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A Bible Study Guide

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THE BOOK OF JASHER

The Authentic Annals Of The Early Hebrews -
Is It The "Real" Book of Jasher?

It is understandable that some may feel that it is impossible or unlikely that this volume could really be the original ***Book of Jasher***.

The issue is compounded by the existence of several works by the name Sefer Hayasher. I have in my possession a copy of Sefer Hayasher - The Book Of The Righteous, edited and translated by Seymour J. Cohen. It is clearly not a book of history, but an ethical text that was probably written in the 13th century. Its introduction cites several other "Books of Jasher", some of which are no longer known to be in existence, such as that by Zerahiah Ha-Yevani of the 13th century. There is also known to have been one written by Rabbi Jacob ben Mier of the 12th century, and one by Rabbi Jonah ben Abraham of Gerona of the 14th century. We are told of a work by that title from the Amoraim period (3rd to 6th centuries) that is characterized as containing "for the most part sayings of the sages of the first and second centuries". So, this title has been a popular one for rabbinical writings, but most are clearly not intended to have been passed off as the book mentioned in the Bible. There is one notable exception which I will mention later.

The first step in dealing with the question of authenticity is to simply read the book with an open mind. One cannot effectively investigate the matter unless he is familiar with it. After all, according to Solomon, "He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him". (Proverbs 18:13). The reader will find that it reads very much like the Bible, except that many passages are replete with details that are not recorded in the Bible.

There are digressions from the biblical narrative that show concurrent events in other parts of the world. There are chapters dealing wholly with events in Egypt or events in Europe. Much of this material can be recognized from other works of ancient history. To anyone familiar with ancient history, it will be obvious that Jasher places these events in a radically different time period than do conventional historians. To be sure, if Jasher be true, there needs to be a radical alteration in the conventional interpretation of ancient history, especially in the area of chronology.

There is little of consequence at variance with the Bible. There are some chronological features that differ, but these can usually be attributed to a textual

error. Usually the error will be resolved by reading on. A later entry will fall into harmony with the Bible text. Remember that the ancient scrolls of this book were in poor condition when the book was printed in Hebrew in 1613. It is not unlikely that some numbers could get scrambled.

There are a couple mysterious accounts of incidents that smack of Greek or Roman mythology, such as the story of Zepho, the grandson of Esau who slew a half human monster in a large cave. This account is easily recognized as the same story as that of Theseus, who slew the minotaur. The characters and the setting are different. A critical reader may object to this material, but many valid explanations are possible concerning why this and other such events were recorded in this book. The original author may have simply reported those things because they were popular folklore of his day. Such stories are merely mentioned in passing and no significance is attached to them. Though one might doubt the veracity of these tales, there is nothing here that should dissuade an objective reader from the opinion that this book is genuine. Even the most casual reader will find Jasher enlightening. Accounts in the Bible can be made more lucid and easier to understand with the background of Jasher in mind.

The next issue to investigate in regard to the authenticity of this book is the two passages which mention the book by name. The first is Joshua 10.12-13:

"... and he [Joshua] said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is it not written in the **Book of Jasher**? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of man: for the Lord fought for Israel."

And now compare it with the following passage in Jasher 88.63-64:

"...and Joshua said in the sight of all the people, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon, until the nation shall have revenged itself upon its enemies... And the sun stood still in the midst of the heavens, and it stood still six and thirty moments, and the moon also stood still and hastened not to go down a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of man, for the Lord fought for Israel."

A comparison of the text preceding also shows a high degree of correlation, indicating that much more than a couple of verses was probably quoted by the Bible writer.

A second mention of the **Book of Jasher** occurs in II Samuel 1.17. In contrast, this incident is not a direct quotation of a historical event from Jasher, as is the case in Joshua. Jasher's narrative ends long before the time of David. How-

ever, as part of his lamentation over the death of Saul and Jonathan, David referred to a comment by Jacob that is quoted in the ***Book of Jasher***. He said:

"Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: Behold it is written in the ***Book of Jasher***."

David is referring to the dying words of Jacob to Judah in Jasher 56:9,

"...only teach thy sons the use of the bow and all weapons of war, in order that they may fight the battles of their brother who will rule over his enemies."

This passage in the Bible has no reference to anything in the Bible itself, but it is made clear from the passage in Jasher.

While the above two references pass the test, it will be up to the reader to satisfy himself as to the general agreement of the entirety of the book with the Bible narrative. This is such an extensive comparison, and such an obvious one, that I will not attempt to make any verse by verse comparison. Certainly any reader who is familiar with the Bible will recognize its similarity to the text of Jasher.

There probably is no way that we can know that the Biblical writer(s) quoted from this book, rather than the other way around? Is it possible that this book was reverse engineered? Perhaps that ***Book of Jasher*** from the Amoraim period was compiled from rabbinic sources such that it is a kind of digest of rabbinic traditions. Indeed, there is a great deal of commonality with accounts from other midrashic sources. If this were found to be so it would in no way diminish its value.

Is it possible that someone created this book as a clever fraud, by appropriating the name of the Biblical Jasher to give the work credibility? There are, of course, many examples of such pious counterfeits from the early new testament period. Could someone have fabricated this book by incorporating a huge number of additional details into the framework of Bible stories, and do it with such accuracy as to be convincing? It is remotely conceivable that some writer of the rabbinical period could have gathered a vast array of those stories, as are common in rabbinical writings, and incorporated them into this work in a framework to, in some way, add credibility to the stories. But such a scenario seems very unlikely, since rabbinical writings have a great deal of credibility otherwise, and no major effort of promoting this book for that purpose has ever occurred. It is hard to imagine that this book would be counterfeited for that purpose or any other. There is simply no motive for such an act. In any case, if this were true, it is such a masterful job as to be a very valuable work in it's own right. The accuracy and credibility of this supposed Pseudo-Jasher is absolute genius. If this be a forgery it is a marvelous one.

Such a fraudulent writer would not have needed to add so much detail into the account to be convincing. The more details he drew from his imagination, the greater his chances of making some glaring error that would give away his deception. A faker would certainly have written a much shorter work and left out unnecessary details.

