

Life of Abraham

Introduction

The life of Abraham is recorded in Genesis 12-25:11. His life marks an epoch in God's eternal purpose. Through Abraham's call, God began working His eternal purpose through the nation that would result from Abraham's seed. Although the events in the first chapter of Romans cycled again and again, they applied the first time to what occurred after the tower of Babel.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man — and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. Rom 1:20-25

The various descendants listed in the Tenth chapter of Genesis all band together to build the tower of Babel. God then changed their languages and scattered them over all the earth.

Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth. Gen 11:9

Each of the nations that resulted from this scattering all followed the path Paul described above. Immediately after they were scattered, God revealed the genealogy of Shem as it led to Abraham. (Gen 11:10-26)

The chart below gives the descendants of Noah through Shem in the top line of each column. The age of each patriarch at the birth of their first son is then listed along with their age at the birth of grandson, great grandson etc. The last two lines show how old each patriarch was when they died with the passage in Genesis. Thus, in the first column Seth was 100 when his firstborn son Arphaxad was born. Arphaxad was 35 when his firstborn son Salah was born and Arphaxad was 135 when Salah was born. Shem was still alive when Abraham was born. Terah's name is asterisked because the three sons are all listed together and the fact that Terah died before Abraham entered Canaan at the age of seventy-five probably means he was not the firstborn.

Shem	Arphaxad	Salah	Eber	Peleg	Rue	Serug	Nahor	Terah*	Abram	Isaac	Jacob
100	born										
135	35	born									
165	65	30	born								
199	99	64	34	born							
229	129	94	64	30	born						
261	161	126	96	62	32	born					
291	191	156	126	92	62	30	born				
320	220	185	155	121	91	59	29	born			
419	290	255	225	191	161	129	99	70	born		
									100	born	
									160	60	born
600	438	433	464	239	239	230	138	205	175	180	147
11:10	11:12-13	11:14	11:16	11:18	11:20	11:22	11:24	11:32	25:7	35:29	47:28

Epoch's in the Life of Abraham

The narrative of his life is a very interesting story of a faithful life. But more than any other Bible Character revealed in the Old Covenant, Abraham's life becomes a template and example for many of the doctrines in the New Testament.

- call out of the Ur of the Chaldees (Heb 11)
- Dealings with Melchizedek (Heb 7)
- Faith in God's promise of a son. (Rom 4)
- Covenant of circumcision (Rom 4)
- Casting out Hagar. (Gal 4)
- Offering of Isaac (James 2)

Perhaps even more important, God placed Abraham in a very important position in His eternal purpose. He is the father of both the Israelite and Messiah's kingdom. Both those who were

circumcised (Israel according to the flesh) and those who were uncircumcised (Gentiles who entered Christ's kingdom) look to Abraham as their father.

Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, 12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised. ... Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. Rom 4:9-12, 16

The Early Life of Abram.

Abraham lived about 2,100 years before Christ was born, or a little over 4,000 years ago. He was born in Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis 11:27-32). His father was Terah. We do not know the name of his mother. From this passage, God only gives us a few facts about Abram's early life.

He had three brothers, one died very young, and the other he left behind when he left Ur.

His mother died (or his father had two wives) for Sarai was his half sister.

Sarai could have no children.

He took over the care of his nephew Lot

God first called him out of Ur of the Chaldees and went to Haran. Acts 7:2-4

Then after the death of his father Terah, he was called to come into the promised land.

And he said, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, 3 and said to him, 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.' 4 Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell. Acts 7:2-5

God offered the following chronology to help us visualize the amount of time that passed.

Gen 12:4 And Abram was seventy-five(75) years old when he departed from Haran.

Gen 16:16 Abram was eighty-six(86) years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

Gen 21:5 Abraham was one hundred(100) years old when his son Isaac was born.

Gen 25:7 After the birth of Isaac, he lived to be one hundred and seventy-five(175) years.

Although Abram's father and brother were idolaters, there is no indication whether Abraham had been an idolater who had repented or had always served the Lord.

And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods. 3 Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. ... 14 "Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! 15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Josh 24:2-4, 14-15

We know his brother's family was deeply infected with idolatry.

Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the household idols that were her father's. ... 30 And now you have surely gone because you greatly long for your father's house, but why did you steal my gods?" 31 Then Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I said, 'Perhaps you would take your daughters from me by force.' 32 With whomever you find your gods, do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren, identify what I have of yours and take it with you." For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them. Gen 31:19-20, 30-32

Abram's story begins with God's Promise/Covenant

Sometimes called a covenant (Acts 3:25), other times a promise (Rom 4:13-21), Paul called God's first words to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3) it both a promise and a covenant.

*Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's **covenant**, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. 16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the **promises** made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the **covenant** that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the **promise** of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of **promise**; but God gave it to Abraham by **promise**. Gal 3:15-18*

God made a conditional promise/covenant with Abraham. God demanded that Abraham leave his country and kindred and come to the land God would reveal to him. Once Abraham left his land and left his family, he had fulfilled his part in the covenant/promise. This promise was again given after he offered up Isaac (Gen 22:15-18).