

Bible in Chronological Order

February 27, 2022

Abram's story begins in the city of **UR**. This is modern day **IRAQ**. While Abraham's father, **TEREH**, was still living, the family decided to move to the land of **CANAAN**. First, they traveled northward 500 miles, to **HARAN**, which is modern-day, **IRAN**. That is where **TEREH** died.

What felt like a "void" in Abram and Sarai's life? NO children

(Genesis 12:1) When Abram was **75** years old, YAWEH told him to leave his **country**, his family and to GO to the land God would show him. "I will make of you, a great **NATION**, and I will **BLESS** you and make your **NAME** great and you will be a blessing to many *others*." This is called the Abrahamic **Covenant**.

Abram and Sarai made the treacherous journey south, from Haran to **Canaan**.

(Genesis 12:5-9) God said to Abram, "To your offspring, I will give this **LAND**." The journey continued through the surrounding areas. Along the way Abram built **ALTARS** as a tribute to his faith in YAWEH.

Even though Abram and Sarai obeyed God, in Canaan they were surrounded by pagans and there was a great **FAMINE** in the land. And still, they remained **childless**. This surely caused them to wonder: How will we give land to our **descendants (offspring)**, when we don't own any land or have any **children?**

Impatient, and doubting God's promise, Abram took his wife, Sarai, and his nephew, **LOT**, to the more fertile land of **EGYPT**. What made the border area, going into Egypt so dangerous?

Abram devised a plan to save his *own* life, while endangering Sarai's life. To save himself, Abram lied, claiming that Sarai was his **SISTER**. As a result, Sarai was "taken" into the Pharaoh's harem and eventually "took" her for his wife. NOTE: the word "taken" as it is used here means, means he had sexual relations with Sarai against her will.

What did Abram receive as a result of his lie? In other words, what did the Pharaoh "gift" Abram, for receiving the "gift" of Sarai?

Have you ever heard this story? And if so, how was it presented to you? In other words, whose safety and reward was of the utmost importance? Were you ever encouraged to consider Sarai's trauma, dignity, perspective, or the long-term effects of what was forced upon her? If not, why do you think that was? If so, when and what were the results of your conversation?

This story is told from a patriarchal perspective only. What potential ramifications or "unconscious" effects do you think, telling it **ONLY** from Abram's perspective, might have for young children, male and female Christian students? What message is being sent, for us to hear the expectation that Sarai should simply "obey" Abram, Pharaoh, and God? And, to never have her suffering acknowledged?

As the narrator of the movie clip suggests, Sarai couldn't protest because it would endanger the life of **ABRAM**. Scripture never considers the plight and indignity Sarai suffered as a human being due to Abram's lie and lack of disobedience to God. Readers are only asked to look at the Pharaoh's suffering and that of the Egyptian people. Does this matter? Why or why not?

Scripture says that God was not pleased with the **PHAROAH** because he had taken Sarai as his **wife**. How did YAWEH afflict Pharaoh and the people of Egypt?

Where else in the Bible will Egypt experience plagues?

Abram and his nephew, Lot, benefited greatly from Abram's lie, while many innocent people suffered. Where and how does this still happen today, in 2022?

With great wealth, the communities of **LOT** and Abram began to fight amongst themselves. Abram gave Lot his choice of the land to the East or to the West. Lot chose the **better** side, the well-watered land, the fertile plains by the **JORDAN** River. This was the Jordan Valley to the **EAST** of them. (Genesis 13:10-13)

YAWEH told Abram to look as far as he could see because that was the land YAWEH was going to give to him and all of his **DESCENDENTS**. (Genesis 13:15) Abram moved to the land of **MAMRE**, near Hebron. Again, he built an **ALTAR** to honor YAWEH there.

There was little peace in this particular region due to wars being fought in the **SIDDON** Valley (the valley of the Dead Sea). The victors plundered Sodom and **GOMORRAH**. They also captured Lot, who lived in **SODOM** at the time – a wicked and sinful place. They also took everything Lot owned.

After hearing of Lot's capture, Abram assembled his household, an army of **813** men and chased the retreating armies of his enemies. Abram was successful in recovering everything that has been taken: his nephew, **LOT**, and all of his possessions, including the **WOMEN** and other captives. The King of Sodom and the king of Salem, Melchizedek, honored Abram for his **HEROISM**. The King of Salem (an early name for **JERUSALEM**) gave Abram a verbal blessing. Abram in return gave Melchizedek a tenth of all the loot.

The grateful king of **SODOM** only wanted "his" people back and told Abram to keep all the booty that had been stolen from Sodom. (Genesis 14:21) Abram refused to keep anything? Why? (Genesis 14:20-24)

That night, Abraham had a vision. YAWEH affirmed the **COVENANT** made in Genesis 12:1, saying, "Do not be AFRAID. I am your **SHIELD**. Your reward shall be great. Look to the heavens and count the **STARS**. That is how many **DESCENDENTS** you will have." (Genesis 15:1-5)