

Bible Study Correspondence Course

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Most scholars perceive that account in Gen. 1-11 is about prehistory. Israel history starts with Abraham in Genesis 12.

According to Prof. Kang, Leonard Wooley spent 12 years (1922-1934) to dig out the entire buried city of Ur and succeeded to restore it in the original form. Having traced from archeological materials and tablet he traced the probable reason why Abraham had to leave Ur. He supposed that religious and economic corruption and demolition of agricultural society in Ur could have made the life in that society uneasy. Wooley recovered houses in which common people could have lived in those days. From the size of houses, art work and construction techniques used, he could perceive high level of civilization. He also pointed out the fact that Ur. Government could have owned mighty army and forced labor system to maintain such a palace and a temple. ¹

Archeologists continuously discovered the name of Abraham on the Tablet. There is a record that Abraham rented a cow from a farmer, A-Bar-Ra-Ma, at the time of King Amisadugga of Babylon (1154 BC). Modern archeology also discovered that Shechem or Bethel had already existed there in 3000 BC. Nelson Clueck discovered 70 old cities in the Jordan Valley and these cities were not barbarous but civilized ones. There are enough traces that Abraham lived in the midst of gentiles but God picked him out to make him a leader for Israel. ²

Hebrew: In Gen. 14:13, Abraham is called Habiru, means “Hebrew”. In Gen. 41: 12, Joseph was also called “Hebrew”. Therefore, Habiru was the name for Abraham and his family. It actually originates from the word “SA-GAZ” on Ur III Tablet which was translated as Habbatu . The word “SA-GAZ” appeared on the Tablet of 2000 – 1800 BC, which originally meant a “robber”. In the City of Mari written on the Tablet of 2500 BC, this word was used for a “group of nomads”, or “those who crossed the river” or “the ones who always carried their own food”. Therefore, it was a name for Terah and Abraham. On Nuji Tablet Habiru was a slave or a hired servant. On Alalakh it was used as soldiers came from other countries. People believed that Habiru was polluting and threatening the region up to Egypt. Therefore, Israel was wandering nomads having no nation of their own. They were a pain to others. In those days, people beyond the river were the trouble makers. In Gen. 5:30, **Noah and Lamech and his children were living**

¹ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 41.

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the southern part of Mesopotamia. Accordingly, Shem, Terah and Abraham were also lived in Ur.³

Why Abraham left his home town Ur and became wandering sojourner (homeless) in Canaan and later in Egypt (Gen. 12:1-9; 12:10-16; 20:13)?

Abraham's departure from Ur contains religious and historical political background. Religiously churches understood God called Abraham to leave Ur, his home town toward unknown somewhere with God's promise to bless him and his descendants.

According to Kang's exegesis, of the text, Gen. 20:13 and drives Socio-political circumstance that forced Abraham to leave his home town, Ur. NRSV writes God "caused" me to wander.

NIV – God "had" me wander. Scofield Bible puts God "caused" me to wander. According to Kang, the verb "caused" in Hebrew was plural which means its subject was plural. The text used "Elohim" for "God." When Elohim is a god, the verb "caused" must be singular. But when the verb is plural subject "Elohim" must be plural also. In those days when the "Elohim" is plural it meant pagan gods, angels, kings, rulers. Abraham must have understood What Elohim means when it was singular or plural. Kang interprets then that Abraham placed his Elohim God on the same line of pagan gods; and he must have understood that the one who caused him to leave Ur wasn't the Yahweh God but pagan gods, kings or rulers.⁴ 여기를 수정했으니 논문을 보라

Kang also speculates that the sociopolitical circumstance of war in the region between **Kdolaomel and Amuraphel** that defeated Ur III could have forced Abraham to leave his home town, Ur. Nations in today's Iraq and neighboring independent nations rose up in the Near East and strived to strengthen their powers.⁵

