The Christian Reception Of Jubilees: A Prime Example
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March 13, 2003

I. Genesis, Jubilees, and (ps-) Josephus

A) Gen 27.40-41: ἔσται δὲ ἡνίκα ἐκαὶ καθέλης, καὶ ἐκλύσεις τὸν ζυγὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ τραχήλου σου.
There shall come a time when you shall break and loosen his yoke from your neck.

B) Jub. 26.34: And it shall come to pass when you become great and shake his yoke from your neck, that you shall sin a complete sin unto death, and you shall be rooted out from under heaven.

C) Synk. 123.23-124.12:
Τῆς Γενέσεως
Τῷ Ἡσαύ ἐφῇ ἐν ταῖς εὐλογίαις ὁ Ἰσαάκ· ἔσται δὲ ἡνίκα ἀν καθέλης καὶ ἐκλύσεις τὸν ζυγὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ τραχήλου σου, πλημμελήσης εἰς θάνατον.

Ἰωσήφπου
Τῷ ρυγ ἔτει τοῦ Ἰσαάκ ἐπανήλθεν Ἰακώβ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπὸ Μεσοποταμίας. καὶ ἀναβλέας ὁ Ἰσαάκ καὶ ἰδὼν τοὺς υἱοὺς ὁ Ἰακώβ ἡνίόχησε τὸν Λευί ὡς ἀρχιερέα καὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν ὡς βασιλέα καὶ ἄρχοντα. Ἡ Ἑβεκκα ἠτῆσε τὸν Ἰσαάκ ἐν τῷ γήρα παραινέσαι τῷ Ἡσαύ καὶ τῷ Ἰακώβ ἀγαπάν ἀλλήλους, καὶ παραινέσαις αὐτοῖς προείπεν ὅτι ἔαν ἐπαναστῇ τῷ Ἰακώβ ὁ Ἡσαύ, εἰς χειράς αὐτοῦ πεσεῖται. μετὰ οὖν τὸ τελευτήσαι τῶν Ἰσαάκ κινηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν υἱῶν ὁ Ἡσαύ καὶ ἄθροίσας ἠθνύ ἠθλη κατὰ τοῦ Ἰακώβ καὶ τῶν υἱῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς πόλεμον. Ἰακώβ δὲ ἀποκλείσας τὰς πύλας τῆς βάρεως παρεκάλει τὸν Ἡσαύ μηνήσθηναι τῶν γονικῶν ἐντολῶν. τοῦ δὲ μὴ ἀνεχομένου, ἀλλα ὑβρίζοντος καὶ ὑνειδίζοντος, βιασθεῖς ὁ Ἰακώβ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰουδα ἐνέτεινεν τὸν καὶ πλήξας κατὰ τοῦ δεξιοῦ μαζοῦ τοῦ Ἡσαύ κατέβαλε. τοῦ δὲ θανόντος ἀναίξαντες τὰς πύλας οἰ υἱοὶ ὁ Ἰακώβ ἀνέιλου τοὺς πλείστους. ταῦτα οὖν ἐν λεπτῇ Γενέσει φέρεται.

D) Michael Glycas 263.21-264.7: τότε οὖν ἐπληρώθη ἡ τοῦ Ἰσαάκ προφητεία "ηνίκα ἂν καθέλης τὸν ζυγὸν τοῦ ἄδελφον σου ἐκ τοῦ τραχήλου σου, πλημμέλειαν πλημμελήσεις θανάτου." καὶ τὰ μὲν τῷ Ἰωσήφπου τοιαύτα, προσέχειν δὲ τούτοις ὡς ἀληθεῖσιν οὐκ ἄξιον. τὸ γὰρ "πλημμέλειαν πλημμελήσεις θανάτου" προσήκη ἐστὶ τοῦ Ἰωσήφπου ἐν γὰρ τῇ προφητείᾳ τοιοῦτον ῥητὸν γεγραμμένον σοι εὑρήσῃ. καὶ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὕτως.
Then was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaac: “when you break the yoke of your brother from your neck, you will sin a sin of death.” But these are the words of Josephus and they do not deserve to be treated as if they were true. For “you shall sin a sin of death” is an addition of Josephus. For in the prophecy, a statement like this is not found recorded.

