

# Genesis: The Book of Beginnings

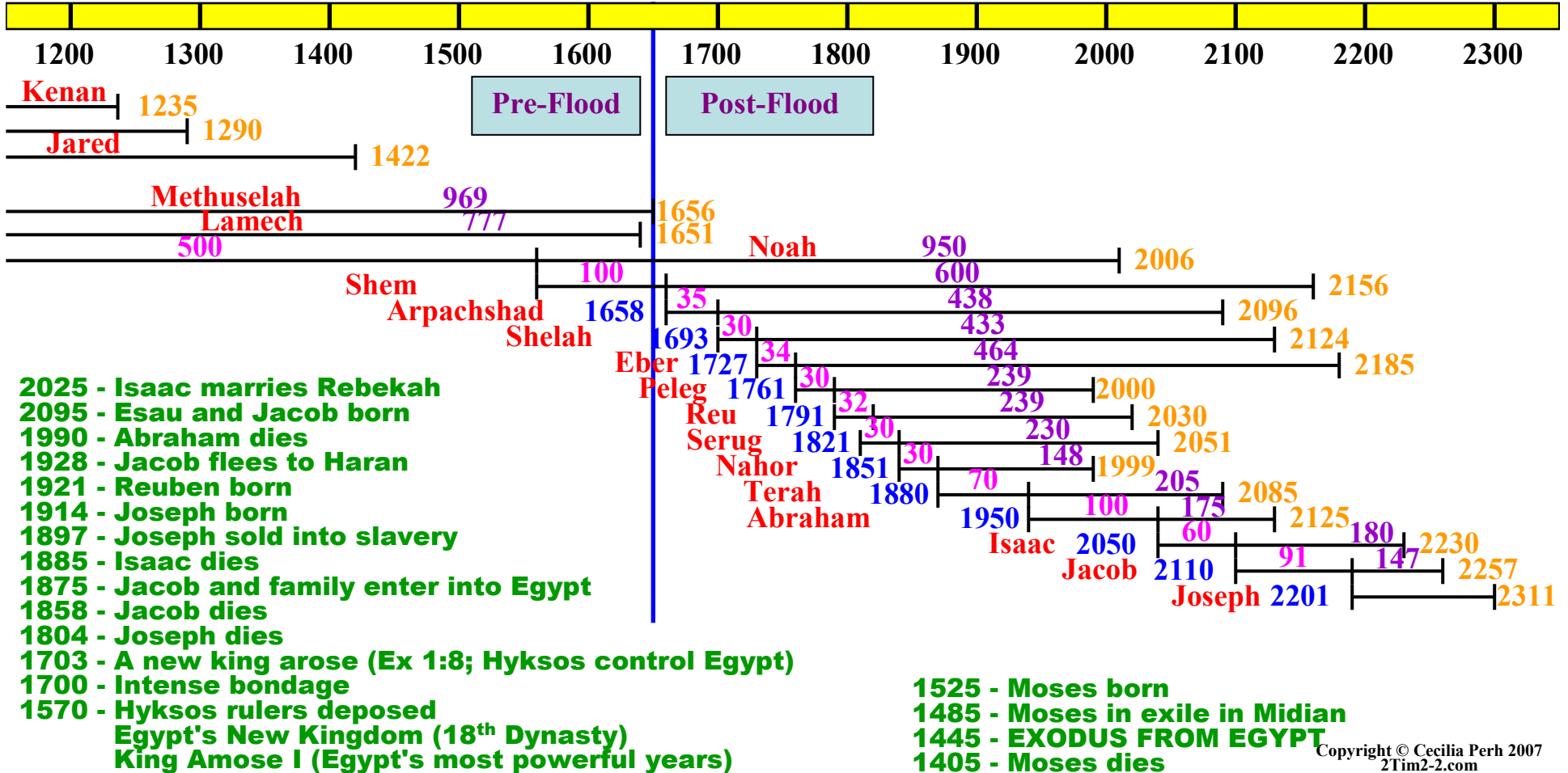
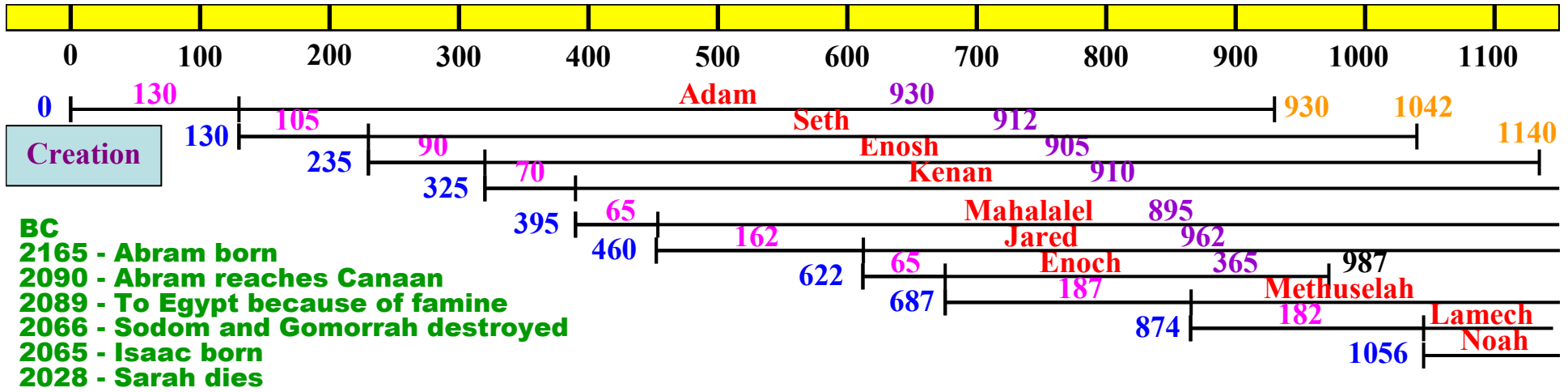
Focus	Four Great Events								Four Great Persons				
<b>Divisions</b>	1	2	3	4	5	9	10	11	12	25:19	27	37:2b	50
	<b>Creation</b>		<b>Fall</b>		<b>Flood</b>		<b>Nations (Babel)</b>		<b>Abraham</b>	<b>Isaac</b>	<b>Jacob</b>	<b>Joseph</b>	
<b>Topics</b>	<b>Primeval History of Humanity</b>								<b>Patriarchal History of Israel</b>				
	<b>Beginning of the Human Race</b>								<b>Beginning of the Hebrew Race</b>				
<b>Locations</b>	<b>East (Eden to Ur)</b>								<b>West (Canaan to Egypt)</b>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>2,000 + years (20% of Genesis)</b>								<b>About 286 years (80% of Genesis)</b>				

**Author:** Moses

**Date written:** after 1445 BC

**Theme:** Israel's Origin & Early Years

**Purposes:** 1) to present the beginning of everything but God  
 2) to record God's choice of Israel & His covenant plan for the nation  
 3) to show how the sin of man is met by the redemption of God



# Genesis 11:27-12:20

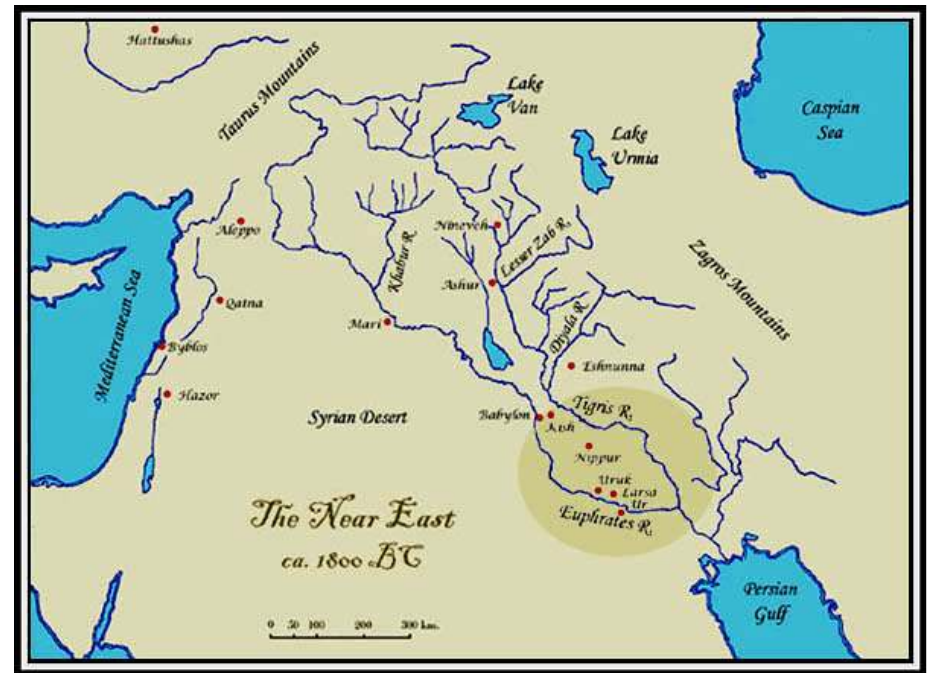
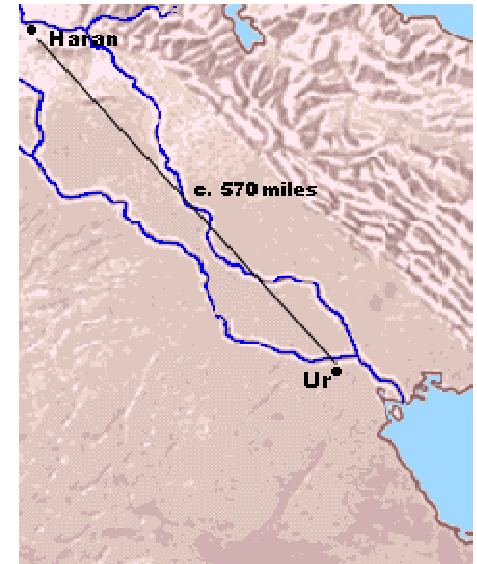
The Call of Abram (11:27-12:9)

Abram in Egypt (12:10-20)

## Acts 7:2-4 The First Call of Abram

2 And he said, "Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, 3 and said to him, 'Depart from your country and your relatives, and come into the land that I will show you.' 4 Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and settled in Haran. And from there, after his father died, *God* removed him into this country in which you are now living."

