

ABRAHAM

When God Calls Your Name

NOAH (father)

950 years

SHEM

600 Years

ARPHAXAD

438 Years

SALAH

433 Years

HAM

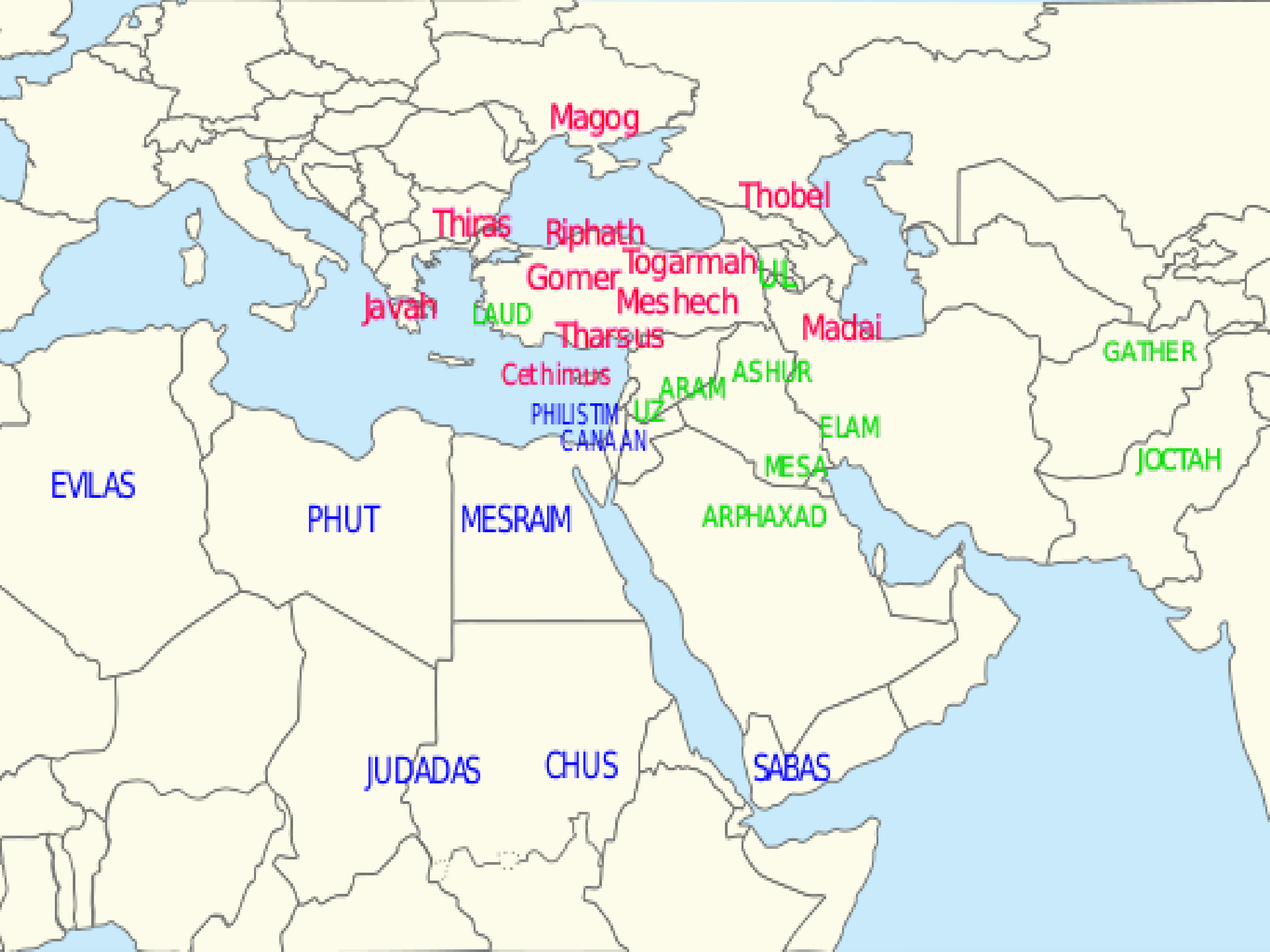
CUSH

NIMROM

**JAPHETH (Noah's
sons)**

**GOMER (Noah's
Grand-sons)**

**ASHKENAZ (Noah's
Great-grand-sons)**



Magog

Thobel

Thiras

Riphath

Togarmah

Gomer

Meshech

Javan

LAUD

Tharsus

Madai

Cethimus

ASHUR

ARAM

PHILISTIM

UZ

ELAM

GATHER

JOCTAH

EVILAS

PHUT

MESRAIM

ARPHAXAD

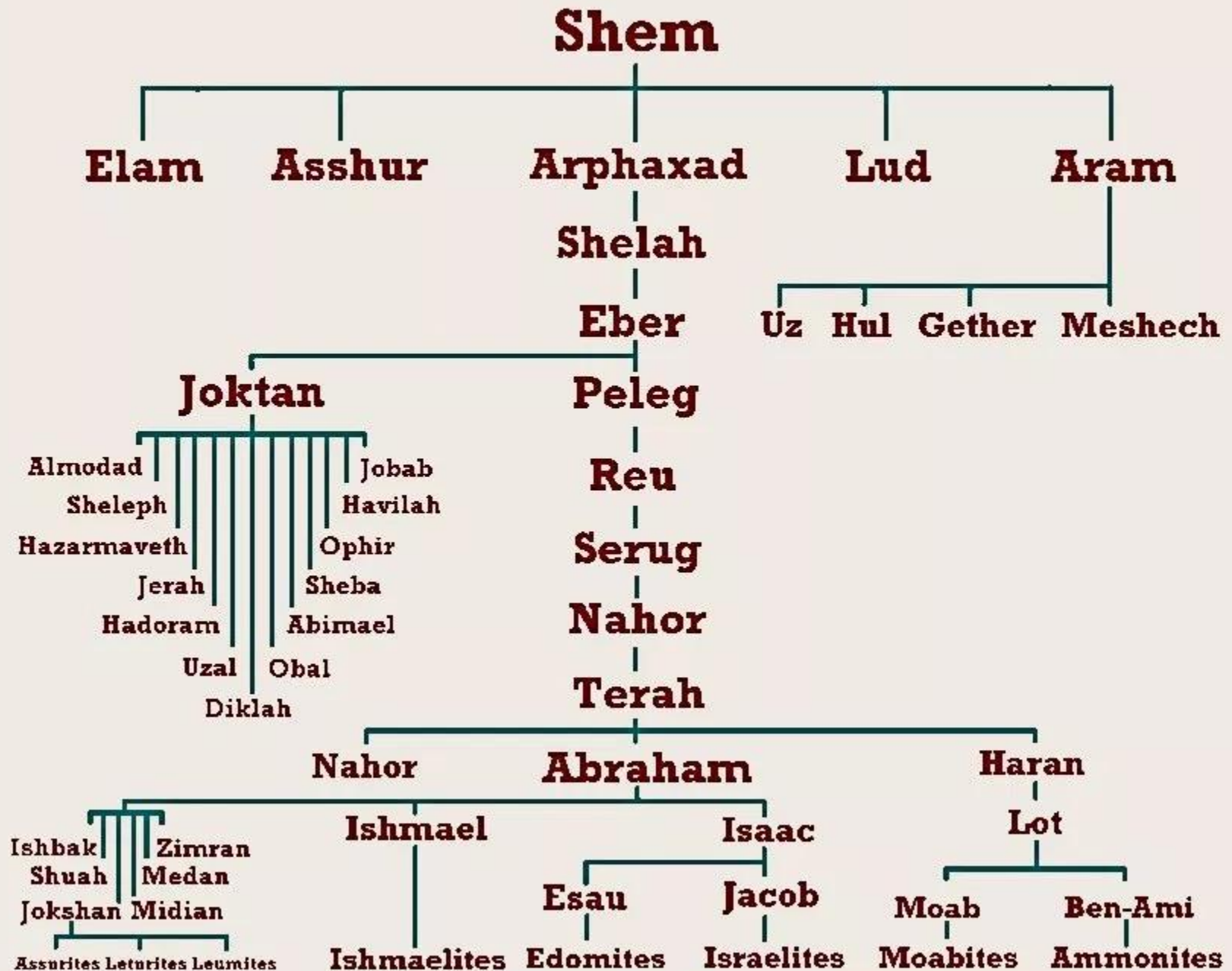
MESA

JUDADAS

CHUS

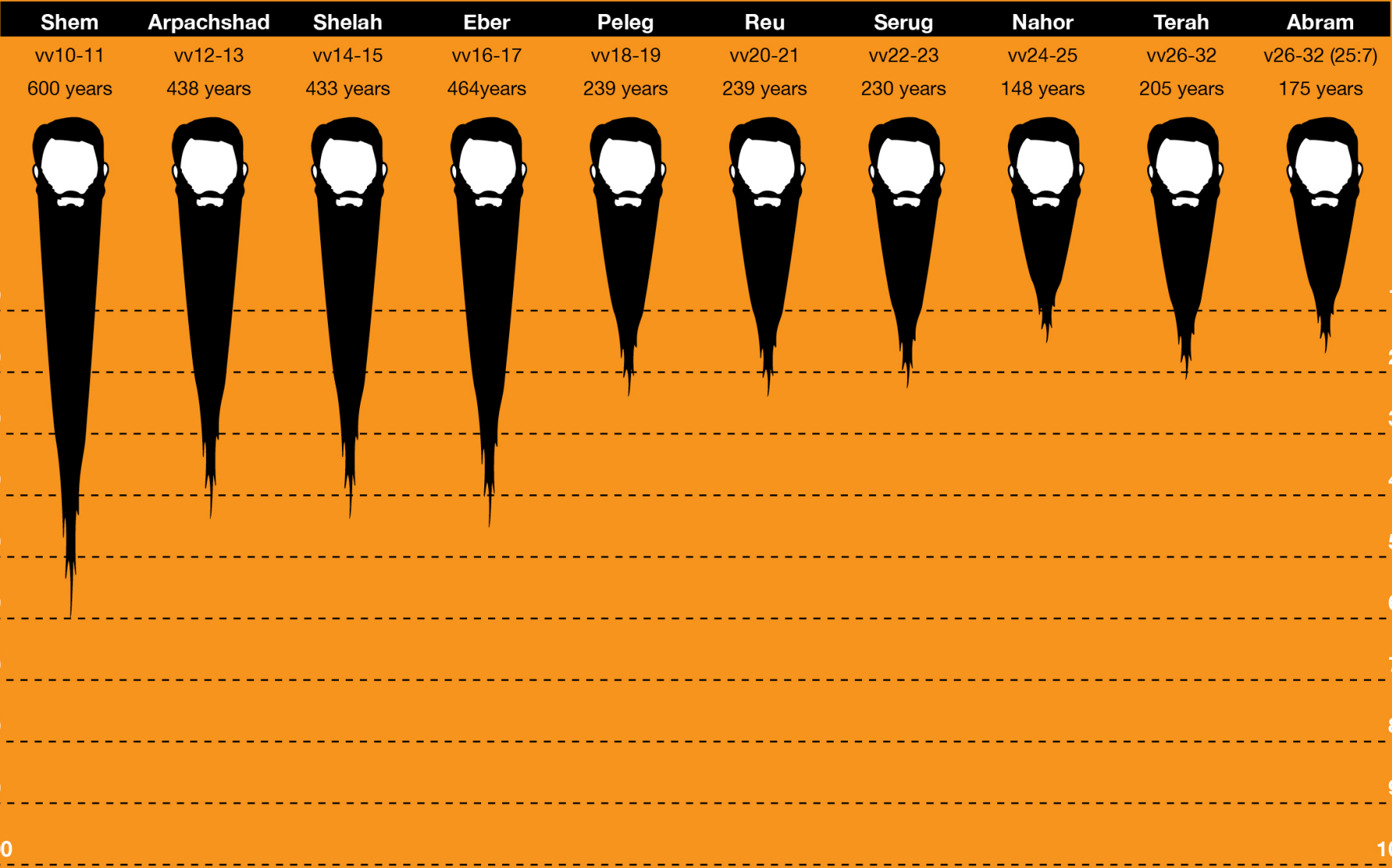
SABAS

The Genealogy of Shem



SHEMtoABRAM GENESIS 11

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**THROUGH YOUR
OFFSPRING ALL NATIONS
ON EARTH WILL BE**
Blessed

GENESIS 22:18

Abraham's Life and Times

- Shem, and Abraham lives over-lap
- Because of laziness, boredom, we skip “the begets”
- Noah was 600 years old when the flood came and he lived 950 years
- From the birth of Arphaxad, two years after the flood, until the birth of Abram it was only 292 years
- Noah lived 350 years after the flood and Shem 500 years
- . Noah was Abraham's great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great-grandfather!

Abraham's Life and Times

- Shem, he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.
- Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Salah.
- Salah lived thirty years great, , and begot Eber.
- Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg.
- Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu.
- Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug.
- Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor.
- Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah.
- Now Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. (Gen 11:10-26)

Abraham's Life and Times

- Abraham was a semi-nomadic shepherd to whom God revealed himself, made promises, and entered into covenant concerning Abraham's offspring and the land that they would inherit in the future
- Abraham's belief in these promises was counted by God as righteousness and his faith shaped his life. Ultimately these promises find their fulfillment in Jesus the Messiah and all those who trust in Yahweh, the true God, Abraham's spiritual children

Abraham's Life and Times

- Abraham was called both a Hebrew (14:13) and an Aramean (Deuteronomy 26:5; cf. 25:20; 28:5; 31:20, 24).
- He was born in Ur and moved to Haran with his father Terah. At God's call, he traveled to Canaan and lived for a while in various localities, in particular: Shechem, Hebron, Bethel, and the Negev desert, with sojourns to Egypt and Gerar.

Abraham's Life and Times

- Abraham's Names
- Abraham and Sarah are referred to as "Abram" and "Sarai" in chapters 11 to 16 until God changes their names in 17:5 and 17:15.
- Scripture indicates the meaning of their names as follows. 'Ab is the Hebrew word for "father."
 - Abram - "Exalted father"
 - Abraham - "Father of Multitudes"
 - Sarai - "Princess" or "Chieftainess"
 - Sarah - "Princess" or "Chieftainess"

Abraham's Life and Times

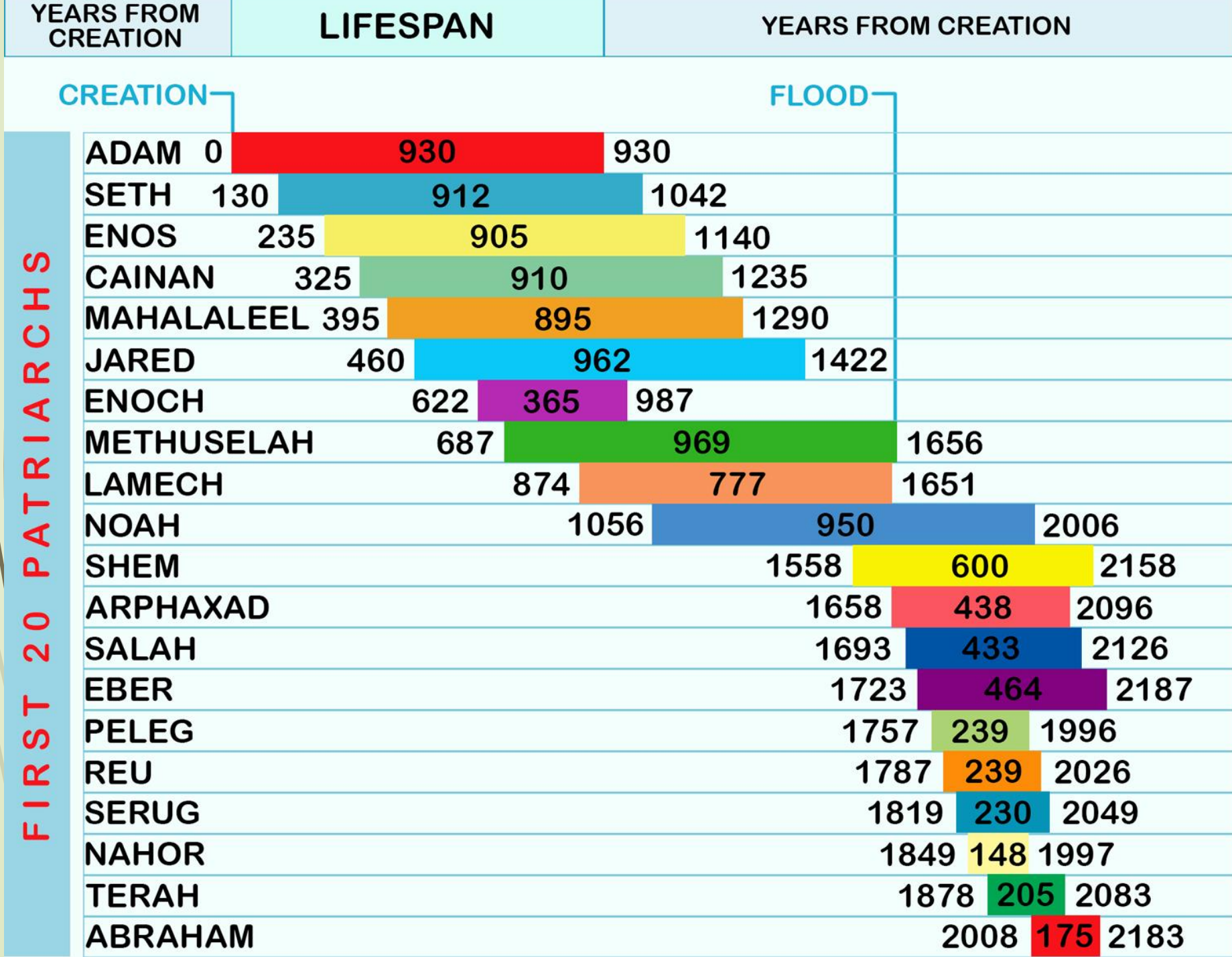
- ➡ Abraham's ancestors were idolaters and polytheists (worshippers of many gods).
- ➡ Joshua reminds the people, "Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshiped other gods" (Joshua 24:2).
- ➡ Jacob's wife Rachel, who probably grew up with Terah's religion, stole her father's "household gods" (31:32-35; 35:2-4)

Abraham's Life and Times

- His approximate age and references to Genesis event
 - Born in Ur (11:27, 32; 12:4)
 - Departs from Haran, age 75 (12:4)
 - Sojourn in Egypt during famine (12:10-20)
 - Rescue of Lot from Mesopotamian Kings (14:1-24)
 - Marriage to Hagar, age 85 (16:3)
 - Birth of Ishmael, age 86 (16:16)
 - Reaffirmation of covenant, age 99 (17:1)
 - Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, age 99 (19:24)
 - Sojourn in Gerar, age 99 (20:1-18)
 - Birth of Isaac, age 100 (21:2; cf. 21:5)

Abraham's Life and Times

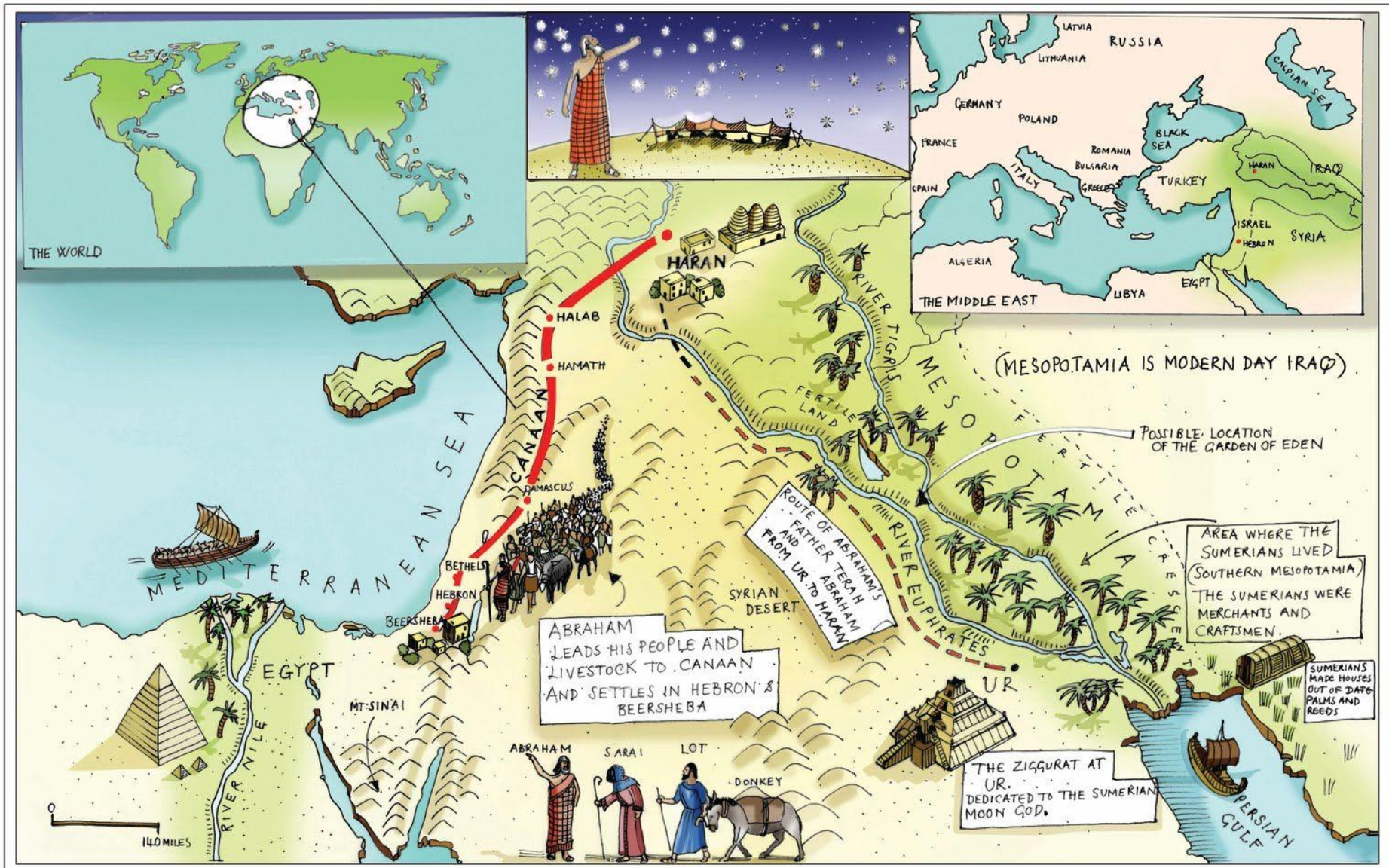
- ➡ His approximate age and references to Genesis event
 - ➡ Offering of Isaac (22:1-19)
 - ➡ Death of Sarah, age 137 (23:1-2; cf. 17:17)
 - ➡ Marriage of Isaac to Rebekah, age 140 (25:20)
 - ➡ Birth of Jacob and Esau, age 160 (25:26)
 - ➡ Death of Abraham, age 175 (25:7)



Chronology of the Old Testament – Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones

	Birth from Creation	Lifespan	Years from Creation
SHEM	1558	600	2158
ARPHAXAD	1658	438	2096
SALAH	1693	433	2126
EBER	1723	464	2187
PELEG	1757	239	1996
REU	1787	239	2026
SERUG	1819	230	2049
NAHOR	1849	148	1997
TERAH	1878	205	2083
ABRAHAM		2008	175 2183

The Faith of Abraham.





