

half of the thirteenth century. Joseph was minister of finance to King Pedro III. (1276-85). Solomon ben Adret refers to Joseph and Moses as the "two great princes." The incident which brought them into notice is connected with the history of one of those informers from whom medieval Jews suffered so much and on whom Jewish law was so severe.

About the close of the reign of King James I. of Aragon (1213-76) there appeared at Barcelona an informer, favored by the authorities, who became a source of danger to the Jews of Aragon. Pedro III., on ascending the throne, summoned the representatives of the Jewish communities into his presence to answer certain charges. Knowing that these could emanate only from the informer of Barcelona, the Jews entreated him to withdraw his charges, at least on this occasion; but the renegade refused to be turned aside from his purpose. At this moment Joseph Abrabalia interceded with the king, exposing the evil designs of the informer and requesting his punishment. Joseph's intercession met with entire success. Pedro III. caused the informer to be seized and delivered over to the Jews. Jonah of Gerona (Geronda), and later also Solomon ben Adret, investigated the case. They condemned him, though with reluctance, and the man was executed by the state authorities about 1281. It seems that this drastic measure, which was prompted chiefly by Joseph, did not meet with unanimous approval, and three years after the latter's death many gave vent to their resentment. This bitter feeling caused the leading men of Gerona (Geronda) to ask Solomon ben Adret to revise the whole case. Adret unreservedly approved of the action of Joseph, and in order fully to appease the agitated communities, he also laid the matter before Meir of Rothenburg, who fully concurred in his decision. These responsa make it possible to ascertain the date of Joseph's death, on which the authorities are greatly at variance. Steinschneider, Zunz, and H. Brody place it in 1324, which is quite impossible, as Adret, who died not later than 1310, mentions Joseph Abrabalia with the memorial formula *y'y*. D. Kaufmann places the date of death at 1283, which is more in accordance with Adret's statements. A Moses Abrabalia is also mentioned in the responsa of Isaac ben Sheshet, though it is doubtful whether he is to be identified with Moses Abrabalia, the brother of Joseph.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: D. Kaufmann, in *Jew. Quart. Rev.* viii. 222 *et seq.*, where the responsa referred to are reproduced.

M. B.

ABRABANEL. See **ABRAVANEL**.

ABRABANEL DORMIDO, DAVID (MANUEL MARTINEZ). See **DORMIDO, DAVID ABRAVANEL**.

ABRACADABRA: Magic word or formula used in incantations, especially against intermittent fever or inflammation, the patient wearing an amulet upon his neck, with the following inscription:

A B R A C A D A B R A
A B R A C A D A B R
A B R A C A D A B
A B R A C A D A
A B R A C A D
A B R A C A
A B R A C
A B R A
A B R
A B
A
A

The underlying idea was to force the spirit of the disease gradually to relinquish its hold upon the

patient. It is first mentioned by Serenus Sammoniscus, physician to the emperor Caracalla, whose work, "De Medicina Præcepta," was admired by the emperors Geta and Alexander Severus. He prescribes that the word be written in the form of an inverted cone, the whole word being written out at first, then with one letter less on each line until one letter stands alone (see King, "Gnostics and Their Remains," p. 317). The explanation that it is a corruption of *Ha-Bracha* and *Dobar* hardly deserves consideration. The Jewish Cabala probably had nothing to do with it. But it finds a striking parallel in *Pesahim*, 112a, which recommends the same means of gradually reducing the power of disease by an incantation formula which subdues the invoked spirit of the disease. The person who is in danger of becoming a victim of the spirit *Shabriri* ("Blindness") is told to say: "My mother hath told me to beware of

S H A B R I R I
A B R I R I
R I R I
R I R
R I."

It is, therefore, probable that the word was originally the name of a demon which is no longer recognizable. It has been the subject of the following stanza (King, *l.c.*):

"Thou shalt on paper write the spell divine,
Abracadabra called, in many a line;
Each under each in even order place,
But the last letter in each line efface.
As by degrees the elements grow few
Still take away, but fix the residue,
Till at the last one letter stands alone
And the whole dwindles to a tapering cone.
Tie this about the neck with flaxen string;
Mighty the good 'twill to the patient bring.
Its wondrous potency shall guard his head,
And drive disease and death far from his bed."

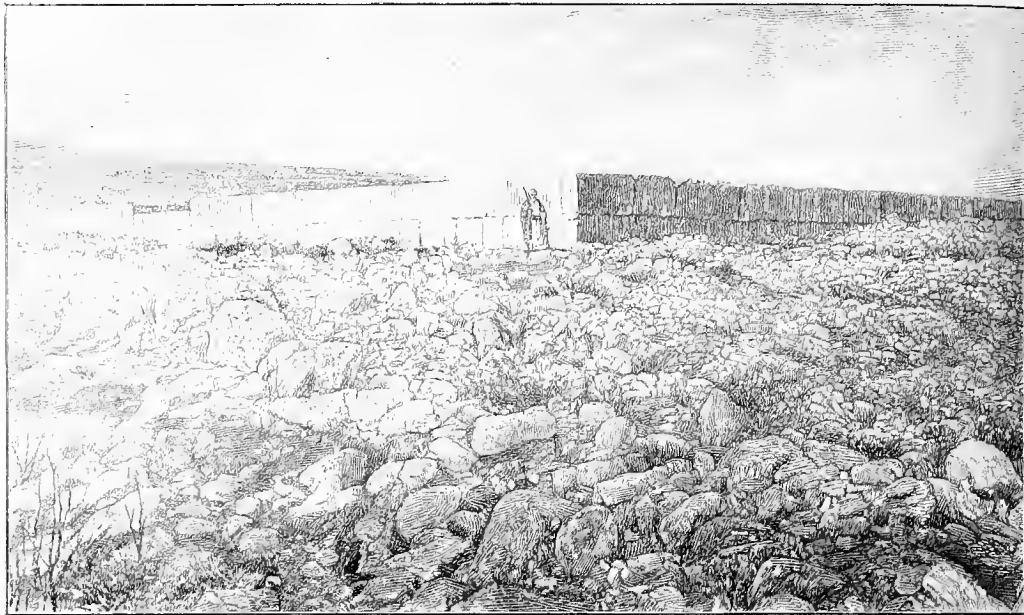
K.