II. The Christian Reworking of Jubilees 12

A. Defining the problem

1) Gen 11.26-12.4: When Terah had lived 70 years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran (Question: were Abram, Nahor and Haran triplets, or was Terah’s 70th year the year when he began to have sons?)… 31. Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sar’ai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth together from Ur of the Chaldaeans to go into the land of Canaan; but when they came to Haran, they settled there. (Question: What caused Terah to lead his family from Ur?) 32. The days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran. (Question: Then Abram was 135 years when Terah died, right?) 12 1 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your relatives and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 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. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves.” 4 So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. (Question: Since Terah’s death at age 205 is recorded first, then should we assume Terah was already dead when Abram left Haran? On chronological grounds, no. Terah was 70 when he fathered Abram. If Abram was 75 years of age when he left Haran; then Terah was only 145 years of age when Abram departed. Hence, he was still alive. But if this is true, then why did Abram abandon his father when he was still alive? Very tacky behavior on his part.)

2) Acts 7.2-4: Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, 7.3 and said to him, ‘Leave your country and your relatives and go to the land that I will show you. (Question: But cf. Gen. 12.1. Was there an earlier revelation in Ur? Did God tell Abram to leave for Canaan twice?) 7.4 Then he left the country of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After his father died, God had him move from there to the country in which you are now living. (Question: So Terah was dead after all. But how can that be if Abram was only 75 when he left Haran?)

B. Jewish exegesis

1) Gen. Rab. 39.7 (Terah was already dead, just not physically so.)

As to the chronology involved, another 65 years are needed. But to begin with you must interpret the passage to indicate that wicked people are called dead while they are yet alive. For Abraham was concerned, reckoning, “If I leave, through me people will
execrate the Name of heaven, saying, ‘He abandoned his father in his old age and went away.’” The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, “You in particular I shall free from the responsibility of paying honor to your father and mother, but I shall never free anyone else from the responsibility of paying honor to his father and his mother. And not only so, but [in order to do so] I shall move up his death to before your departure.” Accordingly first comes: ‘And Terah died in Haran.’ Then: ‘And the Lord said to Abram, “Go [from your father's house to the land that I will show you]”’ (tr. J. Neusner). (Comment: Abram did nothing wrong by leaving Terah behind. Although not physically dead when Abram left Haran, Terah was spiritually dead. To make this point, Genesis recorded Terah’s death before Abram’s departure.)

2) Jerome Hebraicae Quaestiones in Gen. 12.4 (The first 60 years of Abram’s life don’t count.)

“Abram was 75 years of age when he went forth from Haran.” An intractable question arises. Terah, the father of Abraham, when he was still in the land of Chaldaea, fathered Abraham at the age of 70 and later died in Haran at the age of 205. How, then, can Abraham, after the death of Terah, and as he was departing from Haran, be reported to have been 75 years old, since from the birth of Abraham up to the death of his father, 135 years appear to have elapsed? Thus, the tradition of the Hebrews, which we spoke of above, is true—namely, that Terah went out with his sons from the fire of the Chaldaeans and that Abraham, surrounded by the Babylonian fire, because he refused to worship it, was freed by the help of God. From that time, the days of his life and his chronological age are calculated, from the time at which he acknowledged the Lord, and repudiated the idols of the Chaldaeans. (Comment: Although Abram was chronologically 135 years when he left Haran, Genesis 12.4 omits the first 60 years of his life, the years spent in idolatry in Ur. This would mean that he was 60 when he left from Ur, and that Terah was already dead when he left Haran.)

Cf. also Origen (?), in La Chaîne sur la Genèse, ed. Petit, no. 648 (on Gen. 6.10): “Similarly, the 65 years of Noah before he found favor with God are not ascribed to him, just as the 60 years before he attained knowledge of God are not ascribed to Abraham.”

3) Jubilees 11.10 – 12.31 (Abraham was a devoted son and pious man, who didn’t abandon his father.)

11.10: And the prince Mastêmâ sent ravens and birds to devour the seed which was sown in the land, in order to destroy the land, and rob the children of men of their labours. Before they could plough in the seed, the ravens picked (it) from the surface of the ground.

11 And for this reason he called his name Terah because the ravens and the birds reduced them to destitution and devoured their seed.
12 And the years began to be barren, owing to the birds, and they devoured all the fruit of the trees from the trees: it was only with great effort that they could save a little of all the fruit of the earth in their days.

13 And in this thirty-ninth jubilee, in the second week in the first year, [1870 A.M.] Terah took to himself a wife, and her name was 'Edna, the daughter of 'Abram, the daughter of his father's sister. And in the seventh year of this week [1876 A.M.] she bare him a son, and he called his name Abram, by the name of the father of his mother;

14 for he had died before his daughter had conceived a son.

