

A. Receiver of the Summons (11:27–32)

His Region

1. Ur of the Chaldeans

-Likely located where the Euphrates River emptied into the Persian Gulf. Today - SE corner of Iraq about 75 miles north of the Kuwait border.

2. Haran

-Major city in northern Mesopotamia (means "between the rivers" i.e. the Euphrates and the Tigris)

His Religion

-Idolatry

-**Joshua 24:2** - "Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods..."

-Idolatry clung to Nahor and continued to his grandson Laban and to Laban's daughters (Jacob's wives) as is attested by **Gen 31:30–34**

B. Review of the Summons (12:1–3)

The Precepts (1)

-Leave and Go

-What they required...

1. Separation

Matt 6:24
 Acts 2:38

2. Sacrifice

Rom 12:1

3. Labor / Work

Luke 6:46–48
 "dug deep"

4. Faith

Eph 2:8
 Heb 11:8–18

²⁷Now these are the generations of **Terah**. **Terah** fathered **Abram**, **Nahor**, and **Haran**; and **Haran** fathered **Lot**.

²⁸**Haran** died in the presence of his father **Terah** in the land of his kindred, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

Compare to 12:1

²⁹And **Abram** and **Nahor** took wives. The name of **Abram's** wife was **Sarai**, and the name of **Nahor's** wife, **Milcah**, the daughter of **Haran** the father of **Milcah** and **Iscah**.

³⁰Now **Sarai** was barren; she had no child.

³¹**Terah** took **Abram** his son and **Lot** the son of **Haran**, his grandson, and **Sarai** his daughter-in-law, his son **Abram's** wife, and they went forth together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran, they settled there.

³²The days of **Terah** were 205 years, and **Terah** died in Haran.

¹Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you."

²And 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.

Bless You: Gen 13:15–16; 15:5,18; 17:6–8; 22:17–18

³I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Gal 3:7–9 - "preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.'"

His Relatives

1. His Ancestor

-Descendant of **Shem**, son of Noah (Gen 11:10–26)
 -Received the superior blessing (Gen 9:24–27)

2. His Father

-Abram moved with **Terah** from Ur (11:28) to Haran before leaving for Canaan (12:5).

3. His Brothers

Haran (11:27)

-Father of **Lot** (11:27)
 -Died before **Terah** left Ur (11:28)

Nahor (11:27)

-Grandfather of **Rebekah** (Gen 22:23; 24:15)
 -Great Grandfather of **Rachel** and **Leah** (Gen 28:5; 29:5,16)

4. His Nephew

-Abram took **Lot** (11:27) under his care (12:5) when he left for Canaan.

5. His Wife

-Sarai (11:29) means "princess"
 -Was also his half-sister (Gen 20:12)
 -She was barren

Where was Abram when he received God's call?
Ur or Haran? (Acts 7:2–4)

The Promises (2–3)

1. Make you a great nation
2. Bless you
3. Make your name great
4. You will be a blessing
5. Bless those who bless you
6. Curse those who dishonor you
7. All families of the earth shall be blessed - **Rom 4; 9:5; Gal 3:7–9,15–18,29**

C. Response to the Summons (12:4-9)

1. Delay in His Obedience (11:31)
2. Dedication in His Obedience (12:4,5)

⁴So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

When Abram left Ur, he travelled with his father's entire family. Presumably they were a big part of the reason he stayed in Haran.

Note that when he finally left Haran to go to Canaan, he only travelled with his family and Lot (**Sacrifice - Luke 14:26**)

3. Difficulties for His Obedience (12:6)

⁶Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time **the Canaanites were in the land.**

The Canaanites were NOT Godly people and represented hostility and danger for Abraham.

