



The Father of the Muslims

Circa 1867 B.C.



Etymology and Meaning:

The name Ishmael (Hebrew: יִשְׁמָעֵאל, Yishma'el) means "God hears" or "God will hear."

This name reflects the circumstances surrounding his birth and the divine promise given to his mother, Hagar.

The name Hagar (Hebrew Agar) means (“Wandering”) We find that she was a servant of Sarah; She became the mother of Ishmael by Abraham.

Biblical Narrative

Ishmael is a significant figure in the Old Testament, primarily found in the Book of Genesis.

He is the firstborn son of Abraham, the patriarch, and Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian maidservant.

His account is intertwined with themes of promise, covenant, and God's providence.

Birth and Early Life

The narrative of Ishmael begins in **Genesis 16**.

Due to Sarah's barrenness, she offers her maidservant Hagar to Abraham to bear a child.

Hagar conceives, and tension arises between her and Sarah.

Hagar flees into the wilderness, where an angel of the Lord appears to her, instructing her to return and submit to Sarah.

The angel proclaims, "You are now pregnant and will give birth to a son.

You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery" (Genesis 16:11).

Genesis 16 New Living Translation

The Birth of Ishmael

16 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar.

2 So Sarai said to Abram, "The Lord has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her." And Abram agreed with Sarai's proposal.

3 So Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram had settled in the land of Canaan.)

4 So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt.

5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "This is all your fault! I put my servant into your arms, but now that she's pregnant she treats me with contempt. The Lord will show who's wrong—you or me!"

6 Abram replied, "Look, she is your servant, so deal with her as you see fit." Then Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she finally ran away.

7 The angel of the Lord found Hagar beside a spring of water in the wilderness, along the road to Shur.

8 The angel said to her, "Hagar, Sarai's servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

"I'm running away from my mistress, Sarai," she replied.

9 The angel of the Lord said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit to her authority.”

10 Then he added, “I will give you more descendants than you can count.”

11 And the angel also said, “You are now pregnant and will give birth to a son. You are to name him Ishmael (which means ‘God hears’), for the Lord has heard your cry of distress.

12 This son of yours will be a wild man, as untamed as a wild donkey! He will raise his fist against everyone, and everyone will be against him. Yes, he will live in open hostility against all his relatives.”

13 Thereafter, Hagar used another name to refer to the Lord, who had spoken to her. She said, “You are the God who sees me.”^[a] She also said, “Have I truly seen the One who sees me?”

14 So that well was named Beer-lahai-roi (which means “well of the Living One who sees me”). It can still be found between Kadesh and Bered.

15 So Hagar gave Abram a son, and Abram named him Ishmael.

16 Abram was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born.

Covenant and Circumcision

In **Genesis 17**, God establishes His covenant with Abraham, promising him numerous descendants.

Although Ishmael is not the child of the covenant, God acknowledges him.

Abraham circumcises Ishmael at the age of thirteen, as part of the covenantal sign given by God (Genesis 17:23-26).



Genesis 17 New Living Translation

Abram is named Abraham

17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am El-Shaddai—‘God Almighty.’ Serve me faithfully and live a blameless life.

2 I will make a covenant with you, by which I will guarantee to give you countless descendants.”

3 At this, Abram fell face down on the ground. Then God said to him,

4 “This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations!

5 What’s more, I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram. Instead, you will be called Abraham,[a] for you will be the father of many nations.

6 I will make you extremely fruitful. Your descendants will become many nations, and kings will be among them!

7 “I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants[b] after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

8 And I will give the entire land of Canaan, where you now live as a foreigner, to you and your descendants. It will be their possession forever, and I will be their God.”

The Mark of the Covenant

9 Then God said to Abraham, “Your responsibility is to obey the terms of the covenant. You and all your descendants have this continual responsibility.