The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

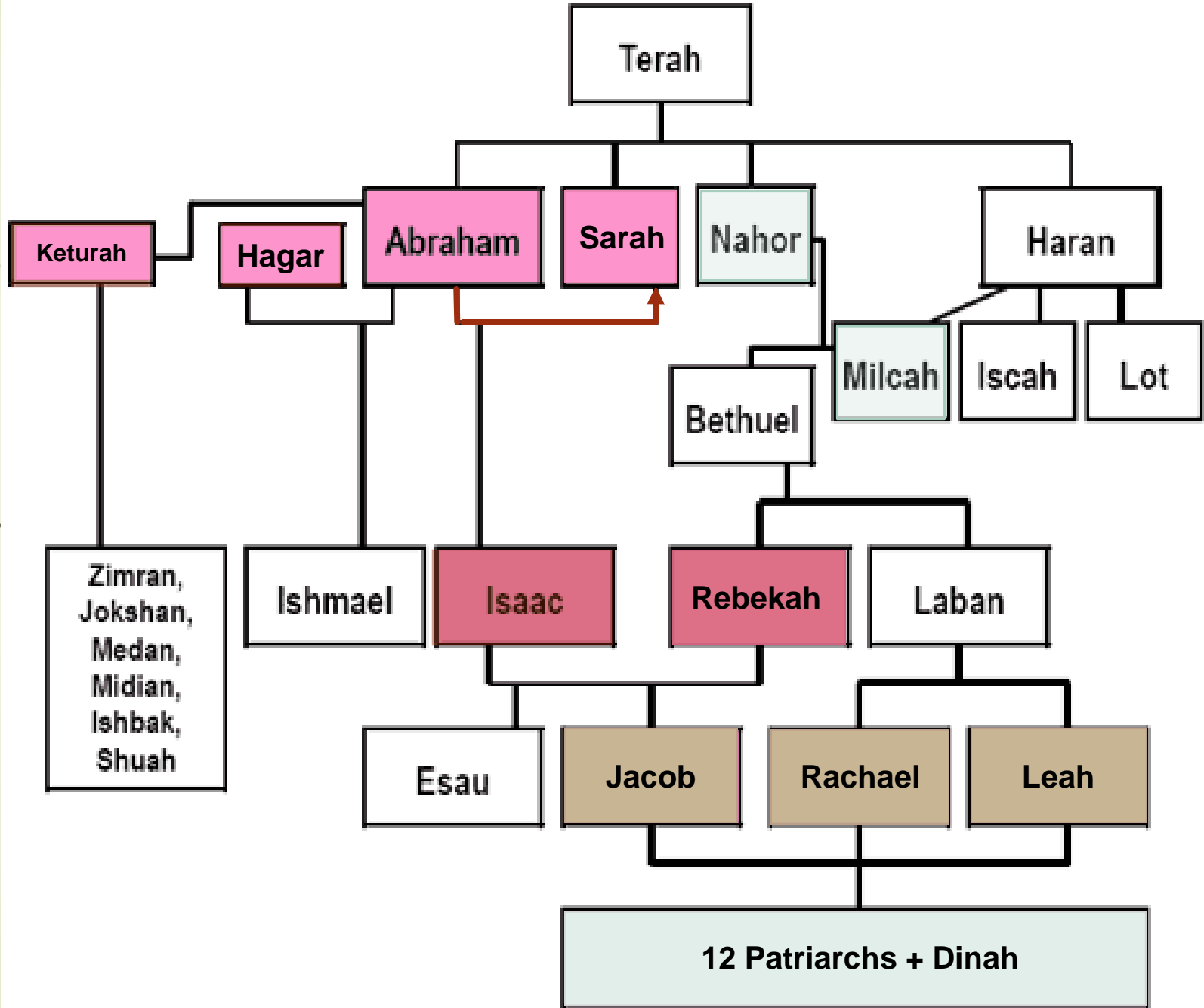
- “This is the account of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot. While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the land of his birth. Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram’s wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor’s wife was Milcah; she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milcah and Iscah. Now Sarai was barren; she had no children.” (11:27-30)

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

- Notice several of the interesting relationships.
 - First, Abraham has married his half-sister (“the daughter of my father though not of my mother,” 20:12)
 - Second, Abraham’s brother Nahor married his niece, Milcah, the daughter of his deceased brother Haran
 - Third, Isaac marries his cousin Rebekah
 - Fourth, Jacob marries his cousins Rachael and Leah.
 - This marrying within the clan – though later prohibited in the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 18) – was not viewed as incestuous within the culture.
 - Marriage with a tribe or kinship unit, to maintain cultural and religious values and property rights


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graph TD; Terah --> Abraham; Terah --> Sarah; Terah --> Nahor; Terah --> Haran; Abraham --> Keturah; Abraham --> Hagar; Abraham --> Ishmael; Abraham --> Isaac; Isaac --> Esau; Isaac --> Jacob; Nahor --> Bethuel; Bethuel --> Rebekah; Rebekah --> Jacob; Jacob --> Rachael; Jacob --> Leah; Haran --> Milcah; Haran --> Iscah; Haran --> Lot; Jacob --> Dinah; Jacob --> 12_Patriarchs[12 Patriarchs + Dinah];
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The chart illustrates the genealogy of the Patriarchs of Israel. At the top is Terah, who has four sons: Abraham, Sarah, Nahor, and Haran. Abraham has three wives: Keturah, Hagar, and Sarah. Keturah has five sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Ishbak, and Shuah. Hagar has one son, Ishmael. Sarah has one son, Isaac. Isaac has two sons: Esau and Jacob. Nahor has one son, Bethuel. Bethuel has one daughter, Rebekah. Rebekah has two sons: Jacob and Esau. Jacob has two daughters: Rachael and Leah. Haran has three daughters: Milcah, Iscah, and Lot. Jacob has one daughter, Dinah. The final box at the bottom represents the 12 Patriarchs and Dinah.



The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

➡ From Ur to Haran (11:31-32)

➡ “Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they settled there. Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Haran.” (11:31-32)

➡ Abraham’s migration was in two phases: (1) from Ur to Haran and (2) from Haran to Canaan

➡ The Call of Abraham (12:1-3)

➡ “The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. ‘I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you;

THE TABLE OF NATIONS

GEN. 10

- City
- City (uncertain location)

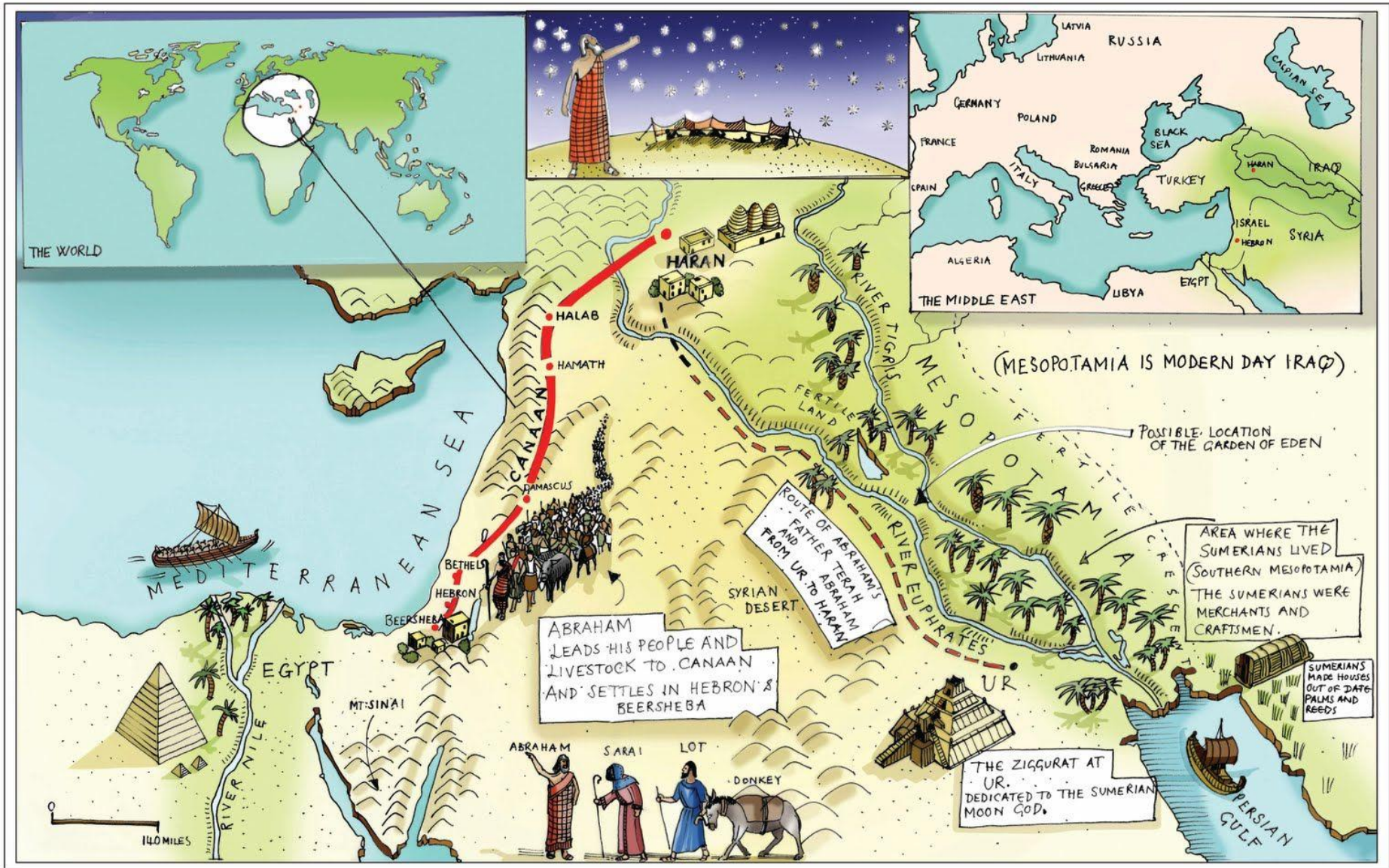
LUD Descendants of Japheth

PUT Descendants of Ham

UZAL Descendants of Shem



The Faith of Abraham.



The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

➡ A Promise of Blessing (12:2-3)

- ➡ To be a great nation.

- ➡ Personal blessing on Abraham.

- ➡ A great or famous name.

- ➡ To be a blessing to others – specifically

 - ➡ A blessing to those who bless Abraham.

 - ➡ A curse to those who curse Abraham.

- ➡ A blessing to all the peoples of the earth.

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

- ➡ A Promise of Blessing (12:2-3)
 - ➡ The promise to be a nation was fulfilled in the nation of Israel
 - ➡ The people of God, the spiritual descendants of Abraham (Romans 4:11-16, 24; 9:7-8; Gal 3:7, 26-29; 4:22-31)
 - ➡ Abraham himself was blessed with wealth (Genesis 12:5; 13:2) and finally an heir in Isaac.

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

- ➡ A Promise of Blessing (12:2-3)
 - ➡ Through Ishmael he was the father of the Arab peoples.
 - ➡ Additionally, he had six children with Keturah.
 - ➡ Abraham's name has become truly famous – all three monotheistic religions look to him as a major figure: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.



Judaism & Christianity

1st Wife: **2** Isaac → Stayed in Palestine (Present day Israel)

Sarah

Banished

Abraham

2nd Wife:

Hagar

1

Ishmael

Went to Mecca (Present day Saudi Arabia)

A
D
A
M

Noah

(Son)

Shem

Semite: Descendent of Shem

Islam

Muslims, Christians, & Jews all believe the same historical principles until this point.

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

- ➡ A Promise of Blessing (12:2-3)
 - ➡ His name 150+ times in the bible
 - ➡ Abraham has been an inspiration to many millions of people who bless him
 - ➡ Abraham, through his descendent Jesus the Messiah – has conveyed the incredible blessing of salvation to all the peoples of the earth.
 - ➡ “Bless” to endue with power for success, prosperity, fecundity, longevity

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

- ➡ Abraham's Journey to Canaan (12:4-5)
- ➡ What sets Abraham apart is his obedience to God's word to him:
 - ➡ "So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there." (12:4-5)

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

➡ Camping at the Tree of Moreh at Shechem (12:6)

➡ “Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The Lord appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your offspring I will give this land.’ So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.” (12:6-7)

➡ Trees became so famous as landmarks that were generally recognized by all as suitable for specifying rendezvous

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

- ➡ The Lord's Promise of Land (12:7)
- ➡ What makes the encampment at the Oak of Moreh so special is God himself:
 - ➡ "The Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.' So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him." (12:6-7)

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

- ➡ The Lord's Promise of Land (12:7)
- ➡ When God spoke to Abraham in Mesopotamia, he gave him a promise of greatness and blessing. But here he makes two promises:
 - ➡ The land
 - ➡ Offspring

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

- The Lord's Promise of Offspring (12:7)
 - The land as yet is not carefully defined in God's promise, though it clearly includes the area in which Abraham is encamped.
 - But the word that Abraham is especially excited to hear is "offspring." Up until now Abraham had no heir, except perhaps his nephew Lot or Eliezer of Damascus (Genesis 15:2)
 - In gratitude for God's promise and as an act of worship, Abraham builds an altar, and presumably, offers a sacrifice to the Lord

The Call of Abraham (11:27-12:9)

➡ Calling Upon the Name of the Lord (12:9)

➡ What does it mean to “call on the name of the Lord”?

➡ To call on the name of God is to invoke God or ask for his help

➡ In our passage it is significant that Abraham is calling upon the name of Yahweh, not another god.

➡ The culture all around him was religious, calling on various supposed deities. But Abraham is now a believer in the One God – Yahweh



ABRAHAM

When God Calls Your Name

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

- Genesis 12, Yahweh has appeared to Abraham and promised him blessing, land, and offspring
- Two problems – (1) famine forces Abraham to move his family to Egypt and (2) Sarah's beauty causes her to be abducted into Pharaoh's harem
- Problems in understanding what is going on
 - (1) How can a 65-year-old woman be considered so beautiful?
 - (2) How can a righteous man like Abraham lower himself to deception in claiming that Sarah is his sister?
 - (3) Why does a similar wife-sister account occur three times in the book of Genesis?

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

- **Famine in the Land (12:10)**
- **Prolonged drought devastating effect, farmers are devastated.**
 - Those whose livelihood depends upon grazing land for their herds, have to go where there is pasture
 - Abraham was the first of his clan to head to the Nile delta area to keep his herds – and his family – alive
- **Vulnerabilities of a Sojourner**
 - “Live ... for a while” (NIV), “sojourn” (KJV), and “reside there as an alien” (NRSV), be a stranger”
 - “to live among people who are not blood relatives”

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

- ➡ Famine in the Land (12:10)
- ➡ Living in a country where you have few legal rights – where your treatment depends upon the whim of a local king or warlord
 - ➡ No family or relationship to protect him
 - ➡ Only protection is to have sufficient armed force or place yourself under the protection of the local king or warlord
 - ➡ There are strong commands in the Bible to protect and not oppress sojourners (Exodus 22:21)

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

➡ Abraham's Fear of Death (12:11-12)

- ➡ Abraham faces a fear – the fear that his beautiful “trophy wife” will be abducted and that he will be killed so that he doesn't cause problems

➡ Questions:

- ➡ Sarah's beauty, how can Sarah be seen as beautiful at age 65?
- ➡ SPECULATION - patriarchal life-span which is about double our own.
- ➡ “Sarai's sixties would therefore presumably correspond with our thirties or forties and her ninety years at Isaac's birth with perhaps our late fifties.” *Kidner, Genesis, p. 117*

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

➡ Questions:

- ➡ Sarah's beauty, how can Sarah be seen as beautiful at age 65?
- ➡ We do know that both Abraham and the Egyptians saw her as beautiful. Abraham was afraid for his life
- ➡ He asks Sarah to say she is his sister rather than his wife – since she is indeed his half-sister.
- ➡ Do this for me: (1) I will be treated well and (2) my life will be spared
- ➡ How likely was wife abduction by the Egyptians?
 - ➡ “The hunger was life-threatening; family, friends, slaves, and animals depended upon the Pharaoh's willingness.
 - ➡ Abraham became a convenience-refugee, with all types of insecurity, fear, and suffering among the selfish Egyptians, who had only contempt for ‘these kind of people’.
 - ➡ The stay in Egypt was not free of charge. The refugees had to pay off with animals, property, or whatever their hosts wanted; among others, their beautiful women.”

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

➡ Sarah Becomes Pharaoh's Concubine (12:14-16)

➡ And it came to pass as Abraham had feared it would:

➡ “When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was a very beautiful woman. And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, menservants and maidservants, and camels.” (12:14-16)

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

- Sarah Becomes Pharaoh's Concubine (12:14-16)
 - And it came to pass as Abraham had feared it would:
 - "When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was a very beautiful woman. And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, menservants and maidservants, and camels." (12:14-16)
 - Abraham's action doesn't seem to be either honorable or faith-filled. It was the act of a man hoping to survive. But God is his judge, not we

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

➡ God's Judgment on Pharaoh (12:17-20)

- ➡ So Sarah is taken into Pharaoh's palace harem and becomes his wife (12:19)
- ➡ The scripture doesn't say (as it does in the case of Abimelech in 20:6) that Pharaoh didn't consummate this marriage
- ➡ Now Abraham and Sarah are separated. God's promise of blessing, land, and offspring seem remote. What God had begun seems to have floundered.
- ➡ "But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram's wife Sarai. So Pharaoh summoned Abram. 'What have you done to me?' he said. 'Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!' Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had." (12:17-20)

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

➡ God's Judgment on Pharaoh (12:17-20)

- ➡ Pharaoh and his household get sick
- ➡ Pharaoh discovers that he has taken Abraham's wife as his own and is being punished for it
- ➡ Pharaoh is angry. He blames Abraham for not telling him the essential truth – that Sarah is Abraham's wife – rather than that she was his sister
- ➡ Pharaoh senses that he is being judged for taking Sarah, he doesn't punish either Abraham or Sarah, but instead sends them out of Egypt to fend for themselves
- ➡ The famine may still be present, but Abraham and Sarah are alive, together again, and free. They survive and end up richer than before

Sarah's Abduction (12:10-20 and 20:1-18)

➡ LET'S JUMP AHEAD, Gen 20:1-18

➡ Similar situation 25 years later

➡ “Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. For a while he stayed in Gerar, and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, ‘She is my sister.’ Then Abimelech king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her.” (20:1-2)

➡ Are the Wife-Sister Stories “Doublets”? The same story told twice – NO!

Passage	12:10-20	20:1-18
Couple	Abraham, Sarah	Abraham, Sarah
Locality	Egypt	Gerar
Reason for stay	Famine	No reason given
King	Pharaoh	Abimelech
Offence	Sarah taken as wife	Sarah entered harem but kept from adultery.
King becomes aware	Not said	Warning dream
Reason for deceit	Abraham's fear of death.	Abraham's fear of death

Passage	12:10-20	20:1-18
Excuse	None given	"No fear of God in this place.... When God had me wander..." asked favor of Sarah
Penalty on King	Serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household.	Abimelech, his wives and concubines could not beget or bear children.
Gifts because of Sarah	Pharaoh treats Abraham well – sheep, cattle, donkeys, slaves, and camels	None reported
Expiation	None	1,000 shekels of silver, plus sheep, cattle, and slaves
Expulsion	Sent away with wife and possessions.	None. "Live wherever you like."

ABRAHAM

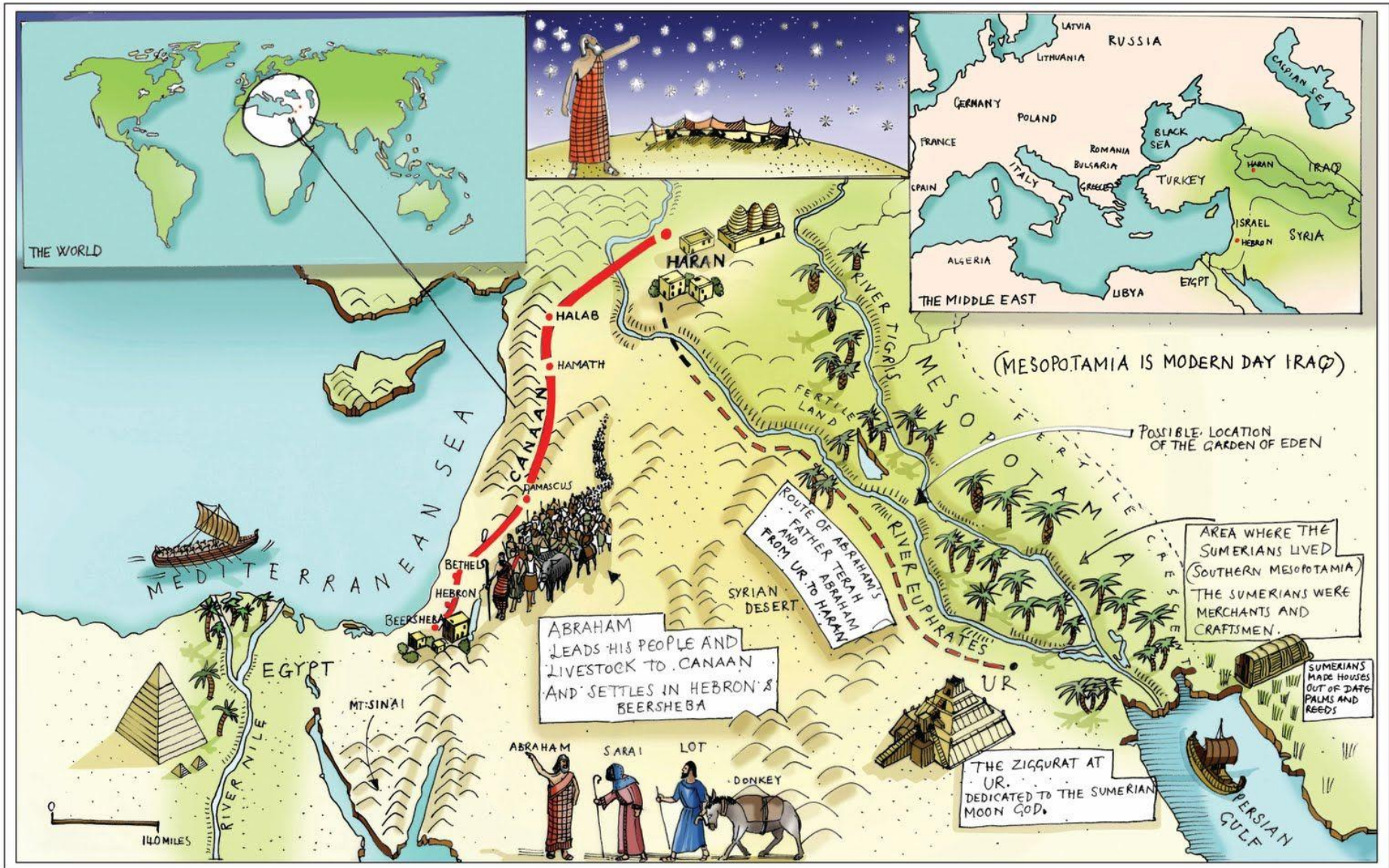
When God Calls Your Name

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➤ Abraham Moves Back to Bethel (13:1-4)

- “So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold. From the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been earlier and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the Lord.” (13:1-4)
- Abram is a nomadic shepherd, travels “from place to place” finding grazing land for flocks and herds. After he is expelled from Egypt he returns to the Negev desert. The drought is possibly over and Abraham can sustain himself there again.