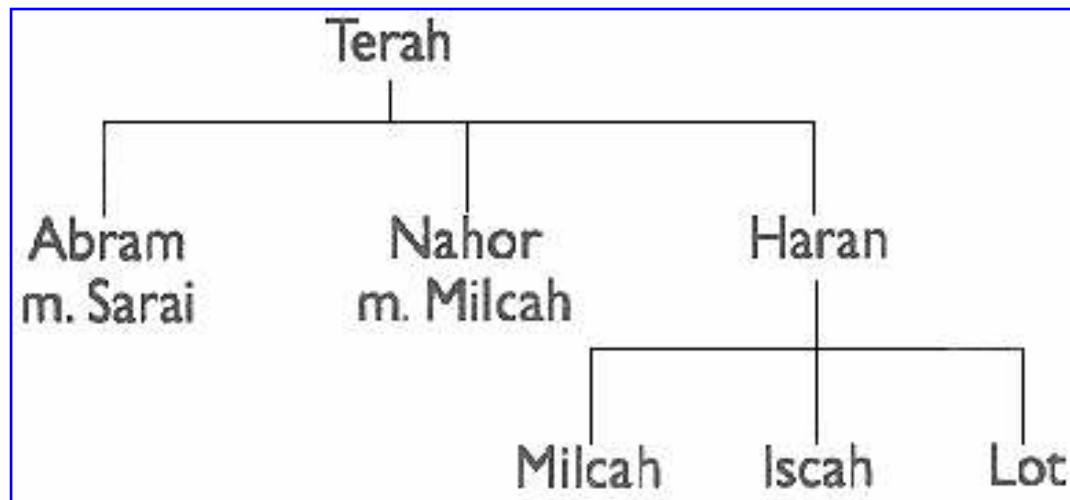
*Abram travels from  
Ur to Haran  
The death of Terah  
(205 years)  
(This event took place  
when Abram was 75  
years old)  
Date - 1917 BC/AM  
2083*



## 11:27–12:9 The Call of Abram

### 11:27–30 The family in Ur

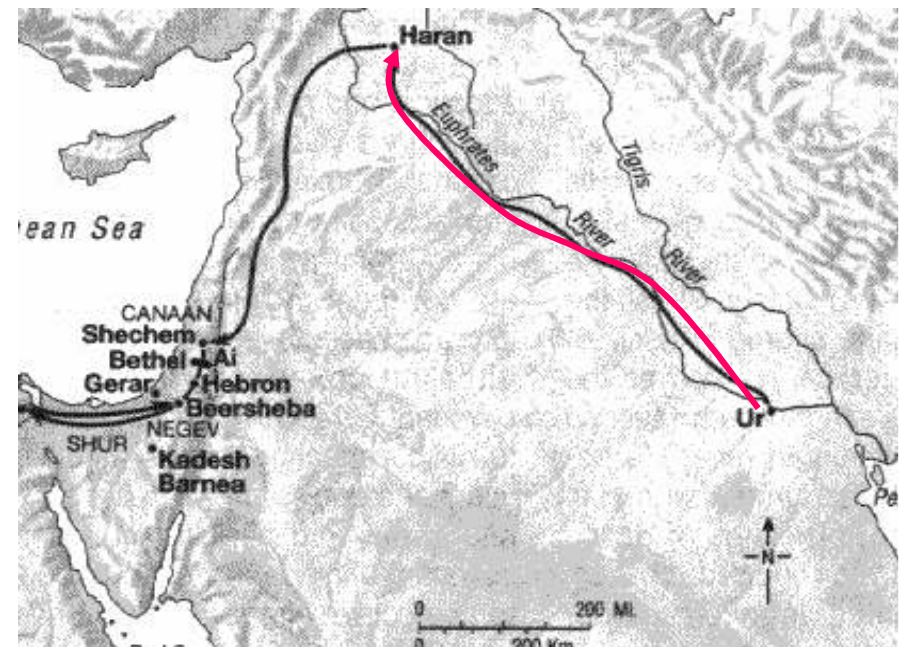
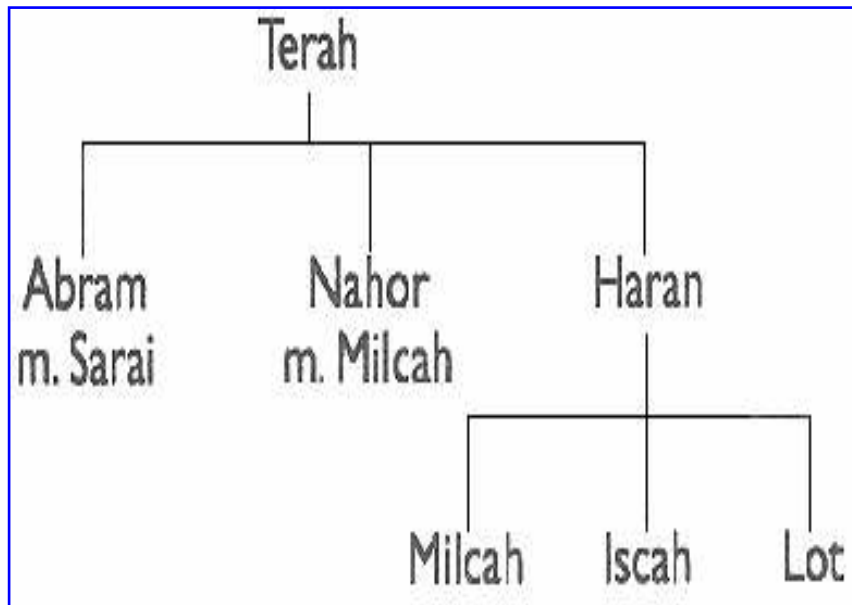
27 Now these are the records of the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot. 28 And Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29 And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah. 30 And Sarai was barren; she had no child.



# 11:27–12:9 The Call of Abram

## 11:31–32 From Ur to Haran

31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans **in order to** enter the land of Canaan; and they went **as far as** Haran, and settled there. 32 And the days of Terah were **two hundred and five years**; and Terah died in Haran.



## 12:1–9 From Haran to Canaan

### A. The Abrahamic Covenant (12:1-3)

- 1 Now the LORD said to Abram,  
“Go forth from your country,  
And from your relatives  
And from your father’s house,  
To the land which I will show you;
- 2 And I will make you a great nation,  
And I will bless you,  
And make your name great;  
And so you shall be a blessing;
- 3 And I will bless those who bless you,  
And the one who curses you I will curse.

*qalal = to be slight, of little account, lightly esteemed, to make despicable, to curse, make light of, treat with contempt, dishonor*

*arar = to curse, to execrate, to denounce evil against*

Ramon Bennett says in *Saga*, p65:

“The LORD has promised to curse, to bring great trouble and harm to those who have a low opinion of the Jewish people. The LORD promises to curse and bring great trouble upon those who cause the dignity or personal pride of the Jewish people to suffer. The LORD promises to curse and bring great trouble upon those who subject the Jewish people to ridicule. The LORD promises to curse and bring great trouble upon those who reproach the Jewish people or subject them to abusive language. The LORD promises to curse and bring great trouble upon those who think that the Jew is lacking in worth or are inferior or beneath notice. The LORD promises to curse and bring great trouble upon those who speak reproachfully of His holy people, Israel.”

Today, *both* Israel and the Church of Jesus Christ are the gauges of people’s true feelings toward God, the only difference is that Israel is a *nation*, while the Church comprises of *people of many nations*.

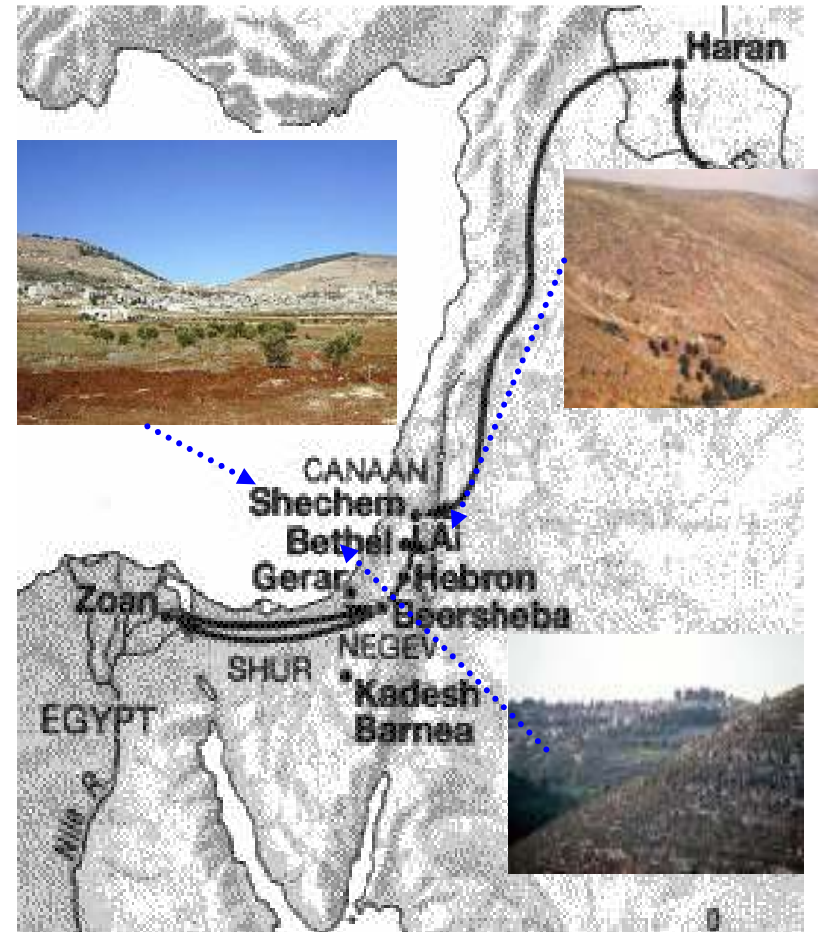
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”



[http://www.drshirley.org/geog/map05\\_med.gif](http://www.drshirley.org/geog/map05_med.gif)

## B. Abraham's Journeys (12:4-9)

4 **So** Abram went forth **as** the LORD had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. **Now** Abram was **seventy-five years old** **when** he departed from **Haran**. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of **Canaan**. 6 And Abram passed through the land as far as the site of **Shechem**, to the oak of Moreh. **Now** the Canaanite was then in the land.

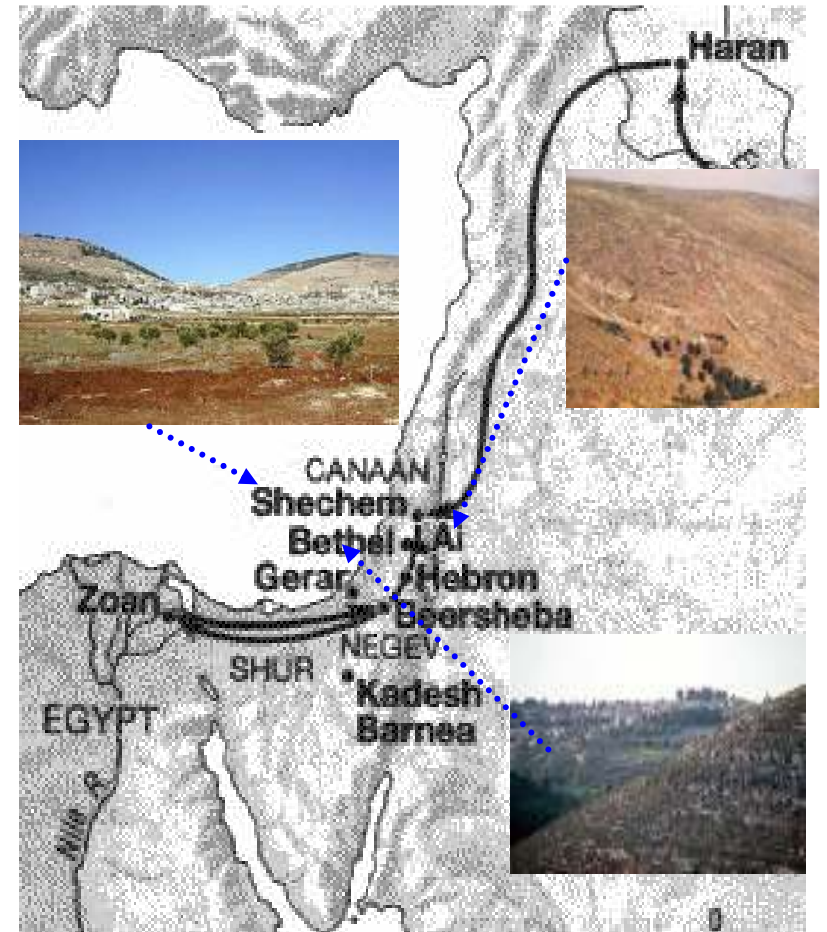


the oak of Moreh – probably a great Tabor oak which served as a landmark at Shechem & as a point where a teacher (Heb. *Moreh*) or judge would come to hear legal cases or provide instruction (eg Deborah's palm tree in Judg 4:5). Besides being valued for their shade, such trees also served as evidences of fertility & were often adopted as places of worship (not often as objects of worship).