ABRAHAM.—**Biblical Data:** According to the Bible, Abraham (or Abram) was the father of the Hebrews. The Biblical account of the life of Abram is found in Gen. xi. 26 to xxv. 10. According to this narrative, he was the son of Terah and was born at Ur of the Chaldees. Terah, with Abram, Sarai (Abram's wife), and Lot (Abram's nephew), left Ur to go to the land of Canaan; but they tarried at Haran, where Terah died (Gen. xi. 26-32). There the Lord appeared to Abram in the first of a series of visions, and bade him leave the country with his family, promising to make of him a great nation (*ib.* xii. 1-3), a promise that was renewed on several occasions. Accordingly, Abram with Sarai and Lot started for Canaan; and at the site of Sichem (or Shechem) the Lord promised the land as an inheritance to the patriarch's seed. After sojourning for a while between Beth-el and Hai (or Ai), Abram, on account of a famine, went to Egypt. Here, to guard against Pharaoh's jealousy, he passed Sarai off as his sister. Pharaoh took her into the royal household, but, discovering the deception, released her and sent Abram and his family away (*ib.* xii. 9-20). Abram returned northward to his former place of sojourn between Beth-el and Hai. There his shepherds quarreled with those of Lot, and the uncle and nephew separated, Lot going east to Sodom, while Abram remained in Canaan (*ib.* xiii. 1-12). Again the Lord appeared to the patriarch, and promised him an abundant progeny which should inherit the land of Canaan (*ib.* xiii. 14-17).

Abram now removed to Mamre (*ib.* xiii. 18) in

Hebron, whence he made a successful expedition against Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and his confederate kings, from whom he rescued Lot, whom Chedorlaomer had captured in the course of an attack upon Sodom and Gomorrah. On his return

could be found therein (*ib.* xviii. 17-32). The cities were destroyed; but Lot and his family, who had been warned, fled from Sodom before its destruction. Abraham now journeyed to Gerar, between Kadesh and Shur, and for the second time passed Sarah off as



TRADITIONAL HOUSE OF ABRAHAM.

(From a photograph reproduced by permission of the Palestine Exploration Fund.)

from this expedition, Abram was blessed by Melchizedek, king of Salem, and refused to retain the recaptured booty offered him by the king of Sodom (*ib.* xiv.).

Once more the Lord appeared to Abram with a promise of abundant offspring, at the same time foretelling their captivity for four hundred years in a strange land and their subsequent inheritance of the land between "the river of Egypt" and the Euphrates. "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (*ib.* xv. 6). Sarai had hitherto been barren. She now gave Abram her handmaid Hagar, an Egyptian, as wife; and the latter bore a son, Ishmael, Abram being at the time eighty-six years old (*ib.* xvi.). Again the Lord appeared to the patriarch with the promise of a numerous posterity. At the same time, in

token of the promise, Abram's name was changed to Abraham ("Father of Many Nations"), and that of Sarai to Sarah ("Princess"). The Lord also instituted the "covenant of circumcision," and promised that Sarah should bear a son, Isaac, with whom he would establish it. Abraham thereupon circumcised himself and Ishmael (*ib.* xvii. 1-21). Soon after, three angels in human guise were hospitably entertained by Abraham in Mamre, where the Lord again foretold Isaac's birth, and when Sarah doubted the promise, the Lord himself appeared and renewed it (*ib.* xviii. 1-15).

In recognition of Abraham's piety the Lord now acquainted him with His intention to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah on account of their wickedness; but, after several appeals from Abraham, He promised that Sodom should be spared if ten righteous men

could be found therein (*ib.* xviii. 17-32). The cities were destroyed; but Lot and his family, who had been warned, fled from Sodom before its destruction. Abraham now journeyed to Gerar, between Kadesh and Shur, and for the second time passed Sarah off as

his sister. Abimelech, king of Gerar, took her into his house; but, on being rebuked by God, released her precisely as Pharaoh had done (*ib.* xx.). At the appointed time Isaac was born, Abraham being a hundred years old. Soon after, Ishmael, Hagar's son, was seen "mocking" by Sarah, and at her solicitation he and his mother were banished. Hagar was comforted in the wilderness by an angel of God (*ib.* xxi. 1-12). Abraham was now a powerful man; and at the solicitation of Abimelech, king of Gerar, he made a covenant with that monarch at Beer-sheba in the land of the Philistines. At Beer-sheba Abraham sojourned many days (*ib.* xxi. 22-34).

The greatest trial of the patriarch's life came when God bade him offer up his only son as a burnt offering. Without a moment's hesitation Abraham took Isaac and proceeded to the land of Moriah, where he was just about to sacrifice him, when an angel of the Lord restrained him, once more delivering the prophecy that the patriarch's seed should be "as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore," and that in them all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Instead of Isaac a ram caught in a thicket was sacrificed (*ib.* xxii. 1-18). Abraham returned to Beer-sheba, and was sojourning there when Sarah died at Kirjath-arba (also called Hebron and Mamre), at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven (*ib.* xxiii. 1, 2). Abraham went to Mamre and bought the cave of Machpelah as a burial-place; and there he buried Sarah (*ib.* xxiii. 3-20).

Isaac was now thirty-six years old, and Abraham sent Eliezer, his servant, to bring a wife for him

from among Abraham's own people. Eliezer journeyed to Nahor, and returned with Rebekah, Abraham's grandniece, whom Isaac married (*ib.* xxiv.). Abraham now married again, taking as his wife Keturah, by whom he had several children. Before his death he "gave all that he had" to Isaac, and sent the sons of his concubines away after bestowing some gifts upon them (*ib.* xxv. 1-6). Abraham died



Abraham and Isaac.
(From the Sarajevo Haggadah.)

at the age of one hundred and seventy-five years; and Isaac and Ishmael buried him beside Sarah in the cave of Machpelah (*ib.* xxv. 7-9). C. J. M.

—In Apocryphal and Rabbinical Literature :

In the Old Testament Abraham presents the type of a simple Bedouin sheik who wanders from place to place in search of pasture for his herds, a kind-hearted, righteous, and God-fearing man whom God chose on account of his faithful and righteous character to be the father of a nation peculiarly favored by Him in the possession of the coveted land of Canaan. Once he is spoken of as a "prophet" (Gen. xx. 7). Incidentally we learn that his father, Terah, was an idolater, like the rest of the Chaldeans (Josh. xxiv. 2); but how Abraham became a worshiper of the Lord, or why God singled him out and led him forth to Canaan, is left to surmise. No sooner, however, did the Jewish people come into closer contact with nations of higher culture, especially with the Greeks in Alexandria, than the figure of Abraham became the prototype of a nation sent forth to proclaim the monotheistic faith to the world while wandering from land to land. Accordingly, the divine promise (Gen. xii. 3, xxii. 18) is understood to mean: "... in thee [instead of "with thee"] shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (see LXX. *ad loc.*).