The Faith of Abraham.



Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➤ Material Wealth a Sign of God's Blessing? (13:2)

➤ "Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold" (13:2). Why is this mentioned?

➤ Set the stage for the conflict with his nephew Lot

➤ Demonstrate God's blessing on Abraham in response to God's promise to him:

➤ "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse...."
(12:2-3)

➤ God's blessing often includes physical wealth.

➤ However, material blessings are not a sure indicator of God's favor.

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➡ Quarrelling over Pasture Land (13:5-9)

➡ “Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. And quarreling arose between Abram’s herdsmen and the herdsmen of Lot. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land at that time.

➡ “So Abram said to Lot, ‘Let’s not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine, for we are brothers. Is not the whole land before you? Let’s part company. If you go to the left, I’ll go to the right; if you go to the right, I’ll go to the left.’”
(13:5-9)

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➡ Quarrelling over Pasture Land (13:5-9)

- ➡ Abraham, though he is the older family member and would have the right to the best land, he allows Lot to have his choice to avoid strife.
- ➡ God has promised Abraham land and he is trusting God to provide for him.

➡ Lot Chooses the Plain of Jordan and Sodom (13:10-12)

- ➡ “Lot looked up and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan was well watered, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, toward Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom.” (13:10-12)
- ➡ Lot chooses the lush Jordan River valley and encamps near Sodom.

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Sinful Sodom (13:13) The key sentence in this section is:
 - “Now the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.” (13:13)
 - “Wicked” in Hebrew “be bad, evil.”
 - The inhabitants of Sodom are sinful, but the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah are evil as well – both their names in 14:2 mean “evil, wicked.”
 - We’ll see in chapter 14 that Abraham pointedly refuses to take anything from Sodom’s king – probably because he disapproved of the city’s sins.
 - Lot is attracted by the well-watered land, but ignores the moral character of the inhabitants.

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- God Promises Canaan to Abraham (13:14-17)
 - Lot has the choice land, but Abraham has God's promise:
 - "The Lord said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, 'Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.'" (13:14-17)
- God has been speaking to Abraham for years now.
 - First, to call him from Ur and later Haran to travel to Canaan. Then to promise him the land and offspring.
 - Here God restates his two-fold promise to Abraham.

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Here God restates his two-fold promise to Abraham.
 - 1. God will give to Abraham's offspring all the land he can see in any direction. God encourages him to walk through "his" land and check it out, perhaps as an act of taking possession of it.
 - 2. Abraham's descendants will be so many that they can't be counted. God uses tiny grains of dust as an analogy to illustrate the uncountable, vast number of Abraham's offspring.
- Abraham Moves to Hebron (13:18)
 - God's promise may have initiated a period of "walking" the land followed by settling at Hebron, near the great trees of Mamre.
 - "So Abram moved his tents and went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he built an altar to the Lord." (13:18)

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Chapter 13 – We learn that:
 - 1. Lot moves to Sodom.
 - 2. Sodom is a place of wickedness and sin.
 - 3. God renews his promise to Abraham of land and numerous offspring.
 - 4. Abraham moves to Hebron where he gains valuable allies.
- Four Mesopotamian Kings Punish Rebellious Vassal Cities (14:1-12)



Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➤ Mesopotamian Kings (14:1-0)

➤ 4 Kings – Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goiim

➤ War against

➤ 5 Kings – Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, king of Bela (that is, Zoar).

➤ 4 Kings defeat the 5 Kings, Lot is caught up in the defeat

➤ Lot Is Taken Captive (14:11-12)

➤ “The four kings seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. They also carried off Abram’s nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom.” (14:11-12)

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➡ Abraham's Allies (14:13-14)

- ➡ “One who had escaped came and reported this to Abram the Hebrew. Now Abram was living near the great trees of Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshcol and Aner, all of whom were allied with Abram. When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan.” (14:13-14)
- ➡ Lot has been captured by large foreign armies. Abraham pulls together his allies and his own men.
- ➡ He convinces Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner – his Amorite neighbors in the area around Hebron – to join him. Together they pursue the Mesopotamian army that has moved north to Dan.

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➡ Abraham Attacks at Night (14:15-16)

- ➡ “During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people.”
(14:15-16)
- ➡ Abraham finds the Mesopotamian army at Dan. Abraham sets the strategy, which involves two elements:
 - ➡ 1. A night attack for maximum confusion
 - ➡ 2. A divided force attacking from several directions

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➡ Abraham Meets Two Kings near Jerusalem (14:17-18)

➡ On the road back to Hebron, Abraham comes to Salem (now Jerusalem), to the Valley of Shaveh, just south of present-day Jerusalem.

➡ “After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley). Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High....”
(14:17-18)

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Abraham Meets Two Kings near Jerusalem (14:17-18)
 - Two kings meet Abraham there – Melchizedek, king of Salem, and Bera, king of Sodom.
 - The king of Sodom has come to negotiate for his subjects' release.
 - The king of Salem, brings food and provisions for the soldiers.
 - These two kings are clear opposites
 - King of Salem
 - Melchizedek = “king of righteousness”
 - Righteous
 - Salem = “peace”
 - Abraham accepts Melchizedek's food and blessing
 - Priest of the Most High God

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Abraham Meets Two Kings near Jerusalem (14:17-18)
 - These two kings are clear opposites
 - King of Sodom
 - Bera = “be evil” (14:2)
 - Sinful
 - Sodom = a symbol for sinfulness
 - Abraham rejects the offer of Sodom’s captured property
 - (worshipper of false gods)

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Abraham Meets Two Kings near Jerusalem (14:17-18)
- Abraham Is Blessed by Melchizedek (14:18-20a)
 - See how Melchizedek honors Abraham:
 - “Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, and he blessed Abram, saying, ‘Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.’” (14:18-20a)
 - Melchizedek offers refreshment – a sign of peace,
 - He blesses Abraham and then God, and attributes Abraham’s victory to God.

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➡ God Most High – El Elyon

- ➡ Just who is this “God Most High”? Melchizedek’s name for God is a pair of words, Hebrew ‘el ‘elyon (found also in Psalm 78:35)
- ➡ ‘Ēl is the generic term for God Hebrew ‘elyôn, “most high,”
- ➡ Elyôn, as a divine name signifying the supremacy of the deity
- ➡ Melchizedek sees El Elyon as being “Creator of heaven and earth” (14:19b) in the same way as Abraham does (14:22)
- ➡ Both Melchizedek and Abraham see El Elyon as totally supreme over everything in earth and heaven
- ➡ Abraham clearly identifies El Elyon with Yahweh in 14:22 and seems to welcome Melchizedek’s blessing.
- ➡ He sees Melchize-dek as a priest serving the same God that Abraham himself serves.

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Abraham Tithes to Melchizedek (14:20b)
 - Then Abraham does a remarkable thing:
 - “Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.” (14:20b)
- What is the significance of one tenth of all the spoils of war being given to Melchize-dek? He didn’t even participate in the rescue mission.
 - Clearly is an act of worship, which immediately follows Melchizedek’s blessing of both Abraham and God Most High:
 - “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.’ Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.” (14:19-20)

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Abraham Tithes to Melchizedek (14:20b)
- By tithing to God's priest Melchizedek, Abraham is worshipping God for giving him the victory.
- Melchizedek, the king, hadn't helped in the military victory and isn't entitled to a share of the spoils, but Melchizedek, the priest and representative of God, receives Abraham's gift as an act of worship of God Most High.
- Abraham, as the general of the expedition, divides up the spoils of war and begins with God who had given them the victory



ABRAHAM

When God Calls Your Name

Melchizedek: 10 biblical facts

- Only three books of the Bible mention Melchizedek
- The New Testament says more about Melchizedek than the Old Testament
- Melchizedek is a contemporary of Abraham's
- Melchizedek has no recorded family
- Melchizedek was a priest of God Most High
- Melchizedek gives blessings (or at least one)
- Melchizedek is the king of Salem
- Melchizedek's name means "king of righteousness"
- The order of Melchizedek is royal and everlasting
- Melchizedek was greater than Abraham and Aaron

Melchizedek: 10 biblical facts

- Only three books of the Bible mention Melchizedek
 - The books Melchizedek is mentioned in are Genesis, Psalms, and Hebrews.
 - The Genesis account introduces Melchizedek as a king during the time of Abraham.
 - The book of Psalms, which alludes to him when describing a royal priesthood
 - The book of Hebrews, Melchizedek is shown as a case study for Jesus' priesthood.
- The New Testament says more about Melchizedek than the Old Testament
 - The writers of Genesis and Psalm 110 give us four verses about Melchizedek. The author of Hebrews spends all of chapter 7 discussing his priesthood
- Melchizedek is a contemporary of Abraham's
 - Abram takes 318 trained warriors and alliance's, rescues Lot (and his spoils) back to Canaan with him. It's at this time that Melchizedek meets Abram and blesses him
- Melchizedek has no recorded family
 - The Jews are about genealogies. Yet Melchizedek has none. There's no Melchizedek, son of So-and-So. No mention of a mother. No mention of a son. Not really anything

Melchizedek: 10 biblical facts

- Melchizedek was a priest of God Most High
 - We get this from Genesis (Gn 14:18). A priest is someone who performs religious rituals for divine beings on behalf of people. They also frequently offer sacrifices and do other things on behalf of humans.
- Melchizedek gives blessings (or at least one)
 - Melchizedek blesses Abram:
 - Blessed be Abram of God Most High,
 - Possessor of heaven and earth;
 - And blessed be God Most High,
 - Who has delivered your enemies into your hand. (Gn 14:19–20)
 - Melchizedek recognizes that Abram has aligned himself with the God above all other gods— and blesses both Abram and their mutual Creator
- Melchizedek is the king of Salem
 - Salem was a city-state in the land of Canaan. “Salem” means “full, complete, safe, whole, peaceful.”
 - Salem. The city seems to live up to the “safe” and “peaceful” parts of its name

Melchizedek: 10 biblical facts

- Melchizedek's name means "king of righteousness"
 - The author of Hebrews brings this up in his argument for Christ's greatness (He 7:2). The name comes from two Hebrew words: malak (king, ruler) and sadaq (righteous, just, innocent)
- The order of Melchizedek is royal and everlasting
 - The 110th Psalm is a Messianic prophecy that tells us two things God promised to do for Jesus: make Jesus the king in Zion and make Jesus a priest.
- Melchizedek was greater than Abraham and Aaron
 - Melchizedek trumps Abraham (He 7:7) — so much so that Abraham gave Melchizedek a tithe of all the spoils Abraham collected on his mission (Gn 14:20; He 7:4)
 - Abraham looked up to Melchizedek, and Aaron looked up to Abraham, that puts the order of Melchizedek higher

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Abraham Refuses to Take from the King of Sodom (14:21-24)
 - The wicked king of Sodom makes a seemingly modest suggestion to Abraham concerning how to divide up the spoils:
- “Give me the people and keep the goods for yourself.” (14:21)
 - In other words: Return the captured citizens of Sodom to me, but feel free to keep for yourself any of the recovered property that had been taken from Sodom.
- But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, and have taken an oath that I will accept nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the thong of a sandal, so that you will never be able to say, ‘I made Abram rich.’ I will accept nothing but what my men have eaten and the share that belongs to the men who went with me – to Aner, Eshcol and Mamre. Let them have their share.” (14:22-24)

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

- Abraham Refuses to Take from the King of Sodom (14:21-24)
 - Why does Abraham so firmly reject the King of Sodom's offer that would allow him to keep the spoil taken from the sack of Sodom?
 - Abraham is particularly concerned that the king of Sodom might boast, "I have made Abram rich."
 - Abraham returns the people and goods, but separates himself from further involvement with a wicked king, city, and goods.
 - He receives Melchizedek, king of righteousness, but rejects the king of wickedness. Abraham does ally himself with those of a different religion, but has nothing to do with a wicked king who is patently evil.

Abraham Rescues His Nephew Lot (13-14)

➤ Lessons from Abraham's Foray into International Politics

- 1. We can trust God to take care of our needs, even though others seem to help themselves – like Lot who took the well-watered land.
- 2. We are to assist our relatives – and others – when we are able, when we see them in trouble.
- 3. We see an example of courage and boldness to emulate.
- 4. We are to worship God with our material wealth, as an indication that he brings the victory, and that “it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant” (Deuteronomy 8:18).
- 5. We are to be careful not to ally ourselves with the wicked any more than is necessary.

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

- Abraham has faced fear in battle with the Mesopotamian kings. But now he faces fear of a different sort – fear in the presence of an awesome God who appears to him.
- Yahweh – a Shield and Reward (15:1)
 - “After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: ‘Do not be afraid, Abram. **I am your shield, your very great reward.**’” (15:1)
- Abraham experiences both God's “word” and a “vision,” some kind of visual perception of God's presence.
 - God assures Abraham, “Do not be afraid, Abram,” calling him by name
- God is saying to Abraham: Don't be afraid. I am your protector, sovereign and I am offering you an exceedingly humongous reward, beyond your wildest dreams, for serving me

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

➤ Vision (15:1)

- Visions may be either visual or auditory and are not the same as dreams in that one does not have to be asleep to experience a vision. God used visions to communicate to people; they constitute a more aggressive form of communication than dreams.
- In contrast to this one, visions in the Old Testament were typically given to prophets in order to communicate oracles to be delivered to the people.
- They may involve natural or supernatural settings, and the individual having the vision may be either an observer or a participant.

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

- Abraham's Longing for an Heir (15:2-6)
- But payment or money isn't what Abraham desires. He is already wealthy. His heart longs for a son, an heir
- Why is this such a big deal?
 - "But Abram said, 'O Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.' Then the word of the Lord came to him: 'This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir.' He took him outside and said, 'Look up at the heavens and count the stars – if indeed you can count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness." (15:2-6)

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

- Abraham's Longing for an Heir (15:2-6)
- God's promise of great wealth doesn't appeal much to Abraham right now. He is saying: Without an heir to which to pass my wealth, what can you give me, Lord, that means anything? Abraham is "childless."
 - In an era when children were necessary for a sense of completeness."
- As things stand now, one of his servants, Eliezer of Damascus, will become his heir at his death.
 - This represents an adoption procedure. A childless couple can adopt a slave, who will bury and mourn them when they die, after which he will inherit their estate – unless a natural son is born after this adoption to become the chief heir

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

- Abraham's Longing for an Heir (15:2-6)
- God speaks an abiding word to Abraham in this vision that is fixed forever in his mind:
 - "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir" (15:3).
 - Now Abraham knows that his heir won't be an adopted son, but his own natural son. What an encouragement to a childless man!
- Next, in the vision, God takes Abraham outside his tent, asks him to try to count the stars, and tells him, "So shall your offspring be" (15:5)
- So God gives Abraham two everyday reminders of his promise of offspring:
 - 1. During the day he can look at the innumerable grains of fine dust and recall God's promise: "I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth" (13:16).
 - 2. During the nights he can look up at the innumerable stars and recall God's promise, "So shall your offspring be" (15:5).

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

- Abraham's Faith Is Accounted as Righteousness (15:6)
- Abraham had questioned God's first promise of reward. Now he believes that God will fulfill his promise of offspring.
 - "Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness." (15: 6)
- In this key verse – which is a mainstay of Paul's teaching on justification by faith (Romans 4:3-6, 9, 20, 25; Galatians 3:6-9; James 2:23) – we see three important elements to understand:
 - (1) **Having Faith**
 - (2) **Crediting**
 - (3) **Righteousness**

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

➡ Faith

- ➡ What is the essence of Abraham's faith? The root idea is of firmness or certainty.
- ➡ This biblical word for "to believe" shows that "biblical faith is an assurance, a certainty, in contrast to modern concepts of faith as something possible, hopefully true, but not certain."
- ➡ Abraham has believed before – faith prompted his journey to Canaan, his worship, his deliverance, and his victory – but here Abraham put his trust in the certainty of God's promise afresh. His confidence takes on a new steadfastness
- ➡ He believes God's promise will certainly be fulfilled.
 - ➡ Abraham doesn't understand how everything will work out, but this he believes – that God will keep his promises!

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

➡ Abraham's Faith Is Accounted as Righteousness (15:6)

➡ Credited or Accounted

➡ The first element is Abraham's faith. The second is God's response. God "credited" (NIV), "counted" (KJV), or "reckoned" (NRSV) that faith to him as righteousness.

➡ The basic idea of Credited or Accounted is the employment of the mind in thinking activity."

➡ In this passage and a few others, the idea "to impute," a specialized sense of "to make a judgment" – "to reckon or credit something (as something) to someone's account."

➡ How many of you have "Credited or Accounted" Mt Hebron's 2020 Graduates – Checks, PayPal, Zelle, Cash app

➡ Make it plain preacher ;>)

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

- Abraham's Faith Is Accounted as Righteousness (15:6)

- **Righteousness**

- The third key idea in this verse is "righteousness." God counts or reckons Abraham's steadfastness in faith as "righteousness,"

- It speaks of conformity to an ethical or moral standard.

- In the Old Testament, this standard is the nature and will of God. A righteous person is one who does righteous acts.

- But here, it is not acts of righteousness or justice that Abraham performs that are significant – though Abraham (for the most part) is acting righteously. Rather, God counts, considers, reckons, accounts his faith to be righteousness before God.

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

➤ Abraham's Faith Is Accounted as Righteousness (15:6)

➤ Righteousness

➤ Based on this understanding, made possible by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins (Isaiah 53), the apostles saw faith as the key element.

➤ God accounts faith to us as righteousness, just like he did for Abraham.

➤ Of course, we in no way deserve this as a result our personal behavior – it is the righteous-ness of Jesus Christ that is credited to our account (Romans 1:17; 3:21-23; 4:5, 11, 24; 9:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

- Taking Possession of the Land (15:7-8)
- But the vision isn't over yet.
 - "He also said to him, 'I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.' But Abram said, 'O Sovereign Lord, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?'" (15:7-8)
- Abraham may have seen his journey from Ur to Canaan as an act of obedience, but from God's perspective, God is the chief actor: "I am the Lord who brought you out..."
- God's purpose for Abraham coming to Canaan was for him to "take possession of" the land. "Take possession" (NIV), "inherit" (KJV), and "to possess" (NRSV)
- Abraham hasn't taken possession yet, of course. Nor will this possession take place within his lifetime. God is talking to Abraham as the progenitor of a race of people who will accomplish this years to come

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

➡ Cutting the Covenant (15:9-11)

- ➡ Abraham acknowledges God's promise that he will possess the land. He isn't doubting here in the way that Zechariah doubted the angel's word in the temple – "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years" (Luke 1:18). Abraham's faith is firmly anchored in God. Rather he is asking God for further information about God's promise.
- ➡ God responds to Abraham's request by instructing him to prepare a solemn ceremony of making a covenant:
- ➡ "So the Lord said to him, 'Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.' Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away." (15:9-11)

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

➤ A Thick and Dreadful Darkness (15:12)

- “As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him.” (15:12)
- Abraham seems to fall into a deep sleep. As he sleeps a darkness comes over him that is “dreadful” (NIV), “horror” (KJV), “terrifying” (NRSV)
- As this nighttime vision unfolds, Abraham is surrounded by a terrifying darkness.

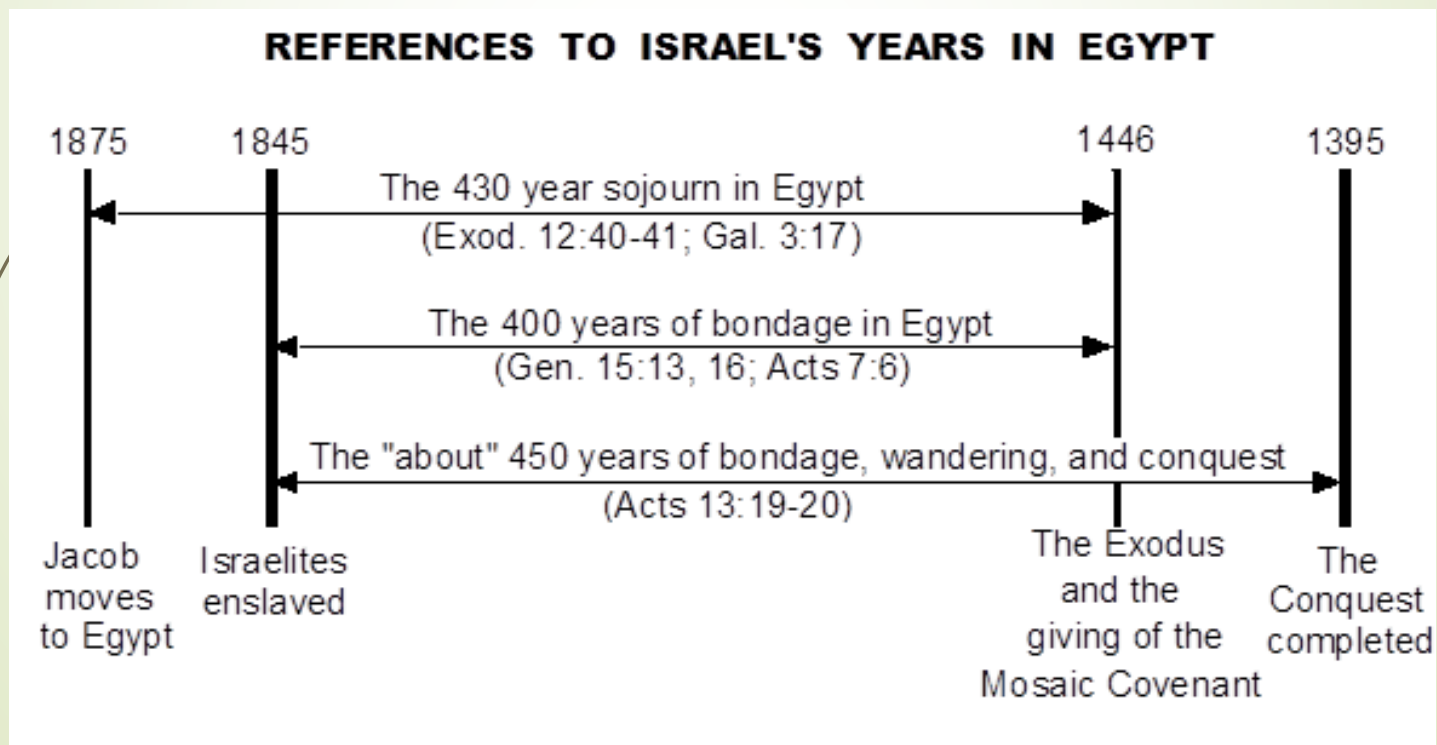
➤ 400 Years in Slavery (15:13-16)

- As he sleeps in this darkness, he hears the voice of the Lord:
 - “Then the Lord said to him, ‘Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. You, however, will go to your fathers in peace and be buried at a good old age. In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.’” (15:13-16)

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

➤ 400 Years in Slavery (15:13-16)

- It is a prophecy of what will happen to Abraham's descendants, no doubt handed down from father to son until it comforted the Israelites during their captivity in Egypt.



