



AARON (ār'un; Heb. derivation uncertain). The son of Amram the Levite and Jochebed (Ex. 6:20) and the first high priest of Israel. Third in line of descent from Levi, he was the brother of Moses and his senior by three years, although he was younger than his sister *Miriam* (which see). His wife was Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab, by whom he had four sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar (6:23).

Moses' Assistant. He was eloquent of speech and divinely appointed to be Moses' mouthpiece (prophet). God specifically told Moses that Aaron would be his spokesman and that "he shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be as God to him" (Ex. 4:16). Together with Moses he withstood Pharaoh and saw the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt by great signs and miracles. In the battle with Amalek, Aaron and Hur supported Moses' arms, which held the official rod, the uplifting of which brought victory to Israel. When Moses went up to Mt. Sinai to receive the tables of the law (24:12), Aaron and his sons, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders accompanied him part of the way, being granted a glimpse of the divine presence (24:1-11). While Moses was on the mountain, Aaron in a moment of weakness and under pressure from the people made a golden image of a male calf as a visible symbol of Jehovah (32:4). The choice of this animal was doubtless suggested by the vigor and strength symbolized by it and by the people's recollection of bull worship in Egypt.

High Priest. In the divine institution of the priesthood Aaron was appointed high (Heb. "great") priest, and his sons and descendants priests. The tribe of Levi was consecrated as the priestly caste. After the Tabernacle was erected according to the divine plan and the ritual established (Ex. 24:12-31; 18; 35:1-40:38), Aaron and his sons were solemnly consecrated to their priestly office by Moses (Lev. 8:6) about 1440 B.C.

(cf. 1 Kings 6:1). Tragedy overtook the family shortly thereafter, when Nadab and Abihu, his elder sons, died because they conducted the worship improperly (Lev. 10:1-2).

The elaborate description of the high priest's garments of glory and beauty (Ex. 28:2), including the jeweled ephod, turban, and crown, is not an interpolation from a later period. Archaeology has shown that in the Desert of Sinai at Serabit el-Khadem turquoise and copper were being mined for Egyptian craftsmen at this early period. The jewels of silver and gold that the Israelites obtained from the Egyptians (11:2) are illustrated from ancient times. Artistic gold and jeweled ornaments were recovered from the ruins of Sumerian Ur over a millennium before the Mosaic period, and there is nothing in the furnishing of the Tabernacle or the clothing of the high priest that would be out of keeping with the artistic accomplishments of contemporary craftsmen.

In his invidious conduct against Moses (Num. 12:1-15) the same weak side of Aaron's character appears as in the incident of the golden calf. In the conspiracy formed against Aaron and Moses led by Korah, a Levite, and Dathan and Abiram, Reubenites, the destruction of the conspirators by the hand of God resulted in the vindication of the Aaronic priesthood (chap. 16). An added attestation of Aaron's divine priestly appointment was the budding of his rod, which was preserved for "a sign against the rebels" (17:10). Aaron shared Moses' sin at Meribah (20:8-13, 24) and consequently was not allowed to enter the Promised Land, dying soon after (20:22-29) on Mt. Hor at the borders of Edom.

Type of Christ. In Scripture typology Aaron is a figure of Christ, our High Priest (Ex. 28:1), who executes His priestly office after the Aaronic pattern (Heb. 9). This type is seen (1) in Aaron's offering sacrifice; (2) in his being anointed with



Jewish high priest

oil by *pouring* (Ex. 29:7; Lev. 8:12), prefiguring our Lord's measureless anointing with the Holy Spirit (John 3:34); and (3) in his bearing the names of the Israelite tribes upon his breast and shoulders, thus presenting them perpetually before God as our Lord bears our cause before the Father (John 17; Heb. 7:25). Aaron entered into the Holy Place on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16) as Christ has entered "heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: H. W. Soltau, *The Tabernacle, the Priesthood and the Offerings* (1884); H. G. Judge, *Journal of Theological Studies* 7 (1956): 70ff.; R. H. Mount, Jr., *The Law Prophesied* (1963), pp. 156-65; R. L. Honeycutt, *Review and Expositor* 74 (1977): 523-36.

AAR'ONITE. Descendants of Aaron, and therefore priests, who to the number of 3,700 fighting men under Jehoiada joined David at Hebron (1 Chron. 12:27). Later we find that their leader was Zadok (27:17).

AB (āb). Babylonian name of the fifth ecclesiastical and the eleventh civil month of the Jewish year. It was introduced after the Babylonian captivity, and is not mentioned in Scripture, in which it is known as the *fifth* month (Num. 33:38), i.e., July-August.

AB (āb; "father"). The first member of several Hebrew compound names, e.g., Absalom.

ABAD'DON (a-bad'don; Gk. *Abaddon*, "destruction"). The angel of the bottomless pit (Rev.

9:11), and corresponding to Apollyon, "destroyer." The word *abaddon* means destruction (Job 31:12), or the place of destruction, i.e., Hades or the region of the dead (Job 26:6; 28:22; Prov. 15:11).

ABAG'THA (a-bag'tha). One of the seven chief eunuchs of Xerxes who were commanded by the king to bring Queen Vashti into the royal presence (Esther 1:10), 483 B.C.

ABA'NA. See Abanah.

ABA'NAH (a-bā'na). One of the rivers of Damascus (2 Kings 5:12; marg., *Amanah*; Gk. *Chrysorrhoeas*, "golden river"). It is, no doubt, the present Barada, about fifteen miles NW of Damascus, and has its source in the Anti-Lebanon Mts. and flows through the city of Damascus; thence after fifty miles it is lost in the marshy lake Bahret el-Kibliyeh. It was one of the rivers that Naaman would have washed in rather than the Jordan River.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: D. Baly, *The Geography of the Bible* (1957), pp. 109ff.

AB'ARIM (ab'ā-rīm; "regions beyond"). A mountain chain SE of the Dead Sea, at the N end of which stands Mt. Nebo (Deut. 32:49). It also featured an elevated outcrop (Heb. *happisgā*) from which Moses viewed the Promised Land (3:27). Israel had an encampment in the mountains of Abarim (Num. 33:47-48).



Aaron's tomb in the mountains of Edom

AB'BA (ab'a). A customary title of God in prayer (Mark 14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). It was in common use in the mixed Aram. dialect of Palestine and was used by children in addressing their father. It answers to our "papa." The right to call God "Father" in a special and appropriative sense pertains to all who have received the testimony of the Spirit to their forgiveness. See Adoption.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: N. Turner, *Christian Words* (1980), p. 1.

AB'DA (ab'dā; "the servant," i.e., "of God").

1. The father of Adoniram, who was "over the men subject to forced labor" under Solomon (1 Kings 4:6), about 960 B.C.

2. The son of Shammua, and a Levite of the family of Jeduthun, resident in Jerusalem after the Exile (Neh. 11:17), 444 B.C. Elsewhere (1 Chron. 9:16) he is called Obadiah the son of Shemaiah.

AB'DEEL (ab'dē-ēl; "servant of God"). The father of Shelemaiah, one of those appointed to seize Jeremiah (Jer. 36:26), before 606 B.C.

AB'DI (ab'dī; "my servant").

1. A Levite and the grandfather of Ethan, and one of the singers appointed by David for the sacred service (1 Chron. 6:44).

2. A Levite, in the reign of Hezekiah, father of Kish (2 Chron. 29:12).

3. A son of Elam who put away his Gentile wife after the return from Babylon (Ezra 10:26), 456 B.C.

AB'DIEL (ab'di-ēl; "servant of God"). Son of Guni and father of Ahi, one of the Gadites resident in Gilead (1 Chron. 5:15).

AB'DON (ab'dōn; "servile").

1. The son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, of the tribe of Ephraim. He ruled Israel for eight years, about 1120-1112 B.C. The only other fact respecting him is that he had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on young asses—a mark of their consequence before the introduction of the horse into Israel. Upon his death he was buried in Pirathon (Judg. 12:13-15), a place probably six miles WSW of Shechem.

2. A son of Shashak and one of the chief Benjamites dwelling in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 8:23), before 1200 B.C.

3. The firstborn of Gibeon (or, as in NIV, Jeiel), a Benjamite resident at Jerusalem (1 Chron. 8:30; 9:36), ancestor of King Saul.

4. The son of Micah, and one of those sent by King Josiah to Huldah to inquire concerning the recently discovered books (2 Chron. 34:20), about 624 B.C. In 2 Kings 22:12 he is called Achbor (or Acbor).

5. A Levitical city of Asher, about nine miles NE of Acco (Josh. 21:30; 1 Chron. 6:74).

ABED'NEGO (a-bēd'ne-gō; "servant of Nego or Nebo"). The Babylonian god of wisdom, connected with the planet Mercury. Abednego was the Aram. name given by the king of Babylon's officer to Azariah, one of the three Jewish youths who, with Daniel, were selected by Ashpenaz (master of the eunuchs) to be educated in the language and wisdom of the Chaldeans (Dan. 1:3-7). Abednego and his friends Shadrach and Meshach were cast into the fiery furnace for refusing to worship the golden statue set up by Nebuchadnezzar, but

were miraculously delivered (chap. 3), about 603 B.C. The Heb. name *Azariah* means "Jehovah has helped." The folly of trying to change inward character by an outward name is hereby illustrated. A tyrant may change the name but not the nature of one true to God.

M.F.U.

A'BEL (ā'bēl; Heb. *hebel*, "breath"). Probably applied to the younger son of Adam and Eve anticipatively because of the brevity of his life, being slain by his elder brother, Cain. Abel, a shepherd and a righteous man (Matt. 23:35; 1 John 3:12), speaks of a regenerate believer. Cain, the farmer, on the other hand, well illustrates the unregenerate natural man, whose worship was destitute of any adequate sense of sin or need of atonement, and who offered the works of his hands instead of faith as a basis of acceptance with God. Abel by contrast "brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions" (Gen. 4:4) and shed atoning blood (Heb. 9:22). By this act he confessed his sense of sin and need of atonement and exercised faith in the interposition of a coming Substitute (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 11:4) instead of presenting the works of his hands as a ground for acceptance with God.

M.F.U.

A'BEL (Heb. *'ābēl*, "watercourse").

1. A word used as a prefix in a number of cases (2 Sam. 20:14, 18). See Abel-beth-maachah.

2. A great stone (1 Sam. 6:18) near Beth-she-mesh, upon which the Philistines set the Ark when they returned it to Israel.



Abel Beth-Maachah

A'BEL-BETH-MA'ACHAH, or **Abel Beth Maachah**, **Abel Bethmaachah** (NIV; ā'bel-beth-mā'a-kā; "brook [?] of the house of oppression," 2 Sam. 20:14-15; 1 Kings 15:20; 2 Kings 15:29). A place in the north of Palestine, identified with Abil el-Qamh, twelve miles N of Lake Huleh. In 2 Sam. 20:14, 18, it is called simply Abel. It was a place of importance, a metropolis, and called a

“mother in Israel” (20:19). It was besieged by Joab, Ben-hadad, and Tiglath-pileser (20:14; 1 Kings 15:20; 2 Kings 15:29).

A'BEL-KERA'MIM (ā'bel-keramim), or **Abel Keramim** (NIV). A place E of the Jordan to which Jephthah pursued the Ammonites (Judg. 11:33), and possibly now represented by a ruin bearing the name of Biet el-kerm—“house of the vine”—to the N of Kerak. Its location cannot be definitely determined.

A'BEL-MA'IM (ā'bel-mā'im; “water brook” [?]), or **Abel Maim** (NIV). Either the name by which Abel-beth-maachah is called in 2 Chron. 16:4 or the name of a nearby city.