## B. Abraham's Journeys (12:4-9)

7 And the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.

8 Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD. 9 And Abram journeyed on, continuing toward the Negev.



the oak of Moreh – probably a great Tabor oak which served as a landmark at Shechem & as a point where a teacher (Heb. *Moreh*) or judge would come to hear legal cases or provide instruction (eg Deborah's palm tree in Judg 4:5). Besides being valued for their shade, such trees also served as evidences of fertility & were often adopted as places of worship (not often as objects of worship).

## Abram in Egypt (Genesis 12:10-20)

### A. The Famine in Canaan (12:10)

10 **Now** there was a famine in the land; **so** Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, **for** the famine was severe in the land.

### Albert Barnes on Genesis 12:10

This first visit of Abram to Mizraim, or Egypt, is occasioned by the famine in the land of promise. This land is watered by periodical rains. A season of drought arrests the progress of vegetation, and brings on a famine. But in Egypt, the fertility of the loamy soil depends not on local showers, but on the annual rise of the Nile, which is fed by the rains of a far-distant mountain range. Hence, when the land of Kenaan was wasted by drought and consequent famine, Egypt was generally so productive as to be the granary of the neighboring countries.

## Abram in Egypt (Genesis 12:10-20)

### B. The Fear of Abraham(12:11-13)

11 And it came about when he came near to Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, “See now, I know that you are a beautiful woman; 12 and it will come about when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, ‘This is his wife’; and they will kill me, **but** they will let you live. 13 Please say that you are my sister **so that** it may go well with me **because** of you, and **that** I may live on account of you.”

### C. The Favor of Pharaoh (12:14-16)

14 And it came about when Abram came into Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. 15 And Pharaoh's officials saw her and praised her to Pharaoh; and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 16 **Therefore** he treated Abram well for her sake; and gave him sheep and oxen and donkeys and male and female servants and female donkeys and camels.

## Abram in Egypt (Genesis 12:10-20)

### D. The Fury of Pharaoh (12:17-20)

17 **But** the LORD struck Pharaoh and his house with great plagues **because** of Sarai, Abram's wife. 18 Then Pharaoh called Abram and said, “What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? 19 Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ **so that** I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife, take her and go.” 20 And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they escorted him away, with his wife and all that belonged to him.

# Genesis 13 – Abram and Lot Separate

- A. The Arrival into Canaan (13:1-4)
- B. The Argument of the Herdsmen (13:5-7)
- C. The Agreement by Abram & Lot (13:8-13)
- D. The Assurance of God (13:14-18)

## Abram and Lot separate (Genesis 13:1-18)

### A. The Arrival into Canaan (13:1-4)

1 So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, he and his wife and all that belonged to him; and Lot with him. 2 Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold. 3 And he went on his journeys from the Negev as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, 4 to the place of the altar, which he had made there formerly; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

Originally called Luz (Gen 28:19), Bethel (lit. "house of God") was located on the N-S Ridge Road ("The Patriarch's Highway") at the crossing of the E-W route between Jericho & Aphek. This latter route connected the Transjordanian Highway with the International Coastal Highway along the Mediterranean coast. From its high elevation, one can see Jerusalem from Bethel, some 12 miles to the south. Perennial springs in the surrounding hills provided abundant water resources for Bethel, a further important factor determining its location.



# Matthew Henry on Genesis 13:1-4

I. Here is Abram's return out of Egypt, Gen 13:1. He came himself and brought all his with him back again to Canaan. Note, Though there may be occasion to go sometimes into places of temptation, yet we must hasten out of them as soon as possible. See Rth 1:6.

II. **His wealth: He was very rich**, Rth 1:2. He was very *heavy*, so the Hebrew word signifies; for *riches are a burden*, and those that *will be rich do but load themselves with thick clay*, Hab 2:6. There is a burden of care in getting them, fear in keeping them, temptation in using them, guilt in abusing them, sorrow in losing them, and a burden of account, at last, to be given up concerning them. Great possessions do but make men heavy and unwieldy. Abram was not only rich in faith and good works, and in the promises, but he was *rich in cattle, and in silver and gold*. Note, 1. God, in his providence, sometimes makes good men rich men, and teaches them how to abound, as well as how to suffer want. 2. The riches of good men are the fruits of God's blessing. God has said to Abram, I will bless thee; and that blessing made him rich without sorrow, Pro 10:22. 3. True piety will very well consist with great prosperity. Though it is hard for a rich man to get to heaven, yet it is not impossible, Mar 10:23, 24. Abram was very rich and yet very religious.

# Matthew Henry on Genesis 13:1-4

Nay, as piety is a friend to outward prosperity (1Ti 4:8), so outward prosperity, if well-managed, is an ornament to piety, and furnishes an opportunity of doing so much the more good.

**III. His removal to Beth-el, Gen 13:3, 4.** Thither he went, not only because there he had formerly had his tent, and he was willing to go among his old acquaintance, but because there he had formerly had his altar: and, though the altar was gone (probably he himself having taken it down, when he left the place, lest it should be polluted by the idolatrous Canaanites), yet he *came to the place of the altar*, either to revive the remembrance of the sweet communion he had had with God in that place, or perhaps to pay the vows he had there made to God when he undertook his journey into Egypt. Long afterwards God sent Jacob to this same place on that errand (Gen 35:1), *Go up to Bethel, where thou vowedst the vow*. We have need to be reminded, and should take all occasions to remind ourselves, of our solemn vows; and perhaps the place where they were made may help to bring them afresh to mind, and it may therefore do us good to visit it.

# Matthew Henry on Genesis 13:1-4

**IV. His devotion there.** His altar was gone, so that he could not offer sacrifice; but *he called on the name of the Lord*, as he had done, Gen 12:8. Note, 1. All God's people are praying people. You may as soon find a living man without breath as a living Christian without prayer. 2. Those that would approve themselves upright with their God must be constant and persevering in the services of religion. Abram did not leave his religion behind him in Egypt, as many do in their travels. 3. When we cannot do what we would we must make conscience of doing what we can in the acts of devotion. When we want an altar, let us not be wanting in prayer, but, wherever we are, call on the name of the Lord.

## **B. The Argument of the Herdsmen (13:5-7)**

**5 Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. 6 And the land could not sustain them while dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together. 7 And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. Now the Canaanite and the Perizzite were dwelling then in the land.**



**Wadi below Ai possibly where Joshua's forces hid in ambush (Josh 8:9)**



**Ai**



**Hills surrounding Ai**

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 13:5-7

Lot now also abounded in the wealth of the East. The two opulent sheiks (elders, heads of houses) cannot dwell together anymore. Their serfs come to strife. The carnal temper comes out among their dependents. Such disputes were unavoidable in the circumstances. Neither party had any title to the land. Landed property was not yet clearly defined or secured by law. The land therefore was in common - wherever anybody availed himself of the best spot for grazing that he could find unoccupied.... The folly and impropriety of quarreling among kinsmen about pasture grounds on the present occasion is enhanced by the circumstance that Abram and Lot are mere strangers among the Kenaanites and the Perizzites, the settled occupants of the country.

Custom had no doubt already given the possessor a prior claim. Abram and Lot were there merely on sufferance, because the country was thinly populated, and many fertile spots were still unoccupied. **The Perizzite** is generally associated with, and invariably distinguished from, the Kenaanite Gen 15:20; Gen 34:30; Exo 3:8, Exo 3:17. This tribe is not found among the descendants of Kenaan in the table of nations. They stand side by side with them, and seem therefore not to be a subject, but an independent race. They may have been a Shemite clan,

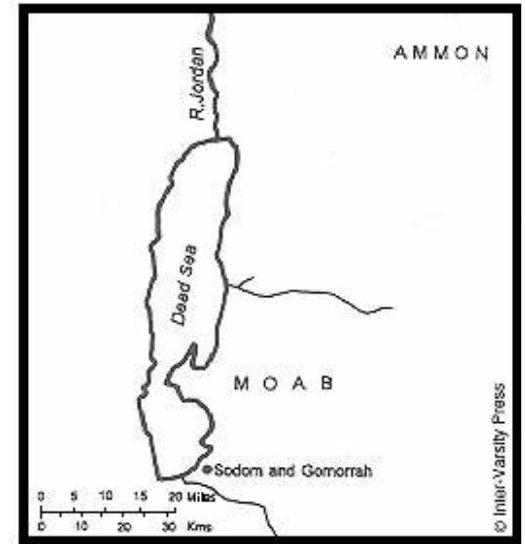
# Albert Barnes on Genesis 13:5-7

roaming over the land before the arrival of the Hamites. They seem to have been by name and custom rather wanderers or nomads than dwellers in the plain or in the villages. They dwelt in the mountains of Judah and Ephraim (**Jdg 1:4; Jos 17:15**). They are noticed even so late as in the time of Ezra (**Ezr 9:1**). The presence of two powerful tribes, independent of each other, was favorable to the quiet and peaceful residence of Abram and Lot, but not certainly to their living at feud with each other.

The strife among the underlings does not alienate their masters. Abram appeals to the obligations of brotherhood. He proposes to obviate any further difference by yielding to Lot the choice of all the land. The heavenly principle of forbearance evidently holds the supremacy in Abram's breast. He walks in the moral atmosphere of the sermon on the mount (**Mat 5:28-42**).

### C. The Agreement by Abram & Lot (13:8-13)

8 Then Abram said to Lot, “Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me: if to the left, then I will go to the right; or if to the right, then I will go to the left.” 10 And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere – this was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah – like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar. 11 So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan; and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they separated from each other. 12 Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom. 13 Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD.



