

Dear Rell,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You stated that while listening to a Bible discussion on TV, a professor stated that Abraham was not a Jew. You said that since you knew that Jesus was a Jew and came from the line of Abraham, you wanted to know what our thoughts were.

Abraham, originally known as Abram (“exalted father”), was born in the Babylonian city of Ur, approximately 4000 years ago. He was a direct descendent of Noah’s son Shem. Although most of the people in Ur were idol worshippers, Abram prayed to the one true God, Jehovah. Because of his great love for the LORD, God appeared to him and promised that he would become the father of a great nation (Genesis 12:3). God instructed Abram at the age of 75 to leave his homeland and go to the alien region of Canaan, some 400 miles to the south. Due to his extraordinary faith, Abram immediately gathered up his household and left for the Promised Land.

Abraham is a key figure in the history of both the Jewish and Arab people. He was the father of Isaac (whose mother was Sarah), the grandfather of Jacob, who God renamed Israel (Genesis 32:28), and the great-grandfather of Judah, whose descendants became known as Jews. He was also the father of Ishmael (whose mother was Hagar, the hand maiden of Sarah) from whom many of the Arab people are descended. Although Abraham was a Hebrew (a descendant of Eber—Genesis 11:17-26), he was neither Jew, nor Arab.

The first Israelites were the children of Abraham’s grandson Jacob and the first Jews were the children of Jacob’s son Judah. By showing the origin of the Jewish people, it is clearly seen that Abraham, although not a Jew, was the great-grandfather of Judah from whom the Jews and our Lord Jesus were descended.

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to go to www.christianquestions.net and sign up for CQ Rewind! It is free, without obligation, and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,
Christian Questions Radio