15 And the child began to understand the errors of the earth that all went astray after graven images and after uncleanness, and his father taught him writing, and he was two weeks of years old, [1890 A.M.] and he separated himself from his father, that he might not worship idols with him.

16 And he began to pray to the Creator of all things that He might save him from the errors of the children of men, and that his portion should not fall into error after uncleanness and vileness.

17 And the seed time came for the sowing of seed upon the land, and they all went forth together to protect their seed against the ravens, and Abram went forth with those that went, and the child was a lad of fourteen years.

18 And a cloud of ravens came to devour the seed, and Abram ran to meet them before they settled on the ground, and cried to them before they settled on the ground to devour the seed, and said, 'Descend not: return to the place whence ye came,' and they proceeded to turn back.

19 And he caused the clouds of ravens to turn back that day seventy times, and of all the ravens throughout all the land where Abram was there settled there not so much as one.

20 And all who were with him throughout all the land saw him cry out, and all the ravens turn back, and his name became great in all the land of the Chaldees.

21 And there came to him this year all those that wished to sow, and he went with them until the time of sowing ceased: and they sowed their land, and that year they brought enough grain home and eat and were satisfied.

22 And in the first year of the fifth week [1891 A.M.] Abram taught those who made implements for oxen, the artificers in wood, and they made a vessel above the ground, facing the frame of the plough, in order to put the seed thereon, and the seed fell down therefrom upon the share of the plough, and was hidden in the earth, and they no longer feared the ravens.

23 And after this manner they made (vessels) above the ground on all the frames of the ploughs, and they sowed and tilled all the land, according as Abram commanded them, and they no longer feared the birds.
12. 1: And it came to pass in the sixth week, in the seventh year thereof, [1904 A.M.] that Abram said to Terah his father, saying, 'Father!'  

2 And he said, 'Behold, here am I, my son.' And he said, 'What help and profit have we from those idols which thou dost worship, and before which thou dost bow thyself? …  

5 Why do ye worship things that have no spirit in them? For they are the work of (men's) hands, And on your shoulders do ye bear them, And ye have no help from them. But they are a great cause of shame to those who make them, And a misleading of the heart to those who worship them: Worship them not.'  

6 And his father said unto him, I also know it, my son, but what shall I do with a people who have made me to serve before them? And if I tell them the truth, they will slay me; for their soul cleaves to them to worship them and honour them.  

8 Keep silent, my son, lest they slay thee.' And these words he spake to his two brothers, and they were angry with him and he kept silent … (Comment: Abram had a legitimate complaint; but he kept silent anyway, because he didn’t want to incite family strife). …  

12 And in the sixtieth year of the life of Abram, that is, in the fourth week, in the fourth year thereof, [1936 A.M.] Abram arose by night, and burned the house of the idols, and he burned all that was in the house and no man knew it. (Comment: Notice that Abram’s age is given as 60; did the author of Jubilees know the same tradition as Jerome’s Jewish informants [see IIb above]? If so, why was Terah still alive when Abram left Haran [see below 12.29]? And why did Abram burn the temple secretly? Was it to avoid getting his father into trouble?)  

13 And they arose in the night and sought to save their gods from the midst of the fire.  

14 And Haran hasted to save them, but the fire flamed over him, and he was burnt in the fire, and he died in Ur of the Chaldees before Terah his father, and they buried him in Ur of the Chaldees. (Comment: Should we assume that the temple fire had something to do with Terah’s decision to leave? But if no one knew who was responsible, why was Terah compelled to leave?)  

15 And Terah went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, he and his sons, to go into the land of Lebanon and into the land of Canaan, and he dwelt in the land of Haran, and Abram dwelt with Terah his father in Haran two weeks of years.  

16 And in the sixth week, in the fifth year thereof, Abram sat up throughout the night on the new moon of the seventh month to observe the stars from the evening to the morning, in order to see what would be the character of the year with regard to the rains, and he was alone as he sat and observed.  

17 And a word came into his heart and he said: All the signs of the stars, and the signs of the moon and of the sun are all in the hand of the Lord. Why do I search (them) out?
18 If He desires, He causes it to rain, morning and evening; and if He desires, He withholds it, and all things are in his hand.'

19 And he prayed that night and said, 'My God, God Most High, Thou alone art my God, And Thee and Thy dominion have I chosen. And Thou hast created all things, And all things that are the work of thy hands.