*The Dead Sea region when Lot lived in Sodom.*

*View from Masada today*



# Albert Barnes on Genesis 13:10-13

Lot accepts the offer of his noble-hearted kinsman. He cannot do otherwise, as he is the companion, while his uncle is the principal. He willingly concedes to Abram his present position, and, after a lingering attendance on his kinsman, retires to take the ground of self-dependence. Outward and earthly motives prevail with him in the selection of his new abode. He is charmed by the well-watered lowlands bordering on the Jordan and its affluents. He is here less liable to a periodical famine, and he roams with his serfs and herds in the direction of Sodom. This town and Amorah (Gomorrhah), were still flourishing at the time of Lot's arrival. The country in which they stood was of extraordinary beauty and fertility. The River Jordan, one of the sources of which is at Panium, after flowing through the waters of Merom, or the lake Semechonitis (Huleh), falls into the Sea of Galilee or Kinnereth, which is six hundred and fifty-three feet below the level of the Mediterranean, and thence descends into the basin of the Salt Sea, which is now thirteen hundred and sixteen feet beneath the same level, by a winding course of about two hundred miles, over twenty-seven threatening rapids....its appearance was then so attractive as to bear comparison with the garden of the Lord and the land of Egypt. The garden of Eden still dwelt in the recollections of men.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 13:10-13

The fertility of Egypt had been recently witnessed by the two kinsmen. It was a valley fertilized by the overflowing of the Nile, as this valley was by the Jordan and its tributary streams. "As thou goest unto Zoar." The origin of this name is given in ([Gen 19:20-22](#)). It lay probably to the south of the Salt Sea, in the wady Kerak. "And Lot journeyed east" מִקְדָּם *miq̄edem*. From the hill-country of Shekem or Ai the Jordan lay to the east.

**The men of Sodom were wicked.** - The higher blessing of good society, then, was missing in the choice of Lot. It is probable he was a single man when he parted from Abram, and therefore that he married a woman of Sodom. He has in that case fallen into the snare of matching, or, at all events, mingling with the ungodly. This was the damning sin of the antediluvians ([Gen 6:1-7](#)). **"Sinners before the Lord exceedingly."** Their country was as the garden of the Lord. But the beauty of the landscape and the superabundance of the luxuries it afforded, did not abate the sinful disposition of the inhabitants. Their moral corruption only broke forth into greater vileness of lust, and more daring defiance of heaven. They sinned "exceedingly and before the Lord." Lot had fallen into the very vortex of vice and blasphemy.

## D. The Assurance of God (13:14-18)

14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; 15 **for** all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. 16 And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; **so that** if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered. 17 Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; **for** I will give it to you.”

18 Then Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by **the oaks of Mamre**, which are in **Hebron**, and there he built an altar to the **LORD**.



Looking east toward modern-day Hebron. To the right of center is the Cave of Machpelah, where Abraham & Sarah were buried (Gen 23:19; 25:9-10). Picture taken from Tel Rumeida, with an ancient wall in the foreground.



Olive grove on top of Tel Rumeida. Modern-day Hebron is in the background.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 13:14-18

Abram is here regarded as the head of a chosen seed, and hence, the bestowment of this fair territory on the race is an actual grant of it to the head of the race. The term "forever," for a perpetual possession, means as long as the order of things to which it belongs lasts. **The holder of a promise has his duties to perform, and the neglect of these really cancels the obligation to perpetuate the covenant.** This is a plain point of equity between parties to a covenant, and regulates all that depends on the personal acts of the covenanter. ... He announces that He will make his seed "as the dust of the earth." .... He is again enjoined to walk over his inheritance, and contemplate it in all its length and breadth, with the reiterated assurance that it will be his.

Abram obeys the voice of heaven. He moves his tent from the northern station, where he had parted with Lot, and encamps by the oaks of Mamre, an Amorite sheik. He loves the open country, as he is a stranger, and deals in flocks and herds. The oaks, otherwise rendered by Onkelos and the Vulgate "plains of Mamre," are said to be in Hebron, a place and town about twenty miles south of Jerusalem, on the way to Beersheba. It is a town of great antiquity, having been built seven years before Zoan (Tanis) in Egypt (**Num 13:22**). It was sometimes called Mamre in

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 13:14-18

in Abram's time, from his confederate of that name. It was also named Kiriath Arba, the city of Arba, a great man among the Anakim Jos 15:13-14. But upon being taken by Kaleb it recovered the name of Hebron. It is now el-Khulil (the friend, that is, of God; a designation of Abram). The variety of name indicates variety of masters; first, a Shemite it may be, then the Amorites, then the Hittites Gen. 23, then the Anakim, then Judah, and lastly the Muslims.

A third altar is here built by Abram. His wandering course requires a varying place of worship. It is the Omnipresent One whom he adores. The previous visits of the Lord had completed the restoration of his inward peace, security, and liberty of access to God, which had been disturbed by his descent to Egypt, and the temptation that had overcome him there. He feels himself again at peace with God, and his fortitude is renewed. He grows in spiritual knowledge and practice under the great Teacher.

# Genesis 14 – Abram rescues Lot

- A. The Rebellion of the 5 kings (14:1-4)
- B. The Retaliation by the 4 Kings (14:5-12)
- C. The Rescue of Lot (14:13-16)
- D. The Reception by Melchizedek (14:17-20)
- E. The Refusal by Abram (14:21-24)

## 14:1–24 Abram rescues Lot

### A. The Rebellion of the 5 kings (14:1-4)

And it came about in the days of **Amraphel** king of Shinar, **Arioch** king of Ellasar, **Chedorlaomer** king of Elam, and **Tidal** king of **Goiim**,<sup>2</sup> *that* they made war with **Bera** king of Sodom, and with **Birsha** king of **Gomorrah**, **Shinab** king of **Admah**, and **Shemeber** king of **Zeboiim**, and the king of **Bela** (that is, **Zoar**).<sup>3</sup> All these came as allies to the valley of **Siddim** (that is, the **Salt Sea**).<sup>4</sup> Twelve years they had served **Chedorlaomer**, **but** the thirteenth year they rebelled.

14:5 Chedorlaomer and his allies formed a power complex which dominated territory all the way to the Jordan River. On its way down to the Dead Sea, the united army followed the “King’s Highway,” which has been a major route of travel throughout history (Num. 20:17). The Rephaim, Zuzim, and Emim are described as “giants” (Deut. 2:10–12, 20–23). The path of conquest extended to the Wilderness of Paran, at the top of the Red Sea. The army then turned north to Kadesh, in the Negev south of Canaan, and ended up at Hazezon Tamar on the western shore of the Dead Sea. Archaeological evidence confirms great destruction in this area around 1900 B.C.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:1

The dominant confederacy consists of four kings. Many generations back the first world power, consisting of four cities, was established by Nimrod in the land of Shinar (Gen 10:8-10). This has now given way to a world-confederacy, consisting of four kings. From the vicinity of the places in which they reigned it is evident that they were petty princes of domains varying from a town and its suburbs to a comparatively extensive territory. **The first, Amraphel, is king of Shinar.** He is therefore the successor of Nimrod, and the sovereign of the most ancient kingdoms, and on these grounds occupies the first place in the list. But this kingdom is no longer the sole or even the supreme power. Amraphel is probably the descendant of Nimrod, and a Kushite. **The second, Ariok, is king of Ellasar.** If this town be the same as Larsa, lying between the Frat and the Shat el-Hie, the land of Shinar has been divided between two sovereigns, and no longer belongs entirely to the successor of Nimrod. Lower Shinar includes also Ur of the Kasdim; and hence, Ariok probably represents that race.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:1

The third, Kedorlaomer, is king of Elam, or Elymais, a country east of the lower Tigris, and separated by it from Shinar. He is probably a Shemite, as the country over which he ruled received its name from a son of Shem (**Gen 10:22**). He is the lord paramount of the others, and commander-in-chief of the united forces. Hence, the Hamite seems to have already succumbed to the Shemite. The fourth, Tidel, is designated “king of Goim.” Goim means nations; and it is doubtful whether it denotes here a special nation or a congeries of tribes. The Gentiles, especially so called, seem to have been Japhethites (**Gen 10:5**). It is obvious that four nationalities are here leagued together, corresponding probably to the Kiprat arbat, four nations or tongues mentioned by Rawlinson (Anc. Mon. I. p. 69). But Kedorlaomer, king of Elam, is clearly not a Kushite. The only question seems to be whether he is a Shemite or a Japhethite, or Arian, in which race the Shemite was ultimately absorbed. If the former alternative be adopted, we may have two Shemite languages among the four. If the latter be accepted, Kedorlaomer is an Arian; Tidal, a Turanian; Amraphel, a Hamite; and Ariok, a Shemite. In either case the Kushite has become subordinate, and a Japhethite or a Shemite has attained the predominance.

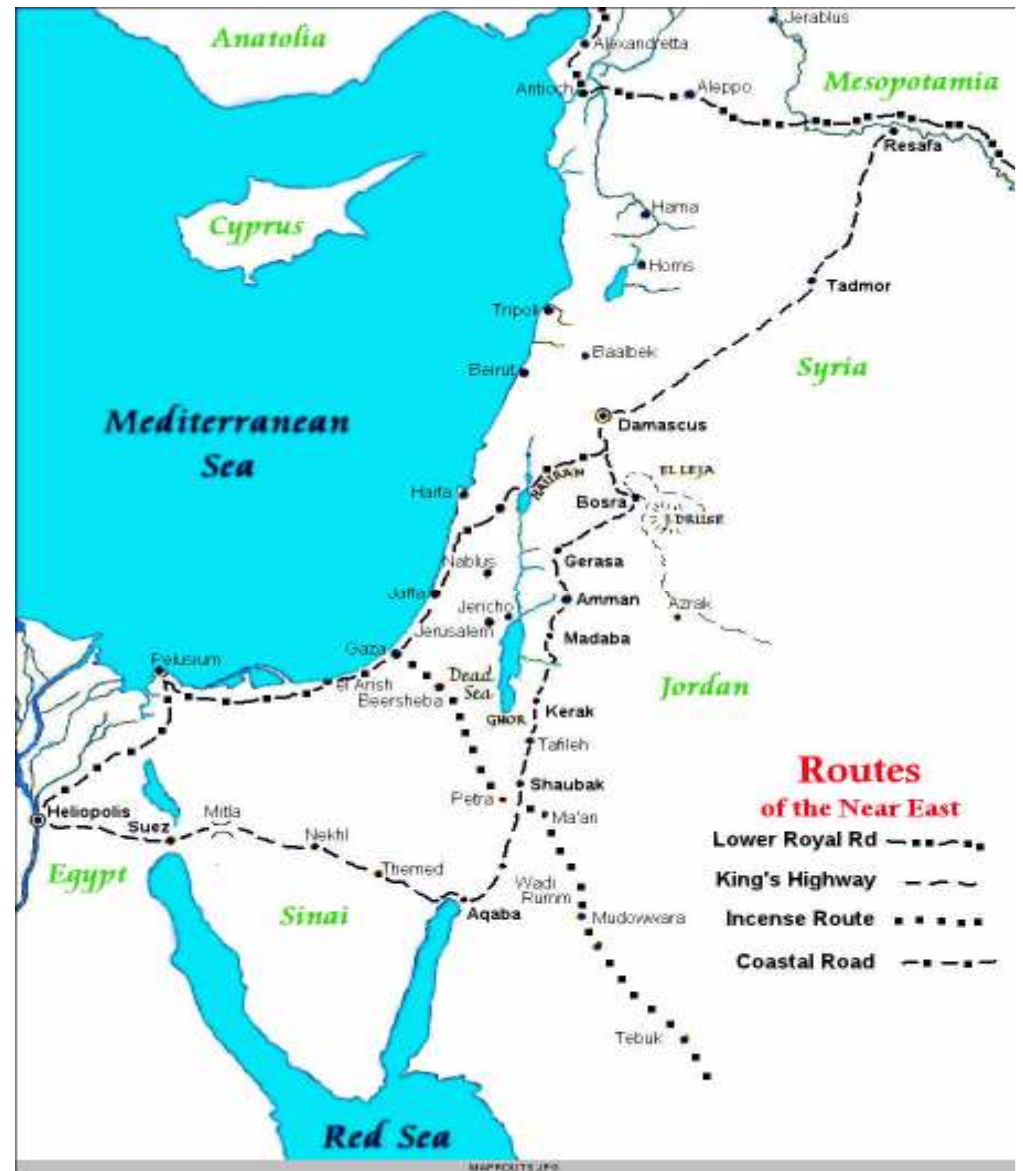
# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:12-3

