

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

AN OVERVIEW OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

JN. 5:39



Jn. 5:39 “**Search the scriptures....they are they which testify of me.**”

## Genesis 15:1-21

We began in Genesis with the beginnings of the human race.

- I. THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY: BEGINNINGS OF THE HUMAN RACE, 1:1—11:32
  - A. The Creation, 1:1—2:25
  - B. The Curse, 3:1—4:15
  - C. The Catastrophe, 4:16—9:29
  - D. The Coalition, 10:1—11:32

## II. PATRIARCHAL HISTORY: BEGINNINGS OF THE HEBREW RACE, 12:1—50:26

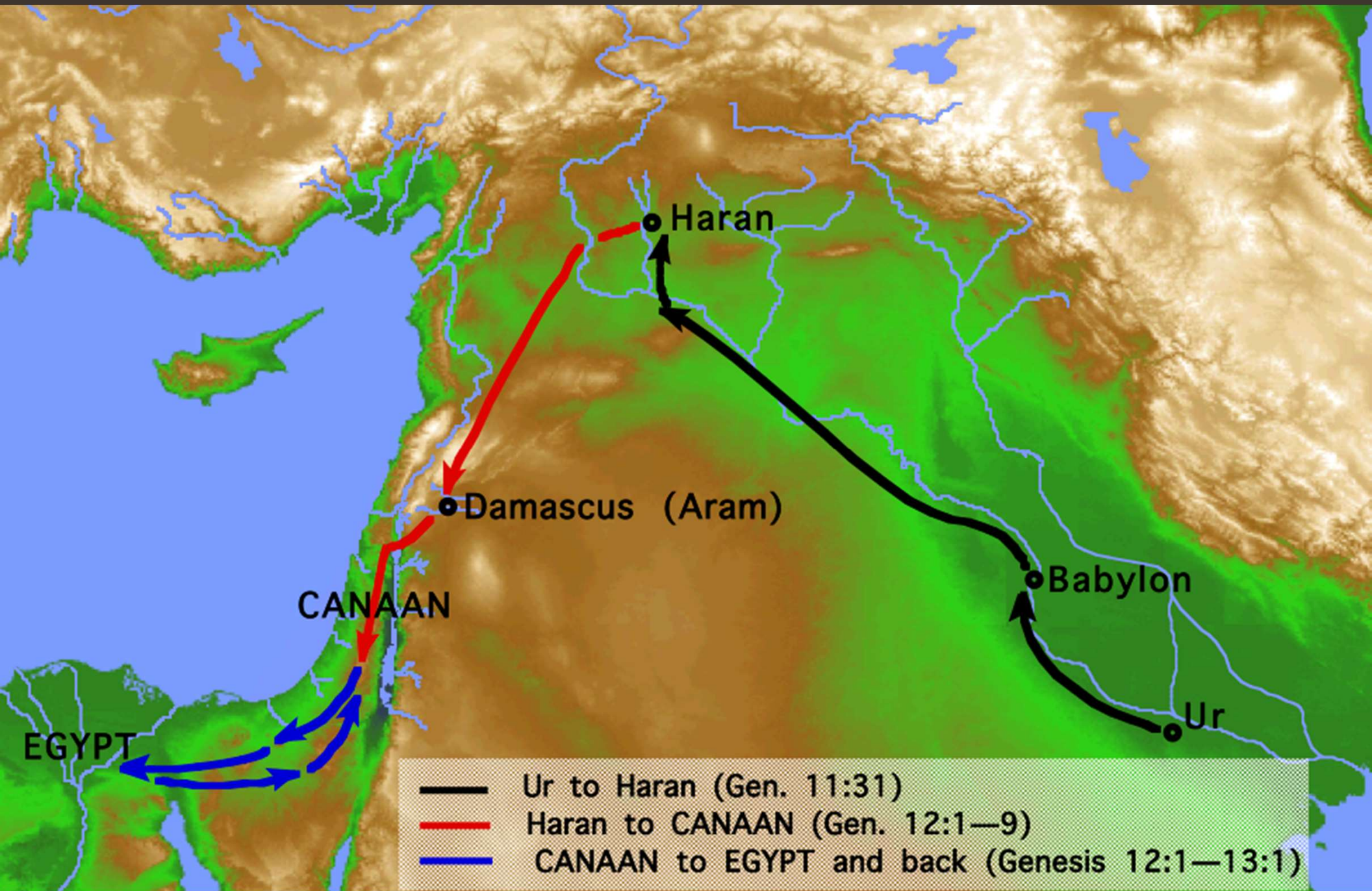
### A. The Progenitor: Abraham, 12:1—25:11

1. The Path of Faith, 12:1-20

2. The Price of Faith, 13:1-18

3. The Power of Faith, 14:1-24

Tonight we will observe “the *Pledge of Faith*,” which is emphasized in the promise made to Abram that is included in the *Abrahamic Covenant*.