4. Dividends of His Obedience (12:7)

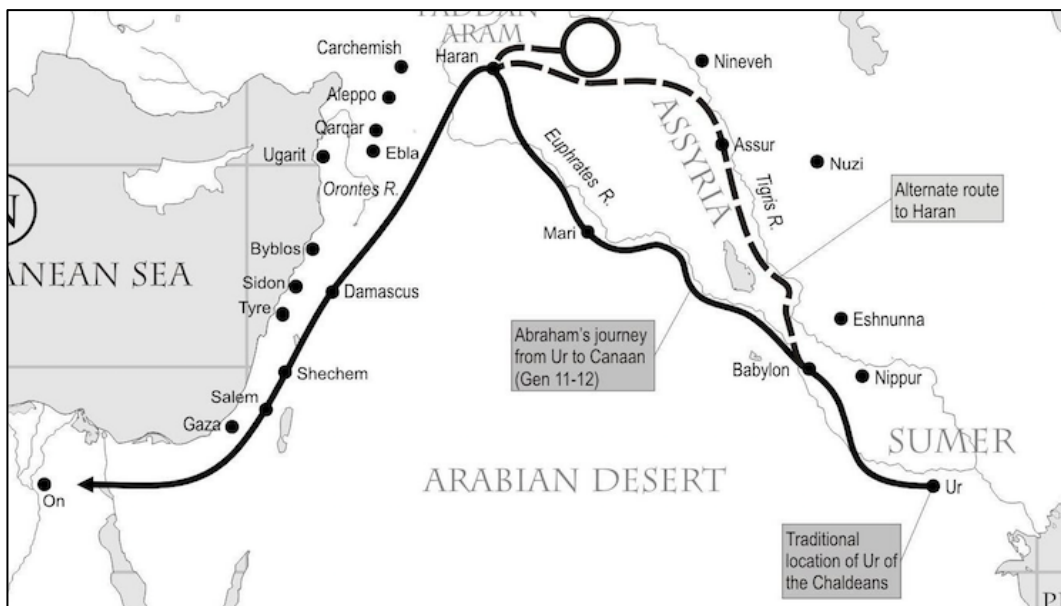
⁷Then the LORD appeared to **Abram** and said, "**To your offspring I will give this land.**" So he **built there an altar to the LORD**, who had appeared to him.

This promise is repeated in almost 150 passages in the Old Testament
Gen 13:15-17; 15:7

5. Devotion in His Obedience (12:7,8)

⁸From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there **he built an altar to the LORD** and called upon the name of the LORD.

⁹And **Abram** journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb. <- Either "South" or the land South of Judah



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*Outline for Life of Abraham: Butler, John G – Abraham: The Father of the Jews (Bible Biography Series, Number Nine), L B C Publications, 1998

His Relatives

His Ancestor - Shem

SHEM. The eldest son of Noah (Gn. 5:32; 6:10; 1 Ch. 1:4), and the ancestor of many descendants (Gn. 10). He was one of the eight people to escape the Flood in the ark (Gn. 7:13), and after it, when Noah was drunk, he and Japheth covered their father's nakedness (Gn. 9:18, 23, 26–27). Two years after the Flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became father of Arpachshad (Gn. 11:10), through whom passed the line of descent to the Messiah (Lk. 3:36), and it may be in reference to this fact that Noah made his prophetic statement (Gn. 9:26). Since among the descendants of Shem listed in Gn. 10:21–31 a number are identified with peoples who are known to have spoken related languages in antiquity, the term 'Semitic' has been applied for convenience to this group by modern philologists. This is a modern use of the term, however, and does not imply that all the descendants of Shem spoke Semitic languages. It is stated that Shem lived for 500 years after the birth of Arpachshad (Gn. 11:11), giving him a life of 600 years. All the major versions agree on these figures. An early theory (Poebel) has been recently revived (Kramer), to the effect that the name *šem* is derived, through various phonetic changes, from *šumer*, written *ki.en.gi* by the Sumerians, the Akkadian name of this people who formed an important element in the early population of Mesopotamia. This theory has not been widely accepted.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. S. N. Kramer, *Analecta Biblica* 12, 1959, pp. 203–204; *The Sumerians*, 1963, pp. 297–299.

T. C. MITCHELL.¹

Genesis 9:24–27 (ESV)

²⁴ When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, ²⁵ he said,

“Cursed be Canaan;
a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers.”

²⁶ He also said,

“Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem;
and let Canaan be his servant.

²⁷ May God enlarge Japheth,
and let him dwell in the tents of Shem,
and let Canaan be his servant.”