10 This is the covenant that you and your descendants must keep: Each male among you must be circumcised.

11 You must cut off the flesh of your foreskin as a sign of the covenant between me and you.

12 From generation to generation, every male child must be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. This applies not only to members of your family but also to the servants born in your household and the foreign-born servants whom you have purchased.

13 All must be circumcised. Your bodies will bear the mark of my everlasting covenant.

14 Any male who fails to be circumcised will be cut off from the covenant family for breaking the covenant.”

Sarai is named Sarah

15 Then God said to Abraham, “Regarding Sarai, your wife—her name will no longer be Sarai. From now on her name will be Sarah.[c]

16 And I will bless her and give you a son from her! Yes, I will bless her richly, and she will become the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will be among her descendants.”

17 Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, but he laughed to himself in disbelief. “How could I become a father at the age of 100?” he thought. “And how can Sarah have a baby when she is ninety years old?”

18 So Abraham said to God, “May Ishmael live under your special blessing!”

19 But God replied, “No—Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son for you. You will name him Isaac,[d] and I will confirm my covenant with him and his descendants as an everlasting covenant.

20 As for Ishmael, I will bless him also, just as you have asked. I will make him extremely fruitful and multiply his descendants. He will become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

21 But my covenant will be confirmed with Isaac, who will be born to you and Sarah about this time next year.”

22 When God had finished speaking, he left Abraham.

23 On that very day Abraham took his son, Ishmael, and every male in his household, including those born there and those he had bought. Then he circumcised them, cutting off their foreskins, just as God had told him.

24 Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised,

25 and Ishmael, his son, was thirteen.

26 Both Abraham and his son, Ishmael, were circumcised on that same day,

27 along with all the other men and boys of the household, whether they were born there or bought as servants. All were circumcised with him.



Ishmael and Isaac

The birth of Isaac, the child of promise, to Sarah introduces further complexity to Ishmael's account.

In **Genesis 21**, Sarah sees Ishmael mocking Isaac during a feast.

Concerned for Isaac's inheritance, Sarah urges Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away.

God reassures Abraham, saying, "Do not be distressed about the boy and your maidservant.

Listen to everything Sarah tells you, for through Isaac your offspring will be reckoned.

But I will also make a nation of the slave woman's son, because he is your offspring" (**Genesis 21:12-13**).

Genesis 21:12-13 New Living Translation

12 But God told Abraham, “Do not be upset over the boy and your servant. Do whatever Sarah tells you, for Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted.

13 But I will also make a nation of the descendants of Hagar’s son because he is your son, too.”

Life in the Wilderness

Hagar and Ishmael wander in the wilderness of Beersheba, where they face the threat of death due to lack of water.

God hears the boy's cries and provides a well for them.

The angel of God reiterates the promise, "I will make him into a great nation" (**Genesis 21:18**).

Ishmael grows up in the wilderness, becoming an archer and settling in the Desert of Paran.

Hagar finds him a wife from Egypt (**Genesis 21:20-21**).

Genesis 21:18 New Living Translation

18 Go to him and comfort him, for I will make a great nation from his descendants.”

Genesis 21:20-21 New Living Translation

20 And God was with the boy as he grew up in the wilderness. He became a skillful archer, **21** and he settled in the wilderness of Paran. His mother arranged for him to marry a woman from the land of Egypt.



Descendants and Legacy

Ishmael becomes the father of twelve sons, who are listed in

Genesis 25:12-16.

These sons become tribal leaders, fulfilling God's promise to make Ishmael a great nation.

The Ishmaelites, as his descendants are known, play various roles throughout biblical history, often interacting with the Israelites.

