

## Ishmael

“And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy handmaid; in all that Sarah saith unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the handmaid will I make a nation, because he is thy seed” (Genesis 21:12-13).

“And God was with the lad, and he grew; and he dwelt in the wilderness, and became as he grew up, an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt” (Genesis 21:20-21).

The introduction of Ishmael into the world has, in our day, constituted a great deal of turmoil and terrorism. To tie Ishmael to the religion of Islam “Mohammed claimed that Ishmael was his ancestor. He claimed this, even though the time between Mohammed and Ishmael was about 2,700 years, and there were no written documents at any time to support this claim” (Religious Research Institute, Dr. Rafat Amari).

Except for the lineage of Jesus, no family in history had ever verified their ancestors over a period of 2,000 years. The family of Joseph, who was from the royal lineage of Judah, and the family of Mary, who was from the same tribe, could account for their ancestors as far back as Abraham. Because there have been documented, written books of the Bible in each generation, the facts are verified again and again. They give testimony to the promise God made to Abraham and to Isaac, son of Abraham, which God then confirmed to almost every member of the Messianic genealogy. God’s divine promise accompanied others in the Messianic line, such as Isaac, his son, Jacob, and Jacob’s son, Judah, as it was recorded by Moses in the book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible (Ibid.).

“There is a prevalent notion that the Arabs, both of the south and north, are descended from Ishmael; and the passage in Gen. xvi. 12, “he (Ishmael) shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren,” is often cited as if it were a prediction of that national independence which, upon the whole, the Arabs have maintained more than any other people. But this supposition is founded on a misconception of the original Hebrew, which runs literally, “he shall be before the faces of all his brethren,” i.e., according to the idiom above explained, in which “before the face” denotes the east), the habitation of his posterity shall be “to the east” of the settlements of Abraham’s’ other descendants... These prophecies found their accomplishment in the fact of the sons of Ishmael being located, generally speaking to the east of the other descendants of Abraham, whether of Sara or of Keturah. But the idea of the

southern Arabs being of the posterity of Ishmael is entirely without foundation, and seems to have originated in the tradition invented by Arab vanity that they, as well as the Jews, are of the seed of Abraham--a vanity which, besides disfiguring and falsifying the whole history of the patriarch and his son Ishmael, has transferred the scene of it from Palestine to Mecca." (McClintock and Strong, Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, (Vol. I: 339).

What's the point? Ishmael is not responsible for today's turmoil and terrorism, or for the development of Islam.

Remember the words of the Apostle Paul, saying, "Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so also it is now. Howbeit what saith the scripture? Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman. Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman" (Galatians 4:28-31). ret