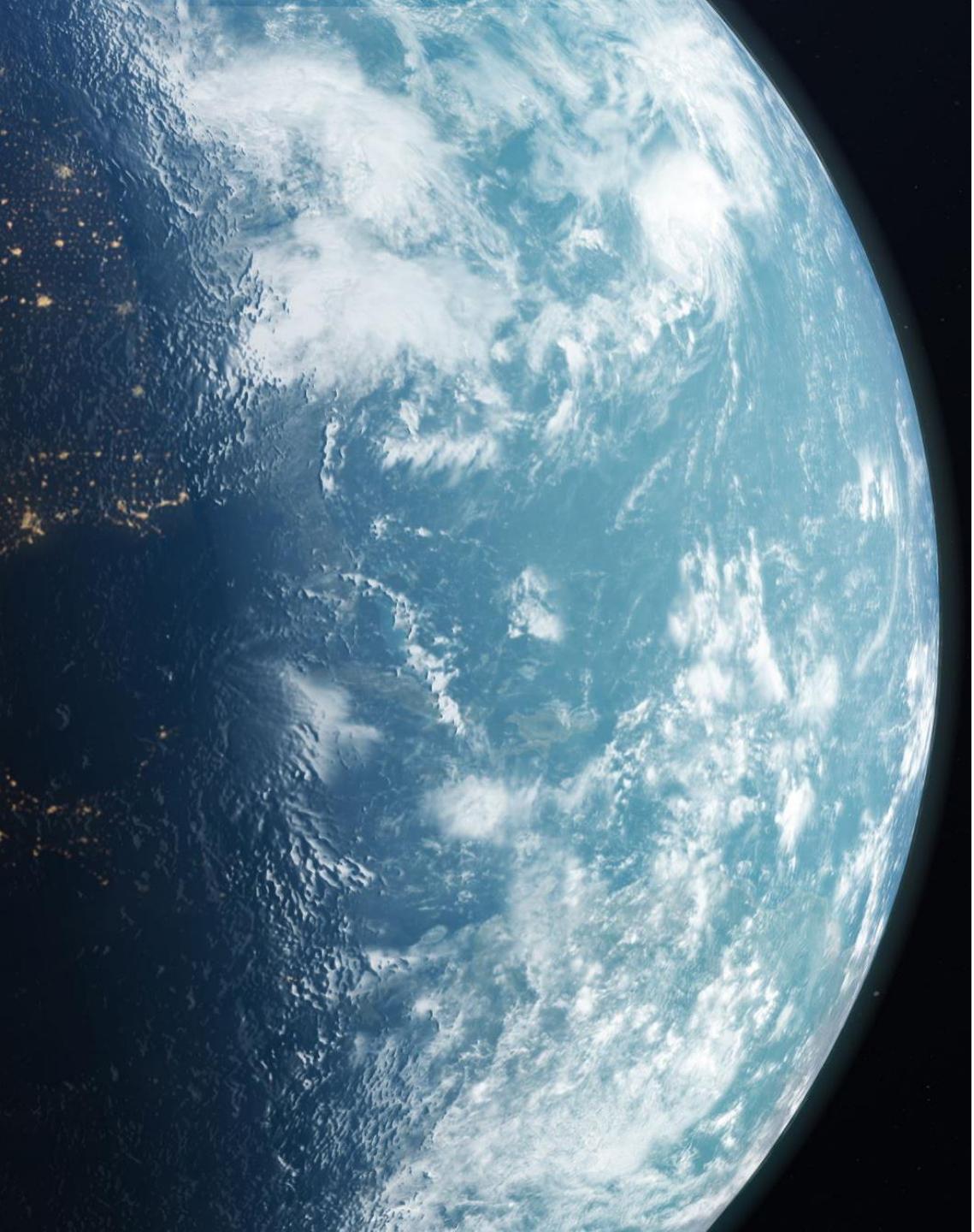




THE FIRST FAMILY OF FAITH

Part I

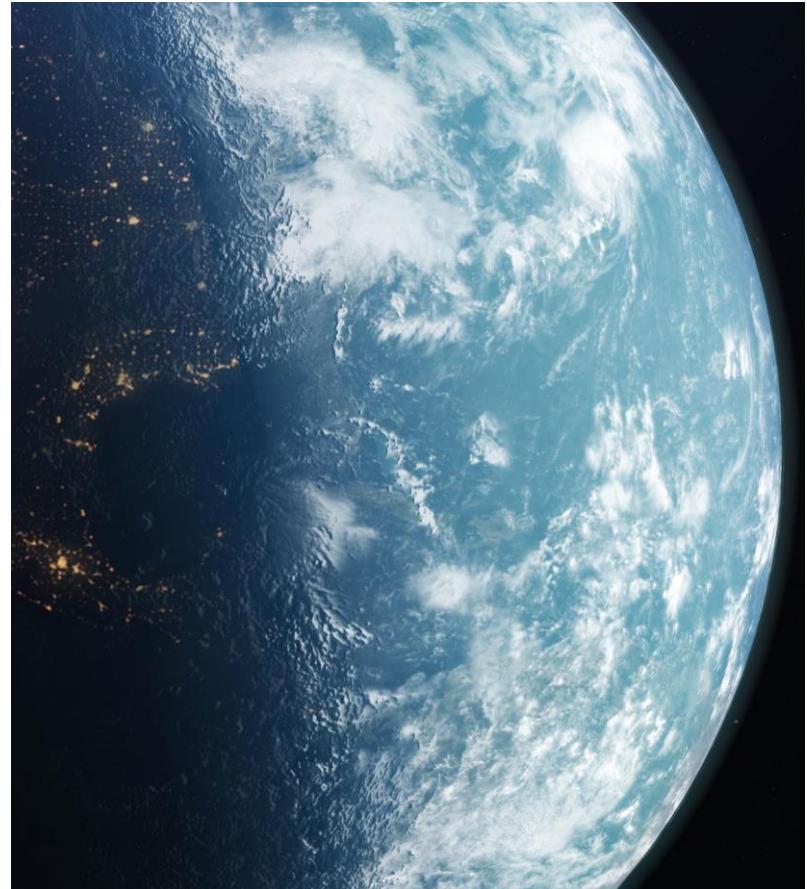
*THE STORY OF
ABRAHAM
AND SARAH*



Before There Was an Abram and Sarai

- There was a Catastrophic Worldwide Flood (Approx 2350 B.C.)
- There was a repopulation of the earth
- It began with the sons of Noah (Shem, Ham and Japheth)

“And on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat” (Genesis 8:4)



Life after the Great Flood
The Ark rested on the Mountains of Ararat (Genesis 8:4)



The Sons of Noah

The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the whole earth.

Genesis 9:18-19



The Table of Nations

This is the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah's sons, who themselves had sons after the flood.

The Japhethites

The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshek and Tiras. The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah.

The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittites and the Rodanites. (From these the maritime peoples spread out into their territories by their clans within their nations, each with its own language). (Genesis 10:1-5)



The Hamites

The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put and Canaan. The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah and Sabteka. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. Cush was the father of Nimrod, who became a mighty warrior on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; that is why it is said, “Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.” The first centers of his kingdom were Babylon, Uruk, Akkad and Kalneh, in Shinar. From that land he went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah and Resen, which is between Nineveh and Calah—which is the great city. (Genesis 10:6-12)



The Hamites continued

Egypt was the father of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, Pathrusites, Kasluhites (from whom the Philistines came) and Captorites.