¹ Mitchell, T. C. (1996). Shem. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Genesis 11:10–26 (ESV)

¹⁰ These are the generations of **Shem**. When Shem was 100 years old, he fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood. ¹¹ And Shem lived after he fathered Arpachshad 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹² When Arpachshad had lived 35 years, he fathered Shelah. ¹³ And Arpachshad lived after he fathered Shelah 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁴ When Shelah had lived 30 years, he fathered Eber. ¹⁵ And Shelah lived after he fathered Eber 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁶ When Eber had lived 34 years, he fathered Peleg. ¹⁷ And Eber lived after he fathered Peleg 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁸ When Peleg had lived 30 years, he fathered Reu. ¹⁹ And Peleg lived after he fathered Reu 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁰ When Reu had lived 32 years, he fathered Serug. ²¹ And Reu lived after he fathered Serug 207 years and had other sons and daughters.

²² When Serug had lived 30 years, he fathered Nahor. ²³ And Serug lived after he fathered Nahor 200 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁴ When Nahor had lived 29 years, he fathered Terah. ²⁵ And Nahor lived after he fathered Terah 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁶ When Terah had lived 70 years, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Gen 11:27–32 Another genealogy precedes the narrative of Abraham. The function of this genealogy is not so much to connect Abraham with the preceding events, as the previous genealogies have done, but to provide the reader with the necessary background for understanding the events in the life of Abraham. The list includes eight names. All the individuals named are relevant for understanding the events of the following narrative except “Iscah” (v.29). The inclusion of this otherwise insignificant name in the list suggests that the author is seeking to achieve a specific number of names. Thus far in the Book of Genesis, the author has followed a pattern of listing ten names between important individuals in the narrative. In this short list only eight names are given, hence if we are expecting ten names, the number of individuals in this list appears to be short by two names. By listing only eight names, the author leaves the reader uncertain who the ninth and, more importantly, the tenth name will be. It is only as the narrative unfolds that the ninth and tenth names are shown to be the two sons of Abraham, “Ishmael” (16:15) and “Isaac” (21:3).²

² Sailhamer, J. H. (1990). Genesis. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers* (Vol. 2, p. 109). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

His Brother – Nahor

Genesis 22:23 (ESV)

²³ (Bethuel fathered Rebekah.) These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

Genesis 24:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her water jar on her shoulder.

Genesis 28:5 (ESV)

⁵ Thus Isaac sent Jacob away. And he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

Genesis 29:5 (ESV)

⁵ He said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" They said, "We know him."

Genesis 29:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

His Wife – Sarai

Genesis 20:12 (ESV)

¹² Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.

His Region

UR OF THE CHALDEES. The city which Terah and Abram left to go to Harran (Gn. 11:28, 31; 15:7; Ne. 9:7). Considered by Stephen to be in Mesopotamia (Acts 7:2, 4). An old identification of Heb. *’ûr* with Urfa (Edessa), 32 km NW of Harran, is unlikely on philological grounds, and *Ura’* is the name of several places known in Asia Minor. Moreover, such an identification would require Abraham to retrace his steps E before setting out W towards Canaan. This identification requires that the ‘Chaldea’ which identifies the location must be equated with *Ḥaldai* (part of ancient Armenia). The *CHALDEANS were a Semitic people known in Babylonia from at least the end of the 2nd millennium BC, but there are no references to their presence in N Mesopotamia. LXX wrote ‘the land (*chōra*) of the Chaldees’, perhaps being unfamiliar with the site. However, Eupolemus (c. 150 BC) refers to Ur as a city in Babylonia called Camarina (‘the moon’) or Ouria. The Talmudic interpretation of Ur as Erech is unlikely since the latter is distinguished in Gn. 10:10.

The most generally accepted identification is with the ancient site of Ur (*Uri*), modern Tell el-Muqayyar, 14 km W of Nasiriyeh on the river Euphrates in S Iraq. Excavations at this site in 1922–34 by the joint British Museum and University Museum, Philadelphia, expedition under Sir C. L. Woolley traced the history of the site from the ‘Al ‘Ubaid period (5th millennium BC) until it was abandoned about 300 BC. Many spectacular discoveries were made, especially in the royal cemeteries of the early Dynastic 3 period (c. 2500 BC). Beneath these a layer of silt was at first equated with the flood of the Epic of Gilgamesh and Genesis (see now *Iraq* 26, 1964, pp. 65ff.). The ruins of the temple tower (*ziggurat*) built by Ur-Nammu, the founder of the prosperous 3rd Dynasty (c. 2150–2050 BC) still dominate the site (*BABEL). The history and economy of the city is well known from thousands of inscribed tablets and the many buildings found at the site. The principal deity was Nannar (Semitic Sin or *Su’ēn*), who was also worshipped at Harran. The city was later ruled by the Neo-Babylonian (Chaldean) kings of Babylonia.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. C. L. Woolley, *Excavations at Ur*, 1954; H. W. F. Saggs, ‘Ur of the Chaldees’, *Iraq* 22, 1960; C. J. Gadd, ‘Ur’, *AOTS*, 1967, pp. 87–101; *CAH*, 1/2, 1971, pp. 595–617; *Orientalia* 38, 1969, pp. 310–348.

