

Genesis: The Book of Beginnings

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

Author: Moses

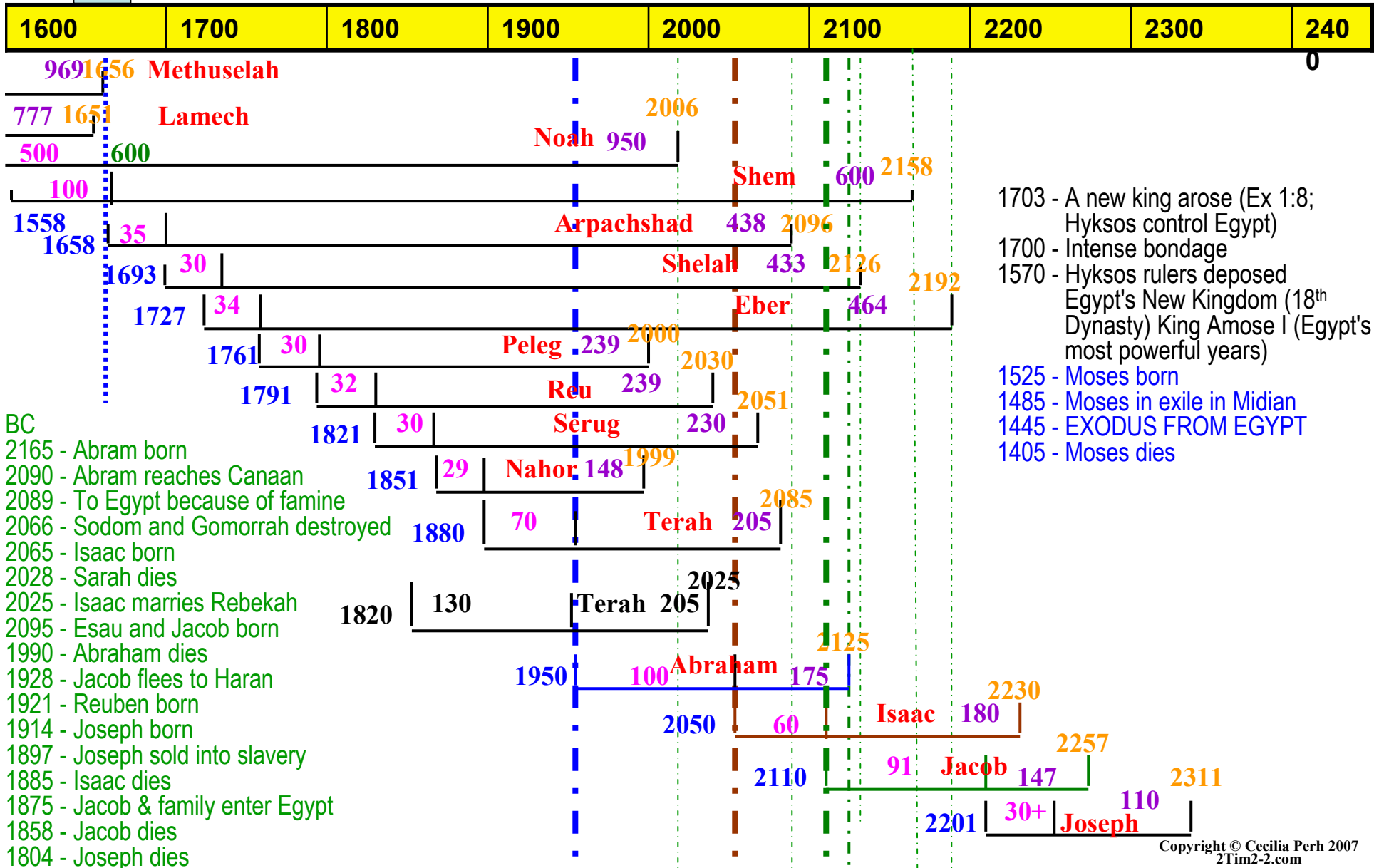
Date written: after 1445 BC

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

Flood

The Generations of Shem and Terah (Genesis 11)

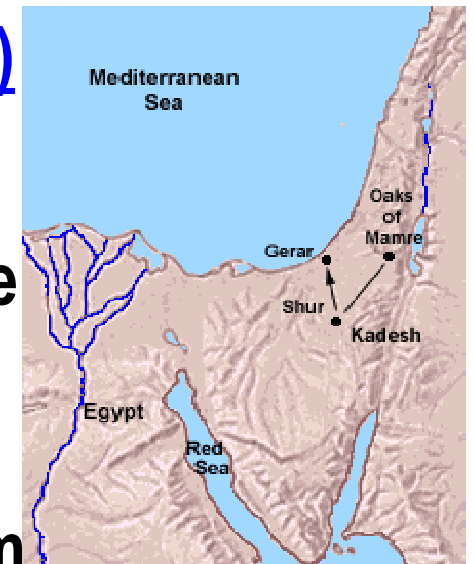


- BC
- 2165 - Abram born
- 2090 - Abram reaches Canaan
- 2089 - To Egypt because of famine
- 2066 - Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed
- 2065 - Isaac born
- 2028 - Sarah dies
- 2025 - Isaac marries Rebekah
- 2095 - Esau and Jacob born
- 1990 - Abraham dies
- 1928 - Jacob flees to Haran
- 1921 - Reuben born
- 1914 - Joseph born
- 1897 - Joseph sold into slavery
- 1885 - Isaac dies
- 1875 - Jacob & family enter Egypt
- 1858 - Jacob dies
- 1804 - Joseph dies

- 1703 - A new king arose (Ex 1:8; Hyksos control Egypt)
- 1700 - Intense bondage
- 1570 - Hyksos rulers deposed
- Egypt's New Kingdom (18th Dynasty) King Amose I (Egypt's most powerful years)
- 1525 - Moses born
- 1485 - Moses in exile in Midian
- 1445 - EXODUS FROM EGYPT
- 1405 - Moses dies

The Birth of Isaac Announced (Genesis 18:1-15)

¹ Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. ² And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when **he saw them, he ran** from the tent door to meet them, and **bowed himself** to the earth, ³ **and said**, “My lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by. ⁴ Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; ⁵ and **I will bring** a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant.” And they said, “So do, as you have said.”



2066 BC

6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead *it*, and make bread cakes." **7** Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf, and gave *it* to the servant; and he hurried to prepare it. **8** And he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed *it* before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.

Abraham's Hospitality

a little water = curds & milk

a piece of bread = 3 measures of fine flour (9.3 gallons or 75 pints)

tender & choice calf

Exodus 23:19 "You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. You are not to boil a kid in the milk of its mother.

Exodus 34:26 "You shall bring the very first of the first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk."

Deuteronomy 14:21 "You shall not eat anything which dies *of itself*. You may give it to the alien who is in your town, so that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner, for you are a holy people to the LORD your God. You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

Hospitality

Hospitality, a Must for Overseers & Elders, Women on Church Support List

- 1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,
- Titus 1:8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,
- 1 Timothy 5:10 having a reputation for good works; *and* if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, *and* if she has devoted herself to every good work.

Hospitality to be Practised by Everybody

- 1 Peter 4:9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint.
- Romans 12:13 contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.
- Hebrews 13:2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

2066 BC

The promise of Isaac's birth
(Fulfilled - Gen 21:1-3 - 2065 BC)

⁹ Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "Behold, in the tent."¹⁰ And he said, "I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him.

¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. ¹² And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

¹³ And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?' ¹⁴ Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son."

¹⁵ Sarah denied *it* however, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh."

Genesis 17:17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"



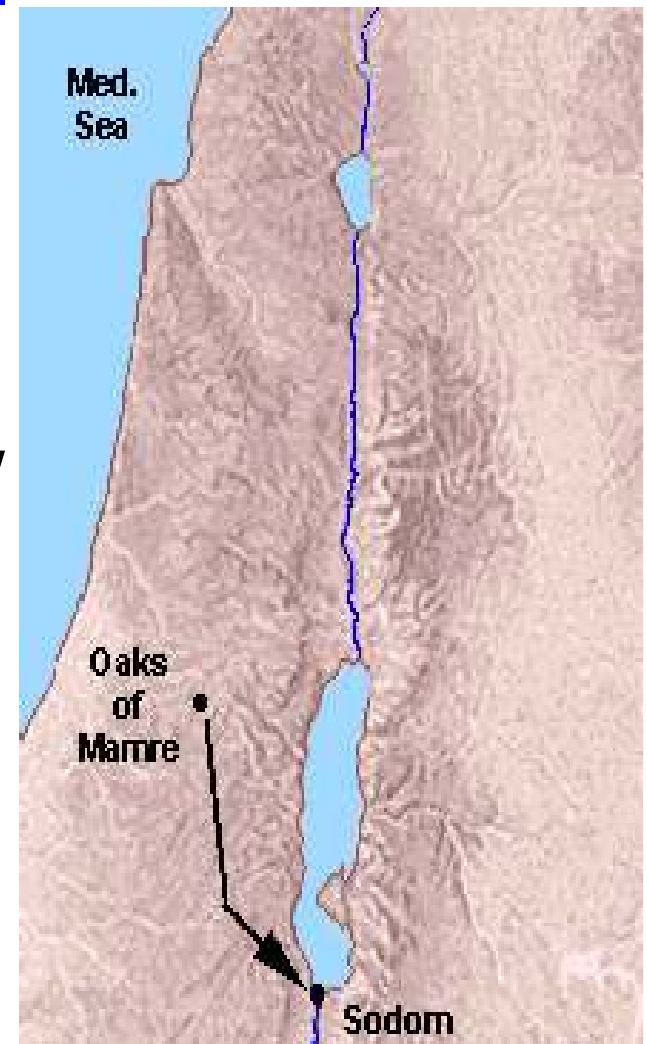
Bedouin tent with eastern side open

The Overthrow of Sodom & Gomorrah Announced (Genesis 18:16-21)

16 Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to send them off.

17 And the LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, **18** since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? **19** **For I have chosen him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice; in order that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.**”

20 And the LORD said, “The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave. **21** I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know.”



2066 BC

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18:22-33)

22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the LORD. **23** And Abraham came near and said, “Wilt Thou indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? **24** Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; wilt Thou indeed sweep *it* away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? **25** Far be it from Thee to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are *treated* alike. Far be it from Thee! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?” **26** So the LORD said, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place on their account.” **27** And Abraham answered and said, “Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am *but* dust and ashes. **28** Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, wilt Thou destroy the whole city because of five?”

