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A New Look at the Pearl of Great Price: Part 7: The Unknown Abraham (Continued)

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A New Look at the
Pearl of Great Price

Part 7

(Continued)

The Unknown Abraham

By Dr. Hugh Nibley



Abraham, from an etching by the Dutch painter Rembrandt (1606-1669), "Hagar leaving Abraham."

• *Which Ur?*—But we have still to deal with Ur of the Chaldees—where was that? It is interesting that the Book of Abraham only speaks of "the land of Ur, of Chaldea," as if to distinguish it from other Urs, and takes us not to the famous city or to some great temple for the sacrifice, but to a typical *panegyris* in an open plain. Though the Bible does not tell us where "Ur of the Chaldees" was, commentators ancient and modern have generally agreed with Beer's dictum that "the sense of the biblical information definitely points to Abraham's birthplace in northern or northeastern Mesopotamia."⁴⁰ Today H. C. L. Gibson concludes that Genesis 24:4, 7 "seems unmistakably to imply that the place of Abraham's nativity was Aram Naharaim," in northern Mesopotamia.⁴¹ A famous commentary of "Eumolpus" states that Abraham was born "in Kamarina, which some call Uria, meaning City of the

Chaldeans," following which many scholars have sought the prophet's birthplace in Urfa, once called Urhoi, near Edessa.⁴² "The learned disagree as to the place where Abraham was born," wrote Tha'labi, following the learned Jewish informants of his day. "Some say it was in Susa in the land of Ahwaz [Ahwaz in Kusistan, ancient Susiana], while some say it was in Babylon in the land of Suwadi in the region called Kutha; and some say it was in Warka [Uruk, Erech]. . . . Others say he was born in Harran, but that his father took him to Babel."⁴⁶ While some have located his birthplace at Kamarina in Armenia or Asia Minor, others have found it at the other end of the world in distant Suza.⁴⁷ Maimonides read in the books of the Sabaeans that Abraham grew up in Koutha, which some locate just south of Baghdad and others in the heart of Iran.⁴⁵