In the third and second centuries B.C., Alexandrine Jews, writing under the name of Hecataeus and Berosus, and Samaritans, like Eupolemus, composed works on Jewish history, from which Josephus ("Ant." i. 7, § 8) gives the following: Abraham, endowed with great sagacity, with a higher knowledge of God and greater virtues than all the rest, was determined to change the erroneous opinions of men. He was the first who had the courage to proclaim God as the sole Creator of the universe, to whose will all the heavenly bodies are subject, for they by their motions show their dependence on Him. His opposition to astrology provoked the wrath of the Chaldeans, and he

had to leave his country and go to Canaan. Afterward, when he came to Egypt, he entered into disputes with all the priests and the wise men, and won their admiration and, in many cases, their assent to his higher views. He imparted to them the knowledge of arithmetic and astronomy, which sciences came to Egypt from Chaldea only in the days of Abraham. Abraham's revolt from Chaldean astrology is spoken of in Philo ("On Abraham," xvii.), in connection with Gen. xv. 5 (compare Gen. R. xlv.).

Concerning his religious awakening in his father's house, the Book of Jubilees, written probably in the time of John Hyrcanus, relates (xi.) that, in order

Opposes Idolatry.

tised in connection with astrology by the whole house of Nahor, Abraham, when he was fourteen years of age, left his father, and prayed to God to save him from the errors of men. Abraham became an inventor of better modes of agriculture, showing the people how to save the seeds in the field from the ravens that devoured them. He then tried to persuade his father to renounce idol-worship, but Terah was afraid of the people and told him to keep silent. Finally, when Abraham met with the opposition of his brothers also, he arose one night and set fire to the house in which the idols were kept. In an attempt to save these, his brother Haran was burned to death.

When, in the night of the new moon of Tishri (the New-year), Abraham was watching the stars to forecast the year's fertility, the revelation came to him that, in view of God's omnipotent will, all astrological predictions were valueless, and, after fervent prayer, he received word from God to leave the Chaldeans and set out on his mission to bless the nations by teaching them the higher truths. An angel of God taught him Hebrew, the language of revelation, by which he was enabled to decipher all the secrets of the ancient books (see Gen. R. xlii). Leaving his brother Nahor with his father, Abraham went to the Holy Land and observed there all the festivals and new moons (afterward prescribed to the Israelites, but already written on the heavenly tablets re-



Abraham and Isaac.

(From a tombstone in the graveyard of the Amsterdam Portuguese Congregation.)

vealed to Enoch), besides many other customs observed by the priesthood of the second century B.C.

According to one opinion, Abraham attained the true knowledge of God when he was three years old; according to others, at ten; and again a more sober opinion claims that he was forty-eight years old (Gen. R. xxx).

In his warfare against the hosts of Amraphel and

other kings, Abraham cast dust upon them, and it turned into swords and lances, and the stubble turned into bows and arrows (according to Isa. xli. 2). Og, the giant king of Bashan, was the one "that escaped" (*ha-palut*), and brought him the news of the capture of Lot. Og was of the remnant of the giants that lived before the Flood (Deut. iii. 11). He cast a lustful eye upon Sarah, and hoped to see Abraham killed in the war in order that he might take her to wife.

Far more explicit is the story of Abraham's life in his Chaldean home as told by the Palestinian rabbi of the second century, and afterwards further developed under the influence of Babylonian folk-lore. He

His Birth. He was born in Kuta, another name for Ur of the Chaldees (B. B. 91a). On the night when he was born, Terah's friends, among whom were councilors and soothsayers of Nimrod, were feasting in his house, and on leaving late at night they observed a star which swallowed up four other stars from the four sides of the heavens. They forthwith hastened to Nimrod and said: "Of a certainty a lad has been born who is destined to conquer this world and the next; now, then, give to his parents as large a sum of money as they wish for the child, and then kill him." But Terah, who was present, said: "Your advice reminds me of the mule to whom a man said, 'I will give thee a house full of barley if thou wilt allow me to cut off thy head,' whereupon the mule replied: 'Fool that thou art, of what use will the barley be to me if thou cuttest off my head?' Thus I say to you: if you slay the son, who will inherit the money you give to the parents?" Then the rest of the councilors said: "From thy words we perceive that a son has been born to thee." "Yes," said Terah, "a son has been born to me, but he is dead." Terah then went home and hid his son in a cave for three years. When, on coming out of the cave, Abraham saw the sun rising in all his glory in the east, he said to himself: "Surely this is the Lord of the universe, and Him I will worship." But the evening came, and lo! the sun set and night befell him, and seeing the moon with her silver radiance, he said, "This, then, is the Lord of the world, and all the stars are His servants; to Him I will kneel." The following morning, when moon and stars had disappeared and the sun had risen anew, Abraham said: "Now I know that neither the one nor the other is the Lord of the world, but He who controls both as His servants is the Creator and Ruler of the whole world." Forthwith Abraham asked his father: "Who created heaven and earth?" Terah, pointing to one of his idols, replied: "This great image is our god." "Then let me bring a sacrifice to him!" said Abraham, and he ordered a cake of fine flour to be baked, and offered it to the idol, and when the idol did not eat it, he ordered a still finer meal-offering to be prepared, and offered it to the idol. But the idol did neither eat nor answer when addressed by him, and so Abraham grew angry and, kindling a fire, burned them all. When Terah, on coming home, found his idols burnt, he went to Abraham and said: "Who has burned my gods?" Abraham replied: "The large one quarreled with the little ones and burned them in his anger." "Fool that thou art, how canst thou say that he who can not see nor hear nor walk should have done this?" Then Abraham said: "How then canst thou forsake the living God and serve gods that neither see nor hear?"

According to Gen. R. xxxviii. and Tanna debe Eliyahu, ii. 25 (probably a portion of Pirke R. El.), Terah was a manufacturer of idols and had them for sale. One day when Terah was absent and Abraham

was left to take charge of the shop, an old, yet vigorous, man came in to buy an idol. Abraham handed

him the one on top, and he gave him the price asked. "How old art thou?"

Breaks Idols. Abraham asked. "Seventy years," was the answer. "Thou fool," continued

Abraham, "how canst thou adore a god so much younger than thou? Thou wert born seventy years ago and this god was made yesterday." The buyer threw away his idol and received his money back. The other sons of Terah complained to their father that Abraham did not know how to sell the idols, and so Abraham was told to attend to the idols as priest. One day a woman brought a meal-offering for the idols, and, as they would not eat, he exclaimed: "A mouth have they but speak not, eyes but see not, ears but hear not, hands but handle not. May their makers be like them, and all who trust in them" (Ps. cxv. 5-8, *Heb.*), and he broke them to pieces and burned them. Abraham was brought before Nimrod, who said: "Knowest thou not that I am god and ruler of the world? Why hast thou destroyed my images?" Then Abraham said: "If thou art god and ruler of the world, why dost thou not cause the sun to rise in the west and set in the east? If thou art god and ruler of the world, tell me all that I have now at heart, and what I shall do in the future." Nimrod was dumfounded, and Abraham continued: "Thou art the son of Cush, a mortal like him. Thou couldst not save thy father from death, nor wilt thou thyself escape it."