**They made war.** - Shinar was the central region from which the different branches of the human family dispersed after the confusion of tongues. It is possible that the mother country claimed some supremacy over the colonies. Shinar was also a great center of commerce, and the cities of the dale of Siddim formed another, of secondary importance. Intercourse between the two countries was therefore frequent. Abram himself had come from Ur Kasdim. The spirit of despotism had descended from Nimrod to the present potentates of the East, and prompted them to aim at universal empire. The five kings are the petty sovereigns, each of a single town and its neighborhood. The area in which these towns lay was very circumscribed. With the exception of the territory of Bela it was afterward submerged and formed part of the basin of the Salt Sea. Hence, Siddim is said to be the Salt Sea. The dale is the deep valley or glen in which these kings dwelt on the banks of the Jordan, or the salt lake into which it flowed. Of the five cities, Sodom was the chief in power, luxury, and wickedness; whence it is mentioned first. Bela is also called Zoar, "the little," and, hence, is placed last; even the name of its king is not given. "All these joined together." They formed a league in self-defense, and marched out to meet the enemy in the dale of Siddim.

## 14:1–24 Abram rescues Lot

### B. The Retaliation by the 4 Kings (14:5-12)

<sup>5</sup> And in the fourteenth year **Chedorlaomer and the kings** that were with him, came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim and the Zuzim in Ham and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, <sup>6</sup> and the Horites in their Mount Seir, as far as El-paran, which is by the wilderness. <sup>7</sup> Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and conquered all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, who lived in Hazazon-tamar.



## 14:1–24 Abram rescues Lot

### B. The Retaliation by the 4 Kings (14:5-12)

<sup>8</sup> And the king of Sodom and the king of Gomorrah and the king of Admah and the king of Zeboiim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) came out; and they arrayed for battle against them in the valley of Siddim, <sup>9</sup> against **Chedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goiim and Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar** – four kings against five. <sup>10</sup> Now the valley of Siddim was full of tar pits; and **the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah** fled, and they fell into them. But those who survived fled to the hill country. <sup>11</sup> Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food supply, and departed. <sup>12</sup> And they also took Lot, Abram's nephew, and his possessions and departed, for he was living in Sodom.





**14:5 Chedorlaomer and his allies formed a power complex which dominated territory all the way to the Jordan River. On its way down to the Dead Sea, the united army followed the “King’s Highway,” which has been a major route of travel throughout history (Num. 20:17). The Rephaim, Zuzim, and Emim are described as “giants” (Deut. 2:10–12, 20–23). The path of conquest extended to the Wilderness of Paran, at the top of the Red Sea. The army then turned north to Kadesh, in the Negev south of Canaan, and ended up at Hazezon Tamar on the western shore of the Dead Sea. Archaeological evidence confirms great destruction in this area around 1900 B.C.**

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:5-12

This great foray is only incidentally introduced into our narrative, on account of the capture of Lot. It was not the first visit probably of these marauders to the same lands. It is interesting to the historian, as a sample of the mode in which conquest was made. It opens up to the view one of the ancient scenes of human activity. It teaches us that **the wave of war often flowed over the lands of the ancient world, and left more or less lasting marks of its disturbing power. Tribes were not unfrequently moved from place to place, intermingled with one another, and enslaved by other tribes.** The actual state of things in the land of Abram's pilgrimage is suddenly presented to us under a new light. The Rephaim, including the Zuzim and the Emim, occupy the east of the Jordan, and had once a place on the west. The Perizzites also dwell side by side with the Kenaanites in the western district. The Horites are found in Mount Seir. As none of these were Kenaan's descendants, we have the undeniable traces of a Shemitic population before and along with the Kenaanites. The language of Heber, therefore, was in the country before the latter arrived.

### C. The Rescue of Lot (14:13-16)

<sup>13</sup> Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now he was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner, and these were allies with Abram. <sup>14</sup> And when Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as **Dan**. <sup>15</sup> And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and pursued them as far as **Hobah**, which is north of **Damascus**. <sup>16</sup> And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his relative Lot with his possessions, and also the women, and the people.



# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:13-16

**“The Hebrew.”** This designation is given to Abram plainly for the purpose of connecting him with Lot... just as his confederate Mamre is distinguished as the Amorite. The object of these designations is to mark, not only their relation to each other, but also their connection with those who were carried off as prisoners of war... The term “Hebrew” does not come into the narrative by hap-hazard. “The sons of Heber” are distinctly mentioned in the table of nations among the descendants of Shem. Its introduction here intimates that there were other descendants of Heber besides Abram already in the land. They could not but be a widespread race. One branch of them, the Joctanites, were the first stock of Arabia’s inhabitants, and the Palgites may have been the earliest settlers in the adjacent Palestine. How many of the non-Kenaanites belong to them we cannot tell; but we learn from the statement now before us that the Hebrew was at this time a known patronymic. The way between Mesopotamia and Palestine has been often trodden.

Abram was dwelling by the oaks of Mamre, near Hebron, therefore not far from the scene of war. He was also in league with Mamre and his brothers Eshkol and Aner. This league was, it is evident from the result, for mutual defense.

## D. The Reception by Melchizedek (14:17-20)

17 **Then after** his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at **the valley of Shaveh** (that is, the King's Valley). 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. <sup>19</sup> And he blessed him and said,

“Blessed be Abram of God Most High,

Possessor of heaven and earth;

20 And blessed be God Most High,

Who has delivered your enemies into  
your hand.”

And he gave him a tenth of all.



# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:18-20

The King's dale is plainly adjacent to the royal residence of Melkizedec, who therefore comes forth to greet and entertain the returning victor. This prince is the king of Shalem. This is apparently an ancient name of Jerusalem, which is so designated in (Psa 76:8). The other Shalem, which lay in the vicinity of Shekem (Gen 33:18, if this be a proper name) is far away from the King's dale and the town of Sodom. Jerusalem is convenient to these localities, and contains the element Shalem in its composition, as the name signifies the foundation of peace (Shalom).

The king of Shalem, by name king of righteousness, and by office king of peace, "brought forth bread and wine." These are the standing elements of a simple repast for the refreshment of the body. In after times they were by divine appointment placed on the table of the presence in the tabernacle (Exo 25:29-30). They were the accompaniments of the Paschal lamb (Mat 26:26-27), and they were adopted by the Messiah as the sacred symbols of that heavenly fare, of which, if a man partake, he shall live forever (Joh 6:48-58)....

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:18-20

**And he was priest to the most high God.** - From this we are assured that the bread and wine refreshed not only the body, but the soul of Abram. In close connection with the preceding sentence, it seems to intimate that the bringing forth of bread and wine was a priestly act, and, accordingly, the crowning part of a sacred feast. The כהן *kohen*, or priest, who is here mentioned for the first time in Scripture, was one who acted in sacred things on the part of others. He was a mediator between God and man, representing God holding out the hand of mercy, and man reaching forth the hand of faith. The necessity of such an office grew out of the distance between God and man produced by sin. The business of the priest was to offer sacrifice and to intercede; in the former making amends to the law, in the latter appealing to the mercy of God. We do not learn by express statement what was the mode of intervention on the part of Melkizedec. But we know that sacrifice was as early as Habel, and that calling on the name of the Lord was commenced in the time of Enosh. These were early forms of approach to God. The offices of king and priest were combined in Melkizedec - a condition of things often exemplified in after times.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:18-20

**The most high God.** - Here we meet with a new name of God, El, the Lasting, the Mighty, cognate with Elohim, and previously occurring in the compound proper names Mebujael, Mahalalel, and Bethel. We have also an epithet of God, “Elion the most high,” now appearing for the first time. Hence, we perceive that the unity, the omnipotence, and the absolute pre-eminence of God were still living in the memory and conscience of a section at least of the inhabitants of this land. Still more, the worship of God was not a mere domestic custom, in which the father or head of the family officiated, but a public ordinance conducted by a stated functionary. And, lastly, the mode of worship was of such a nature as to represent the doctrine and acknowledge the necessity of an atonement, since it was performed by means of a priest.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:18-20

**And he blessed him.** - Here it comes out clearly that Melkizedec acts not only in a civil but in a sacred capacity. **He blesses Abram.** In the form of benediction employed we have two parts: the former of which is strictly a blessing or asking of good things for the person in question. “Blessed be Abram.” It is the part of the father to bless the child, of the patriarch or superior to bless the subject or inferior, and of the priest to bless the people (**Heb 7:7**). Here, accordingly, Melkizedec assumes and Abram concedes to him the superiority. The Most High God is here further designated as the Founder of heaven and earth, the great Architect or Builder, and, therefore, Possessor of all things. There is here no indistinct allusion to the creation of “heaven and earth,” mentioned in the opening of the Book of God. This is a manifest identification of the God of Melkizedec with the one Creator and Upholder of all things. We have here no mere local or national deity, with limited power and province, but the sole and supreme God of the universe and of man. The second part of this benedictory prayer is a thanksgiving to the common God of Melkizedec and Abram for the victory which had been vouchsafed to the latter.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:18-20

**“Thy foes.”** Here Abram is personally addressed. Melkizedec as a priest first appeals to God on behalf of Abram, and then addresses Abram on behalf of God. Thus, he performs the part of a mediator.

**And he gave him a tithe of all.** - This is a very significant act. In presenting the tenth of all the spoils of victory, Abram makes a practical acknowledgment of the absolute and exclusive supremacy of the God whom Melkizedec worshipped, and of the authority and validity of the priesthood which he exercised. We have here all the indications of a stated order of sacred rites, in which a costly service, with a fixed official, is maintained at the public expense, according to a definite rate of contribution. The gift in the present case is the tenth of the spoils of war. This act of Abram, though recorded last, may have taken place at the commencement of the interview. At all events, it renders it extremely probable that a sacrifice had been offered to God, through the intervention of Melkizedec, before he brought forth the bread and wine of the accepted feast.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:18-20

It is obvious that here we stand on broader ground than the special promise made to Abram. Melkizedec was not a partner in the call of Abram, and yet the latter acknowledges him as a priest of the Most High God. Hence, we must fall back on the covenant made with Noah - the representative of the whole race after the deluge - as the broad basis of authority on which Melkizedec acted. That covenant, then, was not a dead letter. It still lived in the heart and will of a part of the nations. Its hallowing and exalting truths had produced at least one center of pure and spiritual worship on the earth. Even Abram, the called of God, acknowledges its constituted head. And the Most High God, Founder and Upholder of heaven and earth, thereby guarantees its validity for all who in every place call on his name in sincerity and truth. And his special call to Abram is given with a view to the final removal of all obstacles to the acceptance and application of this his everlasting covenant. We are thankful for this glimpse into the comprehensive grandeur of the divine purpose concerning man, which is for some time forward cast into the shade, until it begins to break forth again in the anticipations of the prophets, and at length shines forth with imperishable splendor in the revelations of the New Testament.