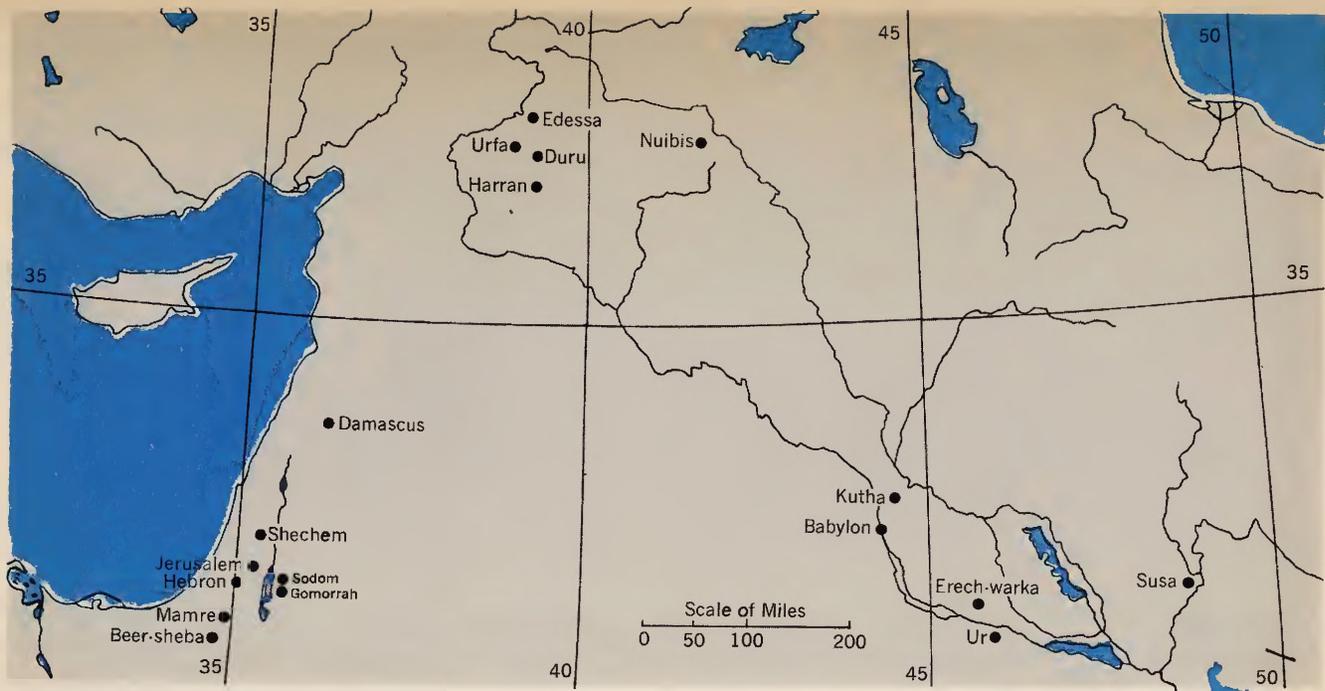
What adds to the confusion and the license of speculation is the high mobility of Abraham's people, *Habiru*, meaning "Refugees" or "displaced persons," as Gibson notes, for which reason he would view them either at Ur or Harran as mere temporary residents—campers, in fact.⁴⁹ Typical of the confusion is the momentous debate about the young Abraham's ten-year imprisonment: one school says that he was in jail seven years in Kardi and three in Kutha, and the other that it was three years in Kardi and seven in Kutha.⁵⁰ It is interesting that the youthful Abraham, like the youthful Joseph Smith (and even the youthful Jesus),⁵¹ seems to have been in trouble with his society, and though today the legends reach us only through the pro-Abraham channels, it is obvious that he caused a great stir and annoyance in his society. When we read of an obscure and innocuous young man exciting general uproar throughout the length of Mesopotamia or causing a mighty monarch to spend sleepless nights, we smile and brush the thing aside as the stuff of legend; the overwhelming verdict of scholarship for the past century, in fact, has detected in the name of Abraham only a code word to designate a large tribal movement. Such things, we say, just don't happen in real life. Only oddly enough, there is an exception—in the case of real prophets they do happen, as modern history attests. What would students say 3,500 years from now to the proposition that thousands of years before there lived a naive, uneducated, and guileless country boy in a small village somewhere in the woods beyond what were known as the Allegheny Mountains, who by a few tactless and unbelievably artless remarks created the greatest excitement in the large seaboard cities of the continent, was hotly denounced in thousands of pulpits throughout the civilized world, and was given front-page coverage in the major newspapers of the capitals of Europe? Could a less plausible story be imagined? Abraham probably had a much smaller and more compact population to impress, and in the great cult-places he had a perfect means for spreading his teaching throughout the world.

Nachmanides and Tha'labi report respectable traditions that Abraham was born in southern Mesopotamia, but that his family moved north immediately after his birth.⁵² Another tradition, reported by Tha'labi, reverses the order: ". . . some say he was born in Harran, but that his father took him to Babel." Still other traditions have it that for fear of Nimrod the family took the newborn Abraham south and settled at Warka.⁵² The very old Book of Judith 5:6-8 supports the story of a flight to the south after a birth in the north. A common legend is that Nimrod's army, after failing to catch young Abraham at

home, returned to Babylon by a march of 40 days, a march which Ka'b al-Akhbar describes in terms of a genuine migration of Nimrod's people, "with their goods and their families and their children . . . to the land of Iraq," i.e. from the north.⁵³ In all accounts the journey between Abraham's childhood home and Babylon is a long one. Just as there are episodes and aspects of early Latter-day Saint history which may never be cleared up because of the individual and collective mobility of the people, so, Theodore Böhl reminds us, "we must not underestimate the great mobility and historical memory of the Patriarchs."⁵⁴

