

!!! Middle East Crisis !!!

The Land from Zidon to Gaza was Given by the Lord God to ABRAHAM and to his “COUNTLESS DESCENDANTS” *Jews, Christians and Muslims*

However, these Children of Abraham have to bear it in mind what God has also revealed:
“The Righteous shall inherit the land” in Psalms 37: 29 and also in Qur’an 21: 105.

**PATRIARCH ABRAHAM happens to be
the father of Ishmael (ancestor of all the Arabs);
the father of Isaac (tribal ancestors of all the Jews);
and was the ancestor of Mary, mother of Christ Jesus.**

Note: The texts from The Holy Scriptures – and the quoted ‘Word of God’ in this article are reproduced from THE MASORETIC TEXT, translated with consultation of Jewish Authorities and Published by The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia.

WHO WAS THIS GREAT PATRIARCH?

Abraham (Ar. *Ibrahim*) was the great-great-grandson of Noah. He was a Hebrew, a term that comes from Eber or Heber. Abraham was the tenth generation from Noah and a native of the Chaldean. He came from the city of Ur in the biblical land of Shinar, near the junction of two rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris. In those days, Ur was a great metropolis and cultural centre. Some of the world’s most influential cultures flourished on the banks of these two rivers. Noteworthy are the Sumerian, Assyrian and Babylonian.

Professor Jacob M. Myers of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania writes, **“Abraham was thus far from being a half-civilized nomad subject to the whims and fancies of those among whom he moved. He was a wise, shrewd, powerful caravan trader, carrying on his business at every important trading post in the land.”**

Often we hear the misconception that Abraham was Jewish, a term applied to the tribe of Judah (colloquial *Jew*). Judah was the great grandson of Abraham; hence he cannot be called a Jew. Similarly, Abraham cannot be called an Israelite, meaning a descendant of his own son named Jacob (*Israel*). He was an ancestor of Jesus Christ but obviously not a follower of Christ. His religious beliefs were not founded upon the Jewish Torah because he lived over three centuries before God sent His messenger Moses, the “law-giver”.

In the Hebrew Scripture, the first occurrence of the word “Prophet” refers to

Abraham. The Qur'an (Koran) gives him the singular honour of *Khalillullah* ('friend of Allah'). The Qur'an reveals; **"Allah chose Abraham for friend."** (4:125). Abraham allowed no idolatry in his household. He was *Hanif* (adherent to immutable Monotheism).

GOD'S REASON FOR CHANGING THE NAME OF OUR PATRIARCH

One day in c. 1919 B.C.E., a man who had been known to his tribe for the last 99 years by the name of **Abram "father of exaltation,"** was asked by the Lord to change his name to **Abraham "father of a multitude"**. Who could have imagined what the Almighty had planned for Abraham who had only one son (Ishmael) at that advanced age. The Lord alone knew that this Great Patriarch would become the father and founder of true monotheism that would encompass more than half the population of this world. **And He brought him forth abroad, and said: 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars, if thou be able to count them'; and He said unto him: 'So shall thy seed be.'** Genesis 15:5.

Today, the total population of Jews, Christians and Muslims – the three children of Abraham – is nearly 3 billion. No one but the Almighty God knows what the count may be in the coming centuries. Will they all be united under one banner and one principle? A principle established by their common patriarch, which expects everyone to submit to **"One God and to Him Alone."** The Jewish Shema reads; **"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one."** Deuteronomy 6:4. The teaching of Jesus reads; **"And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God."** John 17:3.

GOD'S 'TWO FOLD' FAVOUR UPON ABRAHAM

- 1) The Land for his DESCENDANTS...
- 2) Countless number of his DESCENDANTS...

From the place of his birth Abraham came to Canaan. The border of the Canaanite land described in Genesis 10:19 reads: **"from Zidon (Sidon), toward Gerar, unto Gaza; towards Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, unto Lasha."**

'TWO FOLD FAVOUR': And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him: **'Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it'.** Genesis 13:14-17

The above quoted 'Words of God' clearly indicate that the **"promised land"** had been given by the Lord God to **"the countless seeds of Abraham and forever"**. In other words the **"God Given Land belongs to all the three Descendants of Abraham – Jews, Christians and Muslims.** If the promised land and the prophecy attached to it was meant for the House of Israel alone, then God would not have said **"And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth (countless)."** Jews number nearly **20 million**, whereas there are nearly **3 billion** Christians and Muslims living on this world. As nations in the Middle

East clash one again in 2006, there is an urgent need for the Children of Abraham whether physically or spiritually, to reexamine their own roots and God's Promise. Abraham died at the age of 175 and was buried in a tomb in the cave of Machpelah, in the modern town of Hebron. Arabs call the town *al-Khalil* (the friend), and the Mosque in Hebron is known as *al-Haram al-Ibrahimi* (the Sanctuary of Abraham). The Jewish Scripture records the details as under: **And Abraham expired, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. And Isaac and Ishmael his SONS buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre; Genesis 25:8-9.** During the life of his father, if Ishmael had been declared or designated anything other than the "SON" of Abraham, the above quoted 'Words of God' would have been worded differently.