In actuality, we have a wonderful example of just such a fraud. I have in my possession three different works that go by the title Sepher Hayasher or The **Book of Jasher**. This first is, of course, this book. The second is the 13th century ethical treatise that I mentioned earlier. It makes no claim to being the Biblical Jasher and would never be taken for it. The third book is widely recognized for the fraud that it is. It has been republished by the Rosicrucian Order. It claims to have been discovered by Flaccus Albinus Alcuinus, Abbot of Canterbury in the 8th century, while on a pilgrimage. It is the briefest outline of the first six books of the Bible, consisting of about 70 pages of large print. It contains no useful details, and only the barest account of the familiar Hebrew stories. It seems to have been prepared hastily and with little attention to detail. The most obvious feature is that it claims to be the work of a man named Jasher who was the son of Caleb and one of the Judges of Israel. This seems to be its entire reason for existence. It is clear that the author had no real knowledge of Hebrew and failed to recognize that Jasher is not a proper noun. It is not anybody's name. It rather carries the meaning of the upright book or the faithful record. Clearly this book is a fake. It has all the characteristics that you would expect to see in a forgery. It is very brief and contains no unique information except the one thing that is so absurd as to expose it as a hoax. So the contrast between that imitation and this book is very telling. It is easy to see which is genuine.

Finally, consider how Josephus described the **Book of Jasher**. He said "by this book are to be understood certain records kept in some safe place on purpose, giving an account of what happened among the Hebrews from year to year, and called Jasher or the upright, on account of the fidelity of the annals." There could be no better description of the book you see before you. The bottom line is that you, as the reader, will have to answer the question of legitimacy for yourself. Whichever side of that issue you take, I think that you will be enlightened by exploring the issue and by reading the book. If you feel as I do, that this book has the powerful credentials to commend it as the biblical **Book of Jasher**, you will now have in your hands an additional source to investigate when studying the Bible. You will also have much food for thought in regard to the issues of conventional chronology in ancient times.

The Book of Jasher Uncloaked!

Virtually ignored since it was discovered, the **Book of Jasher** holds vital clues to interpreting and understanding Biblical chronology, from the Flood to the Exodus. A mistake made by Archbishop James Ussher

er, who was unfamiliar with the ***Book of Jasher***, led to a 60-year error in placing the birth of Abraham. But this error is corrected in the chronological keys provided by the ***Book of Jasher***. And with these keys, an intriguing, and astounding story emerges.

William F. Dankenbring

The ***Book of Jasher***, mentioned in the Biblical books of Joshua and Second Chronicles, was faithfully translated into English from the Rabbinical Hebrew in approximately A.D. 1840. Says the translator's preface, "the ever memorable events and transactions recorded in Scripture are with many others of the most interesting nature, comprehended in the ***Book of Jasher***; and they are all arrayed in that style of simple, unadorned majesty and precision, which so particularly distinguishes the genius of the Hebrew language/ and this, together with other numerous internal evidences, it is presumed will go far to convince the Hebrew scholar that the book is, with the exception of some doubtful parts, a venerable monument of antiquity; and that, notwithstanding some few additions may have been made to it in comparatively modern times, it still retains sufficient to prove it a copy of the book referred to in Joshua, chapter 10, and 2 Samuel, chap. 1. There are not more than seven or eight words in the whole book that by construction can be derived from the Chaldean language" (page 3-4).

The title of the book in Hebrew, *Sephir Ha Yasher*, literally means "the book of the upright," or "the upright or correct record." Some have thought that "Jasher" was the name of a Hebrew judge in Israel, and a publication that arose in the middle of the eighteenth century (circa 1750 A. D.), purported itself to be a translation into English from a Hebrew manuscript of "Jasher" found at Gazna in Persia. That book appears to have been a fictitious book, a fraud, and most probably the work of some agnostic, cynical English skeptic, written in imitation of the language of Scripture. Its author, in his ignorance, presumed "Jasher" to have been the personal name of an ancient Hebrew figure, the original writer. But the mischievous deed was recognized by true scholars of Hebrew, for the pronoun "the" ("ha" in Hebrew) never precedes or is prefixed to proper names.

How is the ***Book of Jasher*** important to us, today? It sheds marvelous light on the Biblical story, from the time of Adam and Eve, the time of Enoch, and the account of Noah's Deluge, to the Tower of Babel, the tyrant Nimrod, and the story of Abraham and his descendants. Needless to say, I cannot discuss the details of this remarkable historical record, which completely authenticates and corroborates Scriptural history, filling in many missing details deleted in the Scriptural record, in this article. I highly recommend the book for any who desire to perfect their knowledge of the ancient times, from Adam to the Exodus.

The ***Book of Jasher*** provides a fascinating glimpse into the life of Enoch, who was a righteous ruler over men, continually instructing them in truth and up-

rightness, and a knowledge of the Most High God. It also tells us that in the days of "Peleg," not only were the nations at Babel divided and scattered, but the earth itself was also divided. From this book we also learn that Noah and Abraham were contemporaries.

Perhaps the most important key found in the ***Book of Jasher*** is that it corrects the erroneous chronological date for the birth of Abraham assumed by many Christian commentators, in particular archbishop James Ussher. Says the Translator of the ***Book of Jasher***:

- "From this book we learn that Noah and Abraham were contemporaries. How beautiful the contemplation of the meeting of these two Patriarchs, the one being a monument of God's mercy, the other having the promises of the favor and grace of God, not only to himself, but to his seed after him. This fact might be proved from Scripture; but from the 32nd verse in the 11th chapter of Genesis, most of the Christian commentators have erroneously dated the birth of Abraham 60 years later than it actually took place; as it is generally stated that he was born A.M. [after man, i.e., after Adam] 2008, whereas the regular calculation in the Bible leads us to 60 years earlier, viz. 1948. The only cause of this error has been that Abraham's departure from Haran, at the age of 75, is recorded close to the description of the death of Terah, at the age of 205, in Genesis 11:32" (p. 6).

How should we view the ***Book of Jasher***, today? The translator correctly points out that although it is not divine Scripture, it nevertheless is a mighty historical and ancient work which relates directly to Biblical historical times and events. Thus the translator does not recommend it to people as Scripture, as a work of divine inspiration, but does "as a monument of history, comparatively covered with the ivy of the remotest ages; as a work, possessing in its language, all the characteristic simplicity of patriarchal times; and as such, he conceives it peculiarly calculated to illustrate and confirm the sacred truths handed down to us in the Scriptures" (p.vii).

The translator concludes:

- "Like all other ancient writings, (except the inspired volume,) it has in some respects suffered from the consuming hand of time; and there is reason to believe that some additions have been made to it. In fine, it contains a history of the lives and memorable transactions of all the illustrious characters recorded in sacred history, from Adam down to the time of the Elders, who immediately succeeded Joshua" (ibid.).

Having said these things, let's take a close look and see how the ***Book of Jasher***, then, impacts our understanding of ancient Biblical chronology, and what it means to us, today!