God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

➡ The Sin of the Amorites (15:16)

- ➡ But the last sentence of the prophecy gives an intriguing reason for Abraham not possessing the land at this time:
 - ➡ “In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.” (15:16)
- ➡ Just who are the Amorites that God is referring to? Verse 19 provides clarity, Amorites & Canaanites are used as shorthand for all or most of the seven peoples spelled out in 15:19
- ➡ What does he mean “the sin ... has not yet reached its full measure”?
- ➡ God reveals here that the slavery in Egypt, the Exodus, and the conquest of Israel are part of his long-term plan, not only for Israel but for the Amorites.
- ➡ At this point their sin was clearly present, but hadn't reached such proportions that God saw fit to expel them from the land.
- ➡ Joshua's invasion ... as an act of justice, not aggression. Until it was right to invade, God's people must wait

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

➡ The Sin of the Amorites (15:16)

- ➡ The prophecies of Genesis 15 deal with these basic events:
- ➡ Abram would have many descendants. Those descendants would one day be taken captive and treated harshly.
- ➡ After four hundred years, Abram's descendants would return to Canaan. Their return would coincide with God's judgment on the Amorites in Canaan.
- ➡ These prophecies were fulfilled when, after Joseph's death, Pharaoh enslaved the Israelites (who were living in Egypt at the time), and then, four hundred years after Joseph, Moses brought the children of Israel out of Egypt to the borders of Canaan

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

- **The Sin of the Amorites (15:16)**
- Genesis 15:16 shows God's judgment on the wicked.
- The Amorites and other Canaanites were exceedingly wicked
- During the time of Moses, God gave the reason for the Canaanites' downfall: "The land was defiled; so I punished it for its sin, and the land vomited out its inhabitants" (Leviticus 18:25).
- God had predicted this all the way back in Abraham's time. The Amorites were wicked, and Judgment Day was coming



God Speaks to Hagar, Abraham's Other Wife (Genesis 16)

- ➡ **Sarah Gives Hagar to Abraham (16:1-4a)**
- ➡ “Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; so she said to Abram, ‘The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her.’ Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.” (16:1-4a)
- ➡ This arrangement was perfectly legal in Abraham’s world. Sarah, barren at the age of 65 has given up on childbirth.
- ➡ Now she decides to “obtain children” (KJV, NRSV) by her servant girl, Hagar
- ➡ A barren wife could give her maid to her husband so that she might vicariously bear a child through her. A firstborn son born of such a union would become Abraham’s heir unless the primary wife later bore a son herself

God Speaks to Hagar, Abraham's Other Wife (Genesis 16)

- ➡ **Sarah Gives Hagar to Abraham (16:1-4a)**
- ➡ Hagar was an Egyptian maidservant, acquired probably when Abraham and Sarah were in Egypt during a famine
- ➡ She becomes Abraham's "wife" in verse 3,
- ➡ Sarah remains the primary wife, Abraham has sex with Hagar and she conceives
- ➡ **Hagar Despises Sarah & is Driven Away (16:4b-6)**
- ➡ "When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram, 'You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me.' 'Your servant is in your hands,' Abram said. 'Do with her whatever you think best.' Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her."
(16:4b-6)

God Speaks to Hagar, Abraham's Other Wife (Genesis 16)

- Hagar Despises Sarah & is Driven Away (16:4b-6)
- “Despise” “be slight, trifling, of little account.” Whether Hagar’s pride in her pregnancy is subtle or overt, Sarah picks up on it immediately. She, the primary wife, has failed to perform her most important duty in that culture – to produce a male offspring – while her young servant-girl is walking around pregnant and happy. Sarah is jealous – and angry. She blames Abraham:
- **“You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge¹² between you and me.” (16:5)**
- Abraham is caught in the middle of a situation proposed by Sarah herself, not Abraham. But, nonetheless, he is accused of “wrong” What is he supposed to do? He doesn’t know, so he does ...
- **Proverbs 30:21, 23**

God Speaks to Hagar, Abraham's Other Wife (Genesis 16)

- ➡ Hagar Despises Sarah & is Driven Away (16:4b-6)
- ➡ In her jealousy, Sarah turns her rage from Abraham to Hagar and makes life very hard for her. “Mistreated”, “dealt hardly”, or “dealt harshly” and she fled from her
- ➡ Hagar Is Met by an Angel (16:7-10)
- ➡ Sarah runs Hagar off with Abraham's tacit assent. But the “angel of the Lord”— hasn't forgotten her
- ➡ “The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. And he said, ‘Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?’ ‘I'm running away from my mistress Sarai,’ she answered. Then the angel of the Lord told her, ‘Go back to your mistress and submit to her.’” (16:7-9)
- ➡ Hagar is probable on the way back to her home in Egypt —on the Road to Shur, stopped at a spring

God Speaks to Hagar, Abraham's Other Wife (Genesis 16)

- ➡ Hagar Is Met by an Angel (16:7-10)
- ➡ The Lord knows her name, her status as a servant, and her mistress's name. God has not forgotten her.
- ➡ It's interesting to note that in the text Abraham and Sarah never call Hagar by name. She is just "the servant girl." But God calls her by name. They think of Hagar as a slave and foreigner, but God looks at her as a person, a woman whom he has called for his divine purposes
- ➡ The angel asks where she's come from and where she's going,
- ➡ "Go back to your mistress and submit to her,"
- ➡ Does the Lord call on Hagar to exchange her earlier disrespect for Sarah with a humble attitude?
- ➡ Sometimes God calls us to endure hardship and harshness for a higher, redemptive purpose (1 Peter 2:18-25). Sometimes God's purposes and people are forged through hardship.

God Speaks to Hagar, Abraham's Other Wife (Genesis 16)

➡ The Angel's Promises to Hagar Regarding Ishmael (16:10-12)

➡ The angel gently commands her to return, but then speaks to her of her son and of the future:

➡ “The angel added, ‘I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count.’ The angel of the Lord also said to her:

➡ **‘You are now with child and you will have a son.**

➡ **You shall name him Ishmael (which means, “God hears) ,**

➡ **for the Lord has heard (Ishmael) of your misery.**

➡ **He will be a wild donkey of a man; “one free from the restraints of sedentary life” – a roamer, a desert nomad**

➡ **his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers.” (16:11-12)**

➡ k

God Speaks to Hagar, Abraham's Other Wife (Genesis 16)

- ➡ The God Who Sees Me – El-Roi (16:13-14)
- ➡ “She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: ‘You are the God who sees me,’ for she said, ‘I have now seen the One who sees me.’ That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.” (16:13-14)
- ➡ “God who sees me” puts together ‘el, the generic word for God with the noun rō’î, “looking, appearance.”
- ➡ It is one thing to know in theory that God knows you and loves you. It is an entirely different thing to be suddenly aware of God’s presence and personal care over you

God Speaks to Hagar, Abraham's Other Wife (Genesis 16)

- ➡ Ishmael is Born to Abraham and Hagar (16:15-16)
- ➡ Hagar is obedient to the God Who Sees, and returns to her mistress, to whatever Sarah would do to her, and to the destiny that Yahweh has promised her
- ➡ “So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.” (16:15-16)
- ➡ Hagar's son is born to Abraham, and Abraham himself (not Sarah) names him, bestowing on him the name that the Lord had revealed to Hagar, Ishmael, “God hears.”
- ➡ God-fearing people sometimes try to fulfill God's will in their own ways – and complicate things. But God can even be in their mistakes and use their mistakes to work out his plans.

God Speaks to Hagar, Abraham's Other Wife (Genesis 16)

- Ishmael is Born to Abraham and Hagar (16:15-16)
- God-fearing people like Abraham and Sarah can still be at a place when they give in to jealousy and cruelty, anger and irresponsibility, and pride of class, position, and status. None of this is whitewashed in Scripture.
- God calls people who are foreigners, unbelievers, and of low social status to exalt, bless, and use. God, the protector of the downtrodden, delights in helping the despised. Yahweh appears directly to her in the form of an angel and she is never the same again.
- God calls us not to ease our own way, but to go His way, even if it means hardship and suffering. We are not called to pleasure, but to the will of God. He calls us to obey even when it is hard – and honors us (and Hagar) when we do so.

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ It has been 24 years since Abraham came to the promised land and 13 years since Ishmael was born to Hagar.
- ➡ Thirteen years of silence from God
- ➡ Now God appears to him again to reaffirm the covenant that God has given him.
- ➡ El Shaddai
- ➡ Yahweh reveals himself as “God Almighty,” El Shaddai. “Almighty” is the Hebrew adjective shadday, “Shaddai, (the) Almighty.”

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Walk Before Me and Be Blameless (17:1-2)
- ➡ In the past, the covenant has been unilateral, enacted by God without any corresponding action from Abraham.
- ➡ “Covenant,” is a “treaty, alliance of friendship.” It outlines the responsibilities of the parties to the covenant. This time, as Yahweh confirms the covenant, he introduces a performance requirement for Abraham.
- ➡ “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, ‘I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.’” (17:1-2)

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Walk Before Me and Be Blameless (17:1-2)
- ➡ Yahweh identifies himself as God Almighty, El Shaddai, and then gives a command: “walk before me and be blameless.”
- ➡ This is not God’s first command to Abraham. Others include “leave” (12:1), “lift up your eyes” (13:14), “fear not” (15:1), “look heavenward” (15:5), “bring me” (15:9). But the command “Walk before me and be blameless” has a definite ethical emphasis.
- ➡ “Walk in front of” expresses the service or devotion of a faithful servant to his king. “Be blameless” (NIV, NRSV) or “be perfect” (KJV) the Hebrew adverb refers to animals that are without blemish, and is also translated as “full, whole, upright, perfect.”
- ➡ It represents the divine standard for man’s attainment.” In other words, God expects Abraham to live a righteous life before him.

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Walk Before Me and Be Blameless (17:1-2)
- ➡ I don't think this means that Abraham must have complete moral perfection, with never a misstep or a hasty word.
- ➡ But God expects Abraham to live out his side of the covenant wholeheartedly and honestly
- ➡ God's Side of the Covenant: Promises (17:3-8)
 - ➡ Dividing the covenant into three parts:
 - ➡ 17:3-8 "As for me...." God's part of the covenant, many distinguished descendants and a promise of land.
 - ➡ 17:9-14 "As for you...." Abraham's part of the covenant, the sign of circumcision
 - ➡ 17:15-16 "As for Sarai...." The promise of Sarah bearing a son.

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Walk Before Me and Be Blameless (17:1-2)
- ➡ The first of these parts is the solemn obligation that God takes upon himself:
- ➡ “Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, ‘As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.’” (17:3-8)

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Walk Before Me and Be Blameless (17:1-2)
- ➡ Here are the elements of this promise, combined from previous promises God has made to Abraham:
- ➡ Abraham will be very fruitful, with nations and kings as his descendants.
- ➡ The covenant is of everlasting duration, between not only God and Abraham, but God and all of Abraham's descendants.
- ➡ God promises to be Abraham's God and the God of all his descendants.
- ➡ The whole land of Canaan will be an everlasting possession to Abraham and his descendants.

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Walk Before Me and Be Blameless (17:1-2)
- ➡ God acknowledges to Abraham that he is being given the land of Canaan “where you are now an alien” (NIV, NRSV) or “stranger” (KJV), where they sojourn.” As the writer of Hebrews observes:
- ➡ “By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.... All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.” (Hebrews 11:9, 13)
- ➡ Abraham never does “possess” the land literally, except for a small burial plot at Machpelah (chapter 23), but he does believe God and “possesses” it by faith.

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ A New Name to Recall the New Promise (17:5, 15)
- ➡ Part of the covenant promise is a new name by which Abraham will be called. He goes from being called Abram (“exalted father”) to Abraham (“father of many”).
- ➡ Sarah’s name changes, from Sarai to Sarah (17:15), the meaning of her name doesn’t seem to change. It still means “princess” or “chieftanness.”
- ➡ As Abraham is called “the father of many nations” (17:4), Sarah is called “the mother of nations” (17:16).
- ➡ Every time that someone now calls Abraham by name it is a reminder of God’s promise — “Father of many nations.”

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Abraham's Side of the Covenant: Circumcision (17:9-14)
- ➡ God now outlines Abraham's obligations:
- ➡ "Then God said to Abraham, 'As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner – those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.'" (17:9-14)

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- Abraham's Side of the Covenant: Circumcision (17:9-14)
- Circumcision in the Ancient Near East
- No one knows who first instituted the act of circumcision, and it certainly was not a universal practice among males. The Scripture lists the cultures that practiced circumcision in Jeremiah's day:



Ankhmahor's tomb Dating to Dynasty 6 and specifically to the reign of King Teti (2355-2343 BC)

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- Abraham's Side of the Covenant: Circumcision (17:9-14)
- Circumcision in the Ancient Near East
- “The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will punish all who are circumcised only in the flesh – Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, Moab and all who live in the desert in distant places. For all these nations are really uncircumcised, and even the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart.” (Jeremiah 9:25-26)



The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- Abraham's Side of the Covenant: Circumcision (17:9-14)
- The Meaning of Circumcision
- The meaning of circumcision for Abraham is very simply a sign that this person is a member of the covenant people. It was a sign of the covenant.
- The Sign of the Covenant (17:11)
- Circumcision is called the "token" (KJV) or "the sign of the covenant" (NIV, NRSV) in verse 11. Here it is used in the same sense as Christians see the Lord's Supper and baptism – as outward sign or pledge of covenant. The rainbow is a sign of God's covenant with Noah (9:12-13, 17). The Sabbath is a sign of the holiness of God's people (Exodus 31:13, 17; Ezekiel 20:12). The blood of the Passover lamb on the doorposts is a sign of redemption of the family within the house (Exodus 12:13).

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Sarah, the Mother of Nations (17:15-16)
- ➡ “God also said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.’ Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, ‘Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?’” (17:15-17)
- ➡ The covenant considered (a) God’s obligations (17:4-8) and (b) Abraham’s obligations (17:9-14). Now God turns to Sarah, Abraham’s aged wife who is nearly 90 years old.

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

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The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Sarah, the Mother of Nations (17:15-16)
- ➡ First, God had promised Abraham many descendents (12:2, 7; 13:16). Then he made it clear that his descendents will be his own natural, not adopted, offspring (15:4). But this passage is the first time that the Lord designates Sarah herself to be the mother of Abraham's promised son – and through him many nations and kings.
- ➡ Abraham can't help but laugh. The idea of a son being born to a 90-year-old mother and a 100-year-old father is just too much of a surprise. "Laughed" whether in joy or incredulity," used of the reaction of the announcement of the birth of a son to Sarah by both Abraham (17:17) and Sarah (18:12-13). Isaac's name (yishāq) comes from the word for laughter.

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Sarah, the Mother of Nations (17:15-16)
- ➡ Does Abraham's laughter represent (a) unbelief or (b) surprise?
- ➡ When Sarah laughs later in chapter 18, her laughter seems to reflect unbelief, to which God asks, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (18:14).
- ➡ But God doesn't rebuke Abraham. Perhaps because he is laughing out of surprise and because he actually believes it will happen. His belief in what God says seems to be indicated by his question about Ishmael

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Why Not Bless Ishmael? (17:18-22)
- ➡ And Abraham said to God, “If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!’ Then God said, ‘Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descend-ants after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year.’ When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him.” (17:17-22)

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Why Not Bless Ishmael? (17:18-22)
- ➡ Because he is Abraham's son, Ishmael will be blessed, be fruitful, and multiply. Apparently he falls under God's initial promise to Abraham of blessing (12:2-3; see 21:13)
- ➡ But the full terms of God's covenant with Abraham are clearly to be established through Isaac's descendants only – this is mentioned twice to emphasize that fact (verses 19 and 21).
- ➡ Ishmael is circumcised with the sign of the covenant – as are all in Abraham's household, but the special promises of the covenant are not for Ishmael's offspring (see Galatians 4:22-30).

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Abraham Circumcises the Males in His Household (17:23-27)
- ➡ “On that very day Abraham took his son Ishmael and all those born in his household or bought with his money, every male in his household, and circumcised them, as God told him. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, and his son Ishmael was thirteen; Abraham and his son Ishmael were both circumcised on that same day. And every male in Abraham’s household, including those born in his household or bought from a foreigner, was circumcised with him.” (17:23-27)
- ➡ Abraham obeys the Lord’s command – without delay!

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- Abraham Circumcises the Males in His Household (17:23-27)
- The promises God makes to Abraham extend to everyone for whom he has responsibility. They are all included in the covenant promises – though only through Isaac does the full promise and covenant pass to descendants.

ABRAHAM

When God Calls Your Name

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Circumcision of the Heart
- ➡ How are Christians in the twenty-first century to understand the covenant of circumcision and apply its principles in our day? What does circumcision have to do with Christianity?
- ➡ For the answer we need to continue to read the Old Testament. It became clear to the Israelites rather early that there is a difference between outward and inward circumcision.
- ➡ In Leviticus, God talks about Israel's future treachery and hostility towards him, using the term "uncircumcised hearts" (Leviticus 26:40-41).

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Circumcision of the Heart
- ➡ In Leviticus, God talks about Israel's future treachery and hostility towards him, using the term "uncircumcised hearts" (Leviticus 26:40-41)
- ➡ **40 "But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery that they committed against me, and also in walking contrary to me, 41 so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies— if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity,**

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Circumcision of the Heart
- ➡ Moses commands the people: **“16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.”** (Deuteronomy 10:16).
- ➡ At the giving of the Law, Moses says, **“The Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live”** (Deuteronomy 30:6).
- ➡ Jeremiah called on the Israelites to “Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, circumcise your hearts...” (Jeremiah 4:4) and mourned that “the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart” (Jeremiah 9:26).

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Circumcision of the Heart
- ➡ Jeremiah called on the Israelites to “**Circumcise yourselves to the Lord; remove the foreskin of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.**” (Jeremiah 4:4)
- ➡ Mourned that “**26 Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.**” (Jeremiah 9:26).

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Circumcision of the Heart
- ➡ Stephen angered his enemies “**51 “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you.”** (Acts 7:51, referring to Deuteronomy 10:16).
- ➡ Paul wrote, “A man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code” (Romans 2:29)

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Circumcision of the Heart
- ➡ **Romans 2:25-29** Circumcision, the surgical ritual that marks you as a Jew, is great if you live in accord with God's law. But if you don't, it's worse than not being circumcised. The reverse is also true: The uncircumcised who keep God's ways are as good as the circumcised—in fact, better. Better to keep God's law uncircumcised than break it circumcised. Don't you see: It's not the cut of a knife that makes a Jew. You become a Jew by who you are. It's the mark of God on your heart, not of a knife on your skin, that makes a Jew. And recognition comes from God, not legalistic critics.

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Circumcision of the Heart
- ➡ The prophets and apostles declare that physical circumcision is not enough.
- ➡ The heart, too, must be cleansed.
- ➡ Question do the Christian have a new mark of the covenant today?
- ➡ **Colossians 2:11-12 11 In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh^a was put off when you were circumcised by^b Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.**

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Circumcision of the Heart
- ➡ Jesus commanded baptism in the Great Commission: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19)
- ➡ Baptism is the outward sign of an inward change. It represents rebirth in Christ

God's Promises to Abraham

- ➡ We are baptized, not to comply with any church constitution, but by faith and obedience to glorify the great new covenant work of God in our life
- ➡ Have you been washed by the blood of the Lamb? Are your sins forgiven? Have you died with Christ and risen by faith to walk in newness of life? Does the Spirit of Christ dwell in you? Is the law being written on your heart?
- ➡ We signify this in baptism, and glorify God's great new covenant work in your life.

The Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham (Genesis 17)

- ➡ Circumcision of the Heart
- ➡ Colossians 2:11-12 refers to a type of spiritual circumcision
- ➡ This circumcision does not involve the cutting of the body; it is a cutting away of our old nature.
- ➡ It is a spiritual act and refers to nothing less than salvation, effected by the Holy Spirit. Baptism, mentioned in verse 12, does not replace circumcision; it follows circumcision— and it is clearly a spiritual circumcision that is meant.
- ➡ Baptism, therefore, is a sign of inward, spiritual “circumcision.”

God's Promises to Abraham

➤ The Circumcision Controversy in Early Church

- Circumcision was the essential sign of Jewishness in a Roman and Greek world where circumcision was not practiced. Initially, all the Christians were Jews
- The trouble came when the Gospel was received by Gentiles. When Peter spoke to a God-fearing Roman centurion named Cornelius at Caesarea, all heaven broke loose and upset Peter's Jewish theology:
- "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.' So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." (Acts 10:44-48)

God's Promises to Abraham

➤ The Circumcision Controversy in Early Church

- When Peter was called on the carpet for his actions, he told the Jerusalem church how “the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning” – that is, at Pentecost (Acts 11:15)
- Paul's mission was to the Gentiles in particular. In Roman cities, synagogues were established as the Jewish Diaspora spread. Many of those who attended synagogue were Gentiles known as “God-fearers” (Acts 13:16, 26, 50; 17:4, 17).
- While they believed in the Jewish Scriptures, they were unwilling to take the final step of circumcision required for one to become full Jewish proselytes

God's Promises to Abraham

➤ The Circumcision Controversy in Early Church

- It was to this group of God-fearers that Paul's gospel seemed to have its greatest appeal. Paul's missionary strategy was to request an opportunity – based on his credentials as a rabbi – to speak at a local synagogue.
- He would attempt to prove to them from the Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah. Typically, some of the Jews would believe, but most would reject the message.
- However, a great many of the Gentile God-fearers would become believers and form the nucleus of a Christian congregation in that city

God's Promises to Abraham

➤ The Circumcision Controversy in Early Church

- When this began to happen, not only were the Jews enraged, but Jewish Christians from Judea came to these new, predominantly Gentile Christian churches teaching, “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved” (Acts 15:1)
- The matter was brought before a Church Council in Jerusalem and all the arguments were presented. The leaders recognized that the Holy Spirit had “made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith... We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are” (Acts 15:9, 11).

