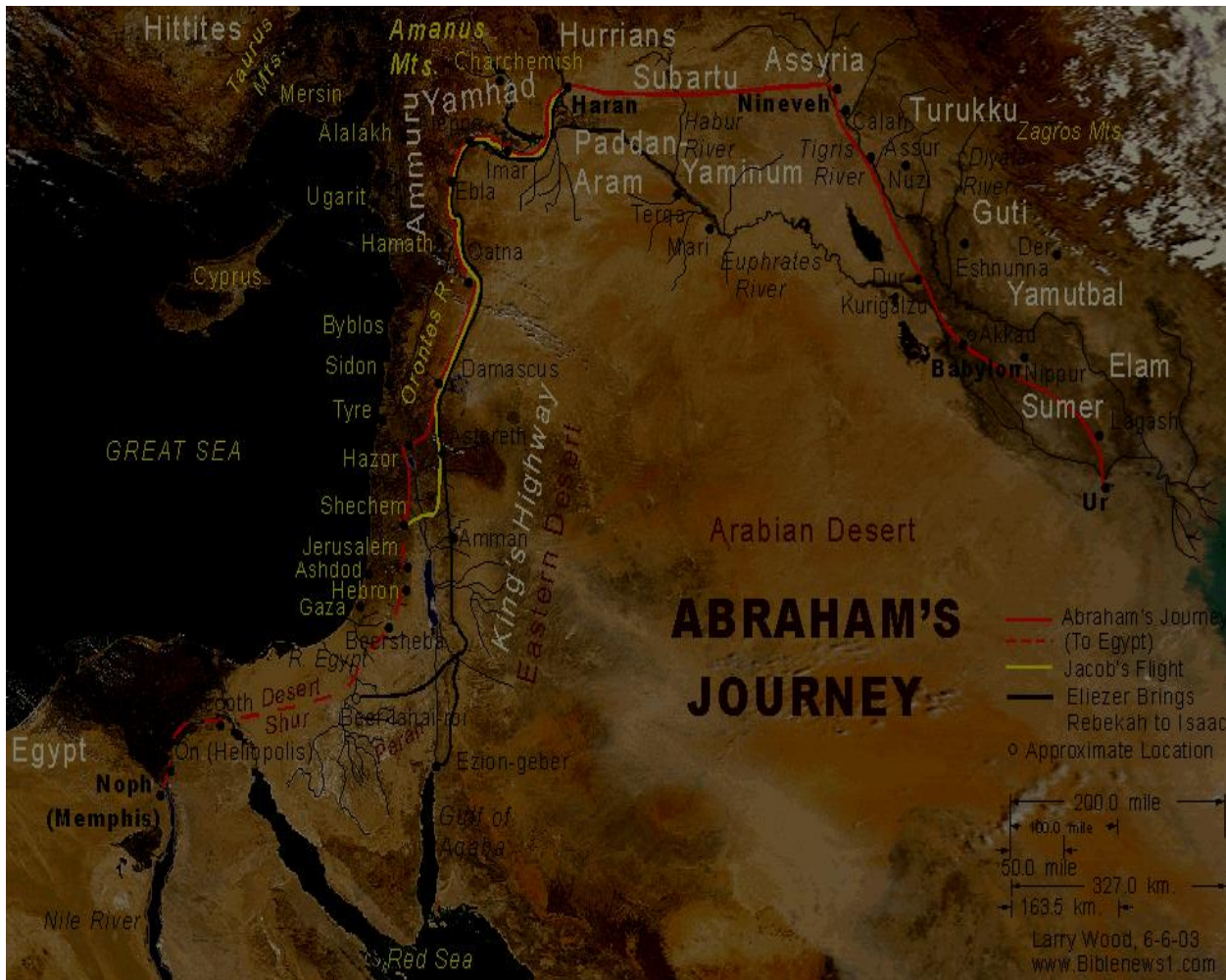


Intro Mar 8

Genesis God called Abraham to go some place. Abraham trusted God would be with him.
'Hebrew' means camel-driver or caravaner.



In the 1800s the Rationalists argued that EVERYTHING about Abraham was false. “If he came from Ur, we’d have found it.” Well, in 1922, Sir Leonard Wooley did discover it! I told my students he discovered a “Welcome to UR” sign. Here is the Ziggurat of UR. Besides that, Babylonian and Hebrew are related languages. So there is more than just a Ziggurat to back up Genesis. Why do I tell you all this? They show that a myth is not just made-up; it has a *fundamentum in re*, a FOUNDATION in Reality. ALL Peoples of the Middle East believed in many Gods. The Hebrews, alone, had only one. Enter the Story, a MYTH, about Abraham.