A'BEL-MEHO'LAH (ā'bel-me-hō'lā; “watercourse of dancing”), or **Abel Meholah** (NIV). A place in the Jordan Valley and the home of Elisha (1 Kings 19:16; Judg. 7:22). It was in the tribe of Issachar. Identified by Nelson Glueck with Tell el-Maqlub (see *The River Jordan*, pp. 166-74), but by others with Tell Abu Sifri, a neighboring site.

A'BEL-MIZ'RAIM (ā'bel-miz'ra-im; “mourning of Egypt”), or **Abel Mizraim** (NIV). The scene of the lament of Egypt over Jacob (Gen. 50:11); the name the Canaanites gave to the “threshing floor of Atad” in Transjordan.

A'BEL-SHIT'TIM (ā'bel-shit'tim; “watercourse of acacias”), or **Abel Shittim** (NIV). The last halting place of Israel during the Exodus (Num. 33:49). Identified with Khirbet Kefrein or Abila in the plains of Moab opposite Jericho, the acacias still fringe the upper terraces of the Jordan with green. Near Mt. Peor at Shittim in the shade of the acacia groves, Israel was lured into the licentious rites of Baal worship (Num. 25:1; Josh. 2:1; Mic. 6:5), resulting in the death of twenty-four thousand by plague.

A'BEZ (ā'bez). In the KJV, the same as Ebez (so NIV), a town in Issachar (Josh. 19:20).

A'BI (ā'bī; “my father”). The daughter of Zechariah and mother of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:2). The fuller form of the name, Abijah, is given in 2 Chron. 29:1, NASB, and in 2 Kings 18:2, NIV.

A'BI (ābi; an old construct form of “father of”). Forms the first part of several Heb. proper names.

ABI'A. See Abijah.

ABI'AH. See Abijah.

A'BI-AL'BON (a'bī-al'bôn; “valiant”). One of David's mighty men (2 Sam. 23:31), called in the parallel passage (1 Chron. 11:32) by the equivalent name *Abiel* (which see).

ABI'ASAPH (a-bī'a-saf; “my father has gathered”). The last mentioned (Ex. 6:24) of the sons of Korah, the Levite. His identity with *Ebiasaph* (which see) (1 Chron. 6:23, 37) is a matter of

much uncertainty and difference of opinion. The probability is that they are the same person.

ABI'ATHAR (a-bī'a-thar; “the father is preeminent”). A high priest and fourth in descent from Eli, who alone of the sons of the high priest Ahimelech escaped death when Saul, in revenge for aid given to David, attempted to wipe out this entire line of priests (1 Sam. 22). Fleeing to David, Abiathar inquired of the Lord for him in the fierce struggle with Saul (23:9-10; 30:7) and became David's lifelong friend. When David became king, he appointed Abiathar high priest (1 Chron. 15:11). David did not depose Zadok, whom Saul had appointed after Ahimelech's decease. Both appointments accordingly stood, and Zadok and Abiathar constituted a double high priesthood (1 Kings 4:4). They jointly superintended the transfer of the Ark to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:11). During Absalom's rebellion Abiathar remained loyal to David (2 Sam. 15:24). However, he adhered to Adonijah when the latter attempted to gain the royal succession at David's death, while Zadok cast his lot with Solomon (1 Kings 1:19). For this unwise move Solomon banished Abiathar to Anathoth, deposing him from his office (2:26-27) and confining the high-priestly succession to Zadok of the elder line of Aaron's sons. In this manner the rule of Eli's house terminated in fulfillment of prophecy (1 Sam. 2:31-35).

The reference to Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar, as priest with Zadok (2 Sam. 8:17) is most unusual and is regarded by many as a simple copyist's error, in which the names of the father and the son were accidentally transposed. But this solution of the difficulty is unlikely since the references to Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar, as priest are so clear that a mistake is not easily explained (1 Chron. 18:16, LXX; 24:3, 6, 31). The best explanation seems to be that the reference is to Ahimelech, who was a son of Abiathar (2 Sam. 8:17; 1 Chron. 18:16; 24:3, 6, 31). He should not be confused with his grandfather. (See Ahimelech, no. 2.) The reference to Abiathar in Mark 2:26 as high priest at Nob (instead of his father Ahimelech, as recounted in 1 Sam. 21:1) is to be explained under the supposition either that our Lord used the name of the more famous priest of the two, who, though not then actually high priest, was at the Tabernacle at the time alluded to, or that the son acted as coadjutor to his father as Eli's sons apparently did (4:4).

M.F.U.; R.K.H.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: H. G. Judge, *Journal of Theological Studies* 7 (1956): 70ff.

A'BIB (ā'bīb; “an ear of corn”). The month the Hebrews were divinely directed to make the first of the year as a memorial of their deliverance from Egypt (Ex. 12:1-2; 13:4). The Passover and the feast of unleavened bread occurred in it, and it marked the beginning of the barley harvest. On the tenth day the Passover lamb was selected and

on the fourteenth day was slain and eaten. On the fifteenth day the Jews began harvesting by gathering a sheaf of the barley firstfruits and on the sixteenth day offered it (Lev. 23:4-14). The slaying of the lamb was typical of the death of Christ, the feast of unleavened bread of the believer's separated walk, while the waving of the sheaf of firstfruits spoke of the resurrection of Christ. The Jewish months were lunar and do not exactly correspond to ours, which are fixed. Abib corresponds to March-April, and its name was changed to *Nisan* (which see) after the Exile (Neh. 2:1; Esther 3:7).

M.F.U.

ABI'DA (a-bi'da; "father of knowledge," i.e., "knowing"). The fourth of the five sons of Midian, the son of Abraham by Keturah (Gen. 25:4; 1 Chron. 1:33).

ABI'DAN (a-bi'dan; "father is judge"). The son of Gideoni and head of the tribe of Benjamin (Num. 1:11; 2:22; 10:24; cf. 7:60, 65).

A'BIEL (a'bi-el; "God is my father").

1. A Benjamite, son of Zeror (1 Sam. 9:1) and father of Ner (14:51), who was the grandfather of King Saul (1 Chron. 8:33, 9:39). In 1 Sam. 9:1 the phrase "son of Abiel" should be "grandson of Abiel."

2. One of David's mighty men (1 Chron. 11:32). He is the same as Abi-albon (or Abi-Albon, NIV), the Arbathite (2 Sam. 23:31), about 1000 B.C.

ABIE'ZER (a'bi-ē'zer; "father of help").

1. The second son of Hammoleketh, sister of Gilead and granddaughter of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:17-18). He was the founder of the family to which Gideon belonged, and which bore his name as a patronymic (Josh. 17:2; Judg. 6:34); before 1170 B.C. He is elsewhere called Iezer, and his descendants Iezerites (Num. 26:30).

2. The Anathothite, one of David's thirty chief warriors (2 Sam. 23:27). Abiezer commanded the ninth division of the army (1 Chron. 27:12), 1000 B.C.

3. Another name for Bukki's father *Abishua* (which see; the term Abiezar appears in Josephus *Ant.* 5.11.5.).

ABIEZRITE (a-bi'ez-rīt; "father of the Ezrite"). A patronymic designation of the descendants of Abiezer (Judg. 6:11, 24; 8:32).

AB'IGAIL (ab'i-gāl; "my father rejoices").

1. The wife of *Nabal* (which see), a sheep master of Carmel (1 Sam. 25:3), about 1000 B.C. In sheep-shearing time David sent some of his young men to Nabal for a present, which was insolently refused. David was greatly enraged and set out with four hundred men to avenge the insult. Abigail, having been informed of her husband's conduct and the impending danger, went to meet David with an abundant supply of bread, grain, and wine. She prayed for David's forbear-

ance, arguing from Nabal's character (v. 25), the leadings of God by which David had been kept from murder by her coming to meet him, and the fact that God is the avenger of the wicked (v. 26). David was mollified by Abigail's tact and beauty, and he recalled his vow. Returning home, Abigail found her husband intoxicated and told him nothing of her conduct and his danger until morning. The information produced so great a shock that "his heart died within him so that he became as stone" (v. 37), and he died about ten days after. Abigail became David's wife and shared his varying fortunes, dwelling at Gath (27:3), being among the captives taken by the Amalekites from Ziklag (30:5), and accompanying her husband to Hebron when he was anointed king (2 Sam. 2:2). She bore David a son named Chileab (3:3; Kileab, NIV), also called Daniel (1 Chron. 3:1).

2. A daughter of Nahash (Jesse) and sister of David, and wife of Jether, or Ithra, an Ishmaelite, by whom she had Amasa (2 Sam. 17:25; 1 Chron. 2:16-17).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: C. E. Macartney, *Ancient Wives and Modern Husbands* (1934), pp. 123-40; id., *Great Women of the Bible* (1942), pp. 105-20; C. J. and A. A. Barber, *You Can Have a Happy Marriage* (1984), pp. 81-93.

AB'IHAIL (ab'i-hāl; "father of might").

1. The father of Zuriel and chief of the Levitical family of Merari when Moses numbered the Levites at Sinai (Num. 3:35), c. 1440 B.C.

2. The wife of Abishur (of the family of Jerahmeel) and the mother of Ahban and Molid (1 Chron. 2:29).

3. The son of Huri and one of the chiefs of the family of Gad, who settled in Bashan (1 Chron. 5:14).

4. The "daughter," i.e., descendant, of Eliab, David's oldest brother and second wife of Rehoboam. She could hardly have been the daughter of Eliab, as David, his youngest brother, was thirty years old when he began to reign, some eighty years before her marriage (2 Chron. 11:18).

5. The father of Esther and uncle of Mordecai (Esther 2:15; 9:29), c. 500 B.C.

ABI'HU (a-bi'hū; "He [God] is my father"). One of Aaron's sons, who with his brother Nadab offered "strange [i.e., "unauthorized," as in NIV] fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them" (Lev. 10:1). As a result both priests were struck dead by the divine Presence manifested in fire (v. 2). The sin of Nadab and Abihu, illustrative of the sin of a believer unto physical death (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 John 5:16), was in acting in the things of God without first seeking the mind of God. It was "will worship" (cf. Col. 2:23). Supernatural fire from the divine Presence had kindled the natural fire that burned upon the altar of burnt offering. It was the priests' duty to keep this fire burning continuously. No command, however, had been given as to how the incense should be kindled

(Lev. 16:12). Not waiting for instruction concerning taking the sacred fire from the brazen altar, but taking common fire that they themselves had kindled, they lighted the incense on the golden altar. This flagrant sacrilege at the commencement of a new dispensation (the legal) had to be divinely punished to serve as a warning, as the sin of Ananias and Sapphira at the beginning of the NT church age was similarly severely dealt with (Acts 5:1-11). Aaron's disobedient sons seem, moreover, to have committed their serious trespass under the influence of wine (cf. Lev. 10:8-9). The true source of exhilaration for the genuine spiritual priest is not wine, with its attendant temptations and perils, but the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18).

M.F.U.

ABI'HUD (a-bi'hud; "father of renown"). One of the sons of Bela, the son of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:3).

ABI'JAH (a-bi'jā; "God is my father" or "daddy").

1. A son of Jeroboam I, king of Israel. On his falling ill Jeroboam secretly sought help from the God whom he had openly forsaken. He sent his wife, disguised and bearing a present of bread and honey, to Ahijah, the prophet, who was at Shiloh. The prophet was blind but had been warned by God of her coming. He revealed to her that, though the child was to die, yet because there was found in Abijah only, of all the house of Jeroboam, "something good . . . toward the Lord," he only, of all that house, should come to his grave in peace and be mourned in Israel (1 Kings 14:14). The queen returned home, and the child died as she crossed the threshold. "And all Israel buried him and mourned for him" (1 Kings 14:18), about 922 B.C.