❖ Abram was continuing his life-journey, by faith, and after the battle of the Five Kings against the Four Kings, God intervened in Abram's life to reinvigorate his faith.

Tonight, we will consider the method God used to encourage Abram.

#### 4. The Pledge of Faith, 15:1-21

##### a. The Initiative – God, Gen. 15:1

Genesis 15:1 After these things **the word of the LORD** came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: **I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.**

- ❖ The path of faith includes weariness and fear, (“After these things...”) and often needs a “booster shot.”

Gal. 6:9 And **let us not be weary in well doing**: for in due season we shall reap, **if we faint not**.

- ❖ The Word of God assists in revitalizing our faith and overcoming fear.
- ❖ The key to is knowing God’s role toward a believer  
→ “...a shield and exceeding great reward.”
- ❖ Remember...He is Immanuel – God with us!

## b. The Inquisitiveness – Abram, Gen. 15:2-3

Genesis 15:2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house *is* this Eliezer of Damascus?

3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

❖ In Gen. 12:2-3, God gave Abram the “Abrahamic Covenant” containing unconditional promises:

Gen. 12:2 And **I will** make of thee a great nation, and **I will** bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And **I will** bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

- ❖ Abram knew that the covenant apparently included lineage and families for generations to come.
- ❖ Abram is aware of the limitations of aging and asks a practical question: “...Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless...”
- ❖ A believer, in fellowship with the Lord, may also have practical questions for the Lord.



c. The Inspiration, Gen. 15:4-6

Genesis 15:4 And, **behold, the word of the LORD came unto him**, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but **he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir**.


5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

6 And **he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness**.

- ❖ During Abram's journey in life by faith, the Lord took the initiative to reinforce Abram's faith, emphasizing the power of the Word of God.
- ❖ The Lord gave a specific and clear answer to Abram's inquiry: "...but **he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.**"

Rom. 10:17 So then **faith cometh by hearing**, and **hearing by the word of God.**

- ❖ The Lord gave Abram an illustration which indicated Abram's limitations – "...Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, **if thou be able to number them...**" and His own lack of limitations regarding His promise: "...and he said unto him, **So shall thy seed be.**"



Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars,  
if thou be able to number them:  
and he said unto him,  
So shall thy seed be.  
Genesis 15:5

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- ❖ The Lord knew what Abram needed to hear in order to convince him to trust His Word.
- ❖ One of the greatest verses in the Bible in regard to faith and salvation is Gen. 15:6 “And **he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.**”

#### d. The Insecurity, Gen. 15:7-8

Gen. 15:7 And he said unto him, I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

8 And he said, **Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?**

❖ Abram's faith was strengthened, but he still wanted verification from God (v. 8.)

e. The Implementation – COMMITMENT,  
Gen. 15:9-21

❖ The answer to Abram's question was to implement a confirmation of commitment by God and Abram to each other:

Gen. 15:9 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

13 And he said unto Abram, **Know of a surety that thy seed** shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them **four hundred years;**

14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, **will I judge**: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full.

17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

18 In the same day **the LORD made a covenant with Abram**, saying, Unto **thy seed have I given this land**, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