At the same time Böhl observes that "the key figure" to the patriarchal history is Nimrod⁵⁴—and in the history of Nimrod two things are outstanding, M. Gernoll discovers: (1) "he always turns up as a contemporary of Abraham," and (2) his activities take place in the north countries.⁵⁵ This is a reminder that "the valley *northward*" from the Plain of Shinar in very early times was called "Nimrod . . . after the mighty hunter," in all probability an ancestor of our friend. (See Eth. 2:1.) Most commentators in the past identified Ur of the Chaldees with Babel simply because Nimrod, who plays such an important role in the early life of Abraham, ruled at Babel;⁵⁶ but he ruled there only after having conquered the land and added it to his empire, his home base being to the north.⁵⁷ Micah 5:5 places "the land of Nimrod" in Assyria, and the Sibylline writings say that he built his famous tower in Assyria.⁵⁸ His original kingdom was Shinar (Sinear), and there are a number of very old traditions that after the generation of Noah the people deserted the inspired leadership of Shem, "migrated east to the land of Sinear, a great plain, and there threw off the government of heaven and made Nimrod their king."⁵⁹ "Tradition has it," writes Beer, "that Shinear is the plain of northern Mesopotamia, ruled over by Nimrod."⁶⁰ Though H. Altmann maintains that the name Shinear designates Babylonia in general whenever it appears in the Bible, he goes on to point out that "the classical Singara, Gebel Singar was in northeastern Mesopotamia," being in the time of Abraham "an integral part of the kingdom of Mitanni."⁶¹ Nachmanides says that when Terah left the "Hamitic" land of Shinear, he went south to Mesopotamia, and again after the birth of Abraham he returned to "the land of the Chaldees in the north."⁶² Böhl says that in Abraham's day Sinear denoted not the Babylonian plain but a city-state on the middle Euphrates.⁶³

One may hold with T. E. Pect that there may originally have been separate Ur and Haran traditions about Abraham that have nothing to do with each other,⁶⁴ but none may deny the importance of Harran



Every city labeled at the southern and northern extremities of Mesopotamia has been claimed by scholars as the authentic birthplace of Abraham. All are agreed that he sojourned at the places indi-

cated in Palestine. The relationship between the three areas in the life of Abraham has proven as devious and complicated as the astronomical problem of three bodies.

and the north country in the early family background of the patriarch. Haran and Nabor are twin cities in the north, and Haran was the name of Abraham's brother while Nabor was his grandfather; Terah, Serug, and Peleg are all names of towns near Haran.⁶⁵ However dubious the status of the southern Ur, "there can be little doubt," Gibson reminds us, "concerning the authenticity of the tradition connecting the Patriarchs with the Harra district."⁶⁶ Kordu-Qardi, where Abraham was imprisoned, has been identified with Hatra and with a place called Ur near Nisibis; Moses Landau said it was Kardi in Bythinia, and others identify it with the Kurdish country.⁶⁷ Indeed, Tha'labi insists that Nimrod was a Kurd.⁶⁸ Though from the Cassite period on all of Babylonia was known as Karduniash, which is also the rendering of Chaldea in the Amarna Tablets,⁶⁹ "the appearance of the Kaldu in southern Babylonia is considerably later than the vaguely accepted but unprovable dating of Abraham," according to C. J. Gadd, who points out that "if Abraham lived about the time of the 1st Dynasty of Babylon, the Babylonian Ur was not then 'of the Chaldees,'" while on the other hand "if his time was later, the Babylonian Ur was . . . of little importance, and the northern orientation of the Abraham stories would then correspond better with the historical situation."⁷⁰ That is, any way we look at it, Abraham's "Ur of the Chaldees" was not the great city of the south identified in the 1920's by Sir Leonard Woolley. As Gordon points out, "there are two Chaldean localities quite distant from each other,"⁷¹ and while the northern Chaldea seems to go back to prehistoric times, the "Chaldees" held sway in the south of Sumer only in later times—long after Abraham.⁷² The Chal-

deans are designated as *Kesed* in the Hebrew Old Testament, and that name also points to the north, where the descendants of Kesed "established themselves opposite to Shinear, where they founded the city of Kesed, the city whence the Chaldees are called Kasdim."⁷³ Gensenius identified Ur of the Chaldees with the northern Assyrian province of Arpakshad = Arpa-kesed or "Chaldean Country."⁷⁴