According to Gen. R. xxxviii, Nimrod said: "Worship the fire!" "Why not water that quenches the fire?" asked Abraham. "Very well, worship the water!" "Why not the clouds which swallow the water?" "So be it; worship the clouds!" Then Abraham said: "Rather let me adore the wind which blows the clouds about!" "So be it; pray to the wind!" "But," said Abraham, "man can stand up against the wind or shield himself behind the walls of his house." "Then adore me!" said Nimrod. Thereupon Nimrod (Amraphel; see Pesik. R. § 33, *Er. 53a*) ordered Abraham to be cast into a furnace. He had a pile of wood five yards in circumference set on fire, and Abraham was cast into it. But God Himself went down from heaven to rescue him. Wherefore the Lord appeared to him later, saying: "I am the Lord who brought thee out of the fire of the Chaldeans" (*Ur Kasdim*, Gen. xv. 7). The legend betrays Persian influence (compare the Zoroaster legend in Windischmann, "Zoroastrische Studien," pp. 307-313). Regarding the cave in which Abraham dwelt, see *ib.* p. 113; compare also B. B. 10a. The dialogue with Nimrod, pointing from fire, water, the cloud, wind, and man to God, has its parallel in Hindu legend (see Benfey, "Pantschatantra," i. 376).

Abraham is thereupon commissioned by God to propagate His truth throughout the world, and he wins many souls for Him: while he wins the men, Sarah, his wife, converts the women. In this manner "they made souls in Haran" (Gen. xii. 5, *Heb.*). He awakens the heathen from slumber and brings them under the wings of God. He is the father of the proselytes (Gen. R. xliii; Mek., Mishpatim, § 18).

Henceforth he was to become "like a stream of blessing to purify and regenerate the pagan world."

Of the manner in which he converted the heathen it is related that he had a palatial mansion built near the oak-tree of Mamre or at Beer-sheba on the crossing of the roads, wherein all kinds of victuals and wine were spread on the table for the passers-by, who came through the doors kept open on all sides; and when they, after having partaken of the meal, were about to offer their thanks to him before

going on their way, he pointed to God above, whose steward he was and to whom alone they owed thanks. Thus, by his love for man, he taught people how to worship God. ABRAHAM'S OAK, in connection with which the Midrash (to Gen. xxi. 33) relates these things, is mentioned also by Jerome (quoted in Uhlman's "Liebesthätigkeit," p. 321). This philanthropic virtue of Abraham is specifically dwelt upon in the TESTAMENT OF ABRAHAM.

His prophetic vision (Gen. xv.) furnished especially grateful material to apocalyptic writers, who beheld foreshadowed in the four differ-

Prophetic Vision. ent animals used for the covenant sacrifice the "four kingdoms" of the Book of Daniel (see also the Midrashim and Targums and Pirke R. El. xxviii; compare Apocalypse of Abraham, ix.).

Regarding Abraham's relation to Melchizedek, who taught him new lessons in philanthropy, see MELCHIZEDEK. Whereas the Bible speaks of only one trial that Abraham had to undergo to give proof of his faith in and fear of God (the offering of his son Isaac, Gen. xxii.), the rabbis (Ab. v. 4; Ab. R. N. xxxiii. [B. xxxvi.]; and Pirke R. El. xxvii. *et seq.*; compare also Book of Jubilees, xvii. 17, and xix. 5) mention ten trials of his faith, the offering of his son forming the culmination. Yet this was sufficient reason for Satan, or Mastemah, as the Book of Jubilees calls him, to put all possible obstacles in his way.

When Abraham finally held the knife over his beloved son, Isaac seemed doomed, and the angels of heaven shed tears which fell upon Isaac's eyes, causing him blindness in later life. But their prayer was heard. The Lord sent Michael the archangel to tell Abraham not to sacrifice his son, and the dew of life was poured on Isaac to revive him. The ram to be offered in his place had stood there ready, prepared from the beginning of creation (Ab. v. 6). Abraham had given proof that he served God not only from fear, but also out of love, and the promise was given that, whenever the 'Akedah chapter was read on the New-year's day, on which occasion the ram's horn is always blown, the descendants of Abraham should be redeemed from the power of Satan, of sin, and of oppression, owing to the merit of him whose ashes lay before God as though he had been sacrificed and consumed (Pesik. R. § 40 and elsewhere).

According to the Book of Jubilees (xx.-xxii.), Abraham appointed Jacob, in the presence of Rebekah, heir of his divine blessings. Jacob remained with him to the very last, receiving his instructions and his blessings. But while the same source informs us that he ordered all his children and grand-children to avoid magic, idolatry, and all kinds of impurity, and to walk in the path of righteousness, JEREMIAH BAR ABBA (in Sanh. 91a) tells us that he bequeathed the knowledge of magic to the sons of his wife, Keturah.

About his death rabbinical tradition has preserved only one statement—that the Angel of Death had no power over him (B. B. 17a). There is

Abraham's Death. nevertheless a beautiful description of his glorious end in the Testament of Abraham (see ABRAHAM, TESTAMENT OF). The same work gives a touching picture of his love for man, while Ab. R. N. (xxxiii.) offers illustrations of his spirit of righteousness and equity. ABBA ARIKA (Rab) even professed to know how the men of Abraham's time expressed their grief at his bier: "Alas for the ship that hath lost its captain! Alas for humanity that hath lost its leader!" (B. B. 91a, b.).

Besides the discovery of astronomy, we find ascribed to Abraham the invention of the alphabet, the knowledge of magic, and of all secret lore ('Ab. Zarah, 14b; Eusebius, "Præp. Ev."; D'Herbelot, "Bibliothèque Orientale," s. v. "Abraham"; "Sefer Yezirah," toward the end). All this is based on Gen. R. to Gen. xv. 5: "God lifted him above the vault of heaven to cause him to see all the mysteries of life." It is related (Tosef., Kid., at end) that he wore a pearl or precious stone of magic power on his neck, wherewith he healed the sick; and that all the secrets of the Law were disclosed to him, while he observed even the most minute provisions of the rabbis (Mishnah Kid., at end; Gen. R. lxiv.). Even in physical size he towered above the rest of men, according to Gen. R. xlix. and Soferim, xxi. 9.