2. The second king of Judah, the son of Rehoboam and grandson of Solomon (1 Chron. 3:10). He is called Abijam in 1 Kings 14:31; 15:1-8 (though Abijah throughout in NIV).

Two names are given for his mother. In 1 Kings 15:2 we read, "His mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom" (cf. 2 Chron. 11:20, 22); but in 2 Chron. 13:2 it is written, "His mother's name was Micaiah [or Maacah in NIV], the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah." The solution of the difficulty probably is that the mother of Abijah had two names, and that Abishalom was her grandfather.

Abijah began to reign 913 B.C., in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam, king of Israel, and reigned three years. Considering the separation of the ten tribes of Israel as rebellion, Abijah made a vigorous attempt to bring them back to their allegiance. He marched with four hundred thousand men against Jeroboam, who met him with eight hundred thousand men. In Mt. Ephraim he addressed a speech to Jeroboam and the opposing army, in which he advocated a theocratic institution, referred to the beginning of

the rebellion, showed the folly of opposing God's kingdom, and concluded with urging Israel not to fight against God. His view of the political position of the ten tribes with respect to Judah, though erroneous, was such as a king of Judah would be likely to take. He gained a signal victory over Jeroboam, who lost five hundred thousand men, and though he did not bring Israel to their former allegiance, he took Bethel, Jeshanah, and Ephraim (Ephron, NIV), with their dependent towns, from them, and Jeroboam never again warred with him (2 Chron. 13:1-20). He imitated his father's sins (1 Kings 15:3) and had fourteen wives, by whom he had twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters (2 Chron. 13:21). He was succeeded by his son Asa (14:1).

3. The second son of Samuel, appointed with Joel, his elder brother, judge of Beersheba by his father. The brothers "turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice" (1 Sam. 8:3). By reason of their conduct Israel demanded of Samuel a king (8:2, 6; 1 Chron. 6:28), before 1030 B.C.

4. The wife of Hezron and mother of Ashhur (1 Chron. 2:24).

5. One of the sons of Becher (or Beker, NIV), the son of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:8).

6. One of the descendants of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, and chief of one of the twenty-four divisions or orders into which the whole body of the priesthood was divided by David (1 Chron. 24:10). Of these the division of Abijah was the eighth; 1000 B.C.

7. The daughter of Zechariah and mother of King Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29:1) and, consequently, the wife of Ahaz. She is also called Abi (2 Kings 18:2); before 719 B.C.

8. One of the priests, probably, who affixed their signatures to the covenant made with God by Nehemiah (Neh. 10:7). He seems to be the same (notwithstanding the great age this implies) who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel (12:4), and who had a son Zichri (12:17; Zicri, NIV); 445 B.C.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: C. F. Keil, *The Books of Kings* (1950), pp. 217ff.; W. F. Albright, *The Biblical Period from Abraham to Ezra* (1963), pp. 60f.; E. R. Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (1983), pp. 34, 81.

ABI'JAM (a-bi'jam; "father of the sea"). The name always given in the book of Kings to the king of Judah (1 Kings 14:31; 15:1, 7-8); elsewhere called Abijah (see NIV, however, where Abijah is used consistently). First Kings 14:1 refers to another person. *Abijam* is probably a clerical error, some manuscripts giving *Abijah*.

ABILE'NE (ab-i-lē'ne; Gk. *Abilēnē*, so called from its capital, Abila, which probably in turn was derived from Heb. *'abēl*, "watercourse"). A tetrarchy on the eastern slope of Lebanon, governed in the fifteenth year of Tiberius by Lysanias (Luke 3:1). Abila lay on the Barada (Abana) some

fourteen miles NW of Damascus, where the modern village of Suk Wadi Barada now stands. Tradition, in naming the spot as the location of the tomb of Abel, the first martyr, is the result of confusing Abel, properly Heb. *hebel*, with *‘abel*, “a watercourse.” Latin inscriptions found here mentioning repairs to the local road by the “Abileni” and having reference to the sixteenth legion, identify the place. Archaeological remains cover two small hills—Tell Abil and Tell umm el-Amad—and include a temple, a theater, and a basilica.

M.F.U.

ABIM/AEL (a-bim’ā-ēl; “my father is God” [?]). One of the sons of Joktan, in Arabia (Gen. 10:28; 1 Chron. 1:22). He has been supposed to be the founder of an Arabian tribe called Maël.

ABIM/ELECH (a-bim’e-lek; “my father is king,” or “royal father”). Probably a general title of royalty, as *Pharaoh* among the Egyptians.

1. The Philistine king of Gerar in the time of Abraham (Gen. 20:1-16), about 2086 B.C. After the destruction of Sodom, Abraham moved into his territory and remained some time at Gerar. Abimelech took Sarah, whom Abraham had announced to be his sister, into his harem, being either charmed with her beauty or desirous of allying himself with Abraham. God appeared to Abimelech in a dream and threatened him with death on account of Sarah, because she was married. Abimelech, who had not yet come near her, excused himself on the ground that he supposed Sarah to be Abraham’s sister. That Abimelech, in taking Sarah, should have supposed that he was acting “in the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands” (20:5) is accounted for by considering the customs of that day. The next morning Abimelech obeyed the divine command and restored Sarah to Abraham, providing him with a liberal present of cattle and servants and offering him settlement in any part of the country. He also gave him a thousand pieces of silver as, according to some, an atoning or vindicating present. Others think that the money was to procure a veil for Sarah to conceal her beauty, that she might not be coveted for her beauty. Thus she was “cleared” for not having worn a veil, which as a married woman, according to the custom of the country, she ought to have done. Some years after, Abimelech, accompanied by Phicol (or Phicol, NIV), “the commander of his army” (21:22), went to Beer-sheba to make a covenant with Abraham, which is the first league on record. Abimelech restored a well that had been dug by Abraham but seized by the herdsmen of Abimelech without his knowledge (21:22-34).

2. Another king of Gerar in the time of Isaac (Gen. 26:1-31), about 1986 B.C. Supposed to have been the son of the preceding Abimelech. Isaac sought refuge with Abimelech from famine and dwelt at Gerar. Having the same fear concerning his wife, Rebekah, as his father entertained re-

specting Sarah, he reported her to be his sister. Abimelech discovered the untruthfulness of Isaac’s statement (v. 8), whereupon he reproved him for what he had said and forbade any of his people to touch Rebekah on pain of death. The agricultural operations of Isaac in Gerar were highly successful, returning him in one year a hundredfold. He also claimed his proprietary right to the soil by reopening the wells dug by his father. The digging of wells, according to the custom of those times, gave one a right to the soil. His success made the Philistines envious, so that even Abimelech requested him to depart, fearing his power. Isaac complied, and encamped in the open country (“the valley of Gerar,” v. 17). In this valley he opened the old wells of Abraham’s time, and his people dug three new ones. But Abimelech’s herdsmen contended concerning two of these, and the patriarch moved to so great a distance that there was no dispute respecting the third. Afterward Abimelech visited Isaac at Beersheba and desired to make a covenant of peace with him. Isaac referred to the hostility that the Philistines had shown, to which Abimelech replied that they not strike him, i.e., drive him away by force, but let him depart in peace, and he closed by recognizing Isaac as being one blessed of God (vv. 27-29). Isaac entertained Abimelech and his companions with a feast, contracted the desired covenant with them, and dismissed them in peace (vv. 30-31). *See also* Gerar.

3. King of Shechem (Judg. 9). After Gideon’s death Abimelech (Judg. 9:1-5), son of Jerubbaal (Jerub-Baal, NIV), formed a conspiracy with his mother’s family, who seem to have had considerable influence in Shechem. The argument used was the advantage of the rule of one person to that of seventy. He also reminded them that he was one of themselves. Thus influenced, the Shechemites furnished him with money out of the treasure of Baal-berith, with which Abimelech hired desperate men and, returning to Ophrah with them, killed all his brothers save Jotham, the youngest, who hid himself.

At a general assemblage of the men of *Shechem* (which see) and the house of *Millo* (which see) Abimelech was declared king, c. 1108-1105 B.C. When Jotham was told of the election of Abimelech he went to the top of Mt. Gerizim, where the Shechemites were assembled for some public purpose, perhaps to inaugurate Abimelech (Kitto), and rebuked them in his famous parable of the trees choosing a king (Judg. 9:6-21).

Judgment against Abimelech was not long delayed, for in three years “God sent an evil spirit between” him “and the men of Shechem,” and they “dealt treacherously with Abimelech” (9:23). They caused ambushes to be laid in the mountains and robbed all that passed. The design was, probably, to bring the government into discredit by allowing such lawlessness, or to waylay

Abimelech himself. The insurgents found a leader in *Gaal* (which see), the son of Ebed, who, while they were cursing Abimelech in the excitement of a village feast to Baal, called upon them to revolt from Abimelech and declared that he would dethrone him. He then challenged the king to battle (9:25-29).

Zebul, the ruler of Shechem, sent word to Abimelech of the revolt and requested him to place himself in ambush that night and be prepared to surprise Gaal in the morning. As was expected, Gaal started out in the morning, was met and defeated by Abimelech, and prevented by Zebul from entering the city. The next day, when the people went out into the field, possibly to continue their vine dressing, Abimelech and two companies of troops killed them. At the same time his remaining company seized the city gates. After fighting against the city all day he took it, destroyed it utterly, and strewed it with salt (9:30-45).

When the leaders of Shechem, who took refuge in the city's tower, heard of the fate of the city they went to the temple of *Baal-berith* (which see; El-Berith, NIV). Their purpose in so doing was evidently not to defend themselves, but to seek safety at the sanctuary of their god from the vengeance of Abimelech. When he heard of this, Abimelech went with his men to Mt. Zalmon and brought from there branches of trees. These were piled against the building and set on fire. The building was consumed with all its occupants, about one thousand men and women (9:46-49).

At last the fate predicted by Jotham (9:20) overtook Abimelech. He went from Shechem to Thebez, besieged the town, and took it. This town possessed a strong tower, and in this the inhabitants took refuge. When Abimelech approached the door to set it on fire a woman threw a piece of millstone (the upper millstone) upon him, crushing his skull. Seeing that he was mortally wounded, he called upon his armor-bearer to thrust him through with a sword, lest it should be said, "A woman slew him" (v. 54). After Abimelech's death his army was dissolved. "Thus God repaid the wickedness of Abimelech, which he had done to his father, in killing his seventy brothers" (v. 56).

4. The son of Abiathar and high priest in the time of David (1 Chron. 18:16). The name is probably an error of transcription for "Ahimelech," as in NIV (2 Sam. 8:17).

5. In the title of Ps. 34 the name *Abimelech* is interchanged for that of *Achish* (which see), king of Gath, to whom David fled for refuge from Saul (1 Sam. 21:10).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: J. J. Wood, *Distressing Days of the Judges* (1975), pp. 227-29, 234-52; F. J. Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis* (1978), 2:65-72, 80-84; G. Bush, *Notes on Genesis* (1981), 1:335-46, 360-64.

ABIN'ADAB (a-bin'a-dab; "father is noble").

1. A Levite of Kiriath-jearim (or Kiriath Jearim, NIV) in whose house the Ark was deposited after it was returned by the Philistines (1 Sam. 7:1; 2 Sam. 6:3-4; 1 Chron. 13:7); before 1030 B.C.

2. The second of the eight sons of Jesse (1 Sam. 17:13; 1 Chron. 2:13) and one of the three who followed Saul to the campaign against the Philistines in which Goliath defied Israel (1 Sam. 17:13).

3. One of the four sons of King Saul (1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39; 10:2). He was slain by the Philistines in the battle of Gilboa (1 Sam. 31:2; 1 Chron. 10:2), c. 1004 B.C. His name appears as Ishvi in the list in 1 Sam. 14:49.

