

Hearing the Original

In my book *The Rise of Scripture*, and thereafter in my “Tarazi Tuesdays” podcast series, I contend that Genesis 1-4 reflects the entire scriptural message in a nutshell, and that Genesis 1-11 is the “expanded” compact version of the entire scripture. The rest of scripture, i.e., the extended story of the descendants of Abram the Hebrew, functions merely as a “coin flipping” example of one of the totality of nations already covered in Genesis 10. The authors’ intent is to show that scriptural Israel is not so much a special nation per se. It is singled out as an example to show that any nation would have behaved similarly, that is, not abiding by God’s will for it. This can be determined by the authors’ blatant omission of referencing Abram’s story as a *toledot* (as was done with Adam, Noah, and his three sons). Terah, Abram’s father, is the concluder of the *toledot* of Shem, one of Noah’s sons. Abram’s story is a sad (*terah*) episode in the story of the nations—the interest of which is the avowedly sole purview of scripture: “Now these are the descendants (*toledot*) of Terāh (*terah*). Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot.” (Gen 11:27). The omission of the story of Abram as his *toledot* will be shown to be even more blatant when we hear of the successive *toledot* of Isaac and of Jacob and even of Ishmael and Esau. In other words, Abram’s progeny is a stand-in for any and all nations mentioned in Genesis 10 as is implied in the promise of blessing of Genesis 12:2 that harks back to Genesis 9-10:

And I will make of you a great nation (*goy*),¹ and I will bless² you, and make your name (*šem*)³ great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will

¹ See Genesis 10:5 (twice), 20, 31, 32.

² See Genesis 1:28; 5:2; 9:1.

³ See Genesis 9:26.