Chronology After the Flood

The ***Book of Jasher*** recounts the story of mankind from Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, to the destruction of Noah's Flood (chapters 1-6). The story of the post-Flood world begins in chapter 7 where we are told that Terah was 38 years old when he begat Haran and Nahor, the older brothers of Abraham (Ver. 22). What year was this? According to the chronology, from the Flood, we discover that Noah was 600 years old at the time of the Flood (Genesis 7:6). The Flood occurred in the year 2348 B.C. Noah's son Shem begat Arphaxad 2 years after the Flood (Genesis 11:10), or in 2346 B.C. From that time on we can trace the descendants of Shem (see Genesis 11:10-26):

Descendant	Lived	Begat	Date
Arphaxad	35 years	Salah	2311 B.C.
Salah	30 years	Eber	2281 B.C.
Eber	34 years	Peleg	2247 B.C.
Peleg	30 years	Reu	2217 B.C.
Reu	32 years	Serug	2185 B.C.
Serug	30 years	Nahor	2155 B.C.
Nahor	29 years	Terah	2126 B.C.
Terah	70 years	Abram	2056 B.C.

At this point, the Biblical genealogy tell us, "And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran" (Genesis 11:26). Yet the ***Book of Jasher*** clearly states that "Terah was thirty eight years old, and he begat Haran and Nahor" (Jasher 9:22). Therefore, the fact that the Bible says Terah was 70 when he begat Abram, Nahor and Haran, must refer to the date when ABRAM was begotten -- 32 years after his two brothers. Abram was the youngest of the three, but is listed first because the birthright became his because of his righteousness and excellency.

This is a straight-forward chronology. However, it differs from that of Archbishop James Ussher. Ussher, in his mammoth chronological work, concluded erroneously that Abram was born seventy five years before Terah his father died. Terah died at the age of 205 (Genesis 11:32). The next chapter of Genesis tells us that God told Abram to leave his country and Abram did so at the age of 75 (Genesis 12:1-4). Ussher assumes that Terah's death and Abram's departure for Canaan was the same year -- therefore, since Terah died in 1921 B.C., Abram's birth would have been, according to Ussher, 75 years sooner -- in 1996 B.C. Notice! This date is precisely 60 years later than the true date for Abram's birth! Unfortunately, Archbishop Ussher did not have access to the **Book of Jasher** when he calculated the birth of Abram!

When this correction is made, however, it suddenly frees up our understanding of events that occurred after the Flood. Much of this illumination comes from the **Book of Jasher**!

Nimrod and the Birth of Abram

Now let's pick up the story of Nimrod, the world's first tyrant, after the Flood. The **Book of Jasher** gives us a very interesting insight into Nimrod's kingdom and personality. The story begins with his father Cush. We read:

- "And Cush, the son of Ham, the son of Noah, took a wife in those days, in his old age, and she bare a son, and they called his name Nimrod, saying, At that time the sons of men began to rebel and transgress against God, and the child grew up, and his father loved him exceedingly, for he was the son of his old age.
- "And the garments of skin, which God made for Adam and his wife, when they went out of the garden, were given to Cush. For after the death of Adam and his wife, the garments were given to Enoch, the son of Jared, and when Enoch was taken up to God, he gave them to Methuselah, his son. And at the death of Methuselah, Noah took them and brought them to the ark, and they were with him until he went out of the ark. And in their going out, Ham stole those garments from Noah his father, and he took them and hid them from his brothers. And when Ham begat his firstborn Cush, he gave him the garments in secret, and they were with Cush many days. And Cush also concealed them from his sons and brothers, and when Cush had begotten Nimrod, he gave him those garments through his love for him, and Nimrod grew up, and when he was twenty years old he put on those garments.

- "And Nimrod became strong when he put on the garments, and God gave him might and strength, and he was a mighty hunter in the earth. . . . And when Nimrod was forty years old, at that time there was war between his brethren and the children of Japheth, so that they were in the power of his enemies. . . . And when Nimrod had joyfully returned from battle, after having conquered his enemies, all his brethren . . . assembled to make him king over them, and they placed the regal crown upon his head.
- "And he placed TERAH THE SON OF NAHOR the prince of his host, and he dignified him and elevated him above all his princes" (Jasher 7:23-41).

Notice! Although the Bible does not mention these fine details in the Scriptural narrative, nevertheless, Terah, Abram's father, was the commander-in-chief of Nimrod's army! He was a very important man in the post-Flood world, and in the government of Nimrod. This occurred when Nimrod was about forty years of age. The account goes on:

- ". . . . And Nimrod dwelt in Shinar . . . and his kingdom became very great . . . and Nimrod reigned in the earth over all the sons of Noah, and they were all under his power and counsel [he was the first World Ruler]. And all the earth was of one tongue and words of union, but Nimrod did not go in the ways of the Lord. . . . And Terah, the son of Nahor, prince of Nimrod's host, was in those days very great in the sight of the king and his subjects, and the king and princes loved him, and they elevated him very high.
- "And Terah took a wife and her name was Ambhelo the daughter of Cornebo; and the wife of Terah conceived and bare him a son in those days. Terah was SEVENTY YEARS OLD when he begat him, and Terah called the name of his son ABRAM, because the king had raised him in those days, and dignified him above all his princes" (Jasher 7:44-51).

The ***Book of Jasher*** therefore plainly tells us Abram was born to Terah when he was 70 years old -- not 135, as Archbishop Ussher thought. The story continues that at the birth of Abram, the astrologers and wise men of Nimrod's kingdom saw a horrifying sign in the heavens, which they understood to mean that the child born to Terah that night would grow up and possess the earth, and would kill all the kings of the earth, posing a great threat to Nimrod himself. A plot was hatched to kill the child. Terah managed to save Abram by substituting the child of one of his servants instead, and then hid Abram, his mother and nurse, in a cave for ten years (Jasher 8:33 - 36).

The account goes on to tell us that Haran, Abram's oldest brother, took a wife when he was 39 years of age, and when he was 42, she bore to him Sarai, in the tenth year of Abram's life (Jasher 9:1-4). Thus Sarai was ten years younger than Abram, whom she would later marry. She was born in 2046 B.C. This means that Haran was born 42 years earlier, in 2088 B.C., and was 32 years older than Abram. This is also corroborated in Jasher 12:16, where we read, "and Haran was in those days that Abram was born thirty and two years old." He was born when Terah his father was 38.

When Abram was ten years old, he came out of the cave. The king Nimrod and all his soothsayers thought he was long dead by this time. However, taking no chances, we read that:

- "And when Abram came out from the cave, he went to Noah and his son Shem, and he remained with them to learn the instruction of the Lord and his ways, and no man knew where Abram was, and Abram served Noah and his son Shem for a long time.
- "And Abram was in Noah's house thirty nine years, and Abram knew the Lord from three days old, and he went in the ways of the Lord until the day of his death, as Noah and his son Shem had taught him; and all the sons of the earth in those days greatly transgressed against the Lord, and they rebelled against him, and they served other gods, and they forgot the Lord who had created them in the earth And Terah had twelve gods of large size, made of wood and stone, after the twelve months of the year. . . ." (Jasher 5-8).