God's Promises to Abraham

- The Circumcision Controversy in Early Church
- James summed up their conclusion:
 - “It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.” (Acts 15:19-21)
 - The church wrote this in a general letter to the new congregations, “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements...” (15:28).
 - Thus, it came about that Gentile Christians were not required to be circumcised as part of their salvation

God's Promises to Abraham

➡ Circumcision and Baptism

➡ The sign of the Old Covenant was circumcision, but the sign of the New Covenant is baptism, which supersedes the old. On the Day of Pentecost, when his Jewish audience asked what they must do to be saved, Peter declared:

➡ “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” (Acts 2:38-39)

ABRAHAM

When God Calls Your Name

God's Promises to Abraham

➡ Circumcision and Baptism

➡ Paul put it this way:

➡ “In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature (“flesh”), not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, **having been buried with him in baptism** and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:11-12)

➡ Literal circumcision was a sign in the flesh, but did nothing to circumcise or purify the heart.

God's Promises to Abraham

➡ Circumcision and Baptism

➡ Paul put it this way:

- ➡ Paul seems to be saying that in his crucifixion, Christ's flesh was stripped off, corresponding to the physical rite of circumcision. **When we are baptized, we identify with Christ's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection** and our hearts are purified. We are circumcised spiritually.
- ➡ The physical act of accepting the New Covenant is now baptism, but the sign of the covenant we bear in our persons is not physical but spiritual – it is the seal of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 4:30), which is associated with, but not identical to, baptism

God's Promises to Abraham

➡ Chapter 17 teaches us:

- ➡ God expects us to be honest and guileless towards him, in our willingness to keep the terms of his covenant with us. We must be blameless, not hypocritical and two-faced (17:1).
- ➡ We must respond to God's covenant towards us by taking on the sign of the covenant – for the Jew, circumcision, for the Christian, baptism (17:10).
- ➡ We, like Abraham, should be immediately obedient to do what God tells us to do, and not put it off, no matter how difficult. One sign of Abraham's faith is his immediate obedience to confirm God's covenant with him through circumcision (17:23).

God's Promises to Abraham

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- ➡ God expects us to be honest and guileless towards him, in our willingness to keep the terms of his covenant with us. We must be blameless, not hypocritical and two-faced (17:1).
- ➡ We must respond to God's covenant towards us by taking on the sign of the covenant – for the Jew, circumcision, for the Christian, baptism (17:10).
- ➡ We, like Abraham, should be immediately obedient to do what God tells us to do, and not put it off, no matter how difficult. One sign of Abraham's faith is his immediate obedience to confirm God's covenant with him through circumcision (17:23).

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- Abraham entertaining the three angels. It becomes apparent in chapter 19 that two angels are on their way to destroy Sodom.
- They stop at Abraham's tent mainly to involve him in intercession in this struggle between judgment and mercy
- Abraham at Mamre (18:1)
 - "The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day." (18:1)
- Abraham is camped at the "Great Trees of Mamre" near Hebron, where he has lived in the past (13:8; 14:13) and where he and Sarah are eventually buried (chapter 23).

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- Abraham Shows Hospitality to the Three “Men” (18:2-8)
- We see in Abraham an amazing example of scrupulous and eager Near Eastern hospitality. This is the way sojourners were to be treated in Abraham’s culture.
- “Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.
- He said, ‘If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by. Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way – now that you have come to your servant.’

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- Abraham Shows Hospitality to the Three “Men” (18:2-8)
- ‘Very well,’ they answered, ‘do as you say.’ So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. ‘Quick,’ he said, ‘get three seahs of fine flour and knead it and bake some bread.’ Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.” (18:2-8)

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- Abraham Shows Hospitality to the Three “Men” (18:2-8)
- Several words seem to characterize Abraham as a conscientious host. “Hurried” occurs in verses 6 and 7. The word “quick” is repeated three times in verses 6 and 7. “Ran” is found in verse 7. Picture this still-fit, 99-year-old man running out from the main encampment to where his herds are being pastured
- He personally picks out his finest young, tender calf and gives orders to butcher and prepare it.
- Then he returns to entertain his guests while the meal is being prepared. His haste is evidence of his desire for his guests’ comfort and honor.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- Abraham Shows Hospitality to the Three “Men” (18:2-8)
- Consider how much trouble it would be – and how long it would take – to butcher a calf and make leavened bread.
- We’re not exactly sure how much flour is in three seahs, but it may be 20 dry quarts per seah* or more.
- Any homemade bread makers out there?
- How much flour is necessary for two loaves of bread?
- Can you imagine how much bread you can make with three seahs (*Jewish study suggest that there was sifting of the 3 seah down to a smaller amount) of flour? Either way this is an extravagant meal to honor these three guests

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- A Promise that Sarah Will Bear a Son (18:9-10a)
- As they eat, they converse with Abraham.
 - “Where is your wife Sarah?” they asked him. “There, in the tent,” he said. Then he said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.” (18:9-10a)
- In verse 10a, the NIV identifies the speaker as Yahweh, “the Lord,” though his identity isn’t clarified until verse 13. It is possible that the guests have supernatural knowledge of Sarah’s name, though it may have come up in the conversation.
- Some have suggested that all three of these “men” were angelic beings who appeared to Abraham in the form of men. However, Genesis 18:1 says that it was “the LORD” (Yahweh) who appeared to Abraham.
- It is the LORD who speaks in verses 13, 20, 26, and 33. Abraham stands “before the LORD” in verse 22. The inference then, one of the three “men” must have been God Almighty taking on the appearance of a man. We call such an appearance a “theophany.”

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- A Promise that Sarah Will Bear a Son (18:9-10a)
- At some point in the conversation, the leader of the group says, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son” (18:10a)
- Sarah Laughs (18:10a-15)
- “Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. Abraham and Sarah were already old and well advanced in years, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, ‘After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?’

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ Sarah Laughs (18:10a-15)
- ➡ Then the LORD said to Abraham, ‘Why did Sarah laugh and say, “Will I really have a child, now that I am old?” Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son.’
- ➡ Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, ‘I did not laugh.’
- ➡ But he said, ‘Yes, you did laugh.’” (18:10a-15)

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ Sarah Laughs (18:10a-15)
- ➡ When they ask where Sarah is, Abraham points behind him to the tent where Sarah sits – perhaps seen, perhaps unseen – at the doorway.
- ➡ As the story unfolds, the narrator reminds us of Abraham's and Sarah's great age and that Sarah is well past menopause, literally, "It had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women" (18:11, NRSV, KJV)
- ➡ Sarah ponders what she just heard and considers that she is "worn out" (NIV) or "grown old" (NRSV).³ She wonders whether she will have "pleasure" at her age.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ Sarah Laughs (18:10a-15)

- ➡ Sarah laughs “to herself.” No one can hear her inner laughter except the LORD, whose word “...
 - ➡ is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12),
 - ➡ who “knows the secrets of the heart” (Psalm 44:21),
 - ➡ and “who searches hearts and minds” (Revelation 2:23)
- ➡ Her inner unbelief is no secret to the LORD
- ➡ Abraham, too, had laughed when God had first told him (17:17).

ABRAHAM

When God Calls Your Name

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- Is Anything Too Hard for the LORD? (18:14)
- Notice that “LORD” in small caps in verse 13 identifies Yahweh as the speaker. He asks, “Is anything too hard for the LORD?”
- A question that echoes down the ages through the Old and New Testaments and up to our own day. Consider with me the implications of our omnipotent Lord:
- “Was my arm too short to ransom you? Do I lack the strength to rescue you?” (Isaiah 50:2)
- “Ah, Sovereign Lord (literally, “Lord Yahweh”), you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.” (Jeremiah 32:17)
- On the impossibility of a rich person being saved, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” (Matthew 19:26, also Luke 18:27)
- The angel Gabriel revealing aged Anna’s pregnancy to Mary at the Annunciation, “For nothing is impossible with God.” (Luke 1:37)

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ Faith in the God of the Impossible
- ➡ But this faith in the God of the impossible was growing in Abraham. Paul recounts Abraham's faith response to learning that Sarah would become pregnant:
- ➡ “Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead – since he was about a hundred years old – and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why ‘it was credited to him as righteousness.’” (Romans 4:19-22)

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- God's Choice of Abraham (18:16-19)
- Abraham walks with these "men" and catch a piece of the conversation:
- **"When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. Then the LORD said, 'Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? Abraham will surely become a great and power-ful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.'" (18:16-19)**

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ God's Choice of Abraham (18:16-19)
- ➡ Yahweh wonders out loud – for Abraham's benefit – whether he should tell Abraham what he has planned for Sodom and Gomorrah. He decides not to “hide” this from Abraham.
 - ➡ “Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).
 - ➡ Abraham, the Friend of God (Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23), is one of these prophets (20:7).

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ God's Choice of Abraham (18:16-19)
- ➡ Why did God choose Abraham? "So that he will direct his children and his house-hold after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just" (18:19). The operative word describing Abraham is "direct" (NIV), "command" (KJV), or "charge" (NRSV).
- ➡ Abraham is not a dictator. But he does set the tone and direction for his family and his household of righteous living towards God and justice towards others.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- **Keeping the Way of the Lord (18:19)**
- **For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.” (18:19)**
- **Three elements describe Abraham’s lifestyle:**
- **“Keeping the way of the LORD.” “Way” refers to a path worn by constant walking or to a major highway.**
- **Metaphorically refers to the actions and behavior of men, who either follow the way of the righteous or the way of the wicked (Psalm 1:6). Isaiah reminds us that God’s ways are much higher than man’s ways (Isaiah 55:7-9).⁸ Keeping the way of the Lord consists “doing what is right and just.”**

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ **Keeping the Way of the Lord (18:19)**
- ➡ **Three elements describe Abraham's lifestyle:**
- ➡ **“Doing what is right” (NIV), “justice” (KJV), and “righteousness” (NRSV) conformity to an ethical or moral standard,” which, in the Old Testament, is the standard of the nature and will of God.**
- ➡ **Judges are to deliver and decide according to the truth without partiality (Leviticus 19:15), weights and measures are to be honest (Leviticus 19:36). Commercial fraud and deception are not allowed. Abraham uses the word in verse 25 to appeal to God's own character of righteousness.**

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- Keeping the Way of the Lord (18:19)
- Three elements describe Abraham's lifestyle:
- "Doing what is ... just" (NIV), "judgment" (KJV), and "justice" (NRSV) the primary sense is to exercise the processes of government.
- Here it is "justice, that is, rightness rooted in God's character" as an attribute of man in general and the judicial process among men

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- The Sins of Sodom and Gomorrah (18:20-21)
- **“Then the Lord said, ‘The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know.’” (18:20-21)**
- In chapter 15 God tells Abraham that “the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure” (15:16), so he isn’t ready to punish the Amorites at this time.
- But here, the sins of Sodom have indeed reached the point where God is ready punish their sins. Throughout the ages God has shown mercy to peoples that have sinned (Exodus 34:6-7; Lamentations 3:22; Jonah 4:2; Romans 2:4; 3:25; 9:22; 1 Timothy 1:16). If God destroyed us for one sin, who would remain? God is merciful, giving us a chance to

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ The Sins of Sodom and Gomorrah (18:20-21)
- ➡ If God destroyed us for one sin, who would remain? God is merciful, giving us a chance to repent. But Sodom's days are numbered. Since God is righteous, there is a time that judgment must fall. And that time has come.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- Will Not the Judge of All the Earth Do Right? (18:22-25)
- Now we see a most amazing, bold, audacious appeal from Abraham to Yahweh.
- “The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the Lord. Then Abraham approached him and said: “Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing – to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ Will Not the Judge of All the Earth Do Right? (18:22-25)
- ➡ God has just spoken about Abraham's destiny to raise up his family in "doing what is right and (18:19). Now Abraham demands righteousness of God: "Will not the Judge of all the Earth do right?"
- ➡ How can God destroy a city that has 50 righteous residents? It would be wrong "to kill the righteous with the wicked," Abraham asks. If God expects justice of Abraham, surely he himself must be just, Abraham argues.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ Will Not the Judge of All the Earth Do Right? (18:22-25)
- ➡ Abraham's name for God – “The Judge of All the Earth” – is another indication of Abraham's monotheism and very high view of God's righteousness.
- ➡ The gods in the Mesopotamian were not known for their righteousness, but for their capriciousness and sins.
- ➡ On the contrary, Yahweh is the righteous and holy God! He can be trusted to do what is right. Abraham is sure of it.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ Will Not the Judge of All the Earth Do Right? (18:22-25)
- ➡ Abraham's motive in this appeal, of course, is to save his nephew Lot from destruction along with Sodom.
- ➡ This is the second time Abraham has risked himself to rescue Lot.
- ➡ Now he comes before the LORD himself with incredible nerve andchutzpah!

ABRAHAM

When God Calls Your Name

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- ➡ Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (18:26-33)
- ➡ Over the course of the next few minutes, Abraham boldly bargains God down from 50 to 10 righteous people that would prevent God from destroying Sodom, and the Lord agrees. Abraham dares not go lower.
- ➡ READ THE VERSES

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- “The Lord said, ‘If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.’
- Then Abraham spoke up again: ‘Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes, what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city because of five people?’
- ‘If I find forty-five there,’ he said, ‘I will not destroy it.’
- Once again he spoke to him, ‘What if only forty are found there?’
- He said, ‘For the sake of forty, I will not do it.’
- Then he said, ‘May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?’

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

- He answered, 'I will not do it if I find thirty there.'
- Abraham said, 'Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?'
- He said, 'For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it.'
- Then he said, 'May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?'
- He answered, 'For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it.'
- When the Lord had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home." (18:26-33)

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

- ➡ Through his prayer, Abraham has prevailed upon the Lord to change his mind – at least to modify his judgment. The audacious assumption that underlies prayer is that we can influence God to change his mind.
- ➡ Of course, God will never act against his own character and word. But, as our saying goes: “There is more than one way to skin a cat.” God can work out his will and purpose in many ways..

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

- ➡ Was God upset with Abraham's boldness?
- ➡ No. I think God had set Abraham up for this very act of intercession by revealing to Abraham his intentions. Abraham was under no illusions. He knew how bad Sodom really was (13:13). He knew how truly wicked the city and its leaders were, evidenced by the way he had refused to accept anything from the king of Sodom (14:21-24).
- ➡ He knew that when the Lord observed the sins of the city, he would destroy it. And therefore, Abraham felt an obligation to protect his own family from that destruction.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

- ➡ God intention to teach Abraham – and us – several lessons about intercession, that is, praying to God on behalf of someone else. 3 lessons here:
- ➡ 1. **Boldness** or confidence before God is necessary to ask God to change his mind or his action. See Ephesians 2:18; 3:12; Hebrews 4:16; 10:19.
- ➡ 2. **Yahweh's character and word** are the basis of the appeal. You can see this in some of the great prayers of intercession in the Bible: Exodus 32:9-14; 33:12-17; Numbers 16:20-22; 1 Samuel 7:5-14; 2 Samuel 24:17; 1 Kings 17:20-23; 2 Kings 19:1-37; Ezra 9:5-15; Nehemiah 1:4-9; Daniel 9:4-19; Amos 7:2-6.
- ➡ 3. **Persistence** in prayer until the answer was given is required. See Luke 11:5-13; 18:1-8.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

➡ 1. Boldness

- ➡ **Ephesians 2:18**; 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.
- ➡ **Ephesians 3:12** In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him
- ➡ **Hebrews 4:16** 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.
- ➡ **Hebrews 10:19** 19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

➡ 2. Yahweh's Character and Word

- ➡ **Exo 32:9-14** Then the LORD relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened..
- ➡ **33:12-17** 17 And the LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."
- ➡ **Numbers 16:20-22** But Moses and Aaron fell facedown and cried out, "O God, the God who gives breath to all living things, will you be angry with the entire assembly when only one man sins?".
- ➡ **2 Samuel 24:17** ... What have they done? Let your hand fall on me and my family."

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➤ 3. Persistence

➤ **Luke 11:5-13** 5Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; 6a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' 7And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' 8I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ 3. Persistence

- ➡ **Luke 11:5-13** 9"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. 11"Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

➡ 3. Persistence

- ➡ Need drive the level of persistence, implies impudence and audacity
- ➡ Jesus is saying should be our attitude as we approach the throne of grace— a confident boldness that persists in pursuing God until He grants us mercy and grace (Hebrews 4:16)
- ➡ A word of caution is appropriate here. Never are we to approach God with impertinence or a demanding or disrespectful attitude

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

➡ 3. Persistence

- ➡ Jesus tells us to ask and keep on asking, and whatever we ask in God's will is assured to us.
- ➡ He had just taught the disciples to pray the Lord's Prayer, which includes the phrase "Your will be done"
- ➡ We see that we are to be persistent in asking for God to work in our lives and answer our prayers according to His perfect will and timing, having confidence that He will do so

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ 3. Persistence

➡ **Luke 18:1-8** 1Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. 2He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. 3And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' 4" For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think,

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➤ 3. Persistence

➤ **Luke 18:1-8** 5yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!" 6And the LORD said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

➡ Luke 18:1-8

- ➡ Judgment ultimately belongs to God (Deuteronomy 1:17) 17Do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike. Do not be afraid of anyone, for judgment belongs to God. Bring me any case too hard for you, and I will hear it.“
- ➡ Widows deserve special protection under the justice system (Deuteronomy 10:18; 24:17–21; James 1:27) 27Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

➡ Luke 18:1-8

➡ 1 Thessalonians 5:17, continual devotion to prayer should be a way of life. The Lord wants to know if He will find any faithful prayer warriors left on the earth when He returns.

➡ Will we be among God's people still praying at Christ's second coming, "Your Kingdom come, your will be done" (Matthew 6:10)?

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18)

➡ The Purpose of Prayer

➡ What can we conclude about Abraham interceding for Sodom?

➡ In reference to Christ:

➡ **1 John 2:1** My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father— Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

➡ **1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus,

➡ **Romans 8:34** Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died— more than that, who was raised to life— is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ The Angels Arrive in Sodom (19:1)
- ➡ “The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.” (19:1)
- ➡ The two angels find Lot sitting in the city gate, a common meeting place in the East for conversation, for business, and for the administration of justice.
- ➡ Lot bows low before them as a sign of respect; he recognizes them as important people, though not yet as divine messengers.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

➡ Lot's Hospitality (19:2-3)

➡ “‘My lords,’ he said, ‘please turn aside to your servant’s house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning.’ ‘No,’ they answered, ‘we will spend the night in the square.’ But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He pre-pared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate.” (19:2-3)

➡ He prevails upon them to come to his house.

➡ His hospitality may not have been as lavish as Abraham’s, but he moves quickly to meet their needs.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

➡ Homosexuality in the Ancient Near East

- ➡ “Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom – both young and old – surrounded the house. They called to Lot, ‘Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.’” (19:1)
- ➡ Before we consider this passage in detail, let’s take a look at homosexuality in the ancient Near East

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Homosexuality in the Ancient Near East
- ➡ Homosexuality was practiced in various forms in many ancient civilizations. There were obvious signs of its existence within the societies that neighbored the Israelites in Old Testament times.
- ➡ Homosexual conduct was indeed present in ancient Egypt
- ➡ 18th century Mesopotamian king Hammurabi — author of the famous legal code bearing his name — had male lovers, and male prostitution was practiced in temples.
- ➡ Homosexuality was indeed present in Assyrian society

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Homosexuality in Canaanite and Hittite Cultures
- ➡ Due to the absence of significant literary or pictographic materials from Palestine and Asia Minor, little is known about the perceptions of homosexuality by their inhabitants.
- ➡ The Old Testament indicate the immoral sexual preferences of the Canaanites in the Mosaic Law, "the story of Sodom (Gen. 19) is supposed to illustrate Canaanite practices, the insinuation is even clearer."

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Summary of Mesopotamian Homosexuality
- ➡ Bottero and Peschow, preeminent Assyriologists who did the first serious study of homosexuality in Assyrian legal codes, conclude as follows:
- ➡ Homosexuality in itself is thus nowhere condemned . . . Anyone could practice it freely, just as anyone could visit a prostitute, provided it was done without violence and without compulsion

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Homosexual Conduct in the Greco-Roman Culture
- ➡ Homosexual behavior was tolerated, accepted, and even institutionalized during the Greco-Roman period (4th century B.C. to 5th century A.D.)
 - ➡ Homosexuality in itself is thus nowhere condemned
 - ➡ Anyone could practice it freely, just as anyone could visit a prostitute, provided it was done without violence and without compulsion

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When God Calls Your Name

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Homosexuality in the Ancient Near East
- ➡ When you compare the tolerance and practice of homosexuality common in the ancient Near East with clear commands of God in the Mosaic law, you see a distinct difference:
- ➡ “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. (Leviticus 18:22, NRSV)
- ➡ “If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death; their blood is upon them.” (Leviticus 20:13, NRSV)

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- Homosexuality in the Ancient Near East
- The word “abomination” (NRSV, KJV) or “detestable” (NIV) in these verses expresses in the strongest possible language that a custom or thing is repugnant to God and falls under his judgment.
- New Testament texts seem to support this conclusion about homosexuality (Romans 1:24-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:8-11).

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

➤ Aggressive Homosexuality (19:4-11)

➤ “Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom – both young and old – surrounded the house. They called to Lot, ‘Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.’ Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him and said, ‘No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them.’”

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- Aggressive Homosexuality (19:4-11)
- But don't do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.' 'Get out of our way,' they replied. And they said, 'This fellow came here as an alien, and now he wants to play the judge! We'll treat you worse than them.' They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door. But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door." (19:4-11)

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Aggressive Homosexuality (19:4-11)
- ➡ “Have sex” (NIV) or “know” (KJV, NRSV) in verse 5 and “slept with” (NIV) or “known” (KJV, NRSV) in verse 8 has the meaning of intimate or carnal knowledge, that is, sexual intercourse.
- ➡ It also describes perversions such as sodomy (as here and in Judges 19:22) and rape (Judges 19:25)
- ➡ Unrestrained homosexuality was common and legal in Sodom. The crowd contained essentially all the men “from every part of the city of Sodom, both young and old” (19:4, NIV), “both small and great” (19:11, NRSV)

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Aggressive Homosexuality (19:4-11)
- ➡ Legally approved homosexuality is not Sodom's only sin. The prophets indicate that the sins of Sodom include injustice, adultery, pride, indifference to the poor, and general wickedness (Isaiah 1:10; 3:9; Jeremiah 23:14; Ezekiel 16:46-48)
- ➡ But open, legal homosexual behavior in the city is the sin that made Sodom's general wickedness abundantly clear to the angels sent there to investigate (Jude 7).
- ➡ "The outcry to the Lord against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it," the angels say (19:14).