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HARAN (Heb. *ḥar(r)an*; Akkad. *ḥarrānu*, ‘crossroads’; Gk. *charrhan*, Acts 7:4). 1. The city c. 32 km SE of Urfa (Edessa), Turkey, on the river *Balīḥ*, lies on the main route from Nineveh to Aleppo. Terah lived there with Abram (Gn. 11:31; cf. Acts 7:2, 4) before the latter migrated to Canaan (Gn. 12:1). It was the home of Isaac’s bride *REBEKAH. Jacob fled there to escape Esau (Gn. 29:4), married Leah and Rachel, daughters of Laban, and all his children (except Benjamin) were born there (Gn. 29:32–30:24).

Harran is referred to in texts from the Ur III period c. 2000 BC as a temple (*é.ḫul.ḫul*) for the worship of *SIN the moon-god, and its occupation is confirmed by archaeological evidence. Its strategic position made it a focus for Amorite tribes according to *MARI texts of the 2nd millennium BC, and later an Assyrian centre fortified by Adadnirari I (c. 1310 BC) with a temple embellished by Tiglath-pileser 1 (c. 1115 BC). Harran rebelled and was sacked in 763 BC, an event used by Sennacherib’s officials to intimidate Jerusalem (2 Ki. 19:12 = Is. 37:12). The city was

³ Wiseman, D. J. (1996). Ur of the Chaldees. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, & J. I. Packer, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

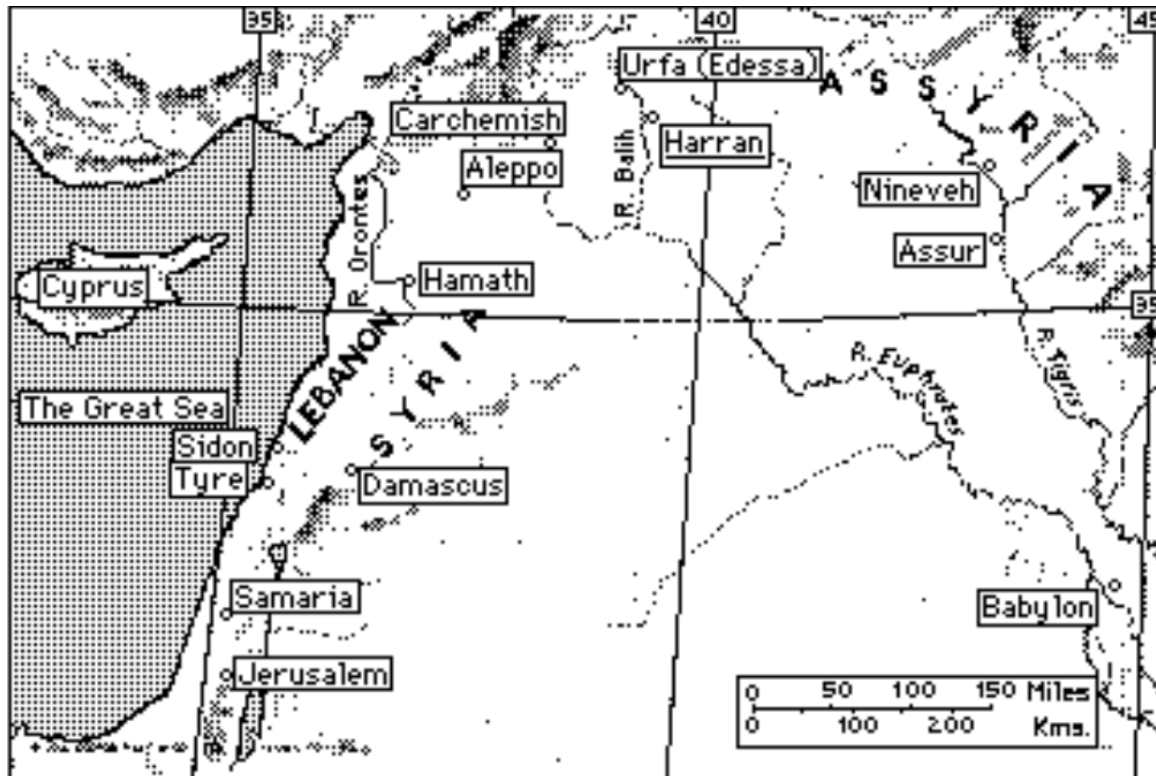
restored by Sargon II, and the temple repaired and refurnished by Esarhaddon (675 BC) and by Ashurbanipal. After the fall of Nineveh (612 BC) Harran became the last capital of Assyria until its capture by the Babylonians in 609 BC. The Chaldean Dynasty's interest in the Babylonian temples led to the restoration of the Sin temples at Harran and at Ur. At the former the mother of Nabonidus (who lived to 104), and at the latter his daughter, were made the high priestesses. It was a thriving commercial city in contact with Tyre (Ezk. 27:23).