Thus Abram, from age 10 to 49, was in the house of Noah, learning the truth of God! This would have been from the year 2046 (the year Sarai was born) until the year 2007 B.C. During this time, "king Nimrod reigned securely, and all the earth was under his control, and all the earth was of one tongue and words of union" (Jasher 9:20). At this time Nimrod and his great men took counsel to build a "strong tower, and its top reaching heaven: (verse 21). While they built it, they "imagined in their hearts to war against him and to ascend into heaven" (Ver. 25). As the Scriptures tell us, and the **Book of Jasher** confirms, the gigantic tower was destroyed in a mighty paroxysm. Says the book of Jasher, "And as to the tower which the sons of men built, the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up one third part thereof, and a fire also descended from heaven and burned another third, and a third part is left to this day, and it is of that part which was aloft, and its circumference is three days' walk" (Ver. 38).

This tremendous event would have occurred just before Abram left the house of Noah in the year 2007 B.C. The tower of Babel catastrophe, therefore, would have occurred somewhere around the year 2008 B.C. It was shortly after this

awesome lesson from the heavens, that Abram comes forth from hiding and exile, and returns to the house of his father Terah.

Abram Confronts Nimrod

When Abram was 50 years old, he left Noah's house and returned to his father's house. Terah was still steeped in idolatry, and still captain of the host of Nimrod (Jasher 11:13-15). Abram remonstrated with his father about his strange gods (verses 26-50). Incensed, Terah reported this incident to Nimrod, who sent soldiers to seize Abram. Nimrod, all his princes, and Terah were present, when Abram witnessed before them, urging the king to repent of his follies and wickedness, his idolatries, and to serve the "God of the whole universe, who created thee, and in whose power it is to kill and keep alive" (Jasher 11:54-55). He ended his testimony, saying, "O foolish, simple, and ignorant king, woe unto thee forever" (Ver. 56).

Nimrod was so indignant and full of wrath, that he ordered Abram put into prison, and then asked his counselors what ought to be done with him. They counseled that Abram should be thrown alive into a flaming furnace and be burned to death (Jasher 12:6). For three days and nights a mighty fire was prepared in the king's furnace, and all the inhabitants of the land stood to see Abram being brought out to be burned. Jasher estimates the crowd at about 900,000 (Jasher 12:7-8).

What happened? Jasher relates:

- "And the Lord loved Abram and he had compassion over him, and the Lord came down and delivered Abram from the fire and he was not burned. But all the cords with which they bound him were burned, while Abram remained and walked about in the fire. . . .
- "And Abram walked in the midst of the fire three days and three nights, and all the servants of the king saw him walking in the fire, and they came and told the king And when the king heard their words his heart fainted and he would not believe them. . . and the king rose to go and see it, and he saw Abram walking to and fro in the midst of the fire . . ." (Jasher 12:24-28).

At this time Abram was 50 years old. Nimrod was the son of Cush, the son of Ham. Ham begat Cush probably 2346 B.C., two years this side of the Flood. If Cush were 251 years of age, when he begat Nimrod, then Nimrod would have been born in 2095 B.C. Remember, he was expressly born in Cush's old age, "the son of his old age" (Jasher 7:23). Thus he would have been about 30 years

younger than Terah, the chief over his host. He would have been approximately 40 years older than Abram.

Keep this date in mind, for later we will see how well it correlates with another date signpost we will discover in the ***Book of Jasher***! There are many "date links" given in the ***Book of Jasher*** which are unavailable any where else.

Abram's Place of Safety

After this, king Nimrod had a disturbing dream, which his counselors interpreted to mean that "the day will come when Abram and his seed and the children of his household will war with my king, and they will smite all the king's horses and all his troops . . . this means nothing else but the seed of Abram which will slay the king in latter days" (Jasher 12:53-55). Abram got secret word of this and the conspiracy to have him killed, and "Abram hastened and ran for safety to the house of Noah and his son Shem, and he concealed himself there and found a place of safety" (Ver. 61).

Terah came to visit his son, after he had been with Noah for a month, at which time Abram encouraged his father to come with him to Canaan, so that they would both be delivered from the hand of Nimrod (Ver. 65). Terah hearkened to his son's wisdom, and they came as far as the land of Haran, and remained there (Jasher 13:1). "And Abram remained in the land of Haran three years, and at the expiration of three years the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, I am the Lord who brought thee forth from Ur Casdim, and delivered thee from the hands of all thine enemies. And now therefore if thou wilt hearken to my voice and keep my commandments, my statutes and my laws, then will I cause thy enemies to fall before thee, and I will multiply thy seed like the stars of heaven . . ." (Jasher 13:3-4). At this time God told Abram, "Arise now, take thy wife and all belonging to thee and go to the land of Canaan and remain there . . ." (Ver. 5).

Abram's First Trip to Canaan

Abram went to Canaan, and dwelt there 3 years. Jasher records, "At that time, at the end of three years' of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan, in that year Noah died, which was the fiftyeighth year of the life of Abram; and all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years and he died" (Jasher 13:9).

Noah was 600 years when the Flood came. He lived beyond the Flood 350 more years, and died in the year 1998 B.C. Abram was born in 2056 B.C. Thus Noah indeed died in Abram's 58th year, just as the ***Book of Jasher*** tells us!

The **Book of Jasher** then tells us, "And in the tenth year of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan (7 more years, or in the year 1991 B.C., when Abram was 65) there was war between Nimrod king of Shinar and Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Nimrod came to fight with Chedorlaomer and to subdue him. For Chedorlaomer was at that time one of the princes of the hosts of Nimrod. . . . And Nimrod assembled all his princes and subjects, about seven hundred thousand men, and went against Chedorlaomer, and Chedorlaomer went out to meet him with five thousand men . . . And all those kings fought there, and Nimrod and his people were smitten . . . and there fell from Nimrod's men about six hundred thousand . . . And Nimrod fled and returned in shame and disgrace to his own land, and he was under subjection to Chedorlaomer for a long time" (Jasher 13:12-16).

Jasher continues the story of Abram: "And it was in the fifteenth year of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan, which is the seventieth year of the life of Abram (the year 1986 B.C.), and the Lord appeared to Abram in that year and he said to him, I am the Lord who brought thee out from Ur Chasdim to give thee this land for an inheritance. Now therefore walk before me and be perfect and keep my commandments . . . And thou shalt come to thy fathers in peace and in good age, and the fourth generation shall return here in this land and INHERIT IT FOREVER" (Jasher 13:17-19).