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Aggressive Homosexuality (19:4-11)
- ➡ In our Western culture there is a strong push to remove any kind of stigma from homosexuality and make it as right and normal as heterosexuality.
- ➡ When Christians give into the pressures of culture and adopt the values of the culture in contrast to the values of the Bible, we lose our chance of being lights to the world.
- ➡ The Bible has two names for those who whitewash sin – false prophets (Ezekiel 13:10-12; 22:28)

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Aggressive Homosexuality (19:4-11)
- ➡ Lot himself was not exempt from a laxity toward sexual immorality. He had a high view of the responsibilities of hospitality by defending his guests, “for they have come under the protection of my roof” (19:8), but a low view of his responsibility to protect his own daughters.
- ➡ Though Peter refers to Lot as “a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men” (2 Peter 2:7) Lot was well on his way to accepting Sodom’s values.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- Aggressive Homosexuality (19:4-11)
- How can Christians keep balance on the issue of homosexuality in our day?
- Is it really possible to be loving and compassionate toward practicing homosexuals at the same time as you condemn the sin?
- Should the church be silent about homosexuality?
- If not, what should we be saying?
- Where should we be saying

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

➤ Aggressive Homosexuality (19:4-11)

- Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God." (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

ABRAHAM

When God Calls Your Name

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Summoning Lot's Family (19:12-14)
- ➡ The angels begin their mission to destroy the city – but not before they deliver Lot and all associated with him.
- ➡ “The two men said to Lot, ‘Do you have anyone else here – sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the Lord against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.’ So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, ‘Hurry and get out of this place, because the Lord is about to destroy the city!’ But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.” (19:12-14)
- ➡ Lot has little credibility with his future sons-in-law.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Hesitating in the Face of Imminent Destruction (19:15-16)
- ➡ “With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, ‘Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished.’ When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the Lord was merciful to them.”
(19:15-16)
- ➡ Why is it so hard to leave? Unbelief? Attachments? Satisfaction with life here?

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Hesitating in the Face of Imminent Destruction (19:15-16)
- ➡ The angels are charged with protecting them because they are Abraham's relatives, so they "grasped" (NIV) the hands of Lot and his family and led them forcibly to safety.
- ➡ Do the angels take them against their will?

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Hesitating in the Face of Imminent Destruction (19:15-16)
- ➡ Yes / No
- ➡ Why?
- ➡ What was God's promise to Abraham concerning the destruction of Sodom and righteous in it?
- ➡ Why is it so hard to leave?
- ➡ Unbelief?
- ➡ Attachments?
- ➡ Satisfaction with life here?

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Lot Flees to Zoar (19:17-23)
- ➡ “As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, ‘Flee for your lives! Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!’ But Lot said to them, ‘No, my lords, please! Your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you have shown great kindness to me in sparing my life. But I can’t flee to the mountains; this disaster will overtake me, and I’ll die.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Lot Flees to Zoar (19:17-23)
- ➡ “Look, here is a town near enough to run to, and it is small. Let me flee to it – it is very small, isn’t it? Then my life will be spared.’ He said to him, ‘Very well, I will grant this request too; I will not overthrow the town you speak of. But flee there quickly, because I cannot do anything until you reach it.’ (That is why the town was called Zoar.) By the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land.” (19:17-23)

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Lot Flees to Zoar (19:17-23)
- ➡ “Lot complains. Catastrophe is about to overtake Sodom and he argues about the escape route.
- ➡ Perhaps he is feeble and thinks he can’t run fast enough.
- ➡ Perhaps he doesn’t believe he can get up into the mountains in time. The angels grant his request to flee to Zoar.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Lot Flees to Zoar (19:17-23)
- ➡ But their charge is to deliver him from danger. If they have to pamper him a bit to get him away, they'll do it.
- ➡ They began at dawn. By now, the sun is high in the sky. Destruction is nigh, so they allow Lot to flee to Zoar.
- ➡ Zoar can't have been too far from Sodom.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ The Geology of the Dead Sea
- ➡ The destruction of Sodom obviously involves some kind of seismic or volcanic phenomenon. The Dead Sea is currently about 1,300 feet below sea level, the lowest point on earth – and its water depths in the northeastern sector go down another 1,300 feet.
- ➡ The Dead Sea lies in the Jordan Rift Valley along one of the deepest, longest, and widest fissures on the earth's surface – the Afro-Arabian fault line. The fault that runs through the center of the Dead Sea separates the African and Arabian tectonic plates of the earth's crust. As these plates gradually move farther apart, the rift valley sinks even lower.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ The Geology of the Dead Sea
- ➡ Earthquakes are common in this area, but the geological catastrophe described in Genesis 19 is one from which the region still has not recovered.
- ➡ R.K. Harrison writes, “Archaeological investigation has shown that about 2000 BC, a devastating natural catastrophe occurred there, which denuded the area of sedentary occupation for over a half a millennium.”

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Fire and Brimstone (19:24-25)
- ➡ “Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah – from the Lord out of the heavens. Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities – and also the vegetation in the land.” (19:24-25)
- ➡ In 79 AD, volcanic gases from Mount Vesuvius overcame the residents of Pompeii within a few seconds and their bodies were covered with ash from the eruption.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Fire and Brimstone (19:24-25)
- ➡ Here, lightning may have ignited the gases causing an explosive wave of fire and burning sulfur that overcame the cities and destroyed both animal and plant life in the whole area.
- ➡ The Bible makes it clear that this was not just a freak seismic occurrence, but a planned punishment upon Sodom that came “from the Lord.”

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- Fire and Brimstone (19:24-25)
- Two awesome verbs describe the event of which the Lord is the subject.
- “The Lord rained ... out of the heavens” is the verb *mātār*, “rain, deluge”
- The burning sulfur rained down upon them with no escape. The vegetation in this area has never recovered. What was once good grazing land that attracted Lot to this wicked city is now bare or submerged in 20 feet of water.
- “He overthrew” may describe the destruction of an earthquake. The Hebrew verb is *hāpak*, “turn, overturn.” The word, which means “to turn upside down,” occurs a number of times when Bible writers describe the Lord’s destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19:21, 25, 29; Deuteronomy 29:23; Isaiah 13:19; Jeremiah 20:16; 49:18; 50:40; Amos 4:11; Lamentations 4:6)

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Remember Lot's Wife (19:26)
- ➡ "But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt." (19:26)
- ➡ I don't think Lot's wife just glanced back. Apparently, she stopped running and gazed back at the city now being destroyed.
- ➡ Perhaps she didn't believe that the danger would reach her, but it did. The sulfur cloud reached her.
- ➡ Perhaps the sulfur salt or ash (as in Pompeii) coated her body and solidified.
- ➡ We don't know.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Remember Lot's Wife (19:26)
- ➡ Lot's wife has become a symbol for the person who has almost achieved deliverance, but just can't leave the attachments of the past behind and is ultimately lost.
- ➡ Jesus' reference to Lot's wife appears amidst his description of the suddenness of the coming of the Son of Man, the importance of readiness to meet him, and the tragedy of those who seek to preserve their old way of life and suffer the utter loss of any life whatsoever.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Remember Lot's Wife (19:26)
- ➡ “On that day no one who is on the roof of his house, with his goods inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. Remember Lot's wife! Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.” (Luke 17:31-33)
- ➡ The writer of Hebrews is probably referring to Lot's wife when he reminds us:
- ➡ “We are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.” (Hebrews 10:39)

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

➡ Abraham Sees the Destruction (19:27-29)

➡ “Early the next morning Abraham got up and returned to the place where he had stood before the Lord. He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, toward all the land of the plain, and he saw dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a furnace. So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham, and he brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived.” (19:27-29)

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Abraham Sees the Destruction (19:27-29)
- ➡ The words, “he remembered Abraham” (19:29) explain the rescue of Lot.
- ➡ God did not forget his promise to Abraham. He didn’t deliver Sodom because he couldn’t find ten righteous people, yet he delivered the object of Abraham’s concern – Lot.
- ➡ God is faithful. We can count on him.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Lot's Daughters Get Pregnant by their Father (19:30-38)
- ➡ “Lot and his two daughters left Zoar and settled in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar. He and his two daughters lived in a cave. One day the older daughter said to the younger, ‘Our father is old, and there is no man around here to lie with us, as is the custom all over the earth. Let’s get our father to drink wine and then lie with him and preserve our family line through our father.’

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Lot's Daughters Get Pregnant by their Father (19:30-38)
- ➡ That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and lay with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. The next day the older daughter said to the younger, "Last night I lay with my father. Let's get him to drink wine again tonight, and you go in and lie with him so we can preserve our family line through our father."

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- Lot's Daughters Get Pregnant by their Father (19:30-38)
- So they got their father to drink wine that night also, and the younger daughter went and lay with him. Again he was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. So both of Lot's daughters became pregnant by their father. The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab; he is the father of the Moabites of today. The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the Ammonites of today."
(19:30-38)

ABRAHAM

When God Calls Your Name

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- Lot's Daughters Get Pregnant by their Father (19:30-38)
- Jewish tradition, Lot's wealth – his flocks and herds – have been destroyed along with Sodom.
- All he has is what he can carry in that desperate escape from the doomed city. He is now afraid to live in the small city of Zoar, so he retreats to a cave for safety.
- Lot is reduced to eking out an existence in the mountains. He has no friends. He has no dowry or status with which to arrange marriages for his daughters. The valley is depopulated, the land barren.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- Lot's Daughters Get Pregnant by their Father (19:30-38)
- Once he was part of Abraham's household and shared Abraham's faith in Yahweh. Now he is alone except for his daughters. At night, he consoles himself with wine until he falls asleep – a sad end for a man with such potential and such dreams of prosperity.
- Why has this seedy story been preserved for us?
- For the Jews of Moses' time, it connects the dots between Lot and Israel's enemies as they enter the Promised Land – **the Moabites** (Deuteronomy 2:9; Numbers 22 and 24) and **the Ammonites** (Deuteronomy 2:19; Judges 10:9).

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- Lot's Daughters Get Pregnant by their Father (19:30-38)
- Probably the most important lesson is the realization that Lot reaps what he has sown.
- Lot decides to move to Sodom and lives among the wicked residents of the city.
- His decision results in future sons-in-law who don't respect him, a wife who doesn't believe the Lord enough to obey and survive the escape from Sodom, and a pair of daughters who can see no other way to have children but by incestuous intercourse with their drunken father.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Lot's Daughters Get Pregnant by their Father (19:30-38)
- ➡ The decisions we make as parents affect our children and their children.
- ➡ The spouses we marry determine our ability to pass on godly values to our offspring.
- ➡ The environments which we call home mold our children's lives.

The Destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19)

- ➡ Sometimes in our headlong quest for success we forget that it is the blessing of God that we must seek.
- ➡ The blessing of God will shed his peace and his presence in our lives and in the lives of our children.
- ➡ The blessing of God will preserve our families.
- ➡ The blessing of God is irreplaceable. Contrast Lot's family with Abraham's and you see how the blessing of God protected Abraham. Seek God. Seek his blessing.

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- The Birth of Isaac to Sarah (21:1-7)
- “Now the Lord was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah what he had promised. Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him. When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God com-manded him. Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.
- Sarah said, ‘God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.’ And she added, ‘Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.’” (21:1-7)

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- The Birth of Isaac to Sarah (21:1-7)
- Isaac has been a long time in coming. Ever since Abraham and Sarah were married – perhaps in Ur of the Chaldeans – they have wanted children. Since coming to Canaan, God has promised Abraham successively that he would have
 - (1) offspring,
 - (2) a son,
 - (3) a son by Sarah his wife
- There have been obstacles, Sarah is taken into Pharaoh's harem, then delivered by God
- In desperation, she gives her maidservant Hagar to Abraham and now watches as Hagar's son Ishmael grows into a young man
- Most recently Sarah has been abducted once again, this time by Abimelech, king of Gerar, and is again delivered by God.
- Now the day that she gives birth has come and she is overjoyed.

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ The Birth of Isaac to Sarah (21:1-7)
- ➡ The Lord did exactly what he had promised he would do, when he said he would do it — “at the very time God had promised him” (21:2)
- ➡ God has been gracious to Sarah. God as Sarah’s divine overseer blessed her with a child

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ The Birth of Isaac to Sarah (21:1-7)
- ➡ All around Abraham's camp there is laughing. Sarah exclaims, "God has brought me laughter and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me" (21:6)
- ➡ The baby's very name "Isaac" means "he laughs"
- ➡ This is the name God gave Abraham when he first told him of the birth. Abraham had fallen facedown and laughed when he heard it (17:17), so God told him, "Your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac" – he laughs (17:19)
- ➡ Isaac's name is forever a reminder of how God keeps his word even though his servants may laugh at the impossibility of the promise

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ Ishmael Mocks Isaac (21:8-10)
- ➡ “The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, and she said to Abraham, ‘Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.’” (21:8-10)
- ➡ Time passes and Isaac is weaned, perhaps by the time he is two or three
- ➡ By now Isaac’s step-brother Ishmael is a teen

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ Ishmael Mocks Isaac (21:8-10)
- ➡ Just what did Ishmael do to so enrage Sarah? “Mocking”
- ➡ Biblical assisted possibility:
- ➡ Sarah sees Ishmael mocking or making fun of Isaac – or maybe even hurting Isaac – and becomes enraged that this son of a servant girl is bothering her son, Abraham’s heir. Paul says that Ishmael “persecuted” Isaac (Galatians 4:29), perhaps referring to this incident – whether by verbal or physical abuse we don’t know.

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- Ishmael Mocks Isaac (21:8-10)
- Sarah comes to Abraham in a tiff and demands, “Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.”
- God Consoles Abraham regarding Ishmael (21:11-13)
- “The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. But God said to him, ‘Do not be so distressed about the boy and your maidservant. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. I will make the son of the maidservant into a nation also, because he is your offspring.’” (21:11-13)

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ God Consoles Abraham regarding Ishmael (21:11-13)
- ➡ Abraham is devastated.
“Distressed/distressing” (NIV, NRSV) or
“grievous” (KJV)
- ➡ Abraham loves this teenager and has looked on him as his heir, one who bears his genes
- ➡ Abraham has watched the child become a young man, hunted with him, and begun to enjoy his company as an almost-grown son. And now Sarah is determined to rid him and Hagar from the family once for all

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- God Consoles Abraham regarding Ishmael (21:11-13)
- But God gives Abraham a three-fold word:
 - 1. Abraham is to grant Sarah's demand that Hagar and Ishmael be sent away.
 - 2. God reminds him that Isaac, not Ishmael, is to be the true heir to the spiritual promises of God. God has told him this clearly before: "But my covenant I will establish with Isaac..." (17:18-21), God tells Abraham that his offspring will be "named" through Isaac.
 - 3. Abraham is assured that God will indeed bless Ishmael also, since he too is Abraham's son. The blessing is that he will be looked to as the head of a nation. Ishmael loses his inheritance as a son, but gains an inheritance as a nation or people.

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ God Consoles Abraham regarding Ishmael (21:11-13)
- ➡ God consoles him with clear direction as well as insight into what God is doing
- ➡ “In one point Sarah is correct, but for the wrong reason: Ishmael will not share the inheritance with Isaac, but that is not because of Sarah’s pettiness or jealousy
- ➡ It is because God has decreed that Abraham’s line of promise will be continued through Isaac
- ➡ Here is an instance of God using the wrath of a human being to accomplish his purposes. A family squabble becomes the occasion by which the sovereign purposes and programs of God are forwarded.”

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ God Consoles Abraham regarding Ishmael (21:11-13)
- ➡ Throughout the Bible, God is at work, in spite of the pettiness or sinfulness of human beings, to work his will and bring about his purposes (Joshua 11:20; 1 Kings 12:15; 2 Kings 6:3; 2 Chronicles 10:15; 2 Chronicles 22:7; 25:20; Psalm 115:3)
- ➡ Note that after Sarah's death, Abraham marries again and fathers six sons, but also sends them away from his son Isaac – this time to the east, bearing gifts from his fortune to help sustain them (25:6)

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ Abraham Sends Hagar and Ishmael Away (21:14-16)
- ➡ “Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the desert of Beersheba.
- ➡ When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. Then she went off and sat down nearby, about a bowshot away, for she thought, ‘I cannot watch the boy die.’ And as she sat there nearby, she began to sob.” (21:14-16)

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- Abraham Sends Hagar and Ishmael Away (21:14-16)
- Abraham does this very hard thing “early the next morning” (21:14) after God had spoken to him
- Abraham doesn’t put off doing the hard things, perhaps because he knows if he delays, he may never follow through. Abraham is obedient to God.
- Hagar wanders hopelessly in the desert around Beersheba where Abraham has been staying. When their water runs out, she lays her dying teenager under the meager shelter of a desert shrub and goes where she can’t see him. In her hour of desperation, she utters one of the first prayers recorded in the Bible, “Let me not look on the death of the child” (21:16)

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

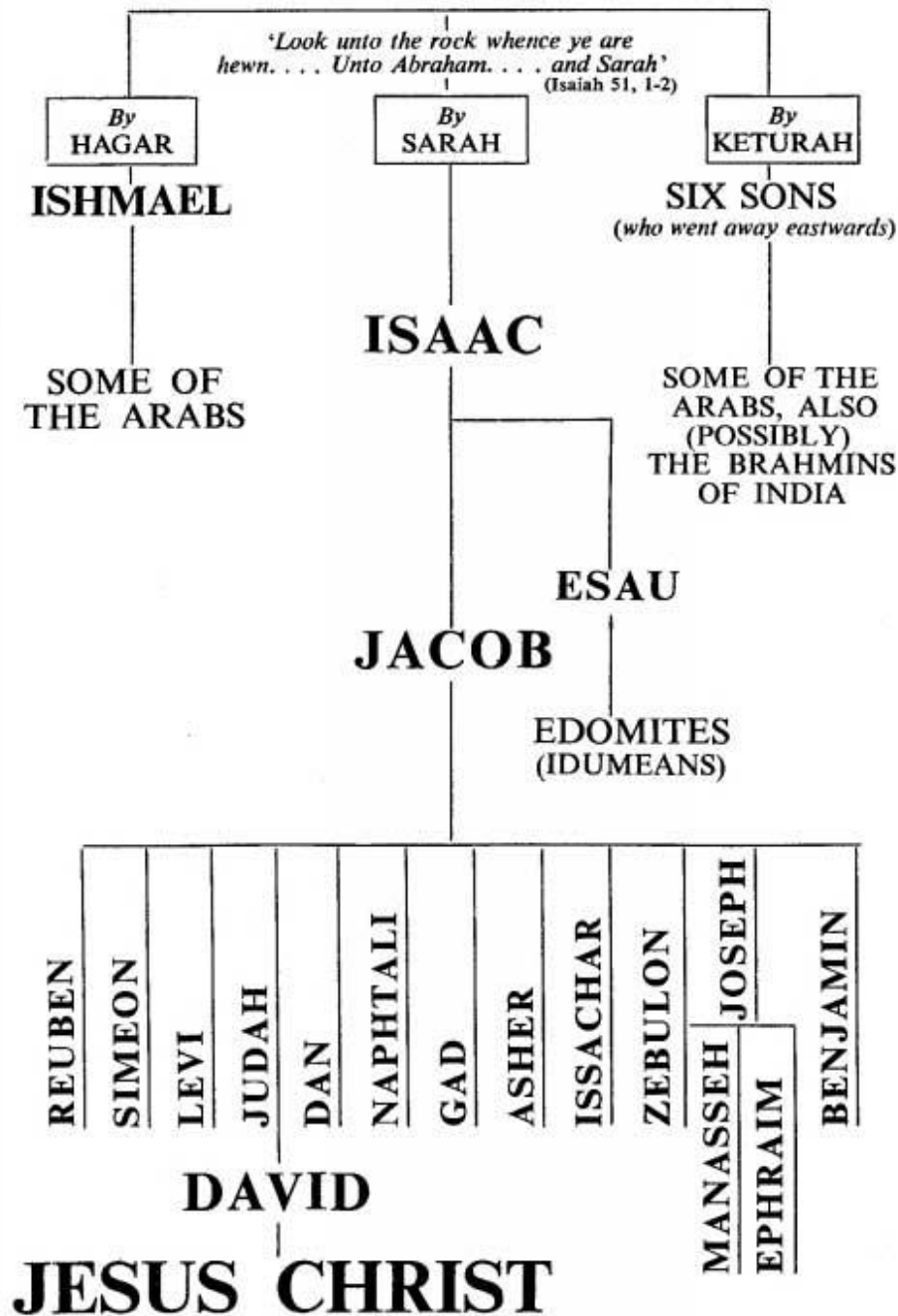
- An Angel Helps Hagar and Ishmael (21:17-21)
- “God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, ‘What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation.’
- Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.
- God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.” (21:17-21)

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- An Angel Helps Hagar and Ishmael (21:17-21)
- Ishmael grows to manhood in the desert and becomes a skilled archer, no doubt killing small animals that provide clothing and food for them. When he is older, Hagar returns to her native Egypt and finds a wife for her son.
- Hagar and Ishmael have been dealt a harsh blow, but with God's help they both survive and eventually prosper. We don't see Ishmael again until he and Isaac together bury their father 73 years hence (25:9). The Bible lists the names of Ishmael's 12 sons, who become tribal leaders in their own right (25:13-16). Ishmael himself lives to the age of 137 (25:17).
- The "nation" that Ishmael's offspring begin to populate encompasses "the area from Havilah to Shur, near the border of Egypt, as you go toward Asshur." (25:18)



ABRAHAM



Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. Son of the maidservant Hagar, Ishmael was the firstborn and is considered to be the father of the Arabic nations.
- ➡ Yet Isaac was chosen to carry on Abraham's legacy. Banished from his father's home, Ishmael had his ups and downs, but ultimately he repented and was considered righteous.
- ➡ Some of the greatest Talmudic sages and high priests were named Ishmael.

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ Ishmael's life story is only hinted at in the biblical narrative, while much of his story is expounded in the **Talmud** and **Midrash**.
- ➡ **Talmud** – the basic compendium of Jewish law and thought; the Talmud Bavli, the edition developed in Babylonia, and edited at the end of the fifth century AD
- ➡ **Midrash** – The classical collection of the Sages' homiletic teachings on the Torah

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ Abraham decided to take his family to Egypt until the famine ended.
- ➡ After Sarah's miraculous escape, Pharaoh gave Abraham and Sarah many gifts, and most importantly, he gave his daughter Hagar to Sarah as a maidservant. Pharaoh told his daughter, "It's better that you be a servant in Abraham's home than a princess in the land of Egypt."
- ➡ When Abraham was 85 and Sarah 75, and they had been married for 60 years without having children, Sarah selflessly decided to give her maidservant Hagar to Abraham so he could have children with her.

