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Terah Became the Father of Abram, Nahor and Haran
11: 27-32

Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran DIG: Why do you think Abram and Terah settled in Haran instead of Canaan? What kind of a turn does the book take at this point?

REFLECT: Is there a *delay* in your spiritual life? How so? Does there need to be a funeral in your life before you can move on to what the Lord wants you to do?

ADONAI puts the spotlight on one particular family. **Terah** kept the patriarchal records received from Shem, and he completed his family record when he wrote: **This is the account of Terah (11:27a).** The next writer, presumably Isaac **(25:19)**, continued the family tree with information he received from his father **Abraham**.

Terah was a descendant of Shem and **the father of Abram** (whose name will later be changed to **Abraham** in **17:5**)**, Nahor and Haran. Abram** was the youngest son, born sixty years after **Haran**, the eldest. But he is placed first in this list because of **his** importance (like Ephraim before Manasseh), since **Abram** was **the LORD's** chosen instrument. The analogy of **ADONAI's** choice of the younger of the sons of Adam, Isaac, Joseph, and Jesse suggests the probability that **Abram** was **Terah's** youngest son.[219] **And Haran became the father of Lot (11:27b). Lot** is mentioned here because of the role that **he** will play later in **Genesis**.

While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died prematurely **in Ur of the Chaldeans,** or the capital of Sumer**, in the land of his birth (11:28).** This is mentioned because it emphasizes the relationship that developed between **Abram** and **Lot**. When **his** father died, **Lot** came under the authority of **his** uncle. Therefore, **Lot** became very attached to **his** Uncle **Abram**, and **Abram** became **his** guardian.



Abram and his brother **Nahor both married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai** (whose name will later be changed to **Sarah**). **She** was the daughter of **Terah** by another woman, so **she** was **Abram's** half sister **(20:12). She** was named after *Sharratu, the Queen wife of the moon god named sin.* **And the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. She was his** niece, **the daughter of his** brother **Haran, the father of both Milcah and Iscah (11:29).**

Sarai makes **her** first appearance near the end of one of those long genealogies we tend to skip over when reading through the Bible. We see that **her** name drops early clues that **Sarai** was overlooked when we read them (art by Sarah Beth Baca: see more information on Links and Resources).

With the words: **This is the account of Terah (11:27a)**, the focus of the biblical history narrows to a single family in **Ur of the Chaldeans**, in Mesopotamia, which is somewhere in southern Iraq. From there, the story fans out in three directions through **Terah's** sons, **Abram**, **Nahor** and **Haran**, and **their** descendants. This is a genealogy of hope because, through **Abraham**, **God** began **his** plan of redemption that would eventually culminate in the birth of **the Messiah**. **The sons** separated and went their separate ways only to be reunited generations later when **Abraham's** male descendants (Isaac, Jacob and Boaz) married female descendants of **his** brothers (Rebekah, Leah, Rachel and **Ruth**).

You would think **Terah** would have something positive to say about what appears to be **his** only daughter, his *princess*, or **Sarai**. Instead, **she** is only identified as

Abram's wife, not **her** higher ranking position as **Terah's daughter**, implying that **her** only connection to the family was by marriage. This reflected the patriarchal culture, where daughters had less value than sons and a woman's identity was tied to her husband. **Sarah's** true place in the family wasn't revealed until some twenty-four years later when **her** husband got into a tight spot and spread the word that **she** was **his** sister (which was a half lie because they were half siblings with different mothers).

Then in words that send a dagger right through her heart, **the Holy Spirit** inspired the human author Moses to write: **Now Sarai was barren; she had no children (11:30).** This statement defined **Sarai**. It exposed an open wound and at the same time fundamentally eliminating **her** from the big things **the LORD** was doing in **her** family. As we learned from Mrs. Noah **(6:18b)**, in the ancient world the value of a woman was measured merely by counting her sons. By this measurement, **Sarai** scored a big zero. According to the family genealogy **Sarai** had two strikes against her. **She** was a woman in a man's world, and **she was barren**. Everyone seemed to have a role in **ADONAI's** plan except **Sarai**. **She** seemed to have no direction.

Sarai's barrenness is noted at this time, so it can be shown that **Abram**, unlike **Haran** and **Nahor (22:20-24), had no children** in either **Ur** or Mesopotamia. The child of promise, **Isaac**, must be born in the Land of Promise.[220]

Probably after **Haran's** death and the marriage of **Abram**, **Terah took his son Abram, his grandson, Lot, son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. Nahor** apparently stayed behind in **Ur** with **Milcah**. Later **Nahor** founded a city near **Haran (22:20-24, 24:10** and **15, 27:43, 28:2,** and **29:4). This was the first crisis in the life of Abraham.** There can be no doubt that **the LORD** had called **Abram** to go to **Canaan** and leave **Ur of the Chaldeans (12:1)**. **But he** obeyed only in part because **he settled in the city of Haran instead of going to the Promised Land (11:31). Terah** means *delay,* and **his** accompanying **Abram** resulted in a *delay* of at least five years in **Haran**, which means *parched.* This is the first of four failures by **Abram**. The time **he** spent in **Haran** was time wasted. **ADONAI** never appeared to **him** again until **he** had moved into the Promised Land of Palestine.