Jacob M. Myers of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania has been a professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary and also a contributor to *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. He is recognized as a leading expert on the Old Testament. In his book *Invitation to The Old Testament*, Doubleday & Co., Inc., New York (1966) page 26, Dr. J. M. Myers writes: **Archaeological discoveries help us to fill in the details of the biblical narrative and to explain many of the otherwise obscure references and strange customs that were commonplace in Abraham's world and time... A Nuzi marriage contract provides that a childless wife may take a woman of the country and marry her to her husband to obtain progeny. But she may not drive out the offspring even if she later has children of her own. The child born of the handmaid has the same status as one born to the wife. That is why, when Sarah wanted to drive out Hagar and Ishmael, it was quite objective to Abraham – because of the legal custom of the region from which he came, he was reluctant to do so. It required a special divine dispensation to act contrary to that custom. "And God said to Abraham, 'Do not be disturbed over the lad and your handmaid. Listen to Sarah and do everything she tells you..." (Gen. 21:12-14).**

The quoted Nuzi Law of Marriage establishes the fact that a child born of a handmaid to a childless father has the same status as one born to his wife and cannot be treated differently, even after the birth of a child to his wife.

THE NAME ISHMAEL WAS CHOSEN BY GOD

Ishmael, the eldest son of Abraham was born to his wife Hagar when Abraham was 86. Before the birth of Ishmael, the angel of the Lord had said to his mother, **"And the angel of the Lord said unto her: 'I will greatly multiply thy seed, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.' And the angel of the Lord said unto her: 'Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear son; and thou shalt call his name Ishmael, because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. Genesis 16:10-11.** Ishmael fathered **"twelve princes according to their tribes." Genesis 25:16.** They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is East of Egypt and towards Assyria. According to Arab genealogists, Ishmael was the progenitor of the Northern Arabs, the Mustariba (i.e. the Aramite tribes) which were assimilated among the Arab-Muslims. After the death of Sarah, Abraham married Keturah and had six more sons from whom issued among others

the South Arabian tribes of Sheba and Dedan. Ishmael married a daughter of Jorhamite prince named Mudad and she gave him an illustrious son named Kedar (Ar. *Qaidar*). Kedar was an ancestor of Adnan (or *Qais*), who was progenitor of the tribes of Northern Arabia and forbearer of the prophet Muhammad. In the Jewish Bible, there is an important prophesy concerning Kedar. There is only one person named Kedar in the Bible. The Oracle of Arabia reproduced below was made by prophet Isaiah nearly 1,500 years before the advent of Islam. This Prophecy had been recorded in the Jewish Scripture which Jews read with great reverence from their ancient hand written Scrolls. **“Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, The villages that Kedar doth inhabit; Let the inhabitants of Sela exult*, Let them shout from the top of the mountains**.** Let them give glory unto the Lord, And declare His praise in the islands. The Lord will go forth as a mighty man, He will stir up jealousy like a man of war; He will cry, yea, He will shout aloud, He will prove Himself mighty against His enemies.” Isaiah 42:11-13. **“And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, In paths that they knew not will I lead them; I will make darkness light before them, And rugged places plain. These things will I do, And I will not leave them undone. They shall be turned back, greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say unto molten images: ‘Ye are our gods.’”** Isaiah 42:16-17 (* Sela=Rock, exult=sing. **This is a reference to *Mount Mercy – The Hills of Arafat* near Mekkah.)

Remember... Those who BELIEVE and exult the God's Message shall be glorified. The fulfillment of the above Prophecy proves to stand that the religious history of Arabia was predestined and the God's Justice did prevail in the end. The advent of a New Religion that would put to shame “Idol Worshipper” was in the Master Plan of Lord God.

JACOB STRIVES AND GOD CHANGES HIS NAME TO ISRAEL...

Isaac, the second son of Abraham, was born fourteen years after the birth of Ishmael. Isaac was the ancestor of the ‘House of Israel’, the ‘House of Judah’, as well as of Jesus. One night, Jacob, the son of Isaac wrestled with an angel of God until daybreak. The incident goes like this: **“And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was strained, as he wrestled with him. And he said: ‘Let me go, for the day breaketh.’ And he said: ‘I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.’ And he said unto him: ‘What is thy name?’ And he said: ‘Jacob.’”** Genesis 32:25-28. The angel physically dislocated the socket of Jacob’s thigh and won. **“And the sun rose upon him as he passed over Peniel, and he limped upon his thigh.”** Genesis 32:32.

ISHMAELS’S MOTHER WAS DESPISED BY THE MOTHER OF ISAAC

“And Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to Abram her husband to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.” Genesis. 16:3-4.

This TRIBAL ENVY or JELOUSY has been prevalent since that day until today. In the *Encyclopedia Judaica Jerusalem, volume 9*, under the heading “Ishmael” it is written: **It is related that a renowned traditionalist of Jewish origin, from Qurayza**

tribe and another Jewish scholar who converted to Islam, told Caliph Omar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz (717-20) that the Jews were well informed that Ismail (Ishmael) was the one who was bound [for the sacrifice], but they concealed this out of jealousy.

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