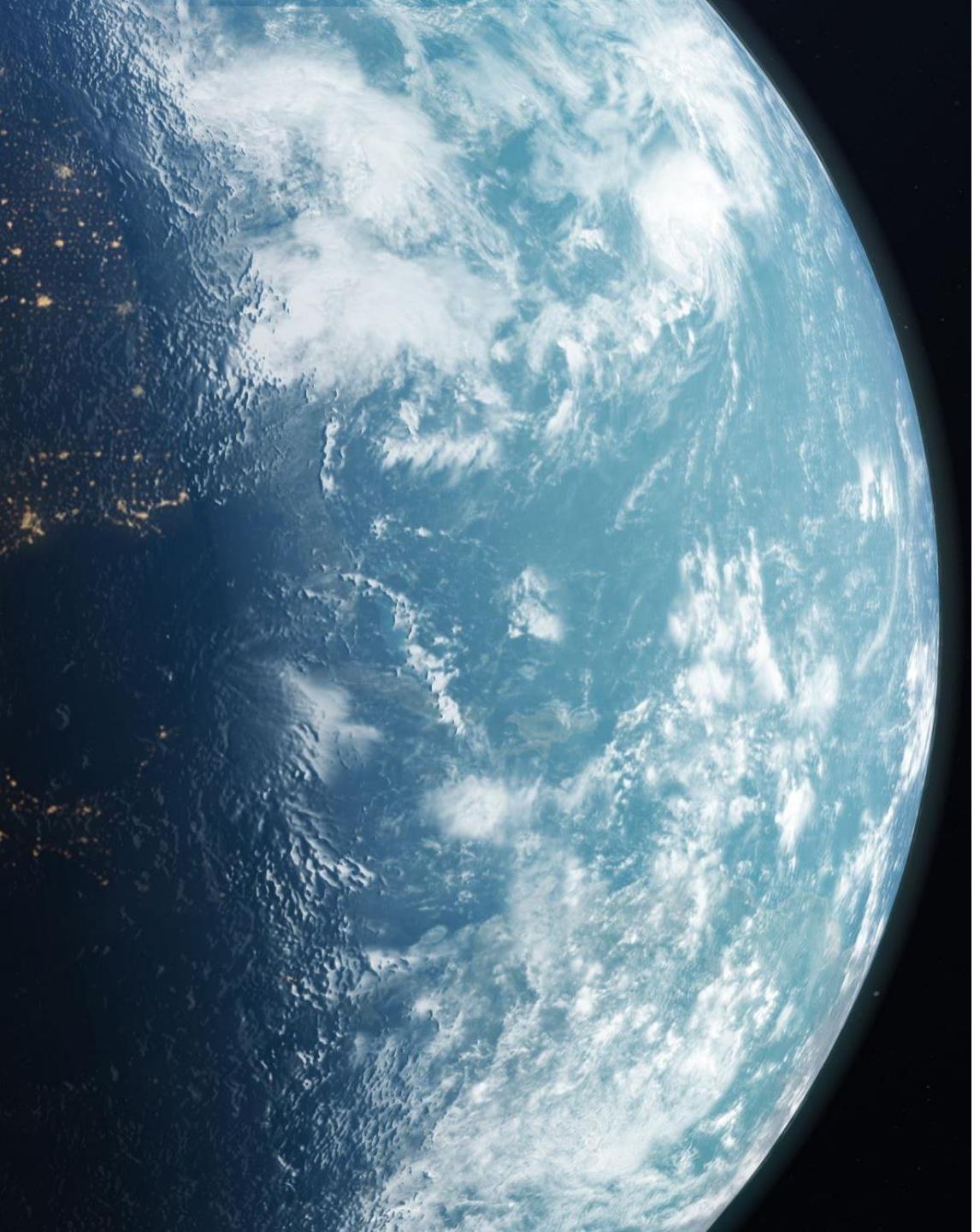
Canaan was the father of Sidon his firstborn, and of the Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Grgashites, Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, Arvadites, Zemarites and Hamathites. Later the Canaanite clans scattered and the borders of Canaan reached from Sidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and then toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiyim, as far as Lasha. These are the sons of Ham by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations.” (Genesis 10:13-20)



The Semites

Sons were also born to Shem, whose older brother was Japheth; Shem was the ancestor of all the sons of Eber. The sons of Shem: Elam, Ashur, Arphaxad, Lud and Aram. The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether and Meshek. Arphaxad was the father of Shelah, and Shelah the father of Eber. Two sons were born to Eber: One was named Peleg, because in his time the earth was divided; his brother was named Joktan. Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan. The region where they lived stretched from Mesha toward Sephar, in the eastern hill country. These are the sons of Shem by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations. These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their lines of descent, within their nations. From these the nations spread out over the earth after the flood.

(Genesis 10:21-32)