Genesis 25:12-16 New Living Translation

Ishmael's Descendants

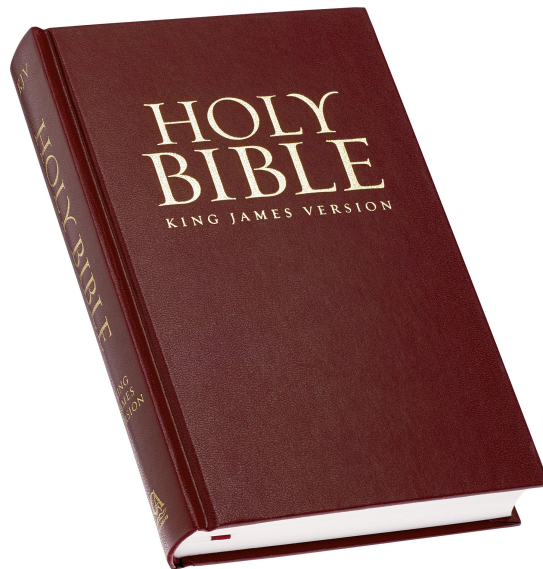
12 This is the account of the family of Ishmael, the son of Abraham through Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian servant.

13 Here is a list, by their names and clans, of Ishmael's descendants: The oldest was Nebaioth, followed by Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,

14 Mishma, Dumah, Massa,

15 Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

16 These twelve sons of Ishmael became the founders of twelve tribes named after them, listed according to the places they settled and camped.



Significance in Scripture

Ishmael's account highlights God's faithfulness and compassion, even to those outside the primary covenant line.

His life serves as a testament to God's hearing and responding to human affliction.



While Ishmael is not the child through whom the Abrahamic covenant is fulfilled, he is nonetheless blessed and made into a great nation, demonstrating God's expansive grace and sovereignty.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Genesis 16

Genesis 15:19-21 lists 10 ancient nations that once inhabited Canaan and who opposed the intrusion of Abraham's descendants after their exodus from Egypt.

None of those nations exists today.

But the descendants of one man, who was also an opponent of Abraham's descendants, today comprise one of the largest ethnic groups in the world: **Arabs**.

Arabs could also be called Ishmaelites since they are the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham by Hagar, the maidservant of Abraham's wife, Sarah.

God had promised Abraham and Sarah innumerable descendants (**Genesis 15:5**), but the couple remained childless.

Growing impatient, Sarah offered Hagar to Abraham as a surrogate, and Hagar bore him a son named Ishmael.

Sarah grew resentful of Hagar and drove her away, but God rescued her and said she would have a son who would be "a wild donkey of a man" who would "live in hostility toward all his brothers" (**Genesis 16:12, NIV**).

Sarah ultimately conceived a son by Abraham who was named Isaac, who became the inheritor of God's covenant promises to Abraham.

It was through Isaac, not Ishmael, that God's blessings flowed.

Abraham was compassionate toward Ishmael - (**Genesis 17:18**), but Sarah urged Abraham to drive Hagar and her son away from their family.

In spite of her banishment, God promised Hagar that her son would become the progenitor of a great nation which he obviously did (**Genesis 17:20; 21:19-20; 25:12-16**).

Ishmael and Isaac together buried their father Abraham when he died (**Genesis 25:9**).

But after Ishmael's death, his descendants "lived in hostility toward all their brothers" (**Genesis 25:18, NIV**).

Isaac's descendants are Jews while Ishmael's are Arabs.

The centuries-long conflict between the two peoples has its origin in Abraham's and Sarah's unwillingness to trust God for the perfect timing for the birth of their promised son.

(Courtesy of Dr. David Jeremiah's Study Bible)

How do we obtain the Forgiveness of our Sins?



How do we get right with God, regardless of our individual sins?

Just say this Prayer and all of your sins will be forgotten, and you will have Eternal life, with Christ Jesus, in Heaven:

Lord Jesus, I repent of all my sins, and I ask you to come into my life, and I believe, that God raised You from the dead, this day, I ask you to be my Lord and Savior.

Romans 10:9 New Living Translation

9 If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Friends, if you prayed that prayer, I believe that you are born again, and you have ever lasting life, get in a good bible teaching church, and may you keep growing, in the Lord, and may HE use you to help save many souls for His Kingdom !

In, Jesus Mighty Name!

Rev. Jesus Del Rio, Ed