

God's Plan For Ishmael

ישמעאל

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Messianic & Christian Publisher

www.olivepresspublisher.org

Published by
Olive Press **צהר זית**
Messianic and Christian Publisher
P.O. Box 567
Port Leyden, NY 13433
and
1326 N. Winton Rd.
Rochester, NY 14609

Our prayer at Olive Press is that we may help make the Word of Adonai fully known, that it spread rapidly and be glorified everywhere. We hope our books help open people's eyes so they will turn from darkness to Light and from the power of the adversary to God and to trust in **ישוע** Yeshua (Jesus). (From II Thess. 3:1; Col. 1:25; Acts 26:18,15 NRSV and CJB, the *Complete Jewish Bible*) May this book in particular inspire people to intercede for those trapped in Islam.

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Cover and interior design by the author.
Cover photos and photo on p. 62 by the author on her world travels.
Photo on p. 57 is from <http://hitch.south.cx/pictures.htm>
Other photos and graphics are from Microsoft Office Online Clipart

Printed in the USA
ISBN 978-0-9790873-6-3
Christian Life: 1. Political Issues 2. Prayer 3. Spiritual Warfare

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In honor to God, all pronouns referring to the Trinity are capitalized; satan's names are not.

I dedicate this book to

ישוע

Yeshua (Jesus)

our Messiah, Savior, and Lord
who gave His life for everyone,
including every Muslim;
and who gave me this book
out of my prayer time with Him.

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*“If only Yishma’el
could live in Your presence!”
... “I will make him fruitful
and give him many descendants.
He will father twelve princes,
and I will make him a great nation!”
(Gen. 17:20 CJB)*

NOTE: Except for the titles, this book will use the Hebrew spellings that give the proper Hebrew pronunciation for most of the Biblical names. The English spelling will be given in parenthesis the first couple times.

Yeshua is Jesus

Yishma'el is Ishmael

Yitzkhak is Isaac

Avraham is Abraham

Yosef is Joseph

Be'er Sheva is Beer Sheba

Moshe is Moses

HaMashiakh is the Messiah

Ruakh HaKodesh is the Holy Spirit

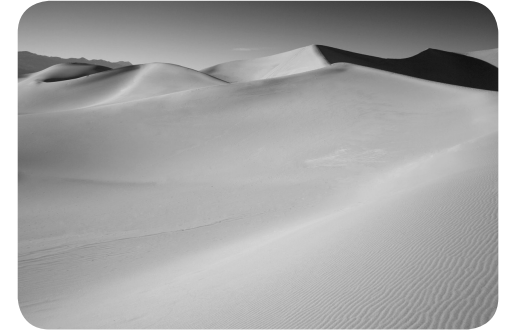
Ruakh is Spirit (which also means “wind”)

ha-satan is satan

(which actually means “*the adversary*”)

1

GOD SPOKE TO HAGAR



One day after hearing about yet another similarity between Ultra Orthodox Jewish people and non-radical Muslim communities, I began to wonder what it would be like if both communities world-wide came to the Lord! Just think about it. The witness to the world would be so astounding! After all, they are both sons of Avraham!! When they both come to the Lord as a whole, what an amazing united force they will be for God’s Kingdom!!! Hallelujah!

Actually just the Muslims alone coming to the Lord would in itself be a very powerful witness to the whole world. Maybe it would be even more powerful since the media and liberals today are more accepting of and sympathetic toward Muslims (Palestinians in particular) than they are toward Christians or Jewish people!!!

Just think about it! It could be a possibility that the Muslims as a group become a witness for the Lord. After all, Yishma’el (Ishmael) did have promises given to him from God. He, too, was saved from death by God as Yitz’khak (Isaac) was! The thought of it got me so excited and overwhelmed that I began to pray earnestly for Muslims.

Soon God began to show me astounding things about His plans for the descendants of Yishma’el, which I will now attempt to show you! Let’s start from the very beginning with Sarah’s slave, Hagar, Yishma’el’s (Ishmael’s) mother.

God Himself spoke directly to Hagar, which in itself is amazing! This only happened to a few, select people in the Old Testament. And what is

even more amazing is that God didn't just speak to her once! He spoke to her twice and provided for her with a miracle! The first time God spoke to her was when she was pregnant and ran away. He spoke to her about Yishma'el. It could have been Yeshua/Jesus Himself who spoke to her because it says "the angel of Adonai" (the Lord). Some people say that every time the Scripture says "the angel of the Lord" it is an appearance of Yeshua Himself!

Genesis 16:7-12 (CJB) *The angel of Adonai found her by a spring in the desert, the spring on the road to Shur, and said, "Hagar, Sarai's slave-girl, where have you come from and where are you going? ... Go back to your mistress and submit to her authority. ... I will greatly increase your descendants; there will be so many that it will be impossible to count them. ... You will give birth to a son. You are to call him Yishma'el [God pays attention] because Adonai has paid attention to your misery.*

He will be a wild donkey of a man with his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him living his life at odds with all his kinsmen."

Notice what God is promising her. "I will GREATLY increase your descendants; there will be so many that it will be IMPOSSIBLE to count them!!" The next words sound very similar to the words given about Yeshua to Yosef (Joseph). "*She will give birth to a son and you are to name Him, Yeshua, [which means 'Adonai saves,'] because He will save His people from their sins*" (Matt. 1:21 CJB). In fact, this is one of only four times in Scripture when God told the parents what to name their baby! And Yishma'el is one of them!