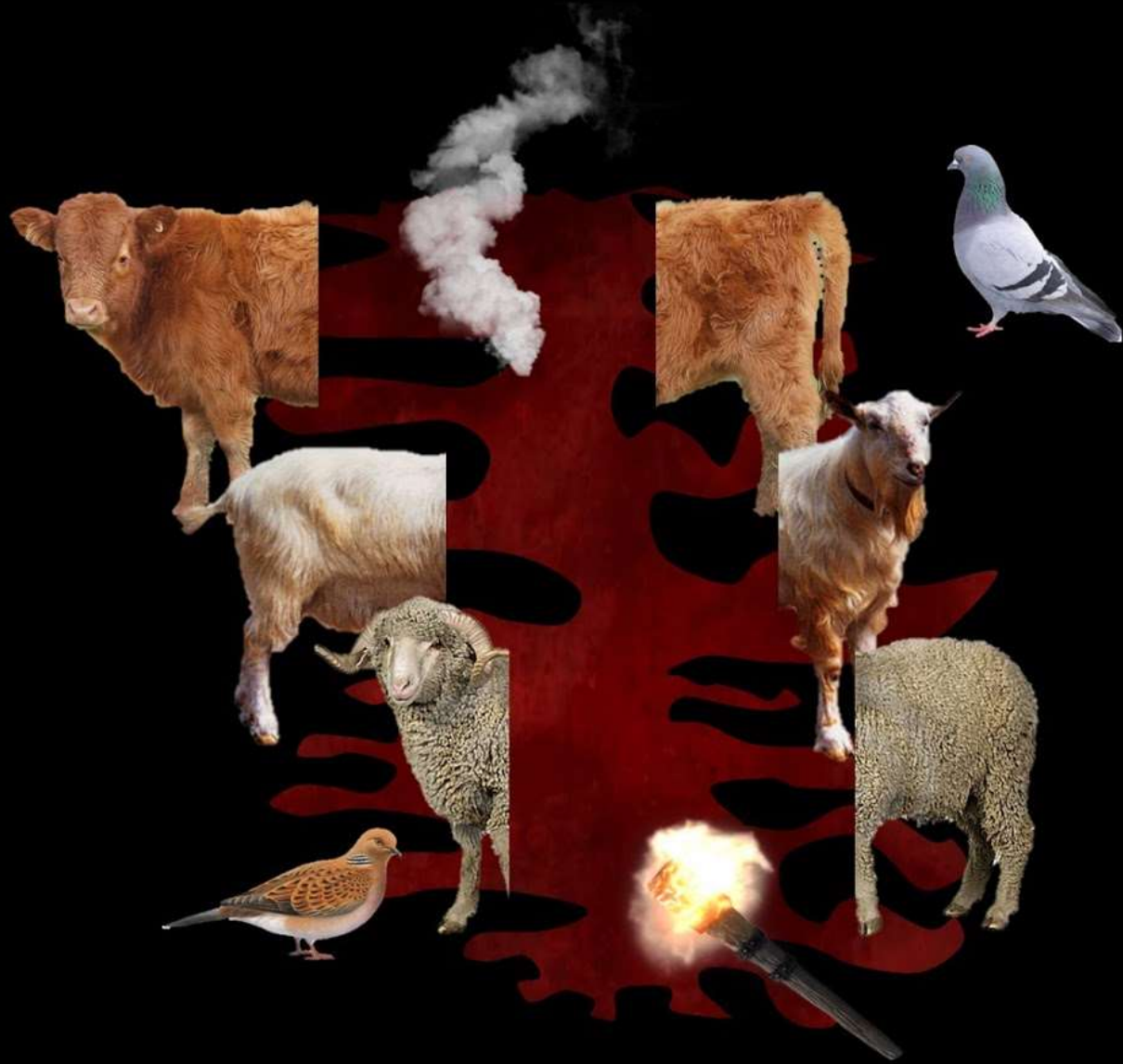
19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

❖ In ancient times, the division of the body parts across from each other would allow the blood to flow in between, making a path of blood. The parties that made a covenant would walk through, one from one end and the other from the other end. This would symbolize that if they violated the covenant that they would be killed.





❖ The implementation of the ceremony included the following specifics in God's promise:

Gen. 15:13 And he said unto Abram, **Know of a surety that thy seed** shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them **four hundred years;**

❖ Abram was “assured” of the history that was going to happen.

Acts 7:6 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil **four hundred years.**

Ex. 12:40 Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was **four hundred** and thirty years. 41 And it came to pass at the end of the **four hundred** and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

❖ Just as the first part of the promise was fulfilled, so shall the conclusion of the promise be fulfilled in the near future:

Gen. 15:18 In the same day **the LORD made a covenant with Abram**, saying, Unto **thy seed have I given this land**, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:



## Summary

❖ Abram was reminded of the Lord's watch care:

**After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am your shield...**

**—Genesis 15:1**

- ❖ The reminder was to revitalize and strengthen Abram's faith.
- ❖ The Lord was longsuffering in listening to and answering Abram's concerns.
- ❖ After giving Abram assurance of the promise, He required mutual commitment between Abram and Himself via the offering.
- ❖ Abram believed God's promises.

## Conclusion

Acts 7:17 But **when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham**, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

Rom. 4:13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

...

16 Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of **the faith of Abraham**; who is the father of us all,

Heb. 6:13 For when **God made promise to Abraham**, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

Psa. 105:38 Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.

39 He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.

40 *The people* asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.

41 He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places *like* a river.

42 **For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.**

43 And he brought forth his people with joy, *and* his chosen with gladness:

44 And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people;

45 That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.



Gal. 3:14 That **the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ**; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. ...

17 And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was **four hundred and thirty years after**, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

18 For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but **God gave it to Abraham by promise.**

29 And **if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**