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18:22-33)

And He said, “I will not destroy *it* if I find forty-five there.”²⁹ And he spoke to Him yet again and said, “Suppose forty are found there?” And He said, “I will not do *it* on account of the forty.”³⁰ Then he said, “Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak; suppose thirty are found there?” And He said, “I will not do *it* if I find thirty there.”³¹ And he said, “Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord; suppose twenty are found there?” And He said, “I will not destroy *it* on account of the twenty.”³² Then he said, “Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak only this once; suppose ten are found there?” And He said, “I will not destroy *it* on account of the ten.”³³ And as soon as He had finished speaking to Abraham the LORD departed; and Abraham returned to his place.

Ezekiel 22:30-31 - ³⁰ "And I searched for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. ³¹ "Thus I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; their way I have brought upon their heads," declares the Lord God.

The Depravity of Sodom (Genesis 19:1-14)

1 Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. **When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.** ² And he said, “Now behold, my lords, please turn aside into your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.” They said however, “No, **but** we shall spend the night in the square.” ³ **Yet he urged them strongly, so** they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

⁴ Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter; ⁵ and they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us **that** we may have relations with them.”

The Depravity of Sodom (Genesis 19:1-14)

6 But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him, **7** and said, “Please, my brothers, do not act wickedly. **8** Now **behold**, I have two daughters who have not had relations with man; please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like; only do nothing to these men, inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof.”

9 But they said, “Stand aside.” **Furthermore**, they said, “This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them.” **So** they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door.

10 But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. **11 And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves trying to find the doorway.**

Gill on Genesis 19:11

And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great,.... with "blindnesses" (n); with extreme blindness, with blindness both of eye and heart, as Aben Ezra interprets it; and indeed had they not been given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, such a stroke upon them might have convinced them that their ways were evil, and their works not right, and that by them they had incurred the displeasure of God, and would desisted from their enterprise; but, on the contrary, they went on with it, and sought with all diligence and labour as much as possible to effect it. The word for "blindness" is only used here and in 2Ki 6:18, and denotes a peculiar sort of blindness; not an entire blindness with respect to every object, but only with regard to that they were intent upon; for otherwise they would not have continued about Lot's house, or fatigued themselves with searching for the door of it, but would rather have been glad to have groped to their own houses as well as they could: and thus it was with the Syrians, when they were smitten at the

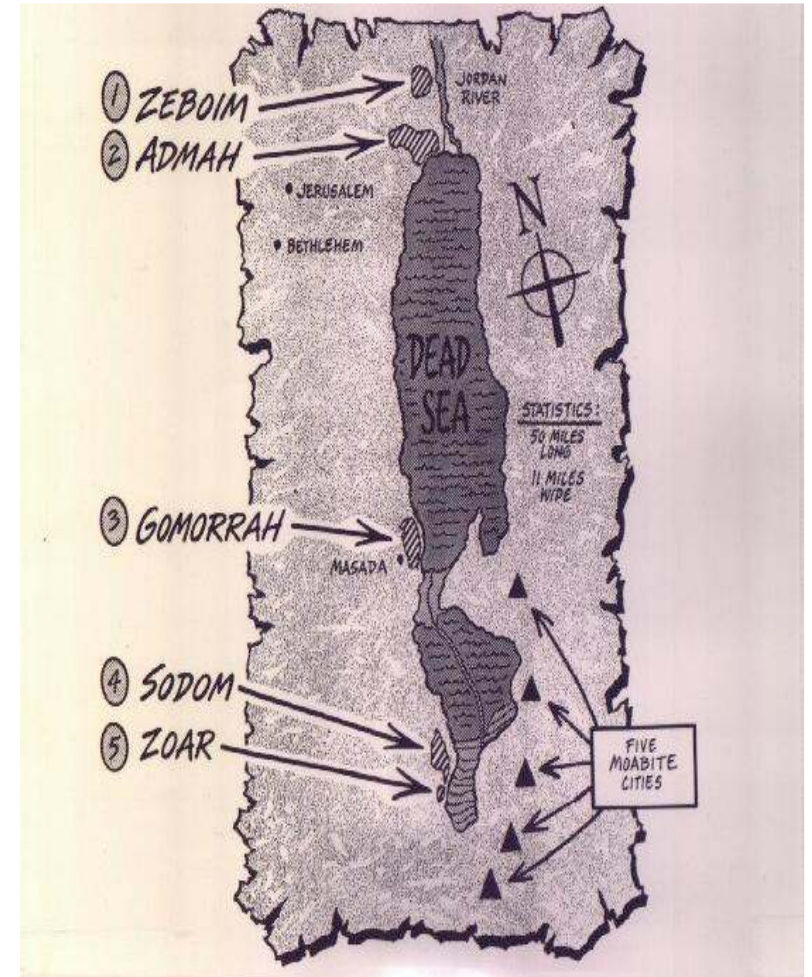
Gill on Genesis 19:11

prayer of Elisha, it was not total, for they could follow the prophet in the way he went and led them, but they could not see their way to the place where they intended to go; and so these men of Sodom could see other objects, but not the door of Lot's house, their heads were so confused, and their imaginations so disturbed as in drunken men; or the medium of the visive faculty, the air, so altered, or the form of the object to be seen so changed, that they could not discern it; when they saw the door, it looked like the wall, and that which seemed to them to be the door, proved to be the wall:

so that they wearied themselves to find the door; went backwards and forwards, fancying the door was here, and then it was there, and when they came to it, they perceived it was not; and thus they went to and fro, until they were quite weary of seeking it, and despaired of finding it, and left off.

12 Then the men said to Lot, “Whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring *them* out of the place; **13** **for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.**”

14 And Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, “Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city.” **But** he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting.



The Escape from Sodom (Genesis 19:15-23)

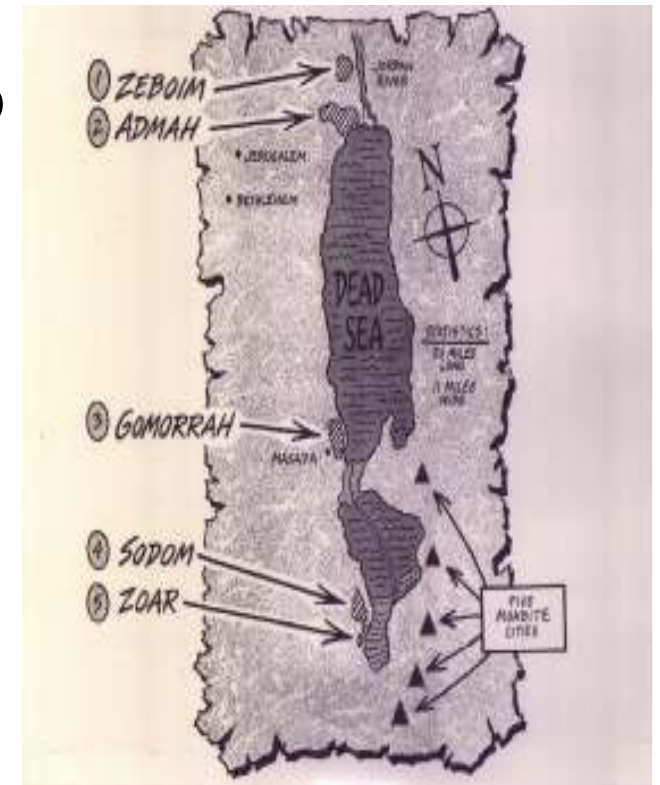
¹⁵ And when morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up, take your wife and your two daughters, who are here, lest you be swept away in the punishment of the city.” ¹⁶ But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the LORD was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city. ¹⁷ And it came about when they had brought them outside, that one said, “Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains, lest you be swept away.”

Early the next morning, when he delayed, they grabbed Lot, his wife, and his daughters by their hands and brought them out of the city (19:16). The final verb of this verse is interesting: it means literally "caused them to alight" (*yanichuhu*), like a bird. In other words, the angels didn't walk them out of the city - they flew them out!

Their escape from Sodom is a picture of the catching up of the believers when Messiah returns for judgment (1 Thess. 4:17). It may also describe how this catching up will take place: an angel will grab hold of one of your hands, and up you go!

The Escape from Sodom (Genesis 19:15-23)

¹⁸ **But** Lot said to them, “Oh no, my lords! ¹⁹ **Now behold**, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest the disaster overtake me and I die; ²⁰ **now behold**, this town is near enough to flee to, and it is small. Please, let me escape there (is it not small?) **that** my life may be saved.” ²¹ And he said to him, “**Behold**, I grant you this request also, not to overthrow the town of which you have spoken. ²² “**Hurry, escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there.**” **Therefore** the name of the town was called Zoar. ²³ The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar.

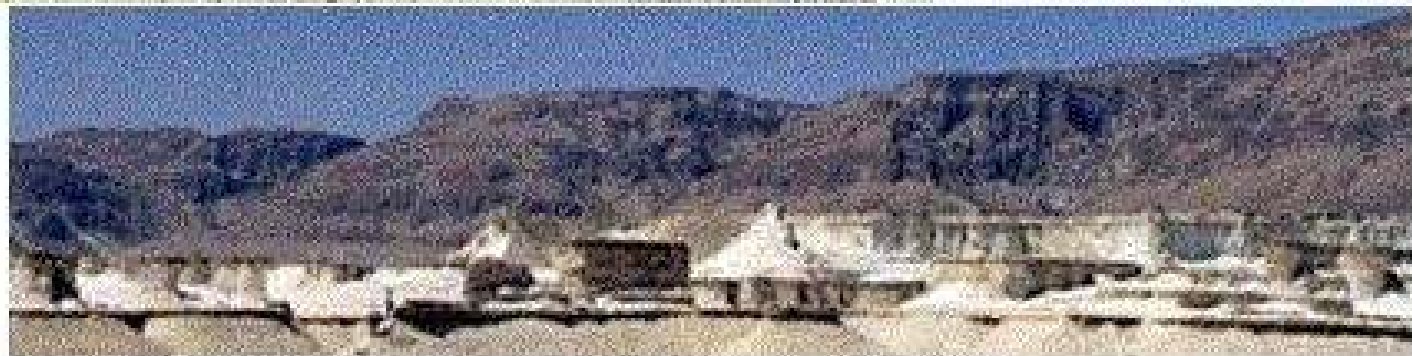




Within the perimeter of each site, everything has been turned to white ash in contrast with the brown stony desert. Among the ashes at all five sites are countless pieces of brimstone, or