There is a deep undercurrent of his true humanity in all the legends about Abraham. "Until Abraham's time the Lord was known only as the God of heaven. When He appeared to Abraham, He became the God of the earth as well as of heaven, for He brought Him nigh to man" (Midr. R. to Gen. xxiv. 3). Abraham, called

True Type of Humanity. "the One" (Isa. li. 2, *Heb.*, and Ezek. xxxiii.), rendered the whole human family one (Gen. R. xxxix) Whosoever has a benign eye, a simple heart, and a humble spirit, or who is humble and pious, is a disciple of Abraham (Ab. v. 29, and Ber. 6b), and he who lacks kindness of heart is no true son of Abraham (Bezah, 32a). But it is particularly Abraham, the man of faith, the "friend of God" (Isa. xli. 8), upon whom are founded alike the Synagogue (see Pes. 117b; Mek., Beshallah, § 3; I Macc. ii. 52; Philo, "Who is the Heir?" xviii.-xix.), the Church (see Rom. iv. 1; Gal. iii. 6; James, ii. 23), and the Mosque (Koran, sura iii. 58-60). "Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian, but a believer in one God [a Moslem], a hater of idolatry, a man of perfect faith" (*ib.* suras ii. 118, iv. 124, vi. 162, xvi. 121). When God said, "Let there be light!" He had Abraham in view (Gen. R. ii.).

Many Arabic legends concerning Abraham based on the Koran found their way back to Jewish works (see Jellinek, "B. H." i. 25, and introduction, xv.).

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K.

—**In Mohammedan Legend:** Of all the Biblical personages mentioned in the Koran, Abraham is undoubtedly the most important. As is the case with all the Biblical material contained in the Koran, its source must be looked for not in any written documents, but in the stories, more or less tinged by midrashic additions, which Mohammed heard from his Jewish or Christian teachers and friends. Care must also be taken to distinguish the various periods in the preaching of the Arabian prophet; for in these matters Mohammed lived from hand to mouth, and his views as to the importance of Biblical personages varied with changing circumstances and changing needs. In his early preachings Mohammed shows very little knowledge of the patriarch. The only mention of him during the early Meccan period is found in sura lxxxvii. 19 (compare sura liii. 37), where Mohammed makes a passing reference to the "Suhuf Ibrahim" (the Rolls of Abraham); these can not have reference, as Sprenger thinks ("Leben u. Lehre Mohammeds," ii. 348, 363 *et seq.*), to any real apocryphal books, but merely to a reminiscence

of what Mohammed had heard about the mention of Abraham in the sacred books of the Jews and Christians (Kuenen, "National and Universal Religions," p. 297, note 1, and pp. 317-323, New York, 1882). Similarly in sura liii. 37—a passage certainly not older than the end of the first Meccan period (Nöldeke, "Gesch. des Korans," p. 79)—he speaks of Abraham as of one that had fulfilled his word, giving as his reference the same Rolls of Abraham (Hirschfeld, "Beiträge zur Erklärung des Korans," p. 12; compare Gen. xxii. 16). To this later Meccan period may also belong what Mohammed has to say of Abraham as one who was oppressed for preaching the true religion and for championing his God. This part of Abraham's career appealed very strongly to Mohammed; for he saw in it a certain prototype of his own early and severe struggles with the patricians of his native city. As Mohammed is the last of the prophets, so Abraham is among the first. Abraham is evidently—though this is not directly stated—one of the seven bearers of Maṭani, the messages repeated from out of the heavenly book (sura xv. 87; compare xxxix. 24). The other six are the prophets of Ad, Thamud, and Midian, and Noah, Lot, and Moses. Abraham is a righteous man (צדיק) and prophet (sura xix. 42).

In the later suras Mohammed seems to have learned more about Abraham. In sura vi. 75 he relates how the prophet came to worship God by watching physical phenomena: "Thus did we show Abraham the kingdom of heaven and of the earth, that he should be of those who are sure. And when the night overshadowed him he saw a star and said, 'This is my Lord'; but when it set he said, 'I love not those that set.' And when he saw the moon beginning to rise he said, 'This is my Lord'; but when it set he said, 'If my Lord guides me not I shall surely be of the people who err.' And when he saw the sun beginning to rise he said, 'This is my Lord, this is the greatest of all'; but when it set he said, 'O my people, verily, I am clear of what ye associate with God; verily, I have turned my face to Him who created the heaven and the earth.'"

"Great, Greater, Greatest." beginning to rise he said, 'This is my Lord'; but when it set he said, 'If my Lord guides me not I shall surely be of the people who err.' And when he saw the sun beginning to rise he said, 'This is my Lord, this is the greatest of all'; but when it set he said, 'O my people, verily, I am clear of what ye associate with God; verily, I have turned my face to Him who created the heaven and the earth.'"

The name of Abraham's father is said to have been Azar, though some of the later Arab writers give the name correctly as Terah. Others claim that Azar was his real name, while Terah was his surname (Nawawi, "Biographical Diet. of Illustrious Men," p. 128; but see Jawaliki, "Al-Mu'arrab," ed. Sachau, p. 21; "Z. D. M. G." xxxiii. 214). Still a third class of authorities say that Azar means either "the old man" or "the perverse one." Modern scholars have suggested that the word is a mistake for **האזרחי** (B. B. 15a; see Pautz, "Mohammed's Lehre von der Offenbarung," p. 242). This Azar was a great worshiper of idols, and Abraham had hard work in dissuading him from worshipping them. The story is told in sura xxi. 53 *et seq.*: "And we gave Abraham a right direction before; for about him we knew. When he said to his father and to his people, 'What are these images to which ye pay devotion?' said they, 'We found our fathers serving them.' Said he, 'Both ye and your fathers have been in obvious error.' They said, 'Dost thou come to us with the truth, or art thou of those that sport?' He said, 'Nay, but your Lord is Lord of the heavens and of the earth, which He created; and I am of those who testify to this, and, by God, I will plot against your idols after ye have turned and shown me your backs.' So he brake them all in pieces, except a large one that haply they might refer it to [lay the blame upon] him. Said they, 'Who has done this with our gods?' Verily, he is of the wrong-doers.' They said, 'We

heard a youth speak of them, who is called Abraham.' Said they, 'Then bring him before the eyes of men; haply they will bear witness.' Said they, 'Was it thou who did this to our gods, O Abraham?' Said he, 'Nay, it was this largest of them; but ask them if they can speak. . . . Said they, 'Burn him and help your gods if ye are going to do so.' We said, 'O fire! be thou cool and a safety for Abraham.' In suras xxvii. and xxxix. Mohammed returns to this story, and adds the account of the messengers that came to Abraham, of the promise of a son named Isaac, and of the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. "We turned these cities upside down and rained on them stones of baked clay" (compare sura li. 34). The destruction of the two cities served Mohammed as a warning, taken from history, which he desired to impress upon his opponents in Mecca.