The Genesis account, according to Kraeling, has the line of Shem begin in upper Mesopotamia and pass through Eber and his son Peleg to Terah and his son Haran.⁷⁵ The "Cave of Treasures" recounts that in Terah's time the black arts appeared "in the city of Ur, which had been built by Horon, the son of Eber."⁷⁶ A "Sabaeen" source reports that it was Noah who built the city of Harra upon leaving the Ark, and that "near Harra is the Sabaeen temple on the hill which was raised by Abraham"—another early high-place connected with Abraham.⁷⁷ Though the name of Jacob is at home in northern (not southern) Mesopotamia, that of Abram "is commoner in the Phoenician than in the Aramaic group,"⁷⁸ and in one of the oldest Abraham stories the two counselors of Nimrod are Jectan of the line of Japheth (a humane person and the friend of Abraham) and Phenech, a Phoenician,⁷⁹ putting the story in the Syro-Phoenician area. Terah's second wife and the mother of Sarah was Nahariath, "the Naharaim woman"⁸⁰—wherever we look the family names take us to that part of western Asia from which the blood of the Pharaohs was replenished from time to time.

There have always been arguments for placing Abraham's Ur both in the south and in the north; "traditions of respectable antiquity exist in favor of

both places," as Gadd puts it, both in the Ur of southern Sumer and "in the northwest, the neighborhood of Harran."⁸¹ E. G. Kraeling, H. W. F. Saggs, E. M. Speiser, R. de Vaux, and W. F. Leamans are among the defenders of a southern Ur,⁸² while H. Gunkel, W. F. Albright, M. Parrot, C. Gordon, and Z. Mayani are for the north, as were formerly B. Beer, M. Gemoll, and F. Oppert.⁸³ As to the meaning of the word Ur, "modern opinion is equally divided," according to B. Z. Wacholder, between the Sumerian (southern) *uru*, "city," and the Babylonian *uru-uniki*, "the seat of light" (cf. Olishem and Potiphar's Hill).⁸⁴ One may realize how foolish it is to dogmatize at this point when one considers that while Thebes was the capital of Egypt for 200 years, the great city of Tanis, which may have been Abraham's Egyptian residence and which was the capital for 350 years, has to this day never been located.⁸⁵

What leaves the door wide open to discussion is the existence in western Asia of a number of different Urs. Ur in the south was a great trade center once, and since Abraham was a merchant, one should expect to find him there. But on the other hand that same Ur had founded merchant colonies far to the north and west at an early date, and some of those settlements, as was the custom, bore the name of the mother city.⁸⁶ Hence, C. S. Gordon maintains that "the Ur of the Chaldees where Abraham was born seems to have been one of the northern Urs," "a commercial settlement in the general area of Harran," founded by the mother city about 2000 B.C.⁸⁷ That would explain Abraham's association with a city of Ur as well as the inescapable northern affinities of the Abraham traditions. What suggested a northern Ur in the first place was the impossible detour of a route from Ur in Sumer to Canaan via Harran.⁸⁸ The best-informed scholars of Joseph Smith's time thought of Ur as lying about 150 miles due east of Harran.⁸⁹ The legends also have the young Abraham living on the northern route: the best customers for his father's idols, we are told, were caravaneers on their way from Fandana in Syria to Egypt to barter Syrian goods for papyrus.⁹⁰ According to the Pseudo-Philo, Abraham migrated directly west from the scene of Nimrod's tower into Canaan,⁹¹ and Jubilees (12:12) reports that when Abraham had to get out of the country in a hurry after destroying the idols, he fled directly to Lebanon. All of which puts Abraham's home squarely on the northern route. Even in the Bible, Gordon insists, "all the connections of the Patriarchal narratives are northern, with no trace of direct contact with Sumer and Akkad," and the accumulation of new documents tends ever more to favor the northern Ur.⁹²

Nimrod-Pharaoh: In getting Abraham onto Egyptian territory, we have also to consider the question: What can Nimrod the Asiatic terror possibly have to do with Pharaoh? A good deal, to judge by the legends, in which the two are constantly confused and interchanged. In the *Clementine Recognitions*