Now notice carefully! God told Abram that He would give him the land from the river of Egypt, the Nile, to the river Euphrates -- and he then told Abram that he would die, peaceably, and in a good old age -- but notice now! Abram would RETURN in the fourth generation, and inherit the land FOREVER! This is a prophecy for the FUTURE! In this instance, the fourth "generation" means 4,000 years, for a full "generation" is a thousand years in fulfillment -- one "day" (2 Peter 3:8-10). Abram was born and lived circa 2,000 B.C. Four "generations" or four thousand years from that time brings us to circa 2000 A.D.! This is one more astonishing evidence that we are surely living in the generation of the END TIME!

Abram's SECOND Journey to Canaan!

Now let's continue the story of Abram. "At that time Abram returned and went to Haran, to see his father and mother, and his father's household, and Abram and his wife and all belonging to him returned to Haran, and Abram dwelt in Haran five years. And many of the people of Haran, about seventy two men, followed Abram and Abram taught them the instruction of the Lord and his ways, and he taught them to know the Lord. In those days the Lord appeared to Abram in Haran, and he said to him, Behold, I spoke unto thee these twenty years back saying, Go forth from thy land, from thy birth-place and from thy father's house, to the land which I have shown thee to give it to thee and to thy children . . . Now therefore arise, go forth from this place, thou, thy wife, and all belonging to thee . . . and rise to return to the land of Canaan.

- "And Abram arose and took his wife Sarai and all belonging to him . . . and they came out to go to the land of Canaan. And Abram went and returned to the land of Canaan, according to the word of the Lord. And Lot the son of his brother Haran went with him, and Abram was SEVENTY FIVE YEARS OLD when he went forth from Haran to return to the land of Canaan" (Jasher 13:20-26).

This was the SECOND time Abram went to the land of Canaan! The first time was when he was 55 years of age. This was 20 years later, when he was 75 years of age. The Bible does not tell us about these two different times Abram went to the land of Canaan. The book of Genesis telescopes and shortens much of the real story, giving us the highlights, as it were. But the ***Book of Jasher*** fills in many very interesting and astounding details, giving us the true chronological order of the various events, births, and deaths, of the patriarchs, and recounts for us their activities and lives.

This second time Abraham went to Canaan, is also recorded in the book of Genesis, chapter 12. Here we are told that Abram departed, at age seventy five, taking Sarai, Lot, and all his substance with him (Genesis 12:3). This was the year 1981 B.C.

Let us now skip down to the next events noted in the ***Book of Jasher***. Abraham was dwelling in the plain of Mamre many years, and his nephew Lot had decided to move down to the Sodom valley (Jasher 15). At that time, a war broke out.

War in the Middle East!

- "At that time Chedorlaomer king of Elam sent to all the neighboring kings, to Nimrod, king of Shinar, who was then under his power, and to Tidal, king of Goyim, and to Arioch, king of Elasar, with whom he had a covenant, saying, Come up to me and assist me, that we may smite all the towns of Sodom . . . for they have rebelled against me these thirteen years. And these four kings went up with all their camps, about eight hundred thousand men . . . And these nine kings made war in the valley of Siddom; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah were smitten before the kings of Elam" (Jasher 16:1- 4).

At this time, Abraham delivered his nephew Lot who had been taken captive by the kings who attacked Sodom. He smote them at night, when their troops were drunken and feasting, in a sudden surprise attack with only 318 men (Jash-

er 16:7). It is another intriguing story, whose details are filled out more completely in the ***Book of Jasher***.

The ***Book of Jasher*** contains an absorbing account of the sins of the people of Sodom, and why God became furious with them, and the account of their divine judgment.

The Birth of Isaac and Death of Terah

Picking up the story, the ***Book of Jasher*** also records the miraculous birth of Isaac when Abraham was 100 years of age. Since Abraham was born in 2056 B.C., the birth of Isaac would have occurred in the year 1956 B.C. Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned, and "Shem and Eber and all the great people of the land, and Abimelech king of the Philistines . . . came to eat and drink and rejoice at the feast which Abraham made" (Jasher 21:5). "Also Terah . . . came from Haran, they and all belonging to them, for they greatly rejoiced on hearing that a son had been born to Sarah" (Ver. 6).

The next chronological link in the story, comes in chapter 22 of Jasher.

- "And Terah died in that year, that is, in the thirty-fifth year of the birth of Isaac son of Abraham. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and he was buried in Haran" (Jasher 22:33-34).

Terah was born in 2126 B.C. The Scriptures also tell us he was 205 years old when he died (Genesis 11:32). This means he died in the year 1921 B.C. On the other hand, Isaac was born in the 100th year of Abraham. Abraham was born in 2056. This puts the birth of Isaac in the year 1956 B.C. If we subtract 35 years from 1956, we come up with 1921 -- the very same year.

Thus the Bible, and the ***Book of Jasher***, are in complete agreement on Biblical chronology from Flood, down through the birth of Terah, Abraham's father, to Abraham, and down to the birth of Abraham's promised son, Isaac!

The Binding of Isaac and Death of Sarah

The intriguing account of the "binding of Isaac" is then recounted in the ***Book of Jasher***, the story of the near sacrifice of this wonderful and obedient son, which is also recounted in the book of Genesis (chapter 22). Isaac at this time was 37 years old (Jasher 22:41). Therefore, this event would have occurred in 1919 B.C.

This was a very traumatic experience, especially for Sarah, who was devoted to her son, and who at one point was told that he had been "sacrificed" by Abraham. Not knowing the truth, that Isaac had been spared, her heart was heavy with grief, but she still had faith in God. When she heard that Isaac was still alive after all, she could hardly take in the good news, and joyous at this wonderful news, her heart was overcome, and she died soon thereafter, but in joy, not in grief. This is not the place to go into this incredible story, nor the time, but it is recommended reading for all students who are serious about the Bible and its message. The year would have been 1919 B.C.

Sarah died at the age of 127 years (Jasher 24:1). She was born ten years after Abraham, or in 2046 B.C. This would put her death in the year 1919 B.C., the same year as the "binding of Isaac," actually following shortly after it.

Sarah was buried with great pomp and ceremony, as befits a queen. "And Abraham buried Sarah with pomp as observed at the interment of kings, and she was buried in very fine and beautiful garments. And at her bier was Shem, his sons Eber and Abimelech, together with Anar, Ashcol and Mamre, and all the grandees of the land followed her bier" (Jasher 24:13-14).

Births of Jacob and Esau

The next important event chronicled in the ***Book of Jasher*** is Isaac, the son of Abraham, taking a wife. "And Isaac took Rebecca and she became his wife, and he brought her into his tent. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebecca, the daughter of his uncle Bethuel, for a wife" (Jasher 24:44-45). Isaac married Rebecca, when he was forty years of age, so this would have been in the year 1916 B.C.

