

**Series: God & Abraham #1120**

**Title: Genesis 11.26-32**

***The People & The Places (Part 7)***

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. I am grateful that you listen and I am glad we can end this week together by returning to the place of Abraham's birth and early life, Ur in the land of the Chaldeans, this city very near Babylon where the Babylonians lived and reigned. As we talked about last time, God rescued Abraham from this place and set him on the road to the land called Canaan. In between there was stop in another city, called Haran. As we talk about the people and places that influenced Abraham and his family, we want to talk about Ur, Haran, and Canaan.

We have started with Ur and it is about Ur that we will have the most to say. What will be said about Haran and Canaan, at least at this point, will be brief. Let's see how we do on time. I want to begin by continuing and finishing the point of emphasis we started yesterday and then we might pivot to Haran. If not, we will do so on Monday. With the weekend forthcoming I hope that you might carve out some time to read the texts that we are discussing and to think about the context in which Abram (his original name) lived his life. If you can capture and understand Ur, the Chaldeans, Babylon, and the Babylonians, then you have a leg up in grasping so much of what takes place in this part of the world written about in the Hebrew Bible, the Genesis through Malachi.

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We have said that for Moses, the author of Genesis, geography is very important. And Moses makes the connection between Ur and Babylon, the Chaldeans and the Babylonians. He writes that God called Abram out of Ur and the Babylonian influence.

I will read just one verse, Genesis 12, verse 1, "**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...'**" God calls Abraham to leave his country. That is Ur of the Chaldeans. Moses interprets Abraham's calling to leave Ur as a call to leave Babylon. Babylon and Ur are so deeply connected that Ur was in the land of the Babylonians.

As Genesis 12 reveals, as soon as God introduces Himself to the man Abram, the Lord puts him on the road out of Ur bound for Canaan. And we read about this from the Hebrew Bible in these references:

Genesis chapter 15, and verse 7, "**7 And [God] said to him, 'I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.'**" That was Genesis 15, verse 7 and you heard God say that He was responsible for getting Abraham out of Ur and into Canaan. (Genesis 15, verse 7.)

Then, in Nehemiah chapter 9, verse 7 we read this in a song of praise to God, "**You are the Lord God, who chose Abram and brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees, and gave him the name Abraham.**" So Nehemiah affirms God as the One who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur. And renamed him.

This is affirmed again in the New Testament. Acts chapter 7, verses 2-4 reads, "**2 And [Stephen] said, 'Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in**

**Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, <sup>3</sup> and said to him, ‘Leave your country and your relatives, and come into the land that I will show you.’ <sup>4</sup> Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. From there, after his father died, God had him move to this country in which you are now living.”** (Acts 7, verses 2-4.)

Both Testaments give testimony to this: God picked up Abram (Abraham) and dropped him off in Canaan. And that was a move away from Babylon (known for the worship of false gods) to Canaan (intended for the worship of the One True God).

Then, when we continue in the Hebrew Bible, we come to the prophetic literature and I invite you to listen to the connection that is made between Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans. Isaiah speaks of the “glory of the Chaldeans” as the city of Babylon that God will overturn as He did with Sodom and Gomorrah. I am reading Isaiah chapter 13, verse 19, **“And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans’ pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.”** And Isaiah chapter 48, verse 14 says the Lord **“will carry out His good pleasure on Babylon, and His arm will be against the Chaldeans.”** Do you hear how Babylon and the Chaldeans are synonymous? That was Isaiah 13, verse 19 and Isaiah chapter 48, verse 14.

Continuing now with the prophets, we read about the Chaldeans who live in the city of Babylon and who have taken the people of God (the Israelites) into captivity. I hope that you are aware of the Babylonian Captivity. I do not want to take much time on this now, but God sovereignly used the Babylonians, under King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon, to intentionally put His people into exile as judgment against Israel for their sin and rebellion. The Jews were taken captive by Babylon. This is the theme being dealt with in the following words from the prophets, much later in the Hebrew Scriptures.

If you have a pen or your phone or computer is out – however you take notes – jot down these Scripture references. And listen as I read for the connection between Babylon and the Chaldeans. Again, as a reminder, I am reading these to show you how the geography of Genesis 11 matters a lot to the rest of the Bible. This shows us how Abraham’s connection to Ur and Babylon is really just the beginning of these places in God’s Word.

In Jeremiah chapter 25 and verse 12, God speaks, **“<sup>12</sup> ‘Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,’ declares the Lord, ‘for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.’** There it was: Babylon and that nation...the land of the Chaldeans are connected in God’s mind.

Jeremiah 50, verse 1, **“The word which the Lord spoke concerning Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, through Jeremiah the prophet...”** (That was Jeremiah 50, verse 1.)

Jeremiah 50, verse 8, **“Wander away from the midst of Babylon and go forth from the land of the Chaldeans...”**

Jeremiah 50, verse 35, **“ ‘A sword against the Chaldeans,’ declares the Lord, ‘And against the inhabitants of Babylon...’”**

Jeremiah 50, verse 45, **“<sup>45</sup> Therefore hear the plan of the Lord which He has planned against Babylon, and His purposes which He has purposed against the land of the Chaldeans...”** (Jeremiah 50, verses 35 and 45.) Read these and you will clearly see the connection!

And then Jeremiah 51, verse 24, **“<sup>24</sup> ‘But I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all their evil that they have done in Zion before your eyes,’ declares the Lord.”**

Jeremiah 51, and verse 54, **“The sound of an outcry from Babylon, and of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans!”** That was Jeremiah 51, verses 24 and 54, making Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans once again synonymous.

The same is the case in the writings of the prophet Ezekiel. Hear now the Word of God at the end of the workweek from Ezekiel. Ezekiel chapter 12, verse 13, **“I will bring him to Babylon in the land of the Chaldeans...”** Babylon is in the land of the Chaldeans.

Ezekiel 23.15, “<sup>15</sup> **girded with belts on their loins, with flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers, like the Babylonians in Chaldea, the land of their birth.**” Ah, according to Ezekiel 23, verse 15 the Babylonians are in Chaldea.

And finally, Ezekiel chapter 23 and verse 23 speaks about the, “<sup>23</sup> **Babylonians and all the Chaldeans...**” They go together. (Ezekiel 23, verse 23.)

Well, I trust you see the link between Abraham, these later Jewish exiles, and the Chaldeans, Babylon, and the Babylonians. Our study is focused on Genesis 11 right now, and yet we can swing way over to the prophets and draw a solid line between the two. That’s how God works. Again, we are running low on time, so we’ll go to Haran next week. That’s our next place. Please do meet us back here again on Monday for God Is.

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