

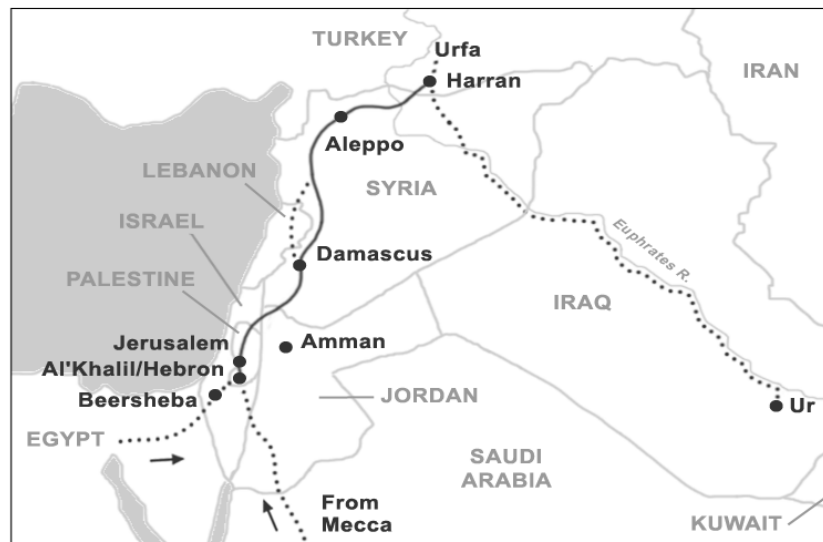
Sarah and Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael

We Are Children of Promise

The Background

Abram's family was originally from Ur of the Chaldeans.

Genesis 11:31,32: *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 forth together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran, they settled there. 32 The days of Terah were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran.*



Abraham Path

- Initial Route
- Future Routes
- One-way Travel

Found on the web at: http://www.robertward.ca/blog/uploaded_images/map_large-755476.gif

God called Abram from Haran to the Promised Land.

Genesis 12:1-5: *Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

4 So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan.

God made a covenant with Abram to provide him with a son.

Genesis 15:1-6: *After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." 2 But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." 4 And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." 5 And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." 6 And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.*

Years later, Abram still had no son, so Sarai, his wife, urged him to conceive a son with her servant, Hagar. This was a recognized legal practice then, but it was not approved by God. Later, Sarai despised Hagar and blamed Abram for conceiving a child with her servant.

Genesis 16:1-6: *Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. 2 And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. 3 So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. 4 And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress. 5 And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the LORD judge between you and me!" 6 But Abram said to Sarai, "Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.*

Ishmael was not the son that God had promised, and God would not fulfill His promise through Him. Yet in His goodness, God promised Hagar He would provide for Ishmael. Abram was 86 when Ishmael was born.

Genesis 16:9,10,15,16: *The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her." 10 The angel of the Lord also said to her, "I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude." ... And Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. 16 Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.*

God made the covenant of circumcision with Abram and named him Abraham, which means "the father of many."

Genesis 17:3-6,9,10: *Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, 4 "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you....And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised.*

God changed Sarai's name to Sarah, which means "princess", and promised the birth of Isaac, whose name means "laughter".

Genesis 17:15-20: *And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" 18 And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!" 19 God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him.*

The Fulfillment of the Promise

Finally, Isaac was born, twenty-five years after the promise was originally made.

Genesis 21:1-7: *The LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did to Sarah as he had promised. 2 And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. 3 Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, Isaac. 4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5 Abraham was a 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 over 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 Context

Paul had preached the pure gospel of salvation through faith alone to the Galatians. They had believed it by God's grace.

Now false teachers were teaching salvation through faith *and* works, robbing the gospel of its comfort and power.

Galatians 4:1-11: I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, **2** but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. **3** In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. **4** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. **6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" **7** So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. **9** But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? **10** You observe days and months and seasons and years! **11** I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain.

The Point

Those who keep the law out of fear or to be saved are like Abram when he failed to trust God's promise and tried to help it along by having Ishmael.

Mt. Sinai is where the law was originally given to Moses.

Galatians 4:24-26: Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. 25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

We are called to trust God's promise, the gospel, in which God promises to save us by grace through faith in Christ, our Savior.

The Christian therefore serves God, not out of fear, but out of love; not as a slave to earn heaven, but as His child who will inherit heaven as a gift.

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