20 Deliver me from the hands of evil spirits who have dominion over the thoughts of men's hearts, And let them not lead me astray from Thee, my God. And stablish Thou me and my seed for ever that we go not astray from henceforth and for evermore.'

21 And he said, 'Shall I return unto Ur of the Chaldees who seek my face that I may return to them, or am I to remain here in this place? The right path before Thee prosper it in the hands of Thy servant that he may fulfil (it) and that I may not walk in the deceitfulness of my heart, O my God.' (Comment: Why did the Chaldaeans want Abram to return to them; had they figured something out about his involvement in the temple arson?)

22 And he made an end of speaking and praying, and behold the word of the Lord was sent to him through me, saying: 'Get thee up from thy country, and from thy kindred and from the house of thy father unto a land which I will show thee, and I shall make thee a great and numerous nation….

28 And it came to pass in the seventh year of the sixth week [1953 A.M.] that he spoke to his father and informed him, that he would leave Haran to go into the land of Canaan to see it and return to him.

29 And Terah his father said unto him; Go in peace: May the eternal God make thy path straight. And the Lord [(be) with thee, and] protect thee from all evil, And grant unto thee grace, mercy and favour before those who see thee, And may none of the children of men have power over thee to harm thee; Go in peace.

30 And if thou seest a land pleasant to thy eyes to dwell in, then arise and take me to thee and take Lot with thee, the son of Haran thy brother as thine own son: the Lord be with thee.

31 And Nahor thy brother leave with me till thou returnest in peace, and we go with thee all together.' (Comment: Even though Terah was still alive when Abram left, Abram wasn’t behaving disrespectfully. Terah gave him his blessing.)
C. *Jubilees* and other Jewish sources in Christian interpretation of Gen 11.26-12.4

1) *La Chaîne sur la Genèse*, ed. F. Petit No. 867, on Gen. 11.28 (*Jubilees* and Jerome’s Jewish tradition.)

’Ἀραχν ἀπέθανεν ἐν τῷ ἐμπυρίσμῳ ὁ ἐνεπύρισεν Ἄβραμ τα ἐιδώλα τοῦ πατέρας τῶν εἰσελθέντων αὐτόν τοῦ ἐξελέσθαι αὐτά. ἦν δὲ Ἄβρααμ τότε ἐτῶν ξ ἄτινα οὐδὲ ἀριθμοῦνται εἰς ἐτη ζωῆς αὐτοῦ διὰ τὸ μέχρι τότε ἐν ἀπιστίᾳ αὐτόν εἶναι, καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ Ἰωβηλαίῳ.

Arran died in the fire in which Abram burned the idols of his father, when he went in to recover them. Abraham was 60 years of age when he burned the idols. **These years are not counted in the years of his life because until that time he was in unbelief, just as it is written in Jubilees.** *(Comment: Jubilees says that Abram was 60 years old when he left from Ur, but does not ascribe these 60 years to Abram’s years of unbelief. The anonymous author seems to have conflated the Jubilees account with Jerome’s Hebrew tradition (2.B above.)*

2) Jacob of Edessa, *Epistle to John of Litarba* (*Jubilees* [aka *Jewish Histories*] and Acts 7.2-4)

Here is how the call of Abraham by God took place. There was in the time of Terah, a violent famine in the country, and men of that time were barely able to save the seed that had been sown on the ground, because of the mass of vultures and birds that God sent and which ate it. As soon as Abraham was 15 years old, Terah his father sent him to chase the vultures from the field, **just as the Jewish Histories describe it.** *(Comment: but cf. Jub. 11.10: *Mastema sent the birds.* ) He was fatigued by the work and was defeated by the mass of vultures. He chased them before and behind him and from all sides and was defeated and did not know what to do. At that time he extended his hands toward the sky with haste and trouble: “God who created heaven and earth by his word, chase and slay these vultures,” he said in a loud voice. And God immediately, without difficulty and without tardiness, chased the vultures from the field of Abraham and said to him with gentleness and kindness: “Abraham, Abraham, it is I whom you have called, I have hearkened to you and I have chased the vultures from your field, because, as you have said, I am the God who made heaven and earth, and all that exists belongs to me; the savage animal of the desert is mine as well as the bird of the sky. I am the one who has brought these vultures to you, and because you have invoked me and known my name, I have hearkened to you and chased the vultures from your field.” **This is the first call of Abraham by God.** *(Comment: So this is the first call in Ur that Acts 7 was talking about.)*