This interpretation that Abraham wasn't faithful to Yahweh God makes sense when we understand Abraham's unfaithfulness in several other occasions: He couldn't trust God's promise to bless him and left Caanan for his survival from the famine (Gen. 12: 10-11); He couldn't trust God's protection and told Pharaoh lie that his wife was his sister (Gen. 12: 12-20); He couldn't trust and wait until God's promise for his heir could be accomplished and took Hagar, the slave girl as his wife to produce an heir (Gen. 16: 1-4). (Jean)

Therefore, in those days, Abraham lived among the gentiles in a pagan religious society.⁶

Human Sacrifice: In the Near East there was a custom of offering a human as a burnt offering. In 2 Kings 3:27, when the battle was going against him, the king of Moab took his firstborn son and offered

³ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 42.

⁴ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 49-51.

⁵ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 43.

⁶ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 41. 40.

him as a burnt offering. People sacrificed their sons and daughters as burnt offering (Lev. 18:21; 20:2; Deut. 18:10). Micah 6:7 denounces human offering. The Jephtha's offering of his daughter is the same kind of sacrifice (Judg. 11:29-40). God denounced and judged such practice of pagan gods.⁷

Context of Egyptian slavery:

Under the rule of Amenemhet III, Egypt rose as a great empire in the region expanding its territory and achieving great prosperity, power and peace in the region as stated in Gen. 12 and beyond. Wondering Sinuhe returned to Egypt and many people from Asia entered Egypt. This is when Abraham went down to Egypt. Perhaps the king Joseph served was Amenemhet I. Egyptians accepted Asian immigrants to the area of **Koschen**. However, sudden immigration from overseas caused problems because 100-140 years later their descendants became rulers of the country. In 1786 -1551 B.C. **Hiksos** kingdom (king of shepherds, foreign rulers) reigned the Egypt including Syria-Palestine. After that, Ah-Moses I had overthrown these foreign-born rulers and Egyptians regained the reign of Egypt. At this time Ah-Moses I became aware of the presence of the Hebrews, their numbers, their wealth and power. He began to worry about the possibility that these Hebrews can join the enemy in case Egypt fights against Asians and the remnants nations of **Hiksos** and that the Hebrews can go back to Canaan which will cause Egyptian economic downturn, which will then result in foreign domination and reign again.

Ah-Moses seized the power under the campaign that he will throw out all the foreigners from the land, for which the Hebrews became the scapegoat because the Hebrews outnumbered others and they had strongest economic power. This is where Ah-Moses began to reduce the number of Hebrews. After his first son Thut-Moses II ruled for 3 years, his wife Hat-shep-sut ruled through 1490-1468 B.C. Hat-shep-sut was the one who adopted Moses as his son and named him so. After Thut-Moses III died, his son Amen-Hopis became the king of the Egypt who was the one imposed forced labor on the Hebrews and became the rival of Moses.⁸

Kang explains that the 10 plagues in Exodus event (Ex. 7:14-12:36) meant 10 pagan gods Egyptians were worshiping that Yahweh God defeated: 1) **Water turned to blood** (Ex. 7: 14-25) represents Hapi, Isis, Khnum, gods of Nile river for prosperity but these gods will now torment Egyptians. 2) **Frogs** (Ex. 8:1-15) represent a god helps safe child-delivery but this god will now be harmful to people including children. 3) **Gnats** (Ex. 8:16-19) represent god of wilderness but this god is now agonizing Egyptians. 4) **Flies** (Ex. 8:20-32) represent sun-god but this god now troubles Egyptians. 5) **Livestock diseased** (Ex. 9:1-7) represent Hathor god, symbolized by milkcow and Apis symbolized by a bull but this god now destroys their livestock, their wealth. 6) **Boils** (Ex. 9:8-12) represent Sekhmet god who controls disease and Sunu god who heals sickness now make people sick. 7) **Thunder and Hail** (Ex. 9: 13-35) represent Nut god of heaven and Osiris god that watches over crops now rather destroy crops. 8) **Locusts** (Ex. 10: 1-20) also represent Nut god and Osiris god that sent locusts (to let them eat every plant in the land -10:12). 9) **Darkness** (Ex. 10:21-29) represents Re and Horus, sun-gods, and Nut and Hathor, god of heaven, all brought darkness. After all, the Egyptian gods can't be any help to Egyptians. 10) **Death of the Firstborn** (Ex. 11:1-12:30) meant all Egyptian gods – Heqet god that appears to the mother at the child-birth, Isis god that protects children, and Pharaoh's son worshiped by Egyptians didn't have any power to protect Egyptians when their firstborn were killed and they rather allowed them to be killed. Therefore, Egyptian gods only bring evil upon the Egyptians.⁹