The '*Akedah*, or sacrifice of Isaac, is mentioned in several places in the Koran. The following account is found in sura xxxvii. 100 *et seq.*: "And when he reached the age to work with him he said: 'O my boy! verily I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee; look, then, that thou seest right.' Said he, 'O my sire! do what thou art bidden; thou wilt find me, if it please God, one of the patient.' And when they were resigned and Abraham had thrown him down upon his forehead, we called to him, 'O Abraham! thou hast verified the vision; verily, thus do we reward those who do good. This is surely an obvious trial.' And we rewarded him with a mighty victim."

Mohammed, however, went further than this, and, in order to strengthen his position against his Jewish opponents in Medina, made out of Abraham the most prominent figure in pre-Islamic Prominence median religious history. He alleges Given to that Abraham was the real founder of Abraham. the religion that he himself was preaching; that Islam was merely a restatement of the old religion of Abraham and not a new faith now preached for the first time. Abraham is the "friend of God" (sura iv. 124), an appellation that the followers of Islam now usually apply to him, and on account of which to-day the city of Hebron is called Al-Halil (compare Isa. xli. 8; Ab. R. N. 61a). He is also said to have been an imam, or religious leader (compare suras ii. 118, xvi. 121), and perhaps also a "hanif"; "he was not one of the idolaters. . . . [God] chose him, and He guided him unto the right way. . . . Then we inspired thee, Follow the faith of Abraham, a hanif, for he was not of the idolaters." The exact meaning of "hanif" is uncertain; but it seems in general to designate a man who searched after the truth and despised idolatry (Kuenen, *l.c.* note 2, pp. 323-326; Wellhausen, "Skizzen," iii. 207).

Characteristic is the following saying: "Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian, but he was a hanif resigned, and not of the idolaters. Verily, the people most worthy of Abraham are those that follow him and his prophets, and those that believe" (sura iii. 60). With the same theological intent Mohammed makes various references to the *Millat Ibrahim* ("Religion of Abraham") as the one he desires his people to follow (suras xvi. 124, ii. 124, xxii. 77).

During the latest period of Mohammed's activity in Medina he became still bolder, and, in developing his theory in regard to Abraham, left entirely the beaten track of Jewish and Christian Midrash. It had become necessary for him to break entirely with the Jews, who refused to acknowledge him as prophet. The *qiblah*, or direction of prayer, was still toward Jerusalem. As the Jews had refused to follow Mohammed it was necessary to dissociate

his religion from theirs, and to turn the faces and thoughts of his followers from Jerusalem to Mecca. In order that the change might be effected with as little friction as possible, Mohammed connected Mecca and its holy house, the Kaaba, with the history of Abraham, the real founder of his Islam. It is here that Ishmael comes for the first time prominently forward. In one of the latest suras (ii. 118 *et seq.*) a passage reads: "And when we made the house a place of resort unto men, and a sanctuary, and (said) take the station of Abraham for a place of prayer; and covenanted with Abraham and Ishmael, saying, 'Do ye two cleanse my house for those who make the circuit, for those who pay devotions there, for those who bow down, and for those, too, who adore. . . .'" And when Abraham raised up the foundations of the house with Ishmael, 'Lord, receive it from us. Verily, Thou art hearing and Thou dost know. Lord, and make us, too, resigned unto Thee and of our seed also a nation resigned unto Thee, and show us our rites, and turn toward us; verily, Thou art easy to be turned and merciful. Lord, and send them an apostle from amongst themselves, to read to them Thy signs and teach them the Book and wisdom, and to purify them; verily, Thou art the mighty and the wise'" (compare suras iii. 90-93, xxii. 27-31).

There is no local tradition connecting Abraham with Mecca; and we are forced to put this down as a pure invention on the part of the prophet, based on political as well as on theological reasons. According to Shahrastani (Arabic text, p. 430), this Kaaba was the reproduction of the one in heaven. The "Makam Ibrahim," or Station of Abraham, is still pointed out within the sacred enclosure at Mecca, and the footsteps of the patriarch are believed by the worshipers still to be there (Snouck Hurgronje, "Het Mekkaansche Feest," p. 40; Mekka, i. 11).

The stories in regard to Abraham, told in a few words in the Koran, naturally form the basis for further midrashic expansion among the Arabs. The likeness of the history of Abraham to certain features in the life of their own prophet made him a favorite subject in the hands of commentators and historians. Mohammedan writers had two sources from which they drew their knowledge of the Bible and of its midrashic interpretation: verbal information from the *akhbar* ("rabbis"), and a study of the text of the Bible itself, and occasionally of comments upon it. The former source was undoubtedly the more prolific of the two. The material is to be found in the standard commentators on the Koran—Zamakhshari, Baidawi, Tabari; but more have been incorporated in the works of Arabic historians, who commenced their histories with the earliest accounts of man, and were thus bound to have a more or less close acquaintance with the Taurat (Torah) and the Midrash upon it. Some of the historians are quite exact, as Ibn K̄utaibah, and the first philosopher of history, Ibn Khaldun; others, however, are less critical, as Tabari, Masudi, Hamza, Biruni, Makrizi, Ibn al-Athir, Abu al-Fida (compare Goldziher, "Über Mohammedanische Polemik gegen die Ahl al-Kitab," in "Z.D.M.G." xxxii. 357). They have much to say about the trials that Abraham underwent in fighting idolatry. They dilate upon the great furnace that Nimrod had built in Kutha for this purpose, and how the furnace was changed into a garden. A Kurd named Hayun, Haizar, or Haizan, is said to have advised Nimrod to have Abraham burnt. Abraham's father is said to have

been a carver of images; and Abraham, in selling his father's wares, attempted to convert the people by crying out, "Who wishes to buy that which neither hurts nor betters?" Large midrashic additions are made in order to bring Nimrod into connection with Abraham. It is said that the stargazers warned him that a boy would be born that would in the future break all the idols; that Nimrod gave orders to put to death all children born; but that when Abraham was born his mother hid him in a cave in which, during a few days, he grew to man's estate, and thus foiled the purpose of the king.