The site, excavated 1951–3, 1959, indicates clearly an occupation before the Assyrian period. The existing ruins are mainly from the Roman city near which the Parthians slew Crassus (53 BC) and from the later occupation by Sabaeen and Islamic rulers in Harran, then called Carrhae. In AV of Acts 7:4 the city is named Charran.

2. Haran is also a personal name. (a) The son of Terah, brother of Abraham and Terah, father of Lot, Milcah and Iscah, who died at *UR (Gn. 11:26–31); (b) A man of Judah, son of Caleb and his concubine Ephah (1 Ch. 2:46); (c) A Levite; son of Shimei, of Gershon (1 Ch. 23:9).

BIBLIOGRAPHY. S. Lloyd and W. Brice, *AS 1*, 1951, pp. 77–112; D. S. Rice, *AS 2*, 1952, pp. 36–84; C. J. Gadd, *AS 8*, 1958, pp. 35–92; K. Prag, *Levant 2*, 1970, pp. 63–94.

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*Harran ('Crossroads' or 'Highways') lies at a strategic point between Mesopotamia and the West.*⁴

⁴ Wiseman, D. J. (1996). Haran. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, & J. I. Packer, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

His Religion

Joshua 24:2 (ESV)

² And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.

Genesis 31:30–34 (ESV)

³⁰ And now you have gone away because you longed greatly for your father’s house, but why did you steal my gods?” ³¹ Jacob answered and said to Laban, “Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force. ³² Anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our kinsmen point out what I have that is yours, and take it.” Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

³³ So Laban went into Jacob’s tent and into Leah’s tent and into the tent of the two female servants, but he did not find them. And he went out of Leah’s tent and entered Rachel’s. ³⁴ Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel’s saddle and sat on them. Laban felt all about the tent, but did not find them.

Nanna/Suen/Sin (god)

Mesopotamian moon god. He was called Nanna in Sumerian, and Su'en or Sin in Akkadian. The earliest writings of both are roughly contemporary, and occur interchangeably. An additional name, which is only attested in literary texts, is Dilimbabbar. The true etymologies of both Nanna and Su'en remain unclear ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 360-64).



Possible depiction of the god Nanna, seated on a temple-like throne, on a fragment of the Stele of Ur-Namma at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (object number B16676.14) (ca. 2100 BCE). The stele was excavated at Ur. © Penn Museum.



The ziggurat TT, or temple tower, of Nanna at Ur. It was built by king Ur-Namma of Ur (r. about 2112-2095 BCE), the founder of the Ur III dynasty. The monumental temple tower is built of solid bricks. © Penn Museum.

Functions

The moon god was the tutelary deity of the city of Ur. His reach and importance, however, was far greater than just a city god, the moon god is clearly one of the most important deities in the wider pantheon of Mesopotamia. In the Early Dynastic god lists, such as Fara SF 1, the moon god appears immediately after the four leading gods [An](#), [Enlil](#), [Inana](#) and [Enki](#) ([Klein 2001](#): 290, and this important, albeit slightly junior position, is confirmed in the text *Nanna-Suen's Journey to Nippur* ([ETCSL 1.5.1](#): 18), when Nanna brings the "first fruit offerings" to Enlil, the head of the early Mesopotamian pantheon ([Black et al. 2004](#): 147).