# BREAK TIME

# The Superiority of the Priesthood According to Melchizedek

## v1-10 The Greatness of Melchizedek, God's King-Priest

### His Titles

king of Salem  
priest of the Most High God  
king of righteousness  
king of peace

### His Lineage

without father  
without mother  
without genealogy

### His Likeness to the Son of God

He abides a priest perpetually

### His Deeds

1, met Abraham after battle  
(s. Gen 14)  
2. blessed Abraham

## v11-12 The Change in Priesthood

No Perfection through the Levitical Priesthood

## v13-28 The Greatness of Jesus, God's King-Priest

### His Lineage

v13-14 – from the tribe of Judah

### His Priesthood

v15-17 – priest according to the order of Melchizedek  
– priest according to the power of an indestructible life

v18-19 – brings in a better hope

v20-21 – made priest by God with an oath

**v22 Jesus is the guarantee of a better covenant**

v23-25 – a permanent priesthood

- \* He abides forever
- \* He is able to save forever
- \* He always lives to intercede for them

v26 – His admirable Qualifications

- \* toward God: holy
- \* toward evil: innocent
- \* in Himself: undefiled
- \* toward men: separated from sinners
- \* toward the universe: exalted above the heavens

v27 – His Sacrifice: of Himself, once for all

v28 – His Appointment: with an oath, Son made perfect forever

## Melchizedek (Heb 5:1-7:28)

### The Order of Melchizedek

1. the order of Melchizedek (5:6,10; 6:20; 7:11,17) – 5x
2. the likeness of Melchizedek (7:15)
3. His Name: Melchizedek = king of righteousness
4. His Titles - king of Salem, priest of the Most High God (7:1-2)
5. His Person – king-priest (7:1)
6. His Priesthood – perpetual (7:3)

### The Order of Aaron / The Levitical Priesthood

1. an imperfect priesthood (7:11), therefore changed (7:12)
2. high priests appointed by God from among men (5:1-4), appointed by the Law (7:28a) according to the law of physical requirement (7:15)
3. an inferior priesthood– appointed without an oath (7:20-21a)
4. High Priests existed in great numbers because prevented by death from continuing (7:23)
5. a temporal priesthood (7:12,23)
6. inferior priests who were sinful (5:1-3; 7:27) & weak (7:28) & need to offer sin sacrifices for themselves (5:1-3; 7:27)
7. high priests were human beings (5:1; 7:28a)

### The Priesthood of Jesus Christ

1. according to the order of Melchizedek (5:6,10; 6:20; 7:11, 17), according to the likeness of Melchizedek (7:15) - a king-priest
2. a perpetual priesthood (5:6; 6:20; 7:17,21), a permanent priesthood (7:23)
3. a perfect priesthood (7:11-12,15-17) with a perfect priest (7:26,28)
4. appointed according to the power of an indestructible life (7:16)
5. ONE High Priest because He abides forever and holds His priesthood permanently (7:34)
6. a superior priesthood – appointed with an oath (7:20-22,28)
7. a superior priest – holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners (7:26) – doesn't need to offer sin sacrifices but offered up Himself as a sin sacrifice (7:27)
8. a perfect priest (7:28b)
9. Jesus is the Son of God (5:5-6; 7:28)

<b>The Levitical Priesthood</b>	<b>The Melchizedikean priesthood</b>
<p>1. The entire tribe of Levi was dedicated to God for religious service and priests were from Aaron's line. The Priesthood was strictly national, strictly Jewish</p>	<p>1. It was universal, not national. He was a priest of God Most High, possessor of heaven &amp; earth (Gen 14;18). The significance: Jesus is not just the Messiah of Israel, but of the whole world</p>
<p>2. The Levites were subject to the king just as much as were the other tribes.</p>	<p>2. It was royal (s. Zech 6:13; Psalm 110:1,4)</p>
<p>3. The priestly sacrifices were not</p>	<p>3. It was righteous and peaceful (cf. Rom 5:1)</p>
<p><b>The Levitical Priesthood was National Tribal Based on Lineage Genealogy All Important Temporary</b></p>	<p><b>The Melchizedikean Priesthood was Universal Royal Based on Character Genealogy Unimportant Perpetual</b></p>
<p>years of age (Num 8:24-25)</p>	<p>order of his priesthood was forever, if he had lived forever</p>

<b>The Priesthood of Melchizedek</b>	<b>The Priesthood of Aaron</b>	<b>The Priesthood of Jesus Christ</b>
<p><b>1. made like the Son of God (7:3)</b>            * without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days or end of life            * abides a priest perpetually</p>	<p><b>1. must be a man (5:1)</b>            * gentle with ignorant &amp; misguided (5:2)            * weak (5:2; 7:28)            * sinful (5:3; 7:27; 9:7,25)</p>	<p><b>1. became a man (2:14-17)</b>            * sympathetic (4:15)            * able to aid those tempted (2:18)            * no sin (4:15; 7:26)            * holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens (7:26)</p>
<p><b>2. was a king-priest (7:1-2)</b>            * king of Salem            * priest of the Most High God            * king of righteousness            * king of peace            * greater than Abraham &amp; Levi (7:6-10)</p>	<p><b>2. must be called by God</b>            * Aaron (5:4)            * sons of Levi (7:5)            * called on the basis of a law of physical requirement (7:16)            * called without an oath (7:21)</p>	<p><b>2. called by God (5:5-6) &amp; designated a High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek (5:10; 6:20; 7:17)</b>            * made priest with an oath (7:21,28)            * priest perpetually (7:3)            * king-priest (7:4)            * greater than Abraham &amp; Levi (7:6-10)</p>
<p><b>3. a permanent priesthood (7:3)</b></p>	<p><b>3. are priests according to the order of Aaron (7:11)</b>            * a temporary priesthood (7:23)            * offer sacrifices daily for own sins &amp; sins of people (7:27)</p>	<p><b>3. a permanent priesthood</b>            * abides forever (7:24)            * able to save forever (7:25)            * always lives to intercede for those who draw near (7:25)            * offered Himself once for all (7:27)</p>
<p><b>no perfection through Levitical Priesthood (7:11)            because weak &amp; useless (7:18)            for the Law made nothing perfect (7:18)            Therefore when the priesthood is changed, the Law is changed also (7:12)</b></p>		
	<p><b>No perfection through the Levitical Priesthood (7:11)</b></p>	<p><b>Jesus, the Guarantee of the Better Covenant (7:22)</b></p>

## E. The Refusal by Abram (14:21-24)

21 And the king of Sodom said to Abram,  
“Give the people to me and take the goods  
for yourself.” 22 And Abram said to the  
king of Sodom, “I have sworn to the LORD  
God Most High, possessor of heaven and  
earth, 23 that I will not take a thread or a  
sandal thong or anything that is yours, lest  
you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’  
24 I will take nothing except what the young  
men have eaten, and the share of the men  
who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and  
Mamre; let them take their share.”



# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:21-24

The king of Sodom concedes to Abram, according to custom, the spoils of conquest as his right, and claims for himself only his subjects who had been rescued from the foe. Abram however declines any personal advantage from the enterprise, or material recompense for his services. To this he was led partly by the present disposition of his mind, in which the spiritual prevailed over the carnal, and partly by the character of the one with whom he had to deal; since the Sodomites were notorious for their wickedness. On other occasions he accepted unmerited gifts (**Gen 12:16; 20:14, 16**). On the present occasion, he, no doubt, felt himself amply rewarded by the recovery of his own kinsman, and the blessing of Melkizedec. Disinterestedness has had another victory in Abram. And, accordingly, the minister of God meets him on the field of a common humanity, and pronounces on him a blessing. The unselfish, unsectarian heart of the heir of special promise, bows in acknowledgment of the representative of the universal and anterior covenant of God with Noah.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 14:21-24

**I have lifted up my hand.** - This is a serious matter with Abram. Either before, or then and there, he made an oath or solemn asseveration before God, with uplifted hand, that he would not touch the property of Sodom. He must have felt that there was danger of moral contamination in coming into any political relationship with the cities of the vale.

**“The Lord, the Most High God, the Founder of heaven and earth.”** In this conjunction of names Abram solemnly and expressly identifies the God of himself and of Melkizedec in the presence of the king of Sodom. The Most High God of Melkizedec is the God of the first chapter of Genesis, and the Yahweh of Adam, Noah, and Abram.

While Abram refrains from accepting any part of the spoils beyond what had been consumed in supplying the necessities of his followers in the expedition, he expressly excepts the portion to which his confederates, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, became entitled by their share in the recovery of the property. This is sufficient to prove that the transaction regarding the spoil was not an offer of generosity on the part of the king of Sodom, but an act of disinterestedness on the part of Abram.

# Genesis 15 – The Abrahamic Covenant

- A. Abram's Complaint (15:1-3)
- B. Abram's Conversion (15:4-6)
- C. God's Covenant (15:7-21)

## The Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 15:1-21)

### A. Abram's Complaint (15:1-3)

**1** After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying,

“Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you;  
Your reward shall be very great.”

**2** And Abram said, “O Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” **3** And Abram said, “Since Thou hast given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.”

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:1

**After these things,** - the victory, the blessing, and the self-denial recorded in the previous chapter.

**“The word of the Lord,”** manifesting himself by speech to his servant.

**“In the vision”** the intelligent observer passes from the merely sensible to the supersensible sphere of reality.

**“Fear not, Abram.”** The patriarch had some reason to fear. The formidable allies had indeed been defeated, and the fruits of their marauding enterprise wrested from them. But they might resume their purpose, and return with an overwhelming force. And Abram was still a stranger in a foreign land, preoccupied by tribes of another race, who would combine against him as soon as they suspected him of being an intruder. But the Lord had stood by him and given him the victory, and now speaks to him in the language of encouragement.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:1

**“I am thy shield, thy exceeding great reward.”** The word I is separately expressed, and, therefore, emphatic in the original. I, Jehovah (Yahweh), the Self-existent One, the Author of existence, the Performer of promise, the Manifester of myself to man, and not any creature however exalted. This was something beyond a seed, or a land, or any temporal thing. The Creator infinitely transcends the creature. The mind of Abram is here lifted up to the spiritual and the eternal. (1) **thy shield.** (2) **thy exceeding great reward.** Abram has two fears - the presence of evil, and the absence of good. Experience and conscience had begun to teach him that both of these were justly his doom. But Yahweh has chosen him, and here engages himself to stand between him and all harm, and himself to be to him all good. With such a shield from all evil, and such a source of all good, he need not be afraid. The Lord, we see, begins, as usual, with the immediate and the tangible; but he propounds a principle that reaches to the eternal and the spiritual. We have here the opening germ of the great doctrine of “the Lord our righteousness,” redeeming us on the one hand from the sentence of death, and on the other to a title to eternal life.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:2-3

Notwithstanding the unbounded grandeur and preciousness of the promise, or rather assurance, now given, Abram is still childless and landless; and the Lord has made as yet no sign of action in regard to these objects of special promise. “Lord Jehovah (Yahweh).” **The name אֲדֹנָי 'aḏōnāy is here for the first time used in the divine records. It denotes one who has authority; and, therefore, when applied to God, the Supreme Lord.** Abram hereby acknowledges Yahweh as Supreme Judge and Governor, and therefore entitled to dispose of all matters concerning his present or prospective welfare. “What wilt thou give me?” Of what use will land or wealth be to me, the immediate reward specified by the promise? Eliezer of Damascus is master of my house. **“To me thou hast given no seed.”** This was the present shield mentioned also in former words of promise. There is something strikingly human in all this. Abram is no enthusiast or fanatic. He fastens on the substantive blessings which the Lord had expressly named.