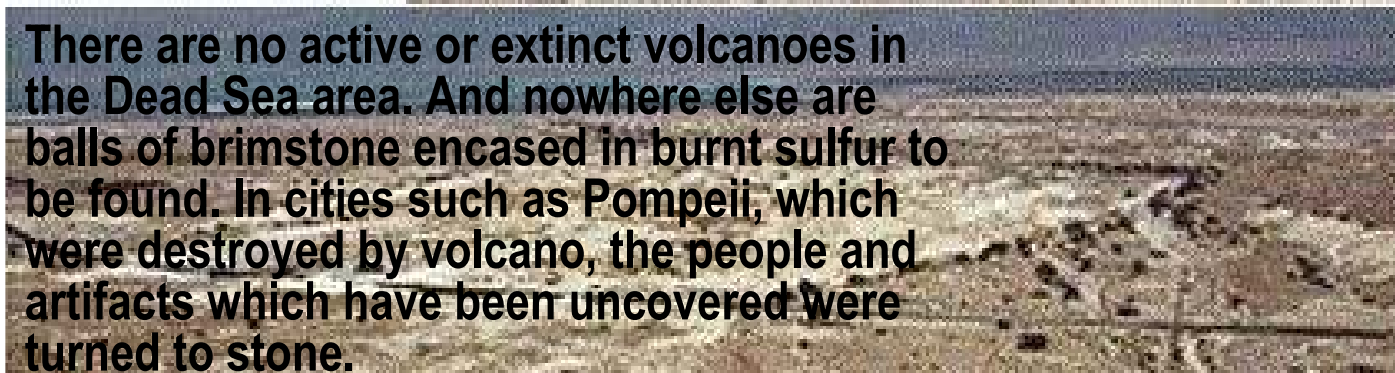


Sodom
&
Gomorrah



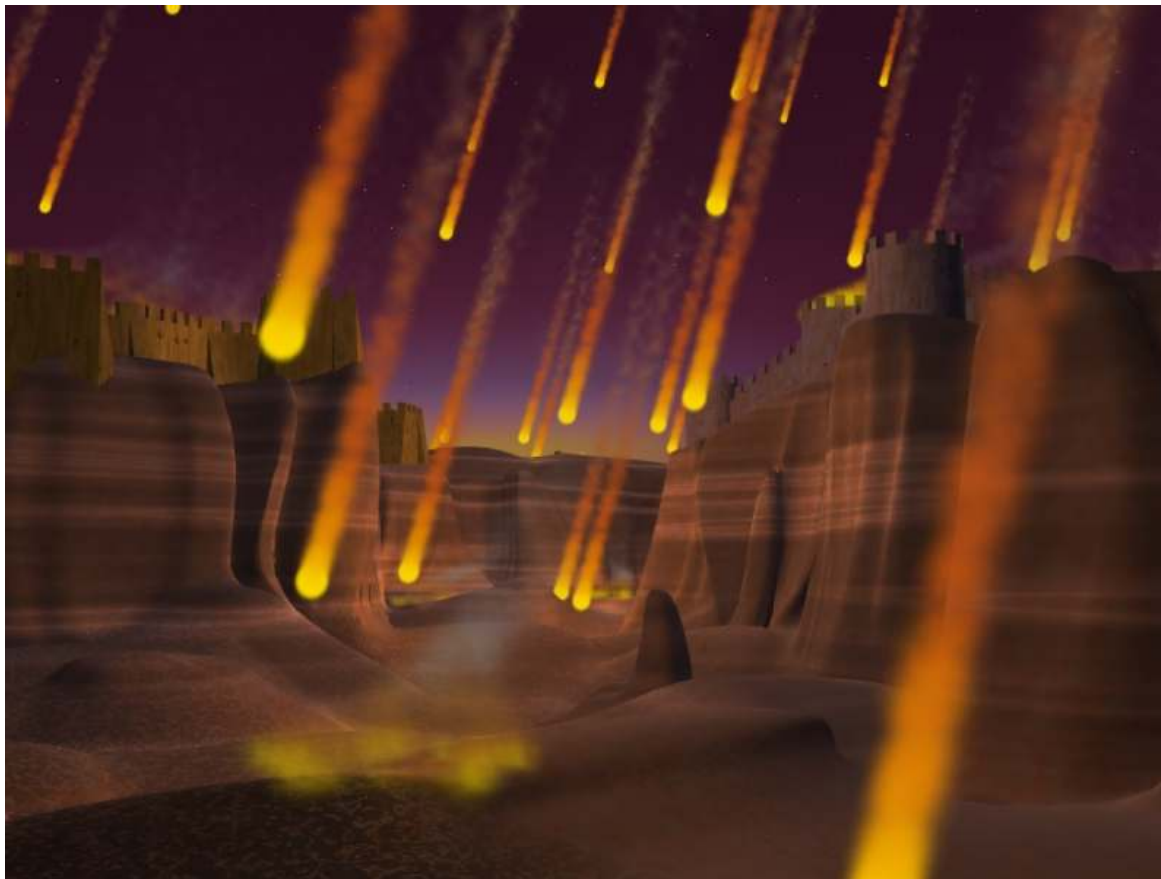
There are no active or extinct volcanoes in the Dead Sea area. And nowhere else are balls of brimstone encased in burnt sulfur to be found. In cities such as Pompeii, which were destroyed by volcano, the people and artifacts which have been uncovered were turned to stone.

Zoar



The Destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24-26)

²⁴ Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, ²⁵ and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. ²⁶ **But** his wife, from behind him, looked back; and she became a pillar of salt.



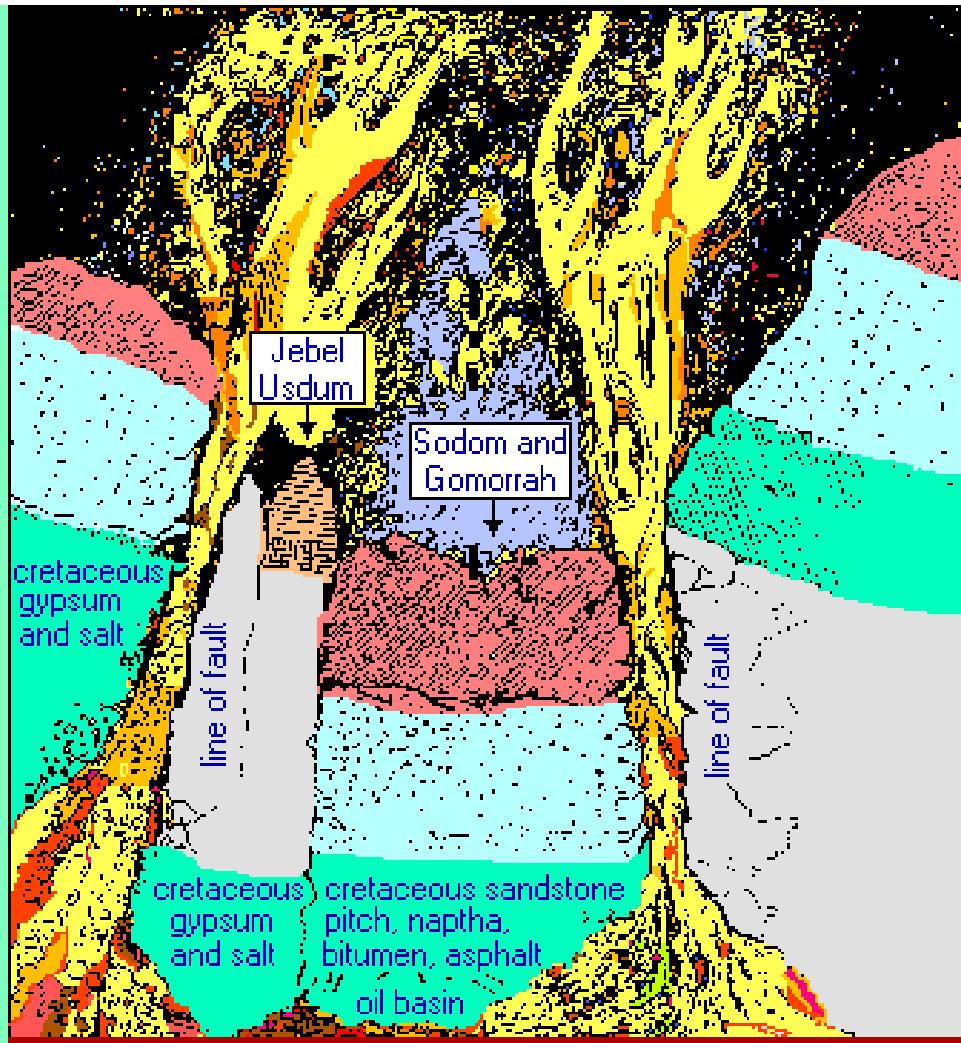
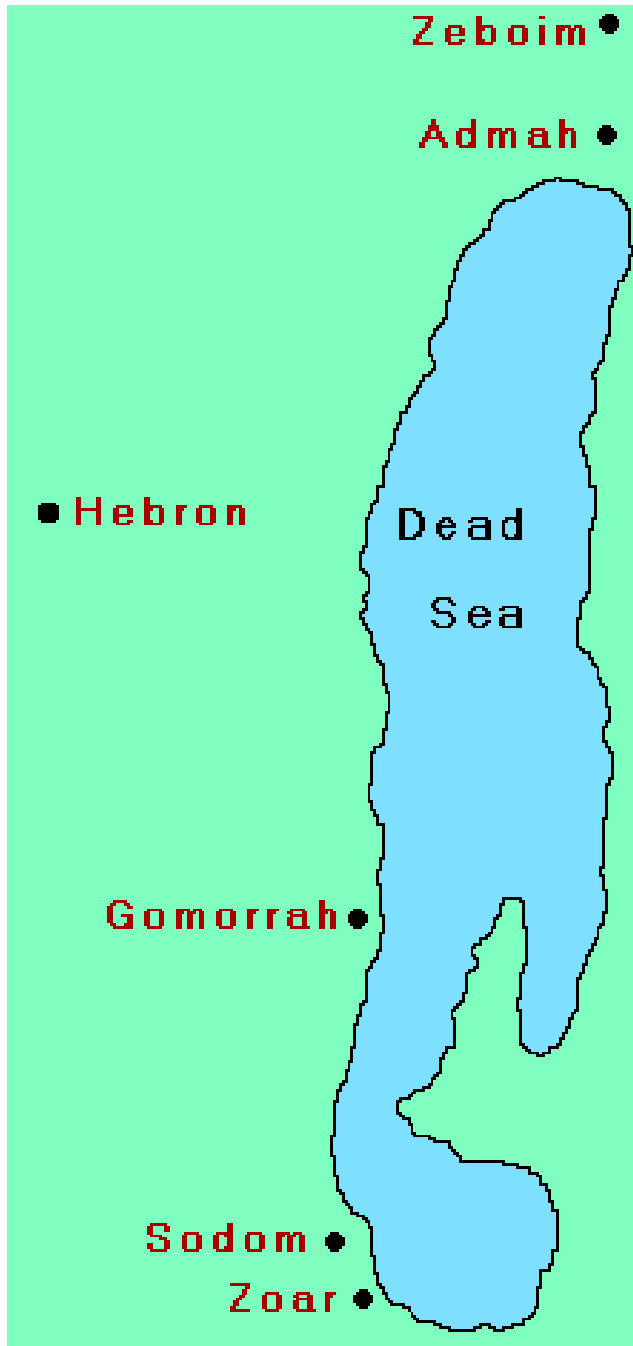


Diagram illustrating how excessive pressure caused by faulting resulted in ignition of oil, gas, sulphur and bitumen from the underlying oil field.