Rebecca bore no children for many years. But the ***Book of Jasher*** records, "And in the fiftyninth year of the life of Isaac the son of Abraham, Rebecca his wife was still barren in those days" (Jasher 26:1). Isaac's 59th year would have been 1897 B.C.

Rebecca asked her husband Isaac to pray for her to have children, even as Abraham had prayed for Sarah, who also had been barren. Isaac does so, and the Lord heard his earnest prayer, and Rebecca conceives (Jasher 26:2-8). She had twins -- Esau and Jacob -- who struggled for dominance even while in her womb. This would have been circa 1896 B.C., when God answered Isaac's prayer, and the prayers of Shem, Eber, and Abraham, and Esau and Jacob were born! Isaac was 60 years old when Jacob and Esau were born.

The ***Book of Jasher*** goes on to tell us, "and the boys grew up to their fifteen year, and they came amongst the society of men. Esau was a designing and deceitful man, an excellent hunter in the field, and Jacob was a man perfect and

wise, dwelling in tents, feeding flocks and learning the instructions of the Lord and the commandments of his father and mother" (Jasher 26:17).

The chronology of Jasher therefore informs us that Rebecca conceived when Isaac was 59, 19 years after she married Isaac. She delivered two children the following year. Therefore, Esau and Jacob were born in 1896 B.C. Fifteen years later, when they were strapping youths and Esau had become an excellent hunter, would have been the year 1881 B.C.

The Death of Righteous Abraham

"And it was at that time that Abraham died, in the fifteenth year of the life of Jacob and Esau, the sons of Isaac, and all the days of Abraham were one hundred and seventy five years, and he died and was gathered to his people in good old age, old and satisfied with days, and Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him" (Jasher 26:29). All the kings and princes of Canaan came to Abraham's funeral, to bury him, and all the people of Haran, and all the princes and grandees among the sons of Abraham by the concubines. Born in 1896 B.C., Jacob and Esau would have been 15 years of age in 1881 B.C. Abraham would have been 175 years of age.

Says Jasher of this remarkable man of faith and obedience to God: "And there arose not a man who feared God like unto Abraham, for he had feared his God from his youth, and had served the Lord, and had gone in all his ways during his life, from his childhood to the day of his death. And the Lord was with him and delivered him from the counsel of Nimrod and his people, and when he made war with the four kings of Elam he conquered them. And he brought all the children of the earth to the service of God, and he taught them the ways of the Lord, and caused them to know the Lord. And he formed a grove and he planted a vineyard therein, and he had always prepared in his tent meat and drink to those who passed through the land, that they might satisfy themselves in his house. And the Lord God delivered the whole earth on account of Abraham" (Jasher 26:34-38).

Esau the Hunter Ambushes Nimrod!

After the death of Abraham, when Esau was 16 years of age, he went into the wilds to hunt game, as was his custom. Jasher tells us:

- "And Esau at that time, after the death of Abraham, frequently went into the field to hunt. And Nimrod king of Babel, the same was Amraphel, also frequently went with his mighty men to hunt in the field, and to walk about in the cool of the day. And Nimrod was observing

Esau all the days, for a jealousy was formed in the heart of Nimrod against Esau all the days.

- "And on a certain day Esau went into the field to hunt, and he found Nimrod walking in the wilderness with his two men. And all his mighty men and his people were with him in the wilderness, but they removed at a distance from him, and they went from him in different directions to hunt, and Esau concealed himself for Nimrod, and he lurked for him in the wilderness. . . .
- "And Nimrod and two of his men that were with him came to the place where they were when Esau started suddenly from his lurking place, and drew his sword, and hastened, and ran to Nimrod and cut off his head.
- "And Esau fought a desperate fight with the two men that were with Nimrod, and when they called out to him, Esau turned to them and smote them to death with his sword. . . . And when Esau saw the mighty men of Nimrod coming at a distance, he fled, and thereby escaped; and Esau took the valuable garments of Nimrod, which Nimrod's father had bequeathed to Nimrod, and with which Nimrod prevailed over the whole land, and he ran and concealed them in his house.
- "And Esau took those garments and ran into the city on account of Nimrod's men, and he came into his father's house weary and exhausted from fight, and he was ready to die through grief when he approached his brother Jacob and sat before him. And he said to his brother Jacob, Behold I shall die this day, and wherefore then do I want the birthright? And Jacob acted wisely with Esau in this matter, and Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, for it was so brought about by the Lord. . . .
- "And when Nimrod the son of Cush died, his men lifted him up and brought him in consternation, and buried him in his city, and all the days that Nimrod lives were two hundred and fifteen years and he died" (Jasher 27:1-15).

Nimrod was slain by Esau when Esau was 16 years of age. At that time, we are here told, Nimrod himself was 215 years of age. Since Esau was 16 in the year 1880 B.C., when Nimrod was killed, and Nimrod was 215 in that same year, then we can calculate the actual birth year of Nimrod. Nimrod was born in the year 2095 B.C. Notice how beautifully all these figures correlate together!

Nimrod, born to Cush in his old age, would have been an old man at this time, when Esau, the young "sport," saw his chance and assassinated the old king! At

this time Esau stole the garments God had made for Adam and Eve, which Nimrod had been given by his father Cush who himself had stolen them from Noah. Evidently, Esau saw these as his means and way to power and kingship in the earth. Yet not long later, famished and feeling on the verge of death, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of bean soup!

The ***Book of Jasher*** continues:

- "And the days that Nimrod reigned upon the people of the land were one hundred and eighty-five years; and Nimrod died by the sword of Esau in shame and contempt, and the seed of Abraham caused his death as he had seen in his dream.
- "And at the death of Nimrod his kingdom became divided into many divisions, and all those parts that Nimrod reigned over were restored to the respective kings of the land, who recovered them after the death of Nimrod, and all the people of the house of Nimrod were for a long time enslaved to all the other kings of the land" (Jasher 27:16-17).

After his untimely death, Niimrod's kingdom did not endure. It became all divided up into the hands of the original kings of the various lands which he had conquered.

After Nimrod -- Jacob and Esau

After this time, a number of deaths of prominent, righteous men are recorded in the ***Book of Jasher***. Two years later, "Shelach, the son of Arphaxad, died in that year, which is the eighteenth year of the lives of Jacob and Esau; and all the days that Shelach lived were four hundred and eighty three years and he died.

- "At that time Isaac sent his younger son Jacob to the house of Shem and Eber, and he learned the instructions of the Lord, and Jacob remained in the house of Shem and Eber thirty two years, and Esau his brother did not go, for he was not willing to go, and he remained in his father's house in the land of Canaan" (Jasher 28:17-18).

