

## Abraham: Between Isaac and Ishmael

### Bereshit, 12, 2 - 25, 11:

#### *The Promises:*

**(12,2)** I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you; I will make your name great, And you shall be a blessing

**(7)** G-d appeared to Avram and said, "I will assign this land to your offspring." And he built an altar there to G-d who had appeared to him.

**(13, 15-16)** for I give all the land that you see to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, then your offspring too can be counted.

**(15, 1)** Some time later, the word of G-d came to Avram in a vision: "Fear not, Avram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great."

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#### *The Complaint and the Last Promise:*

**(2-3)** Avram said: My Master, G-d, what will You give me since I continue to be childless, and the manager of my household is Eliezer of Damascus. And Avram said: Behold, You have not given me children, and thus one of my household will be my heir.

**(4)** But here, G-d's word came to him, saying: This one shall not be heir to you; rather, the one that goes out from your body, *he* shall be heir to you.

**(5)** He brought him outside and said: Pray look toward the heavens and count the stars; are you able to count them? And he said to him: So shall your seed be.

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#### *The fulfillment?*

**(16,1)** Now Sarai, Avram's wife, had not borne him children. She had an Egyptian maid—her name was Hagar.

**(2)** And Sarai said to Avram, "Look, G-d has kept me from bearing. Consort with my maid; perhaps I shall have a child through her." And Avram heeded Sarai's request.

**(3)** So Sarai, Avram's wife, took her maid, Hagar the Egyptian—after Avram had dwelt in the land of Canaan ten years—and gave her to her husband Avram as concubine.

**(4)** He cohabited with Hagar and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was lowered in her esteem.

**(10)** And the angel of the LORD said to Hagar, "I will greatly increase your offspring, And they shall be too many to count."

**(14)** Therefore the well was called *Beer-lahai-roi*; it is between Kadesh and Bered.

**(15)** Hagar bore a son to Avram, and Avram gave the son that Hagar bore him the name Ishmael.

**(16)** Avram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Avram.

**(17,1-2)** When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am El Shaddai. Walk in My ways and be blameless. I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and I will make you exceedingly numerous." (...)

**(10)** Such shall be the covenant between Me and you and your offspring to follow which you shall keep: every male among you shall be circumcised.

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***Sarah's Promise for a Child:***

**(16)** I will bless Sarah ; indeed, I will give you a son by her. I will **ALSO** bless her that she shall give rise to nations; rulers of peoples shall issue from her."

**(17)** Abraham threw himself on his face and laughed, as he said to himself, "Can a child be born to a man a hundred years old, or can Sarah bear a child at ninety?"

**(18)** And Abraham said to G-d, "O that Ishmael might live by Your favor!"

**(19)** G-d said, "Nevertheless, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac; and I will maintain My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring to come.

**(20)** As for Ishmael, I have heeded you, I hereby bless him. I will make him fertile and exceedingly numerous. He shall be the father of twelve chieftains, and I will make of him a great nation.

**(21)** But My covenant I will maintain with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year."

**(23)** Then Abraham took his son Ishmael, and all his homeborn slaves and all those he had bought, every male in Abraham's household, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins on that very day, as G-d had spoken to him. (...)

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***The Expulsion of Ishmael:***

**(21, 9)** Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham playing.

**(10)** She said to Abraham, "Cast out that slave-woman and her son, for the son of that slave shall not share in the inheritance with my son Isaac."

**(11)** The matter distressed Abraham greatly, for it concerned the son of his.

**(12)** But G-d said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed over the boy or your slave; whatever Sarah tells you, do as she says, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be continued for you.

**(13)** As for the son of the slave-woman, I will make a nation of him, too, for he is your seed.

**(14)** Early next morning Abraham took some bread and a skin of water, and gave them to Hagar. He placed them over her shoulder, together with the child, and sent her away. And she wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

**(15)** When the water was gone from the skin, she left the child under one of the bushes

**(16)** and went and sat down at a distance, a bowshot away; for she thought, "Let me not look on as the child dies." And sitting thus afar, she burst into tears.

**(17)** G-d heard the cry of the boy, and an angel of G-d called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not, for G-d has heeded the cry of the boy where he is.

**(18)** Come, lift up the boy and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him."

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### ***The Binding of Isaac:***

**(22, 2)** And He said, "**Take your son, your favored one, Isaac, whom you love,** and go to the land of Moriah..."

**(3)** So early next morning, Abraham saddled his ass and took with him two of his servants and **his son Isaac...**

**(6)** Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put it on **his son Isaac**. He himself took the firestone and the knife; **and the two walked off together**.

**(7)** Then Isaac said to his father Abraham, "**Father!**" And he answered, "**Yes, my son.**" **And he said, "Here are the firestone and the wood; but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" (Last conversation between the two)**

**(8)** And Abraham said, "G-d will see to the sheep for His burnt offering, **my son.**" **And the two of them walked on together.**

**(9)** They arrived at the place of which G-d had told him. Abraham built an altar there; he laid out the wood; he bound **his son Isaac**; he laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

**(10)** And Abraham took the knife to slay **his son**.

**(11)** Then an angel of the LORD called to him from heaven: "Abraham! Abraham!" And he answered, "Here I am."

**(12)** And he said, "Do not raise your hand against the boy, or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear G-d, since you have not withheld your son, your favored one, from Me."...

**(19)** **Abraham then returned to his servants, and they departed together for Beer-sheba; and Abraham stayed in Beer-sheba.**

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### ***Epilogue:***

**(25,1)** Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. (*Rashi: Hagar*)

**(8)** And Abraham breathed his last, dying at a good ripe age, old and contented; and he was gathered to his kin.

**(9)** His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, facing Mamre.

**(11)** After the death of Abraham, G-d blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac settled near **Beer-lahai-roi**.  
(16,14)