

The Abraham Cycle (Genesis 11:27-25:18)

Genesis: The Foundations of Our Faith

April 7, 2024

1. Review: The Primeval History (Gen. 1:1-11:26)

Parallel Panels of the Primeval History¹:

Adam (Gen. 1:1-6:8)

A. Creation (1:1-2:24)

“Be fruitful and multiply” (1:28)

(Implied) Covenant with Adam and His Offspring

B. Adam’s Fall (3:1-24)

C. Generational Spread of Sin—Three Sons

(Cain = seed of serpent) (4:1-24)

D. Genealogy of the Promised Seed (4:25-5:32)

E. Geographic Spread of Sin (6:1-8)

Noah (Gen. 6:9-11:9)

A’. Recreation/Flood (6:9-9:17)

“Be fruitful and multiply” (9:1, 7)

Covenant with Noah and His Offspring

B’. Noah’s Fall (9:18-21)

C’. Generational Spread of Sin—Three Sons

(Ham = seed of serpent) (9:22-27; 10:1-32)

E’. Geographic Spread of Sin (11:1-9) – Babel

D’. Genealogy of the Promised Seed (11:10-26)

*The Problem: The spread of sin *generationally* and *geographically*

*The Solution: The line of the promised seed (11:10-26), leading to Abraham and culminating in Christ

2. Opening Prayer

3. The Structure of the Abraham Cycle²

Prologue: Genealogy of Terah (11:27-32)

A Promises Revealed: Abraham Surrenders His Fatherland in Faith (12:1-9)

-----**B Fall #1: Abram Lies about Sarai in Egypt**; Abram, Lot Separate (12:10-13:18)

-----**C Abram Rescues Lot/Sodom through Military Intervention (14:1-24)**

-----**D Covenant with Abram; Announcement of Ishmael’s Birth (15:1-16:16)**

CENTER: Fall #2 of Abram and Sarai (16:1-3)

-----**D’ Covenant with Abraham; Announcement of Isaac’s Birth (17:1-18:15)**

-----**C’ Abraham Rescues Lot/Sodom through Prayerful Intercession (18:16-19:38)**

-----**B’ Fall #3: Abraham Lies about Sarah in Gerar**; Abraham, Ishmael Separate (20:1-21:34)

A’ Promises Sealed: Abraham Surrenders His Son in Faith (22:1-19)

Epilogue: Genealogy of Nahor (22:20-24)

Afterword: Abram’s Legacy (23:1-25:11)

Main Message: *We can have faith in God like Abraham did, because God keeps His covenant promises even when we fail.*

4. An Overview of the Abraham Cycle

Genesis 12:1-3: Now the Lord said to Abram,

‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.

And I will make of you a great nation,

and I will *bless* you and make your name great, so that you will be a *blessing*.

I will *bless* those who *bless* you, and him who dishonors you I will curse,

and in you all the families of the earth shall be *blessed*.”

¹ Adapted from Gary Rendsburg, *The Redaction of Genesis*, 8.

² Adapted from Gary Rendsburg, *The Redaction of Genesis*, 28-29.