## The Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 15:1-21)

### B. Abram's Conversion (15:4-6)

4 Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This man will not be your heir; but one who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.” 5 And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” 6 Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. (see Romans 4)

### Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:4-5

The Lord reiterates the promise concerning the seed. As he had commanded him to view the land, and see in its dust the emblem of the multitude that would spring from him, so now, with a sublime simplicity of practical illustration, he brings him forth to contemplate the stars, and challenges him to tell their number, if he can; adding, “**So shall thy seed be.**” He that made all these out of nothing, by the word of his power, is able to fulfill his promise, and multiply the seed of Abram and Sarai. Here, we perceive, the vision does not interfere with the notice of the sensible world, so far as is necessary (**Dan 10:7; Joh 12:29**).

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:6

**And Abram believed in the Lord.** - Thus, at length, after many throes of labor, has come to the birth in the breast of Abram “faith in Yahweh,” on his simple promise in the absence of all present performance, and in the face of all sensible hindrance. The command to go to the land which the Lord would show him, accompanied with the promise to make of him a great nation, had awakened in him a certain expectation; which, however, waited for some performance to ripen it into faith. But waiting in a state of suspense is not faith, but doubt; and faith after performance is not faith, but sight.

The second and third renewal of the promise, while performance was still unseen in the distance, was calculated to slay the expectancy that still paused for realization, to give it the vitality of a settled consent and acquiescence in the faithfulness of God, and mature it into conviction and confession.

What was there now, then, to call forth Abram’s faith more than at the first promise? There was the reiteration of the promise. There was the withholding of the performance, leaving room for the exercise of pure faith. There was time to train the mind to this unaccustomed idea and determination. And, lastly, there was the sublime assurance

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:4-6

conveyed in the sentence, "I am thy shield, thy exceeding great reward," transcending all the limits of time and place, comprehending alike the present and the eternal, the earthly and the heavenly. This, coupled with all the recorded and unrecorded dealings of the Lord, leads him to conceive the nobler feeling of faith in the Promiser, antecedent to any part of the execution, any unfolding of the plan, or any removal of the obvious difficulty. The moment of deliverance draws nigh, when Abram at length ventures to open his mouth and lay bare, in articulate utterance, the utmost questionings of his soul before the Lord.

And then, in due time is effected the birth of faith; not by commencing the accomplishment of the promise, but by the explicit reassertion of its several parts, in the light of that grand assurance which covers it in its narrowest and in its most expanded forms. Thus, faith springs solely from the seed of promise. And from that moment there stands up and grows within the breast of man the right frame of mind toward the God of mercy - the germ of a mutual good understanding between God and man which will spread its roots and branches through the whole soul, to the exclusion of every noxious plant, and blossom forth unto the blessed fruit of all holy feelings and doings.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:4-6

**And he counted it to him for righteousness. - First.** From this confessedly weighty sentence we learn, implicitly, that Abram had no righteousness. And if he had not, no man had. We have seen enough of Abram to know this on other grounds. And here the universal fact of man's depravity comes out into incidental notice, as a thing usually taken for granted, in the words of God. **Second.** Righteousness is here imputed to Abram. Hence, mercy and grace are extended to him; mercy taking effect in the pardon of his sin, and grace in bestowing the rewards of righteousness. **Third.** That in him which is counted for righteousness is faith in Yahweh promising mercy. In the absence of righteousness, this is the only thing in the sinner that can be counted for righteousness. First, it is not of the nature of righteousness. If it were actual righteousness, it could not be counted as such. But believing God, who promises blessing to the undeserving, is essentially different from obeying God, who guarantees blessing to the deserving. Hence, it has a negative fitness to be counted for what it is not. **Secondly,** it is trust in him who engages to bless in a holy and lawful way. Hence, it is that in the sinner which brings him into conformity with the law through another who undertakes to satisfy its demands and secure its rewards for him.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:4-6

Thus, it is the only thing in the sinner which, while it is not righteousness, has yet a claim to be counted for such, because it brings him into union with one who is just and having salvation.

It is not material what the Almighty and All-gracious promises in the first instance to him that believes in him, whether it be a land, or a seed, or any other blessing. All other blessing, temporal or eternal, will flow out of that express one, in a perpetual course of development, as the believer advances in experience, in compass of intellect, and capacity of enjoyment. Hence, it is that a land involves a better land, a seed a nobler seed, a temporal an eternal good. The patriarchs were children to us in the comprehension of the love of God: we are children to those who will hereafter experience still grander manifestations of what God has prepared for them that love him. The shield and exceeding great reward await a yet inconceivable enlargement of meaning.

# Abraham Reckoned Righteous By Faith

v1-8 Apart from Works	v9-12 Apart from Circumcision	v13-17 Apart from Law	v18-25 Apart from Circumstances
<p><b><u>v1-3 The Example of Abraham</u></b>  <b><u>v1 – Question #1</u></b>            What has Abraham found?  <b><u>v2 – Answer #1</u></b>            For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God  <b><u>v3 – Testimony of Scripture</u></b>            “And Abraham believed God, &amp; it was reckoned to him as +R”  <b><u>v4-5 The General Principle</u></b>            * wages are what is due            * faith is reckoned as +R  <b><u>v6-8 The Testimony of David</u></b>            * blessing is on the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works            * blessed are on those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven &amp; whose sins have been covered            * Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account</p>	<p><b><u>v9a – Question #2</u></b>            Is this blessing then upon the circumcised, or upon the uncircumcised?  <b><u>v9b – Reason for Question #2</u></b>            For we say, “Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness”  <b><u>v10a – Question #3</u></b>            How then was it reckoned? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised?  <b><u>v10b-12 – Answer #3</u></b>            Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised  <b><u>v11a – Fact from Ab’s Life</u></b>            he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the +R of the faith which he had while uncircumcised  <b><u>v11b-12 – Reason</u></b>            That he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be reckoned to them, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised</p>	<p><b><u>v13 – Promise given through +R of Faith</u></b>            The promise to Ab &amp; his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the +R of faith  <b><u>v14-15 – Reasons</u></b>            For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void &amp; the promise is nullified; for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there violation  <b><u>v16 – Conclusion</u></b>            it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants – those of the Law &amp; those of faith  <b><u>v17 – Scriptural Testimony</u></b>            “A father of many nations have I made you” – says God who gives life to the dead &amp; calls into being that which does not exist</p>	<p><b><u>v18 – Abraham’s Faith</u></b>            In hope against hope he believed, in order that he might become a father of many nations  <b><u>v19-20 Abraham’s Circumstances</u></b>            Without becoming weak in faith, he contemplated his own dead body &amp; Sarah’s dead womb, yet with respect to God’s promise, he didn’t waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God  <b><u>v21 – Ab’s Confidence</u></b>            Being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able to perform  <b><u>v22 – God’s Approval</u></b>            Therefore also it was reckoned to him as +R  <b><u>v23-25 – Reason for the Written Record</u></b>            For his sake &amp; ours, we who believe in Him who raised Jesus from the dead</p>

# Romans 4 - Abraham Justified by Faith

## Apart from Works (v1-8)

### v1-3 The Example of Abraham

#### v1 Question #1

1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found?

#### v2 Answer #1

2 **For** if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about; **but** not before God.

#### v3 Scriptural Testimony

3 **For** what does the Scripture say? "And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."

### v4-5 The General Principle

4 Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, **but** as what is due. 5 **But** to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness,

### v6-8 The Testimony of David

6 just as David also speaks of the blessing upon the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works: 7 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, And whose sins have been covered. 8 "Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account."

# Romans 4 - Abraham Justified by Faith

## Apart from Circumcision (v9-12)

### v9a Question #2

9 Is this blessing then upon the circumcised, or upon the uncircumcised also?

### v9b The Reason for Question #2

**For** we say, "Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness."

### v10a Question #3

10 How then was it reckoned?

### v10b-12 Answer #3

While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, **but** while uncircumcised; 11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, **that** he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be reckoned to them, 12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, **but** who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

# Romans 4 - Abraham Justified by Faith

## Apart from the Law (v13-17)

### v13 The Promise Given to Abraham

13 **For** the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, **but** through the righteousness of faith.

### v14-15 The Reasons

14 **For** if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; 15 for the Law brings about wrath, **but** where there is no law, neither is there violation.

### v16 The Conclusion

16 **For this reason** *it is* by faith, **that** *it might be* in accordance with grace, **in order that** the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

### v17 The Scriptural Testimony

17 (as it is written, "A father of many nations have I made you") in the sight of Him whom he believed, *even* God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.

# Romans 4 - Abraham Justified by Faith

## Apart from Circumstances (v18-25)

### v18 Abraham's Faith

18 In hope against hope he believed, **in order that** he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, "**So** shall your descendants be."

### v19-20 Abraham's Circumstances

19 And without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb;  
20 **yet**, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, **but** grew strong in faith, giving glory to God,

### v21 Abraham's Confidence

21 and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform.

### v22 God's Approval

22 **Therefore** also it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

### v23-25 Reason for the Written Record

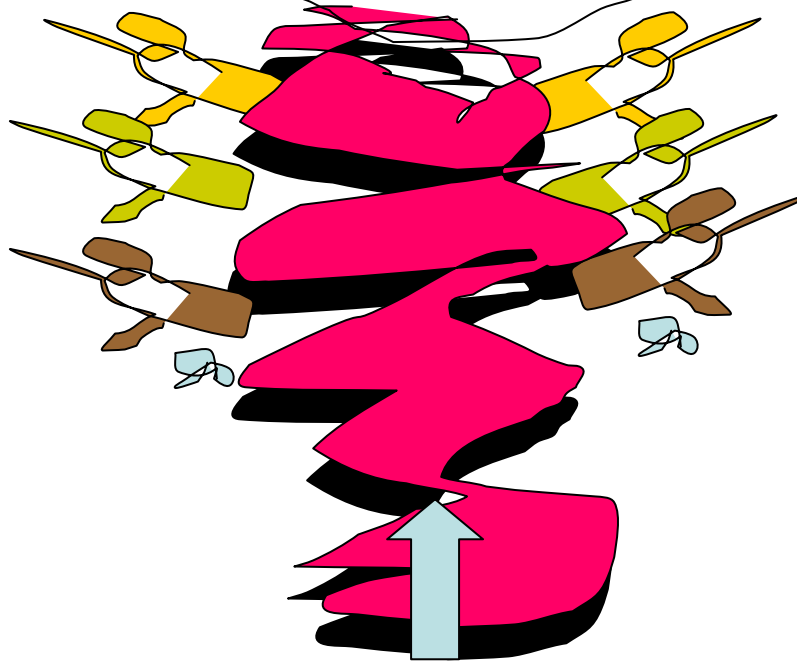
23 Now not for his sake only was it written, that it was reckoned to him, 24 **but** for our sake also, to whom it will be reckoned, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 *He* who was delivered up **because** of our transgressions, and was raised **because** of our justification.