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ A year later, when Abraham was 86, Hagar gave birth to a baby boy, whom she named Ishmael (“G-d will hear”)
- ➡ When Abraham was 99, G-d appeared to him and commanded him to circumcise himself as well as his offspring. Ishmael, who was 13 at the time, allowed his father to circumcise him without any objection.
- ➡ It was at this time that G-d promised Abraham that Sarah would yet bear him a child, who would be named Isaac.

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ Shortly after Isaac's birth, people began referring to Ishmael as Hagar's boy.
- ➡ The seed of jealousy and hate began to grow in Ishmael, corrupting him. When he was about 15, he brought idols into his tent and began worshiping them, mimicking the Canaanite neighbors.
- ➡ He would also go out into the field and shoot arrows at Isaac, all the while pretending to playfully shoot birds.

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ Sarah became aware of Ishmael's ways and demanded that Abraham send away Ishmael and Hagar, who Abraham felt conflicted about sending away his son had become arrogant toward her mistress.
- ➡ Abraham felt conflicted about sending away his son, until G-d intervened and commanded him to "listen to all that his wife Sarah [told] him."
- ➡ So Abraham gave Hagar and Ishmael some food and a flask of water and sent them on their way

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ At first, Hagar remained loyal to the service of G-d as she had learned while in Abraham's house, and her water flask remained miraculously full. But as she wandered further away from Abraham's house in both body and thought, she changed.
- ➡ Her heart slowly began to return to the idols of her youth, and the water flask dried up.
- ➡ As they wandered in the desert of Be'er Sheva, Ishmael became very feverish and dehydrated. His mother, unwilling to witness his death, stowed him under a bush and waited in the distance. Both mother and son began to pray to G-d.

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ At that moment, the angels turned to G-d and asked, "Will you cause a well of water to spring up for him whose descendants will let your children perish with thirst?"
- ➡ But G-d replied, "What is Ishmael at this moment—righteous or wicked?" When the angels proclaimed him righteous, for he had repented, G-d continued, "I judge each man according to his current deeds." So G-d caused a well of water to appear, and Ishmael was saved.
- ➡ After this incident, Hagar and Ishmael settled in the wilderness of Paran. Ishmael became a bandit, robbing passing travelers.

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➤ Jewish History

- Three years after he had sent Ishmael away, Abraham went to visit his son, swearing to Sarah that he would not dismount his camel in Ishmael's vicinity. Abraham arrived at midday and met Ishmael's wife, a Moabite woman. He asked her, "Where is Ishmael?"
- She replied, "He and his mother went to bring fruits and dates from the wilderness."
- "Give me some bread and water," Abraham asked of her, "for I am tired from the rigors of the journey through the wilderness."
- "I have neither water nor bread," she answered
- He told her, "When Ishmael comes, say to him, 'An old man came from the land of Canaan to see you, and he said that you should change the threshold of your house, which is not good for you.'"

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ When Ishmael returned from the wilderness, she told him what had happened.
- ➡ Ishmael understood his father's message, and he sent his mother to find a wife for him from his father's house.
- ➡ Three years later, Abraham again went to visit his son, and again he swore to Sarah that he would not get off his camel while there.
- ➡ Abraham arrived at midday and found Ishmael's new wife, Fatimah. He asked her, "Where is Ishmael?"

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ She replied, “He and his mother went to herd camels in the wilderness.”
- ➡ “Please give me some bread and water,” he asked of her, “for I am tired from the rigors of the journey through the wilderness.”
- ➡ She brought forth bread and water and gave them to him.
- ➡ Abraham stood and prayed to G-d, and Ishmael’s house was filled with bounty and blessing. When Ishmael came back, his wife told him what had happened, and he understood that his father still loved him, even though he was a bandit.
- ➡ From then on, Abraham and Ishmael continued to visit each other.

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ Once, when Ishmael was visiting Abraham, he got into an altercation with his brother Isaac. Ishmael said to Isaac, "I am more beloved to G-d than you, since I agreed to be circumcised at the age of 13, but you were circumcised as a baby and could not refuse."
- ➡ Isaac retorted, "All that you have sacrificed to G-d was three drops of blood. But I am now 37 years old, yet if G-d desired that I be slaughtered, I would not refuse."
- ➡ Said the Holy One, blessed be He, "This is the moment!"

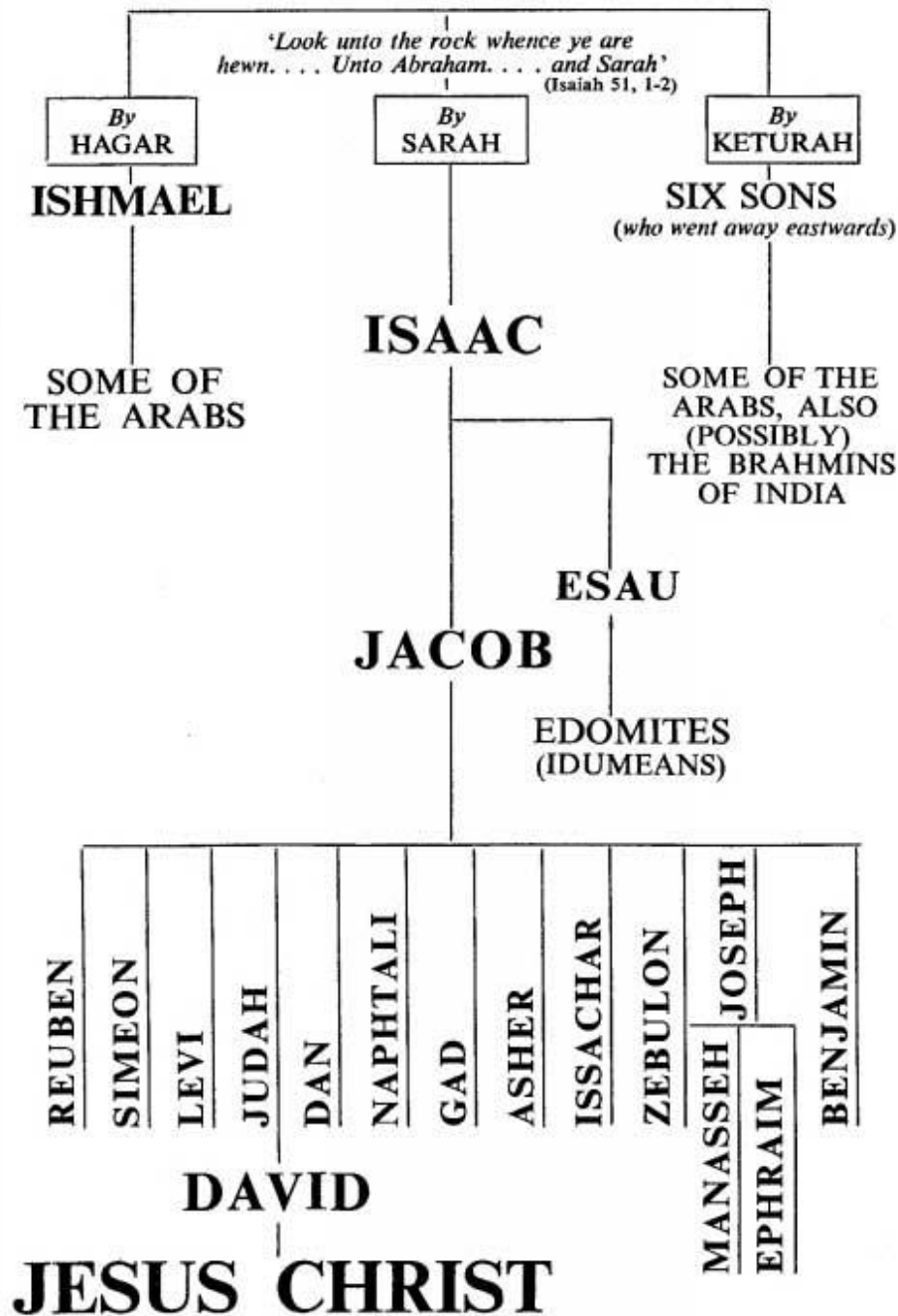
Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ G-d then commanded Abraham, “Please take your son, your only one, whom you love, Isaac, and go away to the land of Moriah and bring him up there for an offering on one of the mountains, of which I will tell you.”
- ➡ The next morning, Abraham and Isaac, accompanied by Ishmael and Abraham’s servant Eliezer, set out for what was to be Abraham’s tenth and final test, the Akeidah.
- ➡ Eventually, Ishmael repented and made up with his brother Isaac, and when it came time to bury their father Abraham, Ishmael honored his brother by letting Isaac go first.



ABRAHAM



Ishmael and the Ishmaelites

- Ishmaelite references in the Bible
- Genesis 37:25. The Ishmaelites as caravan traders who travelled with their camels from Gilead to Egypt bringing with them the goods like spices, balm, and myrrh.
- Genesis 37:28. Joseph was sold to the Ishmaelites for the amount of 20 shekels of silver.
- Judges 8:24. The Ishmaelites used to wear gold earrings.
- 2 Samuel 17:25, 1 Chronicles 2:17. The Ishmaelite Jether and Abigail who was the aunt of Joab were the parents of Amasa, who headed the armies replacing Joab by appointment of Absalom.
- 1 Chronicles 27:30. The Ishmaelite Obil was the one responsible for looking after the camels.
- Psalm 83:6. The Ishmaelites associated with the Edomites, Moabites, and Hagrites.

Ishmael and the Ishmaelites

- ➡ He was blessed by the Lord as promised had twelve sons that would create him a “great nation”
- ➡ Ishmael’s twelve sons, namely; Nabajoth, Kedar, Abdeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kademah all became the forefathers of many nations. Ishmael died at age 137
- ➡ The Ishmaelites were a nomadic nation who dwelt in the untamed country of Shur which is presently located in Saudi Arabia. The ancient capital of Shur was Midian now situated at Al-Bad.

Ishmael and the Ishmaelites

- ➡ Who Were the Ishmaelites?
- ➡ The gentilic “Ishmaelite” appears 8 times in the Bible. Four of these references are in the Joseph story, describing how they bought him as a slave and sold him to Egypt (Gen 37:25, 27, 28; 39:1). The depiction of Ishmaelites in this story is telling:
- ➡ Gen 37:25 Looking up, they (the brothers) saw a caravan of **Ishmaelites** coming from Gilead, their camels bearing gum, balm, and ladanum to be taken to Egypt.

Ishmael and the Ishmaelites

- There were hardly any written records about the Ismaelites after the reign of King David aside from an account in the book of Jubilees that states the Ishmaelites mixed with the other nations
- They lived with the Midianites according to the book of Judges, they were also associated to the Edomites, Moabites, and Hagrites.
- The book of Jubilees further mentioned Ishmaelites living with the people of Keturah, also a descendant of Abraham occupying the lands of Paran up to Babylon and were known as the Arabs and Ishmaelites.

Ishmael in Islam

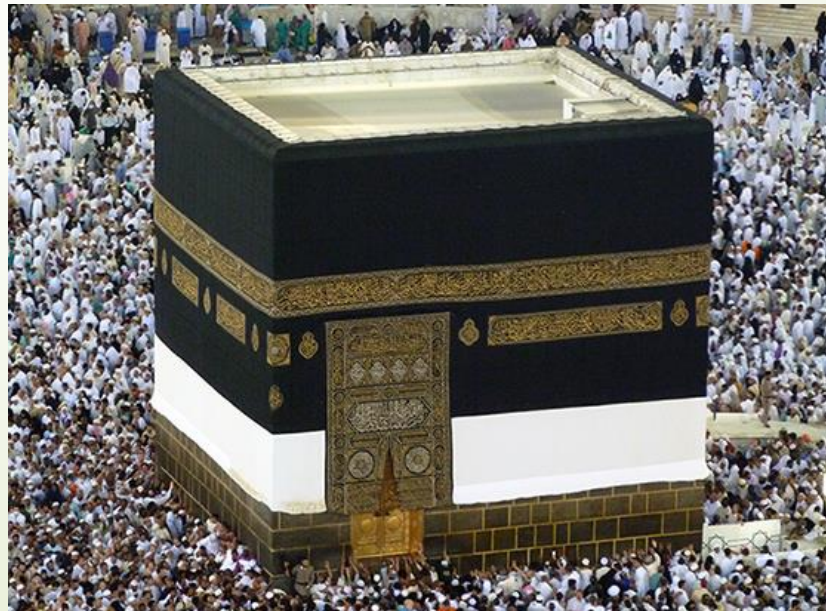
- Ishmael in Islam Ishmael is the figure known in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as Abraham's son, born to Hagar
- In Islam, Ishmael is regarded as a prophet and an ancestor to Muhammad.
- He also became associated with Mecca and the construction of the Kaaba.
- Stories of Ishmael are not only found in Jewish and Christian texts, such as the Bible and rabbinic Midrash, but also Islamic sources.

Ishmael in Islam

- Islamic scholars and hadith support the Jewish and Christian view that Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael away at God's command, in accordance with Sarah's proclamation, "this boy will not be an heir with my son Isaac" (Genesis 21:10-12)
- **Ishmael and Hagar taken to Mecca by Abraham**
- Ishmael and Hagar being taken to Mecca by Abraham in Islamic texts is an important part in the story of Ishmael, as it brings the focus to Mecca and is the beginning of Mecca's sanctification as a holy area
- Islamic tradition says Abraham was ordered by God to take Hagar and Ishmael to Mecca, and later Abraham returned to Mecca to build the Kaaba.

Ishmael in Islam

- ➡ The Kaaba, pre-Islamic monument, rededicated by Muhammad in 631-32 C.E., multiple renovations, granite masonry, covered with silk curtain and calligraphy in gold and silver-wrapped thread (Mecca, Saudi Arabia)



Ishmael in Islam

- In many of these accounts, the Sakina (spirit sent by God), or the angel Gabriel (Jibral) guides them to the location of the Kaaba, at which point Abraham builds it and afterwards, leaves the other two there (other versions say the construction of the Kaaba occurred later and that Ishmael took part in it)
- **The Sacrifice**
- Most Muslims believe that Abraham was told to sacrifice his son, Ishmael, though the Qur'an does mention the son. The multiple versions suggest that it was originally an oral story that had been circulating before being written as it is in the Qur'an and in additional commentaries.
- Unlike in the Bible, there is no mention in the Qur'an of an animal (ram) replacing the boy; rather he is replaced with a 'great sacrifice' (Zibhin azeem)

Ishmael: The Sacrifice Quran37:102–109

- 102. Then, when he was old enough to accompany him, he said, “O My son, I see in a dream that I am sacrificing you; see what you think.” He said, “O my Father, do as you are commanded; you will find me, God willing, one of the steadfast.”
- 103. Then, when they had submitted, and he put his forehead down.
- 104. We called out to him, “O Abraham!
- 105. You have fulfilled the vision.” Thus We reward the doers of good.
- 106. This was certainly an evident test.
- 107. And We redeemed him with a great sacrifice.
- 108. And We left with him for later generations.
- 109. Peace be upon Abraham.

Ishmael: The Sacrifice Quran37:102–109

- ➡ Though it is generally believed by modern Muslims that Ishmael was the son who was almost sacrificed, among scholars and historiographers of early Islam, there is much debate.
- ➡ Such dispute over which son suggests that the story, and where and to whom it happens, is extremely important
- ➡ It is argued that the story originated from rabbinic texts and was adapted to Islam over time in order to give Mecca religious importance and connect the story with the pilgrimage

Ishmael in Islam

➡ Construction of the Kaaba

- ➡ At some point, often believed to be after Hagar's death, Ishmael marries a woman from the **Jurhum**, the tribe who settled in the area around Zamzam. Abraham visits Ishmael in Mecca and when he arrives at his home, Ishmael is not there. Instead Ishmael's wife greets Abraham, but she is not welcoming or generous to him. Abraham instructs her to tell Ishmael some version of the statement that he is not pleased with or to change "the threshold of his door." When Ishmael returns home and his wife tells him this, he knows it is from his father and taking the advice, divorces the woman.

Ishmael in Islam

- ➡ **Construction of the Kaaba**
- ➡ He then marries another woman from **Jurhum**. Abraham once again visits and is met by Ishmael's second wife, as Ishmael is out. This wife is very kind and provides food for him. Abraham instructs her to tell Ishmael some version of the statement that he is pleased with "the threshold of his door." When Ishmael arrives and his wife repeats Abraham's statement, Ishmael knows it is from his father and keeps his wife

Ishmael in Islam

- **Construction of the Kaaba**
- There are many versions of the construction of the Kaaba that differ in fairly significant ways, although all have Abraham build or cleanse the Kaaba and then immediately after, or at an unknown time, God calls Abraham to establish the Hajj, or pilgrimage.
- These narratives differ in when these events occurred, if and how there was supernatural involvement, the inclusion or omission of the Black Stone, and whether Ishmael assisted his father. Of those that say Ishmael took part in the construction, most describe Abraham visiting Ishmael a third time in Mecca, during which they raise the Kaaba.

Ishmael in Islam

- **Construction of the Kaaba**
- Some versions say Abraham has Ishmael look for a final stone, but Abraham does not accept the one he brings back. Instead an angel has brought the Black Stone, which Abraham puts into place. Ishmael is left at the Kaaba, in charge of its care and to teach others about the Hajj
- The Quraysh tribe, who ruled Mecca, rebuilt the pre-Islamic Kaaba in c. 608 AD with alternating courses of masonry and wood
- The starting of the Hajj has many versions, and scholars believe this reflects the late association of Abraham with the Hajj after Islam had developed to help remove its connection to early pagan rituals

Ishmael in Islam

- ➡ **Construction of the Kaaba**
- ➡ Muslims believe that Allah ordered the Kaaba to be constructed. The story goes that Abraham built the mosque with his oldest son, Ishmael in the likeness of Allah's home in heaven.
- ➡ Purportedly the oldest mosque on Earth, it is believed to have been originally used by pagans before Islam came into existence. According to Islamic tradition, the stone was set intact into the Kaabas wall by the Islamic prophet Muhammad in the year 605 AD.

Ishmael in Islam

- ➡ **Construction of the Kaaba**
- ➡ Muslims also believe that the Kaaba stone was once part of the stones of heaven. There are various versions of its story of origin, all similar to one the another.
- ➡ When Adam was banished from the Garden of Eden, he was filled with sin. The Black Stone was given to him to erase this sin and allow him entrance back into heaven. Some instead believe the ancient stone was brought from a nearby mountain by the archangel Gabriel.

Ishmael in Islam

- Genealogy and association with Arabs
- In pre-Islamic times, there were three distinct groups of Arabs - the **Ba'ida**, **Ariba**, and **Musta'riba**.
- The Ba'ida were the “legendary Arabs of the past,” while the Ariba were the “Southern Arabs.”
- Ishmael's descendants became the Northern Arabs known as the Musta'riba or the “Arabized Arabs.” The Musta'riba were described as Arabized since it is believed Ishmael learned Arabic when he moved to Mecca and married into the Arabic tribe of Jurhum

Ishmael in Islam

- **Genealogy and association with Arabs**
- Ishmael's line is then traced from his son Kedar, then down through to Adnan, then to the Musta'riba, to the Quraysh
- In this manner, Muhammad's ancestry leads back to Ishmael, joining "original biblical ancestry of Abraham with a distinctively Arab a final stock," and connecting Muhammad with Mecca and the Kaaba.

Ishmael: The Torah

- The Abraham cycle opens in Genesis 11:27–32, it ends in Genesis 25:18, with the description of Abraham's death, his burial by Isaac and Ishmael (Gen. 25:7–11), and Ishmael's genealogy (25:12–18)
- Ishmael is mentioned in the Torah only once after this, in the context of Esau's marriage to Ishmael's daughter

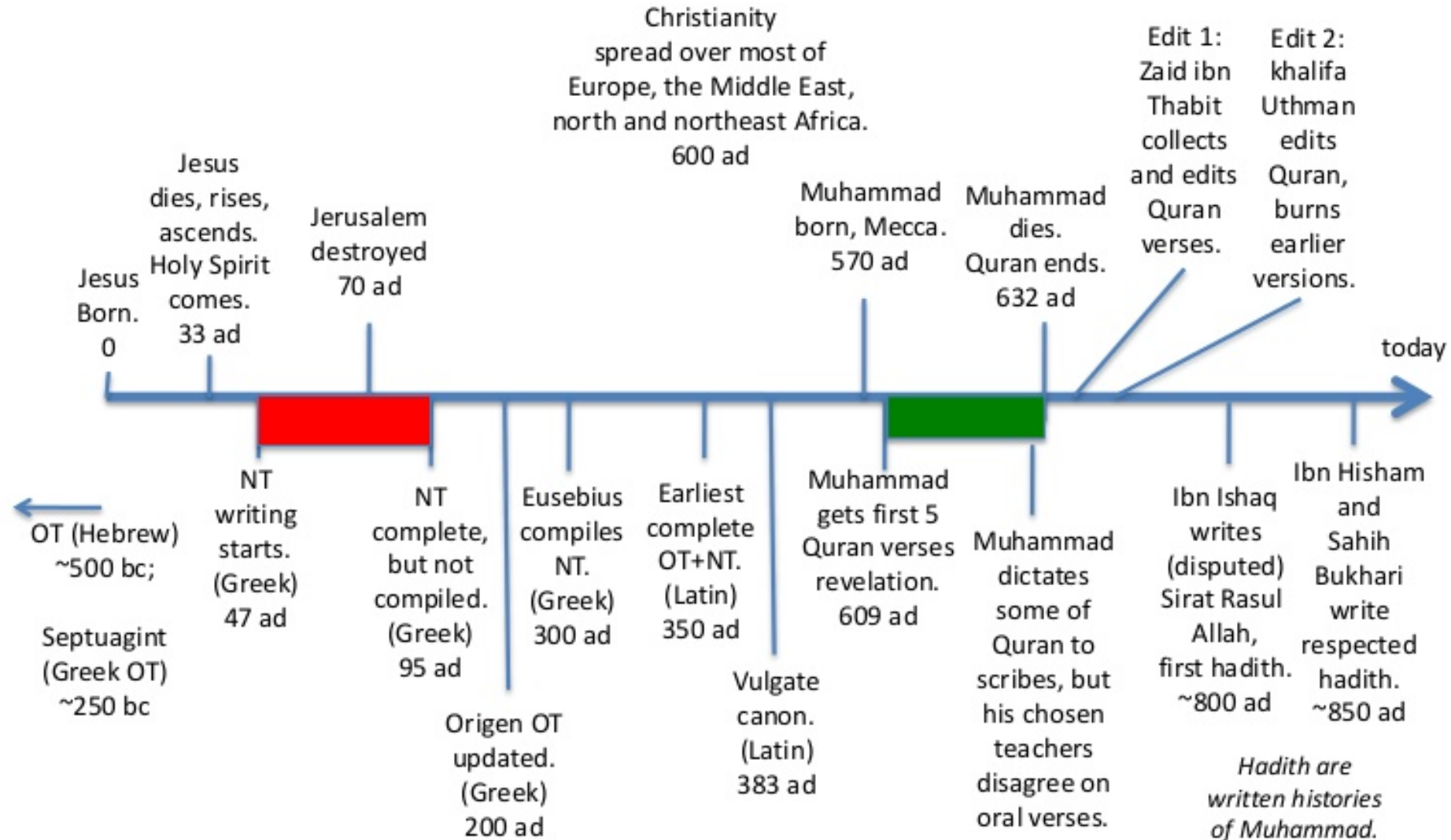
Ishmael: The Torah

- ➡ The Ishmael stories are part of this cycle, in which he and his mother Hagar play an important role:
- ➡ Almost two full chapters (16 and 21) are dedicated to them.
- ➡ The story of Ishmael's birth (Ch. 16) appears in the center of Abraham's cycle.
- ➡ The story of his birth is incorporated in surroundings that heightens his importance: after the Covenant between the Parts (Ch. 15) and before the story of the circumcision (Ch. 17).