4. The father of one of Solomon's purveyors (or, rather, Ben-Abinadab is to be regarded as the name of the purveyor himself) who presided over the district of Dor and married Taphath, the daughter of Solomon (1 Kings 4:11); after 960 B.C.

ABIN'OAM (a-bin'ō-am; "father of pleasantness"). The father of Barak, the judge (Judg. 4:6, 12; 5:1, 12), about 1190 B.C.

ABI'RAM (a-bi'ram; "exalted father").

1. One of the sons of Eliab, a Reubenite, who with his brother Dathan, and with On, of the same tribe, joined Korah, a Levite, in conspiracy against Moses and Aaron, about 1430 B.C. He and the other conspirators were destroyed by an earthquake (Num. 16:1-33; 26:9-10; Deut. 11:6). See Korah.

2. The eldest son of Hiel, the Bethelite, who died prematurely (for such is the evident import of the statement) for the presumption or ignorance of his father, in fulfillment of the doom pronounced upon the posterity of him who should undertake to rebuild Jericho (1 Kings 16:34). Perhaps what is really involved in the prophecy and its fulfillment is infant sacrifice. It was a common practice of Canaanites to make a sacrifice of an infant and bury it in the foundation of a structure in order to placate a god and assure divine blessing on a people or a project. For prophecy, see Josh. 6:26.

AB'ISHAG (ab'i-shag; "father of error"). A beautiful young woman of Shunem, in the tribe of Issachar, who was selected by the servants of David to minister to him in his old age (1 Kings 1:3-4), 965 B.C. She became his wife, but the marriage was never consummated (1:4). Soon after David's death Adonijah sought, through the intercession of Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, the hand of Abishag. But as the control and possession of the harem of the deceased king were associated with rights and privileges peculiarly regal, Solomon supposed this demand to be part of a conspiracy against the throne. Adonijah was therefore put to death. (2:17-25). See Adonijah.

ABISH'AI (a-bish'a-ī; "father of a gift"). A son of

Zeruiah, sister of David (by an unknown father), and brother to Joab and Asahel (1 Chron. 2:16). The first we learn of Abishai is his volunteering to accompany David to the camp of Saul, about 1006 B.C. The two went down by night and found Saul and his people asleep. Abishai begged of David that he might slay Saul with his spear, which was stuck in the ground near his head (1 Sam. 26:6-12). With his brother Joab, Abishai pursued after Abner (who had just slain Asahel) until sundown, and until they had reached the hill of Ammah (2 Sam. 2:24) and aided in the treacherous assassination of Abner (3:30). In the war against Hanun, undertaken by David to punish the Ammonites for insulting his messengers, Abishai, as second in command, fought the army of the Ammonites before the gates of Rabbah and drove them headlong into the city (2 Sam. 10:10, 14; 1 Chron. 19:11, 15). The same impetuous zeal and regard for David that he showed in the night adventure to Saul's camp Abishai manifested in his desire to slay Shimei, when the latter cursed David (2 Sam. 16:9, 11; 19:21). When the king fled beyond Jordan, Abishai remained faithful to David and was entrusted with the command of one of the three divisions of the army that crushed the rebellion (18:2, 12), 967 B.C.

In the revolt of Sheba the Benjamite, David ordered Amasa to muster the forces of Judah in three days. His tardiness compelled David to again have recourse to the sons of Zeruiah, and Abishai was appointed to pursue Sheba, which he did (accompanied by Joab), leading the Cherethites (or Kerethites, NIV), the Pelethites, and all the mighty men (2 Sam. 20:4-10). Later, when David's life was imperiled by Ishbi-benob (or Ishbi-Benob, NIV), Abishai came to his help and slew the giant (21:15-17). He was chief of the three "mighty men" (23:8) who performed the chivalrous exploit of breaking through the host of the Philistines, to procure David a draught of water from the well of his native Bethlehem (23:14-17). Among the exploits of this hero it is mentioned (23:18) that he withstood three hundred men and slew them with his spear, but the occasion of this adventure, and the time and manner of his death, are equally unknown.

In 2 Sam. 8:13, the victory over the Edomites in the Valley of Salt is ascribed to David, but in 1 Chron. 18:12, to Abishai. It is hence probable that the victory was actually gained by Abishai but is ascribed to David as king and commander.

ABISH'ALOM (a-bish'a-lom). A fuller form (1 Kings 15:2, 10) of the name *Absalom* (which see).

ABISH'UA (a-bish'ū-a; "father of salvation").

1. The son of Phinehas (grandson of Aaron), and fourth high priest of the Jews (1 Chron. 6:4-5, 50; Ezra 7:5).

2. One of the sons of Bela, the son of Benjamin

(1 Chron. 8:4); possibly the same as Jerimoth (7:7).

AB'ISHUR (ab'i-shūr; "my father is a wall," i.e., "stronghold," or perhaps "mason"). The second son of Shammai, of the tribe of Judah. He was the husband of Abihail, and father of two sons, Ahban and Molid (1 Chron. 2:28-29).

AB'ITAL (ab'i-tal, "father of the dew," i.e., "fresh"). The fifth wife of David and mother of Shephatiah, who was born in Hebron (2 Sam. 3:4; 1 Chron. 3:3).

AB'ITUB (ab'i-tūb; "father of goodness," i.e., "good"). A son of Shaharaim, a Benjamite, by his wife Hushim, in Moab (1 Chron. 8:11).

ABI'UD (a-bi'ūd). A Gk. form (Matt. 1:13) of *Abihud* (which see). The great-great-grandson of Zerubbabel and father of Eliakim, among the paternal ancestry of Jesus (Matt. 1:13). He is probably the same as Judah, son of Joanna, and father of Joseph in the maternal line (Luke 3:26), and also as Obadiah, son of Arnan and father of Shechaniah (or Shecaniah, NIV) in 1 Chron. 3:21.

ABLUTION. A ceremonial washing, it might be of the person (or part thereof), clothing, vessels, or furniture, as a symbol of purification.



Ceremonial hand-washing

1. Cleansing from the taint of an inferior condition preparatory to initiation into a higher one. Of this sort was the washing with water of Aaron and his sons before they were invested with the priestly robes and anointed with the holy oil (Ex. 29:4; Lev. 8:6). The same is doubtless true of the ablution of persons and clothing that was required of the Israelites as a preparation to their receiving the law from Sinai (Ex. 19:10-15).

2. Preparation for a special act of religious service. Before they entered into the service of the Tabernacle the priests were required, under penalty of death, to wash their hands and feet. For this purpose a large basin of water always stood in readiness (Ex. 30:18-21; Lev. 16). The Egyptian priests carried the practice to a burden-

some extent. Herodotus tells us (2. 37) that they shaved their bodies every third day and that no insect or other filth might be upon them when they served the gods. The Muslim law requires ablu-tion before each of the five daily prayers, permitting it to be performed with sand when water is not to be had, as in the desert.

3. Purification from actual defilement. Eleven species of uncleanness of this nature are recog-nized by the Mosaic law (Lev. 12-15), the purifi-cation for which ceased at the end of a prescribed period, provided the unclean person then washed his body and his clothes. In a few cases, such as leprosy and the defilement caused by touching a dead body, he remained unclean seven days. The Jews afterward introduced many other causes of defilement, being equaled, however, by the Mus-lims.

4. Declaration of freedom from guilt of a par-ticular action. An instance of this is the expiation for the murder of a man by unknown hands, when the elders of the nearest village washed their hands over a slain heifer, saying, "Our hands have not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it" (Deut. 21:1-9). The Pharisees carried the practice of ablu-tion to such excess, from the af-fectation of purity while the heart was left un-clean, that our Lord severely rebuked them for their hypocrisy (Matt. 23:25).

All these practices come under the head of purification from uncleanness; the acts involved were made so numerous that persons of the stricter sect could scarcely move without con-tracting some involuntary pollution. Therefore, they never entered their houses without ablu-tion, from the strong probability that they had unknowingly contracted some defilement on the streets. They were especially careful never to eat without washing their hands (Mark 7:1-5). A dis-tinction must be made between this ceremonial washing and ordinary cleansing of the hands as a matter of decency. When the charge was made against our Lord's disciples that they ate with unwashed hands, it was not meant that they did not wash their hands at all, but that they did not do it ceremonially.

These ceremonial washings were prescribed with such minute details as to be not only bur-densome but sometimes impossible. Before the ceremony one had to decide the kind of food to be partaken of—whether it was prepared first-fruits, common food, or holy, i.e., sacrificial food. "The water was poured on both hands, which must be free from anything covering them, such as gravel, mortar, etc. The hands were lifted up, so as to make the water run to the wrist, in order to insure that the whole hand was washed and that the water polluted by the hand did not again run down the fingers. Similarly, each hand was rubbed with the other (the fist), provided the hand that rubbed had been affused; otherwise the rubbing might be done against the

head, or even against a wall. But there was one point on which special stress was laid. In the 'first affusion,' which was all that originally was re-quired when the hands were not Levitically 'de-filed,' the water had to run down to the wrist. If the water remained short of the wrist, the hands were not clean. Accordingly, the words of St. Mark can only mean that the Pharisees eat not 'except they wash their hands to the wrist.' If the hands were 'defiled' two affusions were required: the first to remove the defilement, and the sec-ond to wash away the waters that had contracted the defilement of the hands. Accordingly, on the affusion of the first waters the hands were elevat-ed, and the water made to run down at the wrist, while at the second waters the hands were de-pressed, so that the water might run off by the finger joints and tips" (Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, 2:11).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: A. Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (1956), 2:11; R. deVaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (1961), pp. 460-61.

AB'NER (ab'ner; "my father is Ner" [?]). The son of Ner and uncle of Saul (being the brother of his father, Kish).

Under Saul. Abner was a renowned warrior and the commander in chief of the army of Saul (1 Sam. 14:50), 1030 B.C. He was the person who conducted David into the presence of Saul after the death of Goliath (17:57). He was doubtless held in high esteem by Saul, and with David and Jonathan sat at the king's table (20:25). He ac-companied Saul to Hachilah (Hakilah, NIV) in his pursuit of David, who sarcastically reproached him for not guarding his master more securely (26:1, 5, 15).

Under Ish-bosheth. After the death of Saul, 1004 B.C., Abner, taking advantage of the feeling entertained in the other tribes against Judah, took Ish-bosheth, a surviving son of Saul, to Ma-hanaim, proclaimed him king, and ruled in his name. This happened five years after Saul's death, the intervening time being probably occu-pied in recovering land from the Philistines and in gaining influence with the other tribes. Desul-tory warfare was kept up for two years between the armies of David and Ish-bosheth. The only engagement of which we have an account is the battle of Gibeah, Joab and Abner commanding the opposing forces.

Slays Asahel. Abner was beaten and fled for his life but was pursued by Asahel (brother of Joab and Abishai). Not wishing to have a blood feud with Joab (for according to usage, Joab would become the avenger of his brother Asahel, in case he was slain), Abner begged Asahel to cease fol-lowing him and pursue someone else. Asahel re-fused, and Abner thrust him through with a back stroke of his spear. The pursuit was kept up by Joab and Abishai until sunset, when a conference of the leaders was held, and Joab sounded the

trumpet of recall. Abner withdrew to Mahanaim and Joab to Hebron (2 Sam. 2:8-30).

Breaks with Ish-bosheth. At last Abner took a step that was so presumptuous and significant of his consciousness of power that even the feebler Ish-bosheth protested. It was the exclusive right of the successor to the throne to cohabit with the concubines of the deceased king. Yet Abner took to his own harem Rizpah, one of Saul's concubines. The rebuke of Ish-bosheth so greatly enraged Abner that he declared his purpose of abandoning the house of Saul and allying himself with David (2 Sam. 3:6-9). To excuse his conduct he asserted that he was aware of the divine purpose concerning David.

