



GENESIS: THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERYTHING

ALTAR BUILDERS

GENESIS 12:4-20



GENESIS: THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERYTHING

God's sovereignty can be understood as
the sum total of His attributes
(authority, power, knowledge, wisdom, righteousness)
which allow Him to
rule over and control all things with absolute perfection.

(adapted from Stuart Scott)

Walking with the Lord is about faithfulness:

- God's faithfulness which never fails
- Our faithful response to God's goodness and faithfulness to us.

In Genesis 12:4-20, Abram responds to God in two ways which couldn't differ more from one another.

I. Abram's Faith (Gen. 12:4-9)

“So Abram went forth as the Lord had spoken to him...”

THE MIGRATION OF ABRAHAM

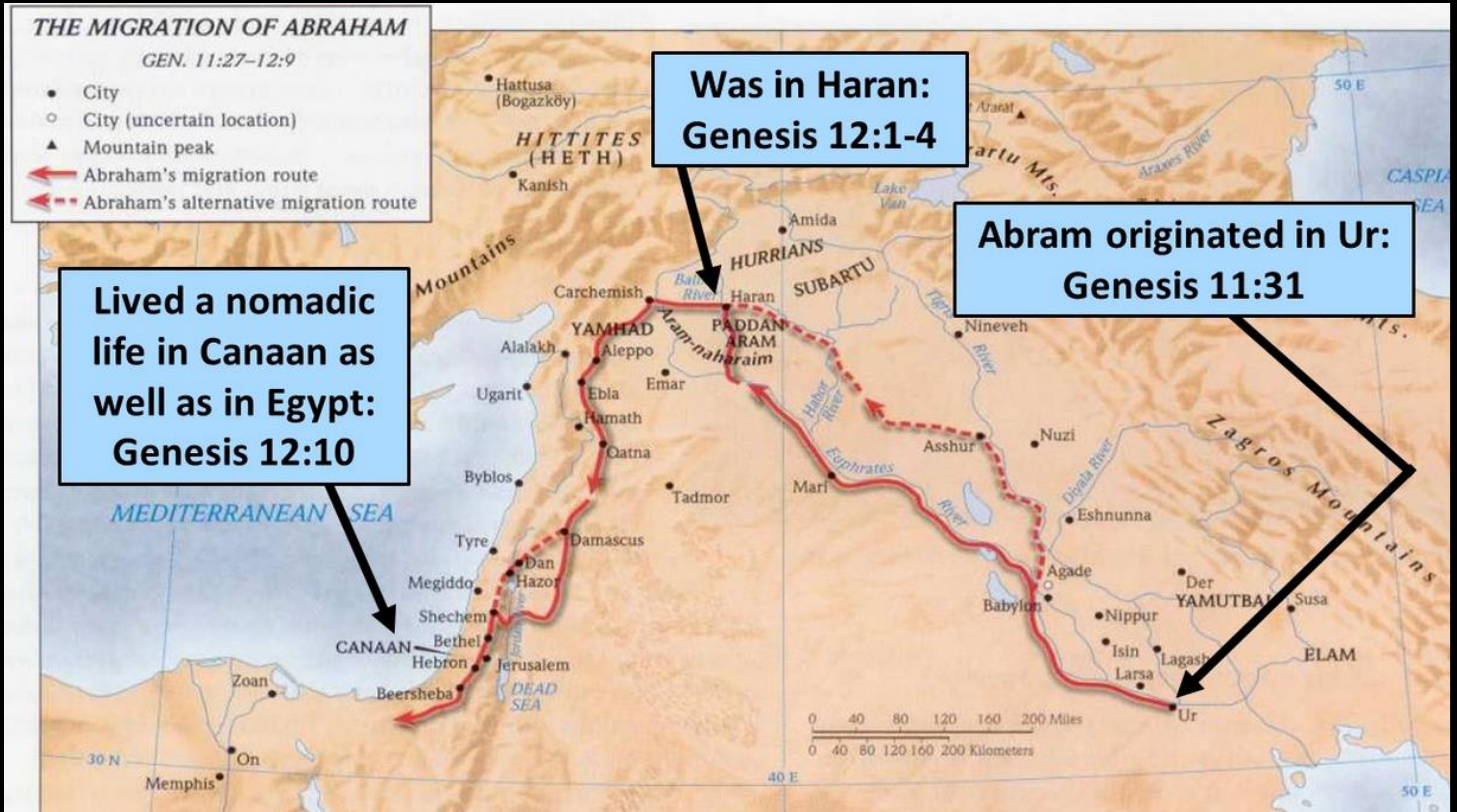
GEN. 11:27-12:9

- City
- City (uncertain location)
- ▲ Mountain peak
- ← Abraham's migration route
- ←- Abraham's alternative migration route

Lived a nomadic life in Canaan as well as in Egypt: Genesis 12:10

Was in Haran: Genesis 12:1-4

Abram originated in Ur: Genesis 11:31



I. Abram's Faith (Gen. 12:4-9)

"Now the Canaanite was then in the land."

I. Abram's Faith (Gen. 12:4-9)

In verse 7, we have two significant details:

1. God tells Abram, “*To your descendants [seed] I will give this land.*” This is the land which will make up the nation of Israel as promised and given by God.

2. God appears to Abram and Abram responds in worship.

Appear (niphal) = to present oneself, to be seen, to be visible.

It suggests that God was visible to Abram in some way.

Theophany = an appearance of God in some physical form.

Christophany = an early appearance of the second member of the Trinity, Jesus Christ.

I. **Abram's Faith (Gen. 12:4-9)**

We are all altar builders. We build them every day of our lives.

Our altars are the things and people we trust in for what we want most.

What does the Lord want us to do with these altars of our hearts?

Make them about Him.

This response is expressed in Abram's frailty as a man and in his fear of man.

II. Abram's Failure (Gen. 12:10-16)

In verse 4, Abram is responding to God according to the knowledge of God's will.

But in verse 10, Abram is reacting to the famine apart from what he knows of God and His will.

II. Abram's Failure (Gen. 12:10-16)

God used the famine to reveal Abram's frailty as a man.

God used Pharaoh to reveal Abram's fear of man.

“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust [greed, pride, selfishness, etc.]. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.” (James 1:14-15)

III. God's Faithfulness (Gen. 12:17-20)

"But the Lord..."

1. Produces wholeness and goodness from what man corrupts
2. Protects His promise and promotes His purposes in all things.
3. Preserves His servants in holiness and in the fear of the Lord.

III. **God's Faithfulness** (Gen. 12:17-20)

Abram wouldn't do the right thing—that's the hopeless side.

The Lord did what Abram wouldn't do—that's the hopeful side.

Our sin is not greater than God's grace in Christ.

For the people reading this for the first time—the Hebrews—and for us, the issue is:

- To whom or to what will our hearts build our altars?—self, fear, worry, anxiety, anger, the unknown, people, stuff, money, ideals... *OR*,
- Will we guard and direct our hearts to build our altars to God from the love of our hearts for Him and His Word?

“Tremble, and do not sin; meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. Offer up the sacrifices of righteousness, and trust in the Lord.” (Ps. 4:4-5)

A person stands on a dark rock in the foreground, looking up at a vast night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy. The text "GRACE CHURCH" is written in large, white, serif capital letters, and "WILLIAMSBURG" is written in smaller, white, serif capital letters below it.

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