

The Questor

Bible history....

....Abraham on the move

So, for the second time, Abraham moved with his whole household. Last time it was at the behest of his father Terah, this time it's in response to God.

Ur, where they started, was a well established and sophisticated place which had been a major city for several hundred years before Abraham's time. By contrast, Haran where they moved to first wasn't yet established as an important city so maybe it was a kind of frontier town. Even so, to leave a settled life as a city dweller and become a nomad living in a tent was a big deal.

At this point Abraham could be considered to be an illegal immigrant. He had come from another country with his household and flocks and pitched his tent – with the intention of staying there. But God told him that this land was to be the heritage of his descendants. So Abraham built an altar there.

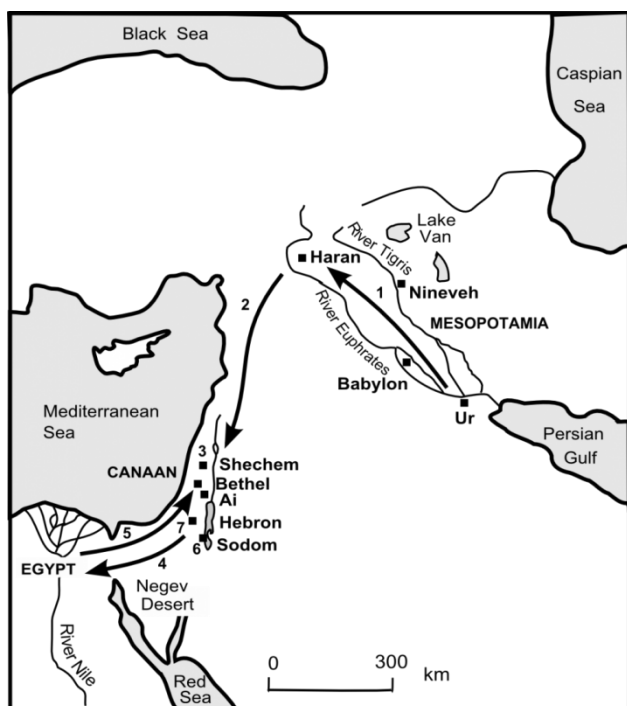
From there, Abraham moved south to a place between Bethel and Ai. He built another altar there and we learn that he prayed to God – the first mention of him doing so. From there he moved further south to the area known as the Negev. In modern day Israel, the Negev occupies the southern part of the country and most of it is semi arid desert. Bedouin communities occupied the northern area around Beersheba and that's where Abraham settled.

Settled that is until there was a famine so he moved lock stock and barrel further south to the Nile delta in Egypt. There follows a story of intrigue – all in Genesis chapter 12 - which led to the Egyptian pharaoh expelling Abraham. So once again they were on the move – but this time much wealthier than when they arrived.

They returned to the area around Bethel and pitched their tents there. Abraham's nephew Lot was still with them and his herdsmen and Abraham's began to argue because there was too little grazing for all their animals. So Abraham and Lot decided to part company. Abraham let Lot have first choice of where he would settle and he chose the Jordan valley because the grazing was plentiful and there were cities like Sodom – the sin city of the day.

Abraham stayed in the hill country of Canaan where the grazing was less good but that was the land that God had promised to him. There God renewed his covenant with Abraham and he settled near to the town of Hebron.

Have you been aware of God's involvement in how your life has developed?



The journey that Abraham and his entourage embarked upon was around 400 miles. That took them to Shechem, a strategically located place on good communication routes and a major Canaanite religious centre. It will become a place of significance in the story as it unfolds. The modern day city of Nablus is built at the site of Shechem.