AQ



This is the "Standard of UR"



Here from the Penn University Museum is the

Goat God (of fertility)



[Goats were essential and reproduce a lot.]

With the Tree of LIFE.

Think

Garden of



Paradise.

I hope this provides some idea of the reality of UR.
Even more could be said on this.

TIMOTHY

(Endure). . . your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God.

GOSPEL

XT chose these 3 to SEE him—in HIS GLORY as God, like Moses and Elijah did.

Moses represents the LAW; Elijah, the PROPHETS. Two pillars of Judaism.

There's that CLOUD again. They 'see'—more or less!—the PRESENCE and POWER of GOD in Heaven, as He was there for MOSES in the Desert on top of **Mt. Sinai**. And God showed himself to ELIJAH, but only after he had walked—like Jesus—forty days and forty nights to the **mountain of God, Horeb**. Remember: God is always present on the top of a mountain. MLK Jr. used this image in his powerful speech. "I've been to the top of the mountain." He got the message from and encountered—that is, he MET—God ONLY after he had journeyed *for 40 days*, like Moses and Elijah—and Peter, James and John.

CAUTION: Even the Prophet Elijah was looking for the WRONG God! He expected to hear God in a wild wind or a powerful storm. NO, God came and spoke in a **gentle breeze**. We too often don't See or Hear God because He isn't LOUD enough. It isn't the voice we are looking for. I

think God speaks and ‘appears’ to us everyday—in disguise, dressed NOT as we expect Him to dress. It takes a *PROPHET*, maybe, to see HIM.

ALL 3 Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 17:1–8, Mark 9:2–8, Luke 9:28–36) describe the Transfiguration, and the Second Epistle of Peter also refers to it (2 Peter 1:16–18). It is a very important feast in the Orthodox Church. [bc of the TRINITY]+

Then we also have: **Brilliant Light** and **White Garments**. All SYMBOLS from The Book of Daniel, popular at the time of XT, and taken up and re-used in Revelations, the Last Book of the NT. The light and white are signs too of God’s Presence—even when we don’t know exactly.

The overwhelming POWER of God’s Glory knocked them over face-down. . . .*they fell prostrate*. But Jesus came assuring them and US that the Glory of God is nothing to fear. He said—as He *TOUCHED* them, “Rise, and do not be afraid.” This is not a God to fear! Just a **gentle breeze**.

The Psalm uses these words: . . .your works are trustworthy. . . . those who hope for his kindness,. . .who is our help and our shield. And finally . . . we have put our hope in you.

. . . until the *Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

Who knows what they THOUGHT Jesus meant at the time. Maybe, *When we all rise to live “in the lap of Abraham”?* It surely wasn’t dying on a Cross followed by a Resurrection! LOL!

However, this is CERTAIN: They did NOT understand it—until LATER! Like Moses, Elijah. We too only understand what XT and his death on the CROSS means as we make our journey. Through the DESERT of Life to the **Holy Land** of **HEAVEN**.

Here is a mosaic from Ravenna, Italy from c. 550



For good explanation of the symbolism

check this <https://orthodoxartsjournal.org/the-mosaic-apse-of-santapollinaire-in-classe-ravenna/>

for starters: Did you see the 3 separated Lambs? Peter, James & John; ONE by himself? Humm?

See Moses and Elijah? OK, then where is XT?

--XT is NOT the Bishop. That is St. Apollinaris, a disciple of S. Peter, who was Bishop of Ravenna. Then Ravenna was the Byzantine Capital of that part of Italy.

The other 'lambs' in the Garden (Heaven?). Who are they?

The Transfiguration Mosaic
IN the Basilica

I was not in it. Only so many
tours get to enter the 6th Century
Town. It is too small for buses.



And I decided to put this famous painting by Raphael on its own page.

He worked on this till he died in 1520. It was finished by his student.

You can see the influence of Michelangelo; cf with the Sistine Chapel
MORE INFO on this site: <https://www.tripimprover.com/blog/transfiguration-by-raphael>

Clearly Raphael shows the confusion of all.
Did you see Moses and Elijah? Any thing else?

Peter, James and John overwhelmed at getting even a glimpse of God-in-His-Glory.
How about the bottom. Who are confused there? What different emotions are pictured by Raphael?