Location of Sodom and Gomorrah

www.biblebelievers.org.au/bb971126.htm

- **The Dead Sea is a part of this rift. So the topography of the real crossing-place is wholly unlike anything in the Gulf of Suez. It used to be said that Sodom and Gomorrah are beneath the Dead Sea, but Jonathan Gray and Ron Wyatt claim convincingly that they have found all five cities.**
- **The whole area around the Jordan-Araba rift valley of the Dead Sea is oil-bearing. Geologists inform us that the southern Dead Sea is a burnt-out oil field. As the diagram indicates, an earthquake caused a section of earth's crust to slip along the fault. A drop of just one inch would wreck a large city. The tremendous pressure exerted by the dislodged mass forced the underlying oil and gas up along the fault lines into the atmosphere where they ignited to form a continuous liquid fire. According to Genesis 19:24, *"the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire out of heaven"*. Professor Kyle found *"Pure sulfur in pieces as big as the end of my thumb. It is mixed with the rich soil of the mountains on the west side of the Sea and is now to be found scattered along the shore of the Sea to the east side..."***

Sodom:

Sulfur balls prove to be 95.7% pure in laboratory tests

■ Continued from page A-1

The ash is layered. This, Wyatt contends, is the result of thermal ionization that takes place when objects are burned at an extremely high temperature. Substances burned with sulfur leave an ash that is actually heavier than the original material, thus explaining how these buildings have survived for nearly 40 centuries, he says.

Some of the outer ash crumbles easily to the touch, he says, and many spots around the two cities show the effects of wind erosion. The brittleness makes exploration tedious and prevents the Tennessean and his crew, including his wife, Mary Nell Wyatt, from entering some of the buildings.

Wyatt also is convinced that several large outcroppings are the remains of ziggurats. He believes they were used in the promiscuous worship rites that brought God's wrath down on the two cities.

"It was this behavior that caused God to destroy them with fire and brimstone," he says with conviction.

Several of the outcroppings also look like the remains of sphinxes, he says.

But it is the sulfur that most

fascinates Wyatt and convinces him that he has found the two doomed cities.

"When the burning sulfur rained down upon the cities, everything was set ablaze. As the cities burned, these balls of flaming sulfur were smothered out by the ashen remains.

"A capsule was formed around the remaining sulfur which preserved it all these years," he explains.

The substance from these capsules has proven to be 95.7 percent sulfur in tests conducted at Galbraith Laboratories in Knoxville.

Like nowhere else in the world, the sulfur from these capsules was ball shaped. "This is an indication that it passed through the atmosphere," Wyatt says.

When Wyatt returns next month to continue his exploration, he will be using electronics "to locate some empty rooms and that sort of things." He hopes some of them contain furniture and decorative items.

"We have a subsurface interface radar system that we used on Noah's Ark. We want to use that to look for uncollapsed chambers and that sort of thing.

"What we also have is fiber optics. When we locate these chambers below the surface, we will bore a hole about an inch in diameter and then introduce these fiber optics with a light source, and that will give us the ability to video and photograph the interior of these chambers."

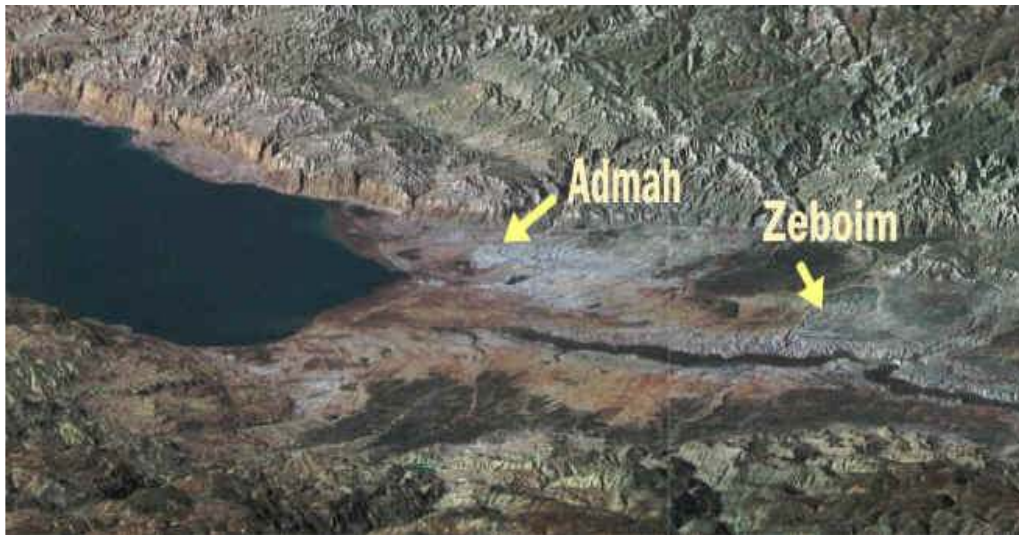


These sulfur balls are mostly golf ball sized, and they have burn marks all around them!

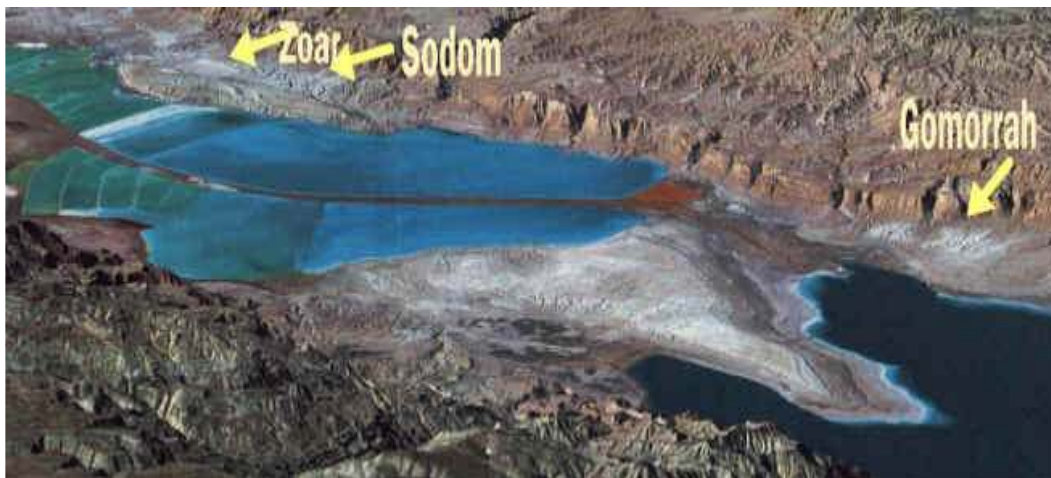
Analysis of the brimstone and ash
Each of the cities of the plain contain evidence of brimstone which God rained down upon the cities to destroy them. The brimstone is composed of 96-98 percent sulfur, with trace amounts of magnesium which create an extremely high temperature burn. This is the only place on earth where you can find pure sulfur in a round ball. This brimstone is NOT from any type of geo-thermal activity as there is no evidence of such in the area, and geo-thermal sulfur nodules are only 40 percent pure sulfur.



Notice each of the cities stand out from the surrounding terrain because of the white ash contained within them. The city of Zoar was a "little one" or a newly built city that was square. As cities grew or expanded they quickly lost this square shape.



Above - The northern end of the Dead Sea, looking southwest



Above - looking southwest at the southern end of the Dead Sea



(Satellite 3-D images copyright Rohr Productions, The Holy Land Satellite Atlas. June 1995 National Geographic)



A. Northern lobe of Dead Sea, B. Southern lobe, now partly dried out

1. Bab edh-Dhra (Sodom), 2. Numeira (Gomorrah), 3. Safi (Zoar/Bela), 4. Feifa (Admah), 5. Khanazir (Zeboiim)

19:24 Whenever God authors something, no civilization can alter it without experiencing the judgment of God. Renowned anthropologist J.D. Unwin conducted an exhaustive study of the eighty-eight known civilizations, which have existed in the history of the world. Each culture started with a strict code of sexual conduct. Then **each of the eighty-eight known civilizations that he studied demanded over a course of time "complete freedom" to express individual passion.** Dr. Unwin reported that **every society, without exception, which allowed sexual misbehavior and permissiveness to prevail amongst its people perished. There have been no exceptions!** **The following are references to Sodom and Gomorrah's destruction:** Deut 29:23 & Isa 1:9 & 13:19 & Jere 20:16 & 23:14 & 49:18 & 50:40 & Ezk 16:49,50 & Hos 11:8 & Amos 4:11 & Mt 10:15 & Mk 6:11 & Lk 17:28,29 & Rom 9:29 & II Pet 2:6-9 & Jude 7 & Rev 11:8. **CHRIST** used Sodom and Gomorrah along with the Flood as illustrations of judgment (See - Lk 17:26-30).

