

Making Promises

Introduction

Goals

- Familiarize ourselves with the **world** of the Old Testament
- Remove the fear of the **geography, names, and timelines** of the Old Testament
- Trace God's activity through **salvation history**, and line up the **politics** of the land with the Biblical story
- **Go to Israel**

Key Places and Terms

- **Mesopotamia** is a region of vital importance to Old Testament history, as the vast majority of Israel's enemies outside of Canaan come from this region.
 - ◉ It is located in the area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers which is where it gets its name – literally meaning "**between the rivers.**"
- **Egypt** lies south of the promise land and features prominently in Old Testament History. The book of Genesis ends, and Exodus begins with God's people held captive here.
 - ◉ Theologically, the **Egyptians and the Exodus** function as a type of captor, from which, God's people need to be led out (see: **Luke 9:31**, where Jesus is leading a "departure" or "Exodus."; **Heb. 3:14-4:11** uses Egypt as an illustration for us before we were saved; see also **Rev. 11:8**. Exodus imagery runs throughout the book of Revelation).
- **Palestine:** the land promised by God to Abraham and his descendants, the homeland of God's chosen people, and the geographical scene for much of biblical history.
 - ◉ The country which in most minds is associated with Israel came to be known as Palestine after the enemies of Israel, the **Philistines**.
- The **Fertile Crescent** The entire land area, stretching from the Euphrates to the Nile Valley..
 - ◉ The Palestinian area became the **bridge** of the Fertile Crescent
 - ◉ Israel's location seemed to make it ideally situated to absorb the **cultures and material benefits** of all the nations that passed through its territory in the process of conducting business.
 - ◉ Almost the entire Old Testament takes place in one of these 4 areas.

Timeline

- The city of **Babylon** has become a powerful city in Mesopotamia by the 1900s
- **Assyria** will shortly be vying for control (1800s)
- **Egypt**, through its 12th Dynasty has begun to extend its influence through Palestine and into Mesopotamia (as Babylon has begun to do the same)
- **Palestine** during the time of Abraham is made up of nomadic peoples and city-states
- Abraham most likely comes on the scene, somewhere between **2100** and **1900 BC**.

Connections

- Abraham begins in **Ur** of the Chaldeans (Gen. 11:26-31; Acts 7:2-4) and settles in **Haran** with his family.
 - ◉ Both of these cities were well known for the worship of the **moon god, Sin**.
 - ◉ **Terah** is most likely content with the worship of other gods, but moves at his son's prompting (Joshua 24:2).
 - ◉ The word, "**east**" in the Biblical text has significant feelings attached to it (Gen. 3:24; 4:16; 11:2).
 - ◉ Consider the significance of the location of Abraham when he is **called** by God.

<p>Luke 9:31</p>	<p>who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.</p>
<p>Hebrews 3:14–4:11</p>	<p>14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. 15 As it is said, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." 16 For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? 17 And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. 1 Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. 2 For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. 3 For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, "As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest,' " although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." 5 And again in this passage he said, "They shall not enter my rest." 6 Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, 7 again he appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." 8 For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. 9 So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, 10 for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. 11 Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.</p>
<p>Revelation 11:8</p>	<p>and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified.</p>
<p>Genesis 11:26–31</p>	<p>26 When Terah had lived 70 years, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran. 27 Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. 28 Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his kindred, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29 And Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. 30 Now Sarai was barren; she had no child. 31 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.</p>

Acts 7:2-4	2 And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, 3 and said to him, 'Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.' 4 Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living.
Joshua 24:2	And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.
Genesis 3:24	He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.
Genesis 4:16	Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.
Genesis 11:2	And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.