Joins David. Abner made overtures through messengers to David, who required, as a preliminary, the restoration of his wife, Michal, who had been given to Paltiel by Saul. Abner made a tour among the elders of Israel and Benjamin, advocating the cause of David. He then went in person to David, who showed him great attention and respect, giving him and the twenty men accompanying him a feast. In return Abner promised to gather all Israel to the standard of David and was then dismissed in peace (2 Sam. 3:9-22).

Slain by Joab. Joab, returning from Hebron from a military expedition and fearing the influence of such a man as Abner, resolved to avenge his brother's death. Unknown to the king, but doubtless in his name, he sent messengers after Abner to call him back. Drawing Abner aside under the pretence of private conversation, he struck him under the fifth rib so that he died (2 Sam. 3:26-30). Abner was buried at Hebron with the honors due to a prince and chieftain, David himself following the bier (vv. 31-32). David's lamentation over Abner exonerated him in public opinion from any blame, and his declaration to his servants (3:38-39) showed that he could properly estimate the character even of an enemy and that he would have punished his murderer had he the power to do so.

ABOMINATION (Heb. *piggûl*, "filth," Lev. 7:18; *shiqqûs*, "unclean," Deut. 29:17, etc., *sheqes*, "rejected," Lev. 7:21, etc.; *tô'ebâ*, "causing abhorrence," Gen. 43:32; Gk. *bdelugma*, Matt. 24:15, etc.). This word is used to denote that which is particularly offensive to the moral sense, the religious feeling, or the natural inclination of the soul. Israel became an abomination ("stench," NIV) to the Philistines because of the antipathy caused by war (1 Sam. 13:4); David, for his distressed condition, was an abomination ("repulsive," NIV) to his friends (Ps. 88:8).

The practices of sin—such as the swellings of pride, lips of falsehood, the sacrifices of the wicked, and the foul rites of idolatry—are stigmatized as abominations (Prov. 6:16; 12:22; 15:8; Jer. 6:15; "detestable" in Prov., "loathsome" in Jer., NIV).

There are some peculiar applications of the term, to which attention is called:

1. "The Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is loathsome [*tô'ebâ*; "detestable," NIV] to the Egyptians" (Gen. 43:32). The explanation probably is that the Egyptians thought themselves ceremonially defiled if they ate with strangers. The primary reason may have been that the cow was the most sacred animal to the Egyptians, and the eating of it was obnoxious to them; whereas it was eaten and sacrificed by the Jews and most other nations. The Jews themselves, in later times, considered it unlawful to eat or drink with foreigners in their houses, or even to enter their dwellings (John 18:28; Acts 10:28; 11:3).

2. Joseph told his brothers to answer when questioned by Pharaoh, "Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers." Joseph adds as a reason for giving this statement, "That you may live in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is loathsome ["detestable," NIV] to the Egyptians" (Gen. 46:34). The origin of this feeling is nowhere given either in sacred or secular history, but the fact is beyond dispute, being amply attested by the evidence of the monuments, on which shepherds are always represented in a low and degrading attitude.

3. When Pharaoh told the Israelites to sacrifice to "your God" without going to the desert, Moses replied, "It is not right to do so, for we shall sacrifice to the Lord our God what is an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice what is an abomination ["detestable," NIV] to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not then stone us?" (Ex. 8:26). Some think the abomination to consist in the sacrifice of the cow. Others (K. & D., *Com.*, ad loc.) think that "the Israelites would not carry out the rigid regulations observed by the Egyptians with regard to the cleanness of the sacrificial animals, and in fact would not observe the sacrificial rites of the Egyptians at all." The Egyptians would, doubtless, consider this a manifestation of contempt for themselves and their gods, and this would so enrage them that they would stone the Israelites.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: R. L. Harris, ed., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (1980), 2:955, 976.

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION. Interpreted by premillennialists as the idolatrous image to be set up by the final Antichrist (the "beast," or "man of lawlessness" of 2 Thess. 2:3-4) in the restored Temple at Jerusalem in the latter half of Daniel's seventieth week (Dan. 9:27; 12:11). For the first part of the three and one-half days (years) of the prophetic week of years, the Antichrist keeps his covenant with the Jews. At the beginning of the last half of the week he breaks it (Zech. 11:16-17), compelling the Jews to worship his image. This is "the abomination (idol) of

the desolator” or “the idol that causes desolation” (cf. Dan. 11:31; 12:11), inaugurating the period of “Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7), a time of terrible suffering to Palestinian Jews of the end time, of which our Lord spoke (Matt. 24:15). In Dan. 11:31 the reference is to the act of Antiochus Epiphanes, prototype of the final Antichrist, who, in June 168 B.C. desecrated the Temple at Jerusalem. He built an altar to Jupiter Olympus on the altar of burnt offering, dedicated the Temple to this heathen deity, and offered swine’s flesh. Premillennialists maintain that neither Antiochus Epiphanes nor the Romans under Titus in A.D. 70 exhausted Daniel’s prophecy, which still awaits fulfillment. Amillennial interpretation, however, sees a fulfillment in the advance of the Romans against Jerusalem in A.D. 70 with their image-crowned standards, which were regarded as idols by the Jews.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: D. Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (1956), pp. 418-37; L. Gaston, *No Stone on Another* (1970); J. F. Walvoord, *Daniel: Key to Prophetic Revelation* (1971), pp. 235-37; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (1975), 1:74-75.

A’BRAHAM (ā’bra-ham; “father of a multitude”). Up to Gen. 17:5, also in 1 Chron. 1:27; Neh. 9:7, he is uniformly called Abram, “high father.” The name *Abram*—Abu-ramu, “the exalted father”—is found in early Babylonian contracts.

Family. Abraham was a native of Chaldea, and descendant in the ninth generation from Shem, the son of Noah. His father’s name was Terah, and he was born in Ur, 2161 B.C. (Gen. 11:27).

Personal History. The life of Abraham, from his call to his death, consists of four periods, the commencement of each of which is marked by a divine revelation of sufficient importance to constitute a distinct epoch.

The First Period. The call and Abraham’s journey to Canaan, to Egypt, and back again to Canaan occurred during this period.

Moves to Haran. When Abraham was about seventy years of age he, with his father, Terah, his nephew Lot, and his wife Sarah, went to live in Haran (Gen. 11:27-31). The reason for this movement is given in Acts 7:2-3: “The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, ‘Depart from your country and your relatives, and come into the land that I will show you.’”

Departs from Haran. At the death of his father the call to Abraham was renewed. “Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you’” (Gen. 12:1). A condition was annexed to the call that he should separate from his father’s house and leave his native land. He left his brother Nahor’s family (who had also come to Haran, cf. Gen. 22:20, 23;

24:29; and 27:43) and departed, taking with him Lot, probably regarded as his heir (*Josephus Ant.* 1.7.1), and all his substance, to go “not knowing where he was going” (Heb. 11:8). Genesis 12:5 states that Abraham “set out for the land of Canaan,” but Heb. 11:8 states that “he went out, not knowing where he was going.” At first the name of the country was not revealed to him. It is designated simply as a “land which I will show you” (Gen. 12:1). But even if the name *Canaan* had been mentioned at the onset, it might still be true that he went forth “not knowing where he was going.” For, in those days of slow transit, imperfect communication, and meager geographical knowledge, the mere name of a country several hundred miles distant would convey almost no idea of the country itself (Haley).



Arrival in Canaan. He traveled until he came into the land of Canaan, and there he formed his first encampment beside the oak of Moreh, between the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim, where his strong faith was rewarded by the second promise that his seed should possess this land. Abraham built “an altar there to the Lord who had appeared to him” (12:6-7). It is probable that the Canaanites were jealous of Abraham, and that he therefore soon removed to the mountainous district between Bethel and Ai, where he also built an altar to Jehovah.

In Egypt. He still moved southward until, at length, compelled by a famine, he went into Egypt. Fearing that the beauty of Sarah would tempt the Egyptians and endanger his life, he caused her to pass for his sister, which was partly true, for she was his half sister, having the same father but a different mother (Gen. 20:12). Sarah was taken to the royal harem, and Abraham was loaded with valuable gifts which he did not deserve, that could not be refused without an insult to the king. Warned of his mistake, Pharaoh summoned Abraham, and indignantly rebuked him for his subterfuge. He then dismissed Abraham, who went out of Egypt, taking his wife and Lot and his great wealth with him (Gen. 12).

Return to Canaan. Having reached his former encampment between Bethel and Ai, he again established the worship of Jehovah (Gen. 13:3-4). The increased wealth of Abraham and Lot became the cause of their separation. The country did not furnish sufficient pasture for the flocks and herds of both Abraham and Lot, and dissensions arose between their herdsmen. In order to avoid strife and consequent weakness before their enemies, Abraham proposed that they occupy different districts. He gave the choice of locality to Lot, who selected the plain of the Jordan and pitched his tent there. The childless Abraham was rewarded with a third blessing, in which God reiterated His promise to give him the land and a posterity as numerous as the dust of the earth. Then Abraham moved his tent, dwelt in Mamre, near Hebron, and built an altar (Gen. 13).

Rescue of Lot. Lot was now involved in danger. The five cities of the plain had become tributary to Chedorlaomer (Kedorlaomer, NIV), king of Elam. In the thirteenth year of their subjection they revolted, and Chedorlaomer (Kedorlaomer) marched against them with three allied kings. The kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fell, their cities were spoiled, and Lot and his goods were carried off (Gen. 14:1-12). Word was brought to Abraham, who immediately armed his dependents, 318 men, and with his Amorite allies overtook and defeated them at Dan, near the springs of Jordan. Abraham and his men pursued them as far as the neighborhood of Damascus and then returned with Lot and all the men and goods that had been taken away, about 2080 B.C.

Meeting with Melchizedek. Arriving at Salem on their return, they were met by *Melchizedek* (which see), king of Salem, and "priest of God Most High," who brought him refreshments. He also blessed Abraham in the name of the most high God, and Abraham presented him with a tenth of the spoils. By strict right, founded on the war usages still subsisting in Arabia, Abraham had a claim to all the recovered goods. The king of Sodom recognized this right, but Abraham refused to accept anything, even from a thread to a shoe latchet, lest any should say, "I have made Abram rich" (Gen. 14:17-24).

The Second Period. The promise of a lineal heir and the conclusion of the covenant (Gen. 15-16) took place in this period.

Vision of Abraham. Soon after this Abraham's faith was rewarded and encouraged by a distinct and detailed repetition of former promises and by a solemn covenant contracted between himself and God. He was told, and he believed, that his seed should be as numerous as the stars of heaven, that his posterity should grow up into a nation under foreign bondage, and that after four hundred years they should come up and possess the land in which he sojourned (Gen. 15).

Birth of Ishmael. Abraham had lived ten years in Canaan, and still he had no child. Sarah, now

seventy-five years of age, followed contemporary custom and allowed Abraham to take Hagar, her Egyptian handmaid, who bore him Ishmael (Gen. 16), 2075 B.C.

The Third Period. The establishment of the covenant, the change of Abraham's name, and the appointment of the covenant sign of circumcision (Gen. 17-21) occurred during this period.

Change of Name. Thirteen more years passed, and Abraham reached his ninety-ninth year. God appeared to him and favored him with still more explicit declarations of His purpose. He changed his name from Abram to Abraham, renewed his covenant, and in token of it commanded that he and the males of his company should receive circumcision. Abraham was assured that Sarah, then ninety years old, should in a year become the mother of Isaac, the heir of the special promises. Abraham wavered in faith and prayed for Ishmael, whom God promised abundantly to bless, but declared that He would establish his covenant with Isaac.