19:26 **CHRIST** used the incident of Lot's wife turning to a pillar of salt as a warning to other believers not to look back on the things of this world. According to I John 2:15-17, our love for this world will profit us absolutely *nothing*. In the end, this world and our love for it will all pass away (See - II Pet 3:7,10,11).

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Abraham sees Sodom Burning (Genesis 19:24-29)

²⁷ Now Abraham arose early in the morning *and went* to the place where he had stood before the LORD; ²⁸ and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley, and he saw, and behold, **the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace.** ²⁹ Thus it came about, **when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.**



From a map, we can see Abraham was thirty miles from Sodom as the crow flies. No doubt he climbed the highest vantage point, and he saw great black clouds of dense smoke from the burning oil.

Jude 7

Just as Sodom and Gomorrah

and

the cities around them,

since they in the same way as these

aor act ptc, ekporneuo, 1x, to go a whoring, "give one's self over to fornication"

indulged in gross immorality

and *heteros, 99x, the other, another: i.e. one not of the same nature, form, class, kind, different*

aor act ptc, aperchomai, 120x, to go away in order to follow any one; idiomatically, of following wrong sexual practices

went after strange flesh,

sarx, 151x, flesh (the soft substance of the living body, which covers the bones and is permeated with blood) of both man and beasts 2) the body 3) human nature

pres pass ind, prokeimai, 5x, to be placed before (a person or a thing), to be placed in front of, to be placed before the eyes

are exhibited as an example,

deigma, 1x, 1) a thing shown 2) a specimen of any thing, example, pattern

in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

pres act ptc, hupecho, 1x, 1) to hold under, to put under, place underneath 2) metaph. to sustain, undergo 2a) suffer punishment

dike, 4x, judicial decision, esp. sentence of condemnation; execution of a sentence, punishment

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Added to Bible Bulletin Board's "J. C. Ryle Collection" by: Tony Capoccia
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tony@biblebb.com Online since 1986

[Remember Lot's Wife by J. C. Ryle \(1816-1900\)](#)

There are few warnings in Scripture more solemn than this. The Lord Jesus Christ says to us, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

Lot's wife was a professor of religion: her husband was a "righteous man" (II Peter 2:8). She left Sodom with him on the day when Sodom was destroyed; she looked back towards the city from behind her husband, against God's express command; she was struck dead at once, and turned into a pillar of salt. And the Lord Jesus Christ holds her up as a beacon to His church: He says, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

It is a solemn warning, when we **think of the person Jesus names. He does not bid us remember Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, or Sarah, or Hannah, or Ruth. No: He singles out one whose soul was lost for ever. He cries to us, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"**

It is a solemn warning, when we consider the subject Jesus is upon. He is speaking of His own second coming to judge the world: He is describing the awful state of unreadiness in which many will be found. **The last days are on His mind, when He says, "Remember Lot's wife."**

It is a solemn warning, when we think of the Person who gives it. The Lord Jesus is full of love, mercy, and compassion: He is One who will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax He could weep over unbelieving Jerusalem, and pray for the men that crucified Him; yet even He thinks it good to give this solemn warning and remind us of lost souls. Even He says, **"Remember Lot's wife."**

It is a solemn warning, when we **think of the persons to whom it was first given.** The Lord Jesus was speaking **to His disciples:** He was not addressing the Scribes and Pharisees who hated him, but Peter, James, and John, and many others who loved Him: yet even to them He thinks good to address a caution. Even to them He says, **"Remember Lot's wife."**

It is a solemn warning, when we consider the manner in which it was given. He does not merely say, "Beware of following-take heed of imitating-do not be like Lot's wife." He uses a different word: **He says, "Remember"** He speaks as if we were all in danger of forgetting the subject; He stirs up our lazy memories; He bids us keep the case before our minds. He cries, **"Remember Lot's wife."**

I will speak of **the religious privileges which Lot's wife enjoyed.**

In the days of Abraham and Lot, true saving religion was scarce upon earth; there were **no Bibles, no ministers, no churches, no tracts, no missionaries.** The knowledge of God was confined to a few favoured families; the greater part of the inhabitants of the world were living in darkness, ignorance, superstition, and sin. Not one in a hundred perhaps had such good example, such spiritual society, such clear knowledge, such plain warnings as Lot's wife. Compared with millions of her fellow-creatures in her time, Lot's wife was a favoured woman.

She had a godly man for her husband: she had Abraham, the father of the faithful for her uncle by marriage. The faith, the knowledge, and the prayers of these two righteous men could have been no secret to her. It is impossible that she could have dwelt in tents with them for any length of time, without knowing whose they were and whom they served. Religion with them was no formal business; it was the ruling principle of their lives and the mainspring of their actions. All this Lot's wife must have seen and known. This was no small privilege.

When Abraham first received the promises, it is probable Lot's wife was there. when he built his tent between Ai and Bethel, it is probable she was there...when the angels came to Sodom and warned her husband to flee, she saw them; when they took them by the hand and led them out of the city, she was one of those whom they helped to escape. Once more, I say, these were no small privileges.

Yet what good effect had all these privileges on the heart of Lot's wife? None at all. Notwithstanding all her opportunities and means of grace-notwithstanding all her special warnings and messages from heaven - **she lived and died graceless, godless, impenitent, and unbelieving. The eyes of her understanding were never opened; her conscience was never really aroused and quickened; her will was never really brought into a state of obedience to God; her affections were never really set on things above. The form of religion which she had was kept up for fashion's sake and not from feeling: it was a cloak worn for the sake of pleasing her company, but not from any sense of its value. She did as others around her in Lot's house: she conformed to her husband's ways: she made no opposition to his religion: she allowed herself to be passively towed along in his wake: but all this time her heart was wrong in the sight of God. The world was in her heart, and her heart was in the world. In this state she lived, and in this state she died.**

In all this there is much to be learned: I see a lesson here which is of the greatest importance in the present day. You live in times when there are many persons just like Lot's wife: Come and hear the lesson which her case is meant to teach.

Learn, then, that the mere possession of religious privileges will save no one's soul. You may have spiritual advantages of every description; you may live in the full sunshine of the richest opportunities and means of grace; you may enjoy the best of preaching and the choicest instruction; you may dwell in the midst of light, knowledge, holiness, and good company. All this may be, and yet you yourself may remain unconverted, and at last be lost for ever.

I dare say this doctrine sounds hard to some readers. I know that **many fancy they want nothing but religious privileges in order to become decided Christians.** They are not what they ought to be at present, they allow; but their position is so hard, they plead, and their difficulties are so many. Give them a godly husband, or a godly wife-give them godly companions, or a godly master-give them the preaching of the gospel-give them privileges, and then they would walk with God.

It is all a mistake. It is an entire delusion. ***It requires something more than privileges to save souls.*** Joab was David's captain; Gehazi was Elisha's servant; Demas was Paul's companion; Judas Iscariot was Christ's disciple; and Lot had a worldly, unbelieving wife. These all died in their sins. They went down to the pit in spite of knowledge, warnings, and opportunities; and they all teach us that it is not privileges alone that men need. ***They need the grace of the Holy Ghost.***

Let us value our religious privileges, but let us not rest entirely upon them. Let us desire to have the benefit of them in all our movements in life, but let us not put them in the place of Christ. Let us use them thankfully, if God gives them to us, but let us take care they produce some fruit in our heart and life. If they do not do good, they often do positive harm; they sear the conscience, they increase responsibility, they aggravate condemnation. The same fire which melts the wax hardens the clay; the same sun which makes the living tree grow, dries up the dead tree, and prepares it for burning. Nothing so hardens the heart of man as a barren familiarity with sacred things. Once more I say, it is not privileges alone which make people Christians, but *the grace of the Holy Ghost*. Without that no man will ever be saved.

I ask **those who attend a sound ministry** in the present day to mark well what I am saying. You go to Mr. A's, or Mr. B's church: you think him an excellent preacher; you delight in his sermons; you cannot hear anyone else with the same comfort; you have learned many things since you attended his ministry; you consider it a privilege to be one of his hearers! All this is very good. It is a privilege. I should be thankful if ministers like yours were multiplied a thousandfold. But, after all, what have you got in your heart? Have you yet received the Holy Ghost? if *not, you are no better than Lot's wife*.

I ask **the children of religious parents** to mark well what I am saying. It is the highest privilege to be the child of a godly father and mother, and to be brought up in the midst of many prayers. It is a blessed thing indeed to be taught the gospel from our earliest infancy, and to hear of sin, and Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and holiness, and heaven, from the first moment we can remember anything. But, O, take heed that you do not remain barren and unfruitful in the sunshine of all these privileges: beware lest your hearts remain hard, impenitent, and worldly, notwithstanding the many advantages you enjoy. You cannot enter the kingdom of God on the credit of your parents' religion. You must eat the bread of life for yourself, and have the witness of the Spirit in your own heart. You must have repentance of your own, faith of your own, and sanctification of your own. *If not' you are no better than Lot's wife.*

I pray God that **all professing Christians in these days** may lay these things to heart. May we never forget that privileges alone cannot save us. **Light and knowledge, and faithful preaching, and abundant means of grace, and the company of holy people are all great blessings and advantages. Happy are they that have them! But after all, there is one thing without which privileges are useless: that one thing is *the grace of the Holy Ghost.* Lot's wife had many privileges; but Lot's wife had not grace.**

How did Lot's wife become a pillar of salt?

"This remarkable happening is stated matter-of-factly, with no suggestion that it was a special miracle or divine judgment. Lot's wife "looked back" (the phrase might even be rendered "returned back" or "lagged back") seeking to cling to her luxurious life in Sodom (note Christ's reference to this in Luke 17:32,33) and was destroyed in the "overthrow" (Genesis 19:25,29) of the city. There are many great deposits of rock salt in the region, probably formed by massive precipitation from thermal brines upwelling from the earth's deep mantle during the great Flood.

Possibly the overthrow buried her in a shower of these salt deposits blown skyward by the explosions. There is also the possibility that she was buried in a shower of volcanic ash, with her body gradually being converted into "salt" over the years following through the process of petrification, in a manner similar to that experienced by the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum in the famous eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

- Henry Morris (taken from: "The Defenders Study Bible")



Gill on Genesis 19:31

- **our father *is* old**; if he was fifty years of age when he was taken captive by the kings, as says the Jewish chronologer (q) he must now be sixty five, since the destruction of Sodom, according to Bishop Usher (r), was fifteen years after that:

The Origin of Moab and Ammon (Genesis 19:30-38)

³⁴ And it came about on the morrow, that the first-born said to the younger, “**Behold**, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight also; then you go in and lie with him, **that** we may preserve our family through our father.” ³⁵ **So** they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger arose and lay with him; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. ³⁶ **Thus** both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father.