⁷ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004),

⁸ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 72-73.

⁹ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 83-84.

According to Kang, God brought 10 plagues to Pharaoh of hardened heart to liberate Israelites from the Egyptian slavery. The plagues was Yahweh's demand for Egyptians to give up their gods, know Yahweh is only God. All they were worshipping was not God but only the nature which can be harmful to human beings. And therefore, Moses was fighting against Egyptian gods.¹⁰

Unnamed concubine: Judges 19:1-21:25

Social context of the text: time of the Judges (Kang P. 153).

During the period of 350 years when there was no king, no leader. In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes (Judges 21:25).

From the original Hebrew language and the culture of the day, Kang exegetes the text differently from the way it has been claiming that the text misinterpreted and people perceived her as an unfaithful prostitute who betrayed her husband and therefore we must correct the misreading the text; **In the context of the usage of husband, son-in-law, father-in-law, wife indicate that she is not the concubine but a wife.**

From the original Hebrew language and the culture of the day, Kang exegetes the text differently from the way it has been claiming that the text misinterpreted and people perceived her as an unfaithful prostitute who betrayed her husband and therefore we must correct the misreading the text;

Originally she was not a concubine. The Levite took her as his wife but treated her like a concubine. The original Hebrew Bible writes "she prostituted on top of him" which gives impression that he made her to do an abnormal sexual activity. The woman was not a grown woman but a young teenager (13-15). In original Hebrew Bible there is no record of her to be unchaste. Kang interprets that she is so young that his abnormal sexual activity could have scared her and she went away to her father's house. And he went there "to speak to her heart" which connotes that she didn't do anything wrong. Otherwise he would use language such as "I will forgive you" but instead, the nuance of the text indicates that he was going to ask her forgiveness and bring her back. Kang derives impression that he could have been a sexual pervert from his behavior of grasping and pushing her out to other sexual perverts in town of Gibeah to be raped. The word "hazak" gives impression that she was resistant to go out but forced and pushed out. He doesn't even ask her how she was when he finds her at the door of the house with her hands on the threshold, and cutting her up into twelve pieces when he arrived at home, which is the exact crime often committed by contemporary sexual predators.¹¹

¹⁰ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 84.

¹¹ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 158.

But in 20: 4 the Levite, the husband of the woman “who was murdered” and in 20: 6, “they raped her until she died,” both of which indicate she died. But Kang claims that in the original Hebrew Bible there is no indication she was dead. The present tense of the participle “nopheleth” indicates she is still alive simply lying at the door. The proof for this is from his usage of two different words meaning “grasp.” In 19:25, 29 he uses word “hazak” which means strong grabbing/seizing; when he cut her up he uses “hazak” and in 20:6 when he explains to his people what happened he used word “ahaz” which is not strong grasping. Kang suspect that she was still alive when they returned home. When he was explaining to his people about what happened he changed the word from hazak to ahaz to avoid his cruelty. And so he needed to grasps her tightly (strongly) to cut her up. If he was cutting the dead body he didn’t have to grab it so tightly.¹²

From all of his behaviors he was a pervert who showed no emotion. We can sense his mood changes; from the time he was speaking to her heart to get her back home to the time he grabbed and pushed her out to be raped and put her on donkey and cut her up. This can be another proof that he was a cruel pervert. How anyone can cut a person whom he used to love and even dead body into twelve pieces and scattered around the area. How much more can a man be cruel than this behavior. And he tells lie to his people that men of Gibeah “intended to kill me and raped my concubine until she died.” He pushed her out to be raped and killed if she died. He shows no conscience, regrets, repentance or grief except murderous rage.

