suggested otherwise, this statement by G-d internalized into Avram that G-d's Divine presence dwelt here in the Land. That is why G-d's instruction to Avram in the Pasuk was to "Lift up your eyes." - to look beyond the current situation of the Land and to perceive the holiness of the Land. By transcending your vision and insight to a holier level of how G-d performs, you will then realize that the Land of Israel is sanctified and transferred over to Avram and his children, despite what is seemingly evident now. This declaration of G-d creates the link between the Israelites and the Land of Israel eternally.

Shabbat Shalom