³⁷ And the first-born bore a son, and called his name **Moab**; he is the father of **the Moabites** to this day. ³⁸ And as for the younger, she also bore a son, and called his name **Ben-ammi**; he is the father of **the sons of Ammon** to this day.



Adam Clarke on Genesis 19:37-38

Called his name Moab - This name is generally interpreted of the father, or, according to Calmet, מואב Moab, the waters of the father.

Ben-ammi - בן עמי Ben-ammi, the son of my people. Both these names seem to justify the view taken of this subject above, viz., that it was merely to preserve the family that the daughters of Lot made use of the above expedient; and hence we do not find that they ever attempted to repeat it, which, had it been done for any other purpose, they certainly would not have failed to do. ...

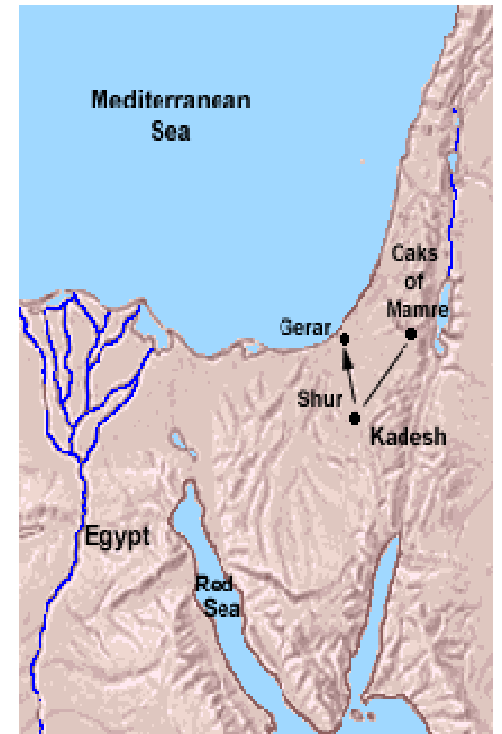
The generation which proceeded from this incestuous connection, whatever may be said in extenuation of the transaction, (its peculiar circumstances being considered), was certainly a bad one. The Moabites soon fell from the faith of God, and became idolaters, the people of Chemosh, and of Baal-peor, Num 21:29; 25:1-3; and were enemies to the children of Abraham. See Numbers 22; Jdg 3:14, etc. And the Ammonites, who dwelt near to the Moabites, united with them in idolatry, and were also enemies to Israel. See Jdg 11:4, 24; Deu 23:3, 4. As both these people made afterwards a considerable figure in the sacred history, the impartial inspired writer takes care to introduce at this early period an account of their origin.

BREAK TIME

Sarah & Abimelech (Genesis 20:1-18)

God and Abimelech (v1-7)

¹ Now Abraham journeyed from there toward the land of the Negev, and settled between Kadesh and Shur; then he sojourned in Gerar. ² And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” **So** Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. ³ **But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, “Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married.”**



Abraham sojourns in Gerar

Gerar was a city of Arabia Petraea, under a king of the Philistines called Abimelech, my father is king, who appears to have been not only the father of his people, but also a righteous man.

Gill on Genesis 20:1

- **Gen 20:1 - And Abraham journeyed from thence towards the south country,....** He returned from the plains or oaks of Mamre, where he had lived fifteen or twenty years, into the more southern parts of the land of Canaan: the reason of this remove is not certain; some think, because he could not bear the stench of the sulphurous lake, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were become; and others, because of the scandal of Lot's incest with his daughters, which prejudiced the idolatrous people in those parts more against the true religion; neither of which are likely, by reason of the distance; but the better reason seems to be, that it was so ordered in Providence that he should remove from place to place, that it might appear that he was but a sojourner in the land:

Keil & Delitzsch on Genesis 20:1-3

- Here Abimelech, the Philistine king of Gerar, like Pharaoh in Egypt, took Sarah, whom Abraham had again announced to be his sister, into his harem, - not indeed because he was charmed with the beauty of the woman of 90, which was either renovated, or had not yet faded (*Kurtz*), but in all probability “to ally himself with Abraham, the rich nomad prince” (*Delitzsch*). **From this danger, into which the untruthful statement of both her husband and herself had brought her, she was once more rescued by the faithfulness of the covenant God.** In a dream by night God appeared to Abimelech, and threatened him with death (מת הנך *en te moriturum*) on account of the woman, whom he had taken, because she was married to a husband.

Sarah & Abimelech (Genesis 20:1-18)

God and Abimelech (v1-7)

4 Now Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, “Lord, wilt Thou slay a nation, even *though* blameless? **5 Did he not himself say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this.”** **6 Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also kept you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. 7 Now therefore, restore the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you, and you will live. But if you do not restore *her*, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours.”**

Abimelech and Abraham (v8-18)

8 So Abimelech arose early in the morning and called all his servants and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were greatly frightened.

Gill on Genesis 20:8

- **Gen 20:8 - Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning,....** Awakening upon the dream, could sleep no more, his thoughts running upon what had been said to him by the Lord in it: wherefore as soon as it was light he rose from his bed:
- **and called all his servants;** his household servants, and particularly his courtiers and counsellors, who had advised him to take Sarah for his wife, and had been assisting in it:
- **and told all those things in their ears:** how that God appeared to him in a dream, and told him that Sarah, whom he had taken into his house, was another man's wife, and that if he did not immediately return her to her husband, he would die, and all that belonged to him:
- **and the men were sore afraid;** lest they should be struck with death; and perhaps they might call to mind the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah for their sins, they had lately heard of, and might fear that some such calamity would befall them.

Abimelech and Abraham (v8-18)

⁹ Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? And how have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me things that ought not to be done.” ¹⁰ And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What have you encountered, that you have done this thing?”

¹¹ And Abraham said, “Because** I thought, surely there is no fear of God in this place; and they will kill me because of my wife. ¹² Besides, she actually is my sister, the daughter of my father, **but** not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife; ¹³ and it came about, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, ‘This is the kindness which you will show to me: everywhere we go, say of me, “He is my brother.”’”**

Clarke on Genesis 20:12

- **The daughter of my father, but not - of my mother -**
Ebn Batrick, in his annals, among other ancient traditions has preserved the following: “Terah first married Yona, by whom he had Abraham; afterwards he married Tehevita, by whom he had Sarah.” Thus she was the sister of Abraham, being the daughter of the same father by a different mother.

Abimelech and Abraham (v8-18)

14 Abimelech then took sheep and oxen and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham, and restored his wife Sarah to him. **15** And Abimelech said, “**Behold**, my land is before you; settle wherever you please.” **16** And to Sarah he said, “**Behold**, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; **behold**, it is your vindication before all who are with you, and before all men you are cleared.”

17 And Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maids, **so that** they bore *children*. **18** **For the LORD had closed fast all the wombs of the household of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.**

Clarke on Genesis 20:16

And unto Sarah he said - But what did he say? Here there is scarcely any agreement among interpreters; the Hebrew is exceedingly obscure, and every interpreter takes it in his own sense.

A thousand pieces of silver - Shekels are very probably meant here, and so the Targum understands it. The Septuagint has χιλια διδραχμα, a thousand didrachma, no doubt meaning shekels; for in Gen 23:15, Gen 23:16, this translation uses διδραχμα for the Hebrew שקל shekel. As shakal signifies literally to weigh, and the shekel was a coin of such a weight, Mr. Ainsworth and others think this to be the origin of our word scale, the instrument to weigh with.

The shekel of the sanctuary weighed twenty gerahs, Exo 30:13. And according to the Jews, the gerah weighed sixteen grains of barley. R. Maimon observes, that after the captivity the shekel was increased to three hundred and eighty-four grains or barley-corns. On the subject of ancient weights and measures, very little that is satisfactory is known.

Behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes - It - the one thousand shekels, (not he - Abraham), is to thee for a covering - to procure thee a veil to conceal thy beauty (unto all that are with thee, and with all other)

Clarke on Genesis 20:16

thy own kindred and acquaintance, and from all strangers, that none, seeing thou art another mans wife; may covet thee on account of thy comeliness.

Thus she was reproved - The original is ונכחת venochachath, but the word is probably the second person *preterite*, used for the imperative mood, from the root נכח nachach, to make straight, direct, right; or to speak rightly, correctly; and may, in connection with the rest of the text, be thus paraphrased: Behold, I have given thy Brother (Abraham, gently alluding to the equivocation, Gen 20:2, Gen 20:5) a thousand shekels of silver; behold, It is (that is, the silver is, or may be, or let it be) to thee a covering of the eyes (to procure a veil; see above) with regard to all those who are with thee; and to all (or and in all) speak thou the truth. Correctly translated by the Septuagint, και παντα αληθευσον, and in all things speak the truth - not only tell a part of the truth, but tell the whole; say not merely he is my brother, but say also, he is my husband too. Thus in All things speak the truth. I believe the above to be the sense of this difficult passage, and shall not puzzle my readers with criticisms. See Kennicott.

[The Birth of Isaac \(Genesis 21:1-7\)](#)

¹ Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised. ² **So** Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him. ³ And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. ⁴ Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. ⁵ Now **Abraham was one hundred years old** when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶ And Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me." ⁷ And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? **Yet** I have borne him a son in his old age."

[The Weaning of Isaac \(Genesis 21:8-13\)](#)

⁸ And the child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

Clarke on Genesis 21:8

At what time children were weaned among the ancients, is a disputed point. St. Jerome says there were two opinions on this subject. Some hold that children were always weaned at five years of age; others, that they were not weaned till they were twelve. From the speech of the mother to her son, 2 Maccabees 7:27, it seems likely that among the Jews they were weaned when three years old: O my son, have pity upon me that bare thee nine months in my womb, and gave thee Suck Three Years, and nourished thee and brought thee up. And this is farther strengthened by 2Ch 31:16, where Hezekiah, in making provision for the Levites and priests, includes the children from three years old and upwards; which is a presumptive proof that previously to this age they were wholly dependent on the mother for their nourishment. Samuel appears to have been brought to the sanctuary when he was just weaned, and then he was capable of ministering before the Lord, 1Sa 1:22-28; and this certainly could not be before he was three years of age. The term among the Mohammedans is fixed by the Koran, chap. 31:14, at two years of age.