The primary symbol of the moon god was as a bull, the result of the horizontal crescent of the waxing moon appearing similar to the horns of that animal. This symbolism led to a consideration of the moon god as a cowherd, which is celebrated most clearly in the composition *The Herds of Nanna* ([ETCSL 4.13.06](#)), the longest section of which enumerates the cattle in Nanna's herd.

An association with fertility may come from the moon god's connection to cattle, and also, perhaps, from the clear link to the menstrual cycle, roughly similar to the timing of the moon's transformations. The connection with fertility is demonstrated in the Old Babylonian (early second-millennium) birth incantations ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 367; [Veldhuis 1991](#)). The magical-medical text *A Cow of Sin* relates the story of the moon god's beautiful and pregnant cow, Geme-Sin. The birthing-pains of Geme-Sin are eased by Sin, and the incantation ends with a 'supplication: "may this woman give birth as easily as Geme-Sin" suggesting this text's role in human child-birth ([Veldhuis 1991](#): 1).

Other literature makes much of the moon as an astronomical feature. The deity is referred to in terms characteristic of the celestial body, e.g., radiant, shining, and much is made of the moon's path and cycle, which were also keenly observed for omens of the future, for example in the first-millennium series *šumma Sin ina tāmartišu*, "If the moon at its appearance" ([Hunger and Pingree 1999](#): 21 ff.).

The Akkadian literature evokes some of the other functions of the moon god. A prayer to Su'en details his role in divination ([Foster 2005](#): 758-9). No doubt this divinatory role was also connected to the moon god's ability to illuminate darkness ([Foster 2005](#): 760-1). Both the moon god and the [sun god](#) are praised together in a further text in which they are associated with issuing laws and verdicts, the determination of destinies, and the announcements of omens ([Foster 2005](#): 762). This judicial role was already obvious in the text of the Early Dynastic 'Stele of the Vultures', where oaths are taken in the presence of Su'en, and in his epithet "diviner of fates", which is used across the Near East ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 367).

Divine Genealogy and Syncretisms

In the Sumerian myth *Enlil and Ninlil* ([ETCSL 1.2.1](#)), the moon god is described as the first-born son of [Enlil](#) and [Ninlil](#), and the moon god's three brothers are listed: [Nergal-Meslamtaea](#), [Ninazu](#) (both underworld deities) and Enbililu (who was responsible for irrigation). There has been some suggestion that this position as the 'first born son of [Enlil](#)' might reflect the importance of Ur during the Ur III period. There are also occasional references to a paternal/fillial relationship between [An](#) and the moon god ([Klein 2001](#): 295-7), but such are probably general references to [An](#) in his role as father of all the gods ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 364-5).

The moon god's wife is the goddess Ningal (Akk. Nikkal) and their children are [Inana](#) and [Utu](#) ([Edzard 1965](#): 102). The god list AN = Anum also names Ningublaga as the son of the moon god, and Amarra-azu and Amarra-he'ea as his daughters. Another child of the moon god known from Old Babylonian sources is Numušda ([Hall 1985](#): 742). Nanna's vizier was Alammuš. In the first millenium [Nuska](#), a vizier of [Enlil](#), was thought of as a son of Su'en (specifically the Su'en of Harran) - a relationship which is possibly a result of contact/conflation with Aramaic religious beliefs ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 365-8).