Consequence of his disguised presentation of the case caused great war between kins and wipe out the tribe of Benjamin.

Hebrews, Homeless Wonderers

To explain the Hebrew’s homelessness we need to understand the origin of the name “Hebrew.” According to the study done by Kang,

In Gen. 14:13, Abraham is called Habiru, means “Hebrew”. In Gen. 41: 12, Joseph was also called “Hebrew”. Therefore, Habiru was the name for Abraham and his family. It actually originates from the word “SA-GAZ” of Ur III Tablet which was translated as Habbatu. The word “SA-GAZ” appears on the Tablet of 2000 – 1800 BC, which originally meant a “robber”. In the City of Mari written on the Tablet of 2500 BC, this word was used for a “group of nomads”, or “those who crossed the river,” (came from beyond the river), or “the ones who always carried their own food”. Therefore, it was a name for Terah and Abraham. On Nuji Tablet Habiru was a slave or a hired servant. On Alalakh it was used for foreign soldiers. People believed that Habiru was polluting and threatening the region up to Egypt. Therefore, Israel was wandering nomads having no nation of their own. They were pain to others. In those days, people beyond the river

¹² Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 159.

were the trouble makers. **In Gen. 5:30, Noah and Lamech's** sons came from the southern part of Mesopotamia and Shem, Terah and Abraham came from Ur.¹³

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“While residing in Gerar as an alien, Abraham said of his wife Sarah, ‘She is my sister.’ And King Abimelech of Gerar sent and took Sarah (Gen. 20:1-2) Abraham says to his wife; ‘And when **God caused me to wander** from my father's house, I said to her, ‘This is the kindness you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, He is my brother’ “ (Gen. 20:13).

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leave his hometown and made him a wanderer.¹⁴

Kang points out the sociopolitical context of the day as one of the causes for Abraham's leaving his home town Ur; there was a war in the region between **Kdolaomel and Amuraphel** that defeated Ur III and Nations, in today's Iraq, and neighboring nations rose up independently in the Near East and strived to strengthen their powers.¹⁵

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Kang explains the context of Egypt that forced Israelites into slavery;

Under the rule of Amenemhet III, Egypt rose as a great empire in the region expanding its territory and achieving great prosperity, power and peace in the region. Many people from Asia immigrated to Egypt. This is when Abraham went down to Egypt. Perhaps the king Joseph served was Amenemhet I. The sudden immigration from overseas caused problems because 100-140 years later their descendants became rulers of the country. In 1786 -1551 B.C. **Hiksos** kingdom (king of shepherds, foreign rulers) reigned the Egypt including Syria-Palestine. After that, Ah-Moses I had overthrown these foreign-born rulers and Egyptians regained the reign of Egypt. At this time Ah-Moses I became to feel nervous about the presence and numbers of the Hebrews, their wealth and power and about the possibility that these Hebrews can join the enemy in case Egypt fights against Asians and the remnant nations of **Hiksos** and that the Hebrews can go back to Canaan which will cause Egyptian economic downturn, and foreign domination again. Kang notes further;

Ah-Moses seized the power under the campaign that he will throw out all the Hebrews who outnumbered others and had strongest economic power. This is where Ah-Moses began to reduce the number of Hebrews. After his first son Thut-Moses II ruled for 3 years, his wife Hat-shep-sut ruled through 1490-1468 B.C. After Thut-Moses III died, his son Amen-Hopis became the king of the Egypt who was the one imposed forced labor on the Hebrews and became the rival to Moses,¹⁶ (Ex. 1:13-14).