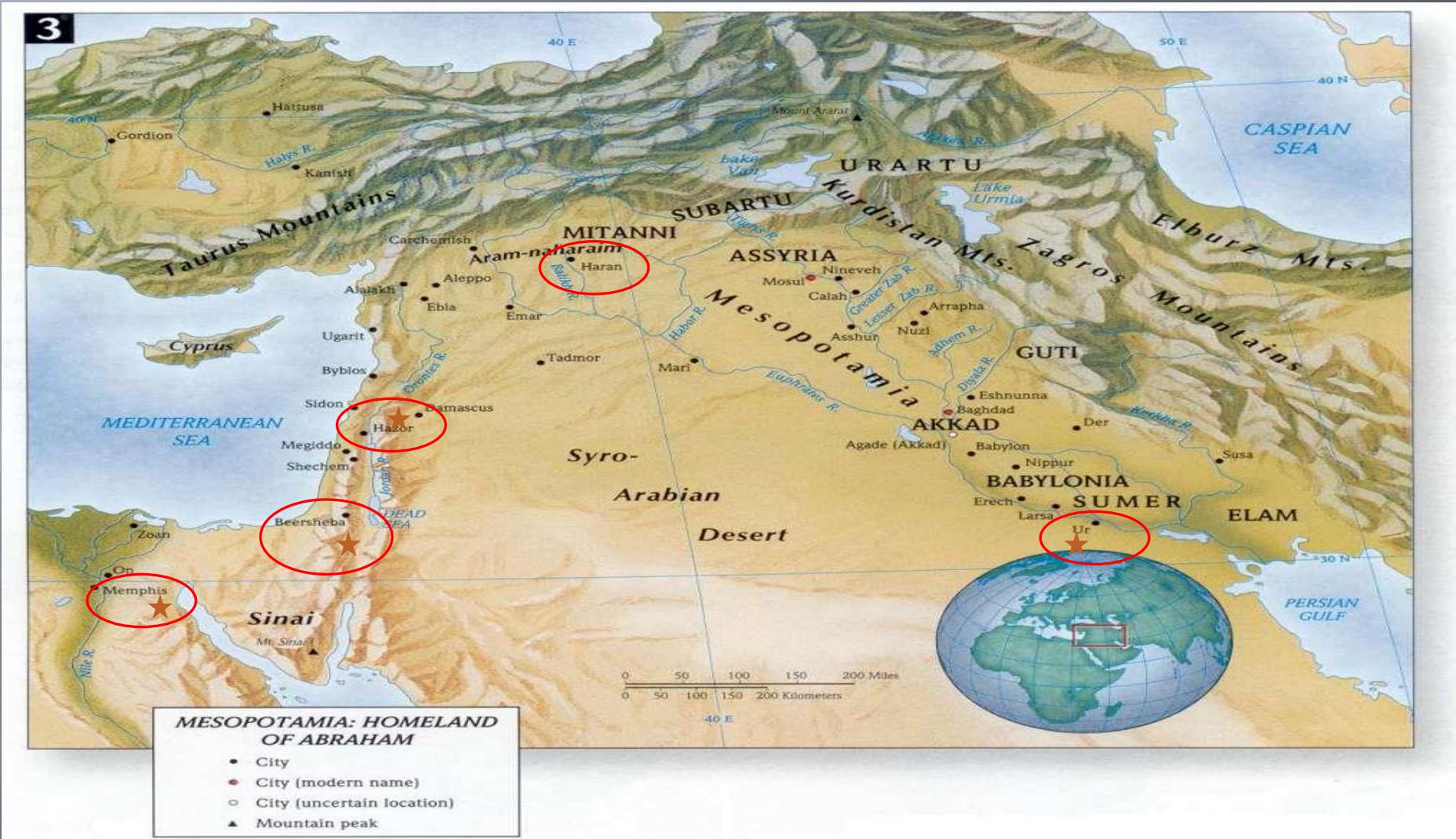


Before There Was An Abram and Sarai

- Each of these tribes began to settle in the region known as the Fertile Crescent
- The heaviest concentration was in the plains of Shinar which is commonly known as Babylon and where the Tower of Babel was constructed which was approx. 2250 B.C. (Genesis 11:2)

“Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As people moved eastward, they found a plain in **Shinar** and settled there. They said to each other, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise, we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.” But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The LORD said, “If as one people speaking the same language, they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.” So, the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called **Babel** because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth. (Genesis 11:9)

The Fertile Crescent; is where the majority of Bible events take place...it starts in Egypt, goes up through Palestine and Syria around and down through Mesopotamia.