When he came to find Terah his father, and told him what God had said to him, he advised him to abandon Kainan, God of the Chaldaeans, and to serve and venerate God alone. Thus Abraham was 15 years old when he was called by God and he was confirmed in truth in his belief by God, at the point of being able to instruct and teach his father Terah and his brother Nachor so that they might repudiate the error and might know the true God.
In his 60th year, he was seized by zeal, and secretly took from the fire during the night and burned the temple where the idol of the God Kainan was found. When the Chaldaeans reassembled to extinguish the fire, Haran the elder brother of Abraham ran to extinguish it, and he fell in the fire and died. Thus the sacred book says that Haran died before his father Terah, in the country where he was born, in Ur of the Chaldaeans. When the Chaldaeans realized what Abraham had done, they pressured Terah and said to him, “Hand over your son Abraham so that we might put him to death, because he has burned the temple of our God, or else we will kill you and burn your house.” Terah, thus pressured, fled from Ur during the night and secretly led away Abraham his son and Lot, son of Haran, his grandson, and Sara his daughter in law. And he came to Haran in Mesopotamia and dwelt there. (Comment: Jubilees doesn’t say anything about the Chaldaeans finding out about Abram’s crime, or their demand that Terah turn over Abram to them. But if Abram committed the crime secretly, how did the townsfolk find out about it? Is this a narrative gloss meant to explain why Terah was the one who led his family out of Ur? He was forced out of the city by an angry populace.)

Later Nachor brother of Abraham came to rejoin them. After 14 years, Terah died in Haran. That is the reason for the departure of Terah and Abraham from Ur of the Chaldaeans. (Comment: If Abram was 60 years of age when then left Ur, then 14 years later he would have been 74 when his father died—one year before his migration from Haran. If Terah was already dead, there is no problem in Abram’s behavior and no contradiction with Acts. But what about the chronological problem?)

3) Sync. 105.6-108.11 (Jubilees, Gen. Rab. and Acts 7)

Premise: Although Genesis puts Terah’s death before the departure of Abram from Haran, this doesn’t mean that Terah was physically dead at the time; that is ruled out by chronological considerations.

In 3312, the 70th year in the life of Abraham's father Terah, Terah begot Abraham, as scripture states. 75 years later, that is 145 years after the birth of Terah, in 3387, Abraham departed from Charran, in his 75th year, as scripture again states: `Abraham was 75 years of age when he departed from Charran.' So if Abraham was born in the 70th year of Terah, which as has been stated above, was in 3312, and in the 75th year after his birth he went forth from Charran by a divine call, it is clear that he departed from Charran in the 145th year of Terah, which adds up to the 3387th year from Adam. Now the text of scripture is most certainly not asserting here that after the death of Terah the patriarch Abraham went out from Charran, even if it puts the account of Terah's death first, and then appends the verse about Abraham's departure. For to the extent that both this passage and Moses the beholder of God are clumsy in treating the sequence of events (as He who had divinely communicated with Moses knew), to the same extent it expresses a wisdom that is superior to that conveyed in human speech. For if we start prying into this matter, scripture will be found in many places to be in error by transposing narrative, putting the first things last and the last things first. For example, in the blessings of Noah's three sons, the text begins with his middle son Japhet; then after inserting Ham, who was the last son, it proceeds to the first son Shem. And again, before discussing the confusion of languages and the building of the tower (at which time,
properly speaking, Babylon, as a result of the confusion, received its name) it says about Nimrod: `the beginning of his reign was Babylon'.

*But if this premise is true (namely that Terah was physically alive when Abram left Haran), then how do you explain Acts 7.4, which says that he was already dead. And what about the first call to Abram in Ur that Acts refers to?*