Cult Places

From the earliest periods, Nanna/Su'en was the patron deity of the city of [Ur](#). The name of his main sanctuary in Ur was é-kiš-nu-gál, the name also used for the moon god's sanctuaries in [Babylon](#) and [Nippur](#) ([George 1993](#): 114). From the Akkadian period until the middle of the Old Babylonian period, the daughter of the reigning king was appointed to be the high-priestess of the moon god at Ur ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 367-9). The most famous of these is Enheduanna, who is the purported author of several Sumerian literary works (e.g. the *Temple Hymns*, [ETCSL 4.80.1](#) and *Inana B*, [ETCSL 4.07.2](#)). However, Enheduanna's authorship has been seriously questioned ([Civil 1980](#); [Black 2002](#); [Rubio 2009](#); [Lion 2011](#)). Other Mesopotamian cult places for the moon god include Ga'eš, a place in the neighbourhood of [Ur](#), and at [Urum](#), modern Tell 'Uqair located east of Babylon, where the moon god was honoured as Dilimbabbar. Beyond the alluvial plains of Mesopotamia, a cult centre of Nanna/Su'en is attested at [Harran](#), south-east of modern [Urfa](#), from the Old Babylonian period onwards, where the temple name was é-húl-húl "House of Rejoicing" ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 368). At Harran a long inscription was found on a stele, which commemorates Adda-guppi, the mother of Nabonidus, and which celebrates her reverence of the moon god. Another stele inscription from Harran describes Nabonidus' accession to the throne, which is here described as being at the will of Su'en, and that he rebuilt the é-húl-húl temple ([Gadd 1958](#)).

Time Periods Attested

The earliest attestation of this name dates back to the very beginning of written documentations. In personal names the moon god is attested from the Late Uruk period until the very end of the cuneiform tradition. Not only is he frequently attested in personal names, a testimony to personal piety, he is also frequently invoked in royal names from the earlier to the late periods, for example: Naram-Sin (Old Akkadian); Amar-Su'en, Šu-Sin, Ibbi-Sin (all Ur III) Sin-iddinam (Old Babylonian), Sennacherib (Akkadian: *Sin-ahhe-eruba* - from the Neo Assyrian period) ([Cohen 1996](#): 9; [Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 360; [Hall 1985](#): 56-91).

Not surprisingly it is from the Third Dynasty of Ur that come the greatest number of attestations and clearest indications of worship. Many dedicatory inscriptions of canals, buildings and objects record the worship and patronage of Su'en, most during Ur-Namma's reign. The perhaps most obvious of these is the temple tower (ziggurat TT) at Ur, built under Ur-Namma. The year names continue to record events related to the moon god, most commonly the installation of the high-priestesses of the moon god at Ur, and for Nanna-Karzida at Gaeš ([Hall 1985](#): 130-2), while offerings are very commonly attested ([Hall 1985](#)). The royal hymns, particularly those to Šulgi often include subscripts to Nanna, for example *Šulgi D* ([ETCSL 2.4.2.04](#); [Klein 2001](#): 285). Among this literature are the 15 hymns to Nanna, which include *A Balbale to Suen* ([ECTSL 4.13.01](#)) and *A tigi to Su'en* ([ECTSL 4.13.09](#)).

Worship of the moon god continued throughout the Old Babylonian period, as attested in both personal names and royal names as well as numerous building inscriptions, year dates and offerings ([Hall 1985](#); [Collon 1992](#): 20).

The moon god seems to have fallen out of favour somewhat in the period of 1500-1000 BCE ([Foster 2005](#): 758-62), but experienced a revival during the first millennium, in particular in personal names of the Neo-Assyrian period ([Radner and Baker 1998-2011](#)). Su'en often appears second, after the pre-eminent deity *Aššur*, among the gods invoked to bless the king ([SAA 1, 133](#) line 1). Some scholars have argued that the Neo-Babylonian king Nabonidus promoted the moon god within the pantheon of Babylonia, but more recently it has been suggested that this is an over-interpretation of the evidence available ([Kuhrt 1995](#): 600). Nevertheless, Nabonidus also reconstructed the temple of Sin at Ur and reinstated the position of the high-priestess priestess of the moon god at Ur.

Iconography

While the moon god is commonly attested in the literature and texts of Mesopotamia, he is not as commonly reflected in the visual iconography. Anthropomorphic representations are known from the Ur III period royal iconography, but second millennium BCE images are rare, which is surprising given that Nanna/Su'en formed the most popular theophoric element in Old Babylonian names. A painting of the moon god is attested at Mari (Room 132), and these relatively rare figurative images continue down to the Neo-Assyrian period, for example Sennacherib's rock relief at Maltau. By far the most common images of this deity appear on cylinder seals, known from across Mesopotamian history ([Collon 1992](#): 22, 27).

