

P narrative based upon that of J - not that of E

Simpson, C. A., Composition of the Book of Judges (Oxford, 1957)

p. 173 Further support is furnished by the fact that P, according to whom Abraham came from Ur of the Chaldees, represents him as moving first to Haran, Gen. 11:31, and from thence to Palestine. Now it is to be noted that the mention of Haran is without significance in P's schematic ordering of his material. The inference to be drawn from this is that P is here taking account of an earlier tradition connecting Abraham with Haran; and since, as is generally recognized, the P narrative is based upon that of J - not that of E, which he ignores completely - the mention of Haran in Gen. 11:31 suggests that it was the J document which named Haran as the place of Abraham's origin, and the home of his kinsfolk.¹

¹ It is possible that even in his representation that Abraham came from Ur of the Chaldees P is drawing on the J tradition; he is not likely to have invented it, for there would appear to have been, in his time, no reason for such a fabrication. If this is so, then it must be inferred that subsequent to the time of J2, whether in the pre-exilic or the exilic period, the place of Abraham's origin was pushed further east to Ur of the Chaldees under the influence of some group in the population of Palestine other than that which looked back to Haran as the place from which their forefathers had come. In this case the mention of Ur of the Chaldees in Gen. 11:28 is not harmonization by Rp but comes from a late J hand. And if, as I have argued (Early Traditions of Israel, pp.73-5), Gen. 15 is late J material, then Ur of the Chaldees in vs 7 may well have belonged to the story in its original form.