The Spoken Word

Richard L. Evans

To see something get going

Life," said Benjamin Disraeli, "is a tumble-about thing of ups and downs,"—with its sick hurry, its divided aims," Matthew Arnold added. There are times when all of us feel overburdened, with debts, with obligations, so many things undone, so many undone things to do—worries, problems, and sometimes our share, it seems, of sorrows. And we wonder how we can be everywhere we ought to be, do all we ought to do, meet the obligations, and carry the weight of our worries, as we seem to divide ourselves in too many different directions, too many ways at once—not feeling that we are completing or disposing of or quite in control of anything—just a reshuffling of papers, a reshuffling of problems. To all of this, some gentle advice from an unnamed source proposes the "one-at-a-time" approach: "Mountains viewed from a distance," it says, "seem to be unscalable, but they can be climbed, and the way to begin is to take the first upward step. From that moment the mountains are less high. The slopes that seem so steep from a distance seem to level off as we near them." Any task in life is easier if we approach it with the one-at-a-time attitude. One step—a beginning: doing something about something, beginning to see something get going—gives assurance that we are on our way and that the solving of problems is possible. To cite a whimsical saying: "If you chase two rabbits, both of them will escape." No one is adequate to everything all at once. We have to select what is important, what is possible, and begin where we are, with what we have. And if we begin—and if we keep going—the weight, the worry, the doubt, the depression will begin to lift, will begin to lighten. We can't do everything always, but we can do something now, and doing something will help to lift the weight and lessen the worry. "The beginning," said Plato, "is the most important part."

* "The Spoken Word" from Temple Square, presented over KSL and the Columbia Broadcasting System January 26, 1969. Copyright 1969.

“... the Pharaohs really were concerned with the validity of their claim to divine authority...”

(3:61) the dispensations of the gospel, following an ancient Jewish formula, are given as ten, each being established by a prophet and revelator who finds himself opposed by a satanic rival and pretender; when we get to Abraham (the third dispensation), we expect his opponent, in view of the rabbinic traditions, to be Nimrod, but it is not: it is Pharaoh. Why is that? In the legends, B. Chapira notes, “Nimrod has become the equivalent of Pharaoh,” yet he is already Pharaoh in the oldest of the legends, the one edited by Chapira himself.^{92a} Wacholder has noted that while Nimrod is indeed the archenemy in the rabbinical accounts, in the *older* “Hassidic” versions he is Pharaoh, a clear indication that the original stories go back to a time “when Egypt was a major power,” when “the encounter between Pharaoh and the traveler from Ur of the Chaldees seemed a crucial event in the history of mankind”; only later, “in the rabbinic sources, Abram’s journey to Egypt is relatively ignored.”⁹³ W. Foerster has observed that “the highlights of . . . divine action” in the history of Israel are “firstly, the basic event of Abraham’s call, God’s covenant . . . secondly, the deliverance from the ‘furnace of Egypt.’”⁹⁴ The furnace of Egypt is here the equivalent of the “furnace of the Chaldees,” the most venerable epithet of Abraham being “he who was delivered from the furnace of the Chaldees.”⁹⁵ Of the moment of delivery a very old account says, “From that day until today it is called Kaladwon, [signifying] what God said to the children of Israel: ‘It is I who brought you forth from Egypt!’”⁹⁶ The confusion of Egypt and Chaldea in the Abraham story is typical.