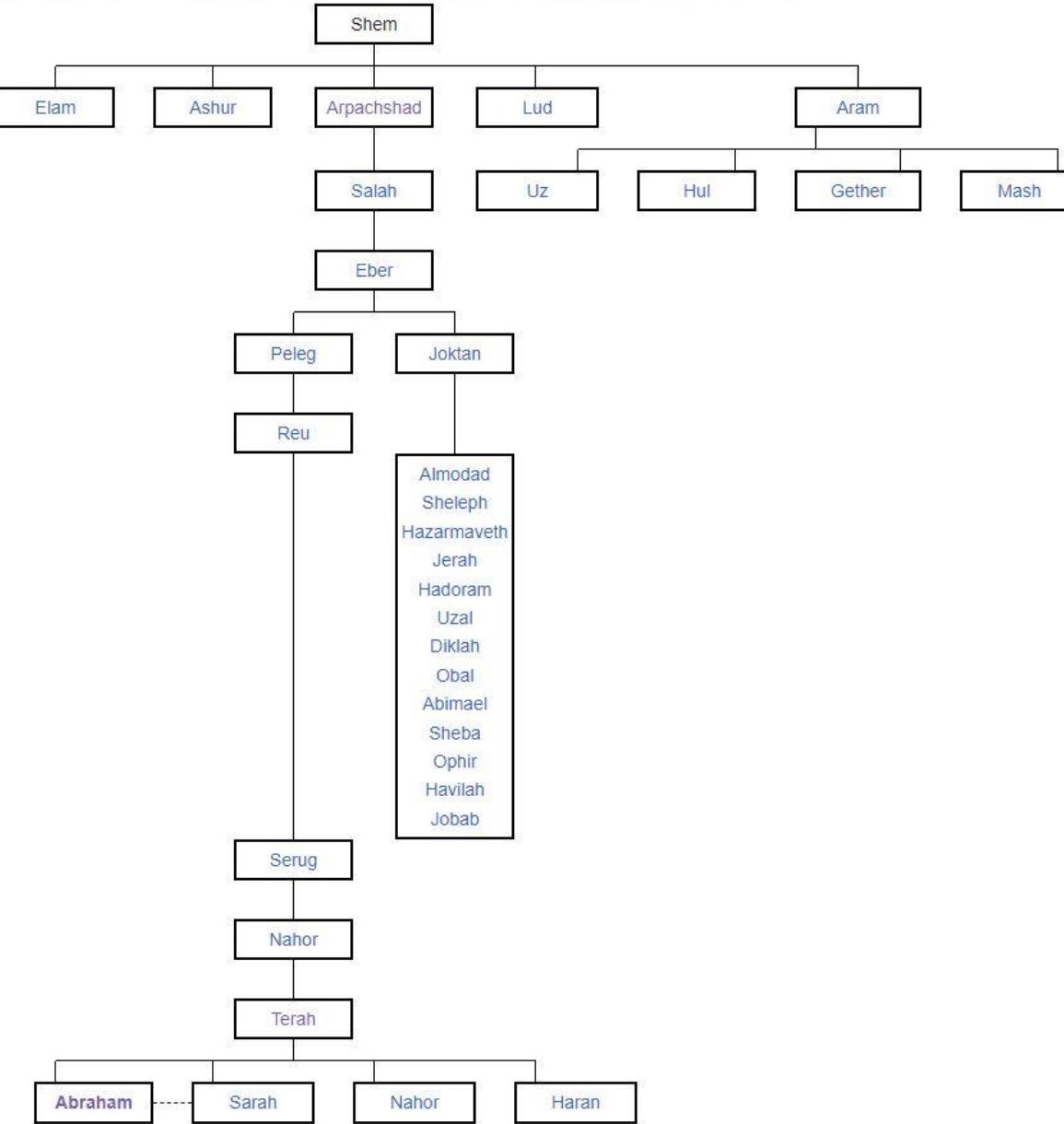
Geography of the Bible (Overview)

- The Fertile Crescent; is where the majority of Bible events takes place:
 - It is called this because the land was fertile due to the accessibility to water as opposed to the desert that surrounds it, and because it is shaped like a crescent.
 - This area is also called the “Cradle of Civilization” because it is where civilization began—it was all that existed of the known world to them.

From Shem to Abram

“This is the account of Shem’s family line. Two years after the flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of Arphaxad. And after he became the father of Arphaxad, Shem lived 500 years and had other sons and daughters. When Arphaxad had lived 35 years, he became the father of Shelah. And after he became the father of Shelah, Arphaxad lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters. When Shelah had lived 30 years, he became the father of Eber. And after he became the father of Eber, Shelah lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters. When Eber had lived 34 years, he became the father of Peleg. And after he became the father of Peleg, Eber lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters. When Peleg had lived 30 years, he became the father of Reu. And after he became the father of Reu, Peleg lived 209 years and had other sons and daughters. When Reu had lived 32 years, he became the father of Serug. And after he became the father of Serug, Reu lived 207 years and had other sons and daughters. When Serug had lived 30 years, he became the father of Nahor. And after he became the father of Nahor, Serug lived 200 years and had other sons and daughters. When Nahor had lived 29 years, he became the father of Terah. And after he became the father of Terah, Nahor lived 119 years and had other sons and daughters. After Terah had lived 70 years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran.” (Genesis 11:10-26)

The following family tree contains information from the Hebrew Bible, without data from any other sources.



Abram's Family

“This is the account of Terah’s family line. **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 Milkah; she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milkah and Iskah. Now Sarai was childless because she was not able to conceive. 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 Harran, they settled there. Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Harran.” (Genesis 11:27-32)

A Few Notable Items worth mentioning:

1. Abram's name will be changed to Abraham
2. Abraham was probably born around 2160 B.C.
3. Sarai's name will changed to Sarah
4. We have little information as to Sarah's ancestry and its hard to estimate a birth year for her
5. Some draw the conclusion Sarah was Abraham's half sister while others draw the conclusion she was his niece.