The moon god is most frequently represented by his symbol, the crescent moon (Sumerian u_4 -sakar, Akkadian *u/ašqāru*). This iconography is already known from Early Dynastic seals, and continues throughout Mesopotamian history and across the Ancient Near East. The crescent shape had an impact on other symbols which came to be associated with Nanna/Suen, primarily the moon god's association with the bull ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 360). Additionally, Nanna/Su'en is often attested in connection with a boat. Other iconographic symbols include a rather enigmatic tripod, and it is now thought that many of the motifs once thought to be solely associated with the sun god - such as rays, gates and a god-figure rising between mountains, might now also be considered iconographic characteristics of the moon god. Such similarities should not be surprising given that the moon provided the light of the night-time, as the sun did for the day ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 374-7).

Name and Spellings

Nanna: In the Early Dynastic period: $^d\check{S}E\check{S}.NA$ (with the sign NA acting as a phonetic complement); later $^d\check{S}E\check{S}.KI$ or $^d\check{S}E\check{S}+KI$, syllabically: na-an-na ([Cohen 1996](#): 9; [Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 360).

Su'en/Sin: first attested at Ebla from ca. 2400 BCE; spelled $^dEN.ZU$, but read Su'en in Sumerian names, and Sin in Akkadian names. For discussions of this rebus-writing, see [Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 360-2. From the Old Babylonian period onward: $^{(d)}30$, clearly related to the close connection between the moon and the month ([Krebernik 1993-98b](#): 360-1).

Dilimbabbar (previously read Ašimbabbar): An alternative name or epithet. The logographic writing DIL-im₂-babbar suggests two possible, and perhaps not mutually exclusive interpretations. The Sumerian word pronounced 'dilim' (written DILIM₂) can refer to a bowl, a possibly valid metaphor for the quarter-moon, and the use of DI, might have been a play upon the meaning of this term as 'unique', while babbar is the Sumerian for "white" ([Cohen 1996](#): 11 n.20).

Written forms:

- Nanna: $^d\check{S}E\check{S}.NA$, $^d\check{S}E\check{S}.KI$, $^d\check{S}E\check{S}+KI$, na-an-na
- Su'en/Sin: $^dEN.ZU$, $^{(d)}30$
- Dilimbabbar: DIL-im₂-babbar

Normalized forms:

- Nanna, Su'en, Sin, Suen, Dilimbabbar, Ashimbabbar (obsolete)

Adam Stone ⁵

⁵ Adam Stone, 'Nanna/Suen/Sin (god)', *Ancient Mesopotamian Gods and Goddesses*, Oracc and the UK Higher Education Academy, 2013 [<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/nannasuen/>]

Call in Ur or Haran?

Acts 7:2–4 (ESV)

² And Stephen said:

“Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, ³ and said to him, ‘Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.’ ⁴ Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living.

The Precepts

Matthew 6:24 (ESV)

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

Acts 2:38 (ESV)

³⁸ And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 12:1 (ESV)

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Luke 6:46–48 (ESV)

⁴⁶ “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you? ⁴⁷ Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸ he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

Ephesians 2:8 (ESV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

Hebrews 11:8–18 (ESV)

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. ¹¹ By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴ For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity

to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.”

Bless You

Genesis 13:15–16 (ESV)

¹⁵ for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. ¹⁶ I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted.

Genesis 15:5 (ESV)

⁵ And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

Genesis 15:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,

Genesis 17:6–8 (ESV)

⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. ⁷ And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. ⁸ And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

Genesis 22:17–18 (ESV)

¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

All Families of the Earth Shall Be Blessed

Romans 4 (ESV)

¹ What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” ⁴ Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵ And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, ⁶ just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

⁷ “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;

⁸ blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”

⁹ Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. ¹⁰ How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. ¹¹ He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, ¹² and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

¹³ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷ as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸ In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” ¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. ²⁰ No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²² That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” ²³ But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Romans 9:5 (ESV)

⁵ To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

Galatians 3:7–9 (ESV)

⁷ Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. ⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” ⁹ So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

Galatians 3:15–18 (ESV)

¹⁵ To give a human example, brothers: even with a man-made covenant, no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified. ¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ. ¹⁷ This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

Galatians 3:29 (ESV)

²⁹ And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

Leaving Family

Luke 14:26 (ESV)

²⁶ “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

Promise Repeated

Genesis 13:15–17 (ESV)

¹⁵ for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. ¹⁶ I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. ¹⁷ Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.”

Genesis 15:7 (ESV)

⁷ And he said to him, “I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess.”