

We have sketched rapidly the outstanding features of the history of Mesopotamia. I have tried to give a vivid idea of its principal features in order to make it possible to understand the difference of the situation in the different main periods, as we discuss their relationship to the Bible.

As I have already stated, the comparison of the early legends of the Sumerians and Babylonians to the earliest part of Genesis, we will leave for a later time. After these, our first reference to Mesopotamia in the Bible is in the introduction of Abraham, where it is stated that he came out of Ur of the Chaldees and went north to Haran in northwestern Mesopotamia. For many centuries, Ur disappeared completely from sight. Now it has been definitely located in southern Babylonia. Originally it was a port on the Persian Gulf, though today its ruins are about 150 miles inland on account of the sediment that has been deposited by the river during the last four thousand years.

An expedition by the University of Pennsylvania and the British museum has been excavating in Ur now for almost ten years. Many interesting things dealing with the history of this important city have been discovered. We will not have time to touch on many of these, but only to point out some of the contacts with the biblical history. It is interesting to notice that at the time of Abraham the life of Ur was at its highest point. The city inherited at that time, the traditions of an ancient and highly organized civilization. Its houses show a comfort and a luxury far superior to that which was found in Babylon in the private houses of the much later time of Nebuchadrezzar. They seem to have been <sup>had</sup> two stories <sup>and will</sup> and to have had a central court into which most of the rooms opened. Some houses contained as many as thirteen or fourteen rooms.

The columns were built of brick of mud brick above the plaster and whitewash over them and an interior staircase connected the