Chapter 5: The Patriarchs: Living Legends or Legendary Lives

- Patriarchs “fathers who rule”
- Covenant between God and the forefathers of Israel
- God of the Bible Identified Himself as
  - God of Abraham
  - God of Isaac
  - God of Jacob
- God promised to fulfill His Covenant

(37) But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. (38) Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.

Exodus 3:6-16
(6) And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. (15) God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, ‘I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt, and has appeared to me, saying, ‘I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt, Luke 20:37-38
(37) But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. (38) Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.”
Playing Down the Patriarchs

- Critical Jewish Scholars join secular Scholars
- Patriarchs are not historical
- Randall Price.
- Dallas Theological Seminary vs. Hebrew University
- "Abraham never exited"
- Campfire accounts passed down through centuries. Backward projection created by nationalist Jews. (600-400BC)
- Seeking to create a glorified past

Low Chronology

- "Abraham never exited" Campfire accounts passed down through centuries. Backward projection created by nationalist Jews.

Verifying the Patriarchs

- Documentary Hypotheses
- JEDP Theory
- Four independent sources
- Combined into one document
- the Yahwist source (J): hypothetically written c. 950 BCE in the southern Kingdom of Judah.
- the Elohist source (E): hypothetically written c. 850 BCE in the northern Kingdom of Israel.
- the Deuteronomist (D): hypothetically written c. 600 BCE in Jerusalem during a period of religious reform.
- the Priestly source (P): hypothetically written c. 500 BCE by Kohanim (Jewish priests) in exile in Babylon.

PRESUPPOSITION that Moses was not the author

Maximalist: Biblical scholar who gives maximum authority to the biblical text as a source for historical and factual information about the past vs.

Minimalist: Biblical scholar who minimalizes the biblical text as an authoritative source for reliable historical and factual information about the past

Verifying the Patriarchs

- William Albright (1891-1971)
- Rejected the "Assumptions" of JEDP
- Based on current archeology
- Hittites proved JEDP was wrong

Presuppositions:
- Moses was not the author
- No ability to literally communicate
- Primitive thinking, ideas
- Facts proved assumptions were incorrect

Nuzi Tablets

Hurrians/Horites
14th Century BC
Administrative Culture, Family
World of the Patriarchs

Genesis 49: Jacob gives 12 sons equal share
Deuteronomy 21:15-17 Firstborn should receive a double portion
Wellhausen attributed contradiction to different authors
Lipit-Ishtar 20th Century
Hammurabi 18th Century (First Born Son)
“Double portion”
Other Correlations: (Kenneth Kitchen)
• Price of slaves in silver shekels (Gen. 37:28)
• Form of treaties and covenants (Gen. 21,26,31)
• Geopolitical Conditions (Gen. 14)
• Domestication of Camels

Names of the Patriarch
Names reflect the period of the times:
• Abraham, Serug, Nahor, Terah
• These names also appear in OLD Assyrian and Babylon
  • 2000 BC (20th Century BC)
• Names with i/y prefix are common
• Yitzchak/Issac Ya’akov Jacob, Yishmael/Ishmael

Places of the Patriarchs
Tel Dan/Laish “From Dan to Beersheba”
Egyptian execration texts. Dan was Laish Judges 18:7,14,27
Laish was renamed Dan in Abraham’s day it was Laish

(38) And there was no deliverer because it was far from Sidon, and they had no dealings with anyone.
It was in the valley that belongs to Beth-rehob. Then they rebuilt the city and lived in it.
(39) And they named the city Dan, after the name of Dan their ancestor, who was born to Israel; but the name of the city was Laish at the first.
Climate of the Patriarchs

- Climate changes through time
- Today the area of Israel is drier
- Compare the biblical record to other “Contemporary Evidence”
- Evidence show the area was wetter in 3rd Millennium BC
  - 3000-2000 BC
  - Dead Sea was fertile

Witness of Genesis 14

- Lot was living in Sodom
- Captured and carried away (Gen. 14:12)
- Abraham rescued Lot
- Met with Melchizedek, Priest/King of Salem
- Critics call it a fabrication
- Detailed listing of place names
  - Valley of Siddim—Salt Sea vs. 3
  - Valley of Shaveh—Kings Valley vs. 17

Plates of the Patriarchs
Fort Abram

- Built in Negev by David or Solomon 10th BC
- Defenses against Egypt
- Name “Fort of Abram”
- Used for Beerheba.
- Abraham founded Beersheba (Gen. 21:22-23)
- When a government builds a fortifications, it is natural to name them for illustrious local or national heroes. Abraham of biblical fame surely fist the bill”. Roland Hendel

Witness of Genesis 14

Gen 14:1 In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, West Semitic Lower Mesopotamia
- Arioch king of Ellasar, Appears in Mari Texts
- Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Elamite name
- Tidal king of Goli, Early form of Hittite

Not only the area of Israel is drier today than in the time of Abraham, the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) So Lot chose for himself all the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom.

Places of the Patriarchs
Fort Abram

Genesis 21:22-23
(22) At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army said to Abraham, “God is with you in all that you do.
(23) Now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my descendants or with my posterity, but as I have dealt kindly with you, so you will deal with me and with the land where you have sojourned.”
Witness of Genesis 14

Gen 14:1 In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goim,

Gen 14:2 these kings made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).

Gen 14:3 And all these joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea).

Gen 14:4 Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

Gen 14:5 In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, Gen 14:6 and the Horites in their hill country of Seir as far as El-paran on the border of the wilderness.

Tomb of Patriarchs

Genesis 23:17-20

(17) So the field of Ephron in Machpelah, which was to the east of Machpelah, the field with the cave that was in it and all the trees that were in the field, throughout its whole area, was made over

(18) to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the Hittites, before all who went in at the gate of his city.

(19) After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah east of Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan.

(20) The field and the cave that is in it were made over to Abraham as property for a burying place by the Hittites.