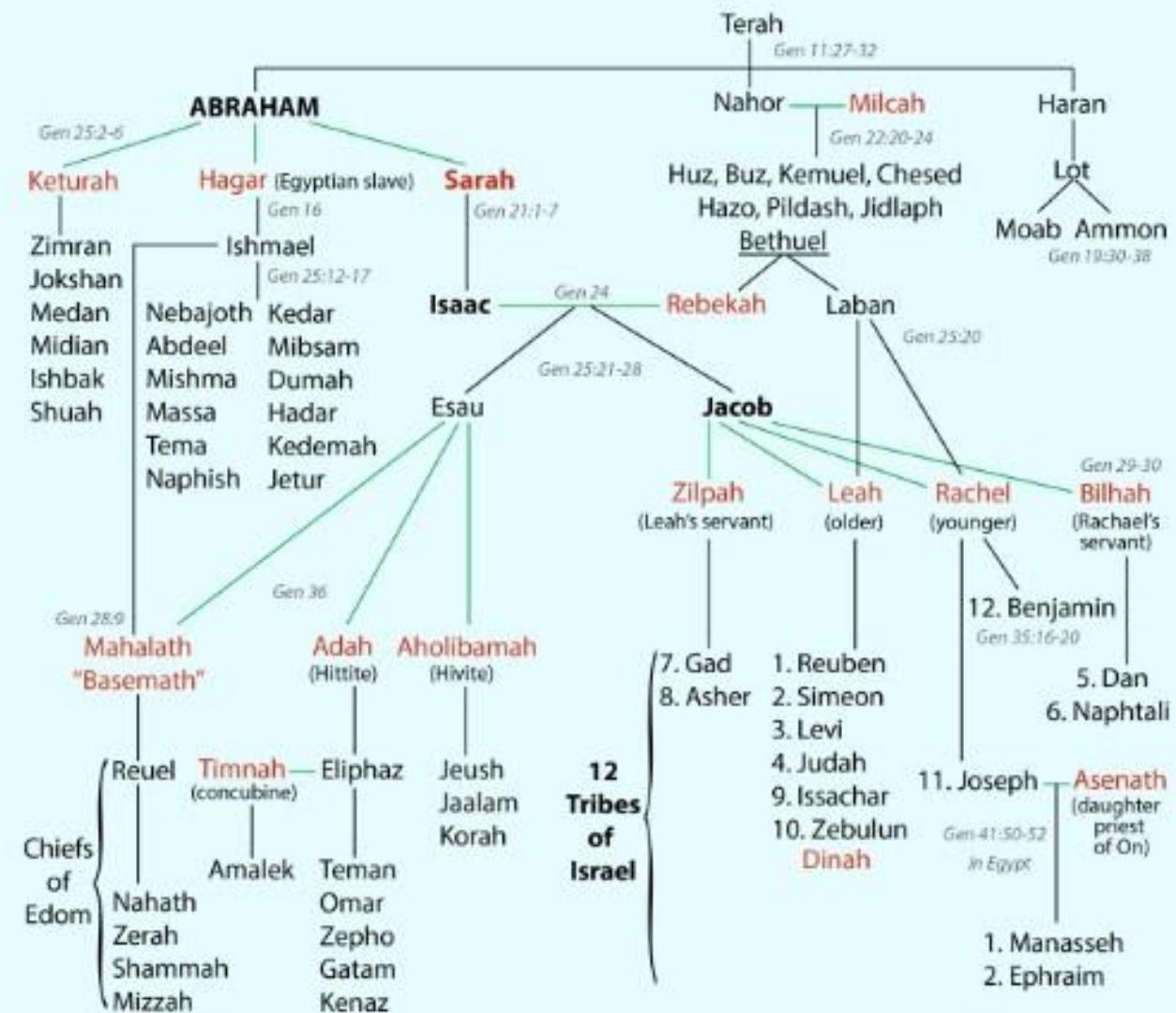


A Few Notable Items worth mentioning:

1. Abraham and Sarah originally lived in the region known as Ur of the Chaldeans
2. Abraham's father (Terah), along with Abraham's brother (Nahor), Abraham's nephew (Lot), as well as Abraham and Sarah left Ur with plans to travel to Canaan ended up settling in Harran.
3. Abraham probably lived during the time and events of Job



GENEALOGY OF ABRAHAM



God's Call To Abraham

The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.”

(Genesis 12:1)



God's Promise To Abraham

“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; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