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¹⁸ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 44. Other Scripture texts support Abraham's faithlessness in several other occasions: He couldn't trust God's promise to bless him and left Canaan for his survival from the famine (Gen. 12: 10-11); He couldn't trust God's protection and told Pharaoh and Abimelech a lie that his wife was his sister (Gen. 12: 12-20; 20:13); He couldn't trust and wait until God's promise for his heir through Sarah becomes a reality and took Hagar, the Sarah's slave girl, as his wife to produce an heir (Gen. 16: 1-4) and married another woman, Keturah who bore him six more sons (Gen. 25:1-6).

Perhaps the king Joseph served was Amenemhet I. The sudden immigration from overseas caused problems because 100-140 years later their descendants became rulers of the country. In 1786 -1551 B.C. **Hiksos** kingdom (king of shepherds, foreign rulers) reigned the Egypt including Syria-Palestine. After that, Ah-Moses I had overthrown these foreign-born rulers and Egyptians regained the reign of Egypt. At this time Ah-Moses I became to feel nervous about the presence and numbers of the Hebrews, their wealth and power and about the possibility that these Hebrews can join the enemy in case Egypt fights against Asians and the remnant nations of **Hiksos** and that the Hebrews can go back to Canaan which will cause Egyptian economic downturn, and foreign domination again. Kang notes further;

Ah-Moses seized the power under the campaign that he will throw out all the Hebrews who outnumbered others and had strongest economic power. This is where Ah-Moses began to reduce the number of Hebrews. After his first son Thut-Moses II ruled for 3 years, his wife Hat-shep-sut ruled through 1490-1468 B.C. After Thut-Moses III died, his son Amen-Hopis became the king of the Egypt who was the one imposed forced labor on the Hebrews and became the rival to Moses,²⁰ (Ex. 1:13-14).

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¹ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 84. Kang explains that the 10 plagues in Exodus event (Ex. 7:14-12:36) meant 10 pagan gods Egyptians were worshipping that Yahweh God defeated: 1) **Water turned to blood** (Ex. 7: 14-25) represents Hapi, Isis, Khnum, gods of Nile river for prosperity but these gods will now torment Egyptians. 2) **Frogs** (Ex. 8:1-15) represent a god helps safe child-delivery but this god will now be harmful to people including children. 3) **Gnats** (Ex. 8:16-19) represent god of wilderness but this god is now agonizing Egyptians. 4) **Flies** (Ex. 8:20-32) represent sun-god but this god now troubles Egyptians. 5) **Livestock diseased** (Ex. 9:1-7) represent Hathor god, symbolized by milkcow and Apis symbolized by a bull but this god now destroys their livestock, their wealth. 6) **Boils** (Ex. 9:8-12) represent Sekhmet god who controls disease and Sunu god who heals sickness now make people sick. 7) **Thunder and Hail** (Ex. 9: 13-35) represent Nut god of heaven and Osiris god that watches over crops now rather destroy crops. 8) **Locusts** (Ex. 10: 1-20) also represent Nut god and Osiris god that sent locusts (to let them eat every plant in the land -10:12). 9) **Darkness** (Ex. 10:21-29) represents Re and Horus, sun-gods, and Nut and Hathor, god of heaven, all brought darkness. After all, the Egyptian gods can't be any help to Egyptians. 10) **Death of the Firstborn** (Ex. 11:1-12:30) meant that all Egyptian gods – Heqet god that appears to the mother at the child-birth, Isis god that protects children, and Pharaoh's son worshiped by Egyptians- didn't have any power to protect Egyptians when their firstborn were killed and they rather allowed them to be killed. Therefore, Egyptian gods only bring evil upon the Egyptians. Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 83-84.

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²⁰ Shin T. Kang. *Bible Study Correspondence Course* (Poulsbo, WA: Five Words Bible Society, 2004), 72-73. Hat-shep-sut was the one who adopted Moses as his son and named him so.