### C. God's Covenant (15:7-21)

7 And He said to him, “I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.” 8 And he said, “O Lord God, how may I know that I shall possess it?” 9 So He said to him, “Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” 10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. 11 And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:7-11

The Lord next confirms and explains the promise of “the land” to Abram. When God announces himself as Yahweh, who purposed to give him the land, Abram asks, Whereby “shall I know that I shall possess it?” He appears to expect some intimation as to the time and mode of entering upon possession. The Lord now directs him to make ready the things requisite for entering into a formal covenant regarding the land. These include all the kinds of animals afterward used in sacrifice. The number three is sacred, and denotes the perfection of the victim in point of maturity. The division of the animals refers to the covenant between two parties, who participate in the rights which it guarantees. The birds are two without being divided. **“Abram drove them away.”** As the animals slain and divided represent the only mean and way through which the two parties can meet in a covenant of peace, they must be preserved pure and un mutilated for the end they have to serve.



### C. God's Covenant (15:7-21)

12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror *and* great darkness fell upon him. 13 And *God* said to Abram, “Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. 14 But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward they will come out with many possessions. 15 And as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. 16 Then in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete.”

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:12-17

**And the sun was about to set.** - This visit of the Lord to Abram continues for two nights, with the intervening day. In the former night he led him forth to view the stars (**Gen 15:5**). The second night sets in with the consummation of the covenant (**Gen 15:17**). The revelation comes to Abram in a trance of deep sleep. The Lord releases the mind from attention to the communications of sense in order to engage it with higher things. And he who makes the loftier revelation can enable the recipient to distinguish the voice of heaven from the play of fancy.

**Know, know thou.** - Know certainly. This responds to Abram's question, Whereby shall I know? (**Gen 15:8**). Four hundred years are to elapse before the seed of Abram shall actually proceed to take possession of the land. This interval can only commence when the seed is born; that is, at the birth of Isaac, when Abram was a hundred years of age and therefore thirty years after the call. During this interval they are to be, "first, strangers in a land not theirs" for one hundred and ninety years; and then for the remaining two hundred and ten years in Egypt: at first, servants, with considerable privilege and position; and at last, afflicted serfs, under a hard and cruel bondage. At the end of this period Pharaoh and his nation were visited with a succession of tremendous

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:12-17

judgments, and Israel went out free from bondage “with great wealth” (**Exo 12–14**). **“Go to thy fathers.”** This implies that the fathers, though dead, still exist. To go from one place to another implies, not annihilation, but the continuance of existence. The doctrine of the soul’s perpetual existence is here intimated. Abram died in peace and happiness, one hundred and fifteen years before the descent into Egypt.

**In the fourth age.** - An age here means the average period from the birth to the death of one man. This use of the word is proved by **Num 32:13** - **“He made them wander in the wilderness for forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the Lord was consumed.”** ...

**For the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full.** - From this simple sentence we have much to learn. **First.** The Lord foreknows the moral character of people. **Second.** In his providence he administers the affairs of nations on the principle of moral rectitude. **Third.** Nations are spared until their iniquity is full. **Fourth.** They are then cut off in retributive justice. **Fifth.** The Amorite was to be the chief nation extirpated (completely destroyed) for its iniquity on the return of the seed of Abram. Accordingly, we find the Amorites occupying by conquest the country east of the Jordan, from the Arnon to Mount Hermon, under their two kings, Sihon and Og

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:12-17

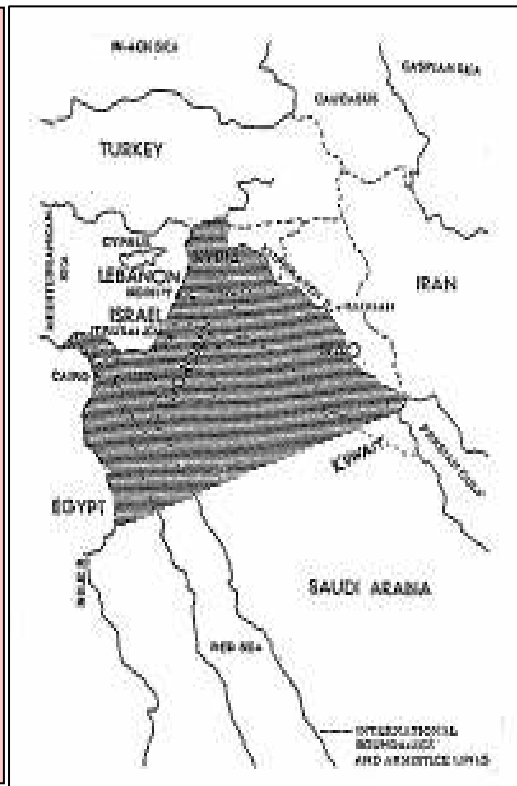
(**Num 21:21-35**). On the west of Jordan we have already met them at Engedi and Hebron, and they dwelt in the mountains of Judah and Ephraim (**Num 13:29**), whence they seem to have crossed the Jordan for conquest (**Num 21:26**). Thus had they of all the tribes that overspread the land by far the largest extent of territory. And they seem to have been extinguished as a nation by the invasion of Israel, as we hear no more of them in the subsequent history of the country.

**And the sun went down.** - The light of day is gone. The covenant is now formally concluded. Abram had risen to the height of faith in the God of promise. He is come into the position of the father of the faithful. He is therefore qualified for entering into this solemn compact. This covenant has a uniqueness which distinguishes it from that with Noah. It refers to a patriarch and his seed chosen out of a coexisting race. It is not, however, subversive of the ancient and general covenant, but only a special measure for overcoming the legal and moral difficulties in the way, and ultimately bringing its comprehensive provisions into effect. It refers to the land of promise, which is not only a reality, but a type and an earnest of all analogous blessings....

## C. God's Covenant (15:7-21)

17 And it came about **when the sun had set**, that it was very dark, and behold, *there appeared* a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. 18 **On that day** the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “**To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: 19 the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite 20 and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim 21 and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite.**”

Boundaries of The Promised Land



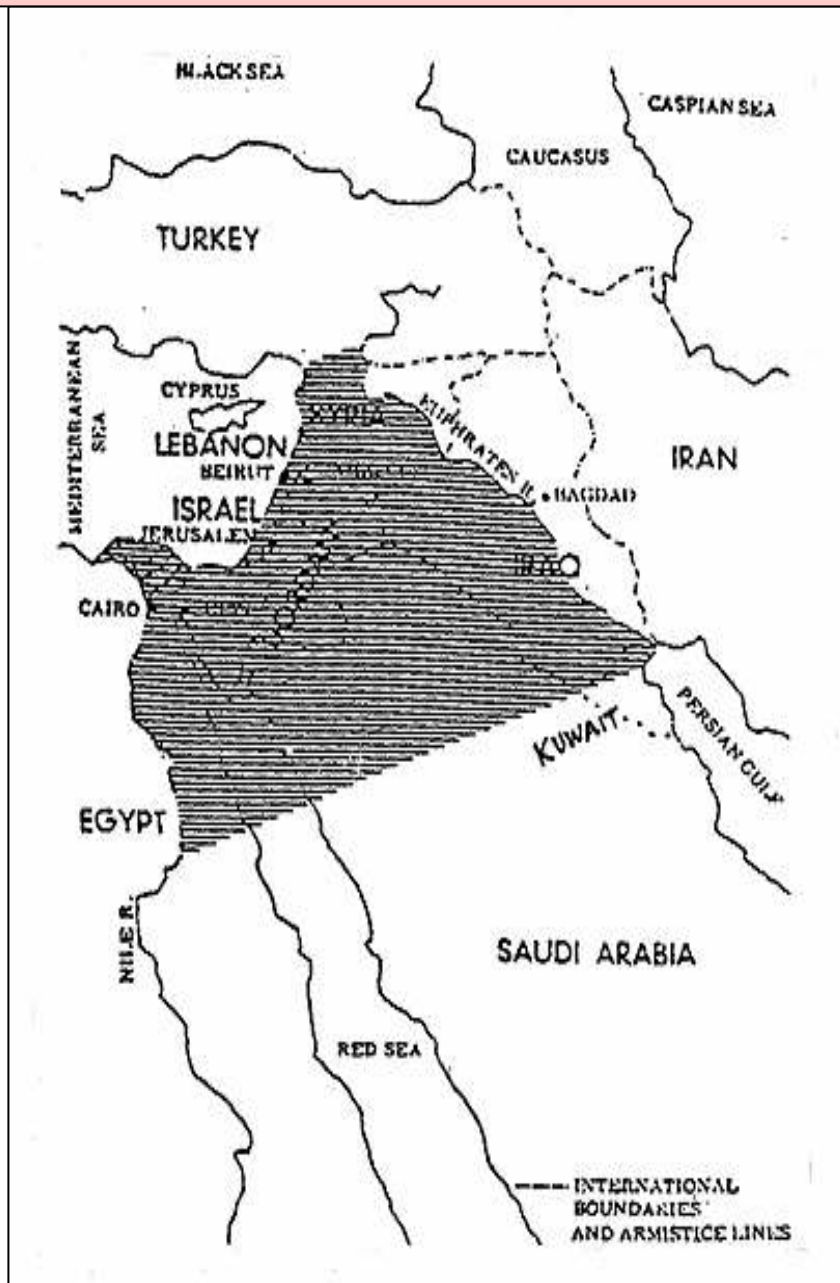
The Empire of David and Solomon

# Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:18-21

In that instant the covenant was solemnly completed. Its primary form of benefit is the grant of the promised land with the extensive boundaries of the river of Egypt and the Euphrates. The former seems to be the Nile with its banks which constitute Egypt, as the Phrat with its banks describes the land of the East, with which countries the promised land was conterminous.

The ten principal nations inhabiting this area are here enumerated. Of these five are Kenaanite, and the other five probably not. The first three are new to us, and seem to occupy the extremities of the region here defined. **The Kenite** dwelt in the country bordering on Egypt and south of Palestine, in which the Amalekites also are found (**Num 24:20-22; 1Sa 15:6**). They dwelt among the Midianites, as Hobab was both a Midianite and a Kenite (**Num 10:29; Jdg 1:16; 4:11**). They were friendly to the Israelites, and hence some of them followed their fortunes and settled in their land (**1Ch 2:55**). **The Kenizzite** dwelt apparently in the same region, having affinity with the Horites, and subsequently with Edom and Israel (**Gen 36:11, 20-23; Jos 15:17; 1Ch 2:50-52**). **The Kadmonite** seems to be the Eastern, and, therefore, to hold the other extreme boundary of the promised land, toward Tadmor and the Phrat. These three tribes were probably related to Abram, and, therefore, descendants of Shem. The other seven tribes have already come under our notice.

## Boundaries of The Promised Land



## The Empire of David and Solomon