Circumcision. That very day Abraham, his son Ishmael, and all the males of his household were circumcised (Gen. 17).

Visit of Angels. Abraham was favored, shortly after, with another interview with God. Sitting in his tent door under the oaks of Mamre he saw three travelers approaching and offered them his hospitality. They assented, and partook of the fare provided, Abraham standing in respectful attendance, according to oriental custom. These three persons were, doubtless, the "Angel of Jehovah" and two attending angels. The promise of a son by Sarah was renewed, and her incredulity rebuked. The strangers continued their journey, Abraham walking some way with them.



Bedouin tent

Destruction of Sodom. The Lord revealed to him the coming judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah; and then followed that wondrous pleading in behalf of the cities (Gen. 18). Abraham rose early the next morning to see the fate of the cities

and saw their smoke rising “up as the smoke of a furnace” (19:27-29), 2063 B.C.

Sarah Taken by Abimelech. After this Abraham journeyed southward, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. Abimelech, king of Gerar, sent for and took Sarah, but was warned of God in a dream and sent her back the next morning to Abraham, whom he reproved for the deceit he had employed. He was healed in answer to Abraham’s prayer (Gen. 20).

Isaac Born. At length, when Abraham was one hundred years old, and Sarah ninety, the long-promised heir was born, 2061 B.C. The altered position of Ishmael in the family excited the ill will of himself and his mother. This was so apparent in the mocking behavior of Ishmael at the weaning of Isaac that Sarah insisted that he and Hagar should be sent away, to which Abraham reluctantly consented. Abraham, after settling a dispute concerning a well taken by Abimelech’s servants, made a treaty with him (Gen. 21).

The Fourth Period. In this period occurred the test of Abraham’s faith and his final years.

Abraham’s Great Trial (Gen. 22-25:11), 2036 B.C. When Isaac was nearly grown (twenty-five years old, says Josephus *Ant.* 1.13.2) God subjected Abraham to a terrible trial of his faith and obedience. He commanded him to go to Mt. Moriah (perhaps where the Temple afterward stood) and there offer up Isaac, whose death would nullify all his hopes and the promises. Probably human sacrifices already existed, and therefore the peculiar trial lay in the singular position of Isaac and the improbability of his being replaced. Abraham decided to obey, because “he considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead” (Heb. 11:19). Assisted by his two servants, he made preparations for the journey and started early the next morning. On the third day he saw the place and told his servants that he and his son would proceed on farther to worship, then return. Upon Isaac’s asking, “Where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” Abraham replied, “God will provide for Himself the lamb.” The altar was built and Isaac placed upon it. The uplifted hand of the father was arrested by the angel of Jehovah, and a ram caught in the thicket was substituted for Isaac. Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh, “The Lord Will Provide.” The promises formerly made to Abraham were then confirmed in the most solemn manner. Abraham returned to his young men and with them went to Beer-sheba and dwelt there (Gen. 22:1-19).

Some have found it difficult to reconcile God’s command to sacrifice Isaac with His prohibition of human sacrifices (Lev. 18:21; 20:2). We answer, “God’s design was not to secure a certain *outward act*, but a certain *state of mind*, a willingness to give up the beloved object to Jehovah” (Haley). “The divine command was given in such a form that Abraham could not understand it in any other way than as requiring an outward

burnt offering, because there was no other way in which Abraham could accomplish the complete surrender of Isaac than by an actual preparation for really offering the desired sacrifice” (K. & D., *Com.*). Moreover, any criticism of Abraham’s sacrifice of his son must be modified by his evident belief in God’s ability to raise that son from the dead.

Death of Sarah. The next event recorded in Abraham’s life is the death of Sarah, 127 years of age, at or near *Hebron* (which see). Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite the cave of *Machpelah* (which see), the field in which it stood, and all the trees in the field, and there he buried Sarah (Gen. 23).

Marriage of Isaac. His next care was to procure a suitable wife for Isaac. He commissioned his eldest servant to go to Haran, where Nahor had settled, and get a wife for his son from his own family. The servant went and, directed by God, chose Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor. In due time he returned, and Rebekah was installed in Sarah’s tent (Gen. 24). Some time after Abraham took another wife, Keturah, by whom he had several children. These, together with Ishmael, seem to have been portioned off by their father in his lifetime and sent away to the E, that they might not interfere with Isaac.

Death. Abraham died when he was 175 years old and was buried by Isaac and Ishmael in the cave of Machpelah (Gen. 25), 1986 B.C.

Man of Faith. The spiritual experience of Abraham was marked by four far-reaching crises in which his faith was tested, and which, in each case, called forth the surrender of something naturally most dear to him: first, his giving up country and kindred (Gen. 12:1); second, his breaking off with his nephew, Lot, particularly close to Abraham by virtue of kinship as a fellow believer and possible heir (Gen. 13:1-18); third, the abandonment of his own cherished plans for Ishmael and his being called upon to center his hope in the promise of the birth of Isaac (Gen. 17:17-18); fourth, the supreme test of his mature life of faith in his willingness to offer up Isaac, his only son, whom he loved passionately and in whom all his expectations centered (Gen. 22:1-19; Heb. 11:17-18).

Man of Covenant Promise. As a friend of God and a man who implicitly trusted the divine promises, Abraham was the recipient of an important covenant involving not only himself, but his posterity, natural as well as spiritual. The Abrahamic covenant as originally given (Gen. 12:1-4) and reaffirmed (Gen. 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8), contains the following elements: (1) “I will make you a great nation,” fulfilled: (a) in a natural posterity, “as the dust of the earth,” the Hebrew people (13:16, John 8:37), (b) in a spiritual progeny (John 8:39; Rom. 4:16; Gal. 3:6-7, 29), comprising all persons of faith, whether Jew or Gentile, (c) in the descendants of Ishmael

(Gen. 17:18-20). (2) "I will bless you," fulfilled in a double sense: (a) temporally (Gen. 13:14-18; 15:18) and (b) spiritually (Gen. 15:6; John 8:56). (3) "And make your name great." In three great world religions—Judaism, Islam, and Christianity—Abraham is revered as one of the eminent men of all time. (4) "And so you shall be a blessing." By his personal example of faith and that faith as manifested in his descendants, Abraham has been a worldwide blessing. (5) "I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse." This has been remarkably fulfilled in the Jewish dispersion. Nations who have persecuted the Jews have fared ill, and those who have protected them have prospered. Prophecy, both fulfilled and unfulfilled, substantiates this principle (Deut. 30:7; Mic. 5:7-9; Hag. 2:22; Zech. 14:1-3; Jer. 50:11-18; 51:24-36; Ezek. 25:2; 26:2-3). (6) "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." This is the great messianic promise fulfilled in Abraham's descendant, Christ (John 8:56-58; Gal. 3:16).

Abraham and Archaeology. Archaeological evidence related to the time of Abraham has been found in Mesopotamia and Palestine.

Life in Ur. The biblical chronology would place Abraham's birth in lower Mesopotamia about 2161 B.C. According to one chronology, he lived there under the new Sumeru-Akkadian empire of Ur Nammu, the founder of the famous Third Dynasty of Ur (c. 2135-2035 B.C.), who took the title of "King of Sumer and Akkad," and whose mightiest work was the erection of the great ziggurat (temple tower) at Ur. Abraham left "Ur of the Chaldeans" (Gen. 11:31) when it was entering the heyday of its commercial and political prestige. According to the new minimal chronology, Abraham was born in Ur and left it during the period when the hated Gutti ruled the land (2180-2070 B.C.). He then left Haran for Canaan about the time Ur entered her golden age (Ur III period). The new chronology dates Ur III 2070-1960 B.C. It was the appearance of "the God of glory" to him "when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran" (Acts 7:2) that enabled Abraham to leave a famous center of wealth and culture for an unknown destination. In addition to a lucrative woolen trade, Ur was the center of numerous other industries that centered about the worship of the moon god Sin (Nannar) and his consort Nin-gal. The great temples and ziggurat of this deity made Ur a mecca for thousands of pilgrims. The far-flung commercial ventures of Ur gave her so much economic power in Mesopotamia that she virtually controlled the region. The total population of the city-state at that time has been estimated at 360,000.

At Haran. The town of Haran (Gen. 11:31; 12:5) in NW Mesopotamia to which Abram migrated on his way to Canaan is still in existence on the Balikh River sixty miles W of Tell Halaf. It was a flourishing city in the nineteenth and

eighteenth centuries B.C., as is known from frequent references to it in cuneiform sources (Assyr. *Harranu*, "road"). It was on the great east-west trade route, and like Ur, it was the seat of the worship of the moon god. Whether Terah chose Haran as a place to settle because he had not made a clean break with the idolatry of his youth, or perhaps for commercial reasons, can only be surmised. The city of Nahor, which was Rebekah's home (Gen. 24:10) is also attested by the Mari Tablets, discovered in 1935 and belonging to the eighteenth century B.C. Evidence of Hebrew occupation of this region also appears in names of Abraham's forefathers, which correspond to the names of towns near Haran: Serug (Assyr. *Sarugi*) and Terah (*Til Turakhi*, "Mound of Terah") in Assyrian times. Other immediate ancestors of Abraham listed in Gen. 11:10-30 have left their trace in this territory called Paddan-Aram (Paddan Aram, NIV; Aram. "field or plain of Aram," Gen. 25:20; 28:2-7). Reu corresponds to later names of towns in the Middle Euphrates Valley, and Peleg recalls later Paliga on the Euphrates just above the mouth of the Habur River.

In Canaan. After the death of Terah, Abraham left Haran and came into Canaan (Gen. 12:4-5). Archaeological and historical studies show that in Palestine and much of Syria deurbanization had set in as early as the twenty-fourth century B.C. and certainly characterized the land during the period 2200-2000 B.C. Newer discoveries indicate that this abandonment of towns resulted not from invasion but from a significant shift to drier conditions combined with a greatly weakened economy and disruption of trade systems. After 2000 B.C. reurbanization of Palestine gradually occurred once more, but the central and southern hill country of Palestine continued to be rather thinly settled even after the rapid growth of urbanization elsewhere. Thus the patriarchal period in Palestine fits admirably into what is now known of the historical context. No great cities or city-states could have confronted the patriarch. And when reurbanization occurred, it was less pronounced in the central and southern hill country, where the patriarchs spent most of their time.

The places that appear in connection with the movements of the patriarchs are not the sites of later periods, such as Mizpah or Gibeah, but include Shechem, Bethel, Dothan, Gerar, and Jerusalem (Salem)—all known by means of exploration and excavation to have been inhabited in the patriarchal age. The five cities of the plain of the Jordan (Gen. 13-14) that appear prominently in the story of Abraham and Lot, namely, Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar also belong to this early period (c. 2065 B.C.), being located at the southern end of the Dead Sea. This area "full of tar pits" (Gen. 14:10) was overwhelmed by a catastrophe of fire, which with the

salt and sulphur of the region, doubtless accompanied by earthquakes common in this area of the Arabah, was the natural aspect of the supernatural destruction of the cities of the plain. These cities are now probably under the slowly rising waters at the southern end of the Dead Sea. The account of Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt is reminiscent of the great salt mass, five miles long, stretching N and S at the SW end of the Dead Sea.