The legends make Hagar an Egyptian woman of the royal court and even a daughter of Pharaoh,⁹⁷ so that when the old Jerusalem Targum on Jeremiah says that Hagar belonged to those very people who threw Abraham into the furnace, we are obliged to view his attempted sacrifice as an Egyptian show.⁹⁸ Even more specific is the Pseudo-Jonathan, which reports that Hagar was “the daughter of Pharaoh, the son of Nimrod,” which makes Nimrod, if not a Pharaoh, the father of one.⁹⁸ It is interesting that there is no sign of Pharaoh on the scene in Facsimile No. 1, while in Facsimile No. 3 the royal family fills the stage: it is quite possible that after overcoming

the antipathy of the father in Asia, Abraham should sometime later have been royally received by the son in Egypt—but this is the merest speculation. In one of the better-known stories, when Sarah lost her temper with Hagar (and it is significant that we have here the same sort of rivalry between Sarah, the true “princess,” and Hagar the Egyptian woman as we do between Abraham and Nimrod), she complained to Abraham, accusing her rival of being “the daughter of Pharaoh, of Nimrod’s line, he who once cast thee into the furnace!”⁹⁹ Having Pharaoh as a son or descendant of Nimrod neatly bridges the gap between Asia and Egypt: one of the most famous foreign potentates to put a son on the throne of Egypt did in fact bear the name of Nimrod—we shall have more to say of him later.

The sort of thing that used to happen may be surmised from an account in the *Sefer ha-Yashar*, according to which “at the time Abraham went into Canaan there was a man in Sinear called Rakion [also Rikyan, Rakayan, suggesting the famous Hyksos ruler Khian]. . . . He went to King Asverus [cf. Osiris] in Egypt, the son of Enam. At that time the King of Egypt showed himself only once a year.” In Egypt this Rakion by trickery raised a private army and so was able to impose a tax on all bodies brought for burial to the cemetery. This made him so rich that he went with a company of a thousand richly dressed youths and maidens to pay his respects to Asverus, who was so impressed that he changed the man’s name to Pharaoh, after which Rikian judged the people of Egypt every day while Asverus only judged one day in the year.¹⁰⁰ This would not be the first or the last time that a usurping Asiatic forced a place for himself on the throne, but the ritual aspects of the tale—the annual appearance of Osiris, the rule over the necropolis, the 1,000 youths and maidens (as in the story of Solomon and Queen Bilqis)—are also conspicuous. We are also told that that wily Asiatic who came to the throne by violence and trickery was the very Pharaoh who would take Sarah to wife.¹⁰¹ Since the Pharaonic lines all went back to Asiatic or Libyan families, the question of legitimacy could be handled, and no one disputes that Nimrod was of the blood of Ham through Canaan, or that the Pharaohs were also of the blood of Ham—on those points all sources agree.

The close resemblance between Nimrod’s treatment of Abraham and Pharaoh’s treatment of Moses has often been noted.¹⁰² And just as the careers of Abraham and Moses can be closely and significantly matched (which is not surprising, since the founders and makers of dispensations of the gospel necessarily

have almost identical missions), so in the Koran, Nimrod and Pharaoh represent a single archetype—that of the supremely successful administrator who thinks he should rule everything.¹⁰³ Likewise in the Koran (Sura 40:37) it is not Nimrod who builds the tower to get to heaven, but Pharaoh—a significant substitution. Even in the Jewish accounts, Pharaoh and Nimrod are like identical twins: both call themselves “the Great Magician,”¹⁰⁴ try to pass themselves off as God, order all the male children to be put to death, study the heavens, pit the knowledge and skill of their wise men against the powers of the prophet.¹⁰⁵ The palace in which Nimrod shuts up the expectant mothers has conspicuous parallels in Egyptian literature, and is designated in the Jewish traditions as the Palace of Assuerus—the Osiris or King of Egypt in the Rikan story above.¹⁰⁶ When the young Moses refuses to worship Pharaoh as the young Abraham does Nimrod, the idolatrous priests accuse both heroes of magic and trickery, the converts of both are put to death by the king, the subjects of both rulers offer up their children to idols, and Pharaoh like Nimrod finally declares war on God and builds a great tower, which falls.¹⁰⁷