*Islam teaches that the first Muslim on earth was not Muhammad but **Abraham**, who was totally submitted to Allah. They also teach that Islam, as a way of life, had also been revealed to Adam and Noah. They teach that **Abraham** was born in Ur of the*

*Chaldeans and could not be a Jew. First, because **Ur of the Chaldeans** was in Mesopotamia, which is now part of Iraq. Secondly, they say the name Jew came after the existence of Judah, the great-grandson of **Abraham**. For these reasons, they say that **Abraham** was more of an Arab than he was a Jew. In Surah 3:67 it says, "**Abraham** was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim and he worshiped none other but Allah alone."*

Haran was apparently a settlement that had been established by **Terah's** son **Haran**, or to which at least **his** name had become attached. The family was originally from there before they moved to **Ur of the Chaldeans**. **Ur** was in the lower reaches of the Euphrates, on the Persian Gulf. Originally, before the centuries of delta deposits that have since formed downstream, it was actually a great seaport. **Haran** was perhaps six hundred miles northwest, whereas **Canaan** was about six hundred miles due west.[221] **Ur** means *flame* and **Chaldeans** means *destruction.* **Abram** was called from the *flame of destruction* to the Land of Promise. But he *delayed* and moved to **Haran** where it was spiritually *parched*.

When the family got to **Haran**, **Terah** didn't want to leave it again and **he** chose to go no further. The family stayed there until **his** death. **Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Haran (11:32).** It is not unusual for Moses to phase out someone who is no longer relevant to the story before proceeding to the main character. This bit of history is given to let us know that we are now going to follow **Abram**, who is now the main character.

It is at this point that the book of **Genesis**, and for that matter the entire Bible, takes a turn. There is a great Grand Canyon that goes right down through the book of **Genesis**. The first eleven chapters are on one side, and the last thirty-nine chapters are on the other side. The first eleven chapters cover over 2,000 years and are extremely condensed. They are the foundation on which the rest of the book is built. The last thirty-nine chapters cover only about 350 years. Now Moses puts the spotlight on the origin of one nation, the Jewish nation of Isra'el.[222]

Haftarah Noach: Yesha'yaku (Isaiah) 54:1-55:5 (A); 54:1-10 (S) [Messianic adaptation: commence the reading at 52:13] (see the commentary on Deuteronomy, to see link click Af – Parashah)

Great joy and jubilation are destined for Zion! No more will she be exiled, reduced in

numbers, and forsaken by **ADONAI (Isaiah 54:1)**. **The Holy One of Isra'el** is still married, and **He** would never disown **Isra'el**, whom **He** compares to **the wife of His youth (Isaiah 54:6)**. **Briefly I abandoned you (Isaiah 54:7),** but **just like Noah's Flood would never again cover the earth, so now I swear that never again will I be angry with you or rebuke you (Isaiah 54:9). YHVH** envisions a glorious **Jerusalem**, with **foundations, windows, gates** and **walls** of precious **stones (Isaiah 54:11-12; Revelation 21:9-27). He Himself** will personally **teach all the children** of **Zion (Isaiah 54:13; John 6:45)**. The Covenant of a dynasty and **Kingdom** among **the nations** now becomes the sacred heritage of **Isra'el** among **the nations (Isaiah 55:4-5).**

B'rit Chadashah suggested readings for Parashah Noach: Mattityahu (Matthew) 24:36-44; Like 17:26-37; Acts 2:1-16; First Kefa (First Peter) 3:18-22; Second Kefa (Second Peter) 2:5

The unexpectedness of the coming Messiah is stated most clearly! **But when that day and hour will come, no one knows – not the angels in heaven, not the Son, only the Father (Matthew 24:36).** Those who dismiss **Yeshua's** return by saying **He** delays are listening to an evil heart **(Matthew 24:48)**. Be warned! If you decide to **eat and drink with drunkards**, you will be **cut** in two – as an animal sacrificed to start a covenant **(Exodus 29:17-18)**. With **weeping and gnashing of teeth**, you will sorrow for all eternity **(Matthew 24:51)**. Remember . . . **the Flood** came unexpectedly and caught many by surprise, except the vigilant **Noah (Matthew 24:37-42)**. So also, the Second Coming will catch many by surprise. Therefore, be ready all the time. **ADONAI** will set **the faithful and sensible servant in charge of all of his property –** blessed be that **servant (Matthew 24:43-47)**.