Clash with the Mesopotamian Kings. The fourteenth chapter of Genesis is the pivotal passage in the patriarchal narratives from a historical point of view. Although archaeology has not yet furnished a link to tie it into the general context of ancient Near Eastern history, evidence is continually increasing of its historical character, which used to be almost universally denied by critics. A remarkable fact about this chapter, demonstrating its great age and authenticity, is its use of archaic words and place names, often appended with a scribal explanation to make them comprehensible to a later generation when the name had changed. Examples are "Bela (that is, Zoar)" in v. 2; "the vale of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea)" in v. 3; "En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh)" in v. 7; "the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley)" in v. 17. Interesting examples of the confirmation of place names occur in the reference to Ashteroth-karnaim and Ham (Gen. 14:5). These two cities, mentioned in the invasion of Chedorlaomer and the kings with him, have both been shown to have been occupied at this early period, as archaeological examination of their sites has demonstrated. Ham was first surmised to be identical with a modern place by the same name in eastern Gilead, and examination of the site by A. Jirku and W. F. Albright (1925 and 1929) disclosed a small but ancient mound going back to the Bronze Age. Thutmose III lists the place among his conquests in the early fifteenth century B.C. Archaeology has likewise confirmed the general line of march followed by the invading kings, later known as "The King's Highway."

Added Archaeological Light. The site of Nuzi near modern Kirkuk (excavated between 1925 and 1941) dates from the fifteenth century B.C. and has yielded several thousand tablets illustrating vividly adoption (cf. Gen. 15:2), marriage laws (cf. Gen. 16:1-16), rights of primogeniture (Gen. 25:27-34), the teraphim (Gen. 31:34), and other customs and practices appearing in the life of Abraham and the Hebrew patriarchs. Also the discoveries at *Mari* (which see), a site near modern Abou Kemal on the Middle Euphrates, since 1933 have shed a great deal of indirect light on the age of Abraham. Moreover, the name *Abraham* (not of course the biblical character) has been found in Mesopotamia in the second millennium B.C., showing that it was actually a name in use at an early date. Certain radical literary critics such as J. L. Thompson (*The Historicity of the*

Patriarchal Narratives [1974]) and J. Van Seters (*Abraham in History and Tradition* [1975]) have dismissed the validity of Early and Middle Bronze Age archaeology for the dating of Abraham. Van Seters actually proposed locating the patriarch about 600 B.C., but Near Eastern history simply does not support such a late date. Additional archaeological evidence to that inadequately "disproved" or suppressed by Thompson and Van Seters supports a much earlier date than they propose through the use of literary critical methods. See Sacrifice, Human. H.R.H.; H.F.V.; R.K.H.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: J. O. Dykes, *Abraham the Friend of God* (1877); H. G. Thomkins, *Abraham and His Age* (1897); W. H. Thomson, *Life and Times of the Patriarchs* (1912); H. H. Rowley, *Recent Discovery and the Patriarchal Age* (1949); F. B. Meyer, *Abraham: The Obedience of Faith* (1953); A. Edersheim, *Bible History* (1954), 1:51-106; J. Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past* (1959), pp. 66-73, 145f., 179, 461, 466, 480f., 490, 497f.; C. F. Pfeiffer, *The Patriarchal Age* (1961); K. A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament* (1966); A. C. Swindell, *Expository Times* 87 (1975): 50-53; D. J. Wiseman, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 134 (1977): 123-30; F. J. Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis* (1978), 1:364-2:112; G. Bush, *Notes on Genesis* (1981), 1:188-2:58.

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM. The phrase "to be in one's bosom" applies to the person who so reclines at the table that his head is brought almost into the bosom of the one sitting next above him. To be in Abraham's bosom signified to occupy the seat next to Abraham, i.e., to enjoy felicity with Abraham. Jesus, accommodating His speech to the Jews, describes the condition of Lazarus after death by this figure (Luke 16:22-23). "Abraham's bosom" is also an expression of the Talmud for the state of bliss after death. Father Abraham was, to the Israelites, in the corrupt times of their later superstitions, almost what the virgin Mary is to the Roman church. He was constantly invoked as though he could hear the prayers of his descendants, wherever they were; and he was pictured standing at the gate of paradise to receive and embrace his children as they entered, and the whole family of his faithful descendants was gathered to his arms.

A'BRAM (ā'bram; "high father"). The original name (Gen. 17:5) of Abraham.

ABRO'NAH (ab-rō'na; "passage"). The thirtieth station of the Israelites on their way from Egypt to Canaan (Num. 33:34-35). Since it lay near Ezion-geber on the W as they left Jotbathah, it was probably in the plain "Kā'a en-Nākb," immediately opposite the pass of the same name at the head of the Elamitic branch of the Red Sea. In the KJV this term is rendered Ebronah.

AB'SALOM (ab'sa-lom; "father of peace"). The third son of David, and his only one by Maacah, the daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur (2 Sam. 3:3), born about 1000 B.C. He was known for his

personal beauty—"In all Israel was no one as handsome as Absalom" (2 Sam. 14:25). Though his hair was doubtless very heavy, and thus was considered beautiful, the weight given, two hundred shekels, is too much and is evidently a scribal error (K. & D., *Com.*; 2 Sam. 14:26).

Avenges Tamar. Absalom's sister, Tamar, became the object of the lustful desire of Amnon, her half brother, David's eldest son, and was violated by him (2 Sam. 13:1-18). According to Eastern notions the duty of avenging his sister's wrong fell upon Absalom. He therefore took Tamar and kept her secluded in his own house, saying nothing to Amnon "either good or bad." After two years had passed he found an opportunity for revenge. He then invited all his brothers, including Amnon, to a great sheep-shearing at Baal-hazor, and, to lull suspicion, requested the presence of his father also. Amid the mirth of the feast, while they were warm with wine, the servants of Absalom, at a preconcerted signal, fell upon Amnon and killed him (13:23-29). Absalom fled to his grandfather Talmai and remained there three years (vv. 37-38).

Return to Jerusalem. David, yearning for his exiled son Absalom (v. 39), yielded easily to the scheme of Joab and permitted Absalom to return to Jerusalem, but not to appear before him. Absalom lived for two whole years in Jerusalem, and then sent for Joab, who refused to see him until Absalom ordered his servants to burn Joab's barley field. Then Joab secured an interview for him with the king (2 Sam. 14).

Preparations for Revolt. But Absalom proved himself false and faithless. He secretly plotted a revolt, winning over the people by his handsomeness and charisma and by the magnificence of his trappings, riding in a chariot with fifty outriders. He also fostered the discontent of the people by insinuations against his father's justice. Other causes, doubtless, were favorable for Absalom: the affair of Bathsheba, the probable disaffection of Judah for being merged in one common Israel, and less attention on the part of David, because of his age, to individual complaints (2 Sam. 15:1-6).

Revolt. When the plot was ripe, Absalom obtained leave to go to Hebron, to pay a vow that he had made at Geshur in case he should be permitted to return to Jerusalem. (The reference in 2 Sam. 15:7 to "forty years" is a scribal error, for David reigned but forty years in all [1 Kings 2:11], and he certainly had reigned many years before Absalom's rebellion. The Syr. and Arab. versions read "four years," and with this Josephus and NIV agree.) Absalom had sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, summoning those favorable to his cause to assemble at Hebron, where he went attended by two hundred unsuspecting adherents (2 Sam. 15:7-11). His next step was to send for Ahithophel, David's counselor, and secure his approval and advice

(15:12), Ahithophel being an oracle in Israel (16:23).

Entry into Jerusalem. When David heard the sad tidings of revolt he at once prepared for flight and, leaving Jerusalem, went to Mahanaim, beyond the Jordan (2 Sam. 15:13-17). Absalom now entered Jerusalem (15:37) and, through the advice of Ahithophel, publicly took possession of the portion of his father's harem left in the city. The motive in this latter act was to gain the more unreserved support of the people, from the assurance that any reconciliation between Absalom and his father would thereafter be impossible (16:20-22). Absalom had already met Hushai, who had been sent to join him by David, that he might be instrumental in thwarting the counsels of Ahithophel (15:33-37; 16:16-19). A council of war was held to consider the course to be pursued against David. Ahithophel advised the immediate pursuit and death of the king—that one death would close the war. Hushai, to gain time for David, urged the king's skill and bravery, the number and might of his warriors, and the possibility and disastrous consequences of defeat, and he advised a general gathering against David and the total annihilation of him and his followers. The advice was accepted by Absalom. Information was secretly sent to David, who then went beyond Jordan and there collected a force sufficient to oppose Absalom (17:1-14, 21-24).

Anointed King. Absalom was formally anointed king (2 Sam. 19:10), appointed Amasa captain of his host, and crossed over Jordan in pursuit of his father (17:25-26). A battle was fought in the wood of Ephraim. The army of Absalom was defeated, twenty thousand were slain, and a still greater number perished in the defiles of the forest.

Death. Absalom fled on a swift mule, and as he was riding through the forest, his "head" became wedged between two branches. When he raised his hands to try to dislodge himself, he let go of the bridle and the unrestrained mule kept going. More than likely Absalom was riding without a saddle, and he simply slipped off the animal's back and hung suspended in midair. The text does not say he was caught by his hair; the historian Josephus stated that. He probably had a helmet over his hair on this occasion; so his hair would not have caught in the branches. Joab, being informed of what had happened to Absalom, hastened to the spot and killed him, notwithstanding David's request that he should be spared. The body was taken down and cast into a pit, over which the people raised a great heap of stones as a mark of abhorrence, a burial that the historian contrasts with the splendid monument prepared by Absalom for himself in the "King's Valley" (2 Sam. 18:1-18), about 967 b.c. The so-called tomb of Absalom that stands today in the Valley of the Kidron can have no connection with the monument Absalom erected for

himself; it probably dates to the first century A.D. Absalom had three sons and one daughter, the latter named Tamar (14:27), who alone survived him (18:18) and became the mother of Maacah, the wife of Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:20-21).

H.F.V.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: C. E. Macartney, *Chariots of Fire* (1951), pp. 93-103; R. N. Whybray, *The Succession Narrative: A Study of 2 Sam. 9-20* (1968); W. G. Blaikie, *The Second Book of Samuel* (1978); R. Battenhouse, *Christianity and Literature* 31, no. 3 (1982): 53-57; L. Rost, *The Succession to the Throne of David* (1982).

ABSTINENCE. A general term signifying to refrain from something or some action. In the ecclesiastical sense it means the refraining from certain kinds of food or drink on certain days.

Jewish. The first mention of abstinence in Scripture is found in Gen. 9:4, where the use of blood was forbidden to Noah. The next is in Gen. 32:32: "Therefore, to this day the sons of Israel do not eat the sinew of the hip which is on the socket of the thigh, because he touched the socket of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip." The law confirmed abstinence from blood (Lev. 3:17) and the use even of lawful animals if the manner of their death rendered it likely that they were not properly bled (Ex. 22:31; Deut. 14:21). Whole classes of animals that might not be eaten are given in Lev. 11. *See* Animal: clean and unclean. Certain parts of lawful animals, as being sacred to the altar, were forbidden, namely, the caul (or fat covering the liver), the kidneys and the fat upon them, the fat covering the entrails, and also the "entire fat tail" (Lev. 3:9-11). Everything consecrated to idols was also interdicted (Ex. 34:15). While engaged in their official duties, the priests were commanded to abstain from wine and strong drink (Lev. 10:9), and the Nazirites had to abstain from strong drink and the use of grapes during the whole time of their separation (Num. 6:3). The *Rechabites* (which see) voluntarily assumed a constant abstinence from wine (Jer. 35:6). The *Essenes* (which see), a Jewish sect, were stringent in their abstinence, refusing all pleasant food, eating nothing but coarse bread and drinking only water, while some abstained from all food until evening.

Christian. Some among the early Christian converts thought themselves bound by Mosaic regulations respecting food, and abstained from flesh sacrificed to idols and from animals accounted unclean by the law. Others considered this a weakness, and boasted of the freedom with which Christ had set them free. Paul discusses this matter in Rom. 14:1-3 and 1 Cor. 8 and teaches that everyone is at liberty to act according to his own conscience, but that the stronger should refrain from that which might prove a stumbling block to his weaker brother. In 1 Tim. 4:3-4 he reproves certain persons who forbid marriage and enjoin abstinence from meats. The council of the apostles at Jerusalem limited en-

forced abstinence upon the converts to that of meats offered to idols, blood, and "things strangled" (Acts 15:29).