One can appreciate the wisdom of the rabbinic distinction between Pharaoh and Nimrod, without which the wires would be hopelessly crossed between a Moses and an Abraham who go through identical routines with the same antagonist—Pharaoh. Yet in the original versions it was Pharaoh in both cases: the Nimrod who calls his magicians and wise men to counter the claims of Abraham, who loses the contest and ends up bestowing high honors on his guest, turns up as Pharaoh in the *Genesis Apocryphon*, the oldest known version of the story. But we have to do here with a characteristic and repeated episode—this repetition of motifs does not begin with Jewish speculations. The Battle of the Magicians, in which Pharaoh’s authority is defended against the pretensions of a dark adversary, is a favorite theme of Egyptian literature and goes back to the prehistoric ritual rivalry of Horus and Seth. It also happens that the Pharaohs really *were* concerned with the validity of their claim to divine authority, so that the actual history of Egypt can be partially interpreted in terms of Pharaoh’s dealings with those who presume to challenge his right and power—the documents of Ramses II are eloquent on this subject, but no more so than those of the kings of Babylon and Assyria, so that we need not assume that the stories of Abraham are simply borrowings from late Egyptian romances. Kings have always been hypersensitive to the operations of rivals, pretenders, relatives, and popular religious leaders.

More in the nature of myths are the extravagant

infancy stories of Abraham and Moses, parallels of which may be found in India and Java, though the Egyptian versions are the oldest known.¹⁰⁸ There are close resemblances between the infancy tales of Moses and the infant Horus,¹⁰⁹ but even closer between the latter and the infancy stories of Abraham: Horus’s mother, like Abraham’s, hides the newborn child in a cave and goes about “as a vagabond and beggar for fear of the Evil One, seeking support for the child.”¹¹⁰ Both babies are sustained in the cave by being given a finger to suck,¹¹¹ and it is common knowledge that the baby Abraham was miraculously supplied with milk and honey either from his own fingers (and the infant Horus is commonly represented sucking his finger), those of an angel, or from the dripping stalactites of the cave.¹¹² Now, though Abraham’s mother goes by many names, the commonest one is Emtelai, which scholars early recognized as a form of Amalthea, Amalthea being the goddess who took the form of a goat and suckled the infant Zeus with milk and honey in the Dictaeon Cave.¹¹³ Though the mothers of Horus and Abraham both fear that their child has expired of hunger in the cave, they find the babes filling the place with a miraculous radiance shining from the infant faces.¹¹⁴ Heller noted that while the stories of the infant Jesus are also very close to those of Moses and Abraham, they come closest of all to the cycle of the infant Joseph.¹¹⁵ In every case the tales point to Egypt—even Jesus immediately after his birth is taken to Egypt, which is the scene of the infancy gospels.¹¹⁶

Where we get these characteristic and repeated stories, the ritual element is not far from the surface. Thus, when Abraham is washed, anointed, clothed in a garment, and fed with bread and wine and/or milk and honey in the cave, we cannot escape reference to the basic ordinances of temple and church.¹¹⁷ Or when Abraham, after escaping death on the altar, an event which he is said to have considered as the equivalent of his own resurrection,¹¹⁸ goes to his eleven companions who are hiding out in the hills and there instructs them for 40 days in the mysteries, who can fail to recall the “40-day” accounts of the resurrected Lord?¹¹⁹ And what are we to make of it when we find the completest version of the story of the attempted sacrifice of Abraham in an early Eastern Christian tale in which the hero is not Abraham but St. Elias?¹²⁰ The fact that the St. Elias story turns up in the very place where Abraham is supposed to have suffered offers another illustration of the astounding survival of very ancient history in local legends throughout the Near East. But the ritual infancy stories? There is no reason in the world why we should regard them as originating with Abraham or

Moses, to whose biographies they have been conveniently annexed. Such doublets and repetitions are, as Gordon reminds us, "typical of Near Eastern literature . . . the taste of the Bible world called for duplication," as when Joseph and Pharaoh have identical prophetic dreams¹²¹—to say nothing of Nephi and Lehi.