5. Foreshadowing in the Abraham Cycle

A. Abraham's Biography Foreshadows Israel's History

Abraham's Biography	Israel's History
<u>Egypt</u> : Sojourned in Egypt due to famine (Gen. 12:10-20) and prospered there (Gen. 12:6)	<u>Egypt</u> : Sojourned in Egypt due to famine (Gen. 47:4) and prospered there (Exod. 1:7, 9, 12, 20)
<u>Plagues</u> : The Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house (Gen. 12:17)	<u>Plagues</u> : The Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house (Exod. 7-12)
<u>Exodus</u> : Pharaoh called for Abram, told him to leave, and sent him away (Gen. 12:18-20)	<u>Exodus</u> : Pharaoh called for Moses, told him to leave, and sent him away (Exod. 12:31-33)
<u>Wealth</u> : While in Egypt, Abram acquired sheep and oxen, silver and gold, and many possessions (Gen. 12:16; 13:2, 5-6)	<u>Wealth</u> : While in Egypt, Israel acquired sheep and oxen, silver and gold, and many possessions (Gen. 15:14; Exod. 3:21-22; 10:9; 12:32, 35-36, 38)
<u>Journey to Canaan</u> : Abram "journeyed" from Egypt toward Canaan (Gen. 13:1, 3)	<u>Journey to Canaan</u> : The Israelites "journeyed" from Egypt toward Canaan (Exod. 12:37)
<u>Mixed Company</u> : "Abram <i>went up</i> from Egypt...and Lot [was] with him" (Gen. 13:1)	<u>Mixed Company</u> : "A mixed multitude also <i>went up</i> with them" (Exod. 12:38)
<u>Quarreling</u> : Abram's shepherds "quarreled" with Lot's (Gen. 13:7-8)	<u>Quarreling</u> : The Israelites "quarreled" with the Lord/Moses (Exod. 17:2, 7)
<u>Turn back to Egypt</u> : Lot desired the Jordan Valley because it was like "the land of Egypt" (Gen. 13:10) and preferred to remain outside Canaan (13:10-12)	<u>Turn back to Egypt</u> : The Israelites craved the food they enjoyed "in the land of Egypt" (Exod. 16:3) and preferred to remain outside Canaan (Num. 13-14)
<u>Successful Warfare</u> : Abram routed a coalition of eastern kings (Gen. 14)	<u>Successful Warfare</u> : Israel routed the Amalekites (Exod. 17:8-16)
<u>Priestly Blessing</u> : Melchizedek, the Canaanite "priest" "went out to meet" Abram; they ate "bread"; and Melchizedek blessed God Most High for delivering Abram's enemies into his "hand" (Gen. 14:17-18, 20)	<u>Priestly Blessing</u> : Jethro, the Midianite "priest" sought out Moses, who "went out to meet" him; they ate "bread"; and Jethro blessed the Lord for delivering Israel from the "hand" of Pharaoh and the Egyptians (Exod. 18:1, 7, 9-10, 12)
<u>Covenant Established</u> : The Lord made a covenant with Abram (Gen. 15) that began with the words, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Ur of the Chaldeans" (Gen. 15:7)	<u>Covenant Established</u> : The Lord made a covenant with Israel (Exod. 19-24) that began with the words, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt" (Exod. 20:2)
<u>Post-Covenant Fall</u> : Abram and Sarai grew impatient and sinned (Gen. 16)	<u>Post-Covenant Fall</u> : The Israelites grew impatient and sinned (Exod. 32)
<u>Covenant Reaffirmed</u> : The Lord graciously reaffirmed his covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17)	<u>Covenant Reestablished</u> : The Lord graciously reestablished his covenant with Israel (Exod. 34)
<u>Worship</u> : Abraham offers up Isaac as a sacrifice on the mountain of the LORD (Jerusalem) (Gen. 22)	<u>Worship</u> : Israel offers up sacrifices on the mountain of the LORD (Jerusalem; see 2 Chron. 3:1)

B. Abraham & Isaac (Gen. 22) Foreshadow the Cross

- Isaac as Abraham's "only" "beloved" son (Gen. 22:2, 12, 16 // Matt. 3:17; 17:5; John 3:16)
- Isaac offered up on one of the mountains of "Moriah" (Gen. 22:2 // 2 Chron. 3:1; John 19:17, 20)
- Isaac carrying the wood up the hill (Gen. 22:6 // John 19:17)
- Isaac's obedient submission to his father (Gen. 22:7-10 // Php. 2:8)
- The sacrificial ram's horns caught in the thicket (Gen. 22:13 // John 19:2)
- Abraham trusting that the Lord would provide a "lamb" (Gen. 22:7-8 // John 1:29, 36, etc.)
- Abraham believing God would raise his son from the dead (Gen. 22:5; Heb. 11:19)
- Abraham not "sparing" his only son (Gen. 22:12 // Rom. 8:32)