

Old Testament Lesson 7

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Prepared by Duane S. Crowther, February, 2002

1. The Tower of Babel and the Lord's Scattering of the People:

A. *Gen. 10:8-10*: Babel was built by Nimrod, son of Cush, grandson of Ham, great-grandson of Noah. (See genealogical lineage: *Gen. 10:1-8*.) *Date*: very roughly c. 2200 B.C.

B. *Gen. 11:1-4*: "Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach into heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

C. *Gen. 11:5-11*: The Lord confounded their language as a preventive measure, "because this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." The place became known as "Babel," "because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." [v. 9]

D. *Book of Mormon connection*: Jared and his brother, and their families, and the families of their friends, came forth from "the great tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, and swore in his wrath that they should be scattered upon all the face of the earth." [Ether 1:33] They were led to the Americas, as part of the great scattering.

E. *Geography*: Noah's ark landed "upon the mountains of Ararat." [Gen. 8:4] *Bible Dictionary*, p. 613: "Ararat. The Hebrew name of the district called by the Assyrians Urartu, and now called Armenia." See Map #9, *The World of the Old Testament*: Mt. Ararat(?) is located between the Black and Caspian Seas. Babel (Shinar) is located about 480 miles south by southeast, in what is now called Iraq, close to the Euphrates River near the present-day city of Basra (about 220 miles up-river from the Persian Gulf).

2. The Genealogy and Early Life of Abram [Abraham]:

A. *Genesis 11*: Abraham is a descendant of Shem (the second-born of Noah's three sons who survived the great flood). Rough calculations based on Genesis 5 indicate that the flood occurred about 2344 B.C., and that Shem was born about 2452 B.C. From Adam to Shem was 11 generations. Following Shem there were nine more generations to Abraham. Thus Abraham was the 20th generation (including Adam) of his line here on the earth; Isaac (21st), Jacob (22nd), and Joseph (23rd). Abraham is the connecting link for the genealogy of Christ's parentage in Matthew 1:1-17. He also is mentioned in Luke's genealogy of Christ: Lk. 3:34 (3:23-38).

B. The generations from Shem to Abraham are: **Shem: 2452-1852** [Moses 8:12; Gen. 5:32; 11:10-11]; **Arphaxad: 2342-1409** (based on two years after the flood: Gen. 11:10) [Gen. 11:10,12-13]; **Salah: 2307-1874** [Gen. 11:12,14-15]; **Eber: 2277-1813** [Gen. 11:14,16-17]; **Peleg: 2243-2004** [Gen.11:16,18-19]; **Reu:2213-1974** [Gen.11:18,20-21]; **Serug: 2181-1951** [Gen.11:20,22-23]; **Nehor: 2151-2003** [Gen. 11:22,24-25]; **Terah: 2122-1917** [Gen. 11:24,26,32]; **Abram 2052-1877** [Gen.11:26; 25:7-10]. Abraham died when he was 175 years old. [Gen. 25:7]

C. **Abram** had two brothers: **Nahor** and **Haran** [Gen. 11:26-27]. They were born and raised in Ur of the Chaldees. {Gen. 11:28; Abra. 1:1, 20, 29-30; 2:1-5}. (Chaldea: "That portion of Babylonia which lay south and east of Babylon, though the name was sometimes used after the days of Jeremiah to denote the whole district lying between and adjoining the rivers Tigris and Euphrates." [Bible Dictionary, "Chaldea," p. 632]. *Note*: Ch is pronounced K in the Old Testament: Kaldeans.

D. *Abra. 1:1-4*: Abram sought for the priesthood and the privileges of the firstborn son. [His father and forefathers had turned to idolatry. Annoyed at his request, they sought to take away his life by having the priest of Elkenah offer him as a human sacrifice. [*Abra. 1:5-11*] The priests seized Abram, tied him to the altar, and prepared to kill him. [*Abra. 1:12-15, Facs. #1*]

E. *Abra. 1:15-19*: Abram prayed. The Lord granted him a vision as His angel loosed his bands. The Lord promised him that He would (1) **take him from his father's house** (2) into a **strange land**, (3) destroy the wicked priest, (4) **put upon him His name**, (5) **give him the priesthood** and His power, (6) and told him that **“through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever**, for (7) **I am thy God.”** [*Abra. 1:15-19*] *This is the beginning of His revealing the Abrahamic Covenant.*

F. The Lord destroyed the priest, his altar and his idols, then sent a famine to the land. Abram's father, Terah, repented of trying to have his son killed. [*Abra. 1:20, 29-30*]

G. **Haran** fathered three children: **Lot, Milcah** and **Iscah** [*Gen. 11:27-29*], but then died in the famine [*Gen. 11:28; Abra. 2:1*].

H. Abram married Sarai [later changed to Sarah]. Nahor married Haran's daughter Milcah. [*Gen:11:29*]

I. Obedient to the Lord's command to get out of the country, Abram took his wife, and his nephew Lot and his wife, and *traveled northwest about 600 miles to Haran*. His father followed him to Haran. When the famine abated there, his father decided to remain in Haran; he returned to his idolatry, and eventually died there in Haran. [*Abra. 2:3-5; Gen. 11:31*]

3. Abram's Missionary Call: The Abrahamic Covenant:

A. *Abra. 2:6-11*: The Lord appeared to Abram in Haran, and told him: (1) go and take Lot with you out of Haran, (2) “I will **make of thee a minister to bear my name** (3) in a **strange land which I will give unto thy seed** after thee for an everlasting possession, when they hearken to my voice.” (4) “I will **make of thee a great nation**, and (5) I will **bless thee above measure**, and (6) **make thy name great** among all nations, (7) and thou shalt **be a blessing unto thy seed** after thee, (8) that in their hands **they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations**; (9) and I will **bless them through thy name**; (10) for **as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name** and (11) shall **be accounted for thy seed**, (12) and shall rise up and **bless thee, as their father**; (13) and I will **bless them that bless thee**, and (14) **curse them that curse thee**, (15) and **in thy seed** (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that **this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee** (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) (16) shall **all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel**, which are the blessings of salvation, even life eternal.” [*Abra. 2:6-11*]

B. *Gen. 12:1-3*: The “short” version of the Abrahamic Covenant.

C. *Abra. 2:12-13*: Abram's internal response to his conversation with the Lord.

4. Abram and Lot Came to the Land of Canaan:

A. *Gen. 12:5*: Abraham was 75 years old when he departed from Haran. *Abra. 2:14*: Abram was 62 years old when he left Haran.

B. *Abra. 2:15; Gen. 12:5*: Abram took his wife, Sarai, and Lot [and Lot's wife], “and all our substance that we had gathered, and the souls that we had won in Haran, and came forth in the way to the land of Canaan, and dwelt in tents as we came on our way.”

C. *The Geography: Gen. 12:5-6, 8-9; Abra. 2:15-20*: They traveled southward from Haran to Canaan, coming to the plain of Moreh near *Shechem*, then to a mountain east of *Bethel*. This would be a

journey of 500 to 600 miles, first through mountainous country, then along the Mediterranean coast through Phoenicia. *See Map 9, then Map 10* [new maps].

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