The Weaning of Isaac (Genesis 21:8-13)

2063 BC

⁸ And the child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. ⁹ Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking. ¹⁰ **Therefore** she said to Abraham, “Drive out this maid and her son, **for** the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac.”

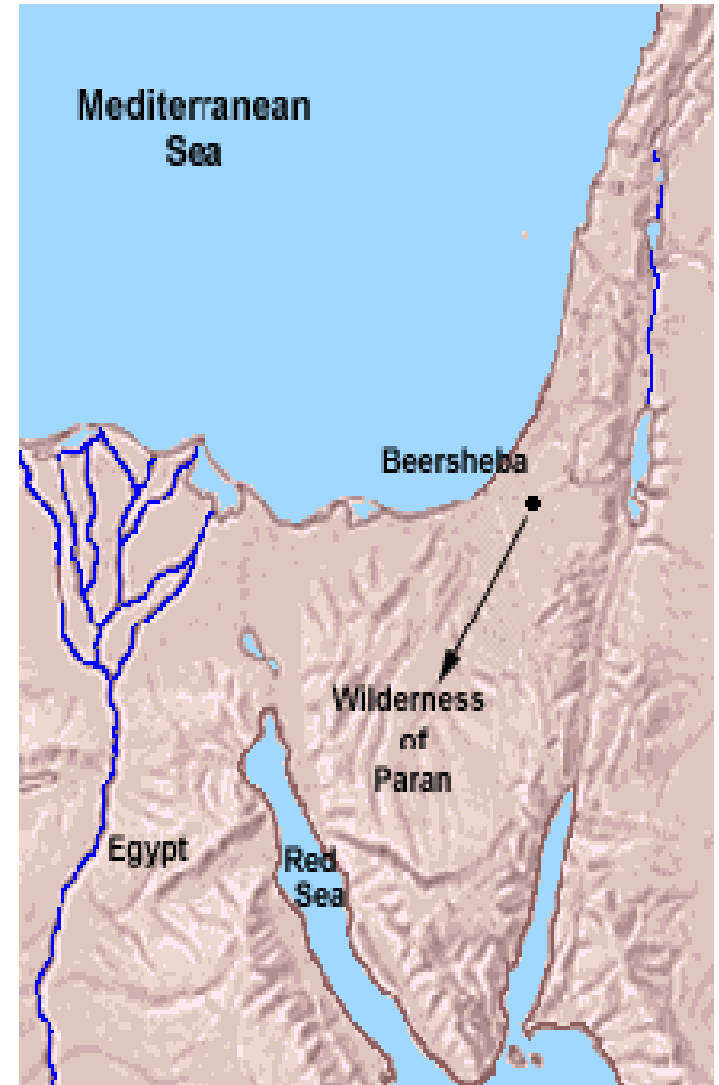
¹¹ And the matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son. ¹² **But** God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; **whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named.** ¹³ **And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant.”**

Galatians 4:21-31

21 Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? 22 **For** it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. 23 **But** the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. 24 This is allegorically speaking: **for** these *women* are two covenants, one *proceeding* from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. 25 Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 **But** the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. 27 **For** it is written, "Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear; Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor; **For** more are the children of the desolate Than of the one who has a husband." 28 And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 **But** as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him *who was born* according to the Spirit, **so** it is now also. 30 **But** what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, **For** the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman." 31 So **then**, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, **but** of the free woman.

Hagar & Ishmael Sent Away (Genesis 21:14-21)

¹⁴ **So** Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave *them* to Hagar, putting *them* on her shoulder, and *gave her* the boy, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba. ¹⁵ And the water in the skin was used up, and she left the boy under one of the bushes. ¹⁶ Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, **for** she said, “Do not let me see the boy die.” And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept.



Ishmael grows up in the Wilderness of Paran

Clarke on Genesis 21:14

Took bread, and a bottle - By the word bread we are to understand the food or provisions which were necessary for her and Ishmael, till they should come to the place of their destination; which, no doubt, Abraham particularly pointed out. **The bottle, which was made of skin, ordinarily a goat's skin, contained water sufficient to last them till they should come to the next well; which, it is likely, Abraham particularly specified also.** This well, it appears, Hagar missed, and therefore wandered about in the wilderness seeking more water, till all she had brought with her was expended. We may therefore safely presume that she and her son were sufficiently provided for their journey, had they not missed their way. Travelers in those countries take only, to the present day, provisions sufficient to carry them to the next village or encampment; and water to supply them till they shall meet with the next well. What adds to the appearance of cruelty in this case is, that our translation seems to represent Ishmael as being a young child; and that Hagar was obliged to carry him, the bread, and the bottle of water on her back or shoulder at the same time. But that Ishmael could not be carried on his mother's shoulder will be sufficiently evident when his age is considered; Ishmael was born when Abraham was eighty-six years of age, Gen 16:16; Isaac was born when he was one hundred years of age, Gen 21:5; hence Ishmael was fourteen years old at the birth of Isaac. Add to this the age of Isaac when he was weaned, which, from Gen 21:8, (See note Gen 21:8) was probably three, and we shall find that Ishmael was at the time of his leaving Abraham not less than seventeen years old; an age which, in those primitive times, a young man was able to gain his livelihood, either by his bow in the wilderness, or by keeping flocks as Jacob did.

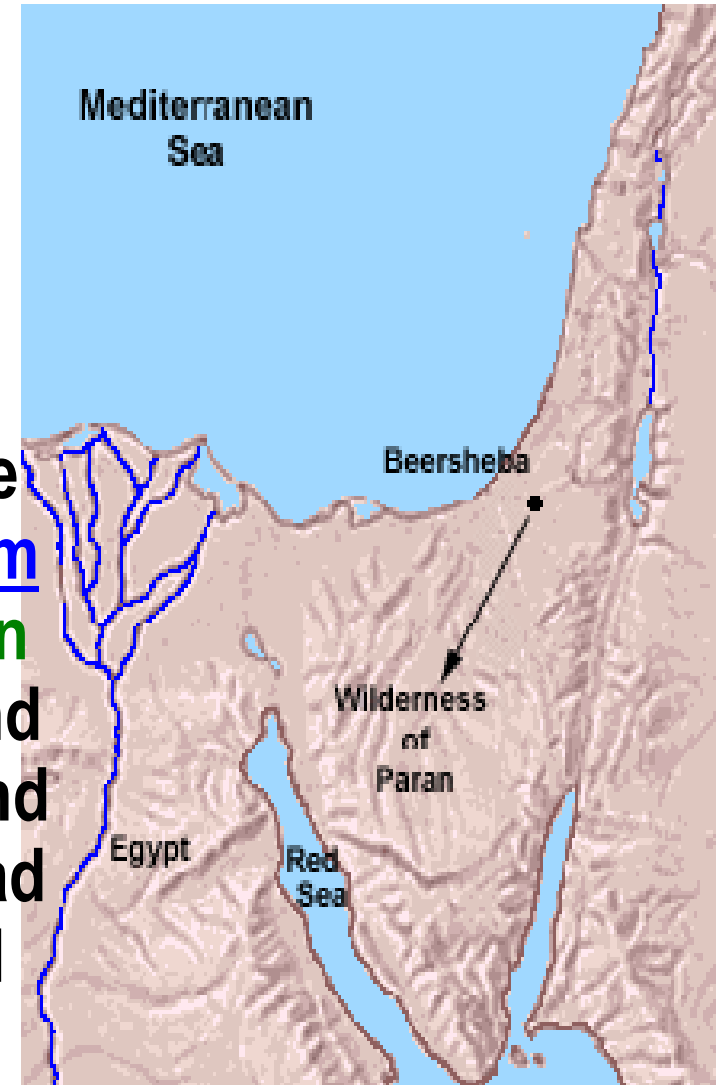
Clarke on Genesis 21:15

And she cast the child - ותשלך את הילד vattashlech eth haiyeled, and she sent the lad under one of the shrubs, viz., to screen him from the intensity of the heat. Here Ishmael appears to be utterly helpless, and this circumstance seems farther to confirm the opinion that he was now in a state of infancy; but the preceding observations do this supposition entirely away, and his present helplessness will be easily accounted for on this ground:

1. Young persons can bear much less fatigue than those who are arrived at mature age.
2. They require much more fluid from the greater quantum of heat in their bodies, strongly marked by the impetuosity of the blood; because from them a much larger quantity of the fluids is thrown off by sweat and insensible perspiration, than from grown up or aged persons.
3. Their digestion is much more rapid, and hence they cannot bear hunger and thirst as well as the others. On these grounds Ishmael must be much more exhausted with fatigue than his mother.

Hagar & Ishmael Sent Away (Genesis 21:14-21)

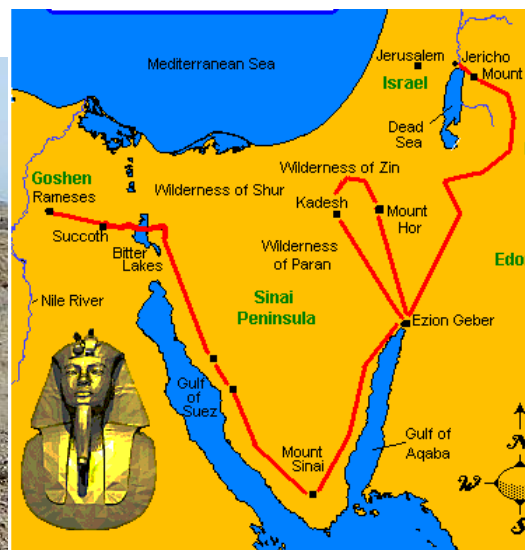
¹⁷ And God heard the lad crying; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, “What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. ¹⁸ Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand; for I will make a great nation of him.” ¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. ²⁰ And **God was with the lad**, and he grew; and he lived in the wilderness, and became an archer. ²¹ And he lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.



Ishmael grows up in the Wilderness of Paran

Keil & Delitzsch on Genesis 21:21

The desert of *Paran* is the present large desert of *et-Tih*, which stretches along the southern border of Canaan, from the western fringe of the Arabah, towards the east to the desert of Shur (*Jifar*), on the frontier of Egypt, and extends southwards to the promontories of the mountains of Horeb (vid., Num 10:12). On the northern edge of this desert was *Beersheba* (proleptically so called in Gen 21:14), to which Abraham had removed from Gerar; so that in all probability Hagar and Ishmael were sent away from his abode there, and wandered about in the surrounding desert, till Hagar was afraid that they should perish with thirst. Lastly, in preparation for Gen 25:12-18, it is mentioned in Gen 21:21 that Ishmael married a wife out of Egypt.