The incongruity of Mohammed's connecting Abraham with the building of the Kaaba was evidently clearly felt, and it is therefore added that his going to Mecca was due to the rupture between Sarah and Hagar. God told Abraham to take the bondmaid and her child, Ishmael, into Arabia; and it was at the Zemzem well within the sacred enclosure that the water rose up which slaked the thirst of the boy. On two occasions Abraham is said to have paid a visit to Ishmael's house in his absence; and, by the answers which each wife gave to her father-in-law, Abraham advises his son, in the one case, to send his first wife away, and in the other to keep his second wife. In the building of the Kaaba, Abraham was assisted by the Shekinah (שכינה); others say by a cloud or by the angel Gabriel. Abraham acted as muezzin, delivered all the necessary prayers, and made the various circuits demanded by the later ritual. It was he also who first threw stones at Iblis (the devil) in the valley of Mina, a procedure which still forms part of the ceremonies connected with the *hajj*. It is natural that in these later accretions Ishmael should take the place of Isaac. Some authors even state that it was Ishmael who was to have been offered up; and that he therefore bears the name Al-Dhabih ("Slaughtered One"). The place of the 'Aẓedah is also transferred to Mina, near Mecca. The ram offered up in lieu of the son is said to have been the same as the one offered by Abel. The slaughtering of Isaac is dwelt upon at length, as well as the firmness of Abraham in resisting the enticement of Iblis, who placed himself directly in his path. This is said to have been one of the trials (sura ii. 118) which Abraham underwent. Arabic commentators, however, speak of three trials only, and not of ten, as does the Jewish Haggadah.

Many of the religious observances that are now found in Islam are referred to Abraham; parallels to which, as far as the institution of certain prayers is concerned, can be found in rabbinical literature.

Abraham is often called by Arabic authors the "father of hospitality"; and long accounts are given of the visit of the angels. He is also said to have been the first whose hair grew white. Of his death an Arabic Midrash has the following: When God wished to take the soul of Abraham He sent the Angel of Death to him in the form of a decrepit old man. Abraham was at table with some guests, when he saw an old man walking in the heat of the sun. He sent an ass to carry the man to his tent. The old man, however, had hardly sufficient strength to put the food set before him to his mouth; and even then he had the greatest difficulty in swallowing it. Now, a long time before this, Abraham had asked God not to take away his soul until he (Abraham) should make the request. When he saw the actions of this old man he asked him what ailed him. "It is the result of old age, O Abraham!" he answered. "How old are you, then?" asked Abraham. The old man gave his age as two years more than that of Abraham, upon which the patriarch exclaimed, "In two years' time I shall be like him! O God! take

me to Thyself." The old man, who was no other than the Angel of Death, then took away Abraham's soul.

Rabbinical midrashic parallels can easily be found to most of the legends referred to above: a large number are given in Grünbaum ("Neue Beiträge zur Semitischen Sagenkunde"). It is of interest to observe that these Mohammedan additions have also, in some cases, found their way into Jewish literature. They are met with in works that have been written under Arabic influence in one form or another. Abraham's visit to Ishmael is found in the *Pirke R. El.* xxx. and in the "Sefer ha-Yashar." In the "Shebet Musar" of Elijah ha-Kohen there is an appendix entitled "Tale of That Which Happened to Our Father Abraham in Connection with Nimrod." Elijah lived in Smyrna at the beginning of the eighteenth century, which fact will explain the Arabic influence.

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G.

—**Critical View:** The original and proper form of this name seems to be either "Abram" or "Abiram" (*I Kings*, xvi, 34; *Deut.* xi, 6), with **Etymology.** the meaning, "my Father [or my God] is exalted." The form "Abraham" yields no sense in Hebrew, and is probably only a graphic variation of "Abram," the *h* being simply a letter, indicating a preceding vowel, *a*; but popular tradition explains it "father of a multitude" (*ab hamon*), given as a new name on the occasion of a turning-point in the patriarch's career (*Gen.* xvii, 5). The name is personal, not tribal; it appears as a personal name in Babylonia in the time of Apil-Sin (about 2320 B.C.; Meissner, "Beiträge zum Altbabylonischen Privatrecht," No. 111), and is not employed in the Old Testament in an ethnical sense (for example, it is not so employed in *Micah*, vii, 20, nor in *Isa.* xli, 8).

In the earlier so-called Jahvistic narrative, Abraham embodies particularly the conception of Israel's title to the land of Canaan. He comes from the East to Canaan, receives the promise of the land, separates from Lot (Moab and Ammon), from Ishmael (Arabian tribes), and from the sons of Keturah (other Arabian tribes), thus eliminating any possible future contention as to the title to the country. A continuous process of selec-

tion and exclusion is here exemplified, the result of which is to identify Abraham with Canaan; such was the popular conception of him as late as the time of Ezekiel (*Ezek.* xxxiii, 24). In the narrative which the critics regard as postexilic, or the Priestly Code, Abraham further represents the formal covenant of God (El Shaddai) with the nation, sealed by the rite of circumcision (COVENANT). He stands, in a word, for the premosaic religious constitution of the people.

Abraham's singularly majestic and attractive personality, as it appears in *Genesis*, is in this view the outcome of generations of thought.

Character. Each age contributed to the portrait of what it held to be purest and noblest and worthiest of the first forefather. The result is a figure, solitary, calm, strong, resting unswervingly on God, and moving unscathed among men. Later he was thought of as "the friend of God" (*Isa.* xli, 8). Paul calls him the father of all who believe (*Rom.* iv.). Mohammed takes him as the representative of the absolute primitive religion, from which Judaism and Christianity have diverged, and to which Islam has returned. The character shows, however, a commingling of high and low. There are generosity (*Gen.* xlii.), bravery (*Gen.* xiv.), a fine sense of justice (*Gen.* xviii.). But tradition, in order to bring out God's special care of the hero, twice makes him guilty of falsehood (*Gen.* xii., xx.); this last fact throws light on the ethical ideas of the eighth century.

Is there any historical kernel embedded in the narrative? Obviously it contains much legendary matter. The stories of Lot, Hagar,

Relation to and Keturah are ethnological myths;

History. the theophanies and the story of the destruction of the cities are legends; circumcision was not adopted by the Israelites in the way here represented; and the story of the attempted sacrifice of Isaac is a product of the regal period. Abraham's kinsfolk (*Gen.* xxii, 20-24) are personifications of tribes, and his predecessors and successors, from Noah to Jacob, are mythical or legendary. What is to be said of the much debated fourteenth chapter? First, it must be divided into two parts: the history of the Elamite invasion, and Abraham's connection with it. The first part may be historical, but it no more follows that the second part is historical than the reality of the miraculous rôle assigned to Moses follows from the reality of the Exodus. On the contrary, the mention of Salem and of tithes points to a postexilic origin for the paragraph. The invasion may be historical — כדרלעמר (Chedorlaomer) and אריוך (Arioch) are Elamite, and a march from Babylonia to Canaan is conceivable—but no mention of it has been found in inscriptions, and it is not easy to reconcile it with known facts. If אמרפל (Amraphel) be Hammurabi, Abraham's date is about 2300 B.C.