Ishmael: The Torah

- Ishmael's place in Chapter 17, as the bearer of Abrahamic fertility blessing and the future of a great nation (12:2, 13:16, 15:5, 17:2–6), also attests to his unique place.
- The expulsion of Ishmael that precedes the Binding of Isaac – termed by some, the Binding of Ishmael, in which Ishmael is nearly reborn and enjoys permanent divine providence (21:20) – also points to his distinct place
- Over thirteen years passed (17:25) from Ishmael's birth until Isaac's birth (21:1–3), thus, it is reasonable to assume, that the bond between the father and his only son, born after so many childless years, was strong.

Bible and Quran Timeline



Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

➡ Jewish History

- ➡ G-d then commanded Abraham, “Please take your son, your only one, whom you love, Isaac, and go away to the land of Moriah and bring him up there for an offering on one of the mountains, of which I will tell you.”
- ➡ The next morning, Abraham and Isaac, accompanied by Ishmael and Abraham’s servant Eliezer, set out for what was to be Abraham’s tenth and final test, the Akeidah.
- ➡ Eventually, Ishmael repented and made up with his brother Isaac, and when it came time to bury their father Abraham, Ishmael honored his brother by letting Isaac go first.

Ishmael: Abraham's Other Son

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Chronology of the Patriarchs

Biblical Event	Scripture	Chronological Reference	Date (BC) ¹	Date (BC) ²
Abraham born	Gen 11:26	Terah 70 years old	2166	2212
Sarah born	Gen 17:17	Sarah 90 years old at Isaacs birth	2156	2202
Abraham departs Haran	Gen 12:4	Abraham 75 years old	2091	2137
Abraham marries Hagar	Gen 16:3	Abraham dwelt 10 years in Canaan	2081	2127
Ismael born	Gen 16:16	Abraham 86 years old	2080	2126
Abraham is promised a son	Gen 17:1, 24	Abraham 99 years old	2067	2113
Ismael circumcised	Gen 17:25	Ishmael 13 years old	2067	2113
Isaac born	Gen 17:17, 21:5	Abraham 100 years old, Sarah 90	2066	2112
Sarah dies	Gen 23:1	Sarah 127 years old	2029	2075
Isaac marries Rebekah	Gen 25:20	Isaac 40 years old	2026	2072
Jacob and Esau born	Gen 25:26	Isaac 60 years old	2006	2052
Abraham dies	Gen 25:7	Abraham 175 years old	1991	2037
Esau marries Judith the Hittite	Gen 26:34	Esau 40 years old	1966	2012
Ishmael dies	Gen 25:17	Ishmael 137 years old	1943	1989
Joseph born	Gen 41:46	Joseph 30 years old during first year of plenty	1916	1962
Joseph sold into slavery	Gen 37:2	Joseph 17 years old	1899	1945
Isaac dies	Gen 35:28	Isaac 180 years old	1886	1932
Joseph serves the Pharaoh	Gen 41:46	Joseph 30 years old (1st year of plenty)	1886	1932
Seven years of plenty begin	Gen 41:29-48	7 years plenty	1886	1932
Seven years of famine begin	Gen 41:30-54	7 years famine	1879	1925
Joseph's brothers come to Egypt	Gen 45:6	2 years into famine, 5 remaining	1877	1923
Jacob & children descend into Egypt	Gen 47:9 Exo 12:40,41	Jacob 130 years old (3rd year of famine?) 430 years in Egypt	1876	1922
Jacob dies	Gen 47:28	Jacob in Egypt 17 years, Jacob 147 years old	1859	1905
Joseph dies	Gen 50:22,26	Joseph 110 years old	1806	1852
Ten Plagues	Exod 7:7	Moses 80 years old, Aaron 83 years old	1447	1493
Exodus	Exod 13:4...	Following Year (in Nisan / Abib)	1446 ¹	1492 ²
Entrance into Canaan		41st year after the Exodus	1406	1452

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ Abraham Swears Faithfulness to Abimelech at Beer-sheba (21:22-24)
- ➡ Abimelech and Abraham already have some history together.
- ➡ “At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his forces said to Abraham, ‘God is with you in everything you do. Now swear to me here before God that you will not deal falsely with me or my children or my descendants. Show to me and the country where you are living as an alien the same kindness (hesed) I have shown to you.’ Abra-ham said, ‘I swear it.’” (21:22-24)

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ Why does Abimelech come with Phicol, his general, to parley with Abraham?
- ➡ Because he sees God's blessing on him and fears him.
 - ➡ Abraham defeated the Mesopotamian army
 - ➡ Abimelech has seen Abraham's prayer heal him and his wives.
 - ➡ Abraham is a man to be reckoned with and Abimelech doesn't exactly trust him.

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ “Then Abraham complained to Abimelech about a well of water that Abimelech’s servants had seized. But Abimelech said, ‘I don’t know who has done this. You did not tell me, and I heard about it only today.’
- ➡ So Abraham brought sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech, and the two men made a treaty. Abraham set apart seven ewe lambs from the flock, and Abimelech asked Abraham, ‘What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs you have set apart by yourselves?’
- ➡ He replied, ‘Accept these seven lambs from my hand as a witness that I dug this well.’
- ➡ So that place was called Beersheba, because the two men swore an oath there.

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ Abraham Calls God in Beer-sheba (21:33-34)
- ➡ “Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there he called upon the name of the LORD, the Eternal God. And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines²³ for a long time.” (21:33-34)

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ The Eternal God (21:33)
- ➡ In Beer-sheba, Abraham realizes something important and special about God – he “called upon the name of the LORD, the Eternal God.”
- ➡ Here Abraham uses a different name for God – in Hebrew el-’ôlām. El, of course, is the generic word for God. ‘ôlām means “forever, everlasting.”
- ➡ The word is used more than three hundred times to indicate indefinite continuance into the very distant future, and occasionally to refer to the past as well.

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- ➡ The Eternal God (21:33)
- ➡ Abraham is an old man, but he recognizes that God will outlive him and live on and on to bless his descendants after him.
- ➡ Abraham now understands God as the One, who in Isaiah's words, "inhabits eternity" (Isaiah 57:15,). God is "from everlasting to everlasting" (Psalm 41:13), his throne has been established "from all eternity" (Psalm 93:2). We are just tiny specks in the great expanse of time. "What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?" (Psalm 8:4).

Isaac Born, Ishmael Banished (Genesis 21)

- The Eternal God (21:33)
- Just as Abraham was struck with the realization of God's eternity, so we discover that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus and his Father are "the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End" (Revelation 1:8, 17-18; 21:6; 22:13). Hallelujah!
- When we unite our lives with Jesus Christ by faith and baptism, we unite ourselves with the Eternal One and will share eternal life with him for ever and ever. In this eternal life, God completes his plan for us that we read in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life" – with the Eternal God.

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Abraham has come to the point in his spiritual journey of radical and immediate obedience to the word of God. He is an exemplar and inspiration to disciples of all ages.
- ➡ God Requires Abraham's Only and Beloved Son (22:1-2)
- ➡ Abraham is living near a well at Beer-sheba on the edge of the Negev desert at the southern extremity of Canaan (20:33-34; 22:19). Here in Beer-sheba he had "called upon the name of the LORD, the Eternal God" (21:33) and here in Beer-sheba God speaks to him a fearful word.

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)
- ➡ “Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, ‘Abraham!’ ‘Here I am,’ he replied. Then God said, ‘Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.’” (22:1-2)

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)
- ➡ There is no mistake about Who this is who is speaking to him.² Abraham has heard God's voice many times during his lifetime. He knows the voice. It is not the voice of an enemy, but a friend. But the message must have brought agony to Abraham's heart. We'll discuss the word "tested" in verse 1

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)
- ➡ Abraham's heart has been broken when he sent away his firstborn son Ishmael at Sarah's insistence (21:10-11). Now Abraham has watched Isaac grow from being a toddler into (we don't know his age). In Isaac, all the promises of God to Abraham find their focus – blessing and descendants and the land. He is the miracle-son of Sarah at 90 and Abraham at 100. How can God ask for him now?
- ➡ The angels seems to speak in measured cadence 'Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love' God describes Isaac in two ways:

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)
- 1. Your only son. “Only” means “only, only begot-ten.” In this context yāhīd refers to an only child.³ Though Isaac is Abraham’s second son, he has sent away Ishmael, his firstborn. As far as he and God are concerned, Isaac is the only one.
- 2. Isaac whom you love. “Love” This general word for “love” is used in many contexts. Here it describes love between human beings, such as the love of father for son. This lad holds all the hopes and dreams and affection of his aged parents.

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)
- ➡ A “burnt offering” commonly burned the entire sacrifice on the altar. Hundreds of years later, in the Mosaic law, God prescribes other offerings of which only part is burned and the rest is eaten by the worshippers.
- ➡ The burnt offering or whole offering is consumed completely.

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)
- ➡ Human Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East
- ➡ Human sacrifice was not unknown in the ancient Near East, though early examples of it are rare.
- ➡ Human sacrifice does seem to have been practiced by the “Sea Peoples” who settled along the coast – Phoenicians and Canaanites.

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Human Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East
- ➡ In Bible times, the King of Moab offered his son as a burnt offering when his capital was under siege (2 Kings 3:27)
- ➡ This Canaanite and Phoenician practice came into Israel under apostate kings when Ahaz “made his son pass through the fire” (2 Kings 16:3) and Manasseh did the same (2 Kings 21:6)
- ➡ The custom was probably fairly widespread, since it prompted condemnations of the practice in the Bible (Leviticus, Deuteronomy, 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Psalm, Jeremiah)

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Human Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East
- ➡ Abraham didn't have the benefit of God's revelation to Moses and the prophets, of the Old Testament scriptures. All he knew was that child sacrifice was practiced by some of the Canaanites.
- ➡ Was Abraham morally incensed by the practice?
- ➡ Abraham had no option but to believe that God seriously demanded that he sacrifice his son as a "burnt offering," that is, a sacrifice that is fully consumed by the fire upon the altar.

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Abraham Heads for Mt. Moriah (22:3-5)
- ➡ To Abraham's credit, when God told him to offer his son Isaac, he didn't put it off. He began his journey "early the next morning."
- ➡ "Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. He said to his servants, 'Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.'" (22:3-5)

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Abraham Heads for Mt. Moriah (22:3-5)
- ➡ “The third day” is about right for a trip from Beer-sheba to Jerusalem, a journey of about 50 miles. He leaves his servants behind with the donkey and tells them that he and the boy will go and worship. “Worship” is the Hebrew verb *hāwā*, “bow down, prostrate oneself, worship.”
- ➡ Observe Abraham’s confident promise: “We will worship and then we will come back to you” (22:5). While Abraham is fully prepared to offer Isaac, he also is confident that God will keep the promises that Isaac himself will be heir to the covenant and have descendants (Genesis 17:19, 21; 21:12). Here is obedient faith in action.

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ Abraham Heads for Mt. Moriah (22:3-5)
- ➡ The writer of Hebrews reflects on the quality of Abraham's faith:
- ➡ "By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, 'It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.' Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death." (Hebrews 11:17-19)

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- God Will Provide the Lamb (22:6-9)
- Isaac was old enough to sense something amiss.
- “Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, ‘Father?’ ‘Yes, my son?’ Abraham replied. ‘The fire and wood are here,’ Isaac said, ‘but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?’ Abraham answered, ‘God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.’ And the two of them went on together.” (22:6-9)
- Abraham answers Isaac’s questions with the only answer he can hope for, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.”

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- Abraham Prepares to Sacrifice His Son (22:9-10)
- “When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.” (22:11-12)
- The narrator explains how Abraham methodically proceeds:
 - 1. Builds an altar, either an earthen altar or one made of stones.
 - 2. Arranges the wood on the altar.
 - 3. Binds Isaac, probably with leather thongs.
 - 4. Lays him on the altar. Abraham picks up his son Isaac, his only son, and sets him on the wood.

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ The Angel Restrains Abraham (22:11-12)
- ➡ But just before that point, the angel – who now speaks with the voice of Yahweh – stops Abraham.
- ➡ “But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, ‘Abraham! Abraham!’ ‘Here I am,’ he replied. ‘Do not lay a hand on the boy,’ he said. ‘Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.’”
(22:11-12)

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ The Angel Restrains Abraham (22:11-12)
- ➡ The repetition of his name – “Abraham, Abraham” – suggests the urgency of the angel’s message, and recalls other urgent calls from God – “Moses, Moses” (Exodus 3:4), “Samuel, Samuel” (1 Samuel 3:4), “Saul, Saul” (Acts 9:4).
- ➡ God stops him from slaying his son, and then encourages him that he has passed the test.

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ God's Testing and Forming of His Servants
- ➡ Yahweh says, "Now I know that you fear God," that is, he is committed to God. One who fears God stands in awe of God and lives with practical righteousness and piety, obeying, walking in the Lord's ways.
- ➡ But doesn't the omnipotent God – "the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth" (14:22) – have foreknowledge of how Abraham will respond?

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ God's Testing and Forming of His Servants
- ➡ Of course. This is not a theological textbook but a story
- ➡ “It would be unfair to Hebrew storytelling to ask it to turn into an academic treatise on God's sovereignty and human freedom.
- ➡ Rather, this story is the story of a journey with God, sometimes told from God's perspective – as in the narrator's opening words – and sometimes told from the human participant's perspective.”

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ God's Testing and Forming of His Servants
- ➡ In verse 1 "tested" (NIV, NRSV) is used to describe this event
- ➡ In some contexts the idea of "testing or proving" for the quality of someone or something, often through diversity or hardship."
- ➡ "Such testing by God, however, was not without intent. It was to refine the character of man that he might walk more closely in God's ways."
- ➡ Several times in the Old Testament, the idea of testing is combined with refining metals, such as silver or
- ➡ God uses the events we face to challenge and strengthen our faith, to grow our spiritual muscles

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ God's Testing and Forming of His Servants

- ➡ In the midst of trials we wonder Why?

- ➡ We seek to find meaning in our trials.

Sometimes, as in Abraham's case, God explains a bit of the purpose. At other times, we just don't know, but we continue to trust that in this circumstance God will fulfill his word: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ The Significance of Abraham's Faith
- ➡ Abraham's act of faith is awesome. Young Isaac is Abraham's only future, yet he is willing to entrust his future to God.
- ➡ "Abraham's willingness to relinquish Isaac expresses his dependence on the Lord himself, not just on the divine promise alone. Abraham recognizes his son Isaac as a gift ultimately belonging to God, and the fulfillment of the Lord's covenant promises as a privilege, not a right."

Abraham Offers Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19)

- ➡ The Significance of Abraham's Faith
- ➡ God leads Abraham – as he brings many of his servants today – to the point of offering to God everything he possesses so that he hopes in God alone – only to receive back, sanctified and blessed, what he has offered. Herein lies the paradox of true discipleship:
- ➡ “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.” (Mark 8:35)

Death of Sarah and Abraham (22:20 - 25:1-11)

- ➡ Abraham is tying up loose ends and making arrangements to provide for Isaac's marriage and to protect his inheritance.
- ➡ Hearing of his Relatives in Haran (22:20-24)
- ➡ Purchasing a Burial Plot for Sarah (chapter 23)
- ➡ Procuring a Wife for Isaac (chapter 24)
- ➡ Marrying a Concubine and Protecting Isaac's Inheritance (25:1-6)
- ➡ The Death and Burial of Abraham (25:7-11)

Abraham's Relatives in Haran (22:20-24)

- A genealogy is introduced of his relatives back in Mesopotamia. The important names here are Bethuel and Rebekah.



Sarah's Death and Burial (23:1-2)

- ➡ “Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. She died at Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.” (23:1-2)
- ➡ Abraham had encamped at various times at the trees of Mamre, near Hebron (here referred to Kiriath Arba). This is the place where Sarah dies at age 127. Abraham “went in” to Sarah’s tent to mourn for her

Main events in Sarah's life:

- Marries half-brother Abraham (11:29-31; 20:12)
- Is barren (11:30)
- Emigrates to Canaan (12:4-5)
- Is Abducted by Pharaoh (12:10-20)
- Gives Hagar to Abraham (16:1-4)
- Abuses Hagar (16:5-6, 9)
- Has her name changed from Sarai to Sarah, promised to be mother of nations (17:15-16)
- Laughs at promise of conceiving (18:9-15)
- Is abducted by Abimelech (20:1-14)
- Gives birth to Isaac (21:1-7)
- Drives away Hagar and Ishmael (21:9-14)
- Dies and is buried (23:1-20)
- New Testament reflections (Hebrews 11:11; 1 Peter 3:5-6)

Purchasing a Burial Spot from the Hittites (23:3-20)

- ➡ Abraham ask Hebron's leaders to sell him a burial place
- ➡ Abraham realizes that he cannot accept the land as a gift or actual legal title will not pass to his heir, so he must pay full price.
- ➡ The city elders must approve of the transaction, since selling land to a resident alien is an exception to their normal property laws.

Purchasing a Burial Spot from the Hittites (23:3-20)

- ➡ First, Abraham wants only the cave, but Ephron offers him the adjacent field with the land
- ➡ 2nd Ephron offers to give Abraham the land, knowing that the property will probably revert to him upon Abraham's death
- ➡ 3rd Abraham insists on paying full price, Ephron asks for a small fortune – 400 shekels of silver
- ➡ Later Abraham will be buried there (25:9), as well as Isaac (35:27-29) and Jacob (49:30; 50:13).

Abraham Seeks a Wife for Isaac (24:1-67)

- ➡ Abraham's life is now winding down. Sarah has been buried. If you could find one or two words to describe Abraham's life, "blessing" would be one of them. "Faith" would be another. He has wealth, long life, and a child who will be his heir.
- ➡ Now Abraham must look to providing a wife for his son Isaac.

Abraham Seeks a Wife for Isaac (24:1-67)

- ➡ “ 2 He said to the chief servant in his household, the one in charge of all that he had, ‘Put your hand under my thigh. 3 I want you to swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I am living, 4 but will go to my country and my own relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac.’
- ➡ 5 The servant asked him, ‘What if the woman is unwilling to come back with me to this land? Shall I then take your son back to the country you came from?’

Abraham Seeks a Wife for Isaac (24:1-67)

➤ “ 2 He said to the chief servant in his household, the one in charge of all that he had, ‘Put your hand under my thigh. 3 I want you to swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I am living, 4 but will go to my country and my own relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac.’ 6 ‘Make sure that you do not take my son back there,’ Abraham said. 7 ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, who brought me out of my father’s household and my native land and who spoke to me and promised me on oath, saying, “To your offspring I will give this land” – he will send his angel before you so that you can get a wife for my son from there. 8 If the woman is unwilling to come back with you, then you will be released from this oath of mine. Only do not take my son back there.’ 9 So the servant put his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and swore an oath to him concerning this matter.” (24:2-9)

Abraham Seeks a Wife for Isaac (24:1-67)

- ➡ The servant is asked to swear by “the LORD (Yahweh), the God of heaven and the God of earth” (24:3). It’s pretty obvious that Abraham believes Yahweh’s power is limitless and extends from the earth to all the heavens,
- ➡ Abraham is too old to make the trip to Mesopotamia himself, so he exacts two promises from his servant:
- ➡ Isaac is not to marry a Canaanite wife, and
- ➡ Isaac is not to return to the family homeland in Mesopotamia.

Abraham Seeks a Wife for Isaac (24:1-67)

- ➡ Abraham is trusting God for this trip. He has obviously been in prayer about it, and perhaps in conversation with God, for he says, “The LORD ... will send his angel before you so that you can get a wife for my son from there” (24:7).

Abraham Seeks a Wife for Isaac (24:1-67)

- ➡ The Servant's Journey to Aram Naharaim (24:10-11)
- ➡ The Servant's Prayer (24:12-14)
- ➡ Rebekah Is the LORD's Answer (24:15-27)
- ➡ The servant has learned faith and worship from Abraham. So he bows down and then prostrates himself before the LORD with praise. He sees the answer to prayer as an indication of God's kindness and faithfulness to Abraham.

Abraham Seeks a Wife for Isaac (24:1-67)

- ➡ The Servant Is Shown Hospitality (24:28-32)
- ➡ The Servant Shares His Mission and Its Fulfillment (24:33-49)
- ➡ This Is from the LORD (24:50-54)
- ➡ The Servant Is Eager to Return (24:54b-61)
- ➡ Isaac Marries Rebekah (24:62-67)
- ➡ Abraham Marries Keturah (25:1-6)
- ➡ The Death of Abraham (25:7-8)
- ➡ Abraham's Burial (25:9-11)

Summary of Abraham's Faith and Achievements

- ➡ **Abraham pioneers monotheism.** He rejects the multiplicity of gods of the Mesopotamians and Canaanites. Instead he called God Yahweh, God Most High (El Elyon), Almighty God (El Shaddai), the Eternal God (El Olam), and Jehovah-Jireh (The Lord the Provider). He is the God of heaven and the God of earth. He is El-Roi, the God who Hagar names "The One Who Sees Me." He is not many gods, but One God.
- ➡ **Abraham hears God's voice and talks to God personally.** For so many, many people – before and after Abraham – God is formal, far off, distant. But for Abraham, God is intimate. We are given that gift of intimacy with God through the mediation of Jesus Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Summary of Abraham's Faith and Achievements

- ➡ **Abraham believes God.** The more he listens to God's words to him, the more he believes. It is this trust in God – even when God asks the hardest thing of sacrificing Isaac his son – this faith that God counts to him as righteousness. He is truly the “father of faith” for us all.
- ➡ **Abraham obeys immediately.** No matter how hard, when God speaks to Abraham, he obeys quickly – immediately, “early the next morning.”

Summary of Abraham's Faith and Achievements

- ➡ **Abraham worships.** He doesn't let his familiarity with God get in the way of his reverence for God's awesome holiness. He worships through prostrating himself, through planting a tree, through building an altar, through sacrificing to God from his flock, through prayer.
- ➡ **Abraham surrenders everything he values to God.** Abraham offers one tenth of the spoils of war to God, but his commitment doesn't stop with the tithe. He surrenders his most valued possession to God – his son Isaac.