However annoying we may find it, it is important to realize that we are dealing here with neither pure history nor pure myth—indeed, in the strictest sense neither history nor myth is ever completely pure. How the two may be mixed is dramatically illustrated in the case of Nimrod's notorious boast: It was when Abraham called upon Nimrod to acknowledge God as the giver of life that the latter intoned what has ever since been his slogan and device: "It is I who give life and I who take it away!" The historical part of the thing is that this actually was the slogan of the Pharaohs from the earliest times. When the king first appears in the Pyramid Text as the conquering hero from the East spreading terror before him, his heralds announce to all the world: "If he wants you to live, you live! If he wants you to die, you die!"¹²² And at the coronation of later kings the Pharaoh was introduced to his subjects as "the Merciful One who gives you back your heads!"¹²³ Finally, in the silver sarcophagus of Sheshonki I, the founder of the 22nd Dynasty, is a cryptogrammatic inscription in which the king boasts that (as Horus) he slays the slayers of Osiris and also is "the Great One who grants life as the Living One."¹²⁴ This particular Sheshonk was the son of a great warlord named Nimrod, whom Petrie believed to be an Elamite from Asia, the leader of a band of warriors, who made himself useful to Pharaoh and finally seized the throne; he was noted for his piety, and in founding a new dynasty also restored the old rites of human sacrifice; he also was the one Pharaoh most closely tied to Israel, marrying his daughter to King Solomon and later conquering Palestine and financing his empire with the plunder of the Temple of Jerusalem. It is an interesting coincidence that the name of Sheshonk (or Shishaq) is the one hieroglyphic word readily identified and unanimously agreed upon by the Egyptologists who have commented on Facsimile No. 2, where the name appears as Figure 8. How all this fits into the picture remains to be seen. ○

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTES

⁴³B. Beer, *Leben Abrahams*, p. 99, noting that Gen. 11:28 allows only a general inference.
⁴⁴H. C. L. Gibson, in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Vol. 7 (1962), pp. 54-55.
⁴⁵B. Z. Wacholder, in *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Vol. 34 (1963), p. 99.
⁴⁶Tha'labi, *Qissas al-Anbiyah* (Cairo, 1922), p. 51.
⁴⁷H. Weill, *Biblical Legends of the Muslims* (1856), p. 47. The Eumolpus text is in R. Riessler, *Altjüdisches Schrifttum* (Heidelberg, 1966), p. 11.
⁴⁸Mainonides, *Dalalat*, Vol. 3, pp. 217-19.

⁴⁹Gibson, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
⁵⁰H. Schüttinger, *Ursprung des Abraham-Nimrod Legendes*, p. 151; Beer, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
⁵¹See our article in *The Instructor*, January 1965, pp. 35-37.
⁵²Tha'labi, *op. cit.*, p. 52; Beer, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
⁵³Ka'b al-Akbar, text in *Revue des Etudes Juives*, Vol. 70 (1920), p. 39; B. Chapira, in *Revue des Etudes Juives*, Vol. 69 (1919), pp. 97, 103f; bin Gorion, *Sagen der Juden*, Vol. 2, p. 4.
⁵⁴T. Boehl, in *Ex Oriente Lux*, Vol. 17, p. 131.
⁵⁵M. Gemoll, *Israeliten und Hykos* (Leipzig, 1913), p. 31.
⁵⁶The Talmud, Midrash, and Arabic sources follow this line of reasoning, according to Beer, *Leben Abrahams*, pp. 97-98.
⁵⁷"Nimrod became king over the children of Ham and founded his empire in Babel, Erech, Akkad and the Land of Sinear," b. Corion, *Sagen der Juden*, Vol. 2, p. 25; Bar Hebraeus, *Chron.* 1:8 (Budge).
⁵⁸*Sibylline Oracles*, c. 99.
⁵⁹P. Rab. Eliezer, *cit.* Beer, *Leben Abrahams*, p. 7; Pseudo-Philo, VII, 1-VIII, 1.
⁶⁰Beer, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-100.
⁶¹A. Altmann, *Biblical Motifs* (Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 76.
⁶²Beer, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
⁶³Bnehl, *Ex Oriente Lux*, Vol. 17, pp. 131f.
⁶⁴T. E. Peet, *Egypt and the Old Testament* (Liverpool, 1922), p. 57.
⁶⁵Gen. 10:25, 11:20-23, 16-19.
⁶⁶Gibson, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Vol. 7, p. 54.
⁶⁷Wacholder, *op. cit.*
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