The year Shelach died, then, was 1880 B.C. In that same year Jacob was sent to the house of Shem and Eber, to learn the ways of God, even as Abraham had been, and he remained there for 32 years -- from 1880 until 1848 B.C., when he returned to Isaac and Rebecca. Esau in the meantime, roamed widely in his hunting trips, and when he was 40 years of age he married a Canaanite woman living in the land of Seir (Jasher 28:22-23).

At this point, the ***Book of Jasher*** gives us another vital benchmark. We read:

- "And it came to pass in those days, in the hundred and tenth year of the life of Isaac, that is, in the fiftieth year of the life of Jacob, in that year died SHEM the son of NOAH; Shem was 600 years old at his death. And when Shem died Jacob returned to his father in Hebron" (Jasher 29:24-25).

Shem died then in the year 1846 B.C. He was born 98 years before the Flood (he was 100 years old two years after the Flood -- see Genesis 11:10), and died 500 years after the birth of Arphaxad (Genesis 11:11). The Flood occurred in 2348 B.C. Since Shem was 600 when he died, and since he was born 2446 B.C, his death would have been in 1846 B.C.

Since the ***Book of Jasher*** shows that Jacob was 50 years old and Isaac was 110 at this point in time, when Shem died, these facts once again confirming that Jacob's birth was in 1896, (fifty years before), and the birth of Isaac was in 1956 B.C. (110 years before).

Jacob Versus Esau -- the Rivalry

After this, we come to the story of Isaac growing old and desiring venison from his son Esau, after which he promises to "bless him." Rebecca and Jacob pull a trick on Isaac, and Jacob disguises himself as Esau, and "steals" his birthright (which really wasn't Esau's any more anyway, since he had already sold it to Jacob).

Esau is so enraged at this act of trickery, that he vows to kill Jacob. We read, "And Jacob was very much afraid of his brother Esau, and he rose up and fled to the house of Eber the son of Shem, and he concealed himself there on account of his brother, and Jacob was sixty three years old when he went forth from the land of Canaan from Hebron, and Jacob was concealed in Eber's house fourteen years on account of his brother Esau, and he there continued to learn the ways of the Lord and his commandments" (Jasher 29:11).

Jacob therefore must have fled to Eber's abode 13 years after Shem's death in 1846. This would put his flight in 1833 B.C. Ishmael, the brother of Isaac, died the following year, "in the sixty fourth year of the life of Jacob" (Jasher 29:18). Jacob continued hiding at Eber's place for 14 years, or until 1819 B.C. Jacob became homesick, and returned to Hebron, only to learn that Esau had neither forgotten nor forgiven him for stealing his "blessing." Alarmed, Isaac and Rebecca counsel Jacob to flee to Haran, to her family there, for refuge, and to find a mate for himself. "Jacob was seventy seven years old when he went out from the land of Canaan from Beersheba" (Jasher 29:30). This would have been the year

1819, showing he did not dilly dally long in Canaan, when his life was at great risk!

Two years later, we read, "And in the second year of Jacob's dwelling in Haran, that is in the seventy ninth year of the life of Jacob, in that year died Eber the son of Shem, he was four hundred and sixty four years old at his death" (Jasher 30:16). This would have been 1817 B.C.

After Jacob dwelt 20 years with Laban, serving him, marrying his two daughters Leah and Rachel, Jacob noted that conditions were getting difficult for him and his growing family. Laban had changed his wages deceitfully ten times, and sought to impoverish Jacob, but God turned his conniving trickery into a blessing for Jacob, and supernaturally blessed his sheep. At the end of 20 years, God appeared to Jacob, and told him to go back to Canaan (Jasher 31:37, 32:3).

Of course, this meant he would encounter Esau once again. Esau indeed came out to seek vengeance on Jacob, but the **Book of Jasher** informs us:

- "And the Lord heard the prayer of Jacob on that day, and the Lord then delivered Jacob from the hands of his brother Esau. And the Lord sent three angels of the angels of heaven, and they went before Esau and came to him. And these angels appeared to Esau and his people as two thousand men, riding upon horses furnished with all sorts of war instruments, and they appeared in the sight of Esau and all his men to be divided into four camps, with four chiefs to them. And one camp went on and they found Esau coming with four hundred men toward his brother Jacob, and this camp ran toward Esau and his people and terrified them, and Esau fell off the horse in alarm, and all his men separated from him in that place, for they were greatly afraid. And the whole of the camp shouted after them when they fled from Esau, and all the warlike men answered, saying, Surely we are the servants of Jacob, who is the servant of God, and who then can stand against us? (Jasher 32:27-32).

Four times such camps of angels ran at Esau and his men, terrifying them and causing them great anguish and astonishment. No doubt many of them wet their breeches that day. After these awesome, frightening events, Esau's heart was temporarily changed, and instead of seeking to destroy his brother, he came to him in peace. He concealed his hatred in his heart, because of his fear (32:39-40). The return of Jacob to Canaan would have been 20 years after he left, or the year 1799-1800 B.C.

"And it was in those days, in that year, being the hundred and sixth year of the life of Jacob, in the tenth year of Jacob's coming from Padan-aram, that Leah the wife of Jacob died; she was fifty one years old when she died in Hebron" (Jasher

41:2). This would have been the year 1790 B.C. Leah therefore was born 1841 B.C.

The Story of Joseph

In the following year, Joseph, the son of Jacob, being a younger son, was "seventeen years old" when he dreamed a dream that seemed to exalt him over his brothers, causing them great anger and animosity (Jasher 41:9). This may have been in 1789 B.C., following the death of Leah. Soon they had enough of his "sass," and counseled to get rid of him -- permanently. Joseph was sold as a slave and would up a slave of Potiphar in Egypt. The next year, when Joseph was 18 years of age, 1788 B.C., that he came to the attention of Potiphar's wife, who fell in deep lust with the young Hebrew lad (Jasher 44:14-16). She later accused Joseph of attempting to rape her, and Potiphar, believing her report, had Joseph cast into the king's prison; "and Joseph was in the house of confinement twelve years" (Jasher 44:76; see also 46:20). This period of imprisonment in the dungeon would have been from 1788 to 1776 B.C. Joseph was thrown into the prison at the age of 18, and remained there 12 years, or until age 30.

During this period, Isaac died at the age of 180 years. "And Jacob and Esau fell upon the face of their father Isaac, and they wept, and Isaac was one hundred and eighty years old when he died in the land of Canaan, in Hebron, and his sons carried him to the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham had bought. . . . And all the kings of the land of Canaan went with Jacob and Esau to bury Isaac . . ." (Jasher 47:10-11). The year would have been 1776 B.C., the final year of Joseph in the dungeon.