Now there are some who pose this as a problem for us, namely that the divine Luke, quoting from the first martyr Stephen in his speech to the Jews, says: “The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he settled in Charran, and he said to him: ‘Go forth from your land and from your kin and hither to the land that I will show to you.’ And then going out from the land of the Chaldaeans he settled in Charran. And from there, after his father died, God settled him in this land, in which you now reside.” They say that, according to this passage, one of two conclusions is necessary. Either (1) Abraham was, according to divine Moses, born in the 70th year of Terah, so that at his death he was 135 before the journey to Canaan; or (2) when, in his 75th year (according to scripture) and after the death of Terah, he ventured forth from Charran to the land of Canaan (this, according to the inerrant book of Acts and the speech of Stephen, the great first martyr and apostle), he was not 75 years old; rather he was 135 years of age, if Terah did in fact die when he was 205 years of age. And in either way, either Genesis or Acts is wrong, as they claim. Now they also propose a solution to the problem, one that is neither truthful nor persuasive: namely, that for the sake of conciseness and not accuracy, it is said by scripture that Abraham and Nachor and Arran were born in the 70th year of Terah, meaning that at that time Terah began to have children (since we know that these three were not triplets). And they have, so they think, good grounds in identifying this as a problem. But their solution is itself problematic and at variance with what is ‘necessary’ and ‘possible’ in logical demonstration. What is ‘necessary’ is: (1) both passages in divine scriptures must be truthful, since they are divinely inspired; and (2) they both must agree that the patriarch Abraham was born in the 70th year of Terah and he was 75 when he journeyed from Charran to the land of Canaan this is both necessary and assured. Now what is ‘necessary’ also embraces what is ‘possible’.

*Solution 1: Terah was physically alive. But as an idolater, he was already dead in his soul. To make this point, Genesis reverses the chronological sequence, putting Terah’s death before Abram’s migration (= Gen Rab)*

Therefore, for the period after Terah's death, it is clearly ‘possible’ that this condition holds, if one is willing to seek out scripture's intent in this passage and considers that, before his natural death, Terah experienced the death of his soul. This was because, as a maker of idols, he was fixated on idolatry and greed and instead of journeying forth as Abraham's companion, he went out for that reason, as it is written: `and Terah took Abraham and Nachor and Lot and Sarah and led them out from the region of the Chaldaeans to go forth to the land of the Canaanites.’ And he came as far as Charran and settled there. But after changing his mind he stayed in Charran, a city given over to idols, up until the 205th year of his life, in which year he also died. Notice at this point there is a rather abrupt break in scripture, which joins together the narrative about Terah before Abraham’s
journey to the land of Canaan with its narrative after the journey (the latter narrative encompassed, as we are showing, the period from the 140th (read 145th) year up until Terah's 205th year, the year of his death). Indeed, it says that `all the days of Terah in Charran were 205 years and Terah died in Charran', instead of saying, `they remained there until death'. Now it is certainly not the case that the entire 205 years of his life were spent in Charran. Then scripture adds `and the Lord said to Abraham: "Go out from your land"' and so forth, specifying further that he was 75 years of age when Abraham went out from Charran; and he was born in the 70th year of Terah. The sum of these years means that Terah was in the 145th year of his life when he arrived in Charran in the land of the Chaldaeans.

Solution 2: There was an earlier call to Abram, while he was still in Ur. That's why he set fire to the idol temple in Ur.

But it is not only this passage that demonstrates for us that before the death of Terah God told Abraham to go out from his land; this is also seen from what was said by the first martyr, namely that before he settled in Charran, God appeared to him in Mesopotamia, that is in the land of the Chaldaeans. (Comment: Following Acts 7.2)

Therefore, the correct inference will be that it was not after the death of Terah that God divinely spoke with Abraham; rather this occurred while he was still in his native land, dedicating himself to God and turning away from the idols of his father, as has been reported in many places. He set fire to these idols at night, so it is said, and Arran his brother was consumed with them, in his desire to extinguish the fire in the presence of Terah, as it is said; and scripture also hints at this saying: `and Arran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land in which he was born, in the land of the Chaldaeans', in the city of Sour. (Comment: Following Jub. 12.12-14)

Therefore, from all these things it is demonstrated that as Terah went forth, the rest of his family, recipients with Abraham of the promise, also journeyed together with him to the land of Canaan, just as scripture states, especially if we suppose that the patriarch Abraham was encouraging them. But when they arrived in Charran, which is idolatrous even to this day, they settled there because of greed and a depraved obsession with idols. Thus Abraham saw that they had died (p. 108) in their soul and, instead of wanting to share with him in the divine promises, were faithless to God. So after the death of the father, namely a death of his soul, he was resettled by God in the land of the promise. In this way also our Lord knows that those who do not believe in him are dead, even if they live a temporary life, as he says in one place, `Let the dead bury their own dead.' (Comment: Following Gen. Rab.)

And to the best of our ability, we have conceived this solution to the problem at hand, in order that the book of Genesis and the book of Acts might be in agreement, since both have been dictated by the same Holy Spirit and one is in no way different from the other regarding the truth. But if someone is inclined to discover some other more consistent interpretation to solve the present problem, we too accept it, prepared to concur for the sake of its value.