The angel of the Lord also foretold Samson's birth and gave instructions of how to raise him, but didn't give his name (Judges 13). God named Yitz'khak (Isaac which means laughter), but didn't give any explanation as to why He chose that name (Gen. 17:19). To the other three, Yokhanan (John), Yeshua (Jesus) and Yishma'el, God gave names that contains His (God's) Name. According to the Strong's Concordance, here are their meanings: Yishma'el [H3458 "*Jehovah pays attention*"], Yokhanan (John)

[H3110 "*from 3076 Jehovah favored, from 2603 ... be gracious ... have pity upon*"], and Yeshua (Jesus) [H3442 "*He will save, from 3091 Jehovah saved*"]! And it was for only two of them, Yishma'el and Yeshua, that God gave an explanation as to why He was giving that specific name.

Now let's look at the definite, strategic importance of three of these four men named by God. Yitz'khak (Isaac) was the beginning of the blood-line through which the Messiah would be born. Yokhanan (John) was a very important figure in preparing the way for the Messiah. And Yeshua IS the Messiah—the Son of God—the most important person in the universe! With these three persons being so vitally important, surely Yishma'el, the only other person in the Bible named by God, is also important. Surely it has some kind of significance for his descendants! At the very least, they can take comfort and be reassured in the promise that God is "paying attention" and noticing everything that is happening to them!

After God spoke to Hagar, He spoke about Yishma'el to Avraham (Abraham). Avraham said to God, "*If only Yishma'el could live in Your presence!*" God answered, "*...But as for Yishma'el, I have heard you. I have blessed him. I will make him fruitful and give him many descendants. He will father twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation*" (Gen. 17:18, 20 CJB). Keep in mind this specific request by Avraham for Yishma'el because we'll come back to it later.

The second time God spoke to Hagar was when she was banished by Sarah.

(Gen. 21:11-21 CJB) *Avraham became very distressed over this matter of his son. But God said to Avraham. "Don't be distressed because of the boy and your slave-girl. Listen to everything Sarah says to you.... But I will also make a nation from the son of the slave-girl, since he is descended from you."*

Avraham got up early in the morning, took bread and a skin of water and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child; then he sent her away. After leaving, she wandered in the desert around Be'er-Sheva. When the water in the skin was gone, she left the child under a bush, and went and sat down, looking the other way, about a bow-shot's distance from him; because she

said, “I can’t bear to watch my child die.” So she sat there, looking the other way, crying out and weeping. God heard the boy’s voice, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What’s wrong with you, Hagar? Don’t be afraid, because God has heard the voice of the boy in his present situation. Get up, lift the boy up, and hold him tightly in your hand, because I am going to make him a great nation.” Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. So she went, filled the skin with water and gave the boy water to drink.

God was with the boy, and he grew. He lived in the desert and became an archer. He lived in the Pa’ran Desert, and his mother chose a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

The angel spoke to her from heaven this time! She heard a voice from the sky! We would feel amazingly blessed to have such a thing happen to us! I would! Wouldn’t you? The voice also spoke her name. How personal and touching is that? It would melt my heart to a puddle! The Lord cared about Hagar and Yishma’el! He cared enough to speak personally to them and to save their lives.

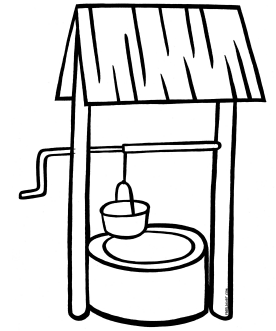
Yitz’khak’s (Isaac’s) life was spared on the altar by God’s voice to Avraham. Yishma’el’s life was spared by the angel of God’s voice to Hagar.

The angel says God heard Yishma’el’s voice. Yishma’el would have been a young man at this time. [He got circumcised when he was 13 in Genesis 17:24 when Avraham was 99 years old. Yitz’khak (Isaac) was born when Avraham was 100.] So what God heard from Yishma’el, who was possibly a 15-year-old, was surely more than just the crying and weeping of a child. Perhaps Yishma’el was praying to God the way Avraham had lovingly taught him during those first 13 years while Avraham still believed that Yishma’el was going to be his only son.

This could be true because notice that Yishma’el believed in God at age 13 to the point of submitting to the command of being painfully circumcised. At that age, this pain would have been quite traumatic. And at age 13 surely he could have refused the operation.

2

BE’ER-SHEVA: MIRACLE WATER FROM A MIRACLE WELL



The well that God showed Hagar, that saved Yishma’el’s life must have been a miraculous well. The words, “God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water,” make me think of the time God “opened the eyes” of Elisha’s servant so he could see the whole army of heaven surrounding them (2 Kings 6:17). I think the well Hagar saw wasn’t there before. I believe it was a miracle well that God created just at that moment.

So, to me, it looks like Yishma’el was saved by miraculous water. I have heard that the Jews believe it is miracle blood that flows in their veins, since Yitz’khak was conceived miraculously by an elderly couple far beyond child-producing age. Well, something similar could possibly be said about Yishma’el’s descendants, since his life was spared by miracle water from a miracle well.

That miracle well, it says in Genesis 21:14, was near Be’er-Sheva (Beer Sheba). This is the first mention of Be’er-Sheva ever in Scripture! And it’s when Hagar and Yishma’el are wandering there! But there is more in Scripture about the well that saved Yishma’el’s life. Immediately after the story about Yishma’el and Hagar in Genesis, it talks about another well, explaining how the area got its name. Could it possibly be the same well?