Abraham's Covenant with Abimelech (Genesis 21:22-33)

²² Now it came about at that time, that Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, “God is with you in all that you do; ²³ now **therefore**, swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me, or with my offspring, or with my posterity; **but** according to the kindness that I have shown to you, you shall show to me, and to the land in which you have sojourned.” ²⁴ And Abraham said, “I swear it.”

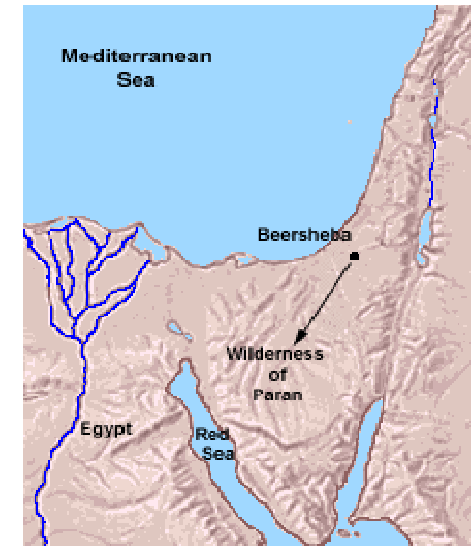
*Abimelech visits
Abraham in Beersheba*



Abraham's Covenant with Abimelech (Genesis 21:22-33)

²⁵ But Abraham complained to Abimelech **because** of the well of water which the servants of Abimelech had seized. ²⁶ And Abimelech said, “I do not know who has done this thing; neither did you tell me, nor did I hear of it until today.” ²⁷ And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them to Abimelech; and the two of them made a covenant. ²⁸ Then Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. ²⁹ And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What do these seven ewe lambs mean, which you have set by themselves?” ³⁰ And he said, “You shall take these seven ewe lambs from my hand **in order that** it may be a witness to me, that I dug this well.”

*Abimelech visits
Abraham in Beersheba*



JFB on Genesis 21:25

- **And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well**
— Wells were of great importance to a pastoral chief and on the successful operation of sinking a new one, the owner was solemnly informed in person. If, however, they were allowed to get out of repair, the restorer acquired a right to them. In unoccupied lands the possession of wells gave a right of property in the land, and dread of this had caused the offense for which Abraham reproved Abimelech. Some describe four, others five, wells in Beer-sheba.

Gill on Genesis 21:26-27

26 - And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing,.... He pleads ignorance; he knew nothing of it before, nor now which of his servants had done it; intimating, that if he could know who it was, he should severely reprimand him for it: **neither didst thou tell me:** signifying that he was to blame he did not complain of it sooner; and at least he had no reason to blame him, since he had never informed him before of it, and therefore could not expect to be redressed: **neither yet heard of it but today:** he had not heard of it from others, as the Targum of Jonathan rightly adds, by way of explanation, but that very day, and very probably not till the moment he had it from Abraham himself.

27 - And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech,.... In gratitude for former favours he had received from him, in token of the friendship that subsisted between them, and for the confirmation of it; and to show that he was fully satisfied with Abimelech's answer to his complaint, as well as willing to enter into covenant by sacrifice, when such creatures were divided, and the covenanters passed between the pieces, for so it follows: **and both of them made a covenant;** or, "cut or struck a covenant" (s); cut the sacrifice in pieces and passed between them, in token of the compact and agreement they entered into with each other; signifying that whoever broke it deserved to be cut in pieces as those creatures were.

Gill on Genesis 21:30

for these seven ewe lambs shall thou take of my hand;
as a present from him, to be retained as his own:

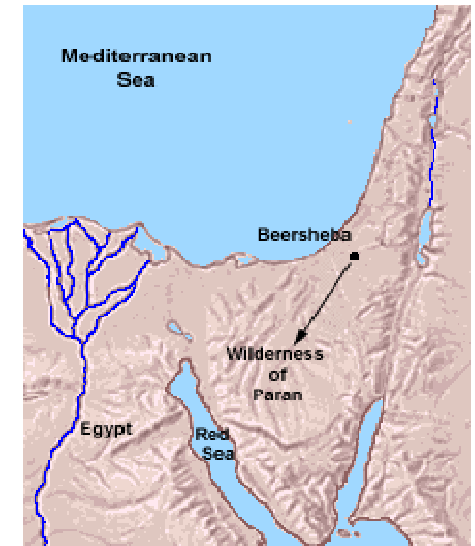
that they may be a witness to me that I have digged this well: these were to be a testimony that the well that had been taken away from Abraham was one that he had dug, and was his property, and which Abimelech acknowledged by his acceptance of these seven lambs; and very probably Abraham received a note from the hand of Abimelech, owning his reception of the seven lambs, and his title to the well, which these were a witness of.

Abraham's Covenant with Abimelech

(Genesis 21:22-33)

31 Therefore he called that place Beersheba; **because** there the two of them took an oath. **32 So** they made a covenant at Beersheba; and Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines. **33 And Abraham** planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and there he called on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God. **34 And Abraham** sojourned in the land of the Philistines for many days.

*Abimelech visits
Abraham in Beersheba*

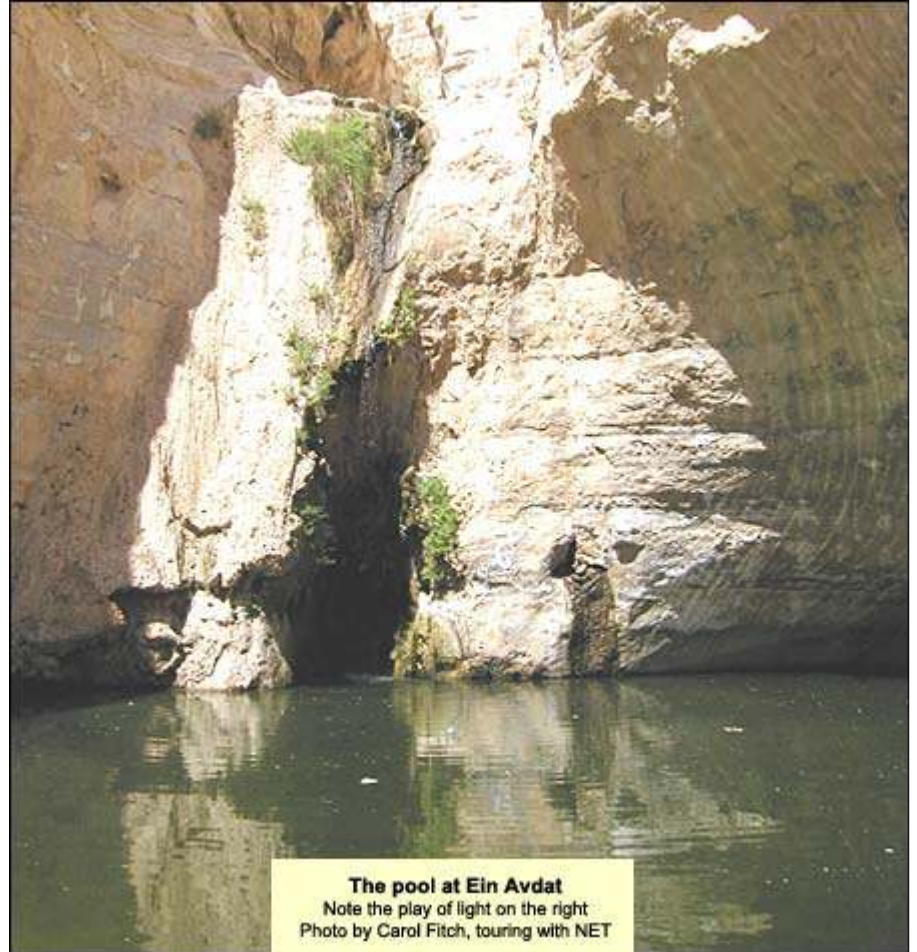


Beersheba was a large village, twenty miles from Hebron to the south.



Gill on Genesis 21:31

31 - Wherefore he called that place Beersheba,.... Either Abraham or Abimelech, or both, called it so; or it may be read impersonally, "therefore the place was called Beersheba" (t), for two reasons, one implied, the other expressed; one was, because of the seven lambs before mentioned; so the Targum of Jonathan, "and therefore he called the well the well of seven lambs;" "Beer" signifying a well, and "sheba" seven; the other, and which is more certain, being expressed, is as follows: **because there they swore both of them**; by the living God, to keep the covenant inviolably they had made between them.



The pool at Ein Avdat
Note the play of light on the right
Photo by Carol Fitch, touring with NET

Gill on Genesis 21:33

And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba,.... The Jewish writers are divided about the use of this grove, as Jarchi relates; one says it was for a paradise or orchard, to produce fruits out of it for travellers and for entertainment; another says it was for an inn to entertain strangers in; it rather was for a shade, to shelter from the sun in those sultry and hot countries; and perhaps for a religious use, and to be an oratory, as the following words seem to suggest: in the midst of it very likely Abraham built an altar, and sacrificed to the Lord; hence might come the superstitious use of groves among the Heathens; and, when they came to be abused to idolatrous purposes, they were forbidden by the law of Moses, which before were lawful. And, though the name of Abraham is not in the text, there is no doubt but he is designed, and was the planter of the grove, and which is expressed in the Septuagint version, as it is supplied by us. What sort of trees this grove consisted of cannot with certainty be said, very probably the oak. R. Jonah thinks it may be the tree which in Arabic they call "ethel", and is a tree like that which is called tamarisk in general it signifies any tree, and especially large trees: and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God; who, is from everlasting to everlasting, or "the God of the world", the Creator and upholder of it, and the preserver of all creatures in it; him Abraham invoked in this place, prayed unto him, and gave him thanks for all the mercies he had received from him.

Keil & Delitzsch on Genesis 21:33

Here Abraham planted a tamarisk and called upon the name of the Lord (vid., Gen 4:26), the everlasting God. *Jehovah* is called the everlasting God, as the eternally true, with respect to the eternal covenant, which He established with Abraham (Gen 17:7). The planting of this long-lived tree, with its hard wood, and its long, narrow, thickly clustered, evergreen leaves, was to be a type of the ever-enduring grace of the faithful covenant God.