The biography of Abraham in *Genesis* is probably to be regarded as legendary; it has grown up around sacred places, ideas, and institutions. Yet there can be little doubt that the name involves some historical fact, and that this fact has to do with tribal migration: the name, though personal, not tribal, may represent a migration. By reason of the paucity of information the whole question is obscure, and any conclusions must be largely conjectural.

The text represents Abraham as coming to Canaan from the Tigris-Euphrates valley. A migration of Hebrew ancestors from that region is not necessary for the explanation of what we know of Hebrew history. But weight must be attached to the well-formed and persistent tradition, and a migration of

this sort, as the Tell-el-Amarna inscriptions indicate, must be regarded as possible. If a motive for the movement be sought, it may be found in the wars which were constantly going on between the thickly settled and feebly organized inhabitants of the valley between the rivers. Distinct indications of an Abrahamic migration from Babylonia are found by some scholars in the similarity between Babylonian and Hebrew institutions (as the Sabbath) and myths (Creation, Flood, etc.); by others this similarity is referred to Canaanite intermediation, or to later borrowing from Assyria or Babylonia.

The supposed relation of the names "Sin" (the wilderness) and "Sinai" (the mountain, and a Canaanite tribe) to the Babylonian moon-god, Sin, is doubtful. The migrating tribes would speak Babylonian or Aramaic, but would speedily become absorbed in their new surroundings and adopt the language of the region. If such a body settled in northern Arabia, this might account for the connection of Abraham with Hagar and Keturah. The Hebrew tribes proper, coming to dwell in that region, may have found his name as that of a local hero, and may gradually have adopted it. But of the condition of things in Canaan from 2300 to 2000 B.C. nothing is known, and between Abraham and Moses there is almost an absolute blank in the history.

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T.

ABRAHAM, APOCALYPSE OF: An apocryphon that has been preserved in Old Slavonic literature. Its title does not fully explain its contents, for about one-third of it might more appropriately be called "The Legend of Abraham," as this contains an account of Abraham's conversion from idolatry to monotheism quite apart from the Apocalypse which follows.

Abraham, the son of the idol-maker TERAH (Gen. R. xxxviii. 13), was, like his father, a thoroughgoing idolater, being chiefly devoted to the worship of the stone idol called the Merumat ("Eben Marumah," stone of Iconoclast. deceit and corruption). But on a journey to a place near Fandana (Padan-aram), some of his idols were smashed, and having long felt misgivings as to their power, he became convinced of the unreality of such deities. Henceforth he fearlessly propagated this new truth, defending it even against his own father, whom he in vain endeavored to convert. He threw the wooden idol Barisat—בר אשתת ("Son of the Fire")—into the flames, and when remonstrated with declared that it must have thrown itself in, in order to hurry the boiling of the food (compare a similar anecdote related of Abraham in Gen. R. xxxviii. 13). But not even this argument influenced his father; and his more elaborate ones in favor of monotheism, which almost to the very letter are identical with those found in the Midrash (Gen. R. l.c.), also proved futile. Finally God told Abraham to leave his father's house, which, no sooner had he done, than it was consumed by fire, as was also his father. The Biblical "Ur of the Chaldees" (Gen. xi. 31, xv. 7) is here interpreted as the fire of the Chaldees, and later in fuller detail in the Book of Jubilees, and still more fully in the Midrash, Gen. R., and in Pes. 118a. In the last passage the account of the death of Haran and of the miraculous escape of Abraham from the fire of the Chaldees is based on a combination of this Apocalypse with the Book of Ju-

bilees. The relative age of these works can be determined by comparing the legend of Abraham as contained in the Apocalypse with those in the Talmud and in the Book of Jubilees. The legend of the raven in the Book of Jubilees (xi. 18) and the account of the conversion of Abraham in his boyhood are still unknown to the Apocalypse, while the legend of the fire of the Chaldees is found there still in its incipient stage. The mockery of the idol Barisat is more extended in the Midrash than in the Apocalypse; also the condemnation of Terah as an idolater, as related in the Apocalypse, discloses the older Haggadah (Gen. R. xxxix. 7), whereas the Book of Jubilees presents the later one (compare Gen. R. xxx. 4, xxxix. 7, where Terah is treated quite mildly). As the Book of Jubilees can not have been written later than 70 (see JUBILEES, Book of), the date of the composition should be set before the middle of the first century.

It is by no means difficult to ascertain with some degree of certainty the language in which this legend was originally written. The **Its Original Language.** sarcastic names given to the idols presuppose a familiarity with a Semitic dialect which a Greco-Jewish writer would scarcely have expected of his readers. It is not certain whether the book was written in Hebrew or Aramaic. The frequent phrase, "And I said, Behold me," suggests the Hebrew idiom הִנְנִי, while the expression "silver" for "money" is common to both languages.

The second part of the book, the main Apocalypse, is a commentary on Gen. xv., which is not only interpreted by the Haggadah as a revelation of the future destinies of Israel up to their final redemption (Gen. R. xlv. 15), but also as implying the fact that "God lifted Abraham above the firmament" and told him to "look down upon the world beneath." The Apocalypse relates minutely the circumstances under which this ascension, mentioned in the Midrash, took place. According to this, Abraham's sacrifice of the animals (Gen. xv.) took place, by God's command, on the holy Mount Horeb, whither Abraham was led by the angel יִהוֹאֵל (Yahoel) after a journey of forty days. The angel introduces himself to Abraham, the "friend of God" (Book of Jubilees, 19; Men. 58b), as a being possessed of the power of the Ineffable Name שֵׁם הַיֵּה (Name of the Existing), a quality assigned elsewhere by the rabbis to METATRON, "whose name is like unto that of God Himself" (Sanh. 38b). This also explains why, in the Apocalypse, the name Yahoel is evidently a substitute for the Ineffable Name (יִהוֹה), of which even the writing out in full was forbidden. Yahoel is also the heavenly choirmaster, who teaches the angels their hymn (שִׁירָה), a function which, according to Yal-kut, i. § 133, is assigned to Michael. Similarly, the control over "the threats and attacks of the reptiles" ascribed here to Yahoel is assigned to Michael (see Schwab, "Vocabulaire," p. 283). Even Michael's chief task of protecting and watching over Israel (Dan. xii. 1) is assumed by Yahoel, who says to Abraham: "I am . . . with the generation prepared from of old to come from thee, and with me is Michael." These are the oldest instances of the gradual transformation of Michael, originally the guardian angel of Israel, into Metatron—that is, unto the one who concentrates in himself all that is great, a development in Jewish angelology of the greatest influence upon the Christian doctrine of the Logos (see ABRAHAM, TESTAMENT OF). Under