In the early church catechumens were required, according to Cyril and Jerome, to observe a season of abstinence and prayer for forty days; according to others, twenty days. Superstitious abstinence on the part of the clergy was considered a crime, and if that abstinence arose from the notion that any creature of God was not good they were liable to be deposed from office. Strict observance of the church fasts was enjoined.

ABYSS' (ä-bîs'; Gk. *hēabussos*). In the NT the abyss is the abode of the imprisoned demons (Rev. 9:1-21). At least many of the demons whom Jesus expelled in His earthly ministry were commanded to return to the abyss (cf. Luke 8:31), but these evil spirits dreaded to go there before their predetermined time. Myriads of demons will be let loose during the period of Tribulation to energize age-end apostasy and revolt against God and His Christ, but will be shut up again in this prison together with Satan at the second advent of Christ (20:1-3). The abyss is therefore to be distinguished from *sheol* (hell) or *hades* (which see). This "unseen world" is revealed as the place of departed human spirits between death and the resurrection (Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; Rev. 1:18; 20:13-14). It is also to be distinguished from "tartarus," the "prison abode of fallen angels" (cf. 2 Pet. 2:4) and "the lake of fire" (Rev. 19:20; 20:10; 21:8), or the eternal abode of all wicked, unrepentant creatures, including Satan, angels, and men. The LXX renders Heb. *t'hôm*, "the primeval ocean" (Gen. 1:2; Ps. 24:2, etc.) as "abyss." In classical Gk. the word *abussos* is always an adjective meaning "very deep" ("bottomless") or "unfathomable" ("boundless"). *See* Hell; Lake of Fire.

ACACIA, ACCACIA. *See* Vegetable Kingdom: Acacia.

AC'BOR. *See* Achbor.

AC'CAD or **Akkad** (äk'äd). An ancient center of Hamitic imperial power founded by Nimrod (Gen. 10:10). The *city* is evidently Agade, which Sargon I brought into great prominence as the capital of his far-flung Semitic empire, which dominated the Mesopotamian world from about 2360 to 2180 B.C. The location of Accad cannot presently be identified, but it must be in the vicinity of Babylon, perhaps N of it. The *country* was named after its capital and embraces the stoneless alluvial plain of southern Babylonia N of *Sumer* (which see). The term "the land of Shinar," in which the world's first imperial power developed embracing "Babel [Babylon, NIV] and Erech [Uruk] and Accad and Calneh" (Gen. 10:10), is descriptive of the entire alluvial plain of Babylonia between the Tigris and the Euphrates, in approximately the last two hundred miles

of the course of those great rivers as they flowed in ancient times. In the cuneiform inscriptions the region is divided into a northern part called Accad (Akkad), in which Babel (Babylon) and the city of Accad (Agade) were situated; and a southern part called Sumer, in which Erech (ancient Uruk, modern Warka) was located. At Uruk the first sacred temple tower (Babylonian, *ziggurat*) was found, as well as evidence of the first cylinder seals (Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past*, pp. 19-23). The inhabitants of this region were originally non-Semitic Sumerians, who racially must have been of Hamitic origin, according to Gen. 10:8-10, and who were the inventors of cuneiform writing and the cultural precursors of their later conquerors, the Babylonian Semites. The city of Accad (Agade) disappeared in ancient times and by Assyrian times was utterly unknown.

M.F.U.; H.F.V.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: H. Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (1954), pp. 41-46; J. Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past* (1959), pp. 19-23; C. J. Gadd, "The Dynasty of Agade and the Gutian Invasion," *The Cambridge Ancient History*, rev. ed. (1963), 1:xix.

ACCEPT, ACCEPTABLE, ACCEPTED (Heb. *rāsā*, "to take pleasure in"; Gk. *dechomai*, "to take with the hand," i.e., "to receive with hospitality"). To *accept* is to receive with pleasure and kindness (Gen. 32:20) and is the opposite of *to reject*, which is a direct refusal with disapprobation (Jer. 6:30; 7:29). An *accepted* or *acceptable time* (Ps. 69:13; 2 Cor. 6:2) is the time of favor, a favorable opportunity. Luke 4:24 means that no prophet is welcomed or appreciated favorably in his own country.

Acceptance also means that relation to God in which He is well-pleased with His children, for by children of God only is it enjoyed. In Acts 10:35 we learn that "in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him."

The Christian scheme bases acceptance by God on justification. Paul in Eph. 1:6 refers to the grace of God, "which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." In Christ only are we acceptable to God. Out of Him we are sinners and subjects of wrath.

The Calvinist teaches that the sins that are pardoned in justification include all sins, past, present, and future, and that God will not deal with the believer according to his transgressions; whereas the Arminian holds that the state of acceptance can be maintained only by perpetually believing in and appropriating to himself the atoning merits of Jesus, and obediently keeping God's holy commandments.

ACCESS TO GOD (Gk. *prosaḡōgē*, "act of moving to"). That friendly relation with God whereby we are acceptable to Him and have assurance that He is favorably disposed toward us (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; 3:12). In substance it is not different from the "peace of God," i.e., the peaceful rela-

tion of believers toward God, brought about through Christ's death. By the continuous power and efficiency of His atoning act, Jesus is the constant Bringer to the Father. Access means the obtaining of a hearing with God, and if a hearing, the securing in some form an answer to our requests. The apostle John (1 John 5:14-15) says: "This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him." Here we learn that access to God involves asking according to His will. A child has right of access to his father. Such right and privilege are granted to, and should be enjoyed by, every child of God. We must not infer that our access is cut off if we do not realize direct answers to some of our requests, but we must believe that God always hears His children and does the best things for them.

AC'CO (ác'kō). A town on the Mediterranean coast, thirty miles S of Tyre, and ten from Mt. Carmel (Judg. 1:31). It was known to the ancient Greeks and Romans as Ptolemais, from Ptolemy the king of Egypt, who rebuilt it in 100 B.C. During the Middle Ages it was called Acra, and subsequently called St. Jean d'Acre. Paul visited this place (Acts 21:7). The original site is a mound called Tell-el-Fukhar, located one mile E of the present city.

Archaeological activity at Acre has concentrated on Crusader structures under the present city. In 1955 the Israel Department of Antiquities cleared the refectory of the Knights of St. John, and in 1956 and from 1959 to 1962 the Department of Antiquities and the National Parks Authority cleared a hospital and chapel of the order.

Other finds in the town include sections of the wall of the Hellenistic city (10-15 feet thick), and a glass furnace and temple dating to the same period. In 1976 Moshe Dothan worked at the harbor area where he uncovered a large tower and defensive wall of the Hellenistic town of Ptolemais. See Ptolemais.

H.F.V.

ACCOUNTABILITY. Not a Bible word but an abstract term for that return for his talents and opportunities that every soul must make to God day by day, and especially at the judgment, as we are taught in Matt. 12:36, Rom. 4:10, Heb. 13:17, and 1 Pet. 4:5. It is a well-established doctrine of Holy Scripture, attested to by human consciousness, that we are free moral agents, entirely dependent upon our Creator for our existence and maintenance, and rightly answerable to Him for our conduct; and that God consequently has a right to our perfect obedience and service. It is accordingly easy for us to feel that He is justified in calling us to a strict reckoning for all He has entrusted us with. Disabled by our fall into sin, gracious strength has been provided for us in the

atonement, so that we are without excuse if we fail to do God's will.

ACCURSED. See Anathema; Oath.

ACCUSER (Heb. *shāpaṭ* "judge"; *sāṭān* "adversary"; in the NT, Gk. *katēgoros*, "prosecutor").

1. One who has a cause or matter of contention; the accuser, opponent, or plaintiff in any suit (Judg. 12:2; Matt. 5:25; Luke 12:58).

2. In Scripture, in a general sense, an adversary or enemy (Luke 18:3; 1 Pet. 5:8). In the latter passage reference is made to the old Jewish teaching that Satan was the accuser of men before God (Job 1:6-11; Rev. 12:10). See Adversary.

ACEL'DAMA (a-sel'dā-mā; ASV and NIV, Akeldama). Called at present "Hak ed-damm," it signifies "Field of Blood" (Matt. 27:8; Acts 1:18-19), now at the E end and on the southern slope of the valley of Hinnom. The tradition that fixes this spot reaches back to the age of Jerome. Once the tradition was that the soil of this spot, a deep pit or cellar, was believed to have the power of consuming dead bodies in the space of twenty-four hours, so that whole shiploads of it are said to have been carried away in A.D. 1218, in order to cover the famous Campo Santo in Pisa.



Aceldama, the field of blood

ACHAI'A (a-kā'ya). The name once applied to the NW portion of the Peloponnesus and afterward applied to the entire Peloponnesus, called now the Morea. It was one of the two provinces, of which Macedonia was the other, into which the Romans divided Greece (27 B.C.). It was under a proconsular government at the time when Luke wrote the Acts, so that the title given to Gallio, "proconsul," was proper (Acts 18:12), A.D. 51 or 52.

ACHA'ICUS (a-kā'i-kus; "an Achaean"). A Christian of Corinth who had rendered Paul personal aid, and by him was kindly commended to the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 16:17), A.D. 54.

A'CHAN (ā'kan; "troublesome"). A son of Carmi,

of the tribe of Judah; called also Achar (1 Chron. 2:7).

Achan's Sin. By one incident of his life Achan attained a disgraceful notoriety. Before Jericho was taken, the city was put under that awful ban whereby all the inhabitants (excepting Rahab and her family) were consigned to destruction, all the combustible goods to be burned, and the metals consecrated to God (Deut. 7:16, 23-26; Josh. 6:17-19). After Jericho fell (1400 B.C.) the whole nation kept the vow, with the exception of Achan. His covetousness made him unfaithful, and, the opportunity presenting, he took a "beautiful mantle from Shinar [or Babylonia, NIV] and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight" (7:21).

Result of Achan's Sin. Ai had been visited by spies, who declared that it could easily be taken. An expedition of three thousand men sent against the city was repulsed, and they returned to Joshua, who inquired of the Lord concerning the cause of the disaster. The answer was that "Israel has sinned. . . they have even taken some of the things under the ban and have both stolen and deceived" (Josh. 7:11). This was the reason for Israel's defeat, and Joshua was commanded to sanctify the people and on the morrow to cast lots for the offender. Achan was chosen and, being exhorted by Joshua, made a confession of his guilt, which was verified by the finding of the spoil in his tent.

Objection has been urged against the use of the lot to discover the guilty party. We answer that the decision by lot, when ordered by God, involved no chance but was under His special direction, as is evident from the expressions "which the Lord takes" (Josh. 7:14), and "the lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord" (Prov. 16:33).

Achan's Punishment. Achan was conveyed with his family, property, and spoils to the valley (afterward called Achor, "trouble," or "disaster" as in NIV), where they "stoned them with stones; and they burned them with fire" (Josh. 7:25).

The severity of the punishment of Achan, as regards his family, has excited considerable comment. Some vindicate it by saying that Achan by his sin had fallen under the ban pronounced against Jericho and was exposed to the same punishment as a town that had fallen away into idolatry (Deut. 13:16-17); others believe that the family of Achan were aware of his crime and therefore were deserving of a share in his punishment (K. & D., *Com.*); others, again, consider it as the result of one of those sudden impulses of indiscriminate popular vengeance to which the Jewish people were exceedingly prone (Kitto). The real explanation is evidently to be found in the fact that the iniquity of the inhabitants of Canaan was now "complete" (cf. Gen. 15:16), and God's righteous wrath was poured out upon them.