The story of how Joseph was delivered from prison, and interpreted the Pharaoh's dreams, and became second-in-command throughout all the land of Egypt, is well known. The **Book of Jasher** again gives a much more detailed picture of the story. The author declares, "And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, and Joseph went out before the king, and he became the king's second in Egypt" (Jasher 49:38). Joseph built himself a beautiful mansion, "like unto the houses of kings" (ver. 39), "three years was Joseph erecting his house" (Ver. 40). Joseph even had an army, numbering 40,000 troops. The year? 1776 B.C. Interesting, isn't it, that the modern end-time "HOUSE of JOSEPH," -- the United States of America -- has its Year of Independence also as 1776 -- that is, 1776 A.D.!!!

"At the revolution of the year, in the second year of Joseph's reigning over Egypt, the Lord gave great plenty throughout the land for seven years as Joseph had spoken, for the Lord blessed all the produce of the land in those days for seven years, and they ate and were greatly satisfied" (Jasher 50:7). Joseph stored the excess grain in silos and treasuries. For seven years they stored up all the extra, surplus grain, knowing that the seven years of famine were coming.

These seven bountiful years would have been 1775-1769. Therefore, the crushing years of famine and drought would have been 1768-1762.

The story of the reconciliation of Joseph with his brothers who had sold him into slavery, is well known. The ***Book of Jasher*** adds much more detail to this incredible Biblical epic.

Ultimately, at the closing stages of the famine, Jacob and his entire family go to Egypt, to live with Joseph, where they are given the choice land of Goshen in the Nile Delta for their inheritance. They live there many years and are incredibly blessed. Jacob blesses the two children of Joseph, born in Egypt, Ephraim and Manasseh, and adopts them as his own. The ***Book of Jasher*** tells us: "And Joseph was very aged, advanced in years, and his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, remained constantly in the house of Jacob, together with the children of the sons of Jacob their brethren, to learn the ways of the Lord and his law" (Jasher 55:35).

"And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years, and the days of Jacob, and the years of his life, were a hundred and forty seven years" (Jasher 56:1). Thus Jacob was 147 years old when he died. Since he was born in 1896, his death occurred in the year 1749 B.C. Since he was in Egypt 17 years, then Jacob immigrated to Egypt in the year 1766 B.C.

Chronology and the Exodus Saga

In the book of Exodus, we read an amazing statement: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:40-41).

Now, Archbishop Ussher in his chronology counts this period of time beginning with the sojourn of Abraham in Canaan, which he dates to 1921 B.C., the year that Terah, the father of Abraham died, and the year he believed that Abraham first went to Canaan (Genesis 12:1-3), that is, Abraham's 75th year (Genesis 12:4).

However, we have seen in the ***Book of Jasher*** that indeed Terah died in 1921 B.C. But Abraham's departure for Canaan when he was 75 years of age took place in the year 1981 B.C., or sixty years earlier than Ussher suggests.

What events, then, can we tie the figure 430 years to, during which the "children of Israel sojourned"?

Obviously, the death of Terah is one linch pin. It is 430 years indeed from the death of Terah, Abraham's father, to the Exodus from Egypt in 1491 B.C.

Interestingly, the death of Terah coincides also with the 35th year of Isaac, the son of Abraham. This was only two years before the supreme test when Abraham took Isaac to Mount Moriah to be a "human sacrifice." Although God did not require Abraham to go through with this deed, it is symbolical of the fact that God the Father did willingly sacrifice His Son, Jesus Christ -- Yeshua the Messiah -- to pay the penalty of our sins, out of His great love for us. The story of Abraham and Isaac vividly pictures that awesome divine love. It pictures not only God's love for us, but God's awesome love for His Son, and His Son's tremendous love for God the Father!

Why would the death of Terah be significant as the starting point of the 430 years of suffering and affliction of the children of Israel?

Could it be partly because Terah, with his power and authority, and widespread respect, was a protective influence over Abraham and his children, so long as Terah lived? No doubt he did his best to help his son so long as he was alive, supplying information, news, and vital intelligence from his own networks as the one-time commander of the hosts of Babylon. Then, just two years after this change in the life of Abraham and his descendants, God called upon Abraham for the greatest sacrifice a parent can make -- to sacrifice his own son (Genesis 22).

In very real and meaningful sense, the "binding of Isaac" pictures the GREATEST travail and suffering human beings can be required to suffer. The loss of one's own son, or daughter, or children, is the greatest trauma a parent can suffer. The binding of Isaac very likely occurred on Passover eve, at the very time the Passover lambs were sacrificed at the Temple!

If we count the beginning of the sojourn of Israel from the death of Terah, as Ussher does, then his date for the Exodus is entirely correct. Abraham himself did not first enter Canaan on that date, but 60 years earlier. However, the Scripture in Exodus speaks of "the sojourning of the CHILDREN of Israel," and not Abraham himself. Although Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are all considered "Israel," in the greater sense, since they are the three great Patriarchs, the sojourning -- when Abraham, Isaac, and their families were completely cut off from outside support -- would have begun at the death of Abraham's father, Terah. His death would have marked the time when they were entirely "on their own," as it were.

The ***Book of Jasher*** sheds marvelous light on the chronology of the years between the Flood and the children of Israel entering Egypt. It does not alter the frame of Ussher's chronology. Creation would still be in 4004 B.C. The Flood would still be in 2348 B.C. The only changes would be the birth dates of Abraham and his children, by putting them all 60 years earlier. This means the sojourn in Egypt itself also began 60 years earlier than Ussher's date.

This happy coincidence provides us an additional 60 years of the children of Israel in Egypt to reproduce like rabbits so their progeny, by the time of the Exodus, includes 600,000 males, besides women and children. Ussher's chronology puts the sojourn of Jacob and his family in Egypt as beginning in 1706. He puts the Exodus in 1491. The difference is only 215 years total, for Jacob's family to grow from 70 people to something like 2-3 million!

However, the reconstruction of the chronology from the Flood to the Sojourn in Egypt gives us another 60 years -- or a total of 275 years in Egypt, for Israel to reproduce and multiply -- another two generations to accomplish the exponential growth rate required!

Also, by backing up the birth of Abraham by 60 years, suddenly many pieces of the historical puzzle begin to click, and fit together. Now we see Abraham was actually taught by Noah himself the ways of the Lord. Isaac also was taught by Noah and Shem. Jacob also spent years in the house of Shem and Eber. The new chronology also helps us to pinpoint in history the Tower of Babel cataclysm, the birth of Nimrod, and Nimrod's rise to power, his relationship to Terah, Abraham's father, and his dealings with Abraham himself, and his children, and his murder at the hands of Esau, Isaac's son. It's all quite a fascinating story.

Read it -- for yourself!

[Book of Jasher Referred to in Joshua and Second Samuel. Faithfully translated (1840) from the Original Hebrew into English. A Reprint of Photo Lithographic Reprint of Exact Edition Published by J.H. Parry & Co., Salt Lake City: 1887]

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