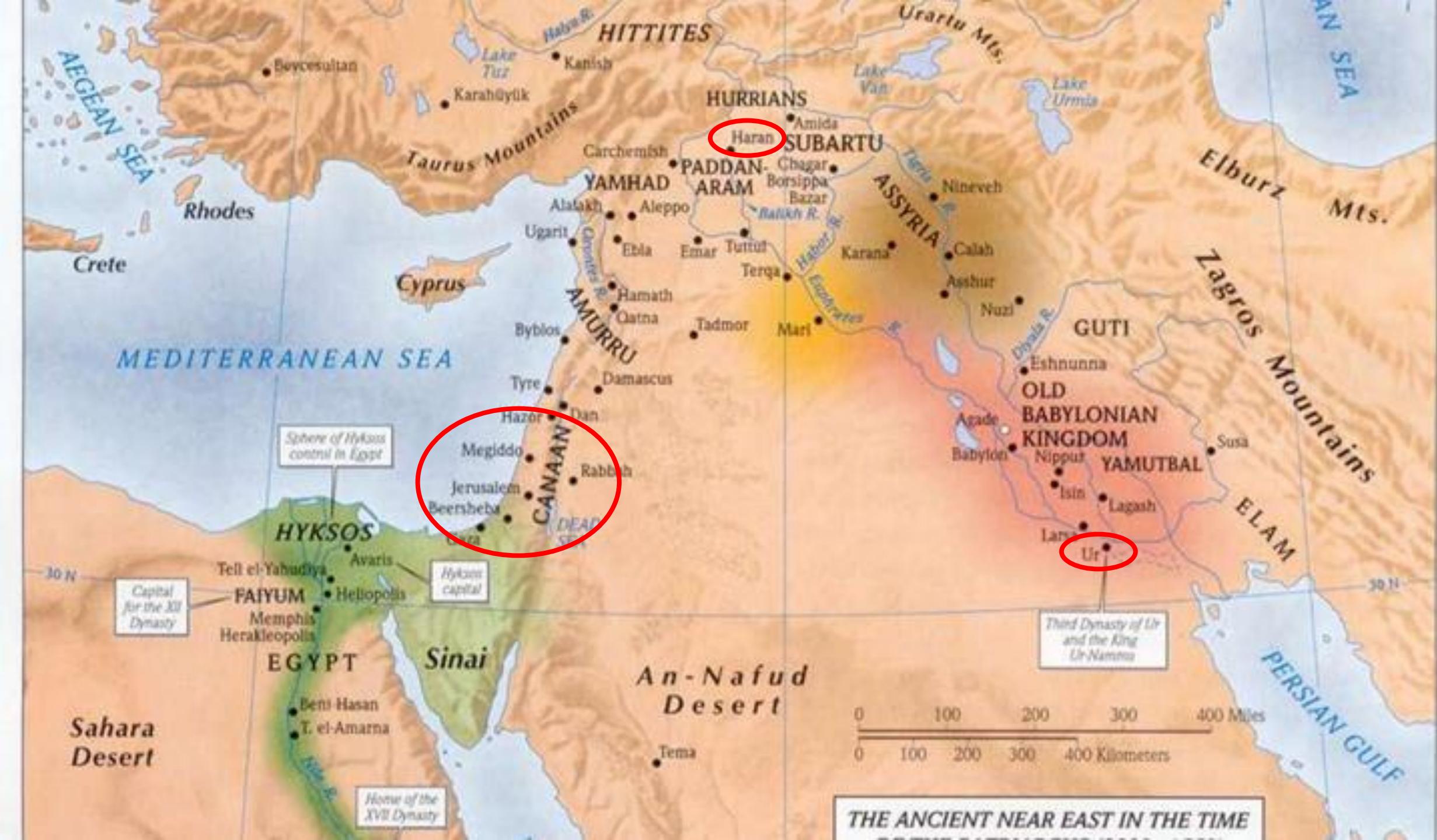
(Genesis 12:2-3)



Abraham's Obedience to God's Call

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. He took his wife **Sarai**, his **nephew Lot**, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there. 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. From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord. Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev. (Genesis 12:4-9)





A Few Things to Ponder

- In Abraham's developing years, his family worshipped many "gods" and based on the region where he grew up their religious practices were no doubt pagan:

"Joshua said to all the people, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Long ago your ancestors, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River and worshiped other gods"

(Joshua 24:2)

- This is what makes Abraham's obedience to the call of God so powerful and real – he had no idea where God was leading him, but he willingly goes anyway
- What does this say about Abraham's faith in God and why would he respond in the way that he did?

A Few Things to Ponder

“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn; look to Abraham, your father, and to Sarah, who gave you birth. When I called him he was only one man, and I blessed him and made him many.

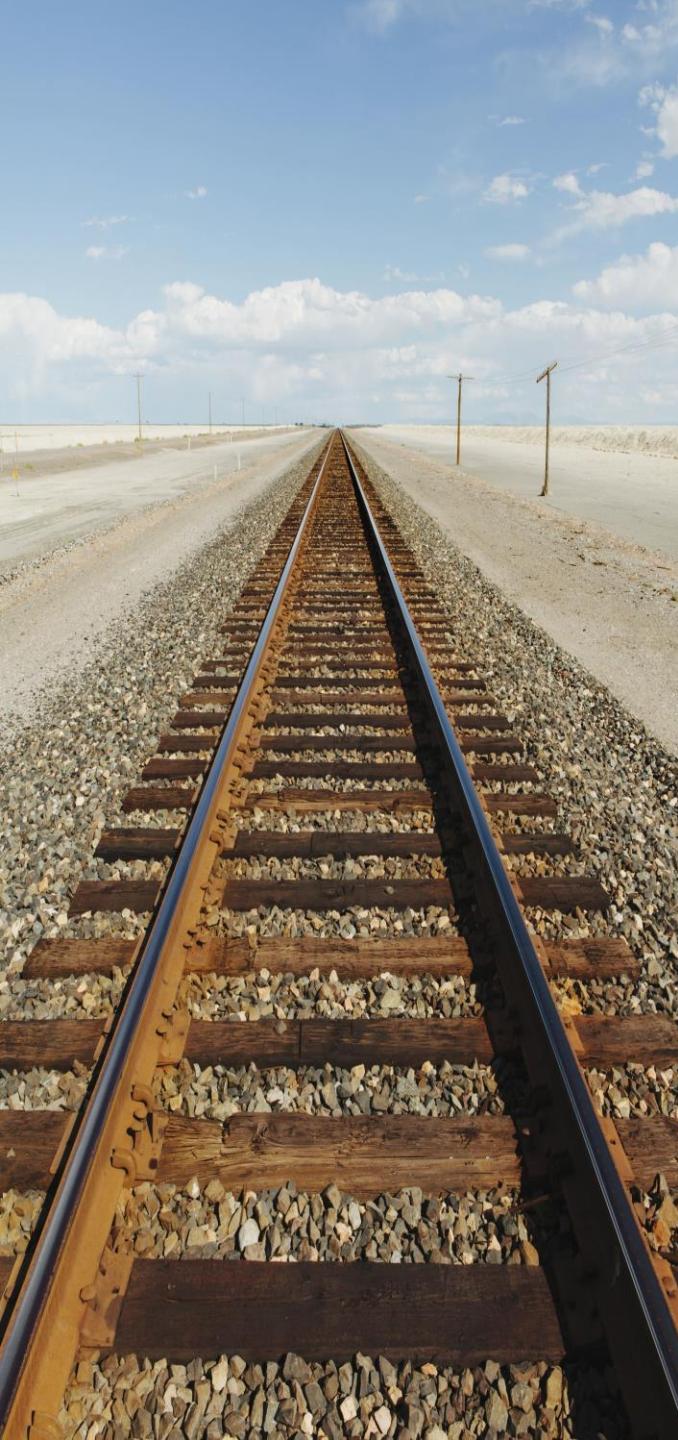
(Isaiah 51:1-2)

- Why did God call Abraham?
- Why did Abraham follow God?
- Remember – Abraham’s act of faith, obedience and even sacrifice came long before the Ten Commandments and the Law were given.

Are God's expectations any different for us?

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:1-2)

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.” (I John 2:15-17)



Abraham & Sarah - A Family of Faith

“By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even **though he did not know where he was going**. 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. **For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God**. And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so, from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. (Hebrews 11:8-12)

God's call is not
Exclusive to
Abraham



God's Call to Moses:

"Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So, Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up." When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am". "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. The Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So, I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:1-11)



God's Call to Samuel:

"The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days, the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions. One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, "Here I am." And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So, he went and lay down. Again, the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." "My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. A third time the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.' So, Samuel went and lay down in his place. The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." And the Lord said to Samuel: "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears about it tingle. At that time, I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family—from beginning to end. For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons blasphemed God, and he failed to restrain them. Therefore, I swore to the house of Eli, 'The guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.' (I

Samuel 3:1-14)



God's Call to Samuel:

Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the Lord. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, but Eli called him and said, "Samuel, my son." Samuel answered, "Here I am." "What was it he said to you?" Eli asked. "Do not hide it from me. May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything he told you." So, Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, "He is the Lord; let him do what is good in his eyes." The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel's words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the Lord. The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.

(I Samuel 3:15-21)



God's Call to Peter, James and John:

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So, they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." So, they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

(Luke 5:1-11)



God's Call to Matthew:

After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. “Follow me,” Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him. Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:27-32)



God's call to us

“But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” (Romans 10:8-13)

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me”
(Revelation 3:20)





The Story of Abraham and Sarah has just begun and next week we'll focus on:

1. **God's Covenant** with Abraham
2. Abraham's and Sarah's life – some high points and some not so high points
3. Abraham's lineage and what that all means to him and to us
4. The Child of Promise – Isaac
5. The significance of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and Abraham's plea
6. The test of Abraham's faith
